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Critical Perspectives on Language Education

Australia and the Asia Pacific

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Multilingual Education

Volume 11

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Critical Perspectives on Language Education

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Introduction

Katie Dunworth and Grace Zhang

In a world in which people's lives are becoming increasingly bound to both the global and the local, there has never been a more important time to reflect on the role and value of language and intercultural education. This book investigates how language education can involve a critical engagement with questions of identity and culture, and explores movements towards new ways of being and belonging. It looks into issues previously under-explored, particularly focusing on the integration of theories and practices of language education and maintenance with relevance to the Asia–Pacific region. The analyses presented here reveal the delicate balance of interests of all those involved in communicating in international and intercultural contexts, and offer detailed insights into the many realities of language education using the specific examples of Chinese, English, Japanese and Tamil.

The chapters in this volume draw on fresh empirical evidence to explore a wide range of related issues, including heritage and minority language education, intercultural education, and English language teaching. What draws the chapters together is their regional geographical context, the foundational belief that permeates each chapter that diversity is a strength, and the unifying themes of constancy and change. The first part of the book explores language and intercultural education theories and applications in relation to L1 or Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), while the subsequent six chapters investigate the principles and practices of multilingual education regarding L2 or Languages Other Than English (LOTE), paying particular attention to Chinese, Japanese and Tamil. Thus, this volume contributes to the study of multilingual education through exploring a wide range of theories and practices in a variety of languages and contexts.

The first section of this volume, which incorporates Chapters, "Occupying the 'Third Space': Perspectives and Experiences of Asian English Language Teachers",

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"Changing Perspectives of Literacy, Identity and Motivation: Implications for Language Education", "Constructing Meaning from the Unfamiliar: Implications for Critical Intercultural Education", "Can Teachers Know Learners' Minds? Teacher Empathy and Learner Body Language in English Language Teaching" and "Code-switching and Indigenous Workplace Learning: Cross-cultural Competence Training or Cultural Assimilation", examines issues in language and intercultural education from the perspective of development and change. The concept of 'thirdness', in particular, features in many manifestations, either explicitly or implicitly, in all the chapters in this section. Drawing on the work of scholars such as Bhabha (1994), Kramsch (2009) and Lo Bianco (2010), the authors in this volume describe thirdness from a post-structuralist perspective, emphasising the dynamic, the contextual and the hybrid. In a globalised world, it is argued, language and intercultural education need to involve a critical engagement with questions of identity and culture, and a movement towards new ways of being and belonging. Part of that process involves reflecting on, and questioning or rejecting, normative practices, whether they be the assimilationist policies that once obtained to the education of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, as described by Grote, Oliver and Rochecouste; or a belief by language teachers in their own capacity to interpret the body language of their students, as outlined in the chapter by McAlinden. While openness to the new may involve some sense of dislocation or discomfort, as Zagoria points out in a chapter that explores findings from a study of culturally diverse musicians in Western Australia, it can also be exhilarating. Moreover, it may also be possible, as Mercieca argues in his chapter, to maintain a sense of security and well-being from cultural constancy, as well as embracing difference and change. While not shying away from examining difficulties, many of the chapters in this section convey something that is rarely expressed in studies of language and intercultural education: the joy inherent in exploring language and culture and engaging with the unfamiliar in a transformative way.

Each of these chapters has been written from a position that endorses a critical approach to language and intercultural education in the interests of valuing variety and respect for difference in a world that is increasingly globalised and diverse. In the second chapter of this volume, *Occupying the Third Space: Perspectives and experiences of Asian English language teachers*, Dobinson presents the findings from an empirical study of the perspectives of English language teachers from Asian countries, interpreted through the theoretical framework of the Third Space. She explores the ambivalence of the study's participants as they welcomed what are described in the chapter as 'Western endorsed' approaches to teaching, which they found stimulating and refreshing; while at the same time experiencing disquiet about what they saw as a vestigial colonialism that undermined their own expertise and knowledge. Dobinson argues that the capacity to occupy the Third Space is necessarily facilitated by being multilingual and multicultural. She concludes that since Asian English language teachers have the advantage of familiarity with more than one educational discourse, language and cultural identity, their insights could make a particularly cogent contribution to the debate on English language education.

Mercieca's chapter, *Changing perspectives of literacy, identity and motivation: Implications for language education*, the third in this volume, also explores the value of thirdness as a way of re-conceptualising English language teaching. The chapter begins by reporting on a study that investigated a migrant group in Australia, brought together by their shared experience of the Northern Soul scene. The study illustrates that cultural literacy, viewed through the prism of the Northern Soul subculture, is bound up with cultural identity and cultural diversity, and that it is a phenomenon that has, simultaneously, the properties of stability and lability. This capacity for change, coupled with an underlying continuity, promotes engagement with the unfamiliar as well as the valuing of, and a sense of security with, existing identities. The findings from this study, Mercieca argues, can be used to interrogate approaches to English language teaching. Successful language learning is contingent on the acknowledgement of the cultural values of the learner and the teacher; and the development of critical intercultural literacy—a concept that is more encompassing than 'communicative competence' or 'cultural literacy'—is a key element in the building of a reconceptualised identity.

Zagoria, in his chapter *Constructing meaning from the unfamiliar: Implications for critical intercultural education*, has also used a study conducted within a music-related context to draw out the need for intercultural education to adopt an approach which both engages with constancy and embraces change and revitalisation so that it can promote meaningful interaction with a diverse and evolving society. Zagoria argues that hybrid identity formation may inevitably involve 'othering' as part of the evolutionary process, but that ultimately the unfamiliar can become an opportunity for growth, provided that there is positive intent underpinning the process. Critical intercultural education can play a key role, as Zagoria states, by facilitating 'a greater awareness and understanding of discourses of inclusion and othering in everyday intercultural communication' and by promoting recognition of the roles of dominant and marginalised discourses in that identity formation.

The fifth chapter, *Can teachers know learners' minds? Teacher empathy and learner body language in English language teaching*, investigates teacher empathy from the theoretical perspectives of interculturality and theory of mind. In this chapter, McAlinden first explores the findings of a study that examined teacher empathy in the teaching of English as an additional language in a culturally and linguistically diverse environment. The study questioned whether it was possible for teachers to know their learners' minds though observing and interpreting their body language and facial expressions, and revealed that the more interculturally experienced teachers believed that they were able to interpret these non-verbal cues from their learners. McAlinden argues that, nevertheless, the experience of teaching diverse groups does not necessarily lead to intercultural teacher empathy, and suggests that institutions need to facilitate the development of a critical intercultural pedagogy in order to 'identify and challenge potentially harmful practices and beliefs of the profession'. As do some of the other authors in this section, McAlinden observes that interculturality requires reflection and change, and that emotional disruption may be a necessary stage in the journey towards thirdness. Only by engaging in such a critical process will teachers be able to challenge their own certainties about their

students' emotions and acknowledge the limitations, as well as the value, of seeking to interpret their learners' minds.

In the final chapter in this section, *Code Switching and Indigenous workplace learning: Cross-cultural competence training or cultural assimilation?*, Grote, Oliver and Rochecouste draw on several theoretical and experiential examples to illustrate a non-assimilationist stance in the teaching and learning of Standard Australian English (SAE) by Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who speak a traditional language, Aboriginal English or a creole as their primary language. Research conducted by the authors examined the workplace language and literacy needs of trainees and identified the value of the explicit teaching of codeswitching (CS) to overcome the view that teaching workplace SAE is simply an updated manifestation of previous unsuccessful assimilationist education policies. The authors argue that promoting CS as a learning tool incorporates maintenance of the trainees' original language/dialect, culture and community connections. Thus, CS can be seen as a 'bridge' between languages or dialects, and provides students with an opportunity to construct an identity that is built on both Aboriginal and 'Western' ways of being.

The second section of this book comprises five chapters exploring the issues of language policy, language education and language maintenance in multilingual societies, including Australia, Hong Kong and Singapore. The findings provide insights and suggestions for language learners, teachers, school authorities and government agencies, and call for paradigm changes in language education and the development of language policy. The chapters present original data and fresh perspectives on studies relating to the interconnection between multilingual policy and the survival of non-mainstream languages, in local and international settings. The local cases include Chinese and Japanese language education and their maintenance in schools and communities in Western Australia. The international cases look at Tamil maintenance in multilingual Singapore and functional English and Chinese as mediums of instruction in Hong Kong's education sector.

The second section starts with Zhang and Gong's *The retention of Year 11/12 Chinese in Australian schools*: *A Relevance Theory perspective*, which examines the pressing issue of retaining Chinese language learners at senior school levels. With the rise of China, Chinese language education has become increasingly important, but the number of students studying Chinese in Australian schools resembles a rollercoaster: until Year 10 it rises consistently, then dives in Years 11 and 12. Drawing on interviews and focus group discussions with school teachers in Western Australia, the authors investigate the rollercoaster phenomenon through the lens of Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995). In particular, the paper explores the interplay of poor retention, students' motivation, and the priorities of schools and the government, to build a better understanding of the underpinning causal factors. The findings show that stakeholders (students, school authorities and government) take a relevance-driven and effect/cost-guided approach, seeking minimum costs but maximum benefits. The implication is that to retain students in their senior years, the optimal relevance of Chinese language education needs to be recognised. This study calls for policies and practices that are based on Relevance

Theory if Chinese, along with other similar language programs, is to be successful in the future. Based on empirical evidence, Zhang and Gong's work provides some theoretical explanations for the apparent fall in support of Chinese language education, making an important contribution to the study of principles and practices of L2 student retention.

The problems of second language education in Australia are not limited to Chinese, and Chapters 8 and 9 tackle issues of Japanese language education and maintenance. Hasegawa's article, *Towards the establishment of a WACE examination in Japanese as a heritage language*: *Critical perspectives*, argues for the necessity of a formal school examination for Japanese heritage learners (JHL). The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) is the highest secondary school award in Western Australia. Hasegawa foregrounds a dilemma: students who were born or grew up in Australia with Japanese parent(s) are only eligible to take the WACE subject of English (as a second language) or Japanese (as a LOTE) if they are not considered a 'native speaker' of both languages—otherwise they may take neither. Hasegawa identifies major challenges that prevent JHL from being a legitimate secondary school subject, among which two intertwined issues are particularly crucial: sound and pragmatic strategies for establishing a JHL program, and the offering of a high-quality heritage language as a school subject. The two are complementary because, for example, including JHL in the mainstream school curriculum makes students value it more than when it is peripheral (Tse, cited in Kondo-Brown 2001). Emphasising the importance of the establishment of a WACE subject of JHL, Hasegawa envisages the endeavour will be demanding, especially given the capacity of the current educational system in Western Australia. There has to be a joining of force of government agencies, Japanese language school teachers, students, parents and Japanese government representatives. Hasegawa's work contributes towards a long overdue recognition of formal education for heritage language students in schools.

Kawasaki's chapter works on a similar cohort of Japanese language learners as Hasegawa's, but focuses on different issues. Hasegawa promotes a new WACE subject for JHL, and focuses on issues of Japanese language education under a formal school system. Kawasaki's work is more on language maintenance, asking questions about the best ways to learn and teach Japanese as a community language in places other than formal schooling, such as community schools and families. *A place for second generation Japanese speaking children in Perth: Can they maintain Japanese as a community language*? discusses the status of Japanese as a community language in Perth and the impact of language policies on its maintenance. She argues that a language policy is created when people make choices on language use in the given speech community, even when these are not in written form. Based on the views of participants in her study, Kawasaki finds that a monolingual ideology is detrimental in promoting language diversity. Language maintenance for second-generation Japanese speakers in Perth has not been a priority in the eyes of language policy makers or education authorities. Community schools and families provide little support to those whose Japanese proficiency does not meet their 'standards'. Kawasaki calls for a more inclusive approach to cater for learners with varying

levels of Japanese, particularly to provide an opportunity for the second generation to interact with others in Japanese language. Favouring a bottom-up approach, she emphasises the important role of the family and community in this endeavour, and suggests that language maintenance will work better if the spirit of multiculturalism that values diversity is upheld and practised in family and community.

Like Kawasaki, Rajan has written on language teaching and maintenance, but with special reference to Tamil language. Chapter 10, *Tamil language in multilingual Singapore: Key issues in teaching and maintaining a minority language*, focuses on the challenges and initiatives relating to the survival of Tamil language. The issues include institutionalising Tamil as a mother tongue through the bilingual education system in Singapore and the maintenance of this minority language facilitated and supported by the media, schools, and the wider Indian community. Rajan states that although Tamil has been designated official status (alongside English, Mandarin and Malay) and is given institutional support, it is only a household language to just over a hundred and ten thousand Indians. The reasons she identifies include the linguistic heterogeneity of the ethnic Indians, and Tamil's reduced use among Tamil–English bilinguals, particularly in the home domain where English seems to prevail. Rajan supports the call for urgent pedagogical transformation that would reconsider the variety to be taught and the attitudes towards language that are expressed, on the basis that this could affect motivational levels of Tamil language learners. This may require a paradigm shift to address and respond to the changing needs of a younger, modern generation of Tamil bilinguals in Singapore. Tamil needs to be actively used and maintained in Singapore by the Tamil community at large, regardless of socioeconomic standing. Rajan envisages the possibility of strengthening Tamil's roots in Singapore through ongoing efforts at re-packaging Tamil and encouraging its use, and offers the possibility that it might even thrive if Tamil-speaking Singaporeans make a conscious effort to identify with and actively speak the language. Rajan's work fills a significant gap in the existing literature on Tamil language learning and maintenance in Singapore.

Chapter 11 is on language policy studies in a Chinese society. Xu's *Functional English and Chinese as mediums of instruction in a higher institution in Hong Kong* looks at the roles of Chinese and English as mediums of instruction (MOI) in Hong Kong. Xu's work differs from the previous chapters in that he investigates Chinese as a language *in* education, rather than as a language *of* education (as a curriculum subject). He points out that Cantonese and *Putonghua* in Hong Kong co-exist alongside English, and the complex multilingual situation is reflected by the language policy: biliteracy (Chinese and English) and trilingualism (Cantonese, *Putonghua* and English). Based on a case study of two courses in a government-funded university in Hong Kong, Xu argues that the MOI is highly context dependent, and the choice of MOI is a dynamic negotiation process rather than a static or stigmatised policy stipulation. Xu promotes: (1) alignment between institutional language-in-education policies and the government's language policy of 'biliteracy and trilingualism'; (2) coherence and continuity among the language-in-education policies from primary to tertiary education; (3) multilingual repertoires of teachers and students and multilingual resources as linguistic and cultural assets; and (4) the

complementary roles of local languages and English and the 'norm' of translanguaging practices. More specifically, in multilingual societies such as Hong Kong, Xu argues that higher education institutions should make language policies compliant with the regional language-in-education policies, and adopt models of MOI that align with the multilingual reality of diverse teaching and learning communities. He asserts that language-in-education policies and multilingual MOI models should pave the way for all schools and higher education institutions in Hong Kong to become 'multilingual sites, where the three major languages could co-exist in a complementary way' (Kirkpatrick and Chau 2008, pp. 42–43). Xu's work contributes to the study of the ongoing discourse of language policy-making and issues of MOI in multilingual societies.

The authors of the chapters in this book are currently located, for the most part, in Western Australia, and those who are not have former or ongoing links within higher education in that state. In this they are an embodiment of the perspective taken in the book: their geographical backgrounds are diverse, and include China, Japan, Singapore, the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe; but their individual histories have been, to a greater or lesser extent, shaped by that Western Australian context that they all share. Thus they represent the global and the local, diversity and similarity. The studies that they have undertaken and on which they report illustrate the ongoing search for a way of being in a changing world, and add important insights and new dimensions to theory and data resources in the field.

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Occupying the 'Third Space': Perspectives and Experiences of Asian English Language Teachers

Toni Dobinson

Abstract This chapter is drawn from a larger study which describes the experiences and perspectives of a group of Asian English language teachers who were also postgraduate students in a Master's program provided offshore in Vietnam and onshore in Australia by an Australian university. Case study data were gathered from the two sites through semi-structured interviews, related documents and primary texts. Findings relating to one of the key interview questions, which investigated Asian postgraduates' responses to Western educational discourses, form the basis of the chapter. Asian teachers reported feeling very influenced by pedagogical approaches which had originated in the West, and felt professionally inspired by them to search for new, innovative teaching approaches. They also recognised the benefits of a synthesis of Western and local approaches. Despite occupying this 'Third Space', however, Asian postgraduates reported feelings of inferiority, disruption, and frustration on both personal and pedagogic levels when attempting to work within Western discourses and, in some cases, when working alongside Western teachers. In this chapter I argue for greater recognition of what Asian teachers can offer in terms of their ability to 'adapt' rather than to 'adopt' (Li, TESOL Quarterly, 32(4):696), and 'recast' rather than imitate (Chowdhury and Phan, Asia Pacific Journal of Education 28(3):311). This cultural and educational acumen could form the basis for more dialogue between language teachers in the Asia Pacific region.

Keywords Third space · Intercultural competence · Educational discourses · Transnational education · Asian English language teachers

1 Introduction

Carl Rogers starts his book *Freedom to Learn* (1969, pp. vi–vii) with a series of questions. He predicts the political implications of education as it was developing in his time and the move towards an alliance between education and profit-making corporations. He foresaw a world which was increasingly globalised and at the

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same time increasingly inward looking or localised: a world where education became a commodity and an export; a world where 'schooling' became the new world religion, necessary for participation in society (Illich 1970); a world of 'pedagogic action' in line with the interests of the dominant players (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, p. 9) which, in this case, is the Western world.

According to Milner, such a world requires teaching built upon knowledge and awareness of diversity, incorporating issues of race, cultural conflict and meritocracy, and conceptions of deficit. Freire (1970) argues for all teachers concerned with bringing down educational hegemonies in all forms, to be enfranchised or, as Milner says, 'to have a seat at the table' (2010, p. 122). Currently, many English language teachers for whom English is a second language are closer to the 'Third Space', or intercultural competence and the ability to work within varied educational discourses, than their counterparts who speak English as a first language. They are plurilingual, pluricultural and in control of what Phan calls 'a harmonious combination of global and local pedagogies' (2004, p. 52), but struggle to have their ideas valued by teachers with English as a first language. Much has been written about the need for second or foreign language teachers to be metaculturally aware, reflecting upon Self and Other (Bright and Phan 2011; Louie 2005; Milner 2010) and moving towards occupancy of what Bhabha calls the 'Third Space', an in-between position or 'ambivalent space in which third perspectives can grow in the margins of dominant ways of seeing' (1994, pp. 227–237). Being plurilingual and pluricultural is a step towards being in the Third Space, yet the voices of many Asian teachers of English go unheard when it comes to prevailing educational discourses. Western-generated, top-down syllabus designs often prescribe methodologies developed outside local contexts and do not reflect local voices, while Western expatriate teachers living in Asia sometimes do not give local teachers the respect they deserve (Widin 2010).

This chapter describes Asian and, in particular, Vietnamese English-language teachers' responses to Western educational discourses, the influences these discourses have had on their teaching and learning, and the underlying feelings of deficit and difference that emerge despite successful adaptation to dual discourses and high levels of intercultural competence. Conclusions focus on providing greater recognition of the contributions of Asian teachers.

2 Related Literature

2.1 Western Educational Discourses and Local Contexts

Critical pedagogy has urged deconstruction of long-standing Orientalist binary paradigms (Takayama 2008, p. 19) and arrived at the conclusion that 'social, cultural and political contexts … are so diverse, the educational systems so incommensurable that it has become very difficult to make any generalisations about the best way to teach' (Kramsch 2009, p. 245). Despite this, Widin's study (2010) of expatriate

teachers involved in university English language teaching projects in East and South East Asia describes the symbolic violence (Bourdieu 1984) of colonialism and aid often manifest in such projects. She talks about the undervaluing and marginalisation of host country Asian staff and teachers, even when they have more training and cultural capital than the teachers brought in to do the job. The result can be self-marginalisation and debasement of the host country's teachers (Widin 2010).

On the brighter side, the literature indicates that there has been some partial deconstruction of East/West teaching and learning paradigms (Takayama 2008). Educational trends and related philosophies can move like shifting sands, parts of the dynamic social, political and economic climates of their time. Just as one idealised set of educational principles has been established, another may emerge to meet the needs of a changing global economy. This is apparent in the way that American and Japanese educational systems are now developing very differently, with the former moving towards greater centralisation in its institutional and pedagogic beliefs and away from 'progressive' pedagogical theories to a neo-liberal focus on testing, standards and core curriculum, and the latter moving towards decentralisation, differentiation of curricula and a 'progressive' pedagogical ethos inspired by humanistic notions of *kosei* (individuality) and *yutori* (more room for growth) (Takayama 2008, p. 19). Such movement highlights the dynamic nature of educational discourse. In recent years, several authors have suggested a move towards a more context-based approach to teaching and learning (Bax 2003; Kramsch 2009), but Asian teachers continue to struggle with the low status of approaches not endorsed by current Western educational theory. Regardless of their ability to manage 'one community, two systems' (Liu and Fisher 2010, p. 180) and operate in at least two languages and cultures, they receive little recognition of the thirdness of perspective that this gives them.

2.2 Thirdness

The idea of being in a Third Space has captured the imaginations of scholars in many fields, including contributors to this volume (see McAlinden, Chapter, "Can Teachers Know Learners' Minds? Teacher Empathy and Learner Body Language in English Language Teaching"). It is referred to as a third 'culture', a third 'stance' or just 'thirdness' (Kramsch 2009). In cultural studies the Third Space is seen as critique which condemns the discourses of domination and 'occupies a space that is neither inside nor outside the history of Western domination but in a tangential relation to it' (Prakash 1992, p. 8). Bhabha (1994) calls this position 'hybridity' (p. 277), an in-between position; 'an ambivalent space in which third perspectives can grow in the margins of dominant ways of seeing' (p. 237). In the field of urban planning and design, Soja (1996) has suggested that the binary of 'same' and 'different' be replaced with 'both' and 'also'. The Third Space, according to him, is a place where there can be creative combinations and the provision of alternative ways of thinking which go beyond conventional borders and the status quo (Soja

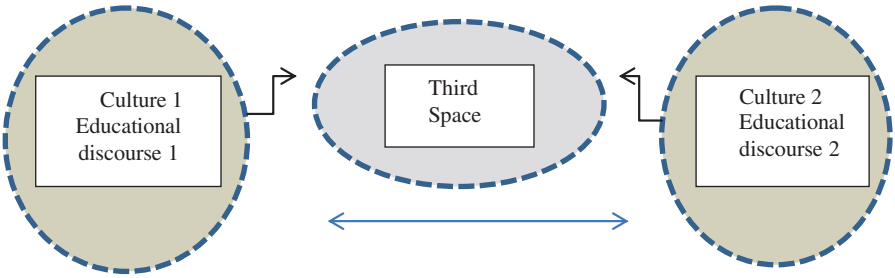

Fig. 1 The Third Space

1996). Similarly, in religious studies, Ingleby states that 'we need to develop ways of cultural interaction, of forming community, that both destroy existing oppositions and create newness, resulting in hybridity or a Third Space' (2006, p. 1). The Third Space provides not so much a new identity (all about me) but a new identification (all about me and another, or even the Other-someone different from me). Culture, he says, requires a non-sovereign view of Self.

In pedagogy, Kramsch favours the term Third Stance rather than Third Culture, as the former suggests more of a process or 'oppositional way of being' than a permanent or static place (2009, p. 248). Culture, and the ontology and epistemology associated with it, she argues, needs to be seen as 'a mode, but not a place, of belonging' as 'imagined as it is real', as a move away from teaching, learning and research conceptualised through traditional dichotomies, and towards dynamic, emergent phenomena which disassemble binaries in culture (2009, p. 248). Such a position is socially constructed and produced through social interaction and discussion (Bhabha 1994; Gutiérrez 2008; Moje et al. 2004). To be in a state of thirdness requires collaboration and innovation (Bhabha 1994), sense-making (both joint and individual), shared understandings and practices (Gutiérrez 2008) and intercultural competence (Crozet et al. 1999).

The idea of thirdness has given rise to Kramsch's 'ecological culture' and Bax's context-based approach. Both of these teaching approaches are highly 'context-sensitive and adapted to the demands of the environment' (Kramsch 2009, p. 247). Such an approach to language education means focusing attention on de-territorialised communicative practices (Blommaert 2005). This perspective is not without its stresses, involving the building of new practices and ontologies which may be historically and socially complex and untidy (Gutiérrez 2008). Teachers in a globalised world may have a new skill set and increased intercultural competence, but at the same time they may experience 'dislocation and disjuncture' (Neilsen 2011, p. 19), states which are by-products of operating in the Third Space. In short, thirdness sits outside Western educational discourses and in opposition to them, even as it is defined and influenced by their existence. Thirdness in this chapter is referred to as a 'space' (Bhabha 1994) rather than a 'stance' (Kramsch 2009) because 'stance' could be seen as a perspective or viewpoint anchored within Firstness, a situation represented more accurately by a Venn Diagram, while 'space' suggests that effort and movement are required to reach this position, as represented above (Fig. 1):

Table 1 Profile of the Asian postgraduate participants taking the MA Applied Linguistics onshore in Australia

Pseudonym	Age range	Gender	Nationality
Yin	20–30	F	Chinese
Lisa	20–30	F	Indonesian
Andee	20–30	M	Indonesian
Yoko	40–50	F	Japanese
Sahar	20–30	F	Bangladeshi
Wong	30–40	M	Chinese
Nguyen	20–30	M	Vietnamese
Mansour	30–40	M	Saudi Arabian
Ravinder	30–40	F	Indian
Jane	20–30	F	Taiwanese

3 Research Method and Design

In 2000 Medgyes observed that relatively little had been written about the experiences of non-native English-speaking teachers (Medgyes 2000). Berns et al. had noted this a year earlier, calling for more voices and views from the periphery to be heard (1999). Global discourse on English language teaching (ELT) has focused more recently on the experiences of non-native English speaking teachers (Hayes 2009), including personal biographies (Braine 2010) and research into perceived identities (Inbar-Lurie 2005), yet relatively few studies have explored the experiences of these teachers in depth.

The case study reported in this chapter was designed to investigate the world views of Asian postgraduates studying in Vietnam and Australia. It sought to discover how they live, work and make subjective meanings of their teaching and learning experiences. A qualitative research method was employed, in the conviction that realities are holistic, constructed and multiple, interacting in a state of 'mutual simultaneous shaping' without any separation between the knower and what is known (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 37). The study was also aligned with postmodern interpretivist interactionist approaches which try to focus on revealing informants' 'self-concept' and 'emotions' as well as notions of 'power' and 'ideology' (Denzin 1992, p. 74).

Participants comprised two groups of people across two different sites. The first group consisted of Asian postgraduates studying onshore at an Australian university, all English language teachers in their own countries. The second group was Vietnamese postgraduates from Vietnam studying at the same institution but offshore, in Ho Chi Minh City. All had at least three years of English language teaching experience. All were enrolled in the one-year, eight-unit, coursework MA (Applied Linguistics) offered both offshore in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and onshore in Australia. A profile of the participants is given in Tables 1 and 2.

Semi-structured individual face to face interviews were used to gather reflections and responses to the interview question: 'How have theories of teaching and learning, established mostly in the West, influenced your views on teaching

Table 2 Profile of the Vietnamese postgraduate participants taking the MA Applied Linguistics offshore in Vietnam

Pseudonym	Age range	Gender	Nationality
Tina	20–30	F	Vietnamese
Una	20–30	F	Vietnamese
Vera	20–30	F	Vietnamese
Hilda	20–30	F	Vietnamese
Tracy	20–30	F	Vietnamese
Tom	20–30	M	Vietnamese
Andrew	20–30	M	Vietnamese
Hannah	20–30	F	Vietnamese
Valerie	20–30	F	Vietnamese
Nina	20–30	F	Vietnamese

and learning?' Findings were analysed using an approach described by Miles and Huberman as 'transcendental realism' (1994, p. 4). The three main stages of this are data reduction, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions. As students related their experiences and ideas, some of their responses were in the form of 'narrative' (Labov 1972, 1982). These narratives were preserved in order not to fracture participants' ways of constructing meaning (Reissman 1993). Analysis of the narratives provided by participants complemented the segmented analysis and the analysis of related documents and primary texts used to triangulate the study.

4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Responses to Western Educational Discourses

The meaning that the Asian postgraduate students/English language teachers made from their teaching and learning encounters ranged from constructive to less constructive. Western learning theories and approaches had influenced participants in their classroom practice both explicitly and implicitly. Out-of-classroom encounters had also exercised considerable indirect influence over how participants responded to Western educational discourses.

On the one hand, the postgraduates shared a common view that exposure to Western teaching and learning theories, and approaches arising from these theories, had enthused and inspired them to try 'different ways' of teaching. They reported that they had discovered approaches to teaching which were beneficial for their learners, and felt liberated from the tedium of the traditional approaches to which they had become accustomed. They talked about increased 'good relationships' with students after implementing the new methodologies. They felt inspired to search for

new teaching styles and more competent approaches to their teaching. To varying extents, both onshore and offshore participants reported that exposure to current learning theories emanating from the West had led them to a new understanding of the 'good teacher' as someone who is 'flexible' and knowledgeable, gives positive feedback, provides strategies for independent learning, has a sense of humour and is prepared to embark upon lifelong learning. On the other hand, there was common feeling among the onshore group in particular that traditional Asian approaches to teaching and learning were equally as effective as those imported from the West. They drew on Eastern approaches to teaching and learning when they claimed that a 'good teacher' needed to be a controller, a role model, a counsellor, a knower of the students, a surrogate parent or care-giver and a builder of dreams. They felt that students needed to believe in the teacher but at the same time the teacher needed to be very strict. There was shared agreement that a teacher's role is to guide students away from 'dangers' and 'evil', and to model moral virtues not only in the classroom but in life generally. Such responses resonate with the work carried out by Dung (2005), Phan (2004) and the guidelines set down by the Constitution of Vietnam which state that 'the aim of education is to form and nurture the personality and moral qualities' (Constitution of Vietnam, Article 35) and that a teacher is 'an engineer of the soul' (Phan 2008, p. 9). Furthermore, they suggested that being an Asian teacher operating within the local context allowed insights into Asian students' behaviours and learning approaches. It provided them with insider perspectives on occurrences of plagiarism, and on phenomena beyond the classroom such as the degree of parental input in the lives of their students (even adult students).

Asian postgraduates also recognised the necessity to form a synthesis of Eastern and Western educational discourses in their roles as English language teachers, and to operate on many levels in the globalised world. For example, the idea of the teacher as a parent or care-giver needed to be married with the idea of the student as an independent learner. Strategies for memorisation needed to be provided alongside strategies for more creative learning approaches. Overall, they agreed that it was possible for Western-endorsed approaches to teaching to be interpreted and practised in equivalent but different ways in the East, a view in line with the observations of Phan (2004).

Despite these insights and positions of thirdness, however, the postgraduates intimated that they sometimes felt they were not valued by their colleagues in the West, or accorded the respect they deserved in terms of their experience managing 'one community, two systems' (Liu and Fisher 2010, p. 180), two educational discourses and two or three languages and cultures. As a result, deficit and difference underpinned much of the meaning they made from their teaching and learning encounters both in Asia and Australia. This led to a certain amount of fear of, and scepticism about, Western educational theory and related approaches. Participants claimed to feel afraid, inferior, looked down upon, different and as though they were living in colonial times, even though they are considerably closer to thirdness than most of their counterparts in the West.

4.2 Colonial Legacies

Reference to colonialism was prevalent in participants' responses to Western educational discourses, particularly those of the Indian and Bangladeshi postgraduates, with comments also made by the Vietnamese postgraduates. Sahar diverted from the interview question slightly to observe how Bangladeshis, even now, were unable to break free of the effects of colonialism, feeling 'overwhelmed' by a 'white skin' and 'acting in a servile manner' at Western teaching conferences. She added quite vehemently, 'I am not your servant any more. We are not in the colony'. She attributed ignorance about research, and a dearth of expertise in academic theorising in Bangladesh, to the Western colonial forces in her country's past: 'in our country there is not much of a new theory or new research … everyone is following the Western thing … we have no other way but to … follow Western research'. Such sentiments recall those of Prakash (1992, p. 8), who spoke of a Postcolonial state of being as the 'aftermath' or feeling of having been 'worked over' by colonial forces, and Bourdieu's notion of 'symbolic violence' mentioned earlier (1984). Some Vietnamese postgraduate students continued this line of thought, talking about 'aggressive' Westerners not caring about Vietnamese people but just wishing to colonise them.

There was an overall sense of a postcolonial residue which left many Asians feeling sub-standard and under the impression that the West still sees them as child-like and dependent. As former Indonesian President Sukarno said at his opening speech at the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, 'colonialism is not dead … in its modern dress it is a form of economic [and] intellectual control' (1955). More recently, Mahbubhani, an Asian academic, has pointed to a covert Western belief in its own moral superiority. This, he feels, is changing, although slowly, with the 'unwrapping' of the numerous layers of Western influence and the questioning of Western attitudes by many living outside the West (2008, pp. 129–130). Asians are no longer inclined to accept an educational theory just because it comes from the West, it seems.

4.3 Inadequacy

Beyond the classroom but related indirectly to the topic of the research, the picture painted by most Asian postgraduates was one of Western perceptions of Asians as 'not as fast or quick thinking', with the speed of social, political and educational change being much slower than in the Occident. They felt they were still seen as 'old-fashioned', 'not smart', 'underdeveloped', 'left behind', 'more primitive', 'not competent' or 'independent', unable 'to come up with [their] own things' particularly in the area of teaching and learning. The general feeling was that Westerners perceive Asians as inferior and 'look down on' them often because of human rights issues (the words 'inferior' and 'looked down upon' appeared 11 times in the transcripts), but also because they are too ready to follow 'regulations', too 'disciplined'

and principled, and not ready enough to show 'initiative' or 'creativity'. There was a suggestion that Asians were too compliant and diligent for their own good, moving to new approaches in education merely because they are told to do so by researchers in the West. Such findings are in line with studies which have reported Asian students' feelings of 'worthlessness' and 'inadequacy' (Aspland 1999, p. 37) and even of being devalued and marginalised by Western expatriate teachers (Widin 2010).

4.4 Unfamiliarity and Ignorance

Many participants provided comments during the interview which suggested that, even in a globalised world, there remains quite a gulf between West and East, Westerners and non-Westerners, Australians and Asians, Western teachers and Eastern teachers, Western educational discourses and Eastern educational discourses. This was attributed in part to a lack of meaningful contact, as well as to cultural and educational unfamiliarity. Nguyen said that, in his experience, volunteer teachers from America found it very difficult to teach in a Vietnamese context because of their lack of understanding and knowledge about 'the cultures and … concepts'. Wong, although not referring to teaching and learning directly, summed up the situation aptly:

> I have the kind of feeling many … Australians and Westerners … do not know much about China but they talk … a lot about China … I give an example … from China's family plan … when I talking with someone here … [they say] your government is stupid … it's terrible … people have the right to give birth to kids but … I think it's reasonable … you are put in that situation it is quite different … it's a very big population … too big … you seldom can find a city bus … when you go to the downtown… such a population it's not easy for the government to feed them … to clothe them … there should be more communication otherwise there's a lot of misunderstanding.

Westerners tend to perpetrate the image of Asia as 'exotic', slipping into what has been referred to as 'a tourist approach' to cross-cultural education (Schoorman 2011), according to participants. This is not to say that Westerners are not interested in knowing about Asia; as Nina stated, 'they want to explore and want to find out more about Asian people, the history, the war time, something like that', but currently exotic images resound with Orientalist and colonial overtones (Said 1978) and do not add to metacultural knowledge. These images impact upon Western educational discourses and find their way into the teacher education courses.

4.5 Emulation

A commonly shared response to Western educational theories was the notion of trying to 'fit in with', or 'imitate' in some way, Western approaches to teaching and learning. This can mean that on a personal level Asian teachers end up caught between cultures, as described by Yin:

> Back in China they have a word for people like me … it's just something like we … don't fully belong to Asian culture or fully belong to Australian, but we kind of half/half because we're not born here but we have grown up in China.

Similarly, Mansour explained that he was 'in the middle' with no desire 'to follow the whole Western culture' but at the same time not wanting 'to follow the … extremists … in Islam', sentiments also expressed by an Indian nurse in a study by Xu (2007). The participant reported feeling as if she had 'a foot here, a foot there, a foot nowhere' (Xu 2007, p. 259). Such feelings of 'Otherness' or lack of belonging and inability to 'fit in', due to inadequate cultural knowledge or perceived cultural differences and linguistic challenges, are well documented in research (Chen and Shorte 2010; Gu 2011; Lewthwaite 1996; Skyrme 2007; Xu 2007; Yue and Le 2010).

In their roles as English language teachers, the participants admitted that they 'try to … learn from the Western … lifestyles' and 'be equal with them', and to show that their ability is the 'same as [a] Westerner' and using what they term 'the reliable method'. Sometimes the desire to assimilate produces Asian teachers who neither attain a new skill set successfully nor retain their previous skill set, according to some of the postgraduates. The inability to meet top-down 'standards' can lead to a lack of confidence in teaching and learning and sow seeds of anxiety and fear—from which can arise feelings of lability, a form of instability talked about by Mercieca, Chapman and O'Neill (2013) and by Mercieca in Chapter, "Changing Perspectives of Literacy, Identity and Motivation: Implications for Language Education" of this volume.

4.6 Fear

Some of the comments provided by participants were oblique to the interview question but very relevant to it. For example, many conveyed a sense of fear of some kind, which went beyond the classroom but had implications for it. Andee and Wong spoke of their fear of their governments and incarceration, ending up in a 'big grave' if they spoke out or did something like having satellite TV installed in their homes. They also confided fear of their parents and of transgressing cultural and social norms; Wong related how he was regularly beaten with a flower pot by his parents for misdemeanours. Yoko spoke of the psychological fear she felt that Westerners would view her in the same negative way as they do other Asians.

In terms of teaching and learning, participants reported a fear of entering a staffroom full of expatriate teachers and joining in conversations with them. As a corollary, Hannah admitted being very afraid at first of 'contact with foreigners' (as were her Vietnamese colleagues) and, as a child, running away when foreigners spoke to her.

