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Different agenda: economic and social aspects of the ethnic press in Australia

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Different agenda: economic and social aspects of the ethnic press in Australia

Abstract

Australia is officially assumed to have a '... thriving ethnic, mainly non-English language press... [which] helps to preserve interest in its readers' original culture ... [and] provides interest critical information on Australian society and a valuable sense of belonging to many NESB Australians' (Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1988). The validity of these assumptions is examined in this report. It explores in detail the economic significance of the ethnic press and the social uses and cultural needs to which its 100-plus newspapers are relevant. Specifically:

a) The economic dimensions of the ethnic press as an industry (its scale, ownership, employment, revenue sources, etc). b) Its readership. c) Factors which determine and limit its social and cultural value to users. d) Future options and trends given changing demographics and immigration policies.

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UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG, AUSTRALIA

Paper No. 8

**Different Agenda:
Economic and Social Aspects of
the Ethnic Press in Australia**

BELL/HEILPERN/McKENZIE/VIPOND

Working Papers on Multiculturalism No.8

Different Agenda: Economic and Social Aspects of the Ethnic Press in Australia

Phillip Bell, Sandra Heilpern, M. McKenzie and J.Vipond
Social Impacts Pty Ltd

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Australia is officially assumed to have a '... thriving ethnic, mainly non-English language press... [which] helps to preserve interest in its readers' original culture ... [and] provides interest critical information on Australian society and a valuable sense of belonging to many NESB Australians' (Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1988). The validity of these assumptions is examined in this report. It explores in detail the economic significance of the ethnic press and the social uses and cultural needs to which its 100-plus newspapers are relevant. Specifically:

- a) The economic dimensions of the ethnic press as an industry (its scale, ownership, employment, revenue sources, etc).
- b) Its readership.
- c) Factors which determine and limit its social and cultural value to users.
- d) Future options and trends given changing demographics and immigration policies.

The research was conducted in four stages. First, one hundred ethnic newspaper proprietors or editors were interviewed by telephone to gather information concerning ownership, employment, print run, advertising and news priorities.

Second, ten newspapers (five from each of Sydney and Melbourne) were selected for detailed study. Interviews were conducted with editors and journalists.

Third, issues of each of the ten newspapers were analysed to provide a general profile of the amount and type of news coverage, advertising and other content.

Fourth, for each of the five Sydney newspapers five 'opinion leaders' from the respective ethnic communities were interviewed and focussed discussions were conducted with groups of readers leaders' from the respective ethnic communities were interviewed and focussed discussions were conducted with groups of readers of the publications.

Newspapers of all kinds do much more than merely report news and information. They may provide cultural experiences, diversion; facilitate social relationships; give

advice; provide information regarding employment, health, recreation; and, ideally, they provide a public record of (and for) their readership. They offer a forum for public debate and can be incorporated into the daily lives of their consumers in many ways which may facilitate or endorse individual or group cultural identity. The degree to which the ethnic press performs these roles is investigated in detail. Preliminary to discussion of such social functions, however, the industrial and economic features of the diverse 'ethnic press' are outlined. The principal findings of this part of the research were as follows.

The ethnic presses in Australia constitute a varied industry of small business, entry into which is relatively easy. Eighty percent of the 100 newspapers surveyed had been established for at least five years, with nearly fifty percent for ten years or more. They employed 563 full-time and 256 part-time workers, although only eleven publications had more than twenty full-time employees.

One third of ethnic publications are owned by companies, and one quarter by individual proprietors. Others are produced by ethnic or community organisations. Twenty nine could be considered to have 'national' readership, with twenty one distributed mainly in Sydney and eleven in Melbourne.

Half of the newspapers are published less frequently than once per week. Forty are weeklies, with eleven printed at least twice per week.

Only twenty nine publications have print runs of more than ten thousand, with fifty one others printing more than two thousand copies each. The one hundred newspapers surveyed represent thirty six languages.

Although eighty per cent of papers were sold rather than distributed free, they relied heavily on advertising for economic survival, with ninety three per cent publishing some paid advertising. All newspapers with print runs of more than ten thousand regularly carried commercial advertisements.

In all stages of the research, the issue of government advertising was a point of controversy. Earlier studies of the 'neglected' ethnic press (e.g. Tenezakis, 1982) have shown that relatively little, irregular government advertising is printed in those

newspapers. During the last six years, the situation has improved, although not to the satisfaction of the industry. One quarter of the newspapers surveyed now published federal government sponsored advertising. Most papers with large print runs regularly did so (twenty one of twenty nine), compared to only five of the twenty publications with print runs of less than two thousand. State government advertising followed a very similar pattern.

Classified column advertisements are common in large-scale, company-owned publications, but appear in only a quarter of community produced newspapers.

Apart from advertising and sales there is no significant source of revenue for any of the newspapers surveyed.

The potential readership of all the ethnic language publications in Australia is as high as two million. Each of thirty six language groups is served by at least one newspaper. Large scale newspapers serve both long-resident and recently arrived groups (e.g. Italian and Vietnamese, respectively).

Leaving aside the issue of the quality of the respective publications it is clear that the industry is diverse, flexible, reasonably stable and responsive to its market in broad terms, although many publishers struggle to survive and rely on family and underpaid assistance.

The news, information, entertainment and advertising printed by the various ethnic papers is less varied, and perhaps of less quality than is suggested by the viability of the industry as a whole. The content of the ten papers selected for in-depth analysis (Polish, Turkish, Vietnamese, Italian, Lebanese, Greek and Portuguese) was found to be predominantly of Australian origin, although 'hard' news and analytical features focussed on current Australian issues were relatively rare. Smaller papers covered 'hard' news as a high proportion of their total copy, while larger papers sometimes were oriented heavily to 'soft' news (e.g. entertainment) or focussed more heavily on homeland issues. Different papers serve different purposes, although none included significant items of original news and analysis of issues such as economics, politics, welfare or immigration. Their typical patterns of content resembled that of Australian suburban newspapers rather than 'quality' broadsheets.

Seven of the ten issues sampled carried some government advertising. Only the voluminous Vietnamese and the Portuguese papers did not. However, the amount of such advertising was small, a point of contention discussed in other sections of this report.

The content of the newspapers studied suggests that most are unambitious and conservative, keeping homeland issues or 'soft' news prominent. This may help to maintain ethnolinguistic identity, but it may do so by limiting readers' experiences rather than expressing the distinctiveness and vitality of the ethnic group's situation and aspirations.

When interviewed personally, editors and journalists as well as readers of the ten newspapers raised many significant issues. They agreed that the quality and range of news carried by a publication was less important than the fact that some regular newspaper be available in the respective non-English language. Longer-resident immigrant groups (Italian, Polish) differed from more recently arrived groups (Vietnamese, Lebanese) in their use of the newspapers. In the former, older generations were the newspapers' principal readers; in the latter, it was the younger. Hence, the social functions served by the papers are varied. They include:

- providing homeland and Australian news;
- encouraging ethnic group cohesion;
- informing new citizens of their rights and entitlements to social services;
- keeping diverse languages alive in Australia;
- improving the status of the ethnic groups, and its self-image;
- facilitating social and commercial interactions within the group and between it and the wider community.

Few saw their role as political, though most regarded themselves as anti-Communist and/or 'middle of the road'.

Journalists (who are few in this industry) saw their role as translators not originators of news items; editors often felt constrained by the need to retain advertising revenue; both regarded themselves as having low status, and few opportunities for professional

growth, despite the high value they placed on serving 'their' community. Lack of on-the-job training of journalists to a high professional standard was a major difference between the ethnic and the mainstream presses.

Most personnel aspired to produce a publication which would be a permanent archival record of their respective ethnic group's history in Australia. Others pointed out that the papers did help to effect political and legislative change (e.g. in pension transferability from the homeland).

The interviews confirmed the outline of the economics of the press given in Section I of the report. Editors and readers alike reiterated the value to the newspapers and their readers of government sponsored advertising for services, entitlements and employment. The finance and status offered by such advertising were highly valued. Some saw the presses as already providing gratis an essential social service and argued strongly for more government recognition and support. Many sections of the industry survived only with difficulty. Many felt undervalued and underfunded.

The readers' interviews provided little evidence that complex psychological functions or needs were being met by the ethnic newspapers. However, many agreed that such publications did confirm individual and cultural identity, and served as more than mere media of information. Unlike radio which was too ephemeral or TV which reports on all minority cultures from the perspective of none, newspapers could offer a point of identification and a continuous record of homeland and local cultural values.

Criticism of the newspapers centred on the lack of 'professionalism', 'purposelessness', irrelevance to contemporary issues and lack of detailed news features on economics, welfare, politics, education or issues such as health

(e.g. AIDS) or women's issues. Many bilingual interviewees judged their newspaper 'second rate', yet also necessary. They wanted it to be professional but not merely to imitate the English language newspapers.

Several issues arise from this study which have implications for the future of the ethnic press, its possible roles and importance, and for government policy relating to the newspapers and to multiculturalism more generally.

The Future

Changed immigration policies have begun to alter the number, mix and social background of new migrants. Younger, better educated readerships will emerge, demanding changes in the quality and functions of ethnic newspapers.

Ethnic-language publications need more specialised, professionally trained journalists, writing on economics, health, women's welfare, business and political issues. Input from experts within the various communities served by the newspapers could supplement this increasingly analytical, professional journalism.

Government sponsored advertising is the most viable form of 'subsidy' for the presses. More, and more widely distributed paid and unpaid publicity from all levels of government is the single most important factor mentioned by everyone connected with the ethnic press. The Office of Multicultural Affairs might directly control these forms of input. It should also investigate ways of encouraging trained or trainee journalists to find employment in the ethnic press. Thirdly, the Office of Multicultural Affairs could liaise more closely with proprietors and employers of the newspapers, seeking regular and detailed feedback on their needs.

The ethnic press serves different purposes from SBS. Its independent, varied voices are best heard in an unregulated, competitive environment. Policy which supports the publication of newspapers which meet more of the readers' information and cultural needs should also maintain this diversity and independence.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In its discussion Paper, *Towards a National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* (1988) The Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs considers briefly the Australian print media. It stated that:

Australia has a thriving ethnic, mainly non-English language press. There are well over one hundred ethnic newspapers which regularly appear, a number of which - *Il Globo*, *Neos Cosmos*, *La Fiamma* - have a large readership and wield considerable influence. Their interests are mainly communal, including relevant overseas news, but selectively national in terms of issues directly affecting their readership. The ethnic press helps to preserve interest in its readers' original culture or country of birth. But, equally important, it provides critical information on Australian society and a valuable sense of belonging to many NESB Australians. (p.151).

The 100-plus ethnic newspapers, however, include many which are published infrequently, many which struggle for survival, many which may serve only inadequately the needs of their potential and actual readers. Their economic and social functions and viability are as varied as their circulations and ethnic orientations. *Il Globo* and *La Fiamma* may be anything but typical.

This report explores in detail the economic situation and functions of the ethnic press in Australia, and examines the social uses and needs to which it is relevant. The 'neglected press', e.g. Tenezakis (1983) calls it, may be much more economically and socially significant than is supposed, even in the Advisory Council's own Discussion Paper (above), which perpetuates the neglect of the ethnic print media when it concludes that:

Overall, in terms of multiculturalism, there are two basic issues in relation to the mass media: the need for the mainstream media to reflect the diversity of the Australian population; and the need for the SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) to appeal to and reach a large representative audience. (p.152).

Such a formulation expresses only a very passive view of the potential functions of the media ('reflecting', 'reaching', 'appealing to' diversified audiences), and assumes SBS to be actually or potentially important provided only that it reaches such audiences. Precisely what ethnically diverse audiences do with, learn from, or experience through

the electronic media, and whether this is sufficiently specific to constitute an essential component of the infrastructures on which various ethnic communities are built, is ignored in such general formulations. Without diminishing the significance of SBS, the role of small, independent media especially the many voices of the diverse ethnic press may be equally important. Unlike SBS and the major English language press, the ethnic press is not centralised, not homogeneous, but may be, potentially, multicultural in ways that centralised broadcast media may not be.

This report begins by assuming that the role of this multilingual cultural and social resource should not be prejudged as merely peripheral to the mainstream media. From the perspectives of its diverse readership, its economic and industry bases, its provision of services which might otherwise not exist, its indirect, not just direct role in providing information, and its potential to reach otherwise relatively inaccessible groups, the ethnic newspapers may contradict the assumptions made when it is assumed that they produce merely small-scale versions of mainstream English-language newspapers. Precisely what the economic and social functions of this diverse and active industry are is investigated in the following report.

1.1 Research Aims of the Report

Specifically, the research aims to provide information concerning:

- a) the economic dimensions of the ethnic print media as an industry (e.g. number of businesses, staffing, industrial structure);
- b) the scale and penetration of these media;
- c) features of the 'ethnic' press which may influence and determine its social and economic roles (e.g. sources and nature of news, social information, advertising, etc.);
- d) the social and economic functions performed by the ethnic print media (economic functions may include information on employment and training and business and investment opportunities, contacts for entrepreneurs and marketing to specific target groups etc; social functions may include

language, culture and social value maintenance, recreational and educational use etc.);

- e) future projections of the minority oriented print media with particular attention to changing demographic (and education) variables and the potential role of the media in social welfare provision.

Definitions:

By 'ethnic press' this report will mean all newspapers, whether published in English, a community language other than English, or both, which specifically and principally address a readership which shares a common ethnolinguistic-cultural background. Not all such newspapers can be called 'community' newspapers, because many are distributed nationally, while others serve only a particular segment of the one language group.

Of the newspapers studied in this report, 65% were published exclusively in their respective ethnic language, 26% included some items in English, and 8% were in English only. 2% used more than one non-English language. Hence, ethnic (i.e. ethnic minority) paper is not necessarily a 'non-English language' paper.

The research reported in this paper focuses on three interrelated aspects of ethnic newspapers published in Australia:

First, the industry itself - its scale, nature, economic significance and functions, considered within its more general economic context.

Second, the actual newspapers produced and distributed to their respective ethnically defined readerships, examining in detail the distribution of different types of news, information, entertainment and advertising in different types of publications.

Third, the readers' uses of, and gratifications derived from these newspapers, the role of the newspapers in their respective ethnic communities and their ability to serve the social and cultural needs of readers and communities.

1.2 Research Design

The research reported here had four distinct stages. Each aimed to establish answers to the questions outlined above. First, a telephone survey was conducted with all contactable proprietors or editors of ethnic newspapers published anywhere in Australia.

Specific questions were posed concerning the nature of the publication, its print run, price, ownership, advertising and news profiles, employment etc. The 100 responses to the telephone interviews form the basis of the general quantitative description of the ethnic press.

Second, ten newspapers were selected for more detailed study. Person-to-person interviews were conducted with the editors of five Melbourne-based and five Sydney-based publications chosen to represent the range of newspapers published. One journalist from each paper was also interviewed, except for the two newspapers which did not employ any journalists.

Third, one issue of each of these ten newspapers was analysed to provide a general quantitative assessment of its news coverage (e.g. topics, origins), advertising and other content.

Fourth, for each of the five selected newspapers in Sydney, key people in the community were interviewed and focused discussion groups were conducted to investigate community expectations and evaluations of the role of the newspapers.

2.0 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE ETHNIC PRESS

2.1 Theoretical Perspectives

Before considering the details of empirical research on the Australian ethnic press, it is necessary to outline some relevant 'theoretical' perspectives to provide a context for the subsequent literature review and for the discussion of the present study. This section therefore discusses the possible 'functions' of newspapers generally and of the 'ethnic press' in relation to social goals such as multiculturalism versus assimilationism. It argues against the assumption that ethnic minority oriented media do, or should, necessarily serve principally to integrate their readers into mainstream Australian society.

Newspapers do much more than report news. They, at least, provide entertainment or diversion, facilitate social interaction through providing shared cultural references and experiences, assist consumers to decide what to purchase, give information about employment, social services and social events. They may also constitute a part of many small-scale social encounters (family discussions, cafe or pub conversations). More generally, they constitute a partial, but perhaps unique record of the public dimension of social groups' histories and values, and are therefore frequently regarded as historical records or, at least, as manifestations of the public life of particular communities. Because newspapers publish correspondence and editorial opinion, they constitute a forum of debate which, however restricted and ideologically limited, is unavailable in the electronic media (although talk-back radio could constitute such a forum if the electronic media were institutionally and economically different from their current form in Australia).

Newspapers are media; they mediate between various social interest groups, institutions and readers (both individual and as socially organised or affiliated), and between public political and private interests. As media they are factors in defining the relationships between social sectors for example, between governments and citizens, between advertisers and consumers, between ethnic minority and majority.

If newspapers mediate such diverse relationships, it follows that their functions can best be understood relationally: they are not simply the cause of readers' knowledge or beliefs. Indeed they may not be most usefully conceptualised as causes at all, but are instead part of a circuit of social and personal uses and functions. Readers do things with newspapers, which, in turn, are interconnected with various social processes far beyond merely providing 'information'.

The social and psychological functions of the press have often been theorised as though they necessarily helped readers to be integrated culturally and socially, which assumes that the press is essentially an agent for social cohesion, whether in relation to a sub-culture such as an ethnic minority or to the larger national culture. Therefore, especially since the rise of mass newspapers and television, the 'functions' served by the media have been studied in an essentially conservative, educational way, with researchers emphasising how the media facilitate the individual's social integration based on communicated 'knowledge, values and social norms' (Wright, 1975 in Tenezakis, 1983, p.21). Such an approach assumes that the society served by the media is a consensually integrated, relatively homogeneous system in which the media contribute to the smooth functioning of the totality by endorsing values assumed to lie at the heart of the social consensus, for example, individualism, the value of work, the nuclear family. News media then define and marginalise actions, groups and values which are outside the assumed consensus ('foreigners', radical political agents, strikers, criminals, dole-recipients). Newspapers in the 'mainstream' do not speak on behalf of marginal, 'deviant' or politically critical sub-groups, but speak of them as threats to the assumed consensus.

The ethnic press, therefore, constitutes a problem for many of the assumptions made by, and about, the major media and their readers. For the multi-lingual presses speak to and (potentially, at least) for minorities, perhaps politically and culturally 'deviant' minorities ('deviant' in the sense that they do not unquestioningly assume the values of the Australian society represented in the pages of the majority media).

Hence, the functions of the ethnic minority media may be quite different from those of the majority media - both in terms of what individual readers use the newspapers for, and in terms of the social (e.g. educative or ideological) roles of the newspapers.

Moreover, ethnic newspapers cannot be assumed to form a homogeneous class themselves. Their functions - social, political, economic, cultural and psychological - may vary greatly depending on the history and characteristics of the language group to which the paper gives expression. The functions of the ethnic press should not be assumed to be consistent over time, region, or language groups, nor even for all within a language group. Age, education, family membership or gender may determine the individual social and cultural uses for, and gratifications from, a paper, just as the role of the paper in the wider community may vary with changes in the economic and political climate of the nation (e.g. the Chinese language press after the June Beijing massacre).

So, newspapers need not be assumed to function as agents of, or as forces towards, integration or assimilation of groups or of individuals within Australia. Nor should it be assumed that they ought to fulfil this role. On the contrary, a consensualist or assimilationist role may be resisted or overtly contradicted by non-English language news organs which may legitimately express 'roles, values and norms' other than those of middle-class Anglo-Celtic Australia - i.e. genuinely multicultural and not hegemonically defined value positions and social functions. The 'functions' of the press should not merely be defined in advance by the researcher on the basis of work on mainstream mass media in what are assumed to be consensually integrated, socially homogeneous cultures.

Newspapers may embody cultural identity in a more important respect than simply being a psychological resource for individuals. They may constitute the more general arena of cultural definition and re-definition (including specifically 'ethnic' elements, but not only these). As public records, as forums for debate, as tellers of stories, as displays of sporting or social achievement, newspapers may constitute a most significant cultural resource and cultural agency by giving a verbal and visual form to the meaning of 'Lebanese', 'Greek' or 'Vietnamese' (in Australia, at a given time).

In short, newspapers do not merely speak to their readers/consumers/users. They also, in various ways speak for them, by speaking about them and their historical, social relations, including those to 'homeland' and to Australian society more generally. This is not to deny that conflicting values may be embodied in competing newspapers even those serving the one ethnolinguistic group. Indeed, unlike the mass publications of the

dominant English-language press, the minority newspapers might be able to avoid the consensual middle-ground which is essential for advertising revenue in the consumer-oriented daily newspapers. As such, 'ethnic' newspapers may only very misleadingly be compared to their larger Australian counterparts. As will be seen in this report, 'newspaper' is the most general and uninformative label for many of the ethnic publications to which it is usually applied in that it suggests that news transmission is the principal or only function of the publications. As will be emphasised throughout this report, the ethnic press serves many and varied functions in a variety of ways depending on the history of its ethnic constituency.

As recently as 1988, 72% of 'recent arrivals' in Australia, whose first language was not English reported reading newspapers in their own language. Non-English speakers generally read such newspapers very frequently as well (70%), but the 'second generation' was only about half as likely to be ethnic paper readers. Nevertheless, this represents 39% of this group. Overall, 65% of potential readers used this resource, about 50% above the number that listened to radio broadcasts in their own language and higher than the number who watch SBS television (50%, 56% respectively). (Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1989.)

2.2 Recent Studies of the Ethnic Press In Australia

We have argued that the existence of minority media need not presuppose any particular social role, and it does not allow one to assume that each ethnic paper acts as an agent of, or as a force towards, integration or assimilation of groups or of individuals within Australia. Nevertheless, both the Australian non-English language press and much of the research conducted on it have been implicitly or explicitly assimilationist. As theoretical background to the present study it is necessary to trace something of the history of both the presses (and their Governmentally-defined purposes) and the social science research conducted on them. This is because, until recently, much of the literature on ethnic media had assumed that its role was (or could be evaluated in terms of) social control, at least in the sense of providing the means for and/or encouraging, accelerating or determining integration or complete assimilation by the minority into the majority culture.

Tenezakis (1983) discusses Gilson and Zubrzycki's (1967) research into the ethnic press. They showed that until 1956 when the Publication of Newspapers in Foreign Languages Regulations were ended, governments had considered two principal criteria in licensing newspapers:

- (1) that nothing be published which was likely to foment disaffection or sedition, or to cause a breach of the peace, was offensive or objectionable, or was in conflict with the Government's policy of assimilation of new settlers;
- (2) that at least one quarter of the publication would be in English and that the leading article (if any) would be in English, accompanied, if desired, by the respective foreign-language translation (Gibson and Zubrzycki, 1967:40).

Tenezakis argues, however, that an explicitly assimilationist goal persisted, along with the patronising assumption that ethnic newspapers provided a 'safety valve' for migrants' grievances .

W.D. Scott & Co (1980) surveyed the 'information needs' of 'migrants in Australia'. Tenezakis (1983) points out that in this report the press was assumed not to be an important medium for the dissemination of useful information for ethnic minorities, but that the survey did not analyse the content of the press to examine the nature of this inadequacy. Instead, the study indicated that:

... [T]he percentages of people reading ethnic newspapers varied widely between different ethnic groups. The groups with the highest percentages of ethnic press readers were the Argentineans and Chileans, Greeks and Turks (84%, 83% and 82% respectively); those with the lowest (40% or less), the Dutch and Maltese. The Lebanese were about midway between these extremes, with a readership figure of 68% (p.10).

The quality of the information published, its relevance to, and use by, readers of different ethnolinguistic backgrounds was not addressed. However, Tenezakis' research addressed precisely this question, studying Greek and Arab newspapers.

In summary, she found, for the Arab newspapers:

- an unexpectedly large amount of commercial advertising.
- a predominance of homeland over Australian news and 'world' news.
- little or no coverage of sporting and recreation events.
- many overseas originated items of interpretation and background information.
- 'limited' coverage given to community welfare and consumer rights themes, with the virtual total absence of articles on relevant services in Australia.

- little 'serious' editorial comment on overseas issues of relevance to local readers.

Predictably, given these features of the newspapers, readers:

- were dissatisfied with coverage of Australian community welfare services.
- expressed dissatisfaction with the editorials and news on issues related to health, family life, trade and industry and politics.
- criticised the reliance on re-cycled 'homeland' news and the quality of journalism.

Greek newspapers were similar in important respects to the Arabic:

... [A]lthough the samples of the Greek newspapers surveyed did contain some locally relevant information on matters of community welfare, consumer rights and related services, this information was fairly limited. The newspapers, as a group, contained very few articles providing descriptive information about the structure, aims and way of functioning of the various organisations which provide services in such areas as education and training, legal matters, health care, consumer protection and the like (p.178).

However, the newspapers differed considerably in important areas, such as coverage of homeland news and local (Australian) sport. Significantly, community information items were not dissimilar: all five newspapers studied provided very little of relevance, confirming the principal finding for the Arabic newspapers. Similarly, all produced very limited and superficial editorial comment.

Greek readers noted and criticised these limitations, while females in particular noted the lack of coverage of issues relevant to them compared with sporting coverage. Despite this, Greek readers regularly read their own language newspapers (34% reading only these), although English language proficiency, years of schooling and male gender reduced reliance on the Greek newspapers. Generally readers were also critical of those limitations identified by the content analysis:

Strongest dissatisfaction was expressed about Australian news and overseas news from countries other than Greece; about information on local services involving community welfare and consumer rights; about articles on matters 'of general interest'; and about editorial commentaries on matters of general public concern in Australian and on international relations issues. (p.236).

Comparing Arabic and Greek readers, Tenezakis found the latter to be less likely to use a first language or ethnic paper, to be more critical of editorial values and news content

related to international and Australian news, though the Arabic readers were more dissatisfied with coverage of matters relating to their ethnic group in Australia and to family life, trade unions and politics. It is the dearth of information about local community welfare services that stands out as the principal general inadequacy of the newspapers studied.

Of special interest is the scarcity of advertisements for Programs and Services in all the Greek newspapers and in particular the lack of advertising for Government run Programs and Services. There was also an almost total lack of government advertising for Employment and Training Opportunities. (p.191).

Generally, in the newspapers Tenezakis studied, government sponsored advertising constituted less than one percent of total space.

Without detracting from the wealth of detailed information yielded by this comprehensive study, however, it must be acknowledged that it assumes that newspapers are and ought to be simply organs of information and opinion, and that readers' interests concern only information narrowly conceived. Tenezakis' methodology did not allow her to investigate the more qualitative questions of the 'uses and gratifications' obtained from the newspapers in relation to it providing entertainment or fostering cultural or sub-cultural identity, for instance. Yet newspapers do much more than circulate news. In short, as well as information, newspapers trade in cultural values, knowledge and ritual, and provide avenues for forming or maintaining self definition and cultural identity. The 'ethnic' press may, potentially, be crucial in this role, given its audience's relative dependence in an environment of linguistic alienation. Newspapers may be used to strengthen or maintain family and social relationships, for diversion and entertainment, for guidance in social norms and behaviour (e.g. socialisation regarding sexual mores).

Kim (1985) showed that, for Korean migrants in Australia, their newspaper was an important factor in providing 'information' about Australian culture. However, like Tenezakis, the more subtle uses to which the ethnic media might be put in confirming cultural identity, in self-definition, or in cultural politics were largely ignored.

Kim studied what he called the role of the Sydney Korean press in the 'acculturation' of Korean migrants. His sophisticated 'uses and gratifications' study focuses on the factors which determine the new arrivals' various levels of integration into Australian

society, their use of English, degree of identification with their ethnic group compared to the 'host culture' and their abstract and concrete knowledge of the latter.

However, the focus on 'acculturation' renders this study somewhat ethnocentric by investigating what communication and other factors determine knowledge of and identification with (Anglo-) Australian 'behaviour, norms and values'.

... Korean migrants' exposure to reality-oriented Australian communication was found to be by far the most important contributor to their level of cognitive acculturation, though followed by reality-oriented Korean communication, fantasy-oriented Australian communication and fantasy-oriented Korean communication in that order. The data clearly indicated that the perceived need to acculturate and level of English communication skills were the two most powerful predictors of communication exposure patterns. The perceived need to acculturate correlated most closely with education, followed by age, length of residence and occupational status. English communication skills correlated most significantly with length of residence, followed by education, age and sex. (p.vii).

This sees as desirable the integration of the Korean immigrant into the 'host' culture via psychological 'acculturation' to which the Korean language and English language media differentially contribute. Nevertheless, Kim does point out that the 'knowledge' provided by the media may be of various kinds, and draws attention to the complexity of the ethnic press' role in providing knowledge and entertainment of value to ethnic minorities. For example, he points out that the media may mediate knowledge about 'ideas, practices, and goods', that they may increase abstract awareness of society, teach readers 'how to' achieve certain social goals, and present principles concerning the values of and systematic features of, the 'host' society. Unfortunately, he ignores the possible roles of the ethnic media in serving the ethnic minority except in relation to integration/assimilation.

Literature which does not make integrationist assumptions is rare. It is therefore ironic that the most politically critical paper of recent times equates the media with the electronic media: Jacubowicz (1989) analyses the multicultural media and criticises their complicity in, or failure to resist, Australian 'monocultural hegemony', but ignores the ethnic press.

Amplifying and extending many of Tenezakis' findings are studies by Young and Taylor (1985) Young (1986). These report on the content of Arabic, Greek, Turkish and Yugoslav newspapers, and the use and evaluation of media by such communities.

Young (1986) shows that 'homeland' news, 'background to current events' and commercial (or, at least, non-government) advertising were the most frequently published items in the four ethnic newspapers that she studied. However, while she comments on the significance of these findings, she also notes the possible significance of items or types of information which are not published (e.g. the dearth of Australian news, even that 'of special interest to ethnic groups' in some newspapers). Among her general findings were the following:

- 'general news of Australia receives a relatively good coverage' in most newspapers except the three Turkish publications.
- news of homeland varies considerably, with consistently high proportions in Arabic publications and fluctuating coverage across Turkish and Yugoslav newspapers.
- a 'reasonable coverage' of cultural, historical, biographical and literary articles in all newspapers.
- variability in space given to government and commercial advertising.

Young compares these content profiles with what the readers of the respective newspapers want from their newspapers, computing an index of rated importance minus actual coverage. She found a high level of consistency on this index across ethnic groups.

She concludes:

Items within the six highest scores in relation to importance minus coverage for at least three of the ethnic groups are:

- information about services available in Australia.
- news about politics etc., in Australia, particularly if relevant to the ethnic group.
- information and practical advice on everyday matters in Australia.
- editorials and commentaries about events in Australia.
- news about the activities of the ethnic community in Australia (except among Greeks).'

Of special significance are the items which at least three of the ethnic groups regarded as of great importance and for which at least three had high scores in relation to importance minus coverage. These items are:

- news of the activities of the ethnic group in Australia.

- information about services available in Australia, especially government services.
- news about politics, etc. in Australia, particularly if relevant to the ethnic group.
- editorials and commentaries about events in Australia.

These four items are considered both as very important and to be receiving less coverage in the ethnic newspapers than their readers would like. Of special significance is that all of these items relate to Australia, and this suggests that the newspapers should present more Australian news and information. While each ethnic group regards news of the homeland of great importance, this topic is obviously sufficiently well covered in all newspapers, and only the Yugoslavs feel a need for a greater coverage of this item. Two ethnic groups, the Greeks and the Turks, consider that additional overseas news and commentary is important (pp.54-5).

Young, Tenezakis and Kim all compare newspapers in terms of their respective ethnic (language) group served. These studies which include content analysis and readers responses show a consistent pattern, summarised by Young (*ibid.*):

There is a strong demand by all the ethnic groups studied for more Australian news, and this covers general news, editorials and commentaries on Australian affairs, news of government services available, news of the ethnic groups in Australia.

However, ethnic publications vary greatly in their print runs, frequency and scope, as well as in their intended social roles (ranging from what are essentially community broadsheets to newspapers which compete with the major English-language dailies). It follows that the content and readers' uses of different newspapers may not most usefully be compared on the dimension of ethnicity alone. The historical and social features of the language group (or sub-group) served and the nature of the newspaper addressing it (its industrial base, ownership, intended commercial status etc.) need to be analysed together. The study reported herein seeks to relate these aspects of the ethnic press, examining in detail the nature of the industry, the newspapers and their uses and social functions for individuals and ethnic communities.

3.0 ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL ASPECTS OF THE ETHNIC PRESS

3.1 Introduction

While the ownership and the financial content of the major English-language presses in Australia is the subject of continuous media and research scrutiny, the ethnic press, like the regional, suburban and special interest presses are seldom seen as publicly significant. Yet the ethnic press is, *prima facie*, an important industry for various reasons. It employs a reasonably large workforce, produces a regular, saleable commodity, and is a channel for advertising and publicity which may make it a necessary adjunct to, or a factor influencing, many other forms of business. It is comprised of many small independent businesses in a field where very large corporations reign supreme. It is, necessarily, of economic significance to its advertising and readers who may use it for various directly and indirectly 'economic' purposes. In providing a unique channel of communication to groups of people who may miss out on mainstream information flows because of an inability to read English, it may also act as an economic conduit where no other relationship exists.

Despite the social and economic importance of the ethnic press, it has evolved as an industry without direct government involvement. This is largely accidental. The government's role in the mainstream media arises from monopoly centred issues and from its power as an allocator of the spectrum of radio and TV space. Neither of these aspects are relevant to the ethnic press. As a result of the lack of government involvement, however, there is also an absence of economic information about the industry. Newspapers are produced independently and no data are collected across the many languages in which they operate. It was to fill in the gaps in our information that a telephone survey of all editors of the ethnic press was conducted.

The telephone survey had two objectives: to serve as a basis for the selection of newspapers for further study, and to produce information on an industry about which very little is known. This section of the report is concerned with the second objective. It describes the nature of the ethnic press as an industry in Part 3.2; it describes the range

of newspapers that are produced in Part 3.3, and how their production is financed in Part 3.4. It assesses, in broad terms, the extent to which its products reach its potential market in Part 3.5.

Each editor answered a series of specific questions concerning their respective papers print run, distribution, costs, etc. The responses were recorded on a questionnaire sheet (Appendix I) and quantitative analyses were based on these data sheets.

3.2 The Industry

The ethnic press is an industry of small business. There are few economies of scale and new firms can be established with very little capital. The rapid demise of ethnic publications is also quite common. Consequently, it is difficult to know how many publications and how many producers are in the industry at any time.

The telephone survey of the ethnic press involved contacting all businesses or contact persons listed in the Margaret Gee Media Guide and business listings in the Yellow Pages. Of the 141 potential contacts, 100 were established and interviews completed. Of the 41 which could not be included, 11 were 'too busy' or uncontactable at the numbers published, 6 were out of business as presumably) were a further 13 who were not known at the number given or where the number had been disconnected. Eleven were not 'newspapers' as defined in the study.