Other forms of fear among the postgraduates in their roles as English language teachers were not directly linked to the influences of Western theories of teaching and learning, but again were related. For example, they expressed fear of their own education systems, fear of their managers or immediate superiors, fear of not

knowing or teaching the right content and fear that students' poor test results will reflect upon them. As one Vietnamese lecturer of the postgraduates stated during a conversation, 'if you want to try to keep your image, you have to have all the students pass their exam, and in order for the student to pass the exam so they have to follow the text book'. Such views have been reiterated in research conducted with Mainland Chinese teachers (Gao and Watkins 2002) and have implications for the ability of teachers to respond positively to Western educational discourses.

As documented by previous researchers (Butler 2005; Ying and Young 2007), Asian educators 'feel safe' teaching to the text book and encourage students to rote learn. Any creativity or deviation from prescribed texts is furtive, as Hannah explains: 'I'll do it out of the observation of … the teaching quality manager because if they know I'm going out of the syllabus … it would be a big problem'. Insufficient knowledge of the subject also threatens teachers and lecturers, making them defensive when questions are directed to them, according to some of the participants. Overall, fear emerged as a considerable part of the negative experiences reported by Asian postgraduate students in this study. Another theme to emerge was one of 'difference', and this is discussed below.

4.7 Sociocultural Norms

As noted by previous researchers (Chang and Sue 2003; Juhana 2012; Koydemir and Demir 2008), participants claimed that differences between Asian and Western teaching and learning environments largely centre on the concepts of shyness and respect, constructs that interfere with Asian teachers' ability to embrace Western theories of teaching and learning wholeheartedly. These phenomena were not talked about negatively by Asian postgraduate students, but seen almost as an Asian trait (the word 'shy' was mentioned 16 times in the transcripts). Respect for Westerners, respect for each other, respect for university lecturers, respect for the elderly, respect for teachers and respect for students were all discussed in the interviews, indicating that the notion of 'respect' features largely in Asian settings. As Phan (2008) notes, the identities of Asians who are English language teachers are challenged by the alien values and practices embedded in the methodologies they are required to adopt. This requires negotiation or resistance, and constant reconstruction of identity. The participants discussed different manifestations of these phenomena in different living conditions, such as among developed but sparsely populated countries or developing populous countries.

4.8 Living Conditions and Hardship

The respondents alluded to disparities in living conditions and circumstances beyond the classroom as contributing to many of the differences in the way Asian teachers and their non-Asian counterparts respond to Western educational discourses. Wong

attempted to draw a picture of life in China during his formative years, in order to provide a backdrop for his responses:

> I was born in China and especially for the countryside and I was young … I did not have enough to eat … I went hungry … in 1997 I developed tuberculosis … and I got a big operation in year 2000 to remove one part of my lung so that's why I didn't got a master degree … I came here … I wanted to see more of the outside world and to get a degree … that's it really … I was born in 1970 … so at that time I was very poor.

The respondents felt that the degree of hardship still often experienced in many countries in Asia, and the inevitable difference this causes (not only in terms of education) between East and West is often not appreciated by Westerners, who may be blinded by the economic vitality of the Asian Dragons. Participants in a study in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007) described how low-paid Asian teachers and lecturers in places like Vietnam and Indonesia often work two jobs and have many family commitments brought about by living in extended families. Commitment may even involve living in grandparents' houses permanently to help with the daily chores.

Participants taking the Applied Linguistics course offshore (and especially the women), who might be working two jobs, travelling long distances and looking after families, described their time in primary and high school as arduous—not to mention the time spent on the course in which they were currently enrolled. Ravinder became visibly upset when she talked about having to leave her twin infants in India with her mother while she completed her degree, with no contact for up to six months at a time. Such experiences, including financial difficulties (Forbes-Mewett et al. 2009), have been reported elsewhere in research conducted in Australia on international students generally and Chinese students in particular (Gao and Liu 1998; Khawaja and Dempsey 2008).

The concepts of hard work and hardship were conspicuous in interviews with Asian postgraduates, particularly in the areas of teaching and learning and their ability to respond to innovative educational theories. This marked them out as 'different' to people in the West, they said. Some participants speculated that many of these hardships or differences were the effects of socioeconomic divides between the public and private sectors, rural and urban areas, and financially disadvantaged and wealthy backgrounds.

4.9 Socioeconomic Divides

A marked divide between conditions in public and private education in Asia has been noted by educational researchers in the region (Alderman et al. 2001; Foondun 2002; Welch 2007) and was alluded to by participants. They explained that low salaries in public schools often caused teachers to save their energy and creativity, and to escape to better-paid, casual private settings after their day jobs. Such conditions are not conducive to making the effort required to whole-heartedly embrace Western educational theories and approaches.

Students enrolled in public schools cannot go elsewhere because of economic constraints. Principals are aware of the lack of teacher motivation in these schools, but can do little to change the situation without the necessary government funds. Equally, they cannot terminate underperforming employees because they are government public servants with permanent positions. Security of tenure is not found in the private sector, according to participants. Teachers 'have to work very well' in private schools or they 'lose their [jobs]' and 'the boss can change them' at whim 'if they don't perform well'. Foreign teachers work in the private schools, on the whole, making it easier for them to use the approaches and methods coming out of Western educational discourses.

In terms of learning, participants agreed that students in public schools are compelled to memorise and reproduce existing ideas much more than in the private sector. They are discouraged from asking questions and told to 'be quiet in the classroom'. In language courses, speaking tests are virtually non-existent; and as students have very limited access to the internet, communication and discovery suffer. Students with the financial capacity often go abroad, to wealthier Asian countries or to Western countries, to complete their studies.

The rural–urban divide in Asian education has also been well documented (Kam 2002; Meganathan 2009; Qian and Smyth 2008). Teachers working in the countryside in Vietnam usually earn much lower salaries than those in the cities, according to participants, possibly because they possess fewer qualifications than those in urban centres. This further decreases motivation for change and innovation in teaching and learning, and diminishes the chances of positive responses to new Western educational theories and methodologies. Teachers working in the cities are more receptive to the latest methodologies, as outlined below by one Vietnamese lecturer of the postgraduate students, not part of the cohort described in this chapter but involved in the larger study:

> Teaching and learning is different from place to place … more open-minded areas I met in the big city where people can get the influence from the West … and where the teachers are well trained, better trained than those in the countryside, and then that influence can be seen more clearly than in rural areas … In the countryside, life is more conservative and also the teachers there are more conservative, they don't have more opportunity to be trained, to apply the new approach, for example.

Learners in urban areas like Ho Chi Minh City are reputed to be more active in classes than those in rural areas, who remain quite passive, according to Valerie. Related to this is the fact that learners in urban areas have the advantage of committed parent involvement in the classroom, and teachers may be more motivated to perform if they are receiving higher salaries. Learners in rural areas not only do not benefit from parent involvement at school but often are required to 'work a lot for [their] parents' before, after and during school hours.

People living in the countryside generally have fewer opportunities in terms of teaching and learning and are more inclined to be bound by tradition and cultural norms than those in the cities, according to participants. Teaching in such contexts is not always open to methodologies encouraged by the West, which are based on learning theories developed in very different contexts. On the other hand, students

from wealthy families who reside in urban settings often have ‘lots of experience from travelling around’ and ‘moving from country to country’, making them more ‘independent thinkers’ than ‘traditional Vietnamese learners’ and instilling in them a certain level of confidence that what they are doing is right. This confidence separates those Asians who see themselves through a deficit lens from those who merely see themselves as different. While difference is a more positive perception than deficit, such feelings can translate into a certain mistrust or scepticism of change and insecurity about remaining different.

4.10 Scepticism

There was a perceived lack of respect by expatriate teachers for local Asian teachers and their teaching approaches and beliefs, a phenomenon which has been elaborated upon by researchers like Bright and Phan (2011), Milner (2010) and Widin (2010). Hilda, who taught English in a private centre, felt that the foreign teachers in her workplace wasted her time by interrupting her lessons and not being ‘really helpful’. Furthermore, she added, ‘They don’t really listen to us’. Vietnamese teachers returning from ‘foreign countries’ felt they needed to ‘apply something new’, leaving local teachers without any ‘working method’ and giving them a ‘difficult’ or ‘hard time’. Lack of teaching confidence was mentioned by several participants; Valerie stated that ‘if I want to be a teacher I must study more … learn a lot … I must do hard’; but now I ‘have not enough time’. The demands on time for teachers, who often work two jobs and are raising families, militates against professional development and leaves them feeling very different from well-educated colleagues returning from overseas.

A common perception among the Vietnamese postgraduates was a mismatch between Western endorsed methodologies and the contexts within which many Asian teachers find themselves.. This mismatch is reminiscent of previous research highlighting the need for a sociocultural approach to teaching and learning (Lantolf 2000). The problems associated with simply replacing one teaching methodology with another taken from a different context have been remarked upon by many in the field (Bax 2003; Hallinger 2010; Kam 2002; Kumaravadivelu 2006; Meganathan 2009). Inevitably, as mentioned earlier, a situation of ‘one community, two systems’ arises (Liu and Fisher 2010, p. 180) which may be damaging or beneficial, depending upon implementation. Participants talked about the difficulties of effecting changes in pedagogy in their school or university environments:

> In Vietnam a new series of textbook have been introduced … at the high schools … these textbooks obey on the communicative approach, but … as teachers we cannot apply … we cannot teach communicative approach at high schools … It’s very difficult. The first problem … class size is very big and … teaching to the test tendency is unavoidable in Vietnam … So as a teacher we have to teach the student what they can do in test. [Tracy]

Even when Asian teachers manage to engage in professional development by attending courses offshore, it is difficult for them to suggest changes to their experienced

colleagues, who may have been their own teachers at some stage, without feeling they are devaluing their mentors. In any case, new textbooks espousing the latest Western methodology are only as good as the teachers using them, and without appropriate professional development 'most other teacher cannot apply that … teaching method'. Coupled with 'shy' students, seating arrangements which discourage conversation and hierarchical teacher-student relationships, it is difficult to apply the principles of interactive teaching, especially if the role of teacher-as-moral-guide (Phan 2008), which many respondents felt was an essential part of a 'good teacher', is hard to negotiate within the new paradigm.

This said, however, the Vietnamese respondents reported that on the whole, with the help of more research in the area in 'recent decades', teaching has become more 'tailor-made' in Vietnam, taking into account 'geographical features' and culture, and accommodating the differences between people in various parts of urban and rural Vietnam. With much hard work, Asian teachers have managed to bridge Eastern and Western educational discourses in many contexts, developing a third perspective with a closer proximity to the Third Space.

5 Conclusion and Implications

The meaning that the Asian postgraduate students in this case study made from their teaching and learning encounters in Australia and Vietnam was simultaneously reassuring and disquieting. Participants described being very influenced by Western theories of teaching and learning, and using these new approaches with variable success depending upon the background of the learners in their classes and the teaching contexts. There still exists, however, an asymmetrical relationship between Asia and the West in terms of movement towards the Third Space and all that such a move entails: intercultural competence, dual identity, and 'a harmonious combination of global and local pedagogies' (Phan 2004, p. 52). This needs to change (Bhabha 1994; Kramsch 2009; Lo Bianco et al. 1999; Taylor and Chiam 2011). Rhetoric which promotes Western knowledge as the 'apex of civilisation', with non-Western knowledge ignored or demoted to the Other (Sanderson 2003, p. 150), is still at large. Acknowledgement of Asian teachers' closer proximity to a position of thirdness, with their ability to operate on many levels by using a 'third perspective' and locating themselves comfortably 'within two identity umbrellas' (Phan 2004, p. 52), is still to be realised in the West. Despite Asian teachers' additive approach to pedagogy, their ability and willingness to 'adapt' rather than 'adopt' (Li 1998, p. 696) and 'recast' rather than imitate (Chowdhury and Phan 2008, p. 311), perceptions of deficit and difference remain firmly in place in the minds of many Asian educators and are reinforced either explicitly or implicitly in Western social, theoretical and educational discourses.

With transnational education on the increase, the joint delivery of courses by host and home country lecturers is the first step towards dialogue between educators from different cultural backgrounds. Many such courses are currently designed and

delivered entirely by the home university's lecturers, even when the qualifications and experience of lecturers from the local setting match them. This may be due to votes of no confidence in the ability of local lecturers by Australian institutions, but equally it could be due to a lack of self-confidence by Asian teachers themselves, as revealed in this study. This is unlikely to change until local teachers are employed to teach in teacher education courses and are included in course design, with their contributions valued. As Middlehurst (2002, p. 11) suggests, permission to 'design and determine content' needs to be more equally shared.

Working together with Asian counterparts will facilitate more dialogue between Asian educators and Australian educators, enabling Australian teachers to maximise learning opportunities with Asian learners in their classrooms and boosting confidence and self-respect in Asian teachers. As iterated by other authors in this volume (Mercieca, Chapter, "Changing Perspectives of Literacy, Identity and Motivation: Implications for Language Education"; McAlinden, Chapter, "Can Teachers Know Learners' Minds? Teacher Empathy and Learner Body Language in English Language Teaching"), interculturality involves discussion about Self and Other. The formalisation of workshops and groups, focusing on such discussion as well as on educational discourses, could take place on campuses and in schools, between teachers and lecturers from different cultural backgrounds and countries. This will help to break down barriers and relieve the apprehensions of both Asian and Australian teachers—no easy task, as it is difficult enough to get secondary and primary teachers from the same cultural background to cross the boundaries of status and perceived expertise to engage in discussion; but with the right strategies and finances in place, it may be achievable.

If there is to be a change in the meaning that Asian teachers make from their teaching and learning encounters, it has to be effected by the fostering of mutual respect (Bowser et al. 2007, p. 678) and recognition of the importance of teacher identity (Phan 2008). There needs to be informed, two-way dialogue in the region, on teaching and learning and the different contexts within which education lies, as well as greater appreciation of the diversity of world views. As Hamston (2000, p. 6) says, 'Our values and our ways of seeing the world … are never complete, finished; each individual's 'becomingness' is open and dialogue keeps this process alive'.

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Changing Perspectives of Literacy, Identity and Motivation: Implications for Language Education

Paul Mercieca

Abstract This chapter affirms the value of secure but flexible cultural identities in developing a form of critical intercultural literacy which is not merely as a set of skills, but a deeper set of understandings. Drawing on the findings of a study of a migrant group in Australia, it suggests that such literacy can be acquired in third spaces between the familiar and the new. From a sociocultural perspective, it is argued that for successful language learning and social interaction, the development of critical intercultural literacy should overarch the narrower concepts of communicative competence and cultural literacy. It is also argued that teaching and learning are much less effective if educator and learner cultural values conflict, and if school literacy learning does not connect with personal experience.

Keywords Critical intercultural literacy · Cultural identity · Cultural literacy · Intercultural communication · Learner motivation · Multiliteracies · Northern Soul

1 Introduction

This chapter considers various theoretical perspectives of literacy, identity and motivation, and emphasises the sociocultural dimensions of language learning. The issue of identity, in language learning in particular, has recently become much more central, as clearer understandings about the ways in which effective learning is impacted by motivation and in turn, motivation is shaped by identity, are developed. Learners now are served by approaches to teaching that focus not only on the development of language skills but also on the development of their wider intercultural literacy and identity. The increasing emphasis on learner identity in language learning is evidenced by the number of studies which focus on the development of teacher identity (Dobinson 2012; Liu and Xu 2011; Phan 2008; Stanley 2012), and has implications for the way in which teachers develop their own intercultural literacy and then assist their learners in their development.

Drawing on a study of a group of British migrants in Western Australia, this chapter attempts to clarify the way in which literacy and identity essentially con-

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stitute each other, and are not separate issues. After exploring the wider concept of critical intercultural literacy, more recent understandings of learner motivation are considered: intercultural competence is argued to be crucial for successful language development, with clear implications for classroom pedagogy. Finally, there is a consideration of ongoing discussions about World Englishes and their implications for language use beyond the classroom. The chapter helps to locate language teaching within the framework of social action, by exploring the ways in which learners can be motivated and empowered.

2 Cultural Literacy and Cultural Identity

Cultural literacy is often understood as the ability to appreciate the traditions, values and beliefs of various cultures. A narrower interpretation, following Hirsch (1987) and indicates an understanding of a range of canonical texts in the dominant culture of one's own society. Warnock (1985) critiques this 'sharing' approach, instead proposing a 'contributing' approach, referring to Bowers' (1974) 'ecological' perspective. Parkinson and Saunders (1999) extend their definition of cultural literacy to include the ability to engage in dialogue with the culture of others. As Ferdman (1990) suggests, literacies are culturally constructed and vital for developing cultural identity.

Literacies are more than just autonomous skills; they are closely linked to and shaped by our identities. Any form of teaching can only empower learners effectively if it engages with diverse identities and is based on a close understanding of cultural identity (Ferdman 1990). Cultural identity is more fluid than ethnic and social identity, and is typically influenced by such experiences as language learning and migration. For Ferdman (1990, p. 193), it involves 'the perceived bases for a person's categorisation … and the person's feeling for this cultural content'. Core aspects of identity vary for individuals, although variation is more restricted for 'subordinate' groups, who need to experience stability before they can explore more individual aspects of identity.

Most writing about identity centres on its creation, maintenance and change. Identity is a fragile construction, often more symbolic than substantial, and mostly self-legitimising via specific cultural practices. Identity studies, such as those in philosophy, psychology and sociology, have focused on both small groups, like subcultures, and wider groupings, like ethnicities. Discussion of subjectivities and objectivities can be complex, and psychological and ontological concerns are unavoidable. Lacan (1949) regards any attempt to establish identity to involving an alienating 'other', making all identifications necessarily false. Other views place emphasis on the relationship between individual and society. Marcuse (1964), following the Frankfurt School approach, argues that consumer society creates false needs and false private identities. For Heidegger (1969), identity is defined through difference, and, for the Birmingham school, subcultural identities are oppositional, ideological and counter-hegemonic. From the perspective of the Chicago school

and symbolic interactionists, identity is a social construction, created in interaction with others. Goffman (1959) views identity as located within performance and as a dynamic process, which or focusses not just on establishing difference but on achieving belonging.

The earlier Birmingham school research into subcultural identity has stressed difference and resistance (e.g. Hebdige 1979), but Thornton (1995) instead redefines subcultural identity as constructed in opposition to both other subcultures and mainstream culture. Bennett (2000) and Redhead (1990) suggest that youth groups interact more closely with mainstream culture. Hodgkinson (2002), Maffesoli (1996), and Muggleton (2000) describe post-subcultural settings where new forms of individual identity have evolved that focus on lifestyle and media consumption rather than class, gender or ethnicity. Their descriptions align more closely with symbolic interactionism, but ignore social wholes.

The way in which identities can change has been explored by Bhabha (1994), drawing on Turner's (1967) concept of the 'liminal' border between adolescence and adulthood to describe the wider group phenomenon of cultural 'hybridity': how individuals and groups engage with others may determine their ongoing cultural identity. The process of identity change has been referred to by Kroes (1996, p. 164) as 'cultural creolisation', exploring identities as developed and transformed by the impact of modern global geo-politics. Drawing on concepts of identity forged in the Caribbean, Cuccioletta (2002) connects notions of 'transculturalism' originally explored by Marti (1891) and later Ortiz (1940), to describe the impact of the internet. For Cuccioletta, multiculturalism creates borders, while transculturalism is more fluid. Kraidy (2009) has argued for a 'critical transculturalism' based on the power of 'human agency'.

Resistance to cultural pluralism often centres on ethnicity (Yinger 1994), a construct associated with nationality, language, race and culture. For Phillipson (1999) and Safran (1999)**,** language alone can no longer underpin nationalism and monoculturalism. However, there is some confusion as to what multiculturalism implies. Sen (2006) has recently critiqued the construction of identity within a 'multicultural' framework, describing a consequent 'plural monoculturalism'. He has argued for 'multiple' identities, a concept echoed in Australia by Pearson (2006), who has proposed 'layered identities' as a way of exploring commonality. Yet for groups lacking social mobility, identity is more a matter of 'fate' than 'choice' (Gray 2000). Fiske (1987), drawing on Lacan (1949), suggests that cultural self-definition is ideological, as it constructs power relations with others: cultural difference thus often implies conflict, domination and resistance, and it may not be possible for those in marginalised groups to change or modify identities, even when they are expected to assimilate to dominant cultural values. Yet the dynamics between dominant and subordinate groups can be complex. Thompson (1991) suggests, in a study of pre-industrial England, that it was possible for many of those of lower social status to have alternating rebellious and deferential identities. Small (1987) believes that the ability to adapt and survive in African–American culture requires stealth; preserving identity requires a syncretic, syndetic and pluralisitic approach, both engaging with and resisting dominant culture. For Small (1987, p. 22), European culture has an 'either/or' approach, while African culture has a 'both/and' approach.

There has been much research into the broad field of popular culture, music, meaning and identity, using data from a variety of sources to illustrate the practices of production, performance, mediation, text and consumption (Shuker 1994). Recent studies have tended to focus on issues of reception and consumption as active and contextual, and suggest that investment in leisure activity is closely connected to personal development at ontological and epistemological levels. Although there has been some attention to the issue of cultural literacy, its connections to cultural identity and popular culture have not yet been fully articulated. There is need for an understanding of how literacy and identity can be developed simultaneously within popular subcultures. It has been suggested that individuals may perceive 'emblematic' or 'core' cultural aspects of identity as more or less personally relevant (Ferdman 1990, pp. 190–194). In educational settings in particular, if educator and learner cultural values are at odds, learning is less effective. Where there are few opportunities to create culturally significant meanings, the 'ability to create a positive and constructive cultural identity will be weakened' (Ferdman 1990, p. 199). For Vygotsky (1987), everyday concepts are mostly learnt via daily life, whereas academic knowledge is acquired through schooling, each contributing to the development of the other. Social constructivist research addresses the way in which school literacy learning is able to build on the foundation of personal experience. The kind of personal experiences described in research into the Western Australia (WA) Northern Soul scene (Mercieca et al. 2013) may well have the potential to develop the kind of cultural literacy described by Ferdman (1990) because of the contingent development of cultural identity. The Northern Soul scene, a cultural practice originating in Britain, evolved from the mid-1960s 'mod' movement and has spread globally via the internet and migration; being part of it may well become a label of ethnic identity for migrant adults in Australia. The Northern Soul scene in WA demonstrates two 'opposite' aspects of continuity and change, and shows that a clearly defined sense of cultural identity creates space for individual identity, in which the two forms of identity are in a symbiotic relationship. For the individuals involved, it is clear that a more flexible form of cultural identity can co-exist with a range of other, more stable, aspects of identity.

Cultural literacy is increasingly viewed as an inclusive concept, encompassing subcultural literacy and reflexivity about popular culture, as explored by Collins (1995). Schirato and Yell (2000), developing Bourdieu's (1984) idea of 'cultural capital', describe cultural literacy as a critical 'feel' for negotiating between cultural rules and practices as they are continuously transformed; this characterisation accords with the way Perth Northern Soul fans engage with their particular cultural practices. Ferdman (1990) suggests that cultural literacy is really framed within cultural diversity and is not only crucial to building cultural identity but is modulated by that identity. For example, for the Northern Soul people in Perth, the development of cultural literacy is related to the experience of migration, the renegotiation of identity and the exploration of their culture. The widening of the scene that commenced about 2006 indicates a willingness to engage with diverse perspectives that is the hallmark of cultural literacy.

Cultural literacy is dialectically connected to cultural identity. The ability to recognise diversity is constituted by cultural practices and identity, but is also a medium of this constitution. In order for cultural literacy to develop, there must be both an underlying level of stability that makes engaging with the cultural practices and identities of others less threatening, and a degree of instability which forces such engagement.

3 Critical Intercultural Literacies

The wider constructs of cultural literacy so far discussed imply ongoing curiosity about unfamiliar genres, discourses and values, all of which are continuously transformed by practice. It also follows that, for full involvement in cultural practices and accrual of cultural capital, appropriate cultural literacy must be developed. Research into the overarching concept of literacy itself has been extensive, based on work by Dewey (1909, 1933), Freire (1970, 1973) and Vygotsky (1962, 1978), and refined by Aronowitz and Giroux (1985). Just as Gardner (1983) and Goleman (1995) have posited multiple intelligences, literacy is also not necessarily singular, and definitions are contested. There has been work on critical literacy such as that by Gee (1990), and also on critical pedagogy (McLaren 1995). Small, who doubts the ability of conventional literacy to survive change, suggests (1987, p. 244) that it is a good servant but a bad master. Nevertheless, concern for more conventional forms of literacy (Street 1984) persists. Of these, 'basic' literacy (Rasool 1999) is generally understood as essential reading and writing skills, 'functional' literacy (Gray 1956) implies the ability to function socially, particularly in the area of employment, and a more 'liberal' view of literacy (Papen 2005) focuses on the skills useful in education and the arts. Papen draws on Jarvis (1987), whose work was in turn informed by the idea of Schön's (1983) 'reflective practice' and Kolb and Fry's (1975) 'experiential learning'. Much research into adult literacy stems from work by Knowles (1968) on 'andragogy', an idea first introduced by a German teacher, Alexander Kapp, in 1833, by which teaching strategies for adults are based on engagement with their own experiences, problems and purposes. Many current understandings of literacy subsume what Wilkinson (1965) describes as 'oracy', or the ability to both listen and speak effectively. For Papen (2005), literacy involves not just a range of technical skills but a struggle for social inclusion and cultural diversity; it is something people can change by creating their own practices.

As understandings of meaning and culture increasingly take diversity into account, there has been a move towards 'multiple literacies' (Kellner 1998, 2004), referring to the proliferating literacies needed to engage in multimedia and multicultural settings. These literacies, including scientific literacy, technological literacy, media literacy, visual literacy and computer literacy (Luke 1997; Quin 2003; Shamos 1995) present great challenges to traditional education. From one perspective, multiple literacies can be regarded merely as skills needed to navigate and survive modernity: in acquiring them, individuals are better equipped to participate

in a global economy. The New London Group (1996, p. 60) claims pedagogy should connect with 'multiliteracies', but Tyner (1998) critiques the splintering of literacy into discrete parts rather than having them operate as an intersecting set of social practices.

Arguments for media and visual literacy go back toMcLuhan (1962, 1964) and Postman (1985), and reflect Kress (1997) in the way media forms have converged in the age of the internet. Critical approaches to computer literacy (Feenberg 1991; Kellner 1998, 2004) are less technophobic, and are essentially based on Illich's (1975) conception of networks as 'tools for conviviality'. From this viewpoint, computer literacy involves technical skills, but also communicative ability, social engagement and the ability to engage in transformative practices. A range of social and cultural literacies, including 'ecoliteracy', economic literacy, musical literacy, and many others have gradually been added to the field of literacy in general. Arguments have been made recently for the value of 'remix' literacy (Pegrum 2009), reflecting the prevalence of hybrid cultures and subcultures. In the area of language learning, the concept of additive literacy (Bauer 2009) builds on Cummins' (1981) Common Underlying Proficiency Theory, which stresses L1/L2 interdependency and the transfer of skills and strategies acquired in L1 to L2. Essentially, learners add to what they already know, rather than replacing their first language with another.

In the current, wider perspective, literacy is now described as a socially constructed practice (Papen 2005). This view moves away from deficit views of 'illiteracy' to incorporate multiliteracies (Pegrum 2008). Barton and Hamilton (2000) identify literacy as a plural concept, as practices may involve different media, cultures, languages and domains of life. Multiliteracies can be regarded as the practical skills required to participate in a global economy, but they are also critical social practices which enable involvement in open and multicultural societies (Feenberg 1991; McLaren 1995). Courts (1998), Pegrum (2008), and Weil (1998) argue strongly for Critical Intercultural Literacies. In addition to the shift from an emphasis on traditional print literacy to multiliteracies, there have been shifts from national to global literacy and from communicative to intercultural competence. As Freire and Macedo (1987) suggest, the focus is now not on 'reading the word' but on 'reading the world'.

In an increasingly globalised environment, young people may be more attuned than their elders to navigating intercultural issues. The World Wide Web has become a site for 'the global convergence of discourses' as Myers and Eberfors (2010, p. 149) suggest. It may be that the opportunities provided for cross-cultural exchange and the construction of shifting cultural identities, if not guaranteeing broadened intercultural literacy, at least create the possibility of greater openness towards new perspectives (Diehl and Prins 2008). Knickerbocker and Rycik (2006, p. 146) describe a contingent need for a critical literacy approach which involves students reflecting on 'their world and their relationships to others'. Beck (2005, p. 394) describes how, by focusing classroom discussion on student concerns, teachers can acknowledge that students have a wide range of experiences which influence their meaning-making and form their basis for developing critical awareness. By con-

necting literacy with identity, and the global with the local, people of all ages can be encouraged to expand their personal horizons while valuing their own backgrounds.

4 Learner Motivation Reconsidered

Recently, traditional concepts of L2 learning motivation have become re-theorised in relation to self and identity, with a number of implications for classroom practice. Gardner and Lambert's (1959, 1972) familiar socioeducational model of instrumental and integrative motivation, building on Freudian psychoanalytic theory, explores the ways in which learners position themselves in relation to the target language community. One dimension of the motivation construct is the degree to which learners are extrinsically or intrinsically motivated (Deci 1975). Earlier critiques of socioeducational models of motivation challenged the assumption that L2 language learning is best served by a strong integrative motivation: for example, Dörnyei (1994) suggested that, in many EFL settings, an instrumental orientation could actually have a greater positive influence. More recently, Lamb (2004) has refuted any clear binary distinction between the two forms of motivation. Contemporary discourses about English as a global language, and research into both external and internal processes of identification (Dörnyei 2005, 2009), reflect the growing move to consider identity as a key issue in many areas of applied linguistics. Global, multicultural, identities have been explored by Lamb (2004, 2009), while Coetzee-Van Rooy (2006, p. 439) argues for complex rather than 'simplex' identities. Coetzee-Van Rooy (2006), referring to the role of English in South Africa, demonstrates the problematic association of integrative motivation with discourses of assimilation and acculturation.

There is a growing consensus that identities are both personally and socially forged (Norton 2000, 2001). Norton and Toohey (2001), drawing on the work of Vygotsky (1978) and Bakhtin (1981), have argued for a research focus not only on individual learning strategies or linguistic output but also on reception in sociocultural contexts. Vygotsky (1978) describes the way in which more experienced participants in a culture engage with less experienced members. Bakhtin (1981) sees speakers fashioning their own voices after initially appropriating the utterances of others. Rueda and Moll (1994, pp. 131–132) suggest that 'motivation is not located solely within the individual, but is socially distributed, created within cultural systems of activities involving the mediation of others'. Socioculturally, L2 learners are seen as situated in particular communities, which may involve unequal relations of power between learners and L2 culture. However, a focus on social context need not ignore the identity and agency of the individual learner. Although there are often strong pressures to assimilate to cultural norms, learners with a strong sense of agency can exercise their own influence on 'host' cultural norms. My research in Perth, echoing Giddens (1987), confirms the dialectic between agency and culture (Mercieca et al. 2013).

It is now suggested (Ushioda 2009) that there is a need to promote continuity between the L2 students' experiences in the classroom and their lives outside it.

This involves moving beyond abstract models and learner types towards engaging with students' own 'transportable identities' in classroom talk (Richards 2006), which are grounded not only in the 'real' world but also in the virtual worlds of the internet, social networking and mobile phone communication. For example, Lamb's work in Hong Kong (2004, p. 179) explores the possibility of teenage engagement with 'global culture', although it is still clear that language learning needs to be grounded in personal contact. My study in Perth (Mercieca et al. 2013) indicates that literacy and identity are forged within contexts of sociality and conviviality. In the Perth migrant subculture studied, identity was not achieved merely via affinity, but specifically through shared experience. In virtual learning, it is the element of interaction rather than learner autonomy which is crucial (Little 2004).

5 Implications for Language Learning and Teaching

The shift from communicative competence to intercultural competence in language learning has already been noted. We could also say there has been a shift from ESL and EFL (English as a Second Language and English as a Foreign Language) to EIL (English as an International Language). In language teaching there is a current shift underway from Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) towards Intercultural Language Teaching (ILT) (Colbert 2003). The changing perspectives of literacy, identity and motivation have implications inside and outside the language learning classroom.

5.1 Inside the classroom

An expanded vision of suitable pedagogic strategies is needed, within an overarching notion of critical intercultural language teaching and learning. Signs of bottom-up change are not particularly promising, and there are clear implications for teacher education. Adapting Au (1998) and McKay and Bokhorst-Heng (2008), there follow eight ways in which teachers can reform their classroom practices, based on an underlying awareness of how cultural identities shape literacy learning. The eight ways are particularly suitable for multilingual ESL classrooms, but are also appropriate for other settings.

5.1.1 Making Meaning-Making the Explicit Aim of Learning

Ownership is the overarching goal. Literacy should be made personally meaningful and immediately rewarding to students of diverse backgrounds by drawing on their interests and experiences. Swain, Kinnear and Steinman (2011, p. 44) refer to 'language learners as meaning makers… moving beyond teaching communicative skills… languaging'. For Swain (2011, p. 1), 'languaging is the use of language to

mediate higher mental cognitive and affective processes'; it is a process involving learning, thinking, communicating, interacting, expressing and connecting with others. This implies that use of language is more than a means of encoding and decoding messages; such a narrow view of communication impoverishes our understanding of what language learning is at its richest. This does not mean that communicative skills development per se has no place. For example, systematic instruction in reading and writing is still needed, with attention to the power-code literacy needed for full participation in mainstream culture; but such aspects are only part of a much wider picture.

5.1.2 Accommodating the Use of L1

Essentially, L1 literacy should be valued per se, and biliteracy supported where possible. L1 can be used to provide stability of identity where needed and to permit effective communication where it is especially useful. 'Only English spoken here' signs, for example, are unhelpful. Littlewood and Yu (2011, p. 70) suggest that strategic use of L1 helps in framing goals, provides affective and interpersonal support, and assists in overall classroom management. The influence of L1 may have long since been reconceptualised in SLA research, but the dominant pedagogy in mainstream multilingual TESOL classrooms remains doggedly monolingual (Widdowson 2003, p. 153). This contrasts with more 'traditional' approaches to the use of L1 in monolingual settings where a bilingual approach could be used instead, a situation often paralleled in many LOTE classrooms. Translation is far too closely associated with Grammar Translation approaches, ignoring the use of L1 as a vital cognitive tool when the L2 task is complex (Swain and Lapkin 2000). Furthermore, using L1 may facilitate collaborative dialogue and prepare learners for code-switching in later life (Cook 2001). A bilingual approach which allows for use of L1 can help facilitate talk about language (such as comparing L1 and L2), learning and culture; for 'how … can you teach a bilingual subject by means of a monolingual pedagogy?' (Widdowson 2003, p. 154).

5.1.3 Making Connections to Local and Global Cultures

Using multicultural works that present cultures in authentic texts accurately depicting the experiences of diverse groups may increase motivation to listen and read. As Howard and Major (2004, p. 104) suggest, materials should 'be contextualised to the experiences, realities, needs and first languages of the learners'. Personal life experiences are also a useful source for writing and speaking work. Connections need to be made between literacy experiences in the home culture and in the classroom. Younger learners may be particularly engaged by materials which explore global cultures, rather than just target language cultures. Internet-mediated activities and materials are increasingly suitable options, while media such as film, television and music remain highly appropriate sources for classroom use.

5.1.4 Adjusting Classroom Approaches

In order to utilise literacy experiences in the home culture, it is important to modify approaches to teaching to incorporate a more process-oriented dimension to classroom activities, where lesson content is not always determined by teacher choice but is managed via negotiation with learners. Classroom management and learner interaction patterns may need to be adjusted on the basis of differences in students' cultures (Phan 2004). Teachers may also need to act in more traditional ways, displaying authority in a more direct manner, for example. CLT approaches need to be re-appraised in response to new understandings of learning context and learning variables, without compromising the integrity of teacher beliefs about classroom efficacy. Appropriate adjustments may be necessary in key areas such as syllabus, materials, methodologies and student groupings. There have been widespread and mostly justified claims that TESOL has moved into a 'post-method' era, but the wider, more eclectic approaches adopted have become entrenched. Bax (2003) and Harmer (2003) provide more detail about arguments for and against more contextually-driven classroom approaches, whereby individual, classroom, local and national cultures are attended to more explicitly in the delivery of teaching and learning activities.

5.1.5 Modifying Assessments

Inclusive forms of assessment are needed to reduce sources of bias, such as prior knowledge, language, and question type. Learners from diverse backgrounds have widely differing knowledge about topics which may appear universally relevant, such as linguistically-influenced approaches to speaking and writing which do not conform to examiner expectations, and strategies for responding to listening and reading texts which are very sensitive to different modes of elicitation. Alternative forms of assessment such as portfolios may create negative backwash if they create undue learner anxiety. Markers and examiners need to give close consideration to a range of issues in language learner assessment. As Chapman (2002) suggests, assessment is usually based on an evaluation of whether and how conventional discourse expectations are met. With the emergence of World Englishes, the question of which varieties are privileged in assessment tasks adds a problematic dimension for markers, many of whom may defer to the 'standard' form of English. As Hamp-Lyons and Zhang (2001) indicate, as 'non-native' writers may adopt non-standard rhetorical patterns, they may be disadvantaged unless they are marked by non-native raters; 'native' markers need to decide how to respond to culturally diverse samples of language. For example, Mickan and Slater (2003) point out the dangers of over-extrapolating IELTS-like strategies in marking writing. Attending to 'arguments, ideas and evidence', communicative quality' and 'vocabulary and sentence structure' (IELTS 2012) discretely, via profile marking, fails to consider the more holistic deployment of linguistic resources required to construct genre-specific texts which perform real social functions.

5.1.6 Maximising Conviviality via Group Work and Mingling

Moving students beyond limited dyadic work groups allows them to explore and appreciate a wider range of social and cultural backgrounds and develop greater empathy. Group work and mingling have long been rationalised as allowing student to student interaction and promoting communicative competence, but their inherently 'humanistic' and 'interpsychological' potential to create conviviality and to develop intercultural competence needs to be affirmed. It may also be useful to regard a wide range of mixed ability in interactive work as a benefit rather than a pedagogical barrier, creating opportunities for students to work autonomously in their Zone of Proximal Development and Zone of Reflective Capacity (Tinsley and Lebak 2009; Vygotsky 1978), and by allowing more experienced participants to engage with relative novices (Storch 2003). Classroom group work should do more than provide greater opportunities to practise language skills or language items; it should also do more than merely provide a bonded classroom with good interpersonal dynamics: group work is also about the way in which individuals can be transformed by social and cultural interactions.