Analysis of the 100 newspapers reveals great diversity. Although some publications are recent, many have survived for a long time. For instance, the oldest paper in the survey was a French monthly paper *Le Courrier Australien* which was first published in 1892. The distribution of dates of establishment of the currently published ethnic press is listed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Period when paper established	No. of newspapers
Less than 2 years ago	11
2 to 5 years ago	9
6 to 10 years ago	17
10 to 20 years ago	29
21 to 30 years ago	12
More than 30 years ago	21
Don't know	1
TOTAL	100

Foreign language newspapers: date of establishment

Source: telephone survey

Only one newspaper had no record of when it began. Including that paper, 34% of all of the newspapers have survived more than twenty years. 11% are new entrants, having been established in the last two years. The characteristics of new and old publications will be considered in more detail below after a description of the structure of the ethnic press as an industry.

The ethnic press is a small industry, too small for separate classification in the employment and output data of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The telephone survey revealed a total employment of 563 full time workers and 256 part time workers. More than two thirds of newspapers have some form of voluntary assistance for their production. Usually volunteers contribute articles, though some assist with production processes. The economic importance of the ethnic press cannot be assessed by

employment data alone. Most newspapers (78~) are printed by contract so that flow on employment is created. Nevertheless this is a small industry.

Data on employment also indicate the dominance of small firms in the industry. Only eleven publications employ more than twenty full time workers. 20 newspapers are produced entirely by volunteer labour. 63 newspapers rely on part time workers; some of these newspapers have volunteer assistance.

The small business structure of the industry is also shown in the answers given on the focus of ownership of the newspapers. Only one third of newspapers are owned by companies. Sole proprietors control one quarter of newspapers and another quarter are produced by ethnic organisations (Table 3.2). The remaining newspapers are produced by partnerships.

It must be remembered, however, that at least 20 of 141 newspapers had 'failed' during the past year or two. Such a failure rate is not unusual among small businesses. In a sample survey of enterprises established by migrants in the period 1973 to 1984 inclusive, it was found that 41% failed in the first three years of operation and a further 5.1% failed after three years (Strahan and Williams, 1988, p. x).

Table 3.2

Form of Ownership	No. of Newspapers
Sole proprietor	26
Company	34
Ethnic Group	23
Other	17
TOTAL	100

Ownership of Ethnic Press

Source: telephone survey

The ethnic press is located mainly in Sydney and Melbourne, with Sydney producing 55 newspapers and Melbourne 31. (See Table 3.3)

Table 3.3

Place of Publication	No. of Newspapers
Sydney	55
Melbourne	31
Brisbane	4
Adelaide	4
Perth	3
Several	2
Canberra	1
TOTAL	100

Location of Ethnic Press

Newspapers tend to be published close to their respective readerships. Twenty one are read mainly in Sydney or NSW and 11 are read mainly in Melbourne or Victoria. Many other newspapers have either a national readership (29 newspapers) or are concentrated in two or three states (usually in S.E. Australia, see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4

Location	No. of newspapers
Sydney	13
NSW	8
Melbourne	7
Victoria	4
Queensland	1
South Australia	3
Western Australia	3
National	29
2 - 3 States	29
Unknown	1
Outside Australia	1
TOTAL	100

Location of readers of ethnic press

In summary, the ethnic press is a small industry which is dominated by small firms and is located in the two largest cities in Australia.

3.3 The Newspapers

The products of this industry, are very diverse in terms of the frequency of their publication and the size of their print runs. Eleven newspapers are produced more

frequently than once per week. Forty are weeklies. The other half are produced less frequently than once per week, usually either fortnightly or monthly (see Table 3.5). Altogether, the newspapers are written in thirty six languages.

Table 3.5

Frequency of publication	No. of Newspapers
More than once per week	11
Once per week	40
Less than weekly and at least once per month	42
Less than once per month	7
TOTAL	100

Ethnic newspapers: frequency of publication

Source: telephone survey

Many of the newspapers have a very small print run (see Table 3.6). Only 29 are produced in print runs of more than 10,000. As can be expected, the larger newspapers are those which are issued more frequently. Of the eleven newspapers printed more than once per week, only one has a small run. It is a Japanese publication prepared for tourists. The rest have print runs of at least 10,000. There is also a tendency for the degree of commercial involvement in production to increase as print runs increase. None of the publications with more than 10,000 copies per print run is produced by an ethnic organisation (see Table 3.6). All of the very small publications (less than 500 copies) are non-commercial and half of publications with print runs of less than 2,000 copies are also produced by ethnic organisations.

Table 3.6

Print Run	Private Individual	Company	Ethnic	Other	Total
Less than 500			3		3
500 - 1999	1	3	8	5	17
2000 - 4999	9	5	6	7	27
5000 - 9999	7	7	6	4	24
More than 10000	9	19		1	29
TOTAL	26	34	23	17	100

**Ethnic newspapers: scale of print run per issue
and nature of ownership**

Source: telephone survey

The social and economic importance of these newspapers depends more upon their circulation than upon the numbers that are printed. Unfortunately, it is possible to obtain hard data on the latter only. Although in the telephone survey, editors were asked for their estimations of readership numbers, their answers were very difficult to code and analyse. Many simply did not know. It seemed from those who did answer that there were great differences in estimated readership per printed paper. A possible reason is that these differences reflected the circulating of daily, weekly and monthly publications.

Despite the difficulties of reaching firm conclusions on circulation data, an overall impression was gained that the ethnic newspapers were read by more people per copy than were their English language counterparts. Households tend to be relatively large, and the ethnic newspapers tend to be kept for perusal by family members over extended periods. When selected editors were interviewed at greater length, they confirmed this impression that each paper was widely read (see section 4).

In summary, one hundred newspapers in at least 36 different languages, other than English, are produced regularly in Australia. Of these one hundred newspapers, ten have large print run and are produced more than once per week, 40 are weeklies, the remaining half of the newspapers are produced less frequently than once per week.

3.4 Sources of Revenue: The Financing of the Ethnic Press

A telephone survey is not a suitable means of obtaining accurate data on the economic viability of small businesses. It is possible, however, to find indicators of sources of revenue. Questions were asked about the prices and methods of selling of newspapers in languages other than English and about where advertising revenue originated.

The prices of ethnic newspapers are in ranges comparable to those of Australian newspapers (see Table 3.7). It is, however, impossible to estimate whether readers find them costly without knowing how many of them buy several newspapers and how many of them buy both Australian and ethnic newspapers. Certainly, compared to suburban newspapers which are usually free, ethnic newspapers are not cheap.

Moreover, prices have tended to rise. Only 31% of newspapers had maintained a consistent price over more than two years, with 24% increasing their sale price during the previous twelve months and 37% during the previous two years.

Table 3.7

Price	No. of Newspapers
Free	19
Less than \$1.00	36
\$1.00 - \$2.00	40
More than \$2.00	4
Overseas distribution	1
TOTAL	100

Ethnic newspapers: price per copy

Source: telephone survey

Not surprisingly, the method of selling copies of ethnic newspapers is different from that of Australian newspapers. because of the more specialised nature of the market, newsagents are less important to the ethnic press, and subscription payers are more important, (see Table 3.8). More than half (55%) of newspapers are issued to readers who pay by subscription. Local shops and clubs where readers meet are another important means of distribution (17% of newspapers rely on such outlets). Newsagents are the main source of distribution for only 14 % of newspapers (see Table 3.8).

Table 3.8

Method of distribution	No. of newspapers
Newsagent	14
Mail out	2
Shops	12
Clubs, etc.	5
Subscriptions	44
Several	12
Not recorded	11
TOTAL	100

Ethnic newspapers: method of distribution

Source: telephone survey

Revenue from advertising is a complex issue which was not addressed in detail. Editors were asked only whether they printed advertisements and where they obtained them from. They were questioned about business advertisements, government advertisements of both federal and state governments and about classified advertisements. Their answers emphasised the importance of business advertisements. Only 7~ of newspapers did not publish them.

Predictably, such advertising is related to the size of print runs, with the smaller scale newspapers sometimes carrying little or none (see Table 3.9). However, all 29 newspapers with print runs of more than 10,000 carried commercial advertising on a regular basis.

Table 3.9

Print Run	Commercial Advertising			
	Regularly	Sometimes	Never	Total
Less than 500	2	1		3
500 - 1999	11	2	4	17
2000 - 4999	21	4	2	27
5000 - 9999	21	2	1	24
More than 10000	29			29
TOTAL	84	9	7	100

**Frequency of commercial advertising in publications
with various print runs**

Source: Telephone Survey

Following up the issues raised in Tenezakis (1983), the relationship between government advertising and the ethnic press was investigated. Both Federal and State Governments advertised at least sometimes in most newspapers studied. The relationships between the print runs of the newspapers, their ownership and government advertising are shown in Tables 3.10 to 3.12 below. Editors were asked to indicate whether the relevant level of government advertised was 'Regularly', 'Sometimes' or 'Never' in their publication. Hence the three categories are subjective, with 'Sometimes' indicating a judgement that more (or more frequent) advertising would be desirable.

Table 3.10

Print run	Federal Government Advertising				
	Regularly	Sometimes	Never	Don't Know	Total
Less than 500		1	0		3
500 - 1999	5	1	11		17
2000 - 4999	4	16	7		27
5000 - 9999	8	11	5		24
More than 10000	21	7		1	29
TOTAL	38	36	25	1	100

**Frequency of Federal Government advertising in
publications with various print runs**

Source: telephone survey

The answers given by the editors contained some surprises. It is, of course, not unexpected that government advertising should be biased towards newspapers with large print run; that is where the largest audience can be reached. In the survey it was found that all of the newspapers printed in runs of 10,000 copies had at least some Federal Government advertisements in some of their issues (see Table 3.10). Of these 29 newspapers, 21 regularly received Federal Government advertisements. On the other hand, of the 17 newspapers which are printed in very small runs of less than two thousand, five also regularly printed such advertisements. In fact only one quarter of all of the newspapers never advertised for the Federal Government. However, Federal advertising was a contentious issue and that many editors felt that they were unfairly treated (see below).

Table 3.11

Print run	State Government Advertising				
	Regularly	Sometimes	Never	Don't Know	Total
Less than 500			3		3
500 - 1999	2	2	13		17
2000 - 4999	6	11	10		27
5000 - 9999	9	13	2		24
More than 10000	21	7		1	29
TOTAL	38	33	28	1	100

**Frequency of State Government advertising in
publications with various print runs**

Source: telephone survey

The pattern of state government advertising, as reported by those interviewed, follows that for the federal level, with slightly more concentration in the newspapers with larger print runs (see Table 3.11).

Because there is a relationship between the size of print run and the type of ownership of a paper, government advertising tends to be published in company-owned newspapers. Newspapers run by ethnic-community organisations, being of smaller scale, are seldom the medium of such advertising (see Table 3.12).

Table 3.12

Ownership	Advertiser / frequency								
	Regularly		Sometimes		Never		Don't know		Total
	Fed.	State	Fed.	State	Fed.	State	Fed.	State	
Private Individual	8	9	14	12	4	5			26
Company	23	24	8	8	3	2			34
Ethnic Group	3	2	6	7	14	14			23
Other	4	3	8	6	4	7			17
TOTAL	38	38	36	33	25	28	1	1	100

**Frequency of government advertising Federal and State,
in publications with various types of ownership**

Source: telephone survey

Table 3.13

Ownership	Classified Advertising			Total
	Regularly	Sometimes	Never	
Private Individual	14	8	4	26
Company	30	1	3	34
Ethnic Group	6	2	15	23
Other	8	1	8	17
TOTAL	38	36	1	100

**Frequency of classified advertising in
publications of various types of ownership**

Source: telephone survey

Classified advertising was seen by some interviewees as commercially very valuable. Again, as reflected in earlier data, larger scale, company-owned operations most frequently carry classifieds. Only 25% of ethnic community newspapers carry these (see Table 3.13).

The issue of government advertising was very controversial, amongst those interviewed. Both within and between language groups, government funded advertising was seen competitively. It conferred both dollars and status on its recipient publications and was said by some editors to encourage commercial advertising. Editors commented freely on the problems they saw facing their publications. Some objected that governments failed to advertise sufficiently with them, occasionally bitterly complaining that the federal and state governments discriminated against the ethnic press. Private advertising, it was claimed, sometimes depended on favours ('bribery'). The economic difficulties faced by individual and family producers of newspapers were frequently mentioned. Another complaint was that some newspapers misrepresented their print runs to encourage government advertising, although it was not possible to ascertain if this was true.

It is important to understand the sources of advertising revenue because the ethnic press is not directly subsidised by the governments either of Australia or of the countries of origin. The Italian government assists the Italian press in Australia. This is the only exception to the statement above.

In summary, most of the 100 newspapers receive their revenue from a combination of advertising and sales. Subsidies are negligible.

3.5 The Ethnic Press and Its Market

The telephone survey has shown that ethnic newspapers in Australia are provided mainly through market processes or volunteer effort with very little direct government intervention. Indirect assistance is provided by government advertising. The industry is dominated by small firms and there seems to be few barriers to new entrants to the market.

Economic theory suggests that it is unnecessary to analyse individual firms in detail to access the performance of such an industry. Although competition is not perfect, it does exist. Firms that survive must be providing a service that someone is willing to pay for; it may be readers, advertisers or a community group. The emergence rate of new newspapers indicates that there is not a situation of monopoly power operating. In many instances, there is competition between newspapers within cultural groups.

Of more interest than individual firms are the interrelationships between firms and their market. Certain questions arise such as:

- do publications reach their potential readers?
- are the publications sufficiently well established to provide continuous service?
- has the industry responded to changes in the structure of the population in Australia which speaks languages other than English?

These questions can be partly answered by an analysis of the data in the telephone survey. The 'in-depth' survey which forms a later stage of this research has been designed to explore in greater detail some of these economic aspects in 10 selected newspapers.

The market for the ethnic press is created by the non-English speaking populations. The Census of 1986 estimated that there were about 2 million people in Australia who were aged over 4 years and who spoke a language other than English at home. Of the many different languages used, twelve were identified as being spoken by more than 50,000 individuals (see Table 3.14).

To begin to assess whether the ethnic press reaches its potential market, a comparison can be made between the number of different newspapers produced in each language and the number of people who use the language. This analysis has some limitations among which is that it equates titles of daily newspapers with those of weeklies and with monthly newsletters. Nevertheless, as any form of publication provides a communication in the home language and a means of linking migrants of the same

language, it is a useful starting point. Data to make this comparison are provided in Table 3.14.

Table 3.14

LANGUAGE	COLUMN 'A' PERSONS AGED 4yrs. & over	% OF COLUMN 'A'	COLUMN 'B' NO. OF PAPERS	NO. OF PAPERS PER 10,000 SPEAKERS OF LANGUAGE
Italian	405,038	20.0	6	0.148
Greek	267,068	13.2	15*	0.562
Chinese	130,769	6.5	3	0.229
German	109,446	5.4	3	0.274
Arabic/Lebanese	106,038	5.2	7	0.660
Spanish	70,075	3.5	4	0.571
Serbo/Croatian	66,609	3.3	7	1.051
Polish	66,185	3.3	5	0.755
Dutch	61,435	3.0	2	0.326
Vietnamese	59,408	2.9	9	1.515
Maltese	57,837	2.9	2	0.346
French	51,397	2.5	1	0.195
Other:	514,555	25.4	36	0.700
Includes:				
Turkish			7	
Filipino			3	
Hungarian			3	
Jewish			3	
Finnish			2	
Indian/Pakistan			2	
Japanese			2	
Korean			2	
Lithuanian			2	
Portuguese			2	
Cambodian			1	
Czechoslovakian			1	
Iranian/Afghan			1	
Latvian			1	
Palestinian			1	
Romanian			1	
Russian			1	
Ukrainian			1	
TOTAL	2,022,831	100	100	0.494

The distribution of the population using languages other than English and the number of ethnic newspapers

Sources: Column A - Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1986 Census Population and Housing, Australia. Small Area Data, Format CSC 07
Column B - telephone survey

*Including 2 Macedonian newspapers

These data indicate, first, that the ethnolinguistic diversity of the newspapers is extremely wide. Newspapers are produced in no less than 36 languages.

Among the 12 main language groups identified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, four seem to have relatively few publications compared to their size and four have a relatively large number. Italian, Chinese, German and French speakers seem to have relatively few newspapers. Those speaking Arabic/Lebanese, Serbo-Croatian, Polish and Vietnamese seem to have a wider choice. Among the languages spoken by fewer than 50,000 people, it seems that there is a more than proportionate number of newspapers and that Turkish newspapers are particularly common.

A large number of titles may reflect diversity within the language group, in political opinions or in a scattering of where the readers live. To consider the market penetration of the ethnic press in more detail it is worth analysing separately those that are published more than once per week, those that are well established and those that are relatively new. In this way, we can see whether the industry has changed over time and how varied it is in its current form.

Predictably, newspapers with large print runs which are issued more than once per week serve language groups with at least 50,000 residents in Australia (see Table 3.15). However, not all large language groups are served by such frequently published newspapers. Specifically the German, Polish, Dutch, Maltese and French populations could be argued to have an unfulfilled need for local newspapers in their respective languages. It may be that these groups (especially the German, Dutch and French) have less demand in that their needs are being served by English language newspapers, given the length of residence and relatively high education levels of these migrants. Moreover, these groups may lack the confined settlement patterns conducive to a community-oriented minority language publication. The German and French may have access to international editions of newspapers from Germany and France. Clearly, the factors which lead to the establishment of a viable ethnic-language newspaper are historically complex and do not merely reflect the size of potential readerships.

Table 3.15

1.	<u>Language</u>	<u>No. of papers</u>
	Greek	3
	Chinese	2
	Arabic	1
	Italian	1
	Spanish	1
	Vietnamese	1
	Yugoslavian	1
2.	<u>Print run:</u>	range 10,000 to 100,000
3.	<u>Published in Sydney:</u>	90%
4.	<u>Date of establishment:</u>	range - 1913 - 1987
	Established before 1960	4
	1961 - 1980	4
	1981 - 1989	2
5.	<u>Employment of full time workers:</u>	range - 5 - 40

Characteristics of 10 ethnic newspapers printed more than once per week in runs of at least 10,000

Source: telephone survey

It is significant that the large scale ethnic newspapers include both long established and recent publications. Recently arrived migrant groups (e.g. Arabic and Vietnamese linguistic groups) are catered for. This suggests that a social need, and not merely a potential market encourages the growth of relevant publications. It also indicates that the social functions of newspapers serving different ethnolinguistic groupings may be diverse. The value of a newspaper to its readership changes as the relationship between the new minority and the host culture changes.

Newspapers that have been established in Australia for more than thirty years are printed mainly in the languages of migrants who began to arrive in large numbers before and just after the Second World War (see Table 3.16).

Table 3.16

1.	<u>Language</u>	<u>No. of newspapers</u>
	Greek	2
	Polish	2
	German	2
	Italian	2
	Jewish	2
	Chinese	1
	Croatian	1
	Dutch	1
	Finnish	1
	French	1
	Hungarian	1
	Latvian	1
	Lithuanian	1
	Russian	1
	Ukrainian	1
2.	<u>Print run:</u>	range - 500 to 37,000
3.	<u>Published in Sydney:</u>	59%
4.	<u>Frequency of publication:</u>	range - Daily to Monthly
5.	<u>Employment of full time workers:</u>	range - 0 to 40

**Characteristics of 22 ethnic newspapers which were
established over thirty years ago**

Source: telephone survey

In all other respects, the long established press is not significantly different from the rest of the ethnic press. That is, the frequency of publication spreads over the whole range, and employment varies from 0 to 40 full time workers. The fact that some newspapers employ such a large workforce is itself significant, especially given that

the newspapers are long-lived and as such might constitute significant, identifiable 'success stories' in small business ventures within their respective ethnic populations.

The numbers and strength of newer foreign language newspapers indicate the flexibility of the ethnic press in responding to changes in the structure of the foreign language speaking population of Australia, particularly the increasing number of recent migrants from South East Asia (See Table 3.17).

In other structural respects, new newspapers are very like the rest of the ethnic press, confirming that the economic viability of such newspapers is not dependent on long-resident communities. Indeed, the large circulation of Vietnamese newspapers shows how social needs may quickly be translated into culturally and socially important commodities (a point considered in more detail later in this report).

Table 3.17

1.	Language	<u>No. of newspapers</u>
	Filipino	3
	Vietnamese	2
	Japanese	2
	Indian - Pakistan	1
	Macedonian	1
	Polish	1
	Turkish	1
2.	<u>Print run:</u>	range - 1,500 to 24,000
3.	<u>Published in Sydney:</u>	73%
4.	<u>Frequency of publication:</u>	range - daily - every 2 months
5.	<u>Employment of full time workers:</u>	range - 0 to 11

**Characteristics of 11 ethnic newspapers which were
established within the last two years**

Source: telephone survey

The economic model of the ethnic press may give misleading results for some part of the industry. As noted earlier, many newspapers are produced by volunteer labour for ethnic community organisations. These newspapers respond to different stimuli from the market-based press. Table 3.18 shows the main characteristics of newspapers produced by ethnic organisations and suggests some important ways in which they are different from their commercial counterparts.

Table 3.18

1.	<u>Language</u>	<u>No. of newspapers</u>
	Croatian	4
	Polish	3
	Arabic	2
	Hungarian	2
	Italian	2
	Turkish	2
	Vietnamese	2
	Chinese	1
	Dutch	1
	Finnish	1
	Greek	1
	Jewish	1
	Palestinian	1
2.	<u>Print run:</u>	range 330 to 7,000
3.	<u>Published in Sydney:</u>	26%
4.	<u>Date of establishment:</u>	range 'Don't know' to 1985
5.	<u>Employment of full time workers:</u>	range - 0 to 1

Characteristics of 23 newspapers produced by ethnic groups

Source: telephone survey

First, the number of such newspapers produced does not reflect the number of speakers of each language in Australia. This is in contrast to the frequently published, large scale ethnic press which requires a high level of demand to be viable. Second, print runs are small, as is the employment of paid staff.

However, there is no particular bias in the time period when ethnic groups established their newspapers, which indicates that for some groups, community-originated communications may remain important regardless of the availability of commercial newspapers in their own or in the English language. The sense of belonging to a unified ethnic group or sub-group that this may reflect suggests that such newspapers may be fulfilling community in ways that are not appropriate to the more commercially based newspapers.

In addition, it appears that 'community produced' newspapers, unlike others, are not predominantly Sydney based. Only one quarter of newspapers produced by ethnic organisations are published in Sydney. Most originate in Melbourne. The contrasts between Sydney and Melbourne are a subject of much discussion in Australia. Usually, Sydney is regarded as more commercially aggressive and Melbourne is more community minded. Whatever the truth of such generalisations, it does appear that in creating an ethnic press the migrant community has conformed with the host culture. The commercial part of the ethnic newspaper industry is dominated by Sydney newspapers, (see Table 3.15) the noncommercial, small-scale, community-based ethnic press originates mainly in Melbourne.

In providing details of a press that contains both new and long established newspapers, and which is both commercial and non-profit oriented, the telephone survey suggests that the industry has considerable flexibility with which to respond to its market. It is more difficult to ask quantitative questions about the content of newspapers. However, the survey did investigate the source of news items published - whether they were reproduced from other publications or not, to indicate generally the degree to which the newspapers produced their own material for publication.

Table 3.19

% Content Reproduced from Other Newspapers	No. of Ethnic Newspapers
None	26
Some	33
About half	25
Most	3
All	3
Could not say	10
TOTAL	100

**Newspapers publishing items directly taken from
other newspaper sources**

As can be seen from Table 3.19, most newspapers rely on material which is not produced by their own journalists. Some rely heavily or exclusively on reprinted or translated items from other publications. This implies that, for many newspapers, highly professional standards of journalism may not be sought. In many cases the newspapers lack locally-oriented and original journalism. Tenezakis (1983) found evidence of readers' criticisms of this in the Greek and Arab language press. In this respect, ethnic newspapers resemble many provincial and suburban newspapers published in English rather than the metropolitan dailies and weeklies.

It should not be assumed simply from the longevity of some publications that the ethnic press is consistently profitable. Many newspapers clearly operate close to the limit of commercial viability, if editors' comments are to be believed. The reliance on family members and on voluntary help supports this claim, as does the turnover in titles referred to earlier in this report. One paper with a print run of 2,500 - 3,000 had recently ceased publication for three months due to a prospective equipment repair bill of \$1500. Facts such as these suggest a picture of difficulty and struggle for at least some of the smaller, individually owned newspapers. As we have seen, many of the smallest

newspapers are not produced under commercial conditions but rather are a result of community effort.

It is necessary, therefore, to qualify the generalisations reported in the quantitative summary of the telephone survey. The economies of each paper may be unique. Certainly, cessation of one advertising source, equipment breakdown or personal illness may be sufficient to close some newspapers at least temporarily. Yet others employ up to 40 workers, and print newspapers of 40-50 pages regularly using the latest printing technology. The 'ethnic press' is very varied, and its economic basis and viability depend on which segment of the industry one examines. It is clear that many newspapers are published despite economic difficulties, not because of potentially high commercial returns. Unlike the mainstream press (including regional and suburban newspapers) the ethnic newspapers are not always simply or principally commercial enterprises.

More than three quarters of all newspapers were printed by contract presses, with 20% produced in-house. The effects of introducing new printing technologies during the recent past were very positive. Of those affected, more than 60% cited increased efficiency or several benefits, 10% indicated they were more cost effective, and only 2% saw disadvantages. Print technologies have changed radically during the past decade. They are likely to facilitate rather than impede the production of newspapers with small print-runs.

The establishment of a new newspaper by an interested entrepreneur appears to be relatively easy, given the viability of various scales of operation and the range of readerships catered for by existing newspapers, though this is not to suggest that commercial viability can be assumed without access to consistent commercial and government advertising. Still, the success of recent newspapers serving 'South East Asian' constituencies is impressive.

3.6 Conclusions

The telephone survey shows that the ethnic press is a diverse industry, which may be described according to the following variables:

- geographical and historical features of ethnolinguistic group(s) served by a publication.
- frequency and scale of its publication; print runs and readership.
- commercial/non-commercial structure; ownership.
- nature of advertising, and other revenue sources.

The industry does seem to meet the needs of its varied potential market(s). The market is served in two rather different ways. Where demand is of sufficient scale to make market-based supply viable, frequently issued publications are available. Where demand is very small, volunteer workers and community ethnic groups issue publications. In between these extremes is a mix of publications which vary in frequency of issue, size of print run and level of employment of paid labour.

It seems that newspapers of all types have been established continually during the post war period. The main difference between new and long-established newspapers lies in the language groups served and to some degree, reflects the changing structure of the migrant population.

The economic aspect will be explored further in the indepth interviews with the editors of ten selected newspapers.

4.0 THE CONTENT OF ETHNIC NEWSPAPERS

The social and economic functions of any commercial or 'community' newspaper are a reflection of, and are reflected in, what each actually publishes - the quality and quantity of its news, information, advertising, editorial pronouncements.

Without assuming that what is read in a newspaper has simple, direct effects on readers, newspapers can be said to mediate between social interests, groups, individuals and between bureaucracies, business, cultural institutions (including sporting) and the various 'publics' which they address as their consumers. Hence, much of what is published in major daily English-language newspapers is not 'news' in any narrow sense, but consists of a variety of genres of socially-significant meanings, information, services, entertainments, advertisements. Much of this originates in government bureaucracies, in the P.R. departments of corporations large and small, in news releases by politicians or the police. Journalists process these sources of information, elaborate them through headlines, photographs and rewriting. But newspapers large and small produce 'stories', 'features' and comment within the routine cycles of news production within which independent, self-initiated or investigative reporting and feature writing are exceptions. It follows that 'news' is only one fraction of what newspapers publish. The other content may be equally important to readers, providing cultural experiences, useful information, diversion, advice and warnings as well as advertising for services and goods.

4.1 Objectives

The purpose of the content analysis of ten selected newspapers is to indicate the degree to which each publishes material of these diverse types, the profile of content which each brings to its readers. Specifically, the amount and scope of news, its subject matter and the extent and nature of advertising are the focus of the following content analysis.

The content analysis indicates how the central link in the process being investigated actually mediates between the readers/users of the newspapers and the society in which both act. That is, it describes, albeit in general terms, the nature of the newspapers' modes of communication, specifying what, if not how, they communicate to their respective readers.

The aims of the content analysis, therefore were:

- To provide a profile of what each of ten selected ethnic newspapers published: their priorities or agenda in terms of the amount and nature of news, features, entertainment, information and various types of advertising.
- To compare the published content of newspapers published for different ethnic readerships, under different commercial or industrial conditions, from Sydney and Melbourne.
- To describe the range of ethnic newspapers in terms of their published content and to relate this to previously published, more detailed content analyses.

4.2 Method

Content analysis is a relatively blunt instrument for dissecting the meaning and significance of a newspaper's published texts. Nevertheless, it offers an objective overview of the profile of material of different types published by one or a class of newspapers.

The newspapers chosen represent different aspects of the most significant variables which distinguish ethnolinguistic Australian communities as well as the scale and the purposes served by relevant newspapers. The ten newspapers selected for detailed analysis are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Title	Language/ Ethnic Orientation	Sydney/ Melbourne	Print Run	Frequency	Price
Tygodnik Polski (16p)	Polish	Melbourne	5,000	weekly	\$1.00
Emek (Labour) (8p)	Turkish	Melbourne	2,500	weekly	\$0.80
Nhan Quyen (40p)	Vietnamese	Melbourne	6,000	weekly	\$0.80
Il Globo (42p)	Italian	Melbourne	60,000	weekly	\$0.80-\$1.00
Neos Kosmos (34p)	Greek	Melbourne	28,000	2/week	\$0.80
La Fiamma (32p)	Italian	Sydney	35,000	2/week	\$0.80-\$1.00
O Portugues na Australia (24p)	Portuguese	Sydney	8,000	weekly	\$1.20
Yeni Vatan (12p)	Turkish	Sydney	4,500	weekly	Free
Chieu Duong (60p)	Vietnamese	Sydney	100,000	daily (6 days)	\$0.80
Al Bairak (16p)	Lebanese	Sydney	35,000	weekly	\$0.80

The ten newspapers selected for detailed content analysis

Although only 10% of all the newspapers surveyed in the comprehensive telephone survey were selected for further study, these publications include much of the diversity represented by the wider industry. The ten newspapers cannot be described as completely 'representative', and they have not been chosen randomly. Instead, they were selected to illustrate variation on as many variables as possible: ethnic group orientation; circulation; price; geographical distribution; place of publication; frequency of publication (though restricted to newspapers issued at least once per week); broadly versus narrowly oriented; and 'professional', company owned newspapers versus community or individually owned.

The ten include five from each of Melbourne and Sydney; one Vietnamese paper from each city, and with vastly different print runs; two established, large circulation Italian newspapers, a small Polish paper from Melbourne and a comparable Portuguese paper from Sydney; a Turkish voluntarily-produced, politically committed publication from Melbourne and a larger circulation, free Turkish paper printed in Sydney; a Sydney-based Lebanese and a Melbourne-produced Greek paper with comparable print runs.

4.2.1 Dimensions of Content Analysed

One issue of each of the ten newspapers was analysed quantitatively on three variables:

1. The 'scope' of news items: whether 'World', 'Homeland' (i.e. of the language group of the paper) or 'Australian' news.
2. News category:
 - 'Hard News': reports of current events, answering the question of what happened to whom?, when?, where?, and features backgrounding current issues in politics, economics, crime, international relations etc.
 - 'Soft (or 'Other') News': human interest, personalities, humorous, or other items not dealing with economics, politics, crime, welfare etc.
 - Editorial comment: all leader editorials, letters or other by-lined 'opinion'.
 - Sport.
 - Business: including any special sections devoted to business/finance (but not-economics reporting aimed at general readership - see 'hard' news, above).
 - Women's/Children: special sections or features specifically addressing these groups.
 - Entertainment: items about entertainment, culture, social events; including TV programs, recipes, games.
 - Religion: items or special sections/features focused on religion.
 - Health: items offering advice, detailing lifestyle, occupational aspects of health.

- Education: items canvassing education issues, including E.S.L. and adult education.

3. Advertising:

- Commercial/business: advertising for goods and services.
- Government/bureaucracy advertisements (e.g. for employment, social services), whether State or Federal.
- Classified advertising.

All categories are mutually exclusive and exhaustive within each dimension. The content categories are very general, compared with, for instance, Tenezakis' more detailed and elaborate system. However, in the absence of funding for extensive translation services or multi-lingual research assistance, it was necessary to categorise newspaper content in these limited ways. The procedure allows judgements about the nature of each paper's coverage of areas of significance to its readers, as well as an indication of the extent of government advertising (an issue raised by editors/proprietors in the general telephone survey).