5.1.7 Building Critical Thinking Skills via Learner Reflection on First Culture (Kramsch 1993)

Building on definitions pioneered by Dewey (1909, 1933) and Glaser (1941), which position reflection centrally, Facione (1998, p. 14) defines the core of critical thinking as 'purposeful, self-regulatory judgment'. Trujillo (2002) develops cogent arguments around the need also to engage open-mindedly with unfamiliar cultures in order to create a dialogic basis for critical thinking. From this perspective, cultural competence is related dialectically to critical thinking, such that 'one will not occur without the other' (Velde and Wittman 2002, p. 456). Learners can first reflect on their own cultures and then engage in dialogue with others to reduce cultural 'uncertainty' (Berger and Calabrese 1975; Gudykunst 1988), eventually moving towards deeper levels of analysis and reasoning. Crucially, the first step is reflection about one's own culture. For this to take place more effectively in language classrooms, approaches which do not asymmetrically emphasise the cultural aspects of L2 are clearly more appropriate.

5.1.8 Incorporating the Diversity of English Varieties

Globally designed coursebooks are still notoriously Anglo-centric, and do not draw widely on local varieties of English or substantially recognise English as an international language (Altan 1995). Spoken texts in such books rarely include either L1–L2 or L2–L2 interactions, and written texts in 'non-native' varieties are conspicuously absent. There is a need for more work in curricular and teaching materials development, although teachers can access 'authentic' samples of language via

the internet and other media (Howard and Major 2004, p. 101). In creating their own materials, attuned to both the wider range of target varieties of English and the real experiences of their learners, teachers need to attend to the socioculturally appropriate modes of delivery (Jolly and Bolitho 1998). Learners themselves are a source of all these aspects of diversity and relevance. There are implications for the way in which product-based syllabi are closely and fatally aligned with mass-produced and essentially monocultural materials. Process-driven syllabi are of their nature more likely to be responsive to the culture of individual classrooms, although less likely to suit the needs of institutions which generate more conservatively designed courses, driven by the demands of standardised testing.

5.2 Outside the Classroom

The following implications are mostly based on Kramsch's (1993) notion of 'third places' in language learning. Kim (1979) argues that identities are formed via both interpersonal and mass media communication processes. His examples of successful 'acculturation' show the possibility of mutual, multicultural appreciation of both migrant and host cultures. However, uncertainty reduction and anxiety reduction theory (Gudykunst 1988) point to the need for some level of stress in strangers to new cultures, to encourage eventual acculturation. From another perspective, Shuter (1993) argues that multiculturalism can obviate the need to create 'third cultures' which value commonality over difference, but Lo Bianco et al. (1999) suggest that that 'third places' are vital for the development of migrant 'intercultural competence'. Kramsch, who has written extensively about 'thirdness', has recently (2009) warned of the inherent risks of romanticisation, exoticisation and marginalisation. She visualises third cultures as dynamic and fluid spaces rather than circumscribed, bounded, bilingual ghettoes.

Albeit from a critical viewpoint, Giroux (1989) argues for a language of possibility in schools, and the solutions offered so far may help to empower learners, insofar as classrooms can be effective third places. However, classrooms are often subject to larger external forces, which militate against the development of critical intercultural literacies.

It is also important to look outside schools, at informal learning via everyday life (de Certeau 1984; Illich 1971; Rogers 2004; Williams 1958) for opportunities to extend multiliteracies. Ferdman (1990) makes a good case for engaging students with texts from a range of cultures, but does not really explore the potential of popular culture. Pegrum (2008) suggests the third space of film, but there is a sense that film, popular literature and the internet lack the levels of group engagement that are crucial for effective meaning-making. An understanding is needed of how both literacy and identity develop by living inside popular subcultures. Less verbally mediated pleasures, such as music and sport, seem promising areas for the creation of empathy, group identity and friendships, particularly at a local level. My research on the Northern Soul scene in WA (Mercieca et al. 2013) reveals a mingling of 'pro-

ductive' and 'evasive' pleasures (Fiske 1987), whereby meaning is produced in a convivial milieu (Illich 1975), promoting both cultural literacy and identity.

As an example of the way in which migrants develop intercultural competence, involvement in the Northern Soul scene in Perth does not take account of sexual orientation, career, ethnicity or social status, but creates an added long-term identity and a means of transcending personal differences. Stratton (2000) argues that there has been a gradual self-ethnicisation of British migrants as they assert their difference from Australian culture, but many of the respondents in the research appeared happy with the balance between the British contact the scene afforded and the regular social intercourse with other Australians in other parts of their lives. In Perth, NS people have a 'transilient' (Richmond 1969) sense of national affiliation but a strong sense of local and global belonging. Furthermore, as older adults, after periods of parenthood or occasional relationship difficulties, people in the scene often have a need to reinvent themselves, and NS provides a social life in which gender is not a key aspect of membership (Mercieca et al. 2013). As a subculture, Northern Soul needs to retain its core identity and yet also respond to a changing world in order to survive. The core reasons for its survival are both the stability and the flexibility of its cultural practices. Flexibility in the mature Northern Soul scene is associated with the travel and employment patterns of a few members and more generally with the transilient nature of their overarching migration narratives. Some informants showed a high degree of global mobility, referring frequently to trips and the maintenance of overseas contacts (Mercieca et al. 2013). A stable local scene in Perth provides the sense of community and stability needed to counterbalance their wider mobility. In this respect, Perth Northern Soul people resemble Asian migrants to Britain, needing both mobility and stability to develop a sense of belonging (Tolia-Kelly 2006). Significantly, the links between notions of mobility, transnationality and identity have recently been probed by Phan (2008), drawing particularly on research in Finland by Paasi (2002) and clearly problematising ideas of fixed regional identity.

The wider implications of the research into the Perth Northern Soul scene beyond the classroom are that an adaptable sense of migrant identity is needed within multicultural societies. This may be derived not just from transilience but from stable membership of subcultures, which also allows for mobility. In reality, not all individuals have fluid identities, and 'spearhead' group members may most effectively bridge the gap between 'strangers' and 'hosts'. Crucially, individuals are also group members (Mercieca et al. 2013). Hobbies and diversions offer great opportunities to 'read the world', especially when they take place in third places such as clubs, beaches and parks, and can be a vital extension to the more formal atmosphere of the classroom.

Global subcultures, situated locally, can assist successful migrations, providing third places between ethnic and host culture identities. Interactions based on nonverbal modes of communication can establish areas of common social engagement. When a Sri Lankan group wandered into a Perth Northern Soul event recently (Mercieca et al. 2013), there were many smiles on the dance floor. Interaction took place via kinesic and proxemic communication, enhancing empathy and sociality. For

language learners in Australia, for example, there may be much to be gained from seeking out similar places.

For those learning languages in monolingual settings, such as in Vietnam, there are clearly fewer tangible third places. However, global subcultures are much more accessible through traditional media such as music, film and TV, and increasingly via the internet. Although such media lack the kind of visceral engagement which leads to fully developed meaning-making, they are in many ways well-attuned to the ways in which younger learners engage with cultural content.

6 Implications for Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication can be improved. First some reflection about the ongoing emergence of World Englishes and the positioning of English as a global language of communication is needed, in order to pinpoint the settings in which speakers actually come into contact. As Phan (2005) argues, there are inevitably power dynamics between centre and periphery users. Accordingly, methods of teaching and assessment are essentially forms of normative control, making English a non-neutral language. Despite globalisation, most language speakers are essentially located by geography, evaluated in terms of linguistic proficiency, and defined ideologically. At the same time, there is an increasing pool of English speakers, and several possibilities for better mutual interaction appear hopeful. Sifakis (2004) suggests that EIcL (English as an Intercultural Language) is a more appropriate term to describe the global role of English, as EIL (English as an International Language) tends to be norm-oriented and EIcL is communication-oriented. If the term EIL is used, it should not really describe a variety but rather the potential of English as a vehicle for intercultural communication (Sharifian 2009).

As a first way to improve intercultural communication, as Phan (2005) suggests, new English users need to take endonormative ownership of teaching, assessment and language use itself, helping to uncouple language use from 'centre' conformity and facilitate equal exchange. Secondly, concerns for linguistic intelligibility in EIL ignore the need for stronger intercultural awareness. A regional speaker with a 'strong' accent can still bridge the culture barrier, and a more intelligible speaker still needs to attend to the cultural background of the listener. Thirdly, multidialectalism needs to be affirmed as a necessity for effective intercultural communication. Lo Bianco (2010) reminds us of the pathology behind national drives for compulsory unilingual literacy, in which any form of difference is uncomfortably associated with inequality. Programs designed to teach standard 'national' languages attempt to establish monodialectalism and to bind identities tightly together in order to maintain social stability. In reality, all language learners need exposure to a wide range of varieties: the wider the range they can access, the more they can communicate effectively with others.

Teachers of English are deeply implicated in issues concerning intercultural communication. Although the literature is beginning to show teachers reflecting

on their own identity, Phan (2008) suggests that 'how teachers of English negotiate their identities… remains under-discussed'. Stanley (2012) conducted a study of expatriate teachers in China, and Liu and Xu (2011) of locally-based teachers in the university sector of the same country. Phan (2008) and Dobinson (2012) have both explored the process of identity formation of Vietnamese teachers of English. In general, it is clear that 'native' English teachers need to be more conscious of their ideological baggage and either must make the most of their accumulated intercultural competence or seek to develop it further. In some ways, many 'non-native' English teachers are a little further down the path already. Myers and Eberfors (2010) argue that the development of 'intercultural critical literacy' (a term which has a different emphasis from critical intercultural literacy) needs to be placed more centrally in pre-service language teacher education programs, and suggest web-based forums as a very useful starting space. However, Myers and Eberfors indicate that notions of intercultural critical literacy involve a synthesis of the concepts of both critical literacy and intercultural competence, where the latter clearly involves the unavoidable central issue of how cultural identity develops.

7 Conclusions

Language learning transcends mere linguistic competence. To learn a language is to extend one's identity and to construct a new narrative about the self. TESOL classrooms can prepare learners for life outside, but teaching and learning may need to be redesigned, based on an understanding of how cultural identities shape literacy learning. Both inside and outside the classroom, engagement with global subcultures can help in achieving successful transitions to new bicultural identities which integrate a globally-oriented English speaking self with a local L1 speaking self (Coetzee-Van Rooy 2006). Third places, situated between local and national identities, can offer the kind of optimal sociocultural engagement which is most effective for meaning-making. However, virtual spaces are increasingly attuned to the ways in which younger people engage with cultural content.

A revised understanding of learner motivation now reveals more clearly the interaction of the individual and the social environment. A more positive and realistic reconceptualisation of motivation can be based around a sense of global rather than national belonging—an integration towards other English speakers in all the imaginary circles. In enabling English speakers to communicate with each other more effectively, it would appear appropriate to encourage multidialectalism. Our own core identity and voice may be acceptable in most contexts, but we should all be open to the possibilities of other ways of being and speaking.

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Constructing Meaning from the Unfamiliar: Implications for Critical Intercultural Education

Ilan Zagoria

Abstract Communication in intercultural settings often involves being exposed to unfamiliar cultural signifiers and the use of differing cultural schemas to interpret these signifiers. The continuing legacy of colonialism, together with inequalities of economic and political power among both nations and cultural groups within nations, create the potential for discourses of othering to negatively affect communication in culturally diverse contexts. This chapter reveals findings from an interpretivist study of how meanings of unfamiliar musics and languages were constructed by non-African members of four African music groups in Western Australia. Discourses of othering, together with discourses of inclusion, were observed in these meaning-making processes. The chapter relates the processes of construction of meaning observed in these contexts to the increasingly intercultural educational settings in Australia, as well as to other culturally diverse contexts.

Keywords Critical intercultural education · Culturally diverse music groups · Western Australia · Language switching · Discourses of othering and inclusion · Construction of meaning · Multiculturalism · African music

1 Introduction

Mass migrations of people from one social and cultural context to another are a distinctive feature of the modern era, when technological, economic, social and other forces have resulted in people seeking safer or more prosperous places to live. Over the course of human history, however, there have always been migrations of people, and as Portera (2011, p. 14) has noted, 'Emigration is not the exception, but the rule.' In the midst of the culturally diverse communities created by these movements of people over time, a myth developed in eighteenth century Europe of each nation-state representing one united cultural/language group with a shared history and a common future (White 2005). This myth continues to inform national government policies in the twenty first century in spite of, and sometimes because

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of, clear evidence that most nation-states have always included a wide variety of cultural/language groups with very different historical origins, values, beliefs, goals and levels of economic and political power (Billig 1995). The relationship between nationalism and state-sponsored education is profound, and it has been argued that 'teaching remains about, within, and for the nation, tacitly about the protection and production of its Culture (and by implication, its preferred ethnicities and races, languages and codes)' (Luke 2004, p. 24).

This chapter challenges the myth of a 'culturally homogenous' nation reflected and created through educational institutions, and argues that Australia needs a critical intercultural education system for *all* students (and the nation) to prosper. It begins by discussing a number of key concepts that underpin critical intercultural education, then briefly traces the growth of cultural diversity and policy responses to this diversity in Australia (and particularly in Western Australia). The chapter then draws on findings from a recent study of the interactions between culturally and linguistically diverse musicians in a number of music groups in Western Australia. The study explored how the musicians constructed meanings from familiar and unfamiliar signifiers in their group settings. The chapter discusses the implications of these meaning-making practices in relation to critical intercultural pedagogy in Australian educational institutions.

2 Key Terms

The dominant monocultural paradigm imposed by educational authorities in countries like Australia and the United States began to be challenged in the 1960s and 1970s as various political movements exposed systemic discrimination against particular groups in the educational institutions of these countries. The groups included, among others, African Americans, women, indigenous peoples, migrants who spoke English as an additional language, people with non-mainstream sexual identities, and people with disabilities. Each of these groups could be perceived to have its own 'culture', and when governments recognised, or were forced to recognise, this, 'multicultural' social and educational policies and programs began to be developed (Banks and Banks 2007; Grant and Sleeter 2011; Lo Bianco 2010; Ozolins 1993). In the process of constructing more equitable education strategies, key terms like 'culture', 'multicultural' and 'intercultural' were defined, redefined and contested.

3 Culture

Culture has been variously described as 'a network of embedded practices and representations (texts, images, talk, codes of behaviour, and narrative structures organizing these) that shape every aspect of social life' (Frow and Morris 2000, p. 316); and as 'webs of significance' which people have 'spun' and in which they

are ‘suspended’ (Geertz 2003, p. 145). Reaffirming the importance of maintaining cultural diversity in society after the September 2001 attacks on the United States, UNESCO’s *Universal declaration on cultural diversity* (2001, p. 13) stated:

> culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.

Contemporary researchers emphasise that culture is dynamic, and that modern societies comprise many different groups, each with its own shifting (sub)cultures, and each with its own status and relative power (Negus 1996). As groups interact with each other, hybrid cultures are formed which, in turn, shift and change according to different influences. When the complexity of shifting cultural forces is ignored cultures can be seen as static, and this can lead to stereotyping and discrimination of members of those cultures.

3.1 Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education

Multiculturalism can be seen to be a philosophy and a paradigm developed to respond to a society becoming increasingly diverse (Lo Bianco 2010), and multicultural education is one of the strategies which has emerged from this paradigm to deal with cultural diversity. However, the term ‘multicultural’ has been criticised as perpetuating a static and essentialising view of cultures and of members of particular cultures. Portera (2011, p. 19) describes multicultural education as ‘often limited to folksy or exotic styles of presentation’ which may be ‘outdated even in their country of origin’. Because of this, multicultural education does little to foster deep understandings, or to prevent othering and stereotyping of members of different cultural groups.

3.2 Conservative, Liberal, and Critical Multiculturalism

Kubota (2004) points out other potential problems with the term ‘multiculturalism’ by highlighting the differences between *conservative*, *liberal* and *critical* views of the term. A c*onservative* view treats cultural diversity as a threat to social unity and encourages the assimilation of minority cultural groups into the dominant culture. A *liberal* approach, on the other hand, respects cultural diversity at the level of, for example, festivals, foods, and music. However, this approach maintains the myth that people from all cultures have equal opportunity and therefore that each individual is responsible for their success or failure in a meritocracy. A liberal approach to multiculturalism, according to Kubota, ignores pervasive structural discrimination which systematically disadvantages particular groups in society. This approach proposes no analysis of, or solutions to, these structural inequities, implicitly blames the underprivileged and marginalised for their ‘failure’ to succeed, and in this way

maintains privileged conditions for particular groups. A *critical* perspective on multiculturalism, in contrast, not only respects cultural diversity but also questions the social justice of a meritocracy in which people are systematically discriminated against because of gender, skin colour, religion, disability, sexual orientation and other group markers. A critical approach to multicultural education questions the teaching of only one cultural view of the world when teachers, students and the population in general are increasingly diverse. This approach challenges the educational and social ideologies and practices that underpin and maintain structural discrimination of some groups while privileging others.

3.3 Critical Intercultural Education

The term *intercultural* has been proposed as a more positive alternative to *multicultural*. The former carries connotations of interaction and dialogue between people of different cultures while the latter refers to people from diverse cultures living together but not necessarily interacting, and perhaps being indifferent to each other (Portera 2011). The term *critical intercultural education* combines the notion of meaningful everyday *interactions* between people of diverse cultures with the questioning of dominant paradigms of power, values and systems of knowledge which perpetuate discrimination and inequity for some, and privilege for others, in educational institutions and in the wider society. A critical intercultural approach to education recognises that course content (knowledge and skills) and teaching and learning practices need to be relevant, engaging, beneficial and transformative for all the participants involved, irrespective of their culture, gender, first language, and other defining group markers. This chapter will focus mainly on critical intercultural education with regard to people of diverse cultural and language backgrounds.

4 Multicultural Australia

The percentage of the Australian population born overseas increased from 23.1 % in 2001 to 27 % in 2011, according to the 2011 census (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012a). Many of these immigrants were born in predominantly English speaking countries, with the two top countries of birth listed as the United Kingdom (21 % of the overseas born population) and New Zealand (9.1 %); however, the third and fourth top countries of birth of this population were China (6 %) and India (5.6 %) (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012b). From 2001 to 2011, the percentage of the overseas-born population born in South East Asia increased from 24 to 33 %, while the percentage born in Europe fell from 52 to 40 % (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012b). Significantly, the countries of birth with the highest *rates* of increase between 2001 and 2011 were Nepal, Sudan and India, with average annual rates of growth of 27, 17.6 and 12.7 % respectively (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012b).

The 2011 census counted 548,370 people who self-identified as Aborigines or Torres Strait Islanders. This represented 2.5% of the total Australian population of 21,507,719 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012c).

The 2011 census recorded that 81% of the population over 5 years old spoke *only* English at home, implying that 19% spoke a language other than, or in addition to, English at home (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012b). Hugo (2009, p 17) reports that the percentage of the population speaking English only at home has been decreasing steadily since the end of World War Two as a result of an increase in the number of immigrants 'born in dominantly non-English speaking countries'. Such immigrants made up 1.9% of the total population in 1947, but 14.8% of the population in 2006. The 2011 census data confirm the continuation of this trend, in which the Australian population is transforming from 'an overwhelmingly British dominated population to a multicultural society' (Hugo 2009, p. 17). However, the 2011 data also confirm Stratton's (1998, p. 10) view of the continuing overall dominance of the Anglo-Celtic 'core' in Australian society.

4.1 Cultural Diversity in Western Australia

The Western Australian state government's Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) states that Western Australia (WA) in 2011 is 'still Australia's most culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse State' and that it was the fastest growing of all the states at 14.3% between 2006 and 2011 (Office of Multicultural Interests 2012). The percentage of West Australians speaking a language other than English at home rose from 11.6% in 2006 to 14.5% in 2011 (Office of Multicultural Interests 2012), and the percentage of the population who spoke only English at home fell from 81.8% in 2006 to 79.3% in 2011 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012a). The state's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population currently accounts for 3.1% of the state's population, slightly higher than the 3.0% in the 2006 census, and also higher than the proportion of this group in the total Australian population (2.5%) (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012a).

4.2 International Students

The large number of international students in Australia also contributes to the cultural diversity of the population. In 2009, 22% of all tertiary students were international (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). In 2011, 332,557 international students were studying at Australian tertiary institutions, 24.2% (80,458) of whom were enrolled on offshore campuses (Australian Education International 2012). Of the 250,000 international student visas granted in 2010–2011, China was the largest country contributor (20%), followed by India (12%) and South Korea (5%) (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). Although international student enrolments in *onshore* education courses fell 2.2% over the period 2009–2010, they increased in

the higher education sector overall by 7.3% during this period (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). *Offshore* enrolments for Australian tertiary institutions grew by 5.2% in 2011, up from 1.4% in 2010 (Australian Education International 2012). It is predicted that these enrolments will continue to increase because international students will have more opportunities to obtain Australian tertiary qualifications without travelling to Australia (Arkoudis et al. 2012).

The increasing number of international tertiary students onshore and offshore, together with an increasingly diverse cultural environment in Australia, indicates that there is a growing need for critical intercultural education in these teaching and learning contexts, but the history of government policy responses to cultural diversity and education in Australia since federation in 1901 indicates that a critical intercultural approach to education may not be easily achievable.

5 Multiculturalism in Australia

Since the nation-state of Australia was created with the federation of the Australian states and territories in 1901, the perspectives of conservative, liberal and critical multiculturalism, as described above, have, at different times, been apparent in the Australian government's approach to cultural diversity. The period from 1901 to the mid-1960s was characterised by a conservative approach, and migration of non-Europeans was restricted under the 'White Australia' policy (Stratton and Ang 1998, p. 148). In addition, it was only in the mid 1960s that all indigenous people were included in the official population census and granted the same voting and other legal rights as other Australians (Australian Electoral Commission 2006). The arrival of substantial numbers of non-Anglo European migrants after World War Two led to an assimilationist approach to cultural diversity, exemplified by the statement that 'Given a generation or two … they are likely to sink into the population with barely a trace of foreign origin' (Barnard 1963, quoted by Ozolins 1993, p 13). However, migrants tended to live together in communities and perpetuate their linguistic and cultural heritage, and Barnard's prediction did not come true. In the late 1960s a more explicit policy of 'integration' (incorporating aspects of 'liberal' multiculturalism) was implemented. Through this policy, migrant languages and cultures were supported and respected as part of the process of integrating these migrants into Australian society (Ozolins 1993). With the dismantling of the White Australia policy in the 1960s and 1970s, and the arrival of Vietnamese and other Asian migrants in the 1970s and 1980s, the government implemented policies which explicitly promoted the benefits of multiculturalism for all Australians (Ozolins 1993).

The National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco 1987) was critical of dominant monolingual/monocultural paradigms at the time, and this policy was adopted by the Australian government, which actively promoted the teaching and learning of languages other than English for all Australians. But this period, in which a critical perspective of monolingualism was promoted, did not last long. The linguistic pluralism emphasised in the policy title 'The National Policy on *Languages'* was soon replaced by a policy title with an emphasis on monolingualism (i.e. English) in the

'Australian *Language* and Literacy Policy' (ALLP) of 1991 [italics added]. Since then, Australian government policies regarding diversity have reverted to a form of liberal multiculturalism. According to Lo Bianco (2010), the ALLP and subsequent language/cultural policies have decoupled language learning and teaching from multiculturalism, benefiting the former at the expense of the latter. Language policies now emphasise literacy in English, 'the language of international communication' (Kirkpatrick 2007, p. 1), and economically strategic Asian languages. According to the recently released government White Paper entitled *Australia in the Asian Century,* the 'priority Asian language[s]' deemed in the national (i.e. economic) interest are Mandarin, Japanese, Hindi and Bahasa Indonesia (Australian Government Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 2012). Multiculturalism, on the other hand, which makes no economic claims, has been seen as only benefiting 'minority interests' (Lo Bianco 2010, p. 12) and, as a result, has been disadvantaged in education and other social policies.

Current trends to 'internationalise' Australian education (especially at the tertiary level) in offshore, onshore and virtual (online) campuses, are further examples of economic imperatives strongly influencing educational policies and practices related to language and cultural diversity. While the internationalisation of education could be 'a counter-hegemonic response to parochialism in scholarship' (Trevaskes et al. 2003, p. 2), it has been argued that economic interests are the main driver of Australia's policies of internationalisation of education (Trevaskes et al. 2003, p. 1). In the context of international education, nationalist agendas have become increasingly irrelevant as more and more educators and students travel to each other's countries, to third party countries and to destinations online. In these culturally diverse, displaced and sometimes virtual spaces, the notion of 'the nation' is no longer clear and critical intercultural education approaches are increasingly needed to optimise teaching and learning outcomes for the participants.

6 Making Meaning in Intercultural Contexts

One of the elements in facilitating intercultural communication is understanding how meaning is constructed in intercultural contexts. This communication could be verbal, involving language; or non-verbal, involving signifiers such as music, dance, and body language (See Chapters,"Can Teachers Know Learners' Minds? Teacher Empathy and Learner Body Language in English Language Teaching" and "Code-switching and Indigenous Workplace Learning: Cross-cultural Competence Training or Cultural Assimilation" of this volume for additional discussions on the interpretation of body language across cultures). Usually, the intended meanings need to be mutually understood by the participants in order for the interaction to be considered 'successful'. However, when knowledge of signifying systems is not mutual, the participants use whatever resources they have to construct meaning from the signifiers presented. These challenges in communication will become more frequent as society becomes more culturally diverse, and the need for a critical intercultural approach to education to prepare students for these contexts will grow.

A critical intercultural approach to education challenges the goals, the content (knowledge/skills), the assessment of teaching and learning activities, and the language/s and pedagogies used in educational activities. In addition, this approach examines critically the contexts of the learning space, the educational institution and the wider society, in order to improve intercultural communication and dismantle processes and structures that maintain discrimination and othering. The aim of this approach is to promote greater understanding of self and of people from different cultural groups. It also aims to make educational activities relevant and engaging for all the participants so that they can contribute to their fullest potential in an increasingly culturally diverse society (Banks and Banks 2007; Grant and Sleeter 2011; Hudson and Morris 2003).

Findings from a recent study investigating the construction of meaning of verbal and non-verbal signifiers in four culturally diverse Western Australian music groups are discussed below, and the implications of these meaning-making processes for critical intercultural pedagogy are then explored. The findings focus mostly on the construction of meaning by the *non-Africa born* members performing African music and song in the four groups participating in the study. The micro-contexts of how members of these culturally diverse groups made sense of unfamiliar signifiers—in this case, African music and lyrics—were investigated. The findings reveal clues as to how and why these groups have remained cooperative, cohesive and creative over long periods, and suggest strategies that could be used to achieve similar outcomes in other intercultural groups, such as those in educational contexts.

6.1 The Study

Data were collected from four well-established, professional Western Australian music groups who perform music from a number of African cultures. The data collection involved in-depth interviews with group members, and audio and video recordings of public performances of the groups between September 2007 and May 2010. The data were analysed using a qualitative interpretive framework (Miles and Huberman 1994), insights from social semiotics (Hodge and Kress 1988; Lemke 1995) and speech act theory (Austin 1962). To preserve anonymity, the musician participants are referred to as M1, M2, M3 and so on, and the groups as Group 1, Group 2, Group 3 and Group 4. The interviewer (the author) is referred to as I. All four groups have been performing in WA since the early 2000s. The author was a participant observer in Groups 1 and 2, and an observer of Groups 3 and 4.

6.2 The Participants

The 25 members of the four music groups came from diverse cultural backgrounds; most were of non-African ancestry. Seven were born in an African country, and two of these seven had European ancestry. Only four of the 25 group members could

understand the main African languages used in the song lyrics (Shona, Wolof and Seychelles Creole, also known as *Seselwa*). The group members of non-African ancestry usually did not understand the non-English lyrics although they sometimes understood the gist of the content. In order to discover how the musicians constructed meaning from the music and lyrics of the songs that they performed, I sought to discover what attracted the group members of non-African ancestry to learn, play and perform music and song which was not part of their cultural or linguistic background.

As one of the musicians of non-African ancestry who played with two of the bands involved, I shared many of the participants' experiences and their ways of making meaning in these contexts. This enabled me to have an insider's perspective and facilitated access to, and communication with, the participants. At the same time I implemented strategies to reduce researcher bias and increase the trustworthiness of the findings such as using multiple sources of data and asking participants to check interview data and research findings.

The presentation of the findings has been divided into two sections. The first discusses why the musicians of non-African ancestry were attracted to African music, what meanings they constructed of the *non-linguistic signifiers* (especially music) that they encountered in the context of their groups' performances, and what implications can be drawn for intercultural education. The second section discusses the musicians' construction of meaning of *linguistic signifiers* in these contexts, focusing on the lyrics expressed in languages that they did not understand. The implications of these findings for intercultural education are then discussed.

6.3 The Attraction of 'African' Music for Musicians of Non-African Ancestry

One of the themes to emerge from the non-African musicians' answers to the question, 'Why were you attracted to African music?' was *the opportunity to learn new, and improve existing, musical skills* through the challenges of playing unfamiliar rhythms, melodies and song structures. This was exemplified in statements by three group members:

> African music is always challenging … I might play a song for six months then finally it'll click … So you develop and kind of grow with an understanding of what the music is, and that really keeps me attached to it. (M6, interview)

> Yeah [learning] techniques … Learning anything different makes you play it better and makes you listen better and makes you play better. Just learning new stuff. (M1, interview)

> [Seeing the Senegalese singer Youssour N'Dour performing in Perth was] the first African band experience that I'd had, and particularly with the rhythms, with the drums and the bass … that was really what grabbed me. And yeah, I was like, I wanna learn … learn some of this stuff. (M7, interview)

These comments reflect the positive attitude that these musicians of non-African ancestry had towards the unfamiliar music that they chose to play, and as such, formed part of a discourse of inclusion of the 'other'. This could explain to some

degree their continued membership of these groups over time. However, on closer examination, alternative or additional conclusions could be drawn from these data. According to postcolonial theorists (e.g. Bhabha 2000; Said 1995), intercultural interactions are strongly influenced by dominant discourses which construct the other in terms of historical as well as contemporary interactions, and these are often based on inequalities of power. As Said (1995) notes, stereotypes constructed of the other can be overly negative or overly positive because they are viewed as existing outside the norms of the dominant culture.

Unfamiliarity can create the notion of exoticism and mystique, which can lead to curiosity and motivation to learn new cultural practices. This process may lead to the creation of overly positive stereotypes of African music, which, as mentioned by Agawu (2004) in *The invention of African rhythm,* can contribute as much to the process of othering as negative stereotypes. The comments of the musicians cited above reflect some of these discourses of othering in the way that certain generalisations (albeit positive) were made regarding African music. For example, they state that it is attractive because 'it's always challenging', and the rhythms seem complex: features not limited to 'African' music. In addition, not *all* 'African' music is challenging or complex. Even the term 'African' can be viewed as an othering device in contexts where it ignores, and therefore serves to homogenise, the vast diversity of the different peoples, languages, musics and cultures that exist on the continent of Africa and in the African diaspora. As Appiah (1992, p. 26) notes, 'Whatever Africans share, we do not have a common traditional culture, common languages, common religions … we do not even belong to the same race'.

Unfamiliarity with particular musical cultural practices does not always make them seem attractive or lead to a curiosity to learn them. Exposure to unfamiliar cultural practices sometimes leads to their rejection. An example of this was the way the buzzers—loosely attached pieces of metal, shells or bottle tops—had been removed from the Zimbabwean *mbiras* (also known as thumb pianos) used in Groups 1 and 4 for most of their performances in WA. This was because European musical conventions, familiar to most West Australian audiences and to the musicians in these groups, generally favoured the relatively 'pure', 'clean' sound of musical instruments. In Zimbabwe, mbiras are usually played with the buzzers attached (Berliner 1993, pp. 11–12), creating a buzzing and distortion when the metal keys are sounded. 'Pure' and 'clean' have positive connotations in Western discourse, in contrast to the negative connotations of 'buzzing' and 'distortion'. Similarly, some of the 'feathered' (Turino 2008) (i.e. unarranged) beginnings and endings of some traditional Shona Zimbabwean songs had been replaced by highly arranged beginnings and endings when they were performed by Groups 1 and 4, to make them more compatible with the dominant European musical conventions followed in WA.

In this case, the music of the other was interesting as long as it followed at least some of the dominant musical conventions understood by the audience (and the musicians). If not, the music might have been categorised as noisy, distorted, repetitive, or unprofessionally arranged. Thus some of the conventions of music from Zimbabwe and other African countries were regarded as attractive, and were

learned and played by non-African musicians, while other conventions were rejected or modified in order to accommodate the music to the context of WA as part of the hybridisation process necessary for it to survive and develop in a different cultural ecology. Encouraging awareness of the processes of acceptance and rejection of different cultural practices such as these could be a useful element in a critical approach to intercultural education.

A second theme to emerge from the data analysis was that the band members of non-African cultural heritage were attracted to the music they played in the African music groups because they *perceived the music as joyful*:

> It's happy and it's always sort of positive music … Different structures, call and response, choral singing, the repetition, the groove. Always doing something positive in people's minds. (M1, interview)

M6 described African music as having

> a happy vibe. I mean, you can't get tired of it really … It's just a free flowing, it's gotta feel right and it's gotta be right at the right time and then it's a happy-time music. (M6, interview)

M7 voiced a similar sentiment:

> I just feel it's a very positive music, uplifting in a way. It's all about joy, getting together. (M7, interview)

Once again these musicians were interpreting the music of the other through the lens of a European discourse in which they had grown up, and their positive comments may be viewed as a discourse of inclusion. In European musical conventions, fast tempos, together with major chords, are often associated with 'happy' music. Conversely, slow tempos, together with minor or altered chords (with augmented or diminished notes), act as signifiers for 'sad', 'introspective' or 'intense' music. Some of the music played by the African groups had fast tempos and chords with very few diminished or augmented notes; it was mostly interpreted by the musicians of non-African ancestry as 'happy' and 'positive'. However, the lead singers, who were all of African cultural heritage, did not express this general idea. For example, M9 spoke of the *moutya* genre of music from the Seychelles as follows:

> *Moutya* music is very African, slave music basically, and very downbeat, slow … You find a lot of *moutya* in minor chords, you know, downbeat, and yes, *moutya's* all about hardship and struggling and slavery. (M9, interview)

The musicians in the African bands, through their sustained relationships with people from different cultures in the music groups, were interacting in contexts which could facilitate the processes of improving understandings across cultures. However, the generalising statements from the group members cited above regarding the 'happiness' of African music glossed over the complexities of the different kinds of music produced by the people of many different cultures on the African continent, and so expressed an (unwitting) othering of these cultures. Even though the intentions of the non-African musicians were positive, the comments above indicate that discourses of othering, together with discourses of inclusion, were present even in contexts which seemed generally conducive to intercultural understandings. As Rustin (2000, p. 188)

states, '[r]ationality and the capacity to enjoy differences depend on a continuing developmental struggle within each individual and social group, and cannot be accomplished by a simple act of rational will'. Intercultural respect and understanding cannot be achieved quickly or through conscious decision-making processes.

These findings suggest that the process of othering is inevitable, at least initially, when one encounters discourses and practices different to those of one's own culture. Exposure to the discourses and practices of an unfamiliar culture does not always lead to an understanding of and a respect for it. On the contrary, in some cases exposure to, and interactions with, unfamiliar cultures can cause a reinforcement of negative (or positive) stereotyping (Gumperz 1979; Said 1995). Critical intercultural education programs need to be sensitive to these potential positive and negative reactions to unfamiliar cultural practices and discourses. Greater understandings of others can result from exposure to other practices and discourses *if* exposure is combined with more knowledge about the schemas underlying these practices and discourses, especially if accompanied by an exploration and questioning of one's own assumptions, schemas and ways of being in the world. This last point is explored further in the next section.

A number of the participants of the study expressed a *more positive valuing of certain features of the culture of the other*, compared to how those features were valued in the participants' heritage cultures. For example, M10, of Anglo cultural background, born and raised in England, was asked about his attitude to English folk music:

> M10: I was into blues quite early on and, of course rock, but no, I thought [English] folk music sounded terribly embarrassing.
> I: Yeah, that's interesting.
> M10: Morris dancing! [laughing] (M10, interview)

Similarly, M2 (South African born of Anglo-Celtic ancestry, who migrated to WA as a child) admitted that he hadn't thought much about Anglo-Celtic Australian culture:

> It's something I've never given much thought to. [My own] culture is not something I give a lot of thought to. (M2, interview)

Both these musicians seemed uninterested in these aspects of their own heritage culture. Ironically, because it was so dominant and lived day to day, it was largely invisible and unmarked, whereas aspects of an 'other' culture were more easily visible, especially those aspects which were markedly different to their own, like the performance of music. An implication of this finding is that critical intercultural education needs to facilitate not only exposure to and a greater knowledge and awareness of other ways of being and acting, but also a greater knowledge and critical awareness of the participants' own cultures, cultural assumptions, and discourses.

The participants also mentioned that they were attracted to playing African music because of the *non-hierarchical, supportive and communal nature of producing the music*:

> It's about supporting one another I think … you know … Backing people up, yeah, helping each other and that's pretty much how their culture work [sic], how a lot of the cultures work. (M2, interview)

M10 mentioned similar ideas when explaining why he was attracted to playing reggae and African styles of music:

> [Reggae] is everyone playing together, it's not … I wasn't, I'm not so much interested in sort of *one* person … Like rock's all about the guitarist, you know. I like the idea of everyone playing together. It's the same with African music played … communally. (M10, interview)

These comments could again be seen as contributing to a discourse of inclusion by expressing an appreciation and respect for other ways of behaving. However, by making overgeneralisations (positive, but not always true) of particular imagined cultural groups (Africans in general; African musicians), these comments could also be interpreted as contributing to a discourse of othering through idealisation. The largely dominant role of the Africa-born lead singers in the bands, who mostly chose the repertoire and led the rehearsals and the public performances, would seem to contradict the perception expressed above that the performance of African music was non-hierarchical and focused on the group rather than on one person.