4.2.2 Units of Content Analysed

One issue of each newspaper was analysed for its pattern of content according to the above categories. As newspapers use various formats, print faces, layout etc. a 'unit of content' needs to be selected which represents, firstly, the presence of an item of a particular kind and, secondly, its magnitude. However, there is no simple relationship between the amount (size) of coverage of an issue or event and its significance. So the numerical detail of area or frequency of a type of item are only indicative of the importance attached to it by the paper in question. Secondly, area and frequency may not be highly correlated. A lot of pages may be devoted to, say a travel feature in the back of a paper, but several small prominent items on pages one or three may be more socially or politically important, and more frequently read (e.g. items on proposed Australian taxation scale changes). An index of area of published item may not be consistent with one of frequency. As there is no mechanical solution to this measurement problem, an index was devised which allows relevant questions to be addressed within the particular study, regardless of direct comparability with other studies. In the present case, it was considered necessary to give weight to the number of items published and, secondarily, to their relative salience as indicated (however

imperfectly) by their area (as a proportion of a page of their respective publication). Hence items were classified as:

- 1) up to 25% of page area
- 2) 26% - 50% of page area
- 3) 51% - 75% of page area
- 4) 76% - 100% of page area

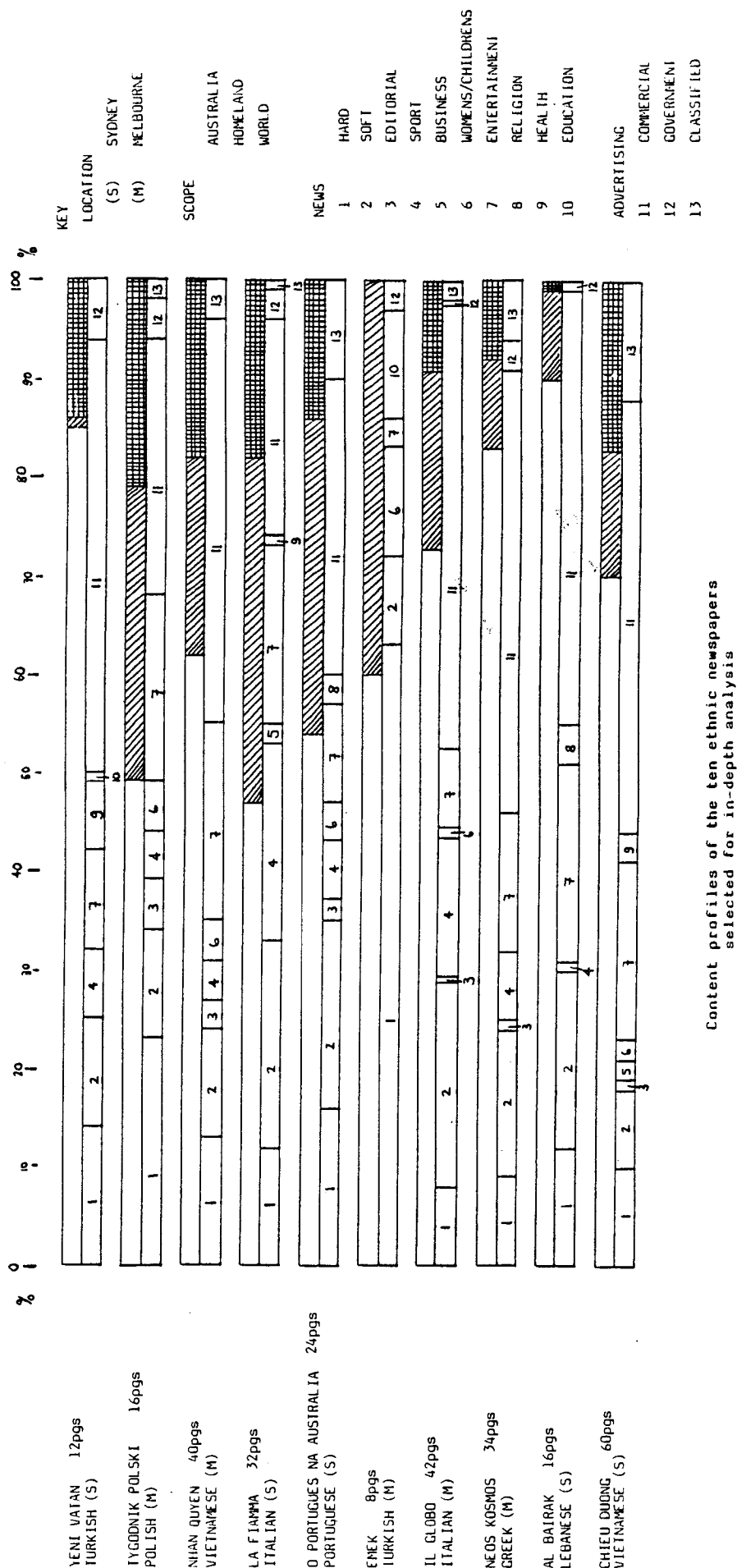
We could refer to a 'content unit' as any published item of up to a quarter of a page. Two units would indicate either two such items or a larger item of more than one quarter but less than half a page in area. The data are presented in terms of such content units.

This procedure 'weights' the data's graphic representation of content towards smaller items, but thereby reflects that an item appeared, even if it was not large in area. The expensive, time-consuming nature of detailed content analysis based on translations of every word of text could not be undertaken for the purposes of this report. The content analysis, however, should be seen in relation to other, more detailed data in Tenezakis, for example. It does provide a meaningful indication of the profile of content in the respective newspapers studied. Its purpose is essentially comparative between newspapers.

4.3 Results

A graphic overview of the different content of the ten newspapers is presented in Figure 4.1. In reading this figure, it must be remembered that only one issue of each paper was analysed, and that 'scope' refers to all copy, including advertising, which is oriented towards one of the three respective categories. Therefore 'Australian' scope includes Australian advertising (cf. say advertising for travel to 'homeland'). An indication of the 'scope' of news copy is best gained by deducting the amount of advertising from the amount of Australian material generally. As most newspapers are comprised of between 30-50% advertisements, the amount of non-advertising 'Australian' copy is much lower than the figure initially suggests.

Figure 4.1



4.3.1 'News' - Topics Covered

As a proportion of content, 'hard' news is not concentrated in the larger newspapers or in the newspapers with larger circulations. *La Fiamma* was relatively low in this category of 'serious' news compared to, say *Emek*. However, it is the range of items as well as their frequency which may be significant for readers. Here, great variation can be observed.

Generally, smaller newspapers cover fewer types of news. Most had no items or very few items on Business issues, Education, Health or issues pertaining directly to women or children's interests. Most included some editorial opinion, however. Sport was not covered in the issues studied of *Chieu Duong* and *Emek*, but was variously reported in other newspapers. However, the incidence of sports news in newspapers published more frequently than weekly should not be judged from these data. Larger newspapers will report on sport more heavily in some issues given its cyclic (weekly) occurrence.

Entertainment was prominent in all but *Emek*, suggesting that newspapers are used as a cultural and social information resource by their communities. Most newspapers included considerable 'soft' news, which in most cases outweighed more serious 'hard' news. In assessing this finding, however, it should be remembered that mainstream 'tabloid' and many 'quality' newspapers include a considerable amount of human interest and other 'soft' news, as well as a large proportion of what has been classified as 'entertainment' in this study. However, *Chieu Duong*, for instance, prints many pages of fiction, providing a magazine for use as a source of Vietnamese language entertainment in a country where alternative sources of such diversion may be very difficult to find.

These profiles suggest that the information and cultural value of different publications will be very varied. In particular, the use of such publications as sources of significant, current Australian news or as sources of socially necessary information on health and education will vary greatly from one newspaper to another. Should readers rely exclusively on these newspapers they may, in some cases, be relatively poorly informed about Australian society generally and about services and lifestyle related information. This is borne out by comparing the priority and proportion of coverage given to particular categories of news in the issues studied.

Newspapers serving some ethnolinguistic communities published very little 'hard' news, and there was great variation in the proportion of a publication devoted to this (although the amount in absolute terms is not necessarily indicated by this statistic). Some newspapers had a much higher ratio of 'hard' to 'soft' news (see Table 4.2), while there was great variability in coverage of specific issues such as Health, Women's Issues, Education, and Business (see Table 4.3), with most newspapers giving little or no coverage to some of these issues.

Table 4.2

HARD NEWS			SOFT NEWS			ENTERTAINMENT		
Rank	Paper	%	Rank	Paper	%	Rank	Paper	%
1	Emek	63	1=	Il Globo	21	1=	Nhan Quyen	20
2	Tygodnik	23	1=	La Fiamma	21	1=	Al Bairak	20
3	O Port.na Aust	16	3	O Port.na Aust	19	3	Tygodnik	19
4	Yeni Vatan	14	4	Al Bairak	18	4=	La Fiamma	18
5	Nhan Quyen	13	5	Neos Kosmos	15	4=	Chieu Duong	18
6=	Al Bairak	12	6=	Tygodnik	11	6	Neos Kosmos	14
6=	La Fiamma	12	6=	Nhan Quyen	11	7=	Yeni Vatan	10
8	Chieu Duong	10	6=	Yeni Vatan	11	7=	O Port.na Aust	10
9	Neos Kosmos	9	9	Emek	9	9	Il Globo	8
10	Il Globo	8	10	Chieu Duong	8	10	Emek	3

**Coverage of hard news, soft news and entertainment
by the ten newspapers as percentage of each newspaper**

Table 4.3

BUSINESS			WOMENS/CHILDREN			HEALTH		
Rank	Paper	%	Rank	Paper	%	Rank	Paper	%
1=	La Fiamma	2	1	Emek	11	1	Yeni Vatan	7
1=	Chieu Duong	2	2	Tygodnik	5	2	Chieu Duong	3
			3=	Nhan Quyen	4	3	La Fiamma	1
			3=	O Port.na Aust	4			
			5	Chieu Duong	2			
			6	Il Globo	1			

**Coverage of specific categories
of content by various newspapers**

4.3.2 Scope of Coverage

By considering the scope of news independently of its precise type and topic, it can be seen that all newspapers predominantly print 'Australian' news and advertising. All but one included some 'world news', however limited this may be in the publications with smaller print runs. *Yeni Vatan* published very little 'homeland' news, although all other newspapers devoted higher proportions to this domain. Coverage reflects the purposes served by the paper however, not just their scale or ethnic orientation as is indicated by comparing the Sydney with the Melbourne Turkish newspapers.

Table 4.4

SCOPE (RANKINGS)								
AUSTRALIA			HOMELAND			WORLD		
Rank	Paper	%	Rank	Paper	%	Rank	Paper	%
1	Al Bairak	90	1	Emek	40	1	Tygodnik	21
2	Yeni Vatan	85	2	La Fiamma	35	2=	Nhan Quyen	18
3	Neos Kosmos	83	3	O Port.naAus t	32	2=	La Fiamma	18
4	Il Globo	73	4	Tygodnik	30	4	Chieu Duong	17
5	Chieu Duong	70	5	Nhan Quyen	20	5=	Yeni Vatan	14
6	Nhan Quyen	62	6	Il Globo	18	5=	O Port.naAust	14
7	Emek	60	7	Chieu Duong	13	7	Il Globo	9
8	O Port.na Aust	54	8=	Neos Kosmos	9	8	Neos Kosmos	8
9	Tygodnik	49	8=	Al Bairak	9	9	Al Bairak	1
10	La Fiamma	47	10	Yeni Vatan	1	10	Emek	0

Ranking of ten newspapers according to their proportional coverage of news about Australia, Homeland, the World

Some newspapers focus strongly on Australian news, even the Sydney Lebanese *Al Bairak* which nevertheless devoted 9% of coverage to (potentially very newsworthy) homeland issues. World news was generally 10-20% of coverage, which is high by the standards of many English-language newspapers, but generally lower than the coverage of homeland news. That different newspapers may provide quite different services to the same language group is indicated by comparing *La Fiamma* with *Il Globo* and *Emek* with *Yeni Vatan*. The two Turkish newspapers have quite different profiles of coverage although both are small weekly newspapers with limited resources and print runs.

The obvious conclusion from Table 4.4 is that some newspapers serve to bring Australia to their non-English readers, others to report more the homeland and world news. Clearly, the functions served by newspapers with such different orientations will be distinct.

4.3.3 Advertising

All ten publications carried some advertising. All but the Vietnamese newspapers included some government advertising in the issue sampled. Although there was not a high proportion of advertising, it is significant that even the smallest (Turkish) paper did include at least unpaid advertising. Commercial advertising was prominent in all but *Emek*, with *Chieu Duong*, *Il Globo*, *Nhan QuYen* and *Yeni Vatan* publishing a high proportion of commercial publicity. The large Vietnamese paper, for instance, included many advertisements for electronic goods, perhaps consistent with its extensive coverage of 'entertainment' issues in its news sections. Size of publication is predictably related to proportion of advertising, but the relationship is not as strong as might have been expected. Print run may be more significant, but even on this variable, there are anomalies. *Yeni Vatan* (12 pages, print run: 4,500) attracts a large proportion of commercial advertising. Six newspapers included classified column advertisements, with *Chieu Duong*, again publishing a large proportion of these.

The distribution of government advertisements (i.e. advertisements for services, jobs etc.) can be seen in the table below which compares the proportions of a paper's advertising copy, ranking the newspapers for each type of advertisement distinguished in the study.

Table 4.5

COMMERCIAL			CLASSIFIEDS			GOVERNMENT		
Rank	Paper	%	Rank	Paper	%	Rank	Paper	%
1=	Il Globo	45	1	Chieu Duong	12	1	Yeni Vatan	6
1=	Neos Kosmos	45	2	O Port.na Aust	10	2	Tygodnik	4
3=	Al Bairak	44	3	Neos Kosmos	6	3=	Emek	3
3=	Yeni Vatan	44	4	Nhan Quyen	4	3=	Neos Kosmos	3
3=	Chieu Duong	44	5	La Fiamma	3	5=	La Fiamma	1
6	Nhan Quyen	41	6=	Tygodnik	2	5=	Al Bairak	1
7	O Port.na Aust	30	6=	Il Globo	2	7	Il Globo	0.5
8	Tygodnik	26						
9	La Fiamma	22						
10	Emek	0						

Ranking of ten newspapers according to their proportional coverage of types of advertising

In the six years since Tenezakis found that less than 1% of ethnic newspapers copy consisted of government funded advertising, little seems to have changed. The questions of the need for such advertising revenue, and the social function of advertising for social services, employment, health services etc. will be considered in the following sections. Here it can be noted that, quantitatively, such advertising is a very small part of ethnic newspapers of all types.

Table 4.5 does indicate the very high proportions of some newspapers devoted to commercial advertising, with more than half the newspapers carrying more than 40% of their copy as paid advertisements.

The commercial media can generally only survive economically if they can consistently 'sell' their readers/viewers/ listeners to advertisers. The ethnic press would appear to be generally successful in achieving this in relation to commercial advertising for goods and services, although not necessarily for government-sponsored advertising.

4.4 Conclusions

Ethnic newspapers defy easy generalisation about their content and, therefore, about their purposes and their uses and values to their respective readers. Some relate to their readerships principally through soft news and entertainment, with a high proportion of advertisements (e.g. *Chieu Duong*). Others provide information and news with little or no advertising or 'soft' news (e.g. *Emek*). Larger, long-established Greek or Italian newspapers resemble a metropolitan daily in their news mix and in their attempt to reach a general readership. They are less parochial, although not necessarily as sophisticated and 'international' as even Australian 'quality' newspapers.

All newspapers appear to lack resources for producing original, investigative, interpretive, topical news features of the kind that constitute one significant part of all major newspapers. Such features which contextualise current economic, political or social issues are a sign of a paper going beyond merely reporting major events. In areas such as health, education, economics (e.g. taxation and its implications), the environment, and social welfare issues, features which relate detail and background to current situations can constitute a most significant resource for readers, especially readers who rely on the paper exclusively. They allow readers to be genuinely informed about their ethnic and the wider culture.

The content of the newspapers studied suggests that most are conservative, keeping homeland issues and 'soft' social news to the fore. This may assist in continually reinforcing a sense of ethnolinguistic identity, but it may do so largely by limiting readers experience to a narrow range of news and cultural sources rather than by confronting Australian society generally with the cultural distinctiveness and vitality of the ethnic group's situation and aspirations. 'Homeland news' may remain

unconnected to the readers' current cultural needs, being a mixture of nostalgia and increasingly irrelevant material. On the other hand, the soft news and entertainment functions of the ethnic press could serve to reinforce and reinvest distinct, authentic cultural definitions for individuals and for groups. The quantity of the various content categories analysed does not itself, indicate which, if either, of these alternatives is the case. However, the next phase of this study seeks to assess such qualitative questions, among others.

The quality and content of these general content profiles will be considered further in relation to the comments of editors/proprietors and of readers and non-readers in the third section of this report.

5.0 INTERVIEWS: NEWSPAPER STAFF, READERS AND OPINION LEADERS

5.1 Objectives and Methods

The interviews and discussion groups formed the third aspect of research into the ethnic print media. To complement the telephone survey of 100 newspaper editors and the content analysis of the ten selected newspapers, opinions and attitudes were elicited from editors and journalists of the ten newspapers, and from various people from the language groups who are consumers of the the ten newspapers, including people prominent within these groups whom we will call 'opinion leaders'. The questions discussed are presented in Appendix II.

The major objectives were to find out:

- the perceived roles of the newspapers.
- how well the newspapers were seen as carrying out these roles.
- in which respects the newspapers were seen as being deficient/effective.
- how the newspapers could be improved.

5.2 Findings: Newspaper Staff

The editors and the journalists who were interviewed from the ten selected newspapers had very similar views regarding their target group of readers.

Ethnic newspapers attempt to serve people who are restricted by their lack of English or who prefer to read in a language other than English. The most important reason for reading the newspaper is overwhelmingly its linguistic familiarity rather than its content, although content too is very significant.

In populations which have had a relatively long history of migration, the major group the newspaper caters for is the older migrant - the Italian, Greek and Polish people who migrated to Australia in the 1950s. They were mostly brought in as unskilled labour, were relatively poorly educated and many of them even now do not read English. Their children, known as the second generation, do read English, but are also believed to read the ethnic press because it does contain different information and because they enjoy reading in the language used at home. The editors, the journalists and the other staff interviewed tended to agree that readership among the third generation is minimal.

The situation is quite different for the groups of more recently arrived migrant. For example, the Vietnamese newspaper targets all generations since only the young children have been born in Australia.

It is interesting to note that while some of the newspapers chosen for the field study had a relatively small catchment population, the sum total of all the groups serviced by the ten selected newspapers may be as high as one million people. The editors were asked if they knew the approximate numbers of people from their ethnic group in their state, and the results are as follows:

Table 5.1

Language Groups	Estimated Number in the Community	
	NSW	VIC
Greek	N/A	280,000
Lebanese	250,000	N/A
Italian	65,000	120,000
Vietnamese	62,000	80,000
Turkish	50,000	30,000
Polish	N/A	32,000
Portuguese	18,000	N/A
TOTAL	445,000	492,000

**Estimates of populations in language
groups selected for study**

While it is appreciated that these numbers represent whole community numbers and are by no means the numbers of readers, it is significant that the ten newspapers under study penetrate into communities which include up to a million people.

The editors' assessment of the degree of coverage their newspapers had in their communities varied considerably as can be seen in the table below. At one end of the scale the editor of the Vietnamese newspaper in Melbourne assessed that about one quarter of the Vietnamese community read his newspaper, *Nhan Quyen*, and at the other end the editor of the Greek newspaper in Melbourne quoted an independent study which claimed that 82% of the Greek people in Melbourne read *Neos Kosmos*.

Table 5.2

Language Group	SYDNEY		MELBOURNE	
	Newspaper	Approx % of community who read the paper	Newspaper	Approx % of community who read the paper
Greek	N/A	N/A	Neos Kosmos	82
Italian	La Fiamma	50	Il Globo	Nearly All
Vietnamese	Chieu Duong	60-70	Nhan Quyen	25
Portuguese	O Portugues na Australia	50	N/A	N/A
Polish	N/A	N/A	Tygodnik Polski	35-40
Turkish	Yeni Vatan	25-30	Emek	30
Lebanese	Al Bairak	30	N/A	N/A

Estimates by editors of readership of selected newspapers in their communities

5.2.1 The Goals of the Ethnic Newspapers

All ten editors who were interviewed tended to have similar aims in publishing their newspapers. These were, in summary:

- to inform people about current events in the home country.
- to inform people about current events in Australia.
- to inform people about current events in the world.
- to stimulate cohesion within the ethnic community.
- to inform people of their rights and responsibilities under Australian laws and regulations.

Additional aims from individual editors included:

- playing a role in keeping their language alive.
- being a bridge between the ethnic community and the Australian community at large.
- helping migrants to adapt to the Australian way of life.
- improving the image that the ethnic community has of itself.
- acting as a referral service by printing the names and phone numbers of useful contacts for people over a wide range of services.

Most editors argued that their newspapers satisfied all sub-groups in their communities, usually with some qualifications. Different groups were recognised, such as left wing and right wing political groups, the politically aware, the poorly educated and the well educated. The special needs of some of these groups were met by having a range of articles or by having sections for special groups, such as women's pages or a few pages in English for the children of migrants. When asked if the newspaper catered for a particular political persuasion, the most common response was that the newspaper was 'middle of the road'. One claimed to be apolitical, saying that political articles only upset his people who tended to become aroused and agitated on political issues, so he only printed good news from the home land, such as the opening of a new dam or new trade opportunities. Three editors described their newspapers as being anti-Communist, and one said that the newspaper was left of centre. Four of the editors mentioned that the attitudes and values of the major advertisers were important when considering the attitudes and values expressed in the newspaper, as the private advertising clients were the financial backbone of the newspaper. As one editor put it succinctly,

If you're defunct, you are not free.

On the whole the journalists agreed with the editors as to the aims of the newspapers and how well those aims were being fulfilled. There were various levels of frustration expressed, especially by those who were working primarily as translators rather than as reporters.

Frustrations also centred around having to satisfy the needs of the older generation in terms of both content and attitudes, around having to satisfy the major advertisers, and having to cater to the idiosyncratic views of the editor, especially in situations where the editor was also the proprietor of the newspaper.

Every journalist interviewed saw his or her role as being different from being a journalist on an Australian newspaper or on a newspaper in their country of origin. They saw themselves as being lower paid, having less professional status, having less opportunities to specialise, and being able to attend less press conferences and news happenings. However, several expressed a special satisfaction of working with a 'mission' or in an area which carried with it an implicit ideological gratification.

During the field work, there was one incident which highlighted for the researcher some of the difficulties of the language barrier. One editor said that there were no journalists on his newspaper, only a production assistant. When she was casually engaged in conversation she happened to mention that she translates articles from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, writes copy from telexes from the home country, and chooses which articles should go in before she does the layout for the spreadsheets. The editor chooses the articles for the front page.

It would appear that while the job title of journalist has considerable consistency of meaning in reference to the Australian press, there are people employed in the ethnic print industry who are called journalists, and who do translating and layouts, and there are people who are called production assistants who write and select articles.

5.2.2 Major Constraints

When the editors were asked what their most important constraint was, three of the ten said they felt there was nothing which prevented them from fulfilling the

objectives of the newspaper. Some recalled times past when there were long delays for news from the homeland, and thankfully smiled at their telex printers and facsimile machines. Two said 'time' and two said 'money' were their greatest restrictions.

One editor said that it cost a lot of money to get news out of his country which was not the 'government line' news. Two editors said that their greatest problem was in recruiting professional staff such as translators, and one editor described the lack of interest from his home country about people living in Australia, so that it was difficult for him actually to get the news.

Similar responses were obtained when the editors were asked what they would do if they were producing their 'ideal' newspaper. Most of them felt that if they had more resources they could produce a newspaper of higher journalistic quality, they could write more copy rather than just translate or do a cut and paste from overseas newspapers. They could do what they try to do now, but do more of it and do it better. In particular, one editor said that he would like to be able to provide on the job training for his journalists. Another said that he would like to be able to open the office to a wide range of community members to write articles for the newspaper. Several said that they wished that they were less dependent on advertising for their economic viability and consequently more able to print a wider range of perspectives on the news. Only one editor saw his newspaper as an instrument for preserving his language in Australia.

5.2.3 The Ethnic Press as Historical Record

All of the editors who were interviewed could see their newspapers as contributing in a significant way to the written history of their communities in Australia. Several editors sent copies of their newspapers to university and government libraries. As one editor said:

It is an everchanging record. As the community changes, so does the newspaper.

Two editors commented that the ethnic press is more than a record of the history of the community in Australia. The press itself can be an instrument of change. For example, the Italian press played a significant role in gaining transferability of pensions from

Italy to Australia, and the Lebanese press has played a part in lobbying the Australian Government for more time for Lebanese programs on SBS television.

5.2.4 Major Expenses and Major Sources of Revenue

The question of the economic basis of the individual newspapers which were selected for study was closely tied in with the essential reason for their existence in the first place. Most are businesses. As we have seen they are owned by individuals or companies. While there is an element of carrying out a 'mission' or fulfilling a set of ideologies, the newspapers exist primarily to make money for their owners. These newspapers are reliant on advertising from businesses in their own communities and from the wider business community. The most sought after prize is, however, advertising from state and federal government departments. Not only are they valued for their revenue, but they also give the newspaper the status of being perceived by government as the leading newspaper in a particular community. Such status is a significant drawcard for commercial advertising, with advantages over its competitors in terms of revenue and circulation.

Only two newspapers in the sample of ten were not run on a commercial basic. The Polish newspaper in Melbourne is run by the ethnic association, and the editor, who almost single handedly puts the newspaper together, confesses to working as 'a social service'. As he said:

I am not here to make money. If they paid me for all my time they could not afford it.

The second newspaper which was not run on a commercial basis is the Turkish newspaper in Melbourne. Most of its funds come from the trade union movement, and most of the work on the newspaper is done on a volunteer basis from a committee of a community centre. It was the only newspaper which had no paid advertising at all.

In this context it is particularly interesting to note the major sources of revenue, as related by the editors of the ten newspapers under study. These are summarised in Table 5.3. Editors were asked to rate the five most common sources of revenue.

Five out of the ten editors rated advertisements from their ethnic business communities as the most important source of revenue, with an additional four rating it in second place. Sales of newspapers and advertising from the general business community seem to be significant sources of revenue for most newspapers, with classified ads and government ads being the least significant categories. Two editors mentioned that there was a high level of bad debts from private classified advertising and that it was not economic to chase up bad debts.

When asked about their major expenses, printing and newspaper were perceived as the major cost items, followed by labour and distribution costs. Some editors volunteered extra costs such as the running of a car and the high cost of inner city rents, but, with one exception, these were not perceived as being as important as the three major categories mentioned above (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.3

Language Group	SYDNEY						MELBOURNE					
	Newspaper	Sources of Revenue					Newspaper	Sources of Revenue				
		Sales	Ethnic Business	General Business	Classified	Govt.		Sales	Ethnic Business	General Business	Classified	Govt.
Italian	La Fiamma	4	2	3	1	5	Il Globo	2	1	1	3	4
Vietnamese	Chieu Duong	1	2	3	-	4	Nhan Quyen	3	1	4	5	4
Turkish	Yeni Vatan	-	1	2	-	3	Emek	Very Little	-	-	-	-
Portuguese	O Portugueses na Australia	3	1	2	5	4	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Lebanese	Al Bairak	4	2	3	-	1	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Greek	N/A	-	-	-	-	-	Neos Kosmos	4	1	2	3	5
Polish	N/A	-	-	-	-	-	Tygodnik Polski	1	2	4	5	3

Major sources of revenue (ranked on a scale 1-5)

Table 5.4

Language Group	SYDNEY					MELBOURNE				
	Newspaper	Cost Items			Newspaper	Cost Items				
		Labour	Printing Paper	Distribution	Other		Labour	Printing Paper	Distribution	Other
Vietnamese	Chieu Duong	1	2	3	-	Il Globo	1	2	3	-
Turkish	Yeni Vatan	3	1	4	2 (car)	N/A	-	-	-	-
Lebanese	Al Bairak	3	1	2	-	Tygodnik Polski	1	2	2	3
Greek	N/A	-	-	-	-	Nhan Quyen	2	1	3	-
Italian	La Fiamma	1	2	3	-	Emek	3	1	2	-
Portuguese	O Portugues na Australia	1	2	-	-	N/A	-	-	-	-
Polish	N/A	-	-	-	-	Neos Kosmos	2	1	3	-

Major Cost Items (ranked on a scale 1-3)

No distinct patterns emerged when the cost factors and the sources of revenue were compared with factors such as the number of employees, print runs or ownership.

When editors were asked whether they had much difficulty in obtaining advertisements from commercial businesses, most replied that they had salespeople, either employed by the newspaper, or employed on a commission basis. The editors who stated that the advertisers came to them were those who appeared to have a virtual monopoly for a particular ethnic group in Sydney or in Melbourne, e.g. the Italian newspapers and the Greek newspaper in Melbourne (which are relatively large in terms of their circulation), and the only Polish newspaper in Melbourne. Most of the editors deal through advertising brokers to obtain the government advertisements.

When asked if it was difficult for them to survive as a newspaper, the editors of the three smallest newspapers agreed. The editors of both Turkish newspapers thought so for very different reasons - one because of the high rate of bad debts from the advertisers, and one because the collective had decided against any commercial advertisements. The editor of the Polish newspaper, too, found survival difficult, and believed that the only reason that they did survive was that a lot of labour was unpaid. The three large newspapers, i.e. the two Italian newspapers and the Melbourne Greek newspaper were in no apparent financial difficulty, and the owner of the Portuguese newspaper in Sydney said that it was financially viable to run two newspapers, but that he would find it difficult to manage with just one. The editors of the two Vietnamese newspapers and of the Sydney Lebanese newspaper answered that they did find it difficult but that they were managing to survive.

5.2.5 Freedom of the Press

Editors were asked if they were free to print whatever they chose about their homeland, and about contentious Australian government policies such as Immigration and Multiculturalism. All said that they felt they had a high degree of freedom but there was an interesting range of comments on this question. There were several different variables of which the editors had to be mindful. In cases where the editor is not the owner, there are the views, attitudes and values of the owner or of the managing director. Then, there are the major businesses who regularly advertise in the newspaper. Some editors are mindful of the consumers, and stated that the readers expect and therefore get a certain perspective. Some editors felt that it was their duty

to print press releases from government departments and ministers as close to their original form as possible. They claimed to believe that it is not their place to edit or comment on government policy. However, many do. For example, of the Vietnamese newspaper, the Sydney editor explained, contradictorily:

We don't feel that we have a stand. Australia has a stand. We print it, but we also comment on it. We are anti-racist and anti-communist.

In Melbourne, the editor of the Vietnamese newspaper ironically commented:

The beautiful thing about Australia is the freedom of speech. We can print different views, even Bruce Ruxton and Ron Casey.

Most of the editors felt free to (and indeed claim that they do openly) criticise government policy. For example, the new immigration regulations are seen as being discriminatory against the ethnic groups who arrived in large waves in the 1950s from Europe. There is a strong feeling that unless small but significant numbers of Italians, Greeks and Yugoslavs are permitted entry into Australia, these cultures and language will die within a few generations. It was interesting to note that the editor of the Italian newspaper in Melbourne felt that he could and did address these issues in *Il Globo*, whereas the editor of *La Fiamma* in Sydney stated that it was his duty merely to inform, not to comment. Yet both newspapers are owned by the same family company, and answerable to the same managing director.

The editors were, on the whole, aware of the laws of libel in Australia, and, and only one editor said that he felt "hamstrung" by these laws. The others appeared to accept that these were the limits within which they worked.

Only two of the journalists said that they were frustrated by not being able to write what they wanted to, and were constrained by the attitudes and decisions of their editor. The others understood the constraints as being 'part of the job' and either agreed with the policy of the newspaper or were resigned to working within its limitations.

5.2.6 What the Office of Multicultural Affairs Should Know

Editors and journalists were asked if they had any further information they thought the Office of Multicultural Affairs should know about the ethnic print media.

There was general agreement that there should be a greater appreciation by the Australian government of the role of the ethnic print media in Australia. It was repeatedly argued that the ethnic print media were disseminating information concerning government policies and procedures, as well as political opinion in the form of translated press releases. In this way, bureaucrats and politicians were able to reach whole sections of the community who were unable to read the English newspapers and to understand mainstream radio and television. It was felt that the government did not appreciate the value of this task, and, especially did not appreciate that it was often done by volunteer or underpaid labour in some newspapers, while the newspapers which were being run for profit were usually the recipients of the only available government finance, government sponsored advertising.

Some editors and journalists argued that the government did not appreciate that the ethnic print media had a secondary, but essential role, of conserving cultures and languages in Australian multicultural society. It was felt that the government did not really understand what multiculturalism is or could be. They asked: 'How could there be a policy of multiculturalism on the one hand, and an education policy of monolingualism on the other? How is it that there is no serious attempt to teach all children to be bilingual, starting in primary schools, as occurs in every country in Europe and in most of Asia?' As one editor said:

Being foreign is, to them, a problem; to us it's a gift!

To the editors and journalists interviewed, multiculturalism was seen as a matter of the government passing laws and putting out reports in language which is difficult to understand. They argued that representatives of parties and government should initiate contact with them, the disseminators of information to the people of the many cultures, and should take an interest in them at times other than 'just before the elections'.

The final message to government was that it should be 'fair'. Apart from the much discussed issue of government advertising, the editors and the journalists brought forward examples of unfairness in allocating time on ethnic radio and especially on SBS television. It was felt that the distribution of foreign language programs was not

proportional to the populations represented in the community, and that the showing of occasional movies at 3 a.m. was not good enough. Proportional time on SBS seemed to be an expectation of these groups.

In summary, it is fair to say that the people interviewed who are employed in the ethnic print media industry feel that they are carrying out a vital role, not only for the people in their communities who are isolated from news because of their limitations in reading English, but also that they are carrying out a vital role for the Australian government and the general community, and that in this regard they are undervalued, undersupported and underfunded.

5.3 Findings: Readers' Uses, Gratifications and Criticisms

5.3.1 Interview Groups

Five discussion groups were held in Sydney with members of the ethnic communities selected for more detailed study - namely Italian, Turkish, Vietnamese, Lebanese and Portuguese. The participants in the group discussion were gathered together by key people from the communities, with requests from the researcher that the members of the group be readers of the selected newspapers and be sufficiently fluent in English to enable discussion with the researcher. It was not always possible for these criteria to be completely met. The outcomes of the discussion groups, as reported below, cannot be claimed to be 'representative' in any systematic way of the larger community. They indicate issues of satisfaction, criticism and concern, however and need to be considered in relation to the responses of staff and key 'opinion leaders'.

5.3.2 Expectations of an Ethnic Newspaper

The main expectation of those interviewed was to have access to a newspaper in their own language, of good quality.

If we could read English, we would read Australian newspapers.

Yet even those who could and did read Australian newspapers, also made a practice of reading their own language newspapers as they gave more detailed information about their home country, and, for many, it was easier to read in their own language.

High expectations were held that the ethnic language newspapers would give valuable news about the local ethnic community, would explain Australian laws and regulations about which migrants needed to learn, and would make it easier for the readers to find businesses and services provided by people from their own language group. One group explained that it was important to have a newspaper they could identify with, a newspaper which was produced by people from their region, with their regional political perspective. To them, the language of the newspaper itself was not enough. It needed to address its readers in specific, relevant terms. Other groups added that if the sole newspaper for a community was perceived by some not to be in line with their attitudes, values or political perspective, then they only reluctantly read it.

5.3.3 Opinions on Newspapers Selected for Study

Feelings ran high in the discussion groups when specific newspapers were discussed. It was only in the Vietnamese discussion group that there was general agreement that the newspaper adequately fulfilled the needs of the community, although this phenomenon may reflect the method of the selection of the groups rather than be a true picture of the views of the general communities.