Another common theme which emerged from the data analysis was the perception of non-African musicians that African music was *atavistic, tribal and spiritual*:

> [African music is] very soulful music and has connection to, I guess, the ancestry and you know, chanting, and connecting to some superior force, some superior ancestral feeling, ancestral beings. (M1, interview)

M7 spoke of the spiritual and uplifting aspects that he perceived in the African music that he performed with Group 2:

> I think it's just a very … even a spiritual sense, you know, like I say, with an optimistic feeling … it's got its very uplifting effect. (M7, interview)

M5 described the African music she liked best as similar to the 'doof' or electronic, trance-inducing music of contemporary Western 'dance' music:

> I can dance to an African drumming group all night on the same level [as 'doof' music]. You know it takes you to the same altered state where you don't … you're not conscious anymore of physical … umm … physically tiring or being out of breath …You're taken to a really mesmerising place. You are … you're going into a trance. I just feel it in the music, it grounds me and I love it … I feel a spiritual experience when I'm in the throes of complete euphoria and the drum is completely in my chest cavity. (M5, interview)

M5 then described why a 'group of ladies' (M5, interview) from the northern suburbs of Perth attended her African dance and singing classes:

> [they] want to do drumming as well, and they want to do singing. So we're doing things like *Harvest* and *Mbakumba* [traditional Shona Zimbabwean songs and dances]. Things like that, just so that they want to feel they're the tribal women, you know, in the village. (M5, interview)

Once again, tropes of othering are in evidence in the above quotations as idealised stereotypes are constructed by the speakers. African music is associated with words such as 'tribal', 'trance', 'spiritual', 'mesmerising', and 'ancestral'; it is seen as connected to the imagined pre-modern life and rituals of communal African villages, through which performance participants can connect to a 'superior force' and achieve transcendent states of mind. The music is perceived as simultaneously

grounding and spiritually uplifting. Linking the corporal and spiritual effects of African music to 'tribal' and other imagined pre-modern practices may create a positive sense of communal belonging, but it also carries echoes of Fanon's (2000, p. 211) unsettling propositions of how Africans symbolise for the European an imagined pre-civilised psyche. In this way, the identity of the 'civilised' European becomes dependent on the creation of the 'pre- or uncivilised' other. As Said (1995, pp. 1–2) states, regarding the role of the other in the process of creating an imagined 'Western' identity, 'the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience.'

The band members of non-African ancestry were attracted to playing African music because they believed that they improved and learned new musical skills by engaging with unfamiliar styles of music and ways of playing their instrument; that the music they played was happy and positive; that the music was performed in a communal, cooperative and non-hierarchical way; and that the music could lead to higher and more spiritual forms of consciousness. These beliefs explain to some extent what attracted the musicians of non-African ancestry to these forms of music, and they are expressed in what appears to be a discourse of inclusion. At the same time, these comments can be interpreted as forming part of a Western othering discourse. These findings suggest that the musicians of non-African ancestry had different, sometimes even conflicting, understandings of the music performed in their groups, compared to the musicians of African ancestry. For example, M9's comments above about *moutya* music questioned the notion of African music as 'happy', and the role of the lead singers acting as the undisputed musical leaders of the groups questioned the perception of the groups as 'non-hierarchical'.

Although the group members successfully worked together with an openness and willingness to engage with people from different cultural backgrounds, their understandings of the unfamiliar music that they played revealed that discourses of othering, as well as discourses of inclusion, were nonetheless present in these contexts. The implications are that critical intercultural education needs to facilitate a greater awareness and understanding of discourses of inclusion and othering in everyday intercultural communication. Critical intercultural education encourages an exploration of how dominant and marginalised discourses affect the ways that teachers, students and others communicate and behave in intercultural contexts.

7 The Construction of Meaning of Lyrics Performed in Unfamiliar Languages

As Australian society becomes more culturally diverse, encounters with unfamiliar languages become more common. Critical intercultural education has an important role to play in creating contexts in which these encounters may have positive outcomes. The following section focuses on the processes involved in constructing meanings from unfamiliar *linguistic* signifiers, especially song lyrics, by members of the African music groups, and implications of these meaning-making processes for critical intercultural education are discussed.

Although most of the musicians had been members of their groups for several years, they had *little understanding of the propositional content* of the lyrics sung in African languages:

> I guess I was told the basic meaning of it. But you're not really aware—you haven't studied that language. So it's hard to know what each word means. (M1, interview)

> Most of the time, probably 80% of the time I'm singing these words, I'm thinking of it musically rather than meaning, rather than cultural meaning. (M4, interview)

> I: Do you remember, say, what [the song] *Bamba* is about?
> M6: *Bamba*, that was about … Oh, that's a good question. [we both laugh]. *Bamba!* Uhh … (M6, interview)

M2 commented that audience members at performances, like most of the musicians, did not understand the content of these lyrics either:

> I: So they [the audience] are not actually responding to …
> M2: The meaning of the words? No, because they can't, because they don't know what's being said. They're responding more to the energy of the group, the sound of the music itself. (M2, interview)

Sometimes even the Africa-born lead singers (like M9 below) were unaware of the propositional content of the lyrics:

> M9: *Bania* is a song from Madagascar … I wouldn't be able to tell you what the song's about because it's in another language. (M9 interview)

While the musicians may have been told the gist of the lyrical content of the songs, these understandings had often been forgotten in spite of the fact that the songs had been performed repeatedly over the years. This suggests that the propositional meanings did not have high importance for most of the musicians, the audience, or even sometimes the lead singer. It seems that the use of multiple, often unintelligible, languages within this social space was unproblematic for most of the participants because of the use of other non-verbal signifiers like music and dance.

Semiotic resources contributing to the construction of the meaning of lyrics in an unfamiliar African language sometimes included brief explanations in English from the lead singer, combined with the non-linguistic signifiers of the music and the delivery of the lyrics. These signifiers were then interpreted by listeners through the constructivist process of using their own schemas, experiences, background knowledge and idiosyncratic associations, in addition to the influences of the dominant discourses to which they had been exposed (Barthes 1994; Feld 1984; Foucault 2002; Frith 1988; Sharifian 2010). Differences in these meaning-making resources would lead to the construction of different interpretations of these songs. Some of the musicians' meaning-making processes are presented below.

M1 (born in Argentina, raised in Argentina and Spain, arrived in Australia as a teenager) constructed meanings from unintelligible lyrics by *associating the phonetic sounds* of words from unfamiliar languages with similar phonetic sounds of words from a language with which he was familiar: Spanish, his first language:

> I think some of the words … the pronunciation is similar to Spanish. So *Mbakumba* [the title of the song], I think it's in Argentina or in South America … there's a lot of African words in … that's why I think that there's a connection … *Mbakumba*, it's like a sorcery—*Mbakumba* … In Spanish, there's a word that's associated with sorcery but I can't remember it. (M1, interview)

He then explained his associations for another song:

> I find the language sort of … not the sense, but sort of familiar, the pronunciation *Mutambarare* [the song title] … Some of the syllables are *tambarare*. There's a word in Spanish, *tambor*, which is drum. *Tam*, that sound, *tam, tam, tambor*... *Tambor*. (M1, interview)

M6 explained in the extract below what he remembered of the brief explanation of the song *Kocc Barma* he had heard some time before the date of the interview.

> M6: Yeah, Kocc Barma is the lady … of the village, as I remember [laughs].
> I: Really? [we both laugh].
> M6: Well, I remember the promiscuity part [laughs].
> I: Of what?
> M6: Of Kocc Barma
> I: Really?
> M6: Or maybe I got it wrong then, there you go. (M6, interview)

M4 made the point that even if the central idea of the song was translated into English, it did not necessarily make sense in an Australian context because of the song's cultural specificity. The meanings of many traditional Shona songs from Zimbabwe played by Groups 1 and 4 were deliberately obscure, sometimes containing 'secret knowledge' unknown even to expert Shona speakers. M4's solution to the inaccessibility of the meaning of deliberately obscure lyrics was to create his own meanings relevant to his own context and situation:

> M4: Quite often traditional stuff … it's sort of like archaic knowledge in a way … it's got to be meaningful for me … So I take it to mean things for myself. (M4 interview)

He gave an example of constructing his own meaning to the traditional Shona Zimbabwean song *Taireva*:

> Take the *Taireva* song [which means] 'I told you so'. If you didn't prepare for winter by collecting sticks you know you'd be cold [laughs]. Thinking ahead, preparing in my own life for what comes every winter, here as well, when there's no work, and trying to deal with that. (M4, interview)

The lack of understanding of song lyrics caused by the use of an unfamiliar language allowed M4 to create subjective, private meanings that had relevance to his own individual situation. In contrast, the meanings constructed by M1 and M6 above were seen by them to be more objective and to reflect, albeit roughly, the 'actual' meaning of the lyrics. Yet all these interpretations were strongly influenced by dominant cultural discourses current in Australia, including othering discourses. The latter led to the imagined interpretations of unfamiliar words to include concepts such as 'sorcery' and 'promiscuity' when referring to the songs *Mbakumba* and *Kocc Barma* respectively. However, according to the writers of these two songs (M12 and M11 respectively), the lyrics of *Mbakumba* referred to 'welcoming', while *Kocc Barma* was a praise song for Kocc Barma, a nineteenth century Senegalese philosopher/sage.

By not comprehending the propositional content expressed by the singer, the listeners could create any meaning with which they felt comfortable and which conformed to the discourses with which they were familiar. Even within the context of these well-established multilingual and intercultural West Australian African music groups, discourses of inclusion and othering were expressed as the group members constructed meanings from unfamiliar linguistic signifiers. This outcome has implications for intercultural education in addition to those already discussed in regard to the interpretation of unfamiliar non-linguistic signifiers.

The use of multiple languages and language varieties in intercultural educational contexts can have both positive and negative effects on the participants. It can result in discourses of othering as described above, but can also have important positive effects on learning and on the construction, maintenance and development of hybridised bilingual/bicultural identities, especially for speakers of minority languages and dialects (Baumgardner 2006; Ibrahim 1999).Through code-switching (switching languages or varieties of a language) learners in intercultural educational contexts can use their own familiar cultural and linguistic resources to process new information and new cultural schemas to successfully negotiate intercultural and multilingual spaces.

The music group members expressed *positive attitudes to the use of multiple languages* during their performances and detailed how this practice could facilitate the expression of their identities as musicians from different cultures within Australia and possibly beyond. M5 (a monolingual English-speaking Anglo-Australian) spoke of the anxiety she experienced singing lyrics in Shona, especially when there were Shona speakers in the audience, because she was not confident of her pronunciation or her understanding of the lyrics. When English lyrics were also included in the song, she felt she could communicate more confidently with the audience. Switching between Shona and English during performances was therefore more inclusive not only for the audience members but also for the performers who were not bilingual in these two languages:

> M5: I was very, very aware of my articulation [of Shona] and I would always be … paranoid if I didn't actually have a full understanding of what the song was about … So it was always a delight to mix the song up when …
> I: Mixing up the languages?
> M5: Yeah mixing the languages up so that I could just get that message across. (M5, interview)

M10 (of English cultural background) saw language switching during performances as an advantage for his group, since not many popular Australian bands switched languages in performances:

> I think it's great that she [the lead singer of the group] … sings some in English and some in Creole …You don't hear that very often. Two languages in one song. Yeah, I think it's great. (M10, interview)

M12 (of Shona cultural background) also pointed to the possible increased exposure of the songs if they included language switching, especially if this included an internationally spoken language like English (reflecting Bentahila and Davies's (2002) findings in relation to *Rai* music). M12 proposed that language switching in

his performances and recordings made them more accessible to people in Australia, Zimbabwe and internationally:

> Sometimes, you put both [languages] … which is good cos it's like both sides people can understand … even more English lyrics, more international. It's standard for people, so people can understand. Yeah, some English lyrics and Shona and we just try to mix it up together. (M12, interview)

M2 (of Anglo-South African/Australian cultural background) saw language switching as a signifier of acceptance and respect of people from different languages and cultures working successfully together. This was important to him, especially in light of his experiences growing up as a child in the apartheid system of South Africa, which was designed to separate people of different languages and cultures:

> It's nice to have the English as well [as the African languages]. To know what the song's about and all that sort of thing … it's like a unifying thing for me I suppose … in terms of growing up in the apartheid era and I'm playing this music now and not having any misconceptions or dramas with playing … and with anyone from a different culture or race, and to see it actually can work. Working with different people from different backgrounds. (M2, interview)

The use of multiple languages during performances was perceived by the musicians as enabling them to sing more effectively in performances, reach a wider audience, and construct a context within which cooperative social practices involving people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds could take place. The language switching during these performances enabled languages spoken and understood by relatively few people in WA to be used together with English to perform the identities of people from a wide range of cultural backgrounds within the performance space. These positive outcomes resemble some of the objectives of critical intercultural education: education that ideally serves to value, encourage and improve (as well as analyse and question) meaningful interaction between people of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The outcomes have been achieved, inter alia, through the valuing and use of multiple languages in the intercultural space. There is a growing body of evidence of the benefits of allowing and encouraging the use of multiple languages and varieties of languages in intercultural educational contexts, whether these involve the teaching and learning of English as an additional language, or other subjects (e.g. Baumgardner 2006; Cross 2012; Ibrahim 1999; Lo Bianco 2010; McAlinden and Zagoria 2013; Pennycook 2007; Szabo 2006). (Chapter, "Code-switching and Indigenous Workplace Learning: Cross-cultural Competence Training or Cultural Assimilation" of this volume provides further discussion of the role of code-switching in intercultural contexts.)

Another objective of critical intercultural education is to support (if required) the development of hybridised identities of students and teachers which already are, or are becoming, multicultural, multilingual or multinational. This support is necessary as the conditions that lead to these hybridising processes occur more frequently in culturally diverse societies.

The Africa-born lead singers of the music groups mentioned in this chapter were often explicitly proclaiming their multicultural, multinational and multi- or supranational identities (Zagoria 2011a), as well as their hybridised musical and other

personal identities during performances (Zagoria 2011b). The majority of the musicians in the groups, who were of non-African ancestry, were also expressing and expanding their cosmopolitan, musical and hybridised cultural identities in WA by actively participating in cultural practices different to those of their own heritage cultures. The use of multiple languages in intercultural educational contexts could have benefits similar to those described by the findings reported in this chapter, especially regarding the valuing of identities which transcend a single language, culture and nation.

8 Conclusion

A critical intercultural approach to education is necessary in Australian educational institutions because of the growing cultural diversity of the population involved in these institutions onshore and offshore, the needs of an increasingly diverse population in the wider society, and the increasing frequency and demands of communicating internationally. The findings from the study discussed in this chapter reveal some of the processes of communication and meaning-making used by members of intercultural music groups; these meaning-making strategies involved discourses of inclusion but also discourses of othering, even within the cooperative, intercultural and self-sustaining contexts of the groups. Participating in discourses of othering was inevitable, at least initially, because the musicians of non-African ancestry (including myself) necessarily constructed their own meanings of African music and song lyrics through the dominant influence of the Western discourses in which they were raised. However, personal agency was also demonstrated through their continued membership of groups in which their cultural and linguistic norms did not dominate and where they learned different ways of behaving, communicating and performing.

9 Implications for Critical Intercultural Education

As members of culturally diverse groups interact with each other, both discourses of inclusion and of othering are used. Becoming aware of one's own expression of an othering discourse does not mean that intercultural interactions should cease, but that the long and often uncomfortable process of communicating meaningfully and respectfully across cultures can begin. Critical intercultural education involves raising awareness of the presence of these discourses, and the implementation of strategies to minimise othering discourses. These strategies might involve activities designed to promote an increase in knowledge and inquiry into the participants' *own* cultural assumptions and social practices, as well as an increase in knowledge and inquiry into less familiar cultural beliefs and practices.

Moving from monocultural to multicultural to intercultural educational environments necessitates engagement in confronting communication processes. Not

engaging in these processes may mean perpetuating conservative and liberal multicultural approaches to education in which structural discrimination and privilege remain entrenched and unquestioned.

The use of multiple languages in intercultural educational contexts can lead to creative, critical and engaging intercultural activities in which many different and hybridised cultural identities can be performed, supported, examined, and celebrated. The promotion of cultural awareness-raising activities does not mean that individuals in educational settings from minority (or majority) cultures need to explain themselves or act as expert or typical representatives of their own cultural groups. Cultures and individual identities are fluid, hybridised and hybridising, and need to be respected for what/who they are without justification. All participants involved in critical intercultural activities need to have agency, respect and freedom to choose topics and tasks that interest them, even if these seem at first to be unrelated to their own cultural identities. The use of multiple languages in intercultural educational settings can be beneficial to all participants, even if some of the languages are incomprehensible to some of them. The valuing of, and exposure to, multilingualism is an essential element of critical intercultural education.

The unfamiliar can become an opportunity for growth and for an expansion of horizons rather than something to be othered, misunderstood, ignored or used to reinforce imagined fears and a fixed self-identity. Those involved in critical intercultural education need to be aware of the probability of discourses of othering occurring as they interact with the unfamiliar. Rather than avoiding meaningful interactions between people of diverse cultures because of the risks of othering, a critical intercultural approach to education accepts that othering discourses will probably occur in these contexts but that strategies (as discussed above) can be implemented to identify and dismantle them. In addition, this approach to education accepts, supports and encourages student and teacher performances of hybridised identities which are multilingual, multicultural, multinational and possibly supranational. Students and teachers who are living, learning and teaching in increasingly culturally diverse spaces require a critical intercultural approach to education that challenges the anachronistic agendas of monolithic nationalism, monolingualism, and conservative and liberal approaches to multiculturalism that are still present in mainstream Australian educational institutions.

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Can Teachers Know Learners' Minds? Teacher Empathy and Learner Body Language in English Language Teaching

Maggie McAlinden

Abstract Empathy has often been associated with how people come to know the minds of others. Theory of mind (ToM) proposes that through social cognition people make unique inferences about unobservable mental states such as intentions, goals and beliefs. This chapter explores the association between teacher empathy, ToM and interculturality, and the expression and interpretation of emotion in intercultural educational settings. The chapter raises questions about the universality of non-verbal emotional expression and interpretation of emotion across cultures, and suggests that teachers may not always be accurate in their interpretations of learners' emotional cues in intercultural encounters. The chapter concludes that reflexivity and empathy are essential elements of being an interculturally effective educator.

Keywords Teacher empathy · Learner body language · Intercultural education · Theory of Mind

1 Introduction

> Empathy is the spark of human concern for others. The glue that makes social life possible. (Hoffman 2001, p. 3)

Tensions and concerns arise as people from culturally diverse backgrounds attempt to negotiate the power and influence of English and globalisation on their lives. This chapter explores the teaching beliefs and practices of a group of English language teachers in a Australian tertiary education setting. It illustrates the importance of teacher empathy in intercultural education, but also questions the assumptions that teachers make about learners' emotional body language. In a similar way to Dobinson and Zagoria (see previous chapters), this chapter presents examples of othering, but also illustrates how teacher empathy mediates effective intercultural communication.

The dominant paradigm of monolingualism and monoculturalism in the context of the increasing linguistic and cultural diversity of students in all sectors of

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Australian education has brought pressure to bear on educators to develop interculturality. Although educators in higher education institutions have always participated in an international exchange of knowledge and ideas across national boundaries and cultures, increases in student numbers and diversity place more demands on educators in Australia to be interculturally effective than previously (Bodycott and Walker 2000; Devlin and Samarawickrema 2010). Few Australian educators have taught or lived outside their own national context (Haigh 2002); most are monolingual in English (Clyne 2007; Coleman 2012; Lo Bianco 2009; Ozolins 1993), and few teacher education courses in Australia address intercultural, multilingual or multicultural education (Leeman and Reid 2006). Thus, Australian academics, teachers and institutions may not be sufficiently prepared to meet the demands that teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners places on them (Devlin and Samarawickrema 2010; Haigh 2002; Wallace and Dunn 2004; Whitfield et al. 2007).

This chapter draws on findings from a qualitative study that focused on teacher empathy as an important aspect of interculturality in a diverse tertiary education setting. The study developed a theory of intercultural teacher empathy in the teaching of English as an additional language. The chapter explores one element of the theory, which is how teachers who teach in culturally diverse settings can know learners' minds through observation and interpretation of learners' emotional body language and emotional facial expression. In this chapter, the terms *emotional facial expression* and *emotional body language* (visual cues) refer to the range of facial and bodily cues including eye contact, gesture and posture that may indicate learners' feelings and thoughts to teachers.

2 Empathy in Intercultural Communication

> Emotions are often thought of as out of control, primitive and childish. These images are incompatible with the civilised nature of the academic world. (Postareff and Lindblom-Ylänne 2011, p. 800)

A deficit view of emotions has long been held within Western scientific and philosophical thought (Oatley et al. 2006): a view that has probably contributed to the neglect of the significance of empathy and emotion in diverse educational settings. Yet teaching and learning, like all human activity, always involves emotion and emotional understanding (Hargreaves 1998). Emotions influence the quality of people's lives, and empathy has been cited as a means through which emotions can be accessed and activated (Arnold 2005; Ekman 2003). The expression and interpretation of emotion across cultures is one of the most studied areas of emotion and culture (Matsumoto 2001). Research in this area suggests that empathy might be significant in intercultural education because it is broadly associated with the ability to view one's own culture from the viewpoint of outsiders (Bodycott and Walker 2000; Deardorff 2006; Haigh 2002; Kramsch 2006, 2011).

There are significant issues with defining and conceptualising emotional phenomena such as empathy, and this chapter does not assume that a shared everyday understanding of empathy exists in Australian English or other languages or

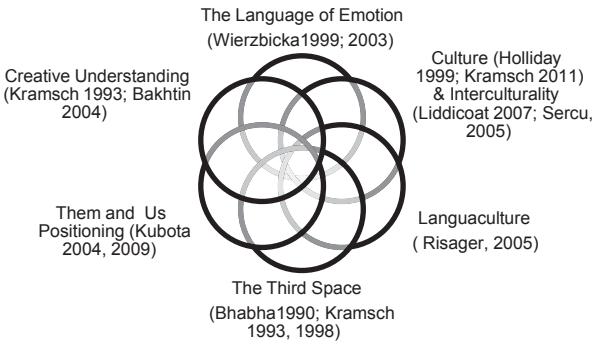

Fig. 1 Key terms and concepts informing the conceptualisation of intercultural teacher empathy in diverse educational settings. (Adapted from McAlinden 2013, p. 54)

dialects. However, the term is widely recognised in English-dominant contexts, if not widely understood or used, and it is in widespread use among social science researchers. For this reason, the term 'empathy' is cautiously adopted as the central concept of this chapter.

Empathy is a significant, much debated, diversely defined phenomenon that has generated a vast amount of conceptual and empirical literature in the fields of clinical, developmental and social psychology and philosophy (see Davis 1983; Eisenburg and Strayer 1987; Gladstein 1987; Jahoda 2005; Verducci 2000; Wispé 1987). The overwhelming view of empathy in psychology and other related fields is that it is a prosocial phenomenon (Roberts and Strayer 1996) that is associated with altruism (Hoffman 1991). Central to the theory of empathy is the capacity of the mature empathiser to recognise and understand the feelings of others (Hoffman 1990).

By exploring data from a setting in which intercultural communication is an intrinsic part of daily life, this chapter provides insights into teacher empathy and interculturality which have relevance to both monolingual and bilingual teachers, in Australia and elsewhere, who work in diverse educational contexts. In this chapter, teacher empathy is conceptualised within, and aligned with, a range of concerns considered significant to teaching and learning in diverse contexts, as illustrated in Fig. 1 and explained in the following section.

3 The Language of Emotion

> Everyone knows what an emotion is, until asked to give a definition. (Damasio 1994, p. 145)

In social linguistics, words like empathy that refer to emotional phenomena are 'conceptual artefacts' (Wierzbicka 2003, p. xviii) and should not be relied on as being universally understood (Wierzbicka 1999). With this concern in mind, lexical and conceptual universals are used in this chapter to represent the theory of intercultural teacher empathy. Universal primes from Wierzbicka's (2003) Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) replace words rooted in the Anglo-English academic

discourse. These universal primes relate to human concepts that have been empirically identified as universal and can be expressed in basic words that exist in all languages (Goddard and Wierzbicka 2007; Wierzbicka 1999, 2003).

4 Intercultural or Cross-Cultural?

Although there is a distinction between the label 'intercultural' as relating to or involving different cultures, and 'cross-cultural' as combining or contrasting two or more cultures, these terms are often used interchangeably. In this chapter, the term 'cross-cultural' is rejected as it is generally used to refer to the combination or comparison of two or more cultures. The term 'intercultural' is preferred as it pertains to the concept of communication occurring *between* people. The prefix 'inter' brings to the concepts of competence and empathy the idea of joint engagement, emphasising the social nature of both intercultural competence and empathy.

5 Culture and Intercultural Communication

> 'Culture' is not a thing, but a social construct vaguely referring to a vastly complex set of phenomena. (Jahoda 2012, p. 300)

In intercultural education, culture is often conceptualised as shared habits, customs, beliefs and behaviours that are particular to a group of people who are bounded by nationality, language, race or religion. In this approach, it is generally thought that the more that is known about a particular culture, the more successful communication will be with people from that culture (Stier 2006). This view has encouraged teachers and teacher trainers to focus on imparting cultural knowledge as the main way to foster effective intercultural communication. However, the focus on external knowledge in this approach ignores issues related to identity, beliefs, practices, emotional expression or worldview (Liddicoat 2007). The identification and comparison of 'different' cultures by national, religious or racial boundaries assigns particular ways of being to particular groups, often defining one group in opposition to another. Culture is relational and plural; it is not useful to describe one individual or group through a single cultural label (Agar 1996). Knowing *about* other cultures does not necessarily mitigate ethnocentrism and prejudice in intercultural communication; other competencies and characteristics such as uncertainty tolerance are more important (Cargile and Bolkan 2013).

Culture is not an immutable, stable, homogenous entity that is bounded by national, religious, or racial categories (Kramsch 2011). Culture is dynamic, plural and relational, and is social practice and process (Holliday 1999). Holliday argues that the standard view of culture as referring to nation states or nationalities serves only to define the essential features of a group. As an alternative, Holliday proposes the 'small culture' (p. 237) paradigm in which the notion of culture does not serve as

a tool to identify and differentiate one group from another, but refers to cohesive behaviour within any 'small' social grouping and is not subordinate to 'large cultures'.

In this chapter, the term 'culture' refers to individual and shared phenomena that are expressed, constructed and mediated through ways of behaving, thinking, feeling, and speaking. Culture is expressed by any or all of the following: language, gender, age, socioeconomic status, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, age, and nationality; and includes values and beliefs as well as non-verbal behaviours.

6 Interculturality

> Interculturality is fundamentally an engagement between self and other. (Liddicoat 2007, p. 20.2)

Interculturality is a long-term, cyclical, dialectical process characterised by changes in people's beliefs, assumptions, emotional responses and practices through communication between individuals who differ in terms of culture. When people who speak different languages encounter each other, emotional and cognitive disturbances are to be expected (Byram 1989; Kramsch 1993; Otten 2003). The fields of applied linguistics, cross-cultural psychology and cross-cultural communication have sought ways of understanding these disturbances through the concept of interculturality. Interculturality includes a wide range of phenomena, including the ability to see the self from outside, to see the world through others' eyes, to cope with uncertainty, and to acknowledge that it may not be appropriate to reduce individuals to collective identities (Kramsch 1993, 2011; Liddicoat 2007; Sercu 2005). Interculturality has prosocial outcomes (Otten 2003) enabling people to communicate successfully in intercultural encounters (Deardorff 2006); thus, interculturality refers to both a process and an outcome of intercultural communication, and is a desirable, but not necessarily a predictable, outcome of teaching (and learning) in diverse educational settings.

7 Languaculture

Culture and language are intertwined, constantly evolving social practices (Gudykunst 1998; Kramsch 1998; Stier 2006; Zoreda 1997). The term 'languaculture' foregrounds the dialectical nature and ever-present interaction between language and culture (Risager 2005) that is of particular significance when people with different cultural backgrounds interact and communicate. For intercultural understanding and learning to manifest in intercultural encounters, the interactants need to acknowledge the primacy and mutability of culture. In this chapter, the notion of language is synonymous with culture, and the concept of language refers to dialects and varieties of one language as well as to languages and dialects that may be either mutually intelligible or unintelligible.

8 The Third Space

The Third Space is a new space that may emerge from intercultural encounters (Bhabha 1990). Within this space, interactants revalue ideological divisions and differences and explore irreducible differences (Kramsch 1993). Although Kramsch conceptualises the Third Space in terms of language learners, the notion lends itself readily to all intercultural encounters, and provides a reference point from which English language teachers' encounters with English language learners in Australia can be understood. This chapter is concerned with how empathy manifests as a means of knowing others in intercultural encounters, and how English language teachers manage, or fail to manage, the emotional disturbance and disruption that often characterise this intersection.

9 Creative Understanding

Empathy has been rejected as a means of knowing others. A Bakhtinian perspective of intercultural communication rejects empathy as a post-colonial notion that assumes that it is necessary to become other(s) in order to understand other(s). Instead, Bakhtin prefers the idea of *creative understanding*: a concept based on the Russian concept *vzhivanie* (living into). Through *vzhivanie*, argues Bakhtin, one retains one's 'outsidedness'; that is, one remains distinct from others: 'the place of another is entered while maintaining our own place and outsidedness; the self is not abandoned nor its viewpoint' (Bakhtin 2004, p. 7). The limits of empathy, its constraints and the extent of its locatedness within neo-colonial discourses is a concern of this chapter; however, Bakhtin's criticism of empathy conflicts with the notion of the mutability of the self, or identity, that is central to current conceptions of interculturality. Interculturality demands that the self is changed. When there are unequal power relations at play in intercultural encounters, it is the responsibility of the more powerful interactant to be wary of imposing their own norms and values on others who may not be in a position to resist.

10 Us and Them Positioning

Research methodologists warn against the us and them positioning that can occur when teaching and researching in intercultural contexts (Atkinson and Silverman 1997). Studies conducted in culturally diverse settings may encourage the rejection of the uniqueness of each individual through othering: that is, uncritically creating and reinforcing linguistic and racial inequality through stereotyping and homogenisation (of English language learners) (Kubota 2002, 2004; Kubota and Lin 2009; Kumaravadivelu 2003; Norton 2000). Othering is not only the reinforcement of the power and status of one's own culture by searching for and establishing

differences between people; it can also be expressed through a focus on sameness. Kubota (2004) defines sameness as 'a colour-blind liberal discourse of individualism, equality and meritocracy. The idea that everyone is equal regardless of race and other attributes' (p. 87). This chapter explores empathy as a phenomenon that may ameliorate othering and other practices that are undesirable in intercultural education. The analysis of the empirical data indicates that othering was evident in the research setting and may be inevitable in all diverse educational contexts in which there are unequal power relations.

11 The Research Approach and Methodology

A constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz 2004, 2006) guided the data collection and analysis for the study. The research processes and procedures included the gathering of data through intensive group and individual interviews with participants who could supply the richest information. The data collection and analysis procedures were abductive, creative, iterative, cyclical, simultaneous and sequential. The data were coded and categorised using open coding, selective coding and constant comparison. The process also included memo-writing, theoretical sampling, theoretical sorting and theoretical writing.

Ten English language teachers participated in the study. Experienced teachers who had facility in an additional language and who had lived and worked overseas were recruited, as well as less experienced teachers. The participants were recruited in groups of three or four, each differing loosely from the others in terms of intercultural experience, including exposure to languages other than English, length of experience as an English language teacher in Australia and overseas, and formative experiences. These groupings are not intended to be viewed as definitive classifications of the participants for the specific purpose of comparison.

Group A consisted of three female English language teachers. All three were born overseas, and were the most *multilingual* English language teachers when compared with the other participants. All three were raised in bilingual/multilingual households/contexts and all used one or more languages in addition to English with varying degrees of proficiency. Participant 1 was born and grew up in Sri Lanka, Participant 3 was born and grew up in Singapore. Both moved to Australia in early adulthood as international students. Participant 2 moved to Australia from Japan as a young child but returned to Japan to live, work and study in early adulthood. Participant 3 had 6 years of full-time experience as an English language teacher in Australia, Participant 2 had 3 years of part-time experience, including 6 months in Japan, and Participant 1 had 6 years of experience as a part-time teacher in Australia.

Group B consisted of three female teachers (Participants 4, 6 and 7) and one male teacher (Participant 5). These participants were *the most experienced* English language teachers in terms of length of teaching experience and overseas teaching experience. Participant 5 had been teaching English for 30 years. Participant 4 had been a teacher for 14 years. Participants 6 and 7 had each been teaching for 15

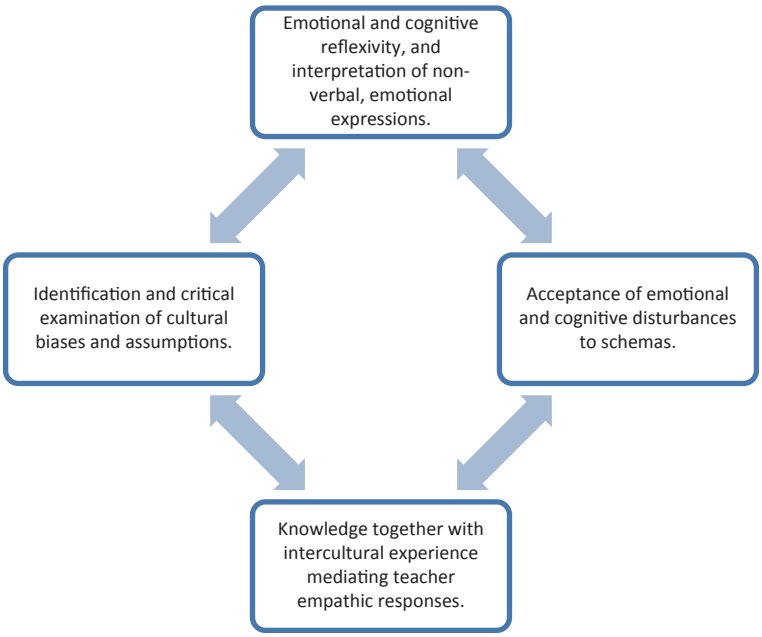

Fig. 2 A representation of the iterative and interactive aspects of intercultural teacher empathy. (McAlinden 2013, p. 230)

years. All four participants were born in contexts where English was the main language of communication, and had grown up in monolingual English households. Participants 4, 5 and 7 had experience teaching English in Japan; Participant 4 had also taught in Vietnam. Participant 6 had taught in Papua New Guinea and Hungary. Participant 5 had also taught English in Kuwait; and had grown up in Tanzania.

Group C consisted of the *least experienced* English language teachers when compared with other participants, and included one female (Participant 8) and two male teachers (Participants 9 and 10). Participants 8 and 9 had 2 years' teaching experience, while Participant 10 had 4 years' experience. None had overseas teaching experience. All three were born in Australia. Participant 10 had studied Japanese as a Foreign Language and Participant 9 had spent some time studying Spanish. Participant 8 had never studied a second language.

12 Analysis of the Data

Figure 2 offers a representation of the theory of intercultural teacher empathy in English language teaching. This representation provides a momentary conceptual stability and continuity, but also allows for similarity, reconceptualisation and renewal. Thus it is neither absolute nor complete; the phenomena are in flux and are

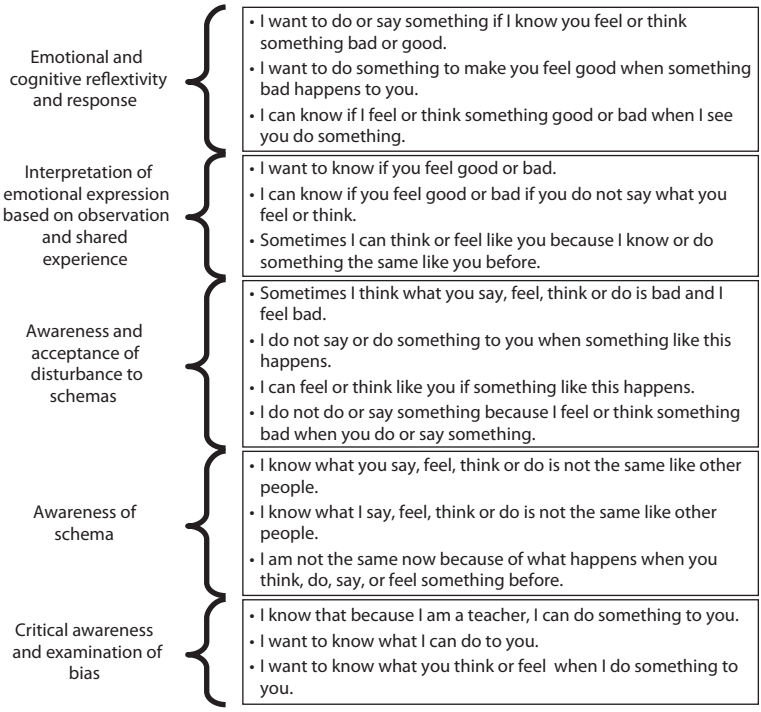

Fig. 3 A semantic explication of intercultural teacher empathy. (McAlinden 2013, p. 231)

variously constructed, enhanced and constrained through the interactions, contexts and discourses within which they are mediated, including the research setting, the discourses of the profession and the related fields of study.

The theory is further explicated in Fig. 3, using universal human concepts expressed in basic words and phrases according to the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) (Goddard and Wierzbicka 2007; Wierzbicka 1999, 2003).

The sections to follow present an analysis of data from which a key element of the theory of empathy represented in Figs. 2 and 3 was developed. This analysis suggests that intercultural teacher empathy was associated with the study participants' observations, interpretations and responses to learners' visual cues, but also indicates that participants' interpretations of learners' visual cues were not always accurate.

13 Empathy and Theory of Mind (ToM)

Since its earliest inception, the concept of empathy has been associated with Theory of Mind (ToM) (Jahoda 2005). More recently, brain-imaging investigations of ToM in cognitive neuroscience have provided new insights into how people are able to

know what is going on in the minds of others. ToM proposes that through social cognition people are able to draw unique inferences about unobservable mental states (desires, intentions, goals, beliefs, knowledge and emotions) of other people (Adolphs 2006; Baron-Cohen 2006; Singer 2006).