The criticisms, however, were remarkably consistent across the groups, and were generally focussed on the lack of news, the staleness of the news by the time it was printed in the ethnic newspaper, the lack of political commentary, and the excess of advertisements. There was a certain amount of anger and disappointment that newspapers could exist with such low editorial and journalistic standards. One person summed up one of the larger newspapers with the comment,

It doesn't produce - it reproduces.

In communities where there is a relatively large choice of weekly newspapers, it seems to be common practice to look at, if not actually buy, the full range, to check up on the latest news. This seems to occur especially in the Lebanese community, where there is

constant anxiety about the war in Lebanon, and where daily news is eagerly sought. In other communities, a range of newspapers is read, it appears, almost as reinforcement as to how 'bad' some of them are.

It was surprising that the topic of government advertising was volunteered as a contentious issue, even in the reader discussion groups. There was anger that, as the group members saw it, a small private, money-making newspaper could exaggerate its circulation so that it received government-sponsored advertisements, and hence attracted business advertisements at what was claimed to be five times the price that the community based newspaper could demand. Readers were critical that such commercial newspapers had enough money to print once a week, while the community newspaper could only afford to print once a month. Similar sentiments were expressed about large privately owned newspapers, although these were not accused of lying about their circulation figures.

5.3.4 The Significance of the Newspaper in Readers' Lives

There was lively discussion in most of the groups when they were asked what they actually did with the newspapers, and if the newspapers stimulated discussion in their families or with their friends. One man stated:

It is part of our lives. Every Monday, I go to the club to get the newspaper, we talk about the latest news at the club and then I take it home and it does the rounds of my family.

While not all the group participants were so graphic in their descriptions, it appears that the ethnic newspapers do trigger discussion on news and issues, and that the newspapers are frequently shared around the family or household. Comments from the groups and from the key people in the communities reinforce the statements in the telephone survey from most of the editors that, on the whole, a single copy of an ethnic newspaper is read by four or five people. Feedback from the groups indicated that some family members may only look at certain pages, (e.g. women's pages, sports pages, news or events in community groups or entertainment) but, one way or another, the newspaper is circulated even to those who have never learnt to read. In some communities it was a fairly common practice for young people to read to their grandparents from the ethnic newspaper.

Readers did not volunteer significant evidence of using the ethnic newspapers for deeper psychological or social functions except perhaps for the Lebanese where the newspapers were seen as a lifeline to Lebanon. There was a wide variation of the extent to which cultural identity appeared to be supported or defined strongly by access to and reading of newspapers in interviewees' first language. The general surveillance and information functions of newspapers are important, even for readers who are critical of the relevant publication, but the cultural content of ethnic newspapers certainly appears to be less relevant to individuals' definition of their personal identities. With the exception of the Lebanese, searching for news of their families at home and elderly readers who may incorporate reading of the newspaper into their interactions with other family members, there is little evidence of complex psychological or social functions being served by the newspapers. Nevertheless, 'missing the newspaper', for readers of all such journals, 'ethnic' or not, may indicate that they are a part of the routine definition of readers' sense of self. Moreover, different types of ethnic newspapers could serve such functions, helping to satisfy deeper cultural needs. Interviewees hinted at just such potential in alluding to the cultural importance of other ethnic media such as television.

The functions served by the newspapers should not be seen merely as a reflection of their content, scope or frequency. Readers use newspapers as cultural resources. Regardless of the levels of sophistication of the various newspapers as sources of news, information and analysis, there is a clear assumption by many of the interviewees that the newspapers will provide a sense of continuity and an historical depth to their ethnically defined social world. Having a newspaper to identify with, produced by people from one's region, circulating the values and taken-for-granted cultural perspectives of the group, were highly valued. Radio is too ephemeral, however current its news; TV tends to report on all minority cultures from the perspective of none, and neither offers a continuous record of either homeland or local cultural experience and values.

Although imperfect, the newspapers either did serve, or were seen as potentially serving, this basic function. Perhaps the increasing alienation of younger readers from the ethnic press shows not that the press is necessarily of little cultural value, but that it has failed to offer a link for such English speakers to their culture of origin, and that it is necessary for different generations and classes to communicate via such newspapers

if the press is to be sufficiently adaptable. The Vietnamese newspapers do cater for a youthful readership, but very much in terms of providing diversion and entertainment. In the absence of alternative newspapers addressing different readerships in the one language, it is difficult to decide whether the ethnic press is limited because of its ethnic orientation *per se*, or because of its inability to be sufficiently plural within its own ethnolinguistic context. Just as there is no single, unified 'Australian Society', neither is there a unified Turkish, Vietnamese, or Italian population living in Australia. If newspapers are not principally organs of news and information, they will only continue to meet their readers needs if they change as the potential readers change. But, as the interviewees implied, the potential readers may need to be in dialogue through the newspapers with other sections of the relevant population for the newspaper to be more than a symptom of the ethnic group's marginal status as defined by the majority media.

For these reasons, perhaps, there was unanimous agreement that if there were no newspaper in their particular language, readers would feel deprived. A newspaper with obvious shortcomings was much better than no newspaper at all.

5.3.5 Other Sources of News

The most common source of news from the home country was ethnic-language radio. There was general agreement that this news, even if it were only ten minutes long, was the most up to date and accurate way of receiving news. Watching news on television, especially on SBS for its wider world news perspective, was preferred as a medium, but even here there were limitations on the amount of news from the various homelands. TV required fairly high skills in understanding English. In some families, children provided a running translation for their parents or grandparents while the news was being broadcast.

In communities which had been in Australia for longer periods, many people read the Australian newspapers, either solely or in addition to their ethnic newspapers. In the more recent arrivals such as the Vietnamese more reliance was placed on the newspapers in their own language. Some commented that, once people acquire enough English to read the Australian newspapers, they feel that the Vietnamese newspapers are too late with the Australian and overseas news, and therefore use them more as a community newspaper than as a news source. These sentiments were echoed by members

of the Italian community who maintain a special interest in, say, Italian soccer, or in keeping their language skills alive. However the situation was quite different for the Lebanese, who, even with English skills adequate for reading the Australian newspapers, still felt that they needed to read the Lebanese newspapers almost daily for news of home.

5.4 Findings: Community Opinion Leaders

Twenty five people were interviewed from the five language group communities associated with the five ethnic newspapers selected for the study in the Sydney area. The people were referred to the researchers on the basis of being key people in the community i.e. they were perceived as having a professional or voluntary role which put them in contact with a lot of people from their own language group. Some of the people interviewed had a long history of work in the community, holding senior office in ethnic associations or societies; others had more informal contact, running businesses which had a high proportion of their clientele from the ethnic community. To distinguish this group from general readers, we refer to them as 'opinion leaders'.

The people interviewed included members of the legal, health, welfare, religious and child-care professions. There were also shop keepers, the leader of a village association, a travel agent, an estate agent and the manager of a club.

5.4.1 Criticisms of the Newspapers

One of the most common criticisms of the five ethnic newspapers was that they lacked 'substance'. All five newspapers were seen by most of the opinion leaders interviewed as lacking depth, as lacking insight, as being bland and uninteresting, or as serving no 'real purpose'.

Different reasons were advanced for this perceived state of affairs depending on factors such as the age of the particular ethnic community in Australia, the goals of the proprietor and the presence or absence of any competition in the form of other newspapers in the same language.

There was a certain wistfulness among the people interviewed in the Italian community that 'La Fiamma (The Flame) had gone out'. Some interviewees pointed out that there were about five Italian language newspapers in Sydney ten years ago, and the press was seen as an agent of change in society. However, it now appears that as the Italian speaking community is ageing, and as the second and third generation Italian Australians are less competent in reading Italian, the Italian newspaper is seen as accommodating more and more to the needs of older people. According to four of the five people interviewed, the newspaper no longer addresses important contemporary issues. It only cuts and pastes from homeland newspapers and translates from Australian newspapers. Moreover, only the uninteresting and bland items are put in, they claimed. One person said:

It's a rehash of a mishmash.

He found that his only interest in the newspaper was to see who has died that week. Another person interviewed buys it for 'a bit of nostalgia'.

While there was agreement that the paper does fulfil a purpose for the older Italian speaking people who cannot or prefer not to read in English, it was also felt that it was a shame that the only large Italian newspaper in NSW had little more than bland news items, sports coverage and a roundup of the social events of the week. Only one of the five people interviewed presented a positive evaluation of the newspaper, and felt it had an important community and cultural role in its present form.

The situation was quite different among the Portuguese people interviewed. It would appear that there are at least two discernible cultural groups among the Portuguese in Sydney, one coming from the mainland, and one from the heavily populated island of Madiera. The newspaper which was selected for this study was perceived to be more aligned with the mainland group, and was heartily praised by people who were interviewed from this group. However, the people from Madiera, who also printed a newspaper in Portuguese, primarily with volunteer labour and with no government advertising to help them, had serious reservations about *O Portugues na Australia*.

Their major criticisms were that the primary goal of the proprietor was to make money rather than produce a high quality newspaper, and that the news was already stale by

the time the newspaper was circulated. However, it was conceded that it did fulfil a purpose for older migrants and more recent arrivals, in that it contained information and news in their only language. The more vigorous supporters of the newspaper also praised it for putting in news items from other Portuguese speaking countries, like Brazil and East Timor, for the Portuguese speaking people who still had family or connections with these areas.

One of the people interviewed, who was critical of the lack of political coverage in the newspaper, recounted the story of how he had set up his own newspaper in 1979, to give political commentary on the coup in Portugal, and how the newspaper folded when it had finished serving that specific purpose in the community. This was an interesting example of a function of the ethnic print media in Australia. Australian newspapers do not usually materialise to address a particular issue, and then cease when that issue is no longer topical.

The newspapers written in Arabic, primarily serving the Lebanese community in NSW, have been covering a political crisis in the Middle East for over a decade. As one of the interviewees explained:

The newspapers fulfil an important psychological function in the community. It is more than just giving information about the war. It is a safety line to the homeland for people who feel severed from their families during war-time.

The particular newspaper chosen for this study was praised by all of the people interviewed as being apolitical, and for reporting the news from Lebanon from 'both sides'. Both Muslims and Christians felt that they could publish articles and place advertisements. However, it was also the apolitical nature of the newspaper which drew some criticism from people who wanted deeper insights, editorial comments and a more educated and intellectual approach to journalism. It was reported that many Lebanese people, searching for more factual and insightful information, have to buy Lebanese journals from the United Kingdom or France. Many Lebanese in Australia buy several weekly newspapers or even the full collection, in their search to find out what is happening 'at home'.

The opinion leaders interviewed expected more than the news of the war from the Lebanese newspaper. They felt that it should give people, who were limited in their

ability to read and understand English, more information on Australian policies and practices, on how to weigh up whom to vote for, on topical issues like AIDS and women's issues, and on matters related to settlement for recent arrivals.

Of all five ethnic groups studied for this research, the Lebanese were most active in discussing the newspaper items amongst themselves. However, as one person reported, that was mainly because of the situation in Lebanon.

If there was no war in Lebanon, there would not be a need for so many newspapers.

The Turkish newspaper which was selected for this research, was probably the most heavily criticised of all. It was described as being a "big 0", as serving no real community purpose, and as being biased towards the Turkish government line to the extent of printing propaganda. It was also claimed that it reported in simplistic terms, which made it unsuitable for the most recent Turkish arrivals who, by reason of the recent immigration regulations, were either young and well educated or old and usually illiterate. People who did not consider themselves 'right wing', did however still flip through this newspaper, if only to justify their disagreement with it, before throwing it away. They preferred to get their news from Turkey from imported Turkish newspapers, even those printed in Germany, but these were expensive to buy every week.

There was a general opinion that the newspaper should devote less space to commercial advertising, and more to community news, to discussion of topical issues concerning women, youth and the aged, and to articles on current news items in Australia.

Here again, there surfaced the recurrent theme of government advertising. Some of the people interviewed argued bitterly that government advertising lent status to a newspaper which was dismissed by the majority of Turkish people as being little more than a commercial advertising business for an individual proprietor.

The Vietnamese newspaper was also the subject of criticism, not only for lack of substance, but also for 'inaccuracy'. The Vietnamese community can choose from a range of newspapers, which cover a wide spectrum of political persuasions, although most of

them tend to cater for an anti-Communist readership. Among those interviewed it was felt that the Vietnamese newspapers on the whole were not of a high standard. There were strong expectations that the newspaper under study, being the largest one, and being a daily, should inform people of government policies and procedures, of their rights and responsibilities as Australian residents or citizens and should discuss topical social issues. However, it appeared that the daily newspaper was considered to be of a poor journalistic standard, filled its pages with fantasy and fiction stories, and was directed mainly towards relatively uneducated readers.

According to the interviewees, the newspaper does satisfy its readers, but more politically sophisticated people subscribed to alternative Vietnamese newspapers and the more educated read the English language press.

In summary, the ethnic press was frequently seen as a second class industry, less professional, less informative and usually less impartial than its Australian or home country counterparts. Yet its roles were seen as vital in providing an information service, a news service and a cultural and community service to a multitude of people in Australian society, many of whom are isolated by their inability to assimilate news and information in English.

The strongly held opinions concerning the potential of non-English language newspapers to fulfil significant personal, cultural and political functions suggest that the 'ethnic press' is important within various communities, although in different ways for different groups. The dilemma for the presses is to be 'professional' without merely duplicating the English language newspapers (which themselves are of variable quality) and to address readers' genuine needs for news and cultural meaning in their own language without being condescending or parochial. The dilemma for the readers is to support and hopefully identify with a newspaper as the expression of distinct cultural and linguistic values while retaining a critical sophistication about the news and other cultural content that the newspaper conveys and represents.

Given the range of publications described in Section I of this report, and in view of readers' uses and views of them, the 'ethnic press' might be described, not as a variation on major English language newspapers, but as a range of special interest, magazine-style publications. Instead of being criticised as 'bad' newspapers, they

might better be analysed as alternative magazines, serving (with varying degrees of success) different needs for different constituencies. That they could be more professional, more sophisticated, more current, more diverse, less trivial, and thereby more integral to the cultural needs of their readers, is indisputable. But they need not be judged by simple comparison with the majority English-language newspapers. Their differences from these may be the basis of their value to their readers. The conclusions in Section 6 develop this point further.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Several issues arise from this study which have implications for the future of the ethnic press, its possible and actual functions and significance, and for Government policy in relation to ethnic media and multiculturalism. In discussing these, we wish to emphasise that many of the matters we address are contentious and incapable of purely pragmatic solution. Generally, in so far as policy is concerned, ideological positions concerning multiculturalism itself will colour how these issues are discussed. As Jacubowicz (1989) points out, in considering the future of SBS, a recent senate committee saw the need for enhancing the 'nation's commitment to multiculturalism and the cohesion of Australia's society'. He saw the desired 'cohesion' as a euphemism for 'monocultural hegemony' (based on an assumed consensus). Where the press is concerned, genuinely plural voices are heard, however, and in considering the implications of the present research we would wish to encourage just this multiculturalism, not the alternative of an homogenised, professionalised, purely commercial range of newspapers which are only published in different languages to render their advertising effective.

6.1 The Future

Despite the proposed expansion of SBS (TV) announced in the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, the diverse, active ethnic press continues to be relatively neglected in broad policy planning. Yet the 'main initiatives' of the Agenda are potentially relevant to the press in several important respects. In particular, the role of ethnic newspapers in publicising social services and other information to citizens who may otherwise lack contact with such services is integral to several of the proclaimed initiatives. For example, those goals in the July 26 News Release relating to 'improved access for education', changes in the recognition of overseas qualifications, 'improved access to and delivery of government services' (which lists precisely those areas where the ethnic presses currently achieve only partially successful communication such as

local government, health and women's issues), and increased access to the ESL opportunities.

Secondly, the goal of fostering and retaining non-English languages as alive and relevant languages-in-use should ideally involve a vibrant, relevant and current linguistically diverse press. This implies a more public interaction between the non-English publications and the cultural institution referred to in the Policy Initiatives which are to 'reflect Australia's cultural heritage'. Newspapers do more than reflect and record; at their best they create and embody the very cultural (and political) aspirations and expressions of their users. However valuable SBS and the reflection of multicultural diversity by museums etc. may be, the active fertilisation of the multicultural sphere by the written word through the existing ethnic presses should be part of future initiatives. Indeed, as will be seen in the following discussion, each area of the National Agenda could and should involve the newspapers studied in the report. They are, or could be, more significantly involved, in providing relevant information to the various populations they serve. They could also more fully embody, express and enrich cultural and linguistic diversity. Given the nature of the ethnic press in Australia, this might be achieved by the active participation of people working on communicating within their own communities. In this important respect, the economic and social functions of the ethnic newspapers are distinct from those of the larger-scale broadcast media. They are, however, directly relevant to all the goals of the National Agenda precisely for this reason. They operate at the level of the club or the school, not of the television network.

We have argued that in narrowly economic terms, the ethnic presses are generally viable, even successful. Such viability is not dependent on their scale of operation (cf. the mainstream press). However, the market for various newspapers is changing or will change as its client population ages and is not 'replaced' by new migrants due to (among other factors) changing immigration policies. As new settlers in Australia are now more stringently selected than in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, fewer migrants will arrive who speak the languages in which many of the current ethnic newspapers are published. Those who gain entrance on the points system will be more highly educated, and more likely to speak English. Hence, unless the ethnic newspapers can address successfully younger 'second-generation' bilingual members of their respective ethnic populations, they may no longer be viable. Newspapers generally have declined since the advent of

television. Other newspapers such as the suburban newspapers in Australia have become little more than advertising resources, unable to charge readers for their limited journalistic content. The social functions served with varying degrees of success already by the ethnic press may change as SBS television and radio address more (and more young) potential readers.