ToM has driven many investigations into facial expression in the areas of social, developmental and cognitive psychology (Ekman 1999, 2003) as well as brain imaging studies of empathy in neuroscience (Adolphs 2006; de Gelder 2006; de Vignemont and Singer 2006; LeDoux 2000). These studies have contributed to understanding how people express, perceive, process and respond to emotion across and within cultures, particularly with regard to non-linguistic communication (LeDoux 2000). For some cognitive neuroscientists such as Singer (2006), ToM and empathy are two separate capacities that share similar features but which develop at different times and in different regions of the brain. Singer's (2006) review of the neuronal basis of empathy concludes that ToM is associated with the lateral temporal lobe and pre-frontal structures that are among the last areas of the brain to develop to full maturity, while empathy is associated with the limbic structures of the brain that develop much earlier. Other research has found that mature empathy involves both ToM and empathy (shared feelings) (Baron-Cohen and Wheelwright 2004). Baron-Cohen (2006, p. 536) considers ToM to be 'just one "fraction" of empathy'.

14 Emotional Body Language and Facial Expression

> You can see by people's faces, how they react to each other, if there is something to do, the manner in which they do it with their partner, all that gives you cues as to what is really going on, and you have got to be a bit sensitive to it. (Participant 5, group B)

> When we see a bodily expression of emotion, we immediately know what specific action is associated with a particular emotion, leaving little need for interpretation of the signal. (de Gelder 2006, p. 242)

Research exploring bodily expressions of emotion has shown that it is as familiar to people as facial expressions of emotion, and that the brain processes emotional body language as quickly and effectively as it does emotional facial expression (de Gelder 2006). The analysis of the data presented in this chapter argues that the teachers who participated in the study noticed both the emotional facial expressions and the emotional body language of the learners during lessons. Participant 4 explained the importance of emotional body language as she imagined what it would be like to teach in the absence of such visual cues:

> The body is open, so they don't have to say something, but they need to nod or give some sort of response back to me, so that I can continue to work on that. There has to be that feedback in order for me, because I can't operate if it is just one way. I can't continue to… Like, if I ask for, or give a topic out and I ask for a response, if I get nothing back, where do I go with that, what do I do, how do I operate? How do I judge where to go from there? (Participant 4, group B)

The study participants acknowledged the importance of being able to read facial expressions in order to predict or guess what learners were feeling:

> If you can't read someone's face it is really hard to know, hard to guess what they are thinking or guess how they are feeling. (Participant 6, group B)

The participants provided detailed descriptions of a range of non-verbal cues and interactions that they believed indicated to them what students were feeling and thinking during lessons. One participant described how he observed learner facial expressions. He noticed how learners interacted with each other and how they reacted to classroom activities non-verbally. The data analysis suggests that it was through observation of, and reflection on, these visual cues that participants were able to make inferences about what was occurring:

> You can see by people's faces, how they react to each other. If there is something to do, the manner in which they do it with their partner. All that gives you cues as to what is really going on. (Participant 5, group B)

Another participant explained how visual cues helped her to judge learners' levels of understanding in English:

> I ask how long they have been here, and I get them talking. And I listen to them and then I say: How much did you understand? And I try and get some feedback, and all the time you are getting visual clues, cues back from students, they are nodding or they are looking blank. (Participant 6, group B)

Observation of learners' non-verbal expressions was also associated with the creation and maintenance of an effective learning environment. Participants explained that they paid attention to and monitored learners' body language throughout their lessons because they believed non-verbal expression and posture to be important indicators of learner interest and understanding. Participant 5 explained the importance of looking for visual cues that indicated what learners were feeling and thinking:

> It's all part of the messages that they give you. I use that all the time in class because all the time you are not just giving them information, all the time you are monitoring if they are understanding it, if they are interested in it. (Participant 5, group B)

Another participant explained the cues that she interpreted as markers of learner engagement and motivation:

> If their eyes are bright and sparkly and they are smiling and their skin is clear, you know and they are enthusiastic, and they can't wait to get on with the task. Then you can be pretty sure that if you explain clearly enough what you want them to do, they'll have a go at it. (Participant 6, group B)

The analysis of the data suggests that the study participants believed that emotional facial expression and emotional body language were the same for each learner, regardless of their cultural background. Their beliefs about the universality of facial expression converge with Ekman's well-known and often cited research (1999, 2003) which resulted in broad acceptance of the idea that emotional facial expressions are universal rather than culturally determined (Matsumoto 2001). This substantive theory states that all humans can experience and recognise six basic

universal emotional states (happiness, surprise, fear, disgust, anger, and sadness), and that people communicate using the same facial expressions: that is, people are 'hardwired' to these emotions in evolutionary biological terms (Ekman 1999, 2003).

In contrast, Wierzbicka (1999) shows that certain feeling concepts are specific to particular cultures. While acknowledging that more simple concepts such as *feel* are universal, Wierzbicka argues that not all languages have words for what Ekman considers basic emotions such as sadness, anger and fear. The range of feelings identified and researched by Ekman are particular to English speaking cultures and therefore fail to account for 'lexical diversity' (Wierzbicka 1999, p. 24). In addition, cross-cultural studies of recognition of facial expressions using brain imaging technology (Jack et al. 2009, 2012a, b) provide further evidence which contradicts the universality of emotion and emotional expression.

Jack et al. (2009) found that some groups of people were unable to reliably distinguish facial expression of feelings of fear and disgust that are commonly held to be universal. A more recent study (Jack et al. 2012b) compared the mental representations of basic facial expressions of two cultural groups. The study concludes that the six basic emotions are culture-specific, not universal. These findings converge with recent reviews of the universality theory in the field of cross-cultural psychology, which claim that there is insufficient evidence to support the theory. Nelson and Russell (2013) argue that of all the evidence reported on the universality of emotional facial expression between 1992 and 2010, they were only able to match happiness universally; they conclude that '[e]vidence does not support the claim that facial expressions are preinterpreted signals for specific basic emotions universally recognised by human beings' (p. 13). That is not to argue that people are never able to accurately interpret the emotional state of others: despite their refutation of the universality theory in terms of emotional facial expression, Nelson and Russell (2013) point out that people can sometimes accurately work out the emotional state of others through social messages, incipient actions, situations or appraisals.

15 Empathy Prompts Action

Behavioural research in the field of developmental psychology and more recent neuroscientific research (de Vignemont and Singer 2006) show that empathy involves observation, reflection, and action in relation to others' feelings; and there is evidence that empathy is not only an automatic response to the observation of emotional cues. The analysis of the data from the current study suggests that when the study participants observed and interpreted student visual cues, they often followed this with emotional and cognitive reflection that led to some form of action. The study participants' interpretations of learner cues helped them to know if learners were engaged in a particular learning activity or not, and this led them to take action when learners were not engaged. The data analysis suggests that the participants depended on their interpretation of learners' non-verbal emotional cues to direct their classroom practice, as Participant 5 explained:

> And of course, if you get the cues that people are not interested in that you quickly finish that, and go on to the next thing. (Participant 5, group B)

Another participant described how her interpretation of the visual cues of two students prompted her to change a set of guidelines for an oral presentation that the students were required to do:

> They had to do this presentation, so while I was telling them what they had to do, I said you are required to do this and this. And then I said, when you make a presentation you come out to the front of the class and you speak to the rest of the class. And I just saw the girls, not a word was said, not a word was spoken, but I just saw the two Saudi girls who were seated opposite each other looking up at each other, they just glanced at each other. (Participant 1, group A)

Participant 1 responded to a barely perceptible non-verbal interaction between two Arabic-speaking learners. She then made a decision to change the guidelines for the oral presentations:

> So, without missing a beat, I went on to say that in the presentation, it is all about making it clear to the other people who are listening, so I don't care where you present it from. If you like to, you can present from your desk. If you like, you can be seated, you can be standing, or you can come up in front. And I just left it at that. (Participant 1, group A)

Participant 1 said that she was not certain what had prompted her do this. She told me, 'there was nothing on the face to show what they were thinking'. According to Participant 1, because of her actions, these particular learners were better able to cope with giving an oral presentation to group of predominantly male students, something they had never done before. She then asked her co-teacher, with whom she shared the teaching of that particular class, to accommodate the learners in the same way. She believed that this intervention was interculturally effective and had contributed to an interculturally appropriate learning environment. Participant 1 did not know that to stand up and give a presentation in front of male students was taboo for these learners; instead, she relied on her intuition and her desire to create a comfortable learning environment. Although the initial observation that Participant 1 referred to could be described as automatic, Participant 1 was able to reflect on what she had seen almost instantaneously, which then prompted her to act.

These findings converge with the discovery of mirror neurones that support the theory of empathy as a way of knowing other minds. The discovery of mirror neurones provides evidence to suggest that when mammals observe movement or emotion in another person they respond empathically (Adolphs 2006; Iacoboni 2009). Neural mirroring is an automatic process that does not involve inference or verbal processing (Fogassi 2011; Fogassi and Ferrari 2011). There is also evidence that the brain activates mirror neurones when the observer is not consciously aware of emotional displays in others. Harrison et al. (2007) found that when participants did not consciously observe a micro-facial expression they still responded emotionally to it; the response was more evident in participants who scored more highly on an empathy scale. The micro-facial expression was the dilation of the pupil, which was measured when the participants in the experiment were shown images of faces expressing sadness, fear, disgust and surprise. In the situations described by the

participants in that study, the observation of visual cues included the interpretation of micro-bodily expressions that seemed to help participants to know when learners were upset, distressed or not engaged.

16 Responding to Negative Emotion

The data analysis also indicates that the participants paid particular attention to learner cues that marked negative emotions and reactions. Participant 2 described how she was able not only to understand, but also to respond to, a Japanese-speaking learner's negative feelings about her teaching approach. She interpreted a lack of eye contact and the presence of facial and bodily tension during an initial lesson as an indication that the student was feeling frustrated with her attempts and methods to engage him:

> I could ask him a question in English like: Did you enjoy your time in America? And he would just freeze up. And if I pushed him, he would get really frustrated… I certainly knew where he was coming from. He was blocked up and wasn't making eye contact and he was very rigid in his face, getting all tense… body language. (Participant 2, group A)

Participant 2's inferences resulted in deliberate action. She decided to change her teaching approach and reassured the student rather than pushing him to speak:

> So, the first day when I did ask those questions he just froze up and I said: That's ok, we are just new here everyone gets shy and I am sure as we get talking, you know, things will start to flow naturally… Yea that sort of thing. Later on, trying to find topics that he was interested in. I mean I thought that that was a fairly general question about living in the States, but he likes sport and he is quite willing to be little bit more vocal now. (Participant 2, group A)

The participants' observation and interpretation of the negative non-verbal cues of learners were also associated with the creation and maintenance of a positive learning environment. This assisted them to identify emotional disruptions among groups of learners and in individual learners, that might have had an adverse influence on student learning. Participant 9 believed that he recognised emotional cues which indicated when a student was feeling bad. He explained how he had sensed that a particular student had a serious problem:

> I saw that he was thinking about something else. He looked preoccupied, he would regularly drift away. He would take time to register that you were talking to him. He often spoke in a quiet voice. He would look out the window while others were looking at the teacher or at their papers. He looked sad. He seemed distant. (Participant 9, group C)

Without any direct interaction or verbal communication with the student, Participant 9 guessed that the student had a problem that was making it very difficult for him to engage with the lessons. The student disclosed the issue to this participant, who was then able to direct the student to appropriate support services. The participant believed that he had gained knowledge of the student's internal emotional and psychological state through intuitive observation and interpretation of non-verbal emotional cues.

Participants' interpretations of student visual cues illustrated in this chapter lie at various points along a proposed continuum of the theories of the socioemotional brain, which range from entirely automatic responses or processes to controlled (reflective) processes (Adolphs 2006; Keysers and Gazzola 2007). At one extreme, there can be instinctive, intuitive responses to emotional facial expressions and emotional body language that enable people to infer the emotional state of others with little contextual information (Keysers and Gazzola 2007). Closer to the other end of the continuum are reflective processes whereby 'explicit knowledge about the inner life of others is the product of reflecting upon the states of others'; in situations like these 'we must browse consciously through what we know about the country and culture' and reflect on this in order to understand and respond (Keysers and Gazzola 2007, p. 195).

17 Differences in Learners' Non-verbal Expression

Although the study participants did not generally refer to cultural differences in the non-verbal expressions of learners, the analysis indicates that at times the participants did perceive differences between students in relation to their cultural backgrounds. Participants believed that at times these differences made it more difficult for them to empathise. For example, Participant 4 perceived cultural differences in non-verbal expression between herself and Mandarin-speaking learners, and perceived these differences as a hindrance:

> Different cultures feed back in certain ways and so you are missing those cues that you are looking for. So, this last group of Chinese students I have had being difficult in that respect, because there is just nothing. You are waiting for some sort of nod of the head or some sort of feedback and it is not there. You just find it difficult to go on. It's like a wall. (Participant 4, group B)

Participant 4's view that the Mandarin-speaking students were less expressive converges with findings from a study that investigated monolingual 'inner circle' English speakers' interpretations of the non-verbal behaviour of English language learners from China who were learning English in New Zealand. The study found that although students displayed intense eye contact, they were less likely to display signs to inner circle English speakers that indicated engagement, such as nodding and smiling (Kuśmierczyk 2011). Participant 4 attributed the lack of facial expression and body language to a deficit in the students' culture:

> We expect something back whereas in their culture, they have never been expected to give anything back, they have not been asked to give their opinion. I think that it may have something to have to do with the way that they have been taught, that a response is not required of them. (Participant 4, group B)

These data extracts also illustrate that at times the study participants referred to English language learners in stereotypical terms, relating particular deficits of belief, practices or values to particular groups of students. In particular, the participants

had a tendency to refer to Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Japanese and Vietnamese-speaking students as lacking the capacity to respond or think independently in class. Teachers and academics in other settings in Australia have been found to express similar views of 'Asian' students (Vandermensbrugghe 2004; Volet 1999), as have expatriate teachers working in Asia (Kember 2000).

Kumaravadivelu (2003) suggests that there are three common stereotypes of Asian students prevalent among English language teachers: (a) they are obedient to authority; (b) they lack critical thinking skills; and (c) they do not participate in classroom interaction (p. 710). Kumaravadivelu points to the danger in, and the absurdity of, the homogenisation of such a diverse array of cultures encapsulated in the geographical term 'Asia':

> It is apparent that there exists a harmful homogenisation of nearly 3 billion people belonging to cultures as contrasting and conflicting as the Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and many others—all thrown into a single cultural basket labelled Asian. (2003, pp. 709–710)

Research contradicts and challenges many of the assumptions held by teachers and academics in Australia about learners from South East Asia. Volet (1999), for example, showed that international students from Confucian Heritage Culture (CHC) backgrounds studying in Australian universities performed better academically than their local counterparts. Chalmers and Volet's (1997) findings contradict many of the persistent stereotypes and prevailing misconceptions that Australian teachers and academics may have of learners of South-East Asian heritage. They conclude that 'focusing on differences between students, or groups of students, increases the possibility of perceiving students inaccurately or seeing only part of the full picture' (Chalmers and Volet 1997, p. 96). As they argue, 'when the "problem" is attributed to the students, teachers can avoid examining their own attitudes and practices' (p. 96).

The well-evidenced stereotyping of English language learners by English language teachers may be an understandable reaction to the difficulties that English language teachers face as they negotiate the complex, culturally diverse context of English language classrooms. Kumaravadivelu (2003) argues that teachers' racial stereotyping of learners may serve to alleviate the challenge of negotiating with diverse groups of learners, as it creates a framework from which teachers can view, explain and resolve communication and learning problems. As Russell (1997) states, '[h]uman beings divide the world into categories. We speakers of English divide colours into red, green, and so on; and our kin into aunts, uncles, cousins, and so on' (p. 426). That is not to argue that the categories or generalisations evident in the presented data are accurate or that they should remain unchallenged, but to suggest that stereotyping might serve a purpose as a stage in the process of interculturality. However, if critical incidents that occur in intercultural encounters are not evaluated and judged on cognitive, affective and behavioural levels, then stereotypes and prejudices may be reinforced (Otten 2003).

In a follow-up interview, Participant 4 referred to the situation outlined in the previous two data extracts and explained that her own cultural schema (Cook 1997; Nishida 1999) might have influenced her understanding of Mandarin-speaking

learners' non-verbal cues. 'Schema' refers to a framework of existing knowledge or understanding from which people interpret and construct meaning, as outlined by Nishida (1999):

> It is said that when a person enters a familiar situation, a stock of knowledge of appropriate behaviour and an appropriate role he/she should play in the situation is retrieved. In other words, every interactant's social world is usually constituted within a framework of familiar and pre-acquainted knowledge about various situations. (p. 754)

When faced with a new situation or experience, schemas are activated and form a knowledge basis from which people are able to interpret and construct meaning. However, there are concerns that people may assume that new experiences or situations conform to these schemas when they do not (Cook 1997). This can lead to misunderstanding and conflict as each person seeks to impose her or his schematic representation as truth.

The Third Space is a process of meaning-making in intercultural encounters that transcends national cultures, yet the study data illustrates that the participants referred to learner differences in terms of national identity, culture and language. Participant 4 believed that her cultural schema was influenced by her Māori cultural identity, which she considered enabled her to accurately interpret and infer meaning from the non-verbal cues of Arabic-speaking students, whom she perceived to be 'very emotional':

> In the past we talked about Chinese students, how I had difficulty relating to Chinese students because of the body language, the eye contact, things like that which really threw me because there was no physical response. Maybe that is to do with my cultural heritage or my way of dealing with people, but I found it more difficult to empathise with students that didn't show a lot of emotion compared to students, I mean, Saudi students are very emotional, so that wasn't a problem. (Participant 4, group B)

Participant 4 believed that at times it was difficult for her to empathise with Mandarin-speaking students because of their lack of emotional expression. Moreover, because she did not observe visual cues or signs of emotion, she assumed that Mandarin or Cantonese-speaking students were less emotional than the Arabic-speaking students. She was more confident of her interpretations of Arabic-speaking students' emotional facial expressions and body language because she believed that she experienced and expressed emotion in a similar way. Participant 4 believed that she had some kind of advantage, which might be akin to an in-group advantage, which helped her to observe and interpret the emotional cues of Arabic-speaking students.

The in-group advantage hypothesis derives from cross-cultural studies of emotion that have identified higher recognition rates of emotional display between people who speak the same language (Beaupré and Hess 2005). Beaupré and Hess posit that the accurate interpretation of emotion by people who share the same language is associated with culturally similar ways of encoding emotion, and may relate to facial physiognomy. They explain, for example, that prominent eyebrows may enable people to detect frowns and other expressions of anger. It is not possible to establish whether Participant 4, who self-identified as an Australian-Māori, was more accurate in her interpretation of the emotional expressions of Arabic-speaking students from Saudi Arabia than she was in her interpretation of Man-

darin-speaking students from China. However, China is not a monoculture; nor is Saudi Arabia. For example, a survey of emotion established that expressions of emotion differed between people from Hui, Uighur, Mongolian, Tibetan and Han ethnic groups in China (Lu and Wang 2012). If teachers rely on national boundaries to interpret students' emotional expression, they may be misrepresenting students. Moreover, if they assume that their interpretations are accurate and act in response to their interpretations, they may be acting on incorrect information and may make inappropriate responses.

The research literature also converges with the study participants' interpretations of learners' behaviour and emotional expression. Participant 6, an experienced teacher, explained a type of behaviour that she associated with Japanese-speaking students from Japan:

> In 1997, I remember having a group of about 12 Japanese girls for an afternoon class and we had a video to watch, but it was way beyond them, and they couldn't cope. They just closed their eyes and tuned out, and I thought Australian kids wouldn't do that. (Participant 6, group B)

Participant 6's observations of and conversations with Japanese-speaking learners as an English language teacher over many years influenced how she responded to their behaviour. Participant 6 believed that not maintaining eye contact or slumping during lessons was a cultural behaviour. She did not feel offended by this behaviour because she associated it with culture. She advised her students that the behaviour was not appropriate:

> If you start to doze in our culture, that implies that either you don't like the culture or you don't like the person, or you don't understand the material. (Participant 6, group B)

Participant 6 was confident that the behaviour she had observed was broadly acceptable in Japan:

> Researcher: Do you think that that is acceptable then in Japan? You think that students can sleep at the desk?
>
> Participant 6: Yes I do. The students tell me that they have all these hours at school and they have to go to cram school in the evening and they have to do this and this and this. And I don't see how they can possible stay attentive for 1ten hours a day. (Participant 6, group B)

Participant 6 did not have direct experience of Japanese society and culture, but she was confident that her beliefs were correct and that she was able to interpret this particular behaviour as culturally-specific and could then respond in a more sensitive way. Another interview explored Participant 5's beliefs about the cues that he picked up from Japanese- speaking learners:

> Researcher: [A]re you picking up on cultural cues that are particular to particular people?
>
> Participant 5: You do, and that comes while they are here, and in the afternoon, they will all be asleep or painting their nails in class. I remember X used to talk about that, X was one of the best teachers ever, but he used to have the whole class of Japanese students asleep, and he is such a great speaker and teacher, it just shows you. (Participant 5, group B)

Participant 5 and Participant 6's interpretations converge with research on sleep culture in Japan. In Japan, a society where study often takes precedence over sleep, *inemuri,* or falling asleep in public spaces, is common during class time in schools and universities and is usually tolerated by teachers because they know that students study hard and are exhausted (Steger 2006). The term *inemuri* is different from other types of sleep; it is a kind of quasi-sleep:

> Its main characteristic is that the sleeper is present in a situation that is meant for something other than sleep. In that way, inemuri is a sociologically distinct form of sleep and has to be differentiated not only from night-time sleep, but also from siesta or napping on a sofa. (Steger 2006, p. 203)

Although more recent research (Steger 2012) suggests that Japanese society is becoming less tolerant of *inemuri*, Steger (2006) found it to be widespread among Japanese schoolchildren, and widely tolerated.

Studies in the area of intercultural learning also provide insight into the association between exposure to other cultures and intercultural competence that may enable accurate interpretation of non-verbal cues in intercultural encounters. Molinsky et al. (2005) show that through implicit learning and exposure to other cultures, people are able to develop expertise in judgement and interpretation of non-verbal gestures and behaviour even without having direct experience of the culture. Despite the likelihood that people from different cultures behave and express emotion in different ways and that culture is not bounded by nationality, this chapter suggests that at times the English language teachers in the study were able to accurately interpret the non-verbal emotional cues of their students and that this capacity was associated with intercultural empathy.

18 Experienced Teachers and Intercultural Empathy

The analysis of the study data also indicates that some participants had a greater capacity to notice and interpret the non-verbal cues of learners than others. Participants who had significant intercultural experience (and who had developed intercultural competence) expressed confidence in their ability to use and interpret the meaning of learner emotional body language even when they had little direct experience with a particular language or culture. Participants who were exposed to intercultural encounters from an early age or over many years of teaching English in Australia and overseas were quite confident that they were able to empathise with their students. Participant 6 and Participant 5, both very experienced teachers in terms of length of years and variety of learners and contexts they have taught in, believed that 'being experienced' made it easier for them to empathise with learners:

> Participant 6: You consider the students' situation and as you become more experienced, more in control of the actual teaching, you can put your feelers out… and have that empathy.
>
> Participant 5: With experience you learn to read a group… you are more in control and you know the cues and the signs. (Group interview B)

Another participant, who was bilingual in English and Japanese, explained a significant experience that contributed to her development as an empathic teacher:

> When I was a kid in school, I remember another kid from Vietnam and I couldn't understand what he was saying and I remember thinking: Why can't he pronounce the words? Through time, you realise what it means to not understand or be able to communicate. What really helped was the Mandarin lesson I did on CELTA. It's been an important exercise in my life. (Participant 2, group A)

Research in developmental psychology has shown that empathy evolves in and from psychological phenomena and is essential to human development (Feshbach 1987; Marcia 1987; Richmond 2004; Sullivan 1962). However, it is only when a complete sense of self and other is experienced that empathy reaches its *mature* form (Hoffman 2001); thus, intercultural teacher empathy may be associated with the development of interculturality in that both are predicated on the development of a critical perspective of, and reflection on, the disjuncture between the self and other(s) in intercultural encounters over time (Liddicoat 2007).

19 Enhancing Learning Outcomes

The study participants believed that their observation and interpretation of learner visual cues helped them to identify when learners had problems or were not engaged. By awareness and observation of these cues throughout lessons, the participants actively monitored learners for visual cues that would indicate if learners were experiencing difficulties:

> When they are doing something I never ever just sit down at the table and start just doing something, and not watch what is happening, I am always present, I'll… sit on the edge of my table… I'm there observing what is going on and I will see if someone is not engaged. (Participant 8, group C)

Sometimes participants identified issues that were specific to language learning, while at other times they identified personal problems. The participants believed that this practice was instrumental in helping them to make professional judgements that enhanced language learning:

> I'll monitor it and see how it goes just to make sure that everyone knows what they are doing for a start. So you need to be watching, so everyone understands, and they are running with it. And then, from that point, I'll step back when it is in its progress, and I will watch and see what happens and go from there. And if there is a group that I think are having problems, I will go up quietly to that group. (Participant 3, group A)

Participant 6 explained what she had noticed about one learner in her class:

> We have got one student at the moment, a Chinese guy, sidles into the classroom, sits down, looks down, has difficulty making eye contact, doesn't look around at the other students… I'm actually quite worried. (Participant 6, group B)

Although Participant 6 may not have been completely accurate in her interpretation of the lack of student eye contact in the instance she referred to, like other

participants she expressed concern for the student and felt compelled to do something when students needed help or were not engaged. The analysis of these data suggests that for the participants in the study, empathy was not only associated with the interpretation of student emotional facial expression and body language, but also involved acting on these cues to create a more positive learning environment.

Although there is strong evidence to show that people express meaning non-verbally across cultures differently, and that cultural differences in emotional facial expression and body language may differ between people from the same national group (Kuśmierczyk 2011; Matsumoto 2001; Spencer-Oatey 2008; Wierzbicka 1999), the analysis of the study data suggests that the participants were largely unaware of this. Moreover, participants' beliefs that they were able to interpret non-verbal expressions of emotional states did not necessarily mean that their interpretations of learner expressions of emotion were accurate.

20 Necessary and Sufficient Conditions for Interpreting Learner Body Language

This chapter has pointed to the potential and significance of the expression and interpretation of emotional phenomena in mediating intercultural communication and learning in intercultural education. It has suggested that at times the teachers in the study were able to know or feel what it was to be the other, and that they were able to imagine (informed supposition) what it was like and then seek knowledge and understanding that enabled them to challenge, question or confirm their imaginings. The findings also suggest that there may be an association between the teachers' intercultural experience and their ability to notice and understand the non-verbal emotional cues of learners.

Research is increasingly showing that non-verbal markers of feelings are much more culturally specific than was once thought; however, those participants in the study with many years of teaching experience, both in Australia and overseas, believed that they negotiated meaning successfully with learners by observation and interpretation of visual cues. The data analysis suggests that the study participants' empathic responses to learners' non-verbal emotional expressions were automatic, unconscious and instantaneous in some situations, while in other situations they involved conscious effort and reflexivity. In particular, familiarity with a particular culture or language may have enhanced accurate interpretation, although familiarity and experience are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for empathic response. Intercultural teacher empathy involved teacher action in response to students' emotional facial expression and emotional body language, particularly when this indicated negative feelings or attitudes. The English language teachers in the study may have been able to accurately interpret the meaning of learners' emotional facial expression and emotional body language, but there is a danger of teachers assuming that non-verbal emotional expression is universal or that shared nationality, culture or even language implies homogeneity of expression.

21 Implications for Theory and Practice

The implications to follow are underpinned by the idea that although empathy is an innate capacity, intercultural teacher empathy may not necessarily be an outcome of teaching culturally diverse learners. In particular, this final section argues for institutions and teacher educators to support teachers to develop and enact a *critical intercultural pedagogy* which will enable teachers to identify and challenge potentially harmful practices and beliefs of the profession.

22 Interculturality

This chapter provides insight into phenomena that are central to human social relationships and interaction, and places teacher emotion, teacher empathy and interculturality centre stage in teaching and learning in intercultural education. It suggests that teacher empathy is associated with interculturality, and that educators may be able to develop intercultural empathy through intercultural interactions. The chapter also points to the potential importance of intercultural experience in the manifestation of intercultural teacher empathy.

One of the aims of this chapter is to present theory and examples of practices that may be useful for educators who work in institutions where they are not sufficiently prepared for the demands of working in increasingly culturally diverse educational settings. These educators, through no fault of their own, may be trapped by the status quo of monoculturalism and monolingualism that inhibits the development of interculturality and appropriate pedagogies. Intercultural experience, including exposure to learners from a wide range of cultures, may enhance teacher empathy in diverse educational contexts.

23 The Communicative Approach in Language Teaching

The internationalisation of education in Australia demands innovative practice and pedagogies in response to the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity of the student population. Awareness of the role of observation and interpretation of emotional facial expression and emotional body language may enhance teaching approaches and practices in this context. Moreover, teaching approaches and practices should be subjects of critical enquiry for teachers and teacher educators. For example, despite the sociocultural turn in English-language teaching pedagogy, the development of communicative competence remains the main goal of language teaching and learning. The concept and aims of communicative competence as enacted through communicative language teaching may fail to take into account English language learners' culturally and socially constructed ways of communicating

feelings, desires and thoughts non-verbally. It may be necessary to reformulate both the communicative approach and communicative competence as culturally situated concepts and practices. In terms of practice, English language teachers and teachers in other diverse settings are encouraged to explore with learners the ways of communicating that both parties find acceptable and those that they do not. Instead of pedagogy that views learners as alike, teacher education courses need to support teachers to create an intercultural, learner-centred environment, perhaps through the facilitation of student-directed pedagogies. I am not proposing that English language teachers abandon the communicative approach or that teachers adopt communication practices that they or their students believe to be ineffective, but that teachers explore and learn more about non-verbal communication across cultures to support their teaching practice.

Teacher educators and researchers also need to promote the notion of diversity and mutability between and within cultures in order to support a critical intercultural pedagogy among teachers. Focusing on taxonomies of cultures that view culture in terms of cross-cultural differences encourages a monolithic view of culture and language as stable, unchanging entities. This approach may reinforce discrimination and prejudice through the creation of knowledge that relies on comparison and contrast to construct meaning in diverse educational settings. Foregrounding the diversity and mutability within and between languages and cultures, without privileging one over another, may be a better way to research diversity and foster effective intercultural communication in education.

24 Othering

This chapter endorses a conception of teacher empathy in which tolerance and caring stand alongside a critical approach to empathy, whereby teachers foreground and address issues of power, privilege and inequity. The process of interculturality and intercultural empathy involves emotional stress and disruption, as does the process of adopting a critical intercultural approach to teaching in all sectors of education in Australia.

The development of intercultural teacher empathy requires teachers and researchers to challenge positive and negative stereotyping as well as assumptions about learners based on national, cultural, linguistic or racial boundaries. The adoption of a critical understanding of othering and other discourses that create and maintain inappropriate teaching practices in diverse educational settings may support this process. Critical pedagogies contend that othering is a pervasive, harmful, racist practice in English language teaching and other related areas of education. The findings presented in this chapter suggest that intercultural teacher empathy may mitigate some of the effects of othering. However, given the diversity and experience of the study participants, it is possible that othering in the form of negative and positive stereotypes may be part of the process of intercultural empathy and interculturality. Categorising and labelling learners may reflect a human desire

to understand the unknown in order to deal with the anxiety and uncertainty that are precipitated in intercultural encounters; teachers may revert to stereotypes in order to make sense of student behaviours and beliefs that disturb their schemas. However, if teachers are afraid to express their thoughts and feelings about what their students do, feel and say, to avoid accusations of racism, the possibility for intercultural empathy may be limited.

A critical understanding and meta-awareness of othering is not easy to achieve, as illustrated by research in the United States and Canada (Herrera and Morales 2009; Pennington et al. 2012; Solomona et al. 2005; Ullman and Hecsh 2011) which shows that intercultural education approaches have little impact on teachers' understandings of institutionalised racism and discrimination.

25 Critical Pedagogies and Othering

Anglo-Australian culture strongly associates itself with egalitarianism. In Australia, people may express racism and discrimination indirectly, and accusations of racism and discrimination may meet with outrage and denial (Babacan 2012). People may veil racist othering in arguments of equality, fairness and deservedness, as well as in the discourses of democracy, freedom of speech and universal human rights (Jayasuriya 2002; Poynting and Mason 2006)**.** Teacher educators need to consider this tendency when recommending ways to introduce a critical intercultural pedagogy in diverse educational settings in Australia and elsewhere.

Teachers who teach in diverse settings may unintentionally reinforce institutionalised racism and discrimination through colour-blind, overly positive discourses of humanism that include banal multiculturalism and positive stereotyping. In the United States and Canada, the concept of 'white privilege' has been used as a critical pedagogical tool in the education of teachers to confront racism by exploring how racism confers power and privilege on some groups while disadvantaging others. However, research (Herrera and Morales 2009; Pennington et al. 2012; Solomona et al. 2005; Ullman and Hecsh 2011) suggests that this approach is ineffective as most white, monolingual-English trainee teachers resist the notion of white privilege. These studies have identified 'discourses of denial' that prevail over any significant changes in understanding (Solomona et al. 2005, p. 147).

The activation of prior learning and knowledge is an important learning tool (Vygotsky 1986). Thus, teachers' innate capacities for empathic response can be used to encourage the development of intercultural teacher empathy that includes self-reflexivity alongside a critical understanding of issues of power and privilege at play in teaching practices and institutions. Teacher educators need to encourage teachers who work in diverse settings to explore and challenge the discourses within which they practice by activating teachers' personal experiences in order to develop their empathic response. Rather than confronting teachers directly with notions such as colour-blindness, sameness and racial stereotyping, teacher educators can adopt a more scaffolded, empathic approach (Dolby 2012), within which

institutions provide time and space for biases and assumptions to be unravelled and challenged. Teachers can use critical pedagogies to cast doubt on the frames of knowledge that they draw on to make pedagogical decisions, as well as to challenge the categories or criteria that they and others use to judge, validate and understand diverse learners.

Teachers are encouraged to acknowledge and claim othering as part of the process of interculturality and intercultural teacher empathy. This can be also be supported through *praxicum* (Pennycook 2004): that is, professional learning that involves a reflexive process in which teachers develop integration of their practice, feelings and thoughts continuously as they are experienced. This critical practice could include, for example, action research into the expression and interpretation of emotion across cultures in their own classrooms, alongside explorations of the ideologies that sustain linguistic, racial, religious and cultural discrimination and reinforce disadvantage in educational settings. By bringing to the forefront teachers' desires for social justice, and by activating teachers' innate capacities for empathy, teacher educators and institutions can develop intercultural teacher empathy beyond its current reach.

A critical intercultural pedagogy requires teachers to adopt a form of critical cultural relativism, which includes the development of an ideological stance on cultural practices that are harmful, particularly those within their own communities of practice and educational institutions. Critical cultural relativism requires that the power, status and cultural biases and assumptions of the observer are exposed through a process of reflexivity which explores othering and binary opposition in one's judgements of others. Critical cultural relativism requires that teachers identify, expose and change harmful practices that they sustain through their own practices or inaction, and those of the communities and institutions of which they are a part.

26 Emotion and Education

In the context of a dominant scientific and philosophical tradition which views emotion as inferior to cognition by almost every measure, this chapter contributes to a growing body of research that diverges from deficit conceptions of empathy and emotion. Teacher emotion should not be separate from intercultural understanding and response. Understanding and awareness of emotion is particularly important when dealing with intercultural miscommunication and misunderstanding in diverse educational contexts, just as it is in teachers' recognition and interpretation of emotional responses in learners.

Teaching practices that interpret and respond to learners' non-verbal cues need to place sufficient emphasis on the diversity of the meaning, interpretation and expression of emotion within and between cultures and languages. Institutions need to support teachers to identify and challenge the taken-for-granted beliefs, assumptions and practices related to the universality of emotion and emotional expression

across cultures. While foregrounding teacher and learner emotion, teaching pedagogies need to take into account that the expression and interpretation of emotional body language are not universal, and that emotional concepts and the words used to express emotion are cultural artefacts. Moreover, reliance on national boundaries to understand student emotion and behaviour is also problematic in the light of research that has found that people express emotion differently even within national boundaries (see Lu and Wang 2012).

If, as research suggests, emotions influence the quality of people's lives, then it is necessary for teacher emotion to be taken into account in teacher education and ongoing professional learning to encourage the development of interculturality and intercultural empathy. In intercultural contexts, this means that a framework is needed to develop understanding of bodily feelings, non-verbal expressions of emotion, and the semantics of emotion. It is recommended that teachers are supported to think about communication of emotion across cultures in terms of universal semantic primes (Goddard and Wierzbicka 2007; Wierzbicka 1999, 2003) and schema theory (Cook 1997; Nishida 1999). Through knowledge of schema theory and the application of universal semantic primes, teachers may be able to gain an emic view of others without facility in a particular language or culture. For example, knowledge of universal semantic primes informs teachers that the words *emotion* and *empathy* are particular to an English academic discourse (Wierzbicka 1999).

Finally, teachers and institutions need a conceptual framework that enables them to explore and challenge their understandings of, and emotional and cognitive responses to, culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Teacher education courses influence how teachers think and talk about their work and create the framework from which they practise, learn and develop. If this framework excludes ideas and theories about how teachers *feel* as they go about their work, it is failing teachers and students. Teachers should not be afraid of, nor seek to avoid, emotional disruption in the process of intercultural teacher empathy. Disturbance and disruption to schema is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition of intercultural empathy and interculturality. Teaching might benefit from being conceptualised as an emotional practice within which teachers can express and explore their responses to learners. Through this process, they may be able to challenge what they 'know' of learners and become aware of both the possibilities and the limitations of observation and interpretation of non-verbal cues in helping them to know learners' minds.

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Code-Switching and Indigenous Workplace Learning: Cross-Cultural Competence Training or Cultural Assimilation?

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Abstract For more than two decades, within numerous spheres of education, code-switching (CS)—moving competently between two languages or dialects—has been promoted as a useful, if not necessary, skill for Australian Indigenous students to develop. (The term 'Indigenous' in Australia usually refers to (mainland) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Since the participants in our study were all Aboriginal, the terms 'Indigenous' and 'Aboriginal' are used interchangeably.) Linguistically it enables them to maintain communicative links with their home communities and to navigate non-Indigenous language environments. In schools and training organisations the development of CS often focuses on the verbal aspects of language (for example, 'What does that mean in your English?' or 'How do we say that in Standard Australian English?'), but CS also encompasses the nonverbal. In this chapter we consider the cultural nuances that underpin the development of competent CS and its associated behaviours: what training organisations often refer to as 'soft skills'. In doing so, we examine the vexed question of whether the development of these soft skills constitutes competency in cross-cultural communication or whether it is another guise for assimilation.

Keywords Needs analysis · Second language learners · Code-switching · Task-based language teaching · Indigenous learners · Vocational and training education · Linguistic assimilation · Cross-cultural communication

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1 Introduction

In this chapter we examine the results of a needs analysis[1] which highlights the practical advantage that code-switching (CS) skills can provide students: namely, that they can facilitate greater participation in the workplace. However, encouraging Indigenous learners to develop these skills raises concerns as to whether inclusion of CS does not simply replicate the assimilation approaches that have dominated education for Australian Indigenous students since colonisation.

The ability to code-switch, or to change from one language or dialect to another, enables bilingual and bidialectal speakers to draw strategically on their linguistic repertoires to achieve their desired communicative goals (Bhatt and Bolonyai 2011). For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians who speak a traditional language, Aboriginal English (AbE) or a creole, proficiency in their primary language enables them to communicate effectively in their home communities and display their membership through the distinctive linguistic features and discourse practices of the home language (Malcolm and Grote 2007). AbE and creoles are systematically different from Standard Australian English (SAE) at all levels, including phonology, vocabulary, morphology, syntax, discourse practices and cultural conceptualisations (Department of Education Western Australia 2012). Speakers of AbE, creoles or traditional languages who can competently code-switch from their home language into SAE have the advantage of being able to interact with non-Aboriginal people in a wide range of mainstream contexts. For young Indigenous learners, CS skills can expand their options in terms of occupational aspirations and workplace opportunities.

That CS practices relate to verbal and non-verbal communication and encompass 'soft skills' was mentioned by many vocational education and training (VET) teachers and by Registered Training Organization (RTO) lecturers who participated in our research project (Oliver et al. 2012) which focused on the second language learning needs of Aboriginal VET students. These skills include acting in ways deemed socially appropriate, demonstrating cultural awareness and understanding, and being receptive to different ways of doing things (The World Bank 2002).

In a linguistic environment in which the language of the dominant culture (in this case, SAE) prevails, the onus for change and adaptation is placed on the Indigenous speaker. Despite their benefits, promoting the use of CS skills does present a dilemma: is their promotion not just another guise for assimilation?

[1] The study was funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant in collaboration with Australian Independent Schools Western Australia (AISWA). AISWA also funded the pilot study of the project.

2 Code-Switching

2.1 Defining Code-Switching

Research undertaken over the last few decades has highlighted the complexity and diversity of CS practices. While there is agreement that CS occurs as a result of languages coming into contact with one another, there is less agreement on which of the many facets of language contact (e.g. language borrowing, transfer, loss, interference, etc.) can be characterised as CS (Poplack 2004). It is perhaps for this reason that there is little concurrence on how CS should be defined. Some scholars take a broad view of what constitutes a code to include changes that monolingual speakers make to their register (from formal to informal language) or style by using specific terms or expressions that communicate sociocultural meaning and identity (Eckert 2001; Wardhaugh 1998). More often, however, CS research investigates instances in which bilingual or bidialectal speakers change from one language or dialect to another.

CS can also be explored from a variety of different perspectives, for example sociolinguistic, psychological, anthropological, sociocultural, sociocognitive or educational, each focusing on different aspects of the phenomenon (Nilep 2006), such as its use as a pragmatic strategy (Gumperz 1982; Sophocleous 2011), the grammatical 'congruence' (Deuchar 2005, p. 255) of the sentence or word structures that are switched, and the meta-grammatical rules that appear to guide CS practices among bilingual speakers (Bhatt and Bolonyai 2011). In his Domain Theory, Fishman (1991) suggests that CS occurs in different spheres, and that each language or dialect is used in a specific domain. The standard dialect may be reserved for the classroom or for talking to someone in authority, such as a policeman, while the home language or dialect is used for family, friends and social situations. Fishman (1967) applies the term *diglossia* to those situations where distinct domains exhibit the use of different varieties of one language, or even of two different languages.

Other studies of the occurrence of CS have shown it to be much more complex. CS has been classified in terms of when and with whom it occurs. For example, the term Metaphorical CS describes a shift from one language or dialect to another 'within a single situation' (Saville-Troike 1989, p. 60) to augment meaning, usually to convey one or more sociocultural pragmatic messages (Bhatt and Bolonyai 2011). Such CS is determined by the relationship between speakers (Saville-Troike 1989): for example, for group identification; but it may serve many other purposes. Bhatt and Bolonyai (2011) found 130 distinctive functions in the 120 CS studies of bilingual speakers that they surveyed. To categorise these, they propose five basic principles that may trigger CS, relating to power, solidarity, perspective, face (preservation of public image) and faith. They use the term 'faith' in this context to describe 'language that more faithfully and economically captures the intended conceptual, semantic-pragmatic, often socioculturally or ideologically grounded, meaning' (p. 526).

Unlike Metaphorical CS, in Situational CS bilingual or bidialectal speakers change their language or dialect for one of two reasons: to signal that the situation itself has altered, often in terms of the relationship between speakers (Blom and Gumperz 1986); or to adapt to a new situation, such as when the context, other speaker or topic has changed (Saville-Troike 1989). Blom and Gumperz (1986) give an example of the former in the context of a Norwegian school in which the teacher uses standard dialect to present a formal lecture during which there is no interaction between the speaker and audience, but switches to local dialect when inviting questions.

Situational CS also occurs in workplace contexts, for example when an Aboriginal mechanic uses AbE with a co-worker from his home community but switches to SAE when speaking to a non-Aboriginal manager or customer. The mechanic uses AbE to express solidarity and a shared identity with his co-worker, then uses SAE to establish a different level of solidarity with a client, to convey an authoritative perspective and/or to disambiguate meaning by using the SAE technical terms. These examples of CS in classroom and workplace settings somewhat blur the distinction between Situational and Metaphorical CS because of the role relationships that they signal.

In some multilingual classroom contexts, using CS to clarify meaning or for other purposes is discouraged and disparaged in ways that are reminiscent of past attitudes. This approach ignores the growing body of research that highlights the importance of valuing and using students' home language as a learning tool (Mercieca, Chapter, "Changing Perspectives of Literacy, Identity and Motivation: Implications for Language Education" this volume; Siegel 2010) and reinforces negative social attitudes towards local languages and dialects. To avoid negative associations with the term CS, some scholars have adopted *translanguaging* as an alternative (Canagarajah 2011; Creese and Blackledge 2010; Garcia 2009).

We use the linguistic term 'code-switching' here to capture a sense of the two-way (rather than unidirectional) process encapsulated by the term. We use it broadly to describe the practice of changing from one language (e.g. traditional Aboriginal language) or dialect (e.g. AbE) to another (e.g. SAE) to meet the needs of the situation in terms of context, speaker or topic (Blom and Gumperz 1986; Department of Education Western Australia 2012; Malcolm and Konigsberg 2007; Saville-Troike 1989).

3 Benefits of CS Skills

3.1 Moving Between Cultures

The ability to code-switch from their home language to SAE enables Indigenous speakers to participate in their own speech community as well as that of Australian mainstream society (and beyond). The term 'speech community' refers to a group that tends to share a similar language code (vocabulary, meanings, pronunciation, usage, discourse practices, conceptualisations, etc.) often because they share a

similar ethnic background, socioeconomic status, age, locality or other characteristic. Their language use signals membership in the group and defines boundaries that set them apart from others. Describing an individual or groups as part of a speech community is somewhat controversial because of the internal diversity of groups, and because individuals may participate in, and identify with, other speech communities at different points in their lives (Wardhaugh 1998). Nonetheless, the distinctiveness of AbE phonology, morphology, syntax, vocabulary and pragmatics makes it easy for Indigenous and many non-Indigenous Australians to recognise a speaker as a member of the Indigenous speech community (Gallois et al. 1984). AbE enables individuals to make connections with other Indigenous people as they construct and display their Aboriginal identity and communicate solidarity with the group. A speaker's home language also facilitates power and respect within the community, as it affords access to the rights and privileges associated with group membership (Malcolm and Grote 2007).

Being able to code-switch into SAE enables Indigenous speakers to navigate mainstream society and avail themselves of the rights and privileges that it too offers. Speaking SAE enhances Indigenous access to mainstream educational, economic, political, health, legal and justice institutions. For example, in education SAE is the language of the classroom: it is spoken by the majority of teachers and used in most learning resources. It has been argued, therefore, that being able to communicate effectively in both the home language and SAE provides Indigenous people with 'double power' (Yunupingu 1999, p. 1). Double power can also enhance understanding of both cultural worlds. Sharla Peltier, a member of Canada's First Nation Peoples, explains that the ability to code-switch between one's home language and that used in mainstream society facilitates the maintenance of 'individual and social integrity and supports pragmatic and semantic bridges for living in two worlds' (2010, p. 126). Australian Torres Strait Islander scholar Martin Nakata (1999) goes further, arguing that having access to SAE gives Indigenous people the power to communicate effectively in the international sphere.

3.2 CS and the Development of Literacy Skills

While CS enables speakers to negotiate within at least two cultural worlds, on a practical level it may offer cognitive advantages for literacy development. Evidence has emerged to support the hypothesis that code-switching between a non-standard dialect and the standard variety has a positive impact on literacy development in young learners (Charity et al. 2004; Connor and Craig 2006; Craig and Washington 2004; Craig et al. 2009; Terry 2006). In research conducted with young African American English-speaking children from low and middle socioeconomic backgrounds, the density of African American English features in their written texts was measured (Craig et al. 2009). Students who produced fewer African American English features in their writing were also better at code-switching into the standard than their less skilled peers. These students also achieved higher scores on their reading tests.

For the skill of writing, learners can be advantaged, particularly with regard to spelling, if they are aware of the existence of the two language varieties and have an understanding of some of the grammatical rules of the standard dialect. For instance, some African American English-speaking children were found to apply morpheme inflections (such as adding -ed, -ing, -s, to verbs and -s to regular plural nouns) in their school writing, even though they did not apply them consistently when speaking their primary dialect (Terry 2006). It should be noted, however, that the relationship between CS, dialect awareness and literacy skills is manifestly complex, so while there may be some correlation a definitive causal link has not yet been established (Connor and Craig 2006; Terry 2006). Unfortunately there remains evidence in the United States (Craig et al. 2009; Leap 1992), Canada (Peltier 2010), Australia (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2011) and elsewhere (Siegel 2010) of learners who speak a minority language or dialect as their home language struggling in schools where the medium of instruction for most learning takes place in the standard language or dialect of the mainstream culture.

3.3 CS in the Australian Indigenous Context

Numerous references have been made to the practice of CS by Australian Aboriginal people, either between dialects of their traditional languages or between AbE or a creole and SAE. Jernudd (1969, 1971) reports different functions for the use of the traditional language and the creole spoken in the Northern Territory: English is used for abuse and quarrels in a traditional language-speaking community (see McConvell 2008, p. 242). McConvell (2008) describes speaking an 'Indigenous form of English to your mates, but speaking to a school principal you may instead use Standard English' (p. 241). In this way Aboriginal students 'depart from the "domain-determined" language to express social meaning' (p. 242), for example by using AbE to signal resistance 'against something going on at school' (p. 242) or using SAE to establish authority or to amuse one's friends. Malcolm and Rochecouste (1998) report evidence of Aboriginal tertiary students openly contesting the academic (Western) framing of the dominant educational discourse by querying or rejecting it or by substituting their own language variety (p. 15). McConvell notes the use of metaphorical CS to provide 'social meaning' about the 'social area' that is 'an additional pragmatic force', explaining that

> Using a language like a shared local dialect calls up a set of rights and responsibilities associated with the speaker's and other participants' position in the social arena—for instance, that people who belong to the same dialect group should share resources. In contrary fashion, use of another dialect can deny any such implications. (2008, p. 245)

Even so, these additional stylistic and social dimensions of the practice of CS support claims for its linguistic and cognitive benefits (McConvell 2008).

3.4 CS in the Context of the VET Classroom/Training Sites

For many Indigenous Australian young people living in remote communities, RTOs such as local State Training Providers (formerly Technical and Further Education institutions) have become important for those preferring to live near their families. Many of these institutions can respond to the needs of the local population as they collaborate with local employers and address the SAE workplace language-learning needs of their learners (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations 2012). Although local RTOs appear to be shaping their VET courses to meet the needs of AbE, creole and Indigenous language speakers in their regions, the extent to which high school VET programs do so is unclear. The limited research available indicates that teachers in these contexts may not have the background knowledge to explain matters pertaining to workplace and general communication (Hill and Helme 2005). A survey reported in Hill and Helme aligns with research conducted by Oliver et al. (2003) which suggests that schoolteachers tend to avoid teaching interpersonal communication skills in favour of formal speaking skills which are highly structured and therefore easy to assess. Teachers were more likely to assess students' oral presentations or debating skills than their ability to use language for social or functional purposes (Oliver et al. 2003).

It appears that in high school VET programs the skills that Aboriginal learners need in order to engage effectively in the workplace are largely overlooked, perhaps because it is assumed that by the time they reach this level they should be proficient in SAE. This was demonstrated in our study of a regional residential high school in Western Australia which specialises in providing VET courses for Aboriginal students from remote communities (for details of the study, see Oliver et al. 2012). Most of the students spoke a traditional language as their home language and AbE or Kriol[2] as a second language. The research aimed to develop a second language Task-Based Needs Analysis[3] model (Long 2005) that VET teachers at this school and others like it could use to address the workplace language and literacy needs of Indigenous learners. It was undertaken using qualitative data collection methods (non-participant observation and interviews) and involved key stakeholders as participants (students, school staff, employers, community members and RTO lecturers teaching in the region in which many of the student participants lived).

[2] Kriol is the name of the English-based creole spoken by many Aboriginal people in northern Australia.

[3] A Task Based Needs Analysis approach was adopted to align with Task Based Language Teaching, a contemporary approach to language teaching that is supported by second language acquisition research and is widely implemented in practice (see Ellis 2003; Nunan 2004).

The study gave rise to three major findings that are relevant to our current discussion:

- students need to advance their CS skills to be able to undertake work-related language tasks and to interact socially with their non-Indigenous employer/s and co-workers (and sometimes customers, depending on the workplace setting);
- they need to develop so-called 'soft skills', defined by Zamudio and Lichter (2008) as encompassing an employee's 'attitude, motivation, work ethic, and [interpersonal] interaction' (p. 573); and
- they need to learn to overcome the feeling of 'shame' in the presence of non-Aboriginal people (described in more detail below).

The findings of the project highlighted the importance of teaching CS to enable students to engage in job-related language tasks such as asking for clarification about a task or explaining to an employer or co-worker how a work activity was completed. Trainees also needed to be able to socialise with others at work. Only in this way could the Indigenous employees become comfortable in a mainstream work environment. As Holmes (2005) points out, learning to engage socially with co-workers is critical because it enables employees to gain membership in the workplace community.

To address these aims, acceptance of CS in classroom contexts was recommended, and was adopted by the school. Students were made aware of their CS abilities and their freedom to use them. Classroom discussions examined communication scenarios and found differences between AbE and SAE words and expressions. This instruction was augmented by a website providing information for teachers on the benefits of CS and, for students, examples of when and where to code-switch. In line with the needs analysis, examples were relevant to the students' work experience environments (e.g. talking to a boss, providing service in a café). The success of the approach was captured in a statement by one student: 'Miss, I'm the best code-switcher in the school'. Students displayed a heightened awareness of and pride in their existing and developing CS skills.

Included in the recommendations for CS at the site was advice on the non-verbal aspects of communication that constitute some of the soft skills required by employees. Often AbE speakers might simply nod when greeting each other, or use hand signals or other sign language to communicate; silence might be an adequate response to a request. In a work environment, however, such interactional devices are not understood and might be misinterpreted as disinterest or lack of motivation (see McAlinden, Chapter, "Can Teachers Know Learners' Minds? Teacher Empathy and Learner Body Language in English Language Teaching", regarding the challenge for even interculturally experienced teachers to interpret the cues of learners from other cultures). The website includes explicit advice about some of the verbal and non-verbal differences between SAE and the students' home languages; for example, explanation is provided about responding verbally to questions, articulating a lack of understanding, maintaining eye contact, saying yes and not just clicking,[4]

[4] In linguistics 'clicks' are classified as consonants and are prevalent in African languages. English speakers will use these same sounds to express disapproval (tch tch) or to spur on a horse (click

and saying hello and not just nodding (See Mercieca, Chapter, "Changing Perspectives of Literacy, Identity and Motivation: Implications for Language Education", for further discussion of the importance of developing intercultural competence for successful language learning).

Our research also indicated that it was critical to find ways for learners to overcome 'shame' to enable them to communicate and participate in the workplace. The AbE word 'shame' refers to the embarrassment or shyness that Aboriginal people feel when attention is focused on them (Eagleson et al. 1982; Harkins 1990; Oliver et al. 2012). For example, several student participants in our study reported their fear of asking trainers or employers clarification questions because they said they would 'get shame'. It is important to note that the AbE notion of 'shame' is conceptualised differently from the same word in SAE (Sharifian 2003; Sharifian et al. 2004, 2005). This is because the word 'shame', like a number of other AbE words, has undergone complex linguistic processes since Aboriginal people first made contact with English colonisers. Despite also occurring in SAE, the meaning of 'shame' in AbE actually preserves an Aboriginal cultural concept (Malcolm 2000b; Malcolm and Grote 2007; Malcolm and Koscielecki 1997; Sharifian 2005; Sharifian et al. 2004).

To illustrate how the notion of 'shame' is understood and experienced by AbE speakers, it is useful to look at the closest equivalent words in Aboriginal languages (including AbE) which incorporate concepts not normally associated with 'shame' in SAE (Wierzbicka 1986). In the Gidjingali language, spoken in northern Arnhem Land, the word 'gurakadj' links the notion of 'shame' with that of fear and a desire to retreat from a situation (Wierzbicka 1986; after Hiatt 1978). In the Pintupi language spoken by Aboriginal people in the Western Desert, the word 'kunta' is associated with embarrassment and shyness but also respect (Myers 1976, cited by Wierzbicka 1986, p. 591), often in relation to the social codes that govern avoidance behaviours, such as between a male and his sisters or mother-in-law. In Nhaalya, spoken in the Kimberley, 'kunyan' relates not only to avoidance behaviours adopted out of respect for social norms, but also extends to a 'general attitude toward anything having to do with white people, whether initially mysterious or not' (Kennedy and Donaldson 1982, cited by Wierzbicka 1986, p. 591). Interestingly, while the SAE use of 'shame' includes the notion of guilt, this is not the case with near equivalent words in Aboriginal languages or with the word in AbE.

AbE speakers attribute the discomfort they express as 'shame' to being in 'certain situations' (Sharifian 2003, p, 197), such as when students in our study wanted to ask the VET teacher questions. Not only would they attract attention to themselves by posing a question, but the teacher might not understand their English, a language they were not confident in, and 'other kids might laugh at them' (Oliver et al. 2012, p. 236). A recent study focusing on Aboriginal university students noted that some of the students even avoided situations in which their presence was virtual, such as contributing to an online discussion board (Oliver et al. 2013).

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click), but they are not classified as part of the SAE phonological repertoire. Clicks have not been classified phonologically in literature on Aboriginal languages; it is possible that such sounds have been subsumed under the term 'apico-lamino-dentals'.

While Aboriginal participants in our project were concerned about 'getting shame' in the training site or workplace when expected to talk to a white person, the non-Aboriginal employers and VET teachers interpreted their silence or reticence as a lack of interest or motivation, characteristics which they associated with soft skills. Because 'shame' and all that it encompasses was seen as a major impediment in preparing the students for the workplace experience, specific reference was made to 'shame' on the website. The production of the website provided an opportunity for the students to collaborate in making videos to contrast the reticent responses associated with 'shame' with communication practices more effective in the non-Aboriginal workplace setting. These web pages proved to be some of the most popular with the students.

4 Code-Switching: A Guise for Assimilation?

As discussed above, CS includes verbal and non-verbal behaviours which disseminate cultural practices and attitudes and which, as our study has shown, can be (mis) interpreted as a lack of soft skills. As Liddicoat et al. (1999) point out, '[c]ulture is inherent in language … [for] every time we say something we are performing a cultural act' (p. 182; after Kramsch 1993). Becoming competent at CS is therefore more just than becoming proficient in two (or more) languages or dialects. It requires learners to understand what to say, when to say it and to whom to say it. Moreover, it requires learners to understand what people in the other culture *expect* them to do and say. CS is more than just communicative: it also essentially involves moving within a new world (Peltier 2010) and developing an understanding about concepts and ideas that were previously unfamiliar. Clearly we are asking a lot of learners when we expect them to achieve a sufficient level of competency in all dimensions of CS—the linguistic and non-linguistic—to be able to integrate successfully into a mainstream workplace. We might then ask ourselves whether we are not simply promoting further assimilationist educational practices.

The Australian Commonwealth and state governments have a long history of establishing various policies which, to all intents and purposes, have promoted the assimilation of Indigenous people in different ways through schools and other institutions, from the time of colonisation to well into the 1960s and 1970s (Altman 2009; Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997; Moran 2005). For example, in the early nineteenth century, government authorities collaborated with religious organisations to convert Indigenous children to Christianity and encourage them to adopt Western values and work ethics so they could become domestic servants and agricultural labourers for European settlers (Prochner 2004). Such attempts to indoctrinate children into Western culture and desert their own culture have rarely been accepted passively: not long after the establishment of the first school for Aboriginal children in 1814 by Governor Macquarie, the divisiveness of the initiative became apparent and was fiercely opposed by their families (Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997).

From the 1870s through to the end of the Second World War, the segregation policies of the protectorate system established land Reserves where Aboriginal people were expected to adopt Western culture. These 'protectionist' measures were undertaken largely in response to external pressures to alleviate the squalid conditions in which many Aboriginal people lived after being forced off their traditional lands (Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997). The decimation of the Aboriginal population through malnutrition, disease and violence perpetrated by settlers was widely accepted as a 'natural process' within the discourse of social Darwinism of the time, which also predicted the inevitable extinction of 'full descent' Aboriginal people (Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997). Every aspect of those living on so-called Reserves was controlled, so English, the language of the colonisers, became the language of education as well as of employment (Malcolm 2001; Prochner 2004).

From 1912 until the 1960s, Indigenous children of 'mixed descent' were actively removed from their families by Protectorate Boards or Chief Protectors and placed in missionary institutions where contact with their families was either severely restricted or completely severed (Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997). This separation was to ensure the adoption of European ways of living. In addition to being trained with skills that would enable them to do manual labour, their schooling promoted conversion to Christianity. Children were usually assigned Biblical names which, along with English, they were obliged to use (Prochner 2004). The overarching goal of this policy was to facilitate the gradual 'absorption' of Indigenous peoples of 'mixed descent' into the general population (Moran 2005; after Rowley 1971). This became explicit policy in 1951 when Paul Hasluck assumed the role of Federal Minister for Territories. He envisioned a time when Indigenous people would assimilate Australian Anglo culture as individuals rather than in groups, so that all vestiges of Aboriginal culture were left behind (Moran 2005) and 'in practical terms … [over] the course of time, it is expected that all persons of aboriginal blood and mixed blood in Australia will live like other white Australians do' (Hasluck 1953, cited by Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997).

The motivations underpinning assimilation policies and practices were far from straightforward. As Moran (2005) explains,

> While there was an important reparative trend—doing something to 'uplift' those who had been neglected at best, and treated appallingly at worst, by the Australian nation—there was also a destructive trend, responding, in some instances, to paranoid fears concerning the future of the white nation, and in others to the perception of the incompatibility, or undesirability, of Aboriginality in the modern Australian nation. (p. 169)

By the 1960s, when it became clear that Aboriginal people were not abandoning their culture and ways of living, an amended version of the assimilation policy was put forth which included the notion of 'choice' (Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997), stating that '[t]he policy of assimilation seeks that all persons of Aboriginal descent will choose to attain a similar manner of living to that of other Australians and live as members of a single community' (quoted in Lippman 1991, p. 29). Nonetheless, Yunupingu (1999) recalls that during his own

schooling in this period he felt that 'becoming literate meant becoming "white": doing Balanda[5] things in Balanda ways … It was a big challenge to learn about Balanda ways without feeling like I was becoming like them: without being assimilated' (p. 2).

While linguists in the late 1960s and early 1970s had begun to recognise the systemic nature of AbE and the English based creoles spoken by Aboriginal people in various regions of Australia (Kaldor and Malcolm 1991; Malcolm 2000a), it was not until the 1980s that research on the importance of recognising, valuing, and nurturing Indigenous culture and home languages (traditional Indigenous languages, AbE and creoles) gained traction so that the acknowledgement and valuing of learners' home languages were finally promoted in Commonwealth government policy (Lo Bianco 1987).

Although more recent and current Commonwealth and state government policy documents promote the recognition and valuing of Indigenous learners' home language(s), when put into practice, the status of SAE, the language of mainstream society, eclipses all Indigenous languages including AbE (Malcolm and Konigsberg 2007; McKay 2011; Truscott and Malcolm 2010). Successive and current Commonwealth and state government policy declarations have promoted the acceptance of and support for Indigenous linguistic and cultural diversity in schools, but unfortunately, when educational institutions (including vocational education environments) operationalise policies, SAE becomes the default language (Klenowski 2009; Truscott and Malcolm 2010). Moreover, in spite of policies that separately and jointly promote the value of Indigenous home languages and the need to support them, there is considerable evidence that when policy becomes practice, mainstream linguistic and cultural assimilation continues to be the goal (Malcolm and Konigsberg 2007; McKay 2011; Sharifian 2008; Truscott and Malcolm 2010). Truscott and Malcolm (2010) describe the discrepancy between policy and practice as 'invisible policy' (p. 6). While current policy appears to embrace linguistic diversity, few Indigenous language programs win government grants, and the funding periods of those that do tend to be short-term (McKay 2011; Truscott and Malcolm 2010).

While it might appear that CS is no more than a modern-day manifestation of assimilationist policy, our promotion of CS does not equate to the policies of the past, nor to the default empowerment of SAE in policies of the present. Rather, CS is advocated because it accommodates Indigenous students' first language, acknowledging it as a valuable learning resource and cultural marker. CS is the bridge that enables the AE–SAE divide to be crossed, advantaging speakers by providing them the opportunity to maintain use of their first language.

Considerable evidence exists of Aboriginal ways to accommodate the CS experience. For example, a quite different perspective on moving between cultures is provided by Lo Bianco et al. (1999), who support Kramsch's (1993) notion of the establishment of a Third Place. The First Place is the home language/dialect and culture; the Second Place is that which is moved towards; the Third Place is an intercultural position that is a combination of the other two. It is dynamic,

[5] *Balanda* is the term used to refer to non-Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory.

developmental and on-going, 'renegotiated with every intercultural interaction and with every learning opportunity' (Liddicoat et al. 1999, p. 181). Learners can choose what they take—or need to take—into the Third Place and what to let pass, a learning strategy that may prove useful for all educators, including those working with VET students (see also Dobinson, Chapter, "Occupying the 'Third Space': Perspectives and Experiences of Asian English Language Teachers", on the Third Space with regard to Asian teachers of EAL learning to accommodate Western and Eastern educational discourses; and Mercieca, Chapter, "Changing Perspectives of Literacy, Identity and Motivation: Implications for Language Education", in which the concept frames a discussion of EAL pedagogy).

Liddicoat et al. (1999) claim that 'language learning is not, in its ideal form, a process of assimilation, but rather a process of exploration. The native speaker norm is replaced with a bilingual norm as the desirable outcome of language teaching and learning' (p. 181). Moreover, it is the responsibility of the teacher to assist the student in exploring the possibilities available in building this intermediary place. This contrasts with much past language teaching practice, particularly in the teaching of standard English to Australian Indigenous students, which 'can be disempowering and can become a form of linguistic and cultural imperialism' (p. 185).

A similar experience of CS and its cultural implications is related by McDonald (1993), whose tertiary student judiciously constructed 'an identity that is both Aboriginal and Western-educated or expanding the construction of what it is to be Aboriginal' (p. 11).

While CS requires some degree of adoption to Western culture and conceptualisation (Lo Bianco et al. 1999), it does encourage the maintenance of the linguistic and cultural codes of practice that the learner initially holds. This is a considerable improvement on earlier assimilationist educational policy. Further support for CS and the advantages it provides are suggested by McConvell (2008) who maintains that the 'freer more expressive use of language choice [that CS provides] may actually be a valuable function of bilingualism [or bidialectalism] which can support the maintenance of languages' (p. 242). McConvell notes 'significant numbers of cases around the world where groups have practised pervasive code-switching for decades or even hundreds of years without language shift removing one of the languages from the repertoire' (p. 242).

Further argument might claim that the onus remains on the Indigenous learner to learn the new language/dialect and the ways of using the language/culture, as well as the knowledge of content of workplace practice, which the non-Indigenous learner does not need to do (see also Dobinson, Chapter, "Occupying the 'Third Space': Perspectives and Experiences of Asian English Language Teachers", on how Asian teachers of EAL must develop intercultural competence, rather than their Western colleagues). Such is the plight of all minority groups. It remains an issue to be carefully considered, if not overcome. Undoubtedly educators and, indeed, non-Indigenous employers need to be informed about the challenges that AbE speakers face in cross-cultural contexts and to seek ways to accommodate and assist them as they learn to code-switch.

5 Conclusion

Although CS does present the dilemma of seemingly harking back to assimilationist principles, it is clear that Indigenous learners such as VET students need to take on the language and culture of the mainstream to be able to compete on an equal footing with their non-Indigenous peers. In the real world there is no choice but to adopt the norms of the dominant culture in order to partake of its benefits, such as equal employment. The current alarming statistics regarding Aboriginal unemployment in general, and Aboriginal youth unemployment in particular, serve to demonstrate that earlier, wholly assimilationist educational strategies which ignored the need for maintenance of language and culture have simply not worked. CS and its concurrent valuing of prior knowledge and background may operate to address this situation, as has been demonstrated by many successful Aboriginal professionals and academics today.

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The Retention of Year 11/12 Chinese in Australian Schools: A Relevance Theory Perspective

Grace Zhang and Qian Gong

Abstract Along with the rise of China, Chinese language education has become increasingly important. However, the tally of students studying Chinese in Australian schools resembles a rollercoaster: until Year 10 it steams upwards, but at Years 11 and 12 it plunges down. Drawing on interviews and focus group discussions with school teachers in Western Australia, this paper investigates the rollercoaster phenomenon through the lens of Relevance Theory. In particular, it explores students' motivations and the priorities of schools and the government, to build a better understanding of the causal factors underpinning the poor retention of students in Year 11/12 Chinese. The findings show that the three major stakeholders—students, school authorities and government—take a relevance-driven and effect/cost-guided approach to language learning, seeking minimum costs and maximum benefits. The implication is that to retain students in their senior years, the optimal relevance of Chinese language education needs to be asserted. This study calls for policies and practices based on Relevance Theory, if Chinese, and other language programmes, are to be successful in the future.

Keywords Year 11/12 Chinese · Multilingual education · Chinese in Australian schools · Relevance theory · Chinese language education · Retention of language students

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1 Introduction

While multilingual education is important from many perspectives such as effective intercultural communication, better employment opportunities and personal fulfilment, Australia faces a major challenge in inspiring students to successfully complete Year 12 of their language study.

In recent years, as China's role on the international stage has become more dominant, there has been increasing attention to Chinese[1] language education worldwide. For example, by 2020 Chinese will be taught in all Swedish schools (Asia Education Foundation 2012). This trend is also apparent in Australian schools, but the upward trajectory halts and declines at Year 11/12, particularly for second language learners (L2) (Scrimgeour 2012), who are Australian students learning Chinese as a second language. The phenomenon can be described as rollercoaster that goes up until Year 10, and then dives. According to Orton (2008), there were approximately 84,000 students of Chinese in 319 Australian schools in 2008, but almost all (close to 94%) of L2 quit before Year 9 or 10, once the language was no longer mandated. At Year 12 nationally, only 3% of students take Chinese, 94% of whom are first language speakers of Chinese (L1). Consequently, in Year 11/12, Chinese language education is 'overwhelmingly a matter of Chinese teaching Chinese to Chinese' (Orton 2008, p. 24).

Such a situation illustrates what Stroud and Heugh (2011) term a crisis in language education. It has stimulated debate on whether or not Australian schools should continue to teach Chinese to senior secondary students. On one side, Professor Hans Hendrischke, director of the Confucius Institute at Sydney University, has called for an end to the teaching of Chinese to Year 12 students where interest is minimal, and concentrating on earlier years of schooling where interest is strong. On the other side, Dr Jane Orton, who runs the Chinese Teacher Training Centre at the University of Melbourne, argues that such a move would be counterproductive, because stopping Chinese at Year 10 makes it merely a hobby (Lane 2012, *The Australian*, April 24) rather than a step along a serious career path.

For any useful debate, understanding the causal factors for the current situation of senior secondary Chinese language learning is essential. This chapter investigates what drives Year 11/12 students away from Chinese language education and prevents it from thriving, based on data collected from school teachers in Western Australia. In explaining the behaviour of the stakeholders involved, this study provides some theoretical insight into the phenomenon based on Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995). The findings show important implications for the revival of Year 11/12 Chinese as a school subject.

[1] Chinese in this study refers to Modern Standard Chinese.

2 The Perceived Reasons for the Drop in Year 11/12 Chinese Student Numbers

Since the mid-1800s, the Chinese community has made its presence felt in Australian history. Since the 1950s Chinese has been taught in Australian schools as a second language, with a surge in the 1980s in response to China's increasingly important role in the world. A new phenomenon has arisen in recent years: Chinese classes need to cater not only for L2 learners, but also for background learners and L1 students. In this study, L2 refers to 'learners who are introduced to learning Chinese at school'; background learners to 'learners who use Chinese at home (not necessarily exclusively)'; and L1 to 'learners who have at least primary schooling in Chinese' (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2011, p. 21). Background learners are typically Australian-born Chinese, and L1 are overseas–born Chinese attending school in Australia. Although background learners have very different affiliations with Chinese language and exhibit a large range of experience with language, 'it is not feasible to identify more groupings for pragmatic reasons' (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2011, p. 21).

Recognising Australia's migration history, the *Draft of Australian Curriculum: Languages* (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2013) asserts that the fundamental principle of learning a second language is to develop students' overall literacy and expose them to a rich and challenging interconnected world filled with linguistic and cultural diversity. The *National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program Guidelines* (2009–2011) states the importance of learning an Asian language to ensure young Australians are well positioned in the future international job market. Between 2009 and 2011, the Australian Government committed $ 62.4 million to support national Asian language programmes and Asian studies in Australian schools, including Chinese language. While the commitment may have benefited other aspects of school Chinese language programmes, it has not had much impact on the retention rate in senior secondary classes. To take Victoria as an example, where 33 % of the country's school Chinese learners reside, 94 % of L2 students quit before Year 10; a similar trend is found among L2 learners at university, where drop-out rates are close to 75 % (Orton 2008, p. 8).

L2 learning is empowered by learners' motivation, which underpins attainment and includes both the drive to start and the stamina to finish the learning journey. A lack of motivation means even individuals with the most remarkable abilities fall by the wayside (Dörnyei 2001). In Dörnyei's (2005) theory of 'L2 Motivational Self System', various factors including peer group, experience of success, the impact of the teacher, and the curriculum are influential in an L2 learner's motivation to continue learning. Orton (2008, p. 5) notes that the proficiency of L1 and background learners disheartens L2 learners, who are also frustrated by their 'lack of success in developing proficiency, which is due to the intrinsic difficulties of Chinese for an English speaking learner, combined with insufficient teaching of certain aspects, and a totally inadequate provision of time needed for the task.'

The recent release of *Australia in the Asian century*: *White paper* (Australia in the Asian Century Task Force 2012, p. 170) recognises that to boost student demand requires joint effort from all stakeholders, including students, principals, parents, businesses, employers and the community. In particular, making significant improvement requires governments and schools to share responsibility for ongoing leadership and commitment. This suggests that the issue of Year 11/12 attainment in Chinese is complex and multifaceted.

The following review focuses on three major elements: learners, school authorities and the government. It focuses on the perceived reasons why L2 learners of Chinese drop out at Year 10. In the next decade L1 and background learner numbers will not increase significantly (Orton 2008, p. 25). This is not ideal: given the still-growing influence of China as a neighbour and world leader, we need more Chinese speakers.

2.1 Learners: Too Hard to Stick Around For

Chinese is very different from languages such as English: spoken, it is a tonal language; written, it has character-based scripts. It is commonly perceived to be distinct from any other language, and requires much effort to master, requiring many school hours and resources. In the current Australian schooling system, L2 learners of Chinese receive approximately 500 hours of instruction, the same as learners of a European language. The current provision for Chinese is inadequate: it takes a native English speaker approximately 2,200 hours to become proficient in Chinese, but only approximately 600 hours to become proficient in a European language such as Italian or French (Orton 2008, p. 14).

Chinese as a second language poses particular and intrinsic learning difficulties for speakers of English, who struggle with tones, homophones, characters, and the system of particles and verb complements. This is why the new Chinese curriculum being developed for Australian schools recognises the distinctiveness of the Chinese language, and caters for the unique and specific needs of Chinese learners (Scrimgeour 2012), ideally making class hours longer and separating L2 from native speakers.