In short, current economic viability is not necessarily a guarantee into this uncertain future, a future which will differ considerably from one ethnic group to another.

6.2 The Professionalisation Dilemma

Very few people who prepare copy for the ethnic press are professionally accredited journalists. Hence the lack of feature articles on significant Australian economic and social issues referred to in Section 3. If the ad hoc, amateur nature of many of the newspapers prevents them serving, for instance, their 'social welfare' functions, then it is tempting to argue for greater professional training and status for 'ethnic' journalists. Allied to this general question is the need for specialised journalistic input (e.g. on business, the economy, women's issues, health) to the newspapers. These issues cannot be addressed adequately by non-specialists, or by re-writing material intended for publication in other contexts, maybe in another country or language. Sub-editors, editors, and writers who see themselves as part of a different but equal system of responsible journalism could arguably, by raising professional standards, change the face of some sections of the ethnic press without reducing its diversity.

Alternatively, or additionally, members of the relevant language group with particular interests or expertise could play a larger role in contributing to newspapers on topics in which they are expert (e.g. welfare workers, teachers, business people, lawyers, from within the ethnolinguistic population, could provide the sorts of items that in the quality newspapers are provided by specialist journalists, academics etc). 'Non-expert' opinion and commentary need not be discouraged because of a more professional approach.

The dilemma for the newspapers and for their staff is that 'professionalisation' may imply homogenisation of a different kind, in which the newspapers become merely imitations of the mainstream press. There is also the question of how journalists should be recruited, trained and promoted given the resources of most newspapers and the various, informal pathways into journalism in both the minor and the mainstream media.

6.3 Serving Different Functions: Individual, Community

6.3.1 News and Features

The mix of news, information, socially useful advertising and cultural diversion offered by each of the ethnic newspapers is very varied. However, few individual newspapers balance these categories of communication in a way that allows readers to judge 'their' newspaper as adequate. Young (1986) rated the six types of information desired by three of the four ethnic groups she studies as: homeland news; information about available services; editorial comment on Australian events; news about the ethnic community; and news about Australian politics relevant to the ethnic group.

The present study supports the need for more coverage of these information issues. But, equally, the general failure of the press to gratify more abstract cultural needs, both individual and community, must be noted. Of course, these needs depend in part on the continuous provision of a trusted, entertaining source of information, both narrowly defined 'news', as well as opinion, features, and 'diversion' (relevant personal profiles, book reviews, etc.). Currently, any one newspaper is unlikely to have the journalistic resources to meet these cultural needs in a sophisticated as well as varied and entertaining way. Hence particular ethnic newspapers tend to be used for one or two specific information-seeking functions only.

Readers generally see this as a limitation which they tolerate in the absence of a more diverse and 'professional' publication in their language. Whether the market forces to which the newspapers now respond are sufficient to encourage more diversity and depth of reporting initiated by the newspapers to meet their readers needs is doubtful, as the principal economic force on most newspapers involves selling advertising space to

commercial enterprises, and the indirect effects of greater professionalisation and diversity of published materials may not work towards increased commercial advertising. As the tabloid English language newspapers and the suburban newspapers in Australia only too clearly show, economically viable advertising is compatible with very general reader appeal and a very narrow range of journalistic production. Suburban newspapers in Sydney are increasingly organs for real estate and local business advertising exclusive of all recognisable forms of journalism! Market forces can narrow news and limit the concept of a newspaper.

In assessing the adequacy of the ethnic press, it must be remembered that readers usually read only one newspaper, often only once a week. Its cultural value, value as a resource, as a conversation piece, as a source of specific information or as a continuous aspect of the user's sense of him/herself depends on this one publication. Moreover, young, old, male, female, socially-integrated and isolated alike will find uses for the one newspaper. Not surprisingly, no publication meets everyone's various needs. Still, a vibrant community which uses a particular language depends on its public, visible definition and re-definition through such foci as newspapers. The functions served by such newspapers could include allowing the communities to debate within, and thereby to contribute to the continued re-definition of themselves politically and socially. The users of the newspapers do not seem to think that this community function is performed as often or as well as they would like. If an ethnolinguistic community comes to regard 'its' newspaper as the suburban community regards 'its' equivalent, then such cultural value will have been completely lost.

Any policy aimed at generating journalism which brings the ethnic community served by a newspaper into active dialogue within itself and with the wider Australian society is to be encouraged. This could involve support for bilingual journalists trained in health, social or economic specialisations who produced features which broadened and deepened the news and cultural definitions available through the ethnic newspapers. The Office of Multicultural Affairs could investigate ways of encouraging trained or trainee journalists or people employed elsewhere in the industry who aspire to write for the ethnic press, to be employed in this capacity. Perhaps by analogy with field workers in Welfare, non English-language journalists who actually write originally researched features on issues such as women, children, health, the aged, taxation or welfare could be independently 'subsidised' for at least limited periods of

assignment to one or more newspapers serving their ethnolinguistic group. This step would directly address the issues raised throughout this report by editors and readers alike of the lack of relevant, quality, journalism in the newspapers.

Strengthening at least some of the ethnic press in this way would possibly develop newspapers which more adequately performed two related functions: first, they might act as written records of an ethnolinguistic group (or part of it); second, they could carry more Government-sponsored advertising of relevance to such communities.

6.3.2 Newspapers as Archives

A more comprehensive, locally-originated coverage of issues and events of significance to an ethnic group which newspapers could provide would help to fulfil one of the functions newspapers generally serve. It would allow (indeed, the newspapers could be the medium for) recording and interpreting a community's social history. Although this need not depend on 'professional' journalists or historians, the more varied and valid the newspaper's coverage, the more adequate would be the resource. This is consistent with the National Agenda initiative of encouraging cultural institutions 'to reflect Australia's cultural heritage in their collections', and extends the current definition of cultural resources to include the documentation of this heritage by ethnic communities through newspapers.

6.3.3 Government Advertising

Government-sponsored advertising is highly sought by the ethnic press. It confers status and has indirectly beneficial effects as well as providing revenue. It also serves its readers' needs for information concerning social services, citizenship etc. very directly. Ideally, advertising could be amplified by news items on related topics, though this seems to happen rarely in the newspapers studied. Unpaid media penetration by press releases on policy or administrative matters is an important potential source of news for all newspapers, especially those with limited journalistic resources. Government departments should devote resources to both paid and unpaid publicity in the ethnic press. To do this effectively and fairly would possibly require a more up-to-date register of relevant publications and a reliable indication of circulation, print runs and, if possible, of the precise readership of all newspapers. However, the first of these requirements is the most essential and could form part of the Office of Multicultural Affairs' regular work, helping to inform relevant departments, especially those

involved in social and health services, about the likely reach of ethnic newspapers large and small. The latter may, in fact, be a very important medium for vital information reaching otherwise relatively isolated citizens. Ideally, decisions concerning where to advertise should not merely aggregate numbers, but aim for a mix of types of newspaper, ethnic backgrounds, length of residence, etc.

The area of government advertising is one where already, but increasingly, ethnic newspapers serve a social welfare role.

Government (i.e. public) support for the whole range of the multi-lingual press, through both paid and unpaid input is the most productive and direct way of supporting it. This is not regarded as a subsidy by the newspapers, because, as with the English-language press, governments pay for a service provided by the newspapers. State and local levels of government as well as federal departments are important potential sources of such revenue, as are statutory authorities, government business enterprises, educational institutions and public utilities. For these agencies who is reached through the press may be more important than the numbers reached. It follows that any policies which encourage diverse ethnic publications will encourage lines of communication between and within ethnic communities and between public organisations and their publics. The healthier the 'minority' media (including the ethnic newspapers) the more likely are positive outcomes of public communication.

The critical significance of government-sponsored advertising to the economic viability of many of the newspapers surveyed implies the need for the Office of Multicultural Affairs to control the distribution and monitor the effectiveness of all advertising in the ethnic press. The placing of such advertising must, of course, be unconditional and not a means of covert regulation of the media. If principally or only commercial criteria are employed in selling government-sponsored advertising (through an intermediary) some socially desirable goals may not be met. The need for information exists independently of the type and scale of the newspaper serving a particular group. This should be reflected in the distribution of publicly funded advertising.

6.3.4 Communicating with the Ethnic Press

The Office of Multicultural Affairs could attempt to liaise with, solicit feedback from and encourage interaction between the proprietors and employees in the ethnic

newspapers, and, ideally, between them and workers in their electronic media counterparts. The isolated, sometimes difficult, circumstances under which the industry operates leaves its editors, journalists, owners, and employees without any strong sense of being part of an industry with its shared values, problems and interests. A less fragmented industry might be expected to better serve its potential clientele of up to 2 million people.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS OF 100 EDITORS OF ETHNIC NEWSPAPERS

Name of Paper: _____ Multicultural Origin: _____
 Contact: _____ Date of 1st I/V: _____
 Address: _____ Date of 2nd I/V: _____
 Phone No: _____
 Fax No: _____

CODE _____

Questions to Establish the Scope of the Newspaper

1. How often do you publish? _____
2. What is your print run? _____
 How many people do you think regularly read your paper? _____
3. When was your paper established? _____
4. Where do you publish the paper? _____
5. Do you write all your own copy? _____
 Are some of your articles reproduced from other papers? _____
 What percent? _____
6. Where do most of your readers live? _____

Questions on the Paper's Revenues

7. What is the price of your paper? _____
 How long has it been that price? _____
8. How is the paper distributed? _____

9. Does the paper receive advertisements from the following sources?
 private business _____
 the federal government _____
 the state government _____
 classified ads _____
 other _____

10. Does the paper receive any grants, donations or financial assistance from any of the following sources?
 ethnic organisations _____
 state or federal govt depts _____
 govt of the home country _____
 other _____

Questions on the Paper's Costs

11. How many people are employed F/I?
 Number of men? _____
 Number of women? _____
 How many people are employed P/I?
 Number of men? _____
 Number of women? _____

12. How many volunteers are there?
 What jobs do the volunteers do? _____
 13. Do you print your paper "in house" or is it done by a contract printer?
 14. Have you recently acquired any new equipment which you could describe as "new technology"? _____

What effect has that had? _____

Questions on the Paper's Ownership

15. Is the paper owned by
 a single proprietor _____
 a company _____
 an ethnic organisation _____
 other _____

Thankyou for your time....May I ring you again if I need to clarify any of this information?

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONS DISCUSSED WITH EDITORS, JOURNALISTS, OPINION LEADERS AND GROUPS OF READERS

INTERVIEWS - EDITORS

Paper Code: _____

Age: _____

Sex: _____

How long have you been editor of this paper? _____

1. What target group is your paper aiming to reach?

Cultural Groups
Place of Residence
Age Groups
Educational Level
Sex
Political View
Other

2. Looking at the people who do read your paper, how would you describe them in terms of above categories?

3. What proportion of the target group do you think actually read your paper?

1/4 (some)
1/4 - 3/4 (about half)
3/4 (most)

4. What are the main goals of your paper?

5. Are these goals different for different groups of records?
eg. newly arrived migrants, women, older people?

6. How well are you meeting each of these goals?

7. What is the most important thing that stops you meeting your goals completely?

8. I'd like you to think about a paper which would be absolutely ideal. In which ways does your paper fall short of the ideal?

9. In what way do you consider your paper contributing to the historical record of your community in Australia?

10. What are your major cost items?
(Please put in order of total cost)

Labour
Printing/paper
Distribution
Other

11. How many people do you have working here?

Number	Job Description
Full time men	
Full time women	
Part time men	
Part time women	
Volunteer men	
Volunteer women	

12. What are your major sources of revenue?

Sales of paper
Advertising-Business-Own Language Group
Advertising-Business-Other Australian
Advertising-Government-Federal
Advertising-Government-State
Classified Ads
Other

13. How do you go about getting ads from businesses from the _____ community? How is this different from getting ads from the wider Australian community?

14. Most newspapers these days find it difficult to manage to make a profit. Many small newspapers fold up after a while. How is it that you manage to keep going?

15. Do you have much contact with the editors of other ethnic newspapers?

E3

E4

16. As editor, do you have freedom to print whatever you want to on:

18. The research I am doing is for the Office of Multicultural Affairs in Canberra. Is there anything you would like to say in general about the ethnic press in Australia?

	Complete Freedom	Bit Restricted	Quite Restricted	Very Restricted
News from home country				
Australian Immigration Policy and Practices				
Australian Multicultural Policies and Practices				
Other				

17. Do you get any feedback from the community as to how your paper is accepted by the community?

Yes
No

Comments:

FOCUS DISCUSSION GROUPS

Paper Code: _____

1. Could you first please tell me your names and how long you have been in Australia?

2. Do you read the _____?
Regularly?
Every issue?

3. Is it important to have a newspaper in your own language?
Yes
No

Why? Does it help to make you feel more _____?

4. If you didn't have this newspaper, would you feel deprived in some way?

5. What is it that you really want from the _____ paper?

6. Do you think that newly arrived immigrants have the same expectations of a newspaper such as the _____?

7. Is the _____ meeting those needs well enough for you?

8. In what ways could it meet your needs better?

9. What would you miss most if the _____ closed down tomorrow?

10. Have you ever used the ads in the paper?

Never Once >Once

To find a job

To employ someone

To find out about an event

To buy or sell something

11. How do you get the paper - from a shop or is it delivered? Who reads it first, and what happens to the paper in your household?

F3

12. Is there someone in your family who does not speak English?

Yes _____
No _____

13. How does the paper meet that person's needs?

14. Do you think that the _____ has a particular point of view about some matters?

15. If you were the editor of the _____ how would it be different?

16. Do you discuss among your friends or family items which you read in the paper?

Never
Sometimes
Often

F4

INTERVIEWS - A JOURNALIST

Paper Code: _____

Age: _____

Sex: _____

How long have you worked here? _____

1. What are the main goals of your paper?

2. Are these goals different for different groups of people
eg. newly arrived migrants, women, older people?

3. How well is the paper meeting each of these goals?

4. What is the most important thing that stops you meeting your
goals completely?

17. Do you read any other papers?

Yes _____
Which one(s) _____

No _____

18. Do you listen to ethnic radio?

Yes (_____ hours/week)
No _____

19. Do you watch SBS television?

Yes (_____ hours/week)
No _____

20. Which of all of these is your favorite way of getting
information or news? Why?

21. Could you give me the names/phone numbers of people you know
who never read the _____?

5. As a journalist I'd like you to think about a paper which would be absolutely ideal. In which ways does your paper fall short of the ideal?

6. As a journalist do you have freedom to write whatever you want to on:

	Complete Freedom	Bit Restricted	Quite Restricted	Very Restricted
News from home country				
Australian Immigration Policy and Practices				
Australian Multicultural Policies and Practices				
Other				

7. Do you have any say about the content areas of the paper?

8. If you were editor, how would the paper be different from what it is now?

9. Do you get any feedback from the community as to how your paper is accepted by the community?

Yes
No

Comments:

10. How did you become a journalist?

INTERVIEWS - 5 KEY PEOPLE/LANGUAGE GROUP

Paper Code: _____

11. Do you see your role as a _____ journalist being any different from a traditional journalist?

12. Do you belong to the AJA or any other professional bodies?

13. Do you have much contact with the editors or staff of other (ethnic) papers?

14. The research I am doing is for the Office of Multicultural Affairs in Canberra. Is there anything you would like to say in general about the ethnic press in Australia?

1. Where did you come from, before you came to live in Australia? _____

2. How long have you been in Australia? _____

and in Sydney? _____

3. You have been recommended to me as a key figure in the _____ community.

How do you see yourself in that role?

4. Do you read the _____ regularly?

5. What role do you think it fulfills in the community?

6. Is this role different for different groups within the community eg. newly arrived immigrants, women, older people? Do some get more attention and do some get ignored?

7. I'd like you to think about a paper which you thought was absolutely ideal. How does _____ fall short of that ideal?

8. If you were the editor, how would the paper be different from the way it is now?

9. Do the people in the community tell you what they think about the paper?

Yes
No

What do they say? How often? How does it take place?

10. Do you think this paper has a particular bias? In what way?

INTERVIEW - NON-READERS

Paper Code: _____

1. Where did you come from, before you came to live in Australia?

2. How long have you been in Australia? _____
in Sydney? _____

3. Have you ever read the _____?
Yes
No

4. Why don't you read it?

5. Do you read any other papers or journals?

N1

6. Do you listen to ethnic radio?
Yes (_____ hours/week)
No

7. Do you watch SBS television?
Yes (_____ hours/week)
No

8. Do you still feel very strongly that you are _____?

N2

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The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) is a division within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. It was established in March 1987 primarily to advise the Prime Minister, the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Multicultural Affairs and the Government on policy issues relating to multiculturalism and to co-ordinate the development and implementation of Government policies relevant to meeting the needs of a multicultural society.

THE CENTRE FOR MULTICULTURAL STUDIES



The Centre for Multicultural Studies was established as an independent research centre within the University of Wollongong in 1978. It is the oldest and largest research centre in its field in Australia. Its charter is to investigate the social policy issues that arise from immigration and ethnic diversity. In meeting the intellectual and practical challenge of an era of ever-growing linguistic and cultural pluralism, the CMS has made a significant contribution to policy development, research and analysis, and tertiary teaching, both nationally and internationally.

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