The difficulties of learning Chinese makes L2 learners feel it is too hard to compete with their peers from L1 and background learner groups. The comparative proficiency of these classmates is discouraging to L2 learners, who may feel that they cannot succeed no matter how hard they try. Orton (2008, p. 27) states that 500 hours can bring a diligent and reasonably bright L2 learner of a European language beginning from Year 7 inside the proficiency range of an educated BS/L1 student by Year 12: that is, by then L2 learners can compete with background learner and L1 students. The same is not applicable to L2 language learners of Chinese. By Year 12, the same diligent, reasonably bright L2 student will master some 500 characters—comparable to a first year student in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. It is impossible for L2 learners to compete with L1 students who by Year 12 have mas-

tered 2,000 characters or more; by secondary school, the three groups are as different as 5-year-olds, 12-year-olds and 17-year-olds (Orton 2008). Every year almost all the top high achievers are of Chinese background, including Chinese as a Second Language. Facing the impossible task of competing with L1 and background learners, most L2 learners drop out well before Year 12, to avoid their university entry score suffering from a low mark (Lane 2012, *The Australian*, April 24).

2.2 School Authorities: Improper Streaming

Our language choices and attitudes towards other languages are closely linked with the (dis)empowerment of languages through official policy (Anchimbe 2013), and this applies particularly to the selection of school subjects, where a school's streaming policy plays an important role. In Australia, only Victoria provides three levels of assessment; elsewhere the levels represent a simple L1/L2 divide in which background learners with very high levels of language proficiency are permitted to take the L2 assessment stream. The lack of a clear background learner curriculum and assessment level at secondary level

> robs Australia of the thousands of would-be classroom L2 learners who every year quit, discouraged by excessive competition, and leaves those who already have a starting proficiency often going nowhere in developing their language in ways they and the country would most benefit from. (Orton 2008, p. 28)

One key issue of solving the retention problem of L2 learners at senior secondary schools is to separate complete beginners from learners with prior knowledge of Chinese (Scrimgeour 2012). This would create fairer streaming; as would creating three nationally recognised separate streams of curriculum and assessment for L1, L2 and background learners. Catering for all three groups is important, particularly as background learner and L1 groups 'comprise a future pool of professionals, including teacher candidates, who are bilingual, bicultural and familiar with Australian schools, relationships and learning styles' (Orton 2008, p. 6); however, it is unlikely that three such separate streams could be justified unless student numbers increase dramatically. There is an argument for accepting reality and encouraging students to pursue Chinese up to Year 10 and then re-engage at tertiary level, but it is also a reality that students are unlikely to choose a language in Year 7 that leads to a known dead end. The study of Chinese in Years 11 and 12 could be made attractive if education authorities found the means to stream classes more fairly.

In a speech on Asian literacy in 2012, former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said:

> There is the real question of the adequacy of curriculum and the fairness of assessment systems both at the high school and university levels when it comes to comparing native and non-native speakers, including the proper classification of non-native speakers who may only have partial fluency… Many Australian students, their teachers and their parents are often discouraged by the ability of their children to get a decent grading in an Asian language taken to year 12 level, particularly when these gradings may count to university entry. (Cited in Lane 2012, The Australian, April 24)

This problematic situation is not an issue only for secondary schools. McLaren reports a similar trend in Australian tertiary education, where background learners and L1 make up the majority of the student population. Based on 2008–2009 Chinese language enrolment in Australian universities, she observes that of the 20 institutions surveyed, enrolment was up by 35% since 2001, but most new learners were of Asian background (2011, p. 3). In one university, of a 65% increase, 62% (of 65%) were students from China. Enrolments for L2, by comparison, are either static or in decline (McLaren 2011, p. 5), a reflection of the poor retention of Year 12 students. Like Orton, McLaren calls for an appropriate separation of language streams, an essential step for the expansion of L2 learners. She warns that if the current situation remains, Chinese risks being "perceived as a 'ghetto' language to be taken only by students of Chinese background", with L2 students feeling excluded (2011, p. 6).

There has been some recent success in changing curricula and introducing new interdisciplinary course structures. There was a 79% increase in Chinese at the University of Melbourne after it required undergraduate students to undertake study outside their primary discipline (Australia in the Asian Century Task Force 2012, p. 173). The same success could also be possible in schools by making appropriate curriculum changes and implementing a streaming system.

2.3 The Government: Ineffective Policy and Funds

Australia in the Asian century: *White paper* (2012) affirms that an increase in Australians' proficiency in languages other than English is crucial in building deeper ties with Asia. In the late 1980s, to meet the needs of the country's economy, the government initiated a plan to produce 'Asia literate' school graduates with proficiency in Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean by the year 2000, and many national and state education-based initiatives were undertaken to implement the plan. The Australian government's support has increased in recent years: the intent is that by 2020 there will be at least 12% of Year 12 graduates who are sufficiently fluent in an Asian language to engage in trade and commerce in Asia (Guidelines 2009–2011).

However, problems exist. Eligibility requirements for entry into language courses at senior secondary level are sometimes arbitrary and often confusing, and this situation fails to give adequate incentives for learning languages at senior secondary level (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority 2011, p. 2). While government support programmes have had limited and localised success, they have ultimately failed to generate the expected number of graduates with adequate proficiency in Asian languages (National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools 1995–2002, National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program 2009–2012). Orton (2008, p. 25) argues that in the early and mid 1990s, the government's support projects made 'great and lasting improvements' in Chinese curriculum design, assessment procedures and textbooks for school learners,

and in the spread of Chinese programmes offered, but faltered mid-decade and was all but dead by the turn of the century. When government interest in encouraging Asian language learning revived in the 2000s, school sector administrators showed little interest, perhaps thinking the same pattern would recur. Indeed, university enrolments confirm that while there has been some gain in the numbers of L1 and background learner students, there has been a stagnation or decrease in L2 learner numbers (McLaren 2011).

The White Paper (2012) states that '[a]ll schools will engage with at least one school in Asia to support the teaching of a priority Asian language': these priority languages are Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian and Japanese. All Australian students will have the opportunity, and be encouraged, to undertake a continuous course of study in an Asian language throughout their years of schooling. Responding to the call for appropriate streaming (Orton 2008; McLaren 2011) from Foundation Year to Year 10, Chinese pathways are being developed for three learner groups—L1, L2 and background learners. While this streaming and the supporting curriculum development will be available by the end of 2013 and may be implemented in 2014, individual schools will make the ultimate decision as to the availability of any particular pathway and how it is offered, while state and territory education authorities will make the decisions about implementing timelines. Whether or not the policy will be realised remains to be seen.

As well as the factors already discussed, there are other reasons for the drop in numbers of Year 11/12 Chinese students. Students may have an unsupportive environment at school, in their family, or in the community, because language is often not valued highly, and 'at school, home and on the street, becoming proficient in a new language is most often either deemed unnecessary given the spread of English in the world, or seen as an exotic private pursuit beyond the ability of most people' (Orton 2008, p. 32). Another concern is that 'Chinese teaches Chinese to Chinese': some 90% of school teachers are L1 speakers with significant intercultural difficulties in delivering a quality programme and are unable to relate to Australian students; L2 teachers are keenly sought after by schools but their Chinese language proficiency level is often not at the desired level (Orton 2008, p. 21).

There are, then, three levels of difficulty facing implementation of an effective Chinese language programme in high schools: first, Chinese is too difficult for L2 learners to learn in the same time as that needed to acquire a European-based language; second, language classes are not always appropriately streamed, inhibiting L2 students from continuing to Year 11/12; and third, the government's uneven support for its own policies has instilled caution and even cynicism among teachers and school administrators and has not translated into an increase of Year 11/12 students of Chinese. These factors have been researched and their important implications for the teaching and learning of Chinese, have been clarified; however, there is no in-depth empirical study of the issues, especially in the context of Western Australia schools; and nor is there a theoretical account of the underlining reasons for the failure to implement an effective language leaching strategy, as the literature primarily deals with issues that are practical in nature.

This study attempts to fill these two gaps and go one step further by situating the issues within the broad context of Relevance Theory. A Western Australia-based empirical study on the causal factors of Year 11/12 retention problems, and its findings will provide an overarching theoretical explanation for the three major stakeholders' behaviours, and their interconnections: for example, is there any universality between the phenomenon of students not continuing with language learning in Year 11/12, schools not streaming into three separate pathways, and the government not providing effective support?

3 Theoretical Framework: Relevance Theory

Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995) was developed as a theory of human cognition in the context of communication, an appropriate focus given the subject of this study as '[h]uman cognition tends to be geared to the maximization of relevance' (Sperber and Wilson 1995, p. 252). Sperber and Wilson define 'relevance' as the speaker's input (a sight, a sound, an utterance, a memory) that links with the knowledge and information the hearer has available, from which to draw inferences and produce conclusions (a positive cognitive effect) that matter to him or her. A positive cognitive effect is a 'worthwhile difference to the individual's representation of the world—a true conclusion, for example' (Sperber and Wilson 1995, p. 251). The speaker's input is relevant if it helps the hearer make informed decisions. Adapting the concept to this study, a relevant input that may influence a Year 11/12 student's decision to take Chinese or not is something that matters to him/her: for instance, the belief that being able to speak and read Chinese will be of benefit when seeking work. Relevance is measured through two elements: cognitive effects and processing effort. Cognitive effect is the interaction of an input and a set of existing assumptions, and processing effort is the effort spent for a cognitive system to produce a cognitive effect (Sperber and Wilson 1995, pp. 46–48).

Relevance Theory has two principles: the Cognitive Principle and the Communicative Principle. The Cognitive Principle stipulates:

> Other things being equal, the greater the positive effects achieved by processing an input, the greater the relevance of the input to the individual at that time. Other things being equal, the greater the processing effort expended, the lower the relevance of the input to the individual at that time. (Sperber and Wilson 1995, p. 252)

That is, human cognitive processes aim to achieve the maximum possible cognitive effect using the minimum possible processing effort (the 2M principle, in this study's terms). The preferred outcome is to achieve maximum positive cognitive effects and expend minimum processing effort, increasing the relevance of the input. The Communicative Principle of relevance stipulates: 'Every stimulus conveys a presumption of its own optimal relevance' (Sperber and Wilson 1995, p. 252); this means that the input is applicable enough to be worth the audience's processing effort, and compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences (Sperber

and Wilson 1995, p. 254). The first principle claims that human cognition aims for the maximisation of relevance, and the second says that utterances create expectations of optimal relevance. Viewed as part of human cognition, the principles of relevance 'are an automatic reflex of the human mental capacity' (Huang 2007, p. 202). In Relevance Theory, relevance is a matter of degree between cognitive effects (benefit) accomplished and processing effort (cost) spent, 'a trade-off between processing efforts and contextual assumptions' (Jucker et al. 2003, p. 1759).

The adapted conceptual framework in this study consists of three aspects:

- Human cognition makes the least processing effort to achieve the maximum positive effect. This may be manifested in the behaviour of students of Chinese when they choose school subjects, of school authorities when they decide which language subjects to offer, and of the government when developing a language policy. It is assumed to target what is optimal or suitable in a situation, obtaining the maximum positive effect for the least effort. For example, without appropriate streaming, taking Year 11/12 Chinese is not optimal for an L2 learner because the effort expended does not achieve the desired effect. Background learners and L1 students, on the other hand, may prefer to take Year 11/12 Chinese because their lesser effort obtains a more positive effect.
- Relevance is a matter of the ratio between effects (benefit) accomplished and effort (cost) spent. The trade-off theory explains that some extra effort may be made for a worthwhile cause. For example, in order to create a good learning environment for Year 11/12 Chinese, an independent school may choose to offer separate streams to L1, L2 and background learners. Although the financial costs may not be optimal, they are offset by the enhanced reputation of the school and the perception that it caters to the needs of the community. In the long run, the school will reach an ideal 2M outcome.
- The principle of relevance 'exploits the common ground between partners' (Jucker et al. 2003, p. 1749). This is because the benefit/cost guided behaviours often has to be the outcome of a coordinated enterprise. For example, the school authorities and the government have to make sure that supporting a senior secondary Chinese programme is cost effective, and to reach their goals they may have to work together, focusing on the common ground between them. Joining forces may enable them to reach a state of optimal relevance in the end.
- The phenomenon of poor retention of Year 11/12 Chinese students can be explained and justified by Relevance Theory's 2M principle, based on the survey presented below.

4 Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach to a systematic and empirical investigation of why the senior year 'dive' occurs. The collected data reveal the opinions and concerns of school teachers on the issue of teaching languages in senior schools.

The teachers were all from Western Australia; in the existing literature, the Western Australia context is less represented.

The data collection consisted of a semi-structured one-hour focus group discussion, two telephone interviews and one face-to-face interview (approximately 5 hours in total). The group discussion was attended by eight participants who were teachers of Chinese, mostly in Western Australian schools. The perceptions and attitudes of participants provided clues as to why it is difficult to retain senior secondary Chinese L2 learners. The focus group discussion enabled interactions among the teachers, which clarified issues and produced in-depth exploration of the causal factors. This form of data collection was efficient, considering the nature of this particular study. Three other participants could not attend the focus group discussion, but two were telephoned individually and one interviewed face-to-face. In total there were 11 current or former teacher participants. Ethics approval for this study was obtained (#SSAL-27-12), written consents were given before the discussion began, and oral consents were sought before the telephone interviews.

The recruitment of participants was by the snowball method, by which 'the researcher asks participants to identify others to become members of the sample' (Creswell 2012, p. 146). Broadly speaking, this study is a purposeful sampling: participants were selected according to the purpose of the investigation (Creswell 2008, p. 214; Dörnyei 2007, p. 126).

The discussion and interviews were semi-structured. The procedure was the same in both: the researcher facilitated an open discussion and, to keep the discussion going, asked open questions. For example:

- What are the reasons that L2 learners do not continue to Year 11 and Year 12?
- What do you think about the impact of some of the government policies (e.g. scaling policy in the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) exams)?
- What do you think about class streaming?

Data were collected by audio-recording, useful for capturing the content of the discussion, and for replaying to confirm the points made. No recording was done during the three individual interviews, as taking notes was adequate when talking one-to-one. The recorded data were analysed using a qualitative interpretive framework (Miles and Huberman 1994), and the themes developed are presented in Section 5.

5 Data Analysis

The teachers identified a number of possible causes for the drop in Year 11/12 Chinese numbers, largely related to changing curriculum requirements for WACE, classroom dynamics between L1, L2 and background learners, school provisions for teaching, and government policy and funding. While most of these factors share commonalities with those identified in Orton's (2008) report, some are more inflected with local context.

Before going to specific causal factors, the participants in this study situated the issue in an historical context, noting that low Year 11/12 enrolment was a natural reflection of Chinese language education being a late starter. Although introduced in Australian schools in the 1950s, it was not until the mid-1990s that comprehensive school programmes took shape. Compared with other foreign languages such as Japanese and Indonesian, the history of Chinese language teaching in Australian schools is several decades shorter. This naturally results in a smaller student base from primary school, leading to an even smaller number in senior school year at the top. For example, 46 schools offer Japanese in Western Australia (School Curriculum and Standards Authority 2011), but only 12 teach Chinese, and some of these started to offer the course only recently. Despite the increase in Chinese programmes offered in recent years, the WACE candidates taking Chinese as a Second Language (Stage 2 and 3), and the background speakers, numbered a meagre 61 and 73 respectively in 2012—although this is a 26.1 % increase over 2011. The lack of WACE Chinese takers is especially pronounced in a state like Western Australia, where the student population is smaller than in the Eastern states. However, the number is on an upward trajectory and teachers feel there could be gradual improvement in the future. The new data here paints a slightly more rosy future for Chinese language education than those rather depressing statistics found in the existing literature and presented earlier.

5.1 'Tough' Chinese Language in Tougher WACE

The participants reported that compared with other languages on offer in schools, it usually takes more time and effort for students to become proficient in Chinese. The other languages on offer usually belong to the Indo-European family, and share significantly more similarities with English. Chinese, a logographic system, is totally different from English. Being tonal, Chinese phonology often proves hard to grasp for those who have not been exposed to it in early childhood. The writing system requires substantial rote learning. 'For a long time, Australian students no longer have to learn much by heart. Learning a language such as Chinese is thus very abstract to them,' noted one participant. In primary school, students are mostly taught some cultural knowledge with very little class time devoted to the language. Once in high school, the demand suddenly becomes greater as students are expected to learn vocabulary, pronunciation, written script and grammar all at once. Many are ill-prepared for this change. The pressure is huge, particularly as many students have no way to practice Chinese language in their day-to-day living. Teachers in the Chinese programme tend to be ethnic Chinese migrants from China rather than locals who grew up in Australia. Apart from their inexperience in teaching in the Australian context, they are not able to provide relevant role models for Australian students who need to see people of backgrounds like their own succeed in learning the language.

The situation is worsened by WACE. Most participants agree that the curriculum change in 2008 was a major factor in the drop in numbers in Chinese courses. WACE requires that Year 12 students complete up to six subjects for entry into tertiary education institutions, although only the four best subject scores are counted. While most students take six subjects, some choose to do only five, or even four. English is compulsory. The preferences for the other subjects often go to mathematics or science, which are university pre-requisites for a large number of courses in science and engineering. The chance of Chinese being chosen as a WACE subject is already limited. Further compounding the problem, the curriculum change enabled a far greater range of unconventional subjects such as photography and physical education as options for WACE. Chinese language thus competes in a larger field, leading to a smaller chance that it will be a preferred subject.

5.2 Personal Relevance: 'Scaled Down' Success

The participants suggested that the social attitude towards foreign language learning is generally negative. The national mind-set is that English is sufficient and there is little value in studying another language. One teacher commented that 'a lot of Australian students lack the intrinsic motivation to learn a second language'. Another described teaching Year 10 students who studied Chinese as a compulsory subject as 'a nightmare' because it was a tough job to manage a class not actively engaged.

Researchers (e.g. Curnow and Kohler 2007) have found that students who choose to learn a language beyond compulsory years are chiefly motivated by two factors: success and enjoyment. Despite the utilitarian reason that Chinese is useful for future careers, L2 learners need to feel they are competent learners; background learners need to be interested in the learning activities. This is usually not the case in the classroom, and background students tend to become bored and lazy while the L2 struggle to keep up, and there are no meaningful, constructive interactions between students. Immediate relevance and success, recognised as strong motivational factors over decades (Dörnyei 2001), also apply to language studies. The participants did not think the situations in Western Australian Chinese classrooms boosted students' motivation, and this weakened their enjoyment and success.

Participants reported that students are also disheartened by the current moderation and scaling practices exercised by the education authorities. Moderation and scaling of the raw marks is a significant factor in whether students take up Chinese. Raw marks are standardised, based on external examinations, as a means of ensuring students are on one ranking list. The process is applied to all courses to ensure that students in the same course, with the same marks, are of the same calibre whatever schools they attend and whatever internal assessment criteria and marking systems their schools use. This moderation process adjusts school assessments using the external examination as a common scale. Since background students tend to perform better in the external exam, schools with more L2 students generally see their school assessment marks adjusted down. This leads to the perception that the

L2 students will lose marks if they take Chinese. In addition, background students tend to gain relatively high marks compared with other subjects, which makes the Chinese language be seen as an 'easy' subject. This too results in an adjustment of raw marks on the basis of the students' performance in 'harder' subjects such as mathematics or physics. Students who are good with languages do not necessarily do well in the science subjects, and a majority of students who take Chinese see their marks scaled down; the scaling process is a strong second disincentive. Participants stated that this punitive system of moderation and scaling has a negative impact on students' choice of Chinese as a WACE subject.

5.3 Streaming of L1, L2 and Background Learners

The participants reported that the composition of the student cohort is a strong contributing factor to the dip in interest in the senior years, although they disagreed on how this leads to loss of student candidates. Prior to 2013, Western Australian senior schools offered two streams: background learners and L2. The background learners' course was for Chinese native speakers, and catered for those with a wide range of proficiency. Mixing students with multiple levels of language proficiency is never ideal, but constraints on administrative flexibility and open-handedness mean that in practice, school Chinese programmes invariably encompass students with myriad on-entry proficiencies, and widely varying needs that can scarcely be met by a single teacher in a single class. This 'one curriculum fits all' system plagues not only Chinese language: it also creates problems for Japanese and other heritage language school learners in terms of course structure, classroom dynamics, students' motivation and curriculum design, as discussed in Hasegawa's Chapter (Towards the Establishment of a WACE Examination in Japanese as a Heritage Language: Critical Perspectives) of this volume.

Some participants confirmed that the presence of a background learner group in an L2 class could be a 'crushing' experience for students with no prior knowledge of Chinese, who felt that they could not compete. As the intimidated L2 learners dropped out, classes were left with ever larger ratios of background learners, creating the impression that Chinese language is 'only for Chinese'.

The prescribed solution was to shift ethnic Chinese, or children with other linguistic advantage, into a 'heritage stream', but the implementation of this policy in 2012 contributed to a drastic reduction in the number of enrolments in Year 11/12, a trend that is expected to continue over the next few years. Participants had several reservations about the creation of a heritage stream. Its introduction would spread the already limited numbers of students across three courses, and could result in the closure of programmes in schools where the total number of students is already small.

There is considerable confusion about the eligibility criteria for background learners at the state level, particularly when assessing background learners. The National Curriculum Council Consultation defines the background learner group as those

> with a very rich and diverse range of capabilities in Chinese language, from learners born overseas who use the language as a mother tongue and have completed some education in Chinese, through to students born in Australia with active but predominantly receptive use of Chinese (Modern Standard Chinese or other language) at home. (Australian Curriculum Consultation 2010)

When applying this broad definition, State agencies may not pick up the nuance, and sometimes a didactic interpretation of the policy results in the exclusion of some genuine L2 students from the L2 course. For example, in deciding the eligibility of the students for a Chinese L2 group in Western Australia, having an ethnic Chinese parent was often sufficient criterion for students to be excluded, whether they spoke Chinese at home or not. This suggests a need to establish clearer criteria for group eligibility, as Orton (2008) argues. Hasegawa's (Chapter (Towards the Establishment of a WACE Examination in Japanese as a Heritage Language: Critical Perspectives)) discussion confirms that eligibility criteria have a huge impact on how effectively the heritage stream is managed.

Although the heritage course has been officially set up, few schools yet have enough students to offer this pathway. Those who take it as a WACE subject need to sit the exam as independent candidates. The Eastern States provide both the course material and the examination paper. Not only is the examination challenging, perhaps proving harder to get good marks in, but students as independent candidates also lose the 10% bonus[2] for university entry offered in the Languages Other Than English course. There is little incentive for students to take this pathway.

In any case, there is difficulty in finding teachers proficient in the skills the heritage course requires. Most Chinese teachers are L2 specialists and feel ill-equipped to deliver the heritage course; a similar situation exists in the Japanese Heritage Language course, as Hasegawa points out.

All these problems, raised by the participants, demonstrate that the streaming of Chinese classes is not a simple matter of school authorities forking out the money to implement the three pathways. Many serious issues need to be addressed before there is likely to be an increased demand for Year 11/12 Chinese language classes.

5.4 Resource Allocation

The participants in this study confirm that most school principals have little background in foreign language education, and even with the best intentions they often do not provide adequate support to language learning, especially when resources are

[2] To encourage students to take up Languages Other Than English (LOTE) as a WACE subject, some universities provide a bonus to students who achieve a scaled score in LOTE courses approved by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. This results in a selection rank higher than the students' Australian Tertiary Admission Rank if they have studied a LOTE course from 2011 onwards. This selection rank is used in place of the lower Australian Tertiary Admission Rank for admission to courses at Curtin University and The University of Western Australia. The students' Tertiary Entrance Aggregates are first enhanced by 10% of the final scaled score in a LOTE course. Ranking rank is calculated from the Tertiary Entrance Aggregates/Australian Tertiary Admission Rank conversion table, using these enhanced aggregates.

limited. In the allocation of resources, Chinese competes not only with English but also with other foreign languages on offer. All subjects suffer as a result.

It was felt by the participants that some administrative measures worked against Chinese courses, varying from insufficient human resourcing of qualified language teachers to infelicitous timetabling. The time allocation for Languages Other Than English subjects in junior high school is only 2 h per week, in comparison with English, science and mathematics which are automatically allocated 4 h each. One teacher mentioned that the timetabling for language studies is subordinate to core subjects such as English, science and mathematics, whose four periods are guaranteed and prioritised. In one school, language was scheduled for the last period in the afternoon when students were tired. The tight timetabling required to accommodate a variety of core subjects made it impossible to find more appropriate times to schedule language. Apart from competing with core subjects, language programmes also were in competition with one another inside schools, each vying for a share of the limited pool of students.

Problems such as inadequate time allocation become so detrimental that even bonus-ranking for high school language students would not prevent students from opting out of Chinese. For this reason, the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (2011, p. 1) are demanding a 'substantial time allocation' for language learning at both primary and secondary levels within a 'crowded curriculum'. The 'Asian Century' plan is going to fail without adequate time allocation.

5.5 Government Policy

Ideally, language policy should reflect the multicultural nature of a society, as Xu argues in Chapter (Functional English and Chinese as Mediums of Instruction in a Higher Institution in Hong Kong) of this volume. However, despite the government's recent initiative in issuing the *Asian century* White Paper, the general feeling among the participants in this study was that this initiative is more rhetoric than substance. Until the federal government commits some funding to Asian language programmes in school, the impact of the White Paper on day-to-day operations in schools will be minimal. Nor does current university policy provide incentive for school language takers. Universities do not have a scheme which recognises school language courses as prior learning for university courses. Apart from the 10% bonus for university entry, there is little offered by universities for students who study other languages for WACE.

Several causal factors are highlighted in the data. The difficulty of Chinese language makes it a less favourable WACE subject, and Chinese is unlikely to be a top pick since the change of curriculum opens up more options for WACE subjects. Students do not see the acquisition of another language as important or relevant in a society where the general attitude of the public is not conducive to Languages Other Than English learning in Australia, and current moderation and scaling processes create the impression that if they take Chinese, whether L2 or background learners, they will be disadvantaged because their raw marks are adjusted downward. The

crude streaming of multi-level students into one group due to resource and budgetary constraints tends to discourage background learners from striving further, while at the same failing to extend L2 students; and teachers often struggle to cope with the large gap between students' proficiencies, particularly as resource allocations are generally insufficient for Chinese language learners to be adequately supported, and government funding cannot provide enough to support programmes or initiatives to permit students to see benefits from learning Chinese.

6 General Discussion

These findings reveal a variety of factors contributing to the low number of Chinese learners in senior school. The general principles of relevance can be used to explain the reasons underlying the dire situation of Year 11/12 Chinese language learning. The relevance principle can be generalised to understand the decision-making process, based on an analysis whereby the cost of carrying out an action is weighed against its benefits.

6.1 Driven Away from Year 11/12 Chinese: Effect/Cost Guide

The findings above indicate that the difficulty in obtaining successful Chinese WACE marks, together with the wide range of subjects on offer, means that students predominantly choose subjects in which they can achieve the highest possible marks or that require least time and effort, in accordance with the principle of relevance. The linguistic nature of Chinese, which has minimal commonality with English, generally fails to meet the criteria of either of the 2M principles. The time-consuming rote learning involved in acquiring Chinese written script, and the mental efforts needed to master the tonal system of Mandarin, means that for the same amount of time and effort students would be better off choosing another subject, or a language with more similarity to English. Moreover, the practice of assessment moderation and scaling in Western Australian schools drives the cost/benefit balance down. It is small wonder that so many students drop out before Year 10.

Chinese is a language of high relevance to good job prospects, and the White Paper acknowledges that study of an Asian language will 'help every student get a great education and secure a good job when they leave school' (Australia in the Asian Century Task Force 2012, p. 166). The link to a good job represents a significant positive relevance for students, but for many it is a distant prospect: L2 students may not find it as immediately relevant as passing WACE and getting a university place.

The problematic streaming that has plagued the Chinese classroom for so long is also driven by cost/benefit assessments. A substantial number of background learners take Chinese as L2 students because their background in the language gives them an *ab initio* advantage over other students. However, because university entry is competitive, the mixing of the L2 and background learner cohorts means L2

students need to put in enormous effort to achieve relatively lower marks. On the other hand, when background learners are placed in the heritage stream, their relative advantage is lost and they find themselves competing with a more competent cohort of L1 or near-L1 students; these learners will be reluctant to opt for the heritage stream. Moderation and scaling of the smaller cohort with a relatively large percentage of background learners also helps to put Chinese language as a WACE subject in a negative light: students perceive their efforts are not rightly rewarded when their marks are adjusted downwards. To put it simply, they feel they lose out in the deal.

From the school authority's point of view, a more refined streaming of Chinese learners needs to be weighed up against the resources available to support it. With the total number of students insufficient to sustain three different streams (L1, L2 and background learners, as proposed by Orton and others) in most Western Australian senior schools, the authorities choose not to offer the background learner stream. It is not surprising to see that two Western Australian catholic schools have chosen to offer Chinese, taking advantage of the start-up funding available from Confucius Institute, a Chinese government initiative to promote Chinese language and culture globally.

Like school policy, government policy follows the motivation rules. The government tends to stick to its guns: any school subject has to be cost effective. Under this constraint, it is not surprising that the Chinese language programme, or any language programme, is struggling to survive. Government policies on the various streams of Chinese learners are not relevant to student's lived experience. One of the teachers in this study commented that the definitions of background learner, L1 and L2 are

> decades old, well before the onset of globalisation. With the increased mobility in today's world, it is quite hard to find an L2 learner who is 100 per cent 'pure beginner'. The decision-makers are far removed from reality. The current definition is vague and could easily cause confusion.

When such criteria are imposed didactically, without any transition, it is difficult for parents, students or teachers to see benefits in the short or long term.

Relevance Theory explains why students stay away from Chinese as a year 11/12 subject. It fails to conform to the optimal relevance in that by continuing with Year 12 Chinese, students do not achieve the greatest positive cognitive effect using the least processing effort. The same concept explains why both schools and the government have been reluctant to provide much-needed funds and other resources to enable proper streaming of Chinese language classes.

6.2 Coming Back to Year 11/12 Chinese: Relevance-driven

Dörnyei (2005) proposes the 'L2 Motivational Self System' (Ideal L2 Self, Ought-to L2 Self, and L2 Learning Experience). In light of the relevance approach, a new dimension can be added to this model: L2 Optimal Relevance. If we expand Dörnyei's theory to any language learner, the relevance-driven principle plays an important role in defining what attracts and keeps language students.

The senior year Chinese student numbers alone show a promising upward trend. From 1995 to 2011, the number of Year 12 students in the state of Victoria increased threefold, from about 300 to 900 students (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2013). However, this impressive increase conceals the large dropout rate that occurs in Year 10. It would be ideal if the number before Year 10 filtered through to Year 12, giving a far greater increase.

The feedback in this study confirms that policies and practices must be based on relevance rules if Chinese courses are to attract students back to Year 11/12. For example, appropriate streaming would allow students to work at appropriate levels. A mechanism needs to be in place to ensure that the eligibility process is rigorous yet flexible enough for students to feel confident they can be successful with the right amount of effort. A new stream such as a L1 group should be introduced gradually from the bottom up so it does not disrupt student numbers too much, to avoid programme closure. When they are appropriately streamed, the current tension between background learners and L2 learners will be resolved, which may save the school financial costs and government funds in the long run, even though it may take some time for the benefits to show. This is in line with Jucker, Smith and Lüdge's (2003) argument: relevance is a matter of degree between effects (benefit) accomplished and effort (cost) spent. The current streaming practice may not accrue an immediate optimal cost/benefit ratio, but in time the trade-off strategy will reach an ideal stage and prove worthwhile.

Jucker et al. (2003) also argue that the implementation of the principle of relevance may utilise the common ground between partners and encourage cooperation from all stakeholders. These coordinated efforts include a number of things in the context of this study: for example, the Chinese community and parents currently provide great support to heritage learners by running community weekend schools and offering private tuition to students. Teachers could use technology to organise flexible teaching classrooms with multiple tasks to cater for different needs.

Cross-school cooperation between programmes may be necessary so that schools can pool resources by setting up language hubs, centres, specialist schools and online teaching, as the White Paper (2012, p. 168) recommends. This will make the programme financially viable; teachers will be relieved of some of the pressure of teaching multi-level classes and a more homogeneous grouping of students will circumvent boring the more advanced learners and frustrating the less advanced, caused by inappropriate mixing of achievement levels.

In order to retain Year 11/12 Chinese students, a more flexible approach is needed in our education system. For example, where the cohort is too small to be viable, the application of moderations and scaling could be reconsidered. Raw marks could be used instead of scaled marks so that the scores of students who have achieved a certain level of proficiency will not be skewed by the composition of the cohort. Universities could also provide cross-credits to students of various proficiencies who have studied Chinese in school. Although many believe it will be hard to achieve in the immediate future, the teachers who responded to this study concurred that the ultimate hope to achieve the goal of the 'Asian Century' lies in making Lan-

guages Other Than English a compulsory course for school graduation, as practised in many Asian and European countries as well as North America.

To encourage students to stay with Chinese in their senior year of schooling, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (2013) proposes six initiatives: a double bonus, a modified set of eligibility criteria, an *ab initio* course, a new Chinese culture and society study, expansion of the current Vocational Education and Training courses, and a new scored Victorian Certificate of Education Vocational Education and Training Chinese study. These are worthy of consideration nationwide.

7 Conclusions and Implications

The behaviours of students, school authorities and the government all follow the precepts of Relevance Theory when deciding to whether to continue or discontinue, to support or neglect, Chinese in Year 11/12. The majority of students (L2 and part of the background learner groups) do not wish to continue in the senior years because the cost of their efforts is not justified by the benefits. On the other hand, some L1 and background students from China choose Chinese as a subject because of the relative advantage they possess from accumulated exposure to the language and culture. Public schools have to strike a balance between educational opportunities, financial costs, community and parental expectations, and students' performance. Independent and catholic schools owe it to themselves to work out the cost of investment in a language course and the needs of their clientele. Government policies also follow relevance principles: the benefits of an Asian language literate population in the future are recognised, but achieving this goal is hampered by budgetary constraints and the need to satisfy other priorities.

This study offers an overarching account which establishes that various stakeholders in Chinese language education act in accordance with the principles of relevance; that is, the picture conforms to the theory of optimal relevance, in that the actions of all the parties involved can achieve the greatest positive cognitive effect through the least processing effort. This adds a refreshing theoretical dimension to the existing literature, where most issues discussed so far have been of a practical nature.

The approach adopted in this study has important implications when addressing the questions of what drives students away from the senior years of Chinese language in Australia and why the $ 62.4 million finding has not had any significant effect. Without a language policy that follows relevance principles, money alone will do little good and will certainly not solve the problem of retaining students. This study calls for relevance-stipulated and Australian context-guided actions: if Chinese senior years are ever to be successful in the future, every stakeholder needs to see how the endeavour works with the least effort and the greatest positive effect.

This study may be useful to inform effective strategies in implementing the recent call from the Australian government that at least one Asian language be offered

by each school to meet the demands of the Asian Century (Australia in the Asian Century Task Force 2012). The current disappointing situation of Year 11/12 Chinese learners in Australia is contrary to the government's and community's wishes. McLaren's comments on the possible failure of Chinese language teaching are resounding:

> This has unfortunate implications for the Australian community at large, given the rise of China to become Australia's most important trading partner. China offers important opportunities for Australia, and the nation needs the engagement of broad sectors of the community to make the most of these opportunities. (2011, p. 11)

Policies and practices with no proper underpinning principles often give rise to a vicious cycle whereby investment in Languages Other Than English programmes produces minimal results, so that even less investment can be justified in the future. Any future programme devised to retain students of Chinese in Year 11/12 needs to follow relevance principles. This study contributes to the revival of Year 11/12 Chinese student numbers by providing a better understanding of the importance of 2M principles in the undertaking. While the empirical data in this study was collected in the context of Western Australia school teachers, the findings and conclusions should be useful, at least in principle, for other parts of Australia and beyond.

8 Postscript

A recent new initiative, and optimistic development, is that the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (2013) of the Government of Western Australia has approved the introduction of WACE background (replacing the term 'heritage') language courses in Years 11 and 12 Chinese. Background learner Year 11 will be offered in 2015, and Year 12 in 2016. L1 and L2 courses will continue to be offered.

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (2013) sets three major criteria for identifying L2, background and L1 learners: total time of formal education (from pre-primary) in a school where Chinese is the medium of instruction (less than one year for L2, less than 5 years for background learners, and more than 5 years for L1); total time of residency or time spent in a country where Chinese (or a Chinese dialect) is a medium of communication (less than 2 years for L2, less than 5 years for background learners, and more than 5 years for L1); and use of Chinese (or a Chinese dialect) for sustained communication outside the classroom with a person who has a background in Chinese (not permitted for L2, permitted for background learners and L1). L2 students have typically studied Chinese for 200–400 h by the commencement of Year 11.

These refined and clearer criteria and, more importantly, the efforts made by the government to provide proper streaming of the three groups of learners, make the future of Chinese education look much brighter. Moreover, for 2014 university admissions onwards, all four public universities in Western Australia (as opposed to only two in the past) will apply the Languages Other Than English bonus for

the purpose of determining a student's Tertiary Entrance Aggregates and Australian Tertiary Admission Rank. It is hoped that all these positive initiatives and endeavours can be translated into thriving and sustainable student retention at Year 11/12.

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Towards the Establishment of a WACE Examination in Japanese as a Heritage Language: Critical Perspectives

Hiroshi Hasegawa

Abstract Learning Languages Other Than English (LOTE) has been recognised as a vital element of Australia's current school educational program. The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE), the highest secondary school award in Western Australia, enables students to take either English or another LOTE as a second language. For example, students who are native speakers of English can take a WACE subject in, say, Japanese, while students with Japanese as their first language can take English as their second language. However, while this would seem to cater for the needs of both students, it causes a dilemma for others. Those whose parent(s) speak Japanese as native speakers, but who were born or grew up in Australia, are eligible to take WACE in either English as a second language or Japanese as a LOTE, but may end up taking neither if they are considered to be native speakers of both languages. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority in WA has been handling such issues on a case-by-case basis, and it is not unusual to find students who feel forced to abandon their language learning completely for WACE. Specific practical strategies are needed to deal with the issues concerning heritage language education, which can no longer be regarded as isolated or rare. This chapter discusses the challenges and implications of the establishment of a WACE in Japanese as a heritage language.

Keywords Japanese as a heritage language · Japanese in Australian schools · WACE · LOTE · Background speakers · Heritage language education

1 Introduction

Education in Languages Other Than English (LOTE), which has been designated a key learning areas since 1989, has been the focus of official Australian governmental support: urgent action is needed to maintain the legitimacy of LOTE (Fernandez 2007; Group of Eight 2007). The *Asian Century* White Paper officially unveiled by Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard on 28 October 2012 has as one of its foci the expansion of the study plan for Asian languages, including Chinese, Japanese,

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Indonesian and Hindi, in Australian education. It expresses the Australian government's ambitions for reviving and building a strong, positive relationship between Australia and Asia.

Issues relating to Heritage Language (HL) have fallen somewhat outside the purview of the debate on promoting LOTE learning of Asian languages in particular (Clyne and Kipp 2006). It may be that HL-based bilingualism is less valued than bilingualism in LOTE learning (Lo Bianco 2008). Australia is multilingual and multicultural, its population including approximately 6 million migrants from over 200 countries, which in 2010 was equivalent to 27% of the population (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). Over 350 languages have been brought into Australia according to the 2006 Census (Lo Bianco 2009), yet there is only limited access to well designated HL education in formal school settings as part of the country's current LOTE educational context.

Language ideology has an institutional framework (Oriyama 2010) which determines the selection of a particular language as a subject-based syllabus for courses in schools (Aussie Educator 2013). Learners of HL have the most potential to be bilingual and bi-cultural, which will make them precious assets to Australia (Clyne 1997; Kondo-Brown 2001; Lo Bianco 2009; Oriyama 2010, 2012). While there has been a growth in awareness of the value of bilingualism over the last 20 years (Mercurio and Scarino 2005), there have been no direct guidelines provided for encouraging this within the educational system in Australia, and this lack may have severely limited or even entirely curtailed the development of speaking and literacy skills in HL (Garcia 2003). In Australia, four Asian languages—Chinese (Mandarin), Indonesian, Japanese, and Korean—have received official acknowledgement from the political educational policy-makers and accorded status as school subjects. In 2011 for the first time, they were offered officially at Higher School Certificate (HSC), the highest award in secondary education level, in New South Wales (NSW). This is the only state to offer an HL national curriculum framework and a course of studies for students at senior secondary school level. If the number of students undertaking these four language subjects increases in the near future, it is likely that the NSW HSC case may serve as a model for the design of HL courses in other states.

There has been a rapid increase in the number of children with Japanese as a Heritage Language (JHL) in Australia over the last two decades (Oriyama 2012). Apart from NSW, there is no senior secondary level JHL course offered in any Australian state. Political views and strategies for the implementation of HL education as a school subject differ from state to state, and are, in any case, inadequate. Although studies of second language acquisition and bilingualism research are abundant in general (Oriyama 2010), further investigation is needed to develop effective mechanisms and practical strategies for the foundation of HL courses because, as Kondo-Brown (2001) points out, traditional LOTE educational curricula fail to encourage a high level of achievement by HL students. This paper critically explores the challenges and implications for the foundation of a Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) course in JHL, particularly with regard to practical issues in HL educational settings, including the societal legitimacy of JHL, eligibility determination, methodological and pedagogical obstacles, and the lack of human and material resources.

2 Definition of HL and its Learners

It is useful to examine and acknowledge the educational position of HL, beginning with a definition of HL and HL learners in Australian contexts, compared with others. The term 'heritage' reflects multiple definitions and synonyms, such as 'aboriginal, ancestral, autochthonous, (ex-)colonial, community, critical, diasporic, endoglossic, ethnic, foreign, geopolitical, home, immigrant, indigenous, language other than English, local, migrant, minority, mother tongue, refugee, regional, and strategic' (Bale 2010, p. 43). Bale stresses that the term is complicated to label. The term 'heritage language', coined in Canada, has been most commonly used since the 1970s (Bale 2010). The field has received considerable attention in the US since the 1990s, in terms of research, policy and practice; the *Heritage Language Journal* was launched in 2003 (Mercurio and Scarino 2005; Oguro and Moloney 2010), and was followed by national conferences on Heritage Language in 1999 and 2002 (Hornberger 2005; Hornberger and Wang 2008; Wu 2011). While HL is an alternative to lexical terms like minority, indigenous, immigrant, ethnic, second or foreign language (Hornberger 2005), it is often understood to refer to languages that are outmoded, useless or low-class, rather than expressing potential influence (Baker and Jones 1998); for example, Valdes (2001, pp. 37–38) defines HL as 'an endangered indigenous language or immigrant language that is not normally taught in school'. The term 'community language' is still used by the Australian government instead of HL (see, for example, Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2011) and has been commonly adopted in Australia since the 1970s (Scarino 2008; Wiley 2005). Although it is not clear to which specific community this term refers (Mercurio and Scarino 2005), it has been utilised 'to distinguish immigrant and indigenous languages from foreign and classical languages and to suggest that locally used languages should have priority, or at least equality, of esteem' (Lo Bianco 2008, pp. 65). The Australian educational policy-makers for the newly designed national curriculum introduced the term 'heritage language' for the high school course that commenced in 2011. It is used in this chapter, which primarily discusses issues relating to language teaching in secondary schools, rather than the term 'community language' which Kawasaki introduces in Chapter, "A Place for Second Generation Japanese Speaking Children in Perth: Can they Maintain Japanese as a Community Language" of this volume in a more general examination of the views of language maintenance in the family and community.

Definitions of HL are often accompanied by a discussion of its learners and its classification. HL learners are often referred to as children crossing borders (Kawakami 2007), heritage language speakers (Valdes 2001), background speakers, heritage learners, or home-background speakers, depending on the focus of the study (Koshiba and Kurata 2012). Hornberger and Wang (2008, p. 4) suggest that 'HL learners' should refer to those with 'ancestral heritage and extending their ties to the HL and heritage culture (HC) beyond immediate families'. They point out that clarifying who HL learners are 'requires far more than simply assessing their linguistic abilities and determining the relationship between their dominant and home languages' (Hornberger and Wang 2008, p. 5). From the perspective of

instruction and pedagogy in the educational context, Douglas (2005) and Hornberger and Wang (2008) refer to Valdes' different definitions of HL students as those 'having historical or personal connection to a language' or those 'who appear in a foreign language classroom, who are raised in homes where a non-English language is spoken, speak or merely understand the HL, and are to some degree bilingual in English and the HL' (Valdes 2001, pp. 37–38). Valdes calls the former a historically and personally linked definition and the latter a proficiency linked definition. A simplification of these definitions to suit the Australian context might be 'children who are being educated primarily through English but who also have contact with other language(s) through their family/community' (Oguro and Moloney 2010, p. 26). Since HL cannot be readily measured or quantified, however, HL learners have become unique and do not fit into educational settings as easily as they do into other school curricula (Scalera 2004). It should be acknowledged that these definitions, reflecting a variety of perspectives, encourage individual students to define themselves as HL learners in a broad sense. According to Valdes (2001) the term 'home-background speaker' is used in Australia, but for this chapter the term 'HL learners' will be used for two reasons: first, the status of HL has already been established with NSW's 2011 launch of its secondary course; and second, there is a tendency for current school teachers in WA, whose HL situation is the focus of this chapter, to employ this term rather than others.

3 Learners of HL and its Status in the WACE System

Just as the definition of HL and its learners is controversial, so is the distinction between HL learners and native speakers of the target HL. Identification as a native speaker of the target LOTE should be made according to each student's basic instinct, but instead it is currently judged by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) in WA. A student considered to be a non-native speaker of the target LOTE automatically becomes ineligible to take the subject for WACE. English might be acceptable as a second language WACE subject, but SCSA will not accept this either, claiming that students are native speakers of English if they grew up in Australia, and this has enabled them to reach high proficiency in English (as well as the target LOTE). As a result, there are some cases where students are allowed neither to take English as a second language nor to take a LOTE for WACE.

How then to define the target group of students who can be considered potential HL learners, even though a definition of HL has not been offered by SCSA, WA's main educational policy actor? 'Policy actors not only implement a given policy but also appropriate it in ways that make the policy their own' (Bale 2010, p. 45), and in the case of HL this has led to a situation in which there is no distinction in the upper secondary education system between students of JHL and those who are considered Japanese Background Speakers (JBS). Homogenising these separate subgroups of

Japanese language users is standard protocol, and the current educational model in WA. The question of student eligibility to sit a second language WACE subject is also unclear, as demarcations between bilingual, foreign, heritage, or indigenous languages are not clearly drawn (Hornberger and Wang 2008). Attempts to define HL lead to discussion of two major issues: first and second languages, and primary and secondary languages. According to Polinsky (2000), most people consider their mother tongue their first language and their primary language; second language and secondary language are the automatic defining patterns for HL. However, linguistic identity and status can influence an individual's relationship to the target language, especially in terms of language expertise, language affiliation, and language inheritance (Leung et al. 1997): Leeman, Rabin and Roman-Mendoza (2011, p. 481) point out that 'the notion that identity is intricately connected to language was central to early calls for bilingual and heritage language (HL) education'. In terms of HL, people's sociohistorical relationships with interlocutors and personal confidence in their language largely help to build the distinction between mother tongue and HL. From this perspective, HL may be defined as their first and secondary language and the mother tongue as the second and primary language, or vice versa. Montrul (2012) notes the sociopolitical dimension of languages, such as majority and minority language, as well as language acquisition order (first and second language) and language function (primary and secondary language), and insists that is important to fully understand the characteristic elements underlying their HL identifications. To do this in relation to individual choice or use of one's language as HL may avert some problematic cases in which HL learners' parents, usually the closest and most influential in their HL development, misidentify their children's identities and HLs. Douglas, for example, points out that

> Parents who speak Japanese to their children since their birth perceive that Japanese is their mother tongue for their children, and they do not realize their children's Japanese language shifts from the first and primary language to the first but secondary language in the process of interaction with other children of the dominant language and schooling in the dominant language. (2005, p. 3)

Failing to distinguish between one's mother tongue and HL may also be due to 'the perceived vitality of one's ethnolinguistic group, and the desire for a positive social identity' (Oriyama 2012, p. 168). Ethnolinguistic vitality can be nourished by status, institution and demographic factors (Giles et al. 1977).

Such multifaceted factors are interwoven, and have dynamic effects on the definition of one's HL, making it difficult to categorise either mother tongue or HL, or to comprehend the factors of bilingualism in general (see, for example, Oriyama's 2012 model of variable networks of bilingualism). HL also corresponds to one's identity, which 'is inconsistent and situational in space and time, and personal relations can influence and be influenced by others and by the sociocultural context for all means of communication' (Oriyama 2010, p. 77). These factors reveal the nature of HL as arbitrary and transitional (Hornberger and Wang 2008), as well as subjective and open to individual perspectives.

4 Major Conflicts in the Creation of HL Subject-based Syllabuses or Courses

There appear to be four major issues that have inhibited the establishment and implementation of a JHL programme in WA secondary education: the societal legitimacy of JHL; determination of eligibility; methodological and pedagogical obstacles; and lack of human and material resources. The following sections discuss these issues from a theoretical and practical perspective, in order to determine the parameters for a successful HL course and its establishment.

4.1 Societal Legitimacy of JHL

4.1.1 Community School and Potential Students

The rationalisation of HL education may be based on the direct statistical evidence of student numbers. Confirming that there are sufficient enrolment numbers may help to convince the educational authority to establish HL courses in states in Australia other than NSW. Most potential JHL students in Australia are those in Japanese community schools, who are able to foster positive JHL development through home, community, and peer support, along with their Japanese identity (Oriyama 2010). Japan Overseas Educational Services reported a total of 12 Japanese schools in Australia in August 2012. These can be split into two streams. Category one includes three schools acknowledged by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). The schools in this category, which target Japanese students who are in Australia for a relatively short time and plan to go back to Japan in the near future, follow the Japanese curriculum based on MEXT guidelines; the study hours and subjects taught in Japanese are equivalent to those in Japan. Most students are Japanese nationals whose first language is Japanese. Category two consists of nine schools which run at weekends and accept students who in most cases are permanently in Australia or anticipating a long-term stay. This group can be divided into two streams: 2a is *Hoshuujyugyooko*, six schools with financial support from the MEXT; and 2b is *Hoshuukyooshitsu*, three schools with no financial support from the Japanese government. Schools in both these categories attract both Japanese and non-Japanese attendees of local schools, with the primary aim of improving or maintaining their levels of JHL. In WA, in addition, there is a school attended by students with JHL that falls in the second category. It is called the Weekend Japanese School in Perth (WJSP), and is funded by the Japanese government; senior high school students are not eligible to enrol in it because in Japan compulsory education ends at the age of 15. WJSP accepts approximately 170 students from primary and junior high school, and may be the largest potential source of JHL learners in WA to take the WACE course in future years (C. Fukumoto, personal communication November 23, 2012).

The statistical evidence above sounds impressive, and promises to legitimise the establishment of JHL courses. However, there are two obstacles. First, NSW has two 2b weekend community schools, the Sydney Saturday School of Japanese and the North Shore Japanese School, but since they do not cater for senior high school students, the only choice for students wishing to study JHL for HSC purposes is the Saturday Schools of Community Languages (SSCL). Similarly, there are no institutions in WA which cater for JHL students after Year 10, and no equivalent to SSCL. WJSP does not target students with JHL because the Japanese system excludes senior high schoolers. It is necessary to create an official community school-based opportunity for high school students to access JHL study in WA prior to the establishment of the WACE. Second, a demand for enrolment in the JHL course in the future cannot be guaranteed, especially when the potential enrolment number in WA is compared with the numbers in NSW. A total of 35 students undertook the JHL course at the SSCL in NSW in 2012, made up of 19 Year 11 and 16 Year 12 students, of whom 15 sat the 2012 HSC examination. (N. Shimada, personal communication January 21, 2013). Most of those students were from the two Japanese weekend schools, 344 from the Sydney Saturday School of Japanese and 44 from the North Shore Japanese School in 2012, which means just below 4% of the students (15/388) took JHL for the HSC. Extrapolating this number to WA, only 7/170 students may take a JHL course in the future. This is not likely to convince the educational authorities of the legitimacy of the course.

4.1.2 Influence of Parents

The students' selection of school subjects is heavily influenced by a third party, their parents. It is common that parents support their children's JHL learning, and their use of Japanese with their children can affect the children's JHL development, especially in grammar, listening skills and reading proficiency; these children in general perform better than other subgroups who have JHL grandparent(s), are of JHL descent, and for whom Japanese is a foreign language (Kondo-Brown 2005). While parents have a belief that Japanese is a highly valued language in Japanese communities outside Japan (Oriyama 2012), they sometimes consider it impractical for their children to take JHL for the secondary school award and admission to higher education. The first reason for this derives from the current JHL course in NSW, which can be seen as more complicated and less developed and defined in terms of structure than other subjects. Although particular vocabularies and expressions including Kanji are embedded in the JHL syllabus, the topics and themes handled in each class are controlled primarily by the teacher. However, none of the JHL teachers at this stage is expert in specific JHL teaching, and they have been given no professional training in Japanese language-teaching in Australia (this issue will be discussed later). Some parents are hesitant to let their children take courses coordinated by non-JHL specialists. A second reason relates to the criteria for entry eligibility and the presence of JHL students with high-level Japanese in the course. Ability and proficiency can be strongly affected by factors such as the

amount of time students spend using the target HL at home and in other formal and informal language environments (Kondo-Brown 2005; Nishimura-Parke 2012; Oriyama 2012), and consequently many students in the HL course have the potential to obtain higher marks on the higher education entrance examination than for other subjects (de Kretser and Spence-Brown 2010; Hsieh and Field 2011; Willoughby 2006). Hence, achievement in JHL subjects depends on the opportunities the student has had to develop JHL proficiency (Nishimura-Parke 2012), which may lead parents to view the JHL course negatively as these more advanced, confident students are likely to outperform those with weaker JHL, and to adversely affect their results in the entrance examination.

Parents wishing their children to learn JHL at school and maintain their Japanese identity in Australia have been taking the current situation for granted, as JHL learning is mostly conducted at community educational institutions such as weekend schools. This situation may not maximise the learners' sense of the value of learning JHL, and may create a distance between JHL and secondary school subjects, especially in a course such as WACE. Political empowerment by establishing the JHL secondary programme is the key to enhancing the legitimacy of JHL in WA; this will attract parents' attention, and may lead them to encourage their children's JHL learning as well.

4.2 Eligibility Determination

4.2.1 Educational Authority's Attitudes Towards JHL

The Board of Studies in NSW considers students to be eligible for a JHL course in upper secondary school when they meet the following criteria:

> At entry level to the course, students will have typically undertaken: some study of Japanese in a community, primary and/or secondary school in Australia, and/or formal education in a school where Japanese was the medium of instruction up to the age of ten. (Board of Studies New South Wales 2010b, p. 5)

This serves to indicate that HL students' eligibility is determined on the basis of selected criteria. Consequently there may be a case where a student who has spent 1 year at an educational institution with a Japanese medium of instruction might be placed in the same classroom as students with 4 years of Japanese usage; yet they are examined under the criterion that 'one curriculum category fits all', regardless of their ability and proficiency in JHL (Koshiba and Kurata 2012). This single-track system may even apply to non-background students' entry conditions if they have returned from an exchange visit to Japan. De Kretser and Spence-Brown (2010) point out that, in WA as well as South Australia, Northern Territory and Tasmania, those who are on 1-year exchange studies to Japan need to return to Australia before the full year is up if they are to be eligible for Japanese as a Second Language (JSL) courses. Since such a one-solution-fits-all procedure has been applied to the second/foreign language program, its application will be further complicated in HL courses (Carreira and Kagan 2011).

As for the structure of language education, secondary school students in WA have the choice of undertaking the WACE course in core English or another designated language as their second language subject. Of the relevant WACE subjects comparable to NSW HSC subjects (Universities Admissions Centre n. d.), students may take either English or one (or more) of 16 second languages, divided into 20 separate courses, including background speakers' courses in Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian, Malay and Russian. For example, students who are native speakers of English can undertake a WACE subject in a recognised second language such as Japanese. Conversely, those with Japanese as their first language cannot take Japanese but can take English as their second language. In terms of Japanese this category includes two courses: JSL or JBS. This creates a dilemma for students with JHL. At present, students with JHL are not automatically eligible to take JSL. Correspondingly, JBS, in which 'students must analyse, evaluate, and respond to literacy texts, and understand aspects of contemporary issues' (Oguro and Moloney 2010, p. 27), has a high standard of entry criteria in terms of existing literacy and cognitive skills. The SCSA in WA has raised objections to most cases of such students selecting the WACE course in JSL from Year 11, reasoning that those who do not fit the course criteria for the JSL are automatically accommodated by the course of JBS; but researchers and educators such as de Kretser and Spence-Brown (2010) and Oguro and Moloney (2010) point out that those who are placed in a homogeneous JBS class often encounter extensive difficulties because their JHL competence is not equal to that of the other students. Inconsistent ability or proficiency in Japanese among the groups of different backgrounds is also demonstrated by Kanno et al. (2008).

'The criteria used for assigning students to one group or another vary across the country' (de Kretser and Spence-Brown 2010, p. 44), and the SCSA in WA has been handling applications on a case-by-case basis. They may sometimes allow students with JHL to take a JSL course instead of JBS, by virtue of the fact that they are speakers of English as their first language and mother tongue, and may not be eligible for the English as a Second Language course. This dichotomy between the JSL and JBS courses puts students with JHL into a double bind and leads to a situation where there are always some students in WA who abandon their studies of Japanese because of their ineligibility for any of the options at senior high school level.

4.2.2 Multi-levels of HL Proficiency in One Class

Establishing a course for students with HL requires investigation into appropriate pedagogy, based on students' HL linguistic and sociocultural knowledge. This is because the opportunities for personal or social contacts, incentives and constraints, and the subject's personality, which are not fixed but vary according to the situation, may also motivate them to use HL in order to maintain or to strengthen it (Hornberger and Wang 2008). The quantity and quality of individual community contacts is more the key to the development of HL literacy than individual profiles or exposure to the target language (Oriyama 2012). Nevertheless, it should

be noted that a correlation with the dominant language plays a significant role in matters of HL development, as the degree of access to a dominant language at an early stage of life affects language development (Montrul 2006, 2008). Given that the individual's HL has already been developed at the point of entry to the official educational institution or HL course, there are likely to be extreme disparities in the proficiency and skills with the target HL among students in a single class. Unlike regular second language courses which provide multiple levels or stages according to individual students' learning histories and formal educational profiles, the HL curriculum tends to treat students uniformly despite wide variations in their Japanese proficiency and skills, most of which were acquired prior to their entry (Douglas 2005; Nishimura-Parke 2012; Oriyama 2012). Inevitably HL teachers encounter students with a broad range of target HL linguistic knowledge and skills, as well as personally and subconsciously customised HL usage such as vernacular speech and idiomatic expressions, in a single class (Nishimura-Parke 2012; Willoughby 2006; Wu 2011; Yamasaki 2010). After teaching a Year 11 JHL class for one term, Nishimura-Parke (2012, p. 133) confessed that

> The information and knowledge of Japanese they have acquired for the last 15 years of their lives is vast, so that there is a difference in proficiency in Japanese among them. Studying in the two-year JHL course will not guarantee to minimise their differences. There is nothing to say that minimising their difference is not the main purpose of this course. At the end of Term 1, however, I felt that the differences in their Japanese proficiency increased rather than being minimised. [Author's translation]

The eligibility criteria for HL students are currently based not on the quality of their HL but on the quantity-oriented definition of HL (Oguro and Moloney 2010). There is a prevailing belief that students who do not meet the criteria for these subjects are inevitably alienated, and inhibited from learning Japanese as a school subject. This is why the current process of determining students' eligibility is inappropriate, since it tends to exclude potential HL students rather than being welcoming and inclusive. Such an efficient, but not effective, procedure based on a narrowly defined eligibility offers a compelling argument for more flexible entry requirements for the HL course.

4.3 Methodological and Pedagogical Obstacles

4.3.1 Psychological Complex

Students learning their HL have integrative or instrumental motivations which are generated by support from family members and from their personal interest in family origins and re-establishing their individual identities. The advantages of learning HL, such as building better oral skills, including fluency and pronunciation, and better comprehension (Potowski 2002) are attractive because of the opportunity to obtain better marks for higher education admission and for future employability (Willoughby 2006). On the other hand, there are several pitfalls, such as lack of knowledge or understanding of the grammar (Potowski 2002), genre, and regis-

ter (Oguro and Moloney 2010). Moreover, students' relative fluency in HL raises teachers' expectations for their correct and appropriate HL use in class, which may reduce their self-esteem and shake their confidence in the target HL (Koshiba and Kurata 2012; Potowski 2002; Scalera 2004; Yamasaki 2010). In the case of JHL, such expectations are often the result of a student's Japanese name or physical appearance, and may give them extra pressure, anxiety and sometimes even embarrassment (Koshiba and Kurata 2012). Such reactions may develop further if their classmates criticise them for taking an easy subject to complete their course and obtain a high mark with minimum effort (Kondo 1997). These may cause students to see the target HL as irrelevant or useless rather than practical, which in turn may discourage them from selecting it as a school subject (Willoughby 2006). Hornberger and Wang warn that these disadvantages may cause apprehension of being observed as incompetent in HL; this is known as language shyness:

> According to Krashen, HLLs who know the HL fairly well but lack late-acquired aspects of language (e.g., politeness, social class markers) tend to avoid interaction with native speakers in the HL to avoid the embarrassment of being corrected or ridiculed. This decreased interaction reduces the input they may receive from more competent speakers, and hence lessens the chance of increased proficiency. (Hornberger and Wang 2008, p. 24)

Carreira and Kagan (2011) and Yamasaki (2010) express the concern that JHL students are sometimes expected by their JHL teachers to disconnect their inherited and cultivated knowledge of Japanese language from the elements introduced in class, where variations in individual vernaculars and personalised expressions are often challenged by standard and academic Japanese forms. This creates a situation where HL becomes ambiguous for teachers as well as for individual speakers or learners, since ideas and beliefs about a given HL are not necessarily shared (Yamasaki 2010). It is important for teachers to understand, and explain to their students, that HL learners' language proficiency consists of two contrasting elements: highly developed natural communicative proficiency and underdeveloped cognitive/academic language proficiency (Cummins 1980). There may be improvement in the latter skills, but this does not necessarily coincide with their learning purpose of maintaining or developing their HL skills for use with family and friends (Willoughby 2006). This purpose should not be undervalued, but is not considered in the current debate about HL education.

4.3.2 Target Context

Disagreement about the selection of topics and themes for JHL education can create another obstacle: whether topics and themes should be viewed from Japanese or Australian perspectives. A discussion of this requires a comparison of JHL with the JSL Course. WACE in JSL Stage 2 concentrates on the use of the Japanese language primarily in the Australian context, while in JSL Stage 3 the perspective shifts to the context of Japan. It makes sense that the students' Japanese language learning in Australia should be done by comparing and contrasting the difference between Japan and Australia, moving from issues which are familiar and customised

(Australian contexts) to less familiar aspects (Japanese contexts). The Board of Studies NSW explicitly defines the primary purpose of the course as providing students 'with opportunities to become more proficient and literate in Japanese in an expanding range of contexts' (2010b, p. 32). Such a flexible statement may be interpreted positively as teachers can choose to base their teaching on a particular context; but, at the same time there can be negative consequences of leaving this decision to the individual teacher who is dealing with divergent HL abilities and levels in the one class. Even if HL students have high oral skills, this does not necessarily indicate that their HL education covers appropriate target backgrounds, which currently focus solely on Japanese situations rather than including elements of both cultures.

The current JHL course at HSC level allows individual teachers to determine topics and themes in either Japanese or Australian contexts. This versatility creates more teacher responsibility in the course, and may be associated directly with students' HSC outcomes. Although this flexibility might be due to the one of the purposes of the HSC study, 'to provide a flexible structure within which students can prepare for: further education and training—employment—full and active participation as citizens' (Board of Studies New South Wales 2010b, p. 4), there is no equivalent provision for JHL. The Board of Studies NSW's guidelines for JHL only suggest resources, and do not provide sufficient guidance for JHL teachers to select topics and themes from the wide range possible.

4.4 Lack of Human and Material Resources

4.4.1 Teacher Recruitment

The broad differences between students with linguistic and cultural knowledge backgrounds are a cause of concern, and teachers play a vital role in catering for groups of students with an extensive range of the target HL abilities. While it is important to separate HL education from traditional LOTE education (see, for example, Kagan and Dillon 2009), there are in reality concerns about teachers' enlarged responsibilities in two interrelated areas: limitations to their ability and availability, and insufficient pedagogical materials and teaching resources.

HL teaching demands a wide range of tasks and creativity, and requires both short- and long-term lesson planning and the versatility to cope with the variations in students' linguistic competence. It is not unusual to see that some students are more fluent in the target HL, and this may make teachers with limited target HL linguistic capacity feel uneasy (Hornberger and Wang 2008). The Board of Studies NSW explicitly states that '[u]sing Japanese as the primary medium of instruction will maximise these learning opportunities in the classroom' (2010b, p. 32). This sounds simple, but expects potential JHL teachers to have an exceptionally high standard of Japanese language to ensure successful student outcomes. It is not unusual for Japanese–English bilingual and experienced teachers in JSL in NSW to express great concern about teaching JHL after checking the HSC in JHL curricu-

lum and examination papers (Nishimura-Parke, personal communication December 12, 2012). Teachers' failure to meet ideal high standards may result in HL classes where students sometimes show low motivation or disrespect for their teachers, and may devalue the significance of HL learning and the status of the teachers in the school (Hsieh and Field 2011; Willoughby 2006). This also has consequences for the current unstable occupational status of HL teachers. Many HL teachers in many countries are not employed full-time and may not be equipped with expertise in specific HL teaching; some are concerned about the insecurity of their teaching positions and the lack of official recognition given to HL in the schools (Wu 2011). This tangled situation may narrow JHL teachers' availability and conditions; that is, only those who have enough experience in teaching Japanese at higher levels, or who are native speakers of Japanese or have an extremely high level of competence, are competent to teach JHL; but it is not practical to limit HL teachers only to this group. In addition, the requirement for HL teachers to teach in another subject area as well has drawn attention in Canada (Duff 2008), and this also applies to the Australian context. Since it is possible that, with low enrolments, there may be a single HL class, HL teachers might well be expected to teach or coordinate an additional subject. There is a pressing need for the recruitment and professional development of suitably skilled teachers in HL education (Hsieh and Field 2011). At the same time, the insufficiency of expert trainers to train the recruited teachers is problematic in the Australian context. This situation should be urgently researched and improved in order to establish the WACE JHL course.

4.4.2 Professional and Resource Development

There is a shortage of both potential JHL teachers and opportunities for their training, and JHL pedagogy is extremely under-developed (Nishimura-Parke, personal communication December 12, 2012). Teachers generally refer to textbooks when designing their curricula (Wu 2011, p. 68), so it is essential to provide high-quality textbooks and other resources, especially when aiming to address the characteristic weaknesses of JHL learning. While most second language courses are concerned with the four micro skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in the target language (the first two and last two skills are interdependent), the HL curriculum should focus primarily on the advancement of reading and writing skills, on the assumption that while some students may believe they have acquired high reading skills (Matsunaga 2003), nearly all believe that they have already attained a high level of oracy (Carreira and Kagan 2011; Douglas 2005; Kagan 2005; Nishimura-Parke 2012; Potowski 2002). Douglas's (2005) and Oguro and Moloney's (2010) studies exhibit students' weaknesses in HL speaking (as well as reading and writing), which can be interpreted as an indicator of their limited communication skills. In studying JHL, students should be challenged to upgrade their Japanese literacy skills, and especially to advance their Kanji reading and writing abilities (Douglas 2008). The Heritage Japanese Stage 6 Character List published by the Board of Studies New South Wales (2010a) contains a total of 507 Kanji characters as well

as 194 vocabulary examples, which students are expected to recognise and use by the end of the course. Nor should the issue of the target vocabulary in the course be overlooked. In Japanese only certain words, or certain parts of them, can be written in Kanji. A target vocabulary has been introduced in HL classes in NSW, but this may expand radically in response to the students' broad HL backgrounds. In fact, the quality and quantity of the newly introduced vocabulary is influenced by the topics and themes associated with the course, which the individual teachers select from the five issues: young people and their relationships, traditions and values in a contemporary society, the changing nature of work, the individual as a global citizen, and Japanese identity in the international context (Board of Studies New South Wales 2010b, p. 16). The choice of the particular topics and themes can be unlimited, depending on how the individual teacher interprets such broad issues; and the lack of specificity may result in an inappropriate focal point, especially in a JHL class of students with a wide range of ability and proficiency.

A nation-wide availability of approved textbooks would support teaching to particular JHL target levels, and standardised approaches to specific topics and themes. Without this foundation, it seems impossible for teachers to realise the vision that 'teaching is a thinking activity and teachers are people who construct their personal ways of teaching' (Borg 2003). The availability of appropriately standardised resources may reduce the difficulties associated with training teachers and enable them to pinpoint more specific content and curriculum design in the HL course.

5 Implications

In order to boost the legitimacy of JHL as a secondary subject, some strategies will be suggested here. One is for JHL extra credit to be graded in the HSC curriculum (de Kretser and Spence-Brown 2010). This would be similar to the current incentive scheme whereby some universities offer Year 12 students extra points towards their tertiary admission rank if they take one (or more) second languages at high school. In such a scheme, 10% of the students' final scaled scores in their selected language subjects, including HL courses, would be added to their scores and counted for university admission. The introduction of this scheme would help increase official recognition of JHL courses in all Australian states. The scheme would be strengthened further if JHL courses were included in the tertiary sector as well. Academic research into a smooth transition between the two educational sectors in Australia has been urged since the 1950s (Hillman 2005); but despite this, mechanisms for making second or foreign language learning systems continuous across the interface of these sectors have been insufficient. It is, however, true that this field has gradually been gaining attention in recent literature: as, for example, in the work of Fielding and Stott (2012). It may be timely for HL to boost its value and its legitimacy in the academy and society, in the context of the discussion about the continuity of second or foreign language education over the secondary–higher education interface. This debate will lead to further investigation into the provision of HL courses in universities in Australia, or the lack thereof.

As mentioned earlier, parents have a strong influence on secondary school students' decisions about subject selection, and this is a strong factor in students' choice of an HL course (Douglas 2005). Most parents wish their children to maintain their HL through official schooling, but this is often hampered. A common complaint is that financial costs are the primary consideration in educational policies, while individual values such as family culture tend to receive little consideration or be ignored, weakening the legitimacy of JHL as a core secondary educational course. HL learning may be seen as unattractive or as preserving a disappearing language, as opposed to being an invaluable opportunity for students to contribute to Australia's multicultural society. The focus, therefore, should be on the value of HL education nation-wide, which requires the same strategies to be applied to each state. In the case of WA, the SCSA's policies and individual school programs should operate together in designing the HL program. The establishment of HL programs in the four main Asian languages may be more achievable if it is initiated together with European languages, such as Italian, the main second language at many catholic schools, and French, which was introduced in many schools in 1950 and still remains popular. This seems to be the practical first step in establishing the JHL programme for WACE.

Another factor is the criteria for students' eligibility for JHL courses that are embedded in school curriculum policies. It is vital to define HL education and its learners, and to establish in educators a common understanding of the various types of HL learners. For example, a foreign language introduced in a school setting may not always be the same as the HL of students who are exposed to the same language at home; and HL learning to maintain and preserve culture and language within indigenous communities in Australia, for example, is not the same as target language education in the Australian school context, which turns into second or foreign language education. Students' individual proficiency in language studies should be the focus of instruction (Kelleher 2010), and educational authorities such as the SCSA should have a common concept which acknowledges that HL learners are different from each other and cannot be measured by a single criterion.

Students' acceptance for the HL course can be the beginning of another issue. The current course in NSW is hampered by the challenge of conducting classes for students with inconsistent JHL abilities. The degree of linguistic and cultural expertise required for JHL is located somewhere between JSL Stage 3 and JBS. On the one hand, catering for students with Japanese proficiency and cultural knowledge prior to entering the course may position the JHL course closer to the JBS than JSL, but the quantity and quality of the elements introduced in the JHL course are seen as far less than those of JBS. On the other hand, there is a clear distinction between JSL Stage 3 and JHL learning. Currently students are abandoning their JHL studies, or are being merged into one category in one JBS class. One solution could be to set up several different tracks depending on levels and stages, such as JHL Stage 1 and 2 in Year 11, and JHL Stage 1 and 2 in Year 12. To address the concern about insufficient numbers enrolling in the courses, the online teaching/learning mode can be used as an alternative or support to the conventional face-to-face approach (de Kretser and Spence-Brown 2010). Although the online HL learning approach and environment has been insufficiently investigated, several studies, including those of

Kono (2006), Lee (2006) and Zhang (2005), indicate its potentials and effectiveness for future strategies. In addition, the allocation of students to a particular course level should be decided more carefully, and by multiple approaches. Assessment of HL ability by a placement test is highly recommended (Fielding and Stott 2012), and students' academic portfolios as well as their previous and current personal exposure to JHL should be taken into account in the entry assessment.

Because HL learning does not exist in isolation, as Hornberger and Wang highlight in their research, effective pedagogies for HL classes can be framed by investigation of the ecological system surrounding 'these individuals, their interactions with the people around them, and their dynamic interface with the social, educational, cultural, economic, and political institutions' (2008, p. 6). Various methodological and pedagogical obstacles need to be overcome if a JHL programme is to be established in secondary education in WA. Networking could be a vital initiative; especially influential is the group in charge of curriculum and course design in the teachers' association. In the case of WACE, it is necessary to involve not only the Consulate General of Japan in Perth but also the SCSA in the working party, through information exchange sessions or seminars. Hornberger and Wang (2008, p. 15) contend that 'language educators, language planners, and language users must make concerted efforts to address these issues.' In reality, however, the presence of the SCSA in the working party has been disregarded, despite the fact that, as policy stakeholders, they have the authority to influence the establishment of a JHL program. Involvement of the SCSA in the working part may also create opportunities for teachers to exchange opinions with representatives from that body, and especially with those who produce the JHL examinations for tertiary education entry. Cultural knowledge of the target HL should be given an equal weighting with high linguistic ability as a teaching goal, when determining how the course is constructed. In terms of JHL, for example, the students' cultural awareness can be seen as an obstacle because their acculturated awareness and unique perceptions may not meet the parameters of the curriculum, which is based on either Japanese or Australian contexts depending on the stage. Networking discussions with the SCSA will help to clarify the selection of target context: Australian, or Japanese, or a combination.

Another factor affecting the legitimacy of HL in secondary schools is teacher recruitment and professional and resource development, especially in terms of the limitations of teachers' availability and ability, and insufficient pedagogical materials and teaching resources. The discipline of HL demands teachers' devotion and commitment to their teaching performance along with a high level of proficiency and linguistic ability in the target language. This limits the pool of potential teachers. Wu (2011) suggests that official recognition, such as a specific certificate, would be a prospective strategy to promote the value and status of teachers in HL. Because of the demand for a high level of JHL linguistic ability, including knowledge and the appropriate use of varieties such as register, native teachers of Japanese who have already been coordinating classes for JSL or JBS courses are often discussed as potential JHL teachers. Register can be divided into two categories, academic and everyday (Gibbons 1999). Since the academic register has a more significant link

with literacy development than the everyday register (Gibbons and Lascar 1998), HL teachers should not be oversensitive about focusing on it and teaching it in their HL classes, despite criticism about their extensive use of it with students who are neither confident in it nor positive about it. First, however, teachers should tell their students that their underdeveloped literacy skills are due to their limited exposure to academic Japanese (Douglas 2008).

It is also vital to outline not only the minimum but also the maximum levels of vocabulary items and target language usage. JHL in HSC provides guidelines for the target Kanji, and for grammar and structures, in order to clarify the minimum targets for students to achieve by the end of the course, which is the same academic provision as is present in JSL and other second or foreign language subjects in general. However, the future JHL course, which is likely to broaden its target areas, requires more specifically explained targets, especially the maximum level of academic and formal language use. The explicit line of course curriculum—how broadly JHL study should be undertaken by students—also enables JHL teachers to identify appropriate linguistic and sociocultural knowledge or abilities, including enacted goals and actual goals as well as anticipated outcomes and actual outcomes (Hornberger 2005). This approach may enhance the legitimacy and significance of the production of authorised textbooks and resources, including explicitly targeting and structuring the teaching areas and methodology of JHL, which can benefit teachers in all states of Australia. If individual teachers are to be flexible and use their judgement to meet classroom demands, clear foundations of the course must be established, and reliable resources must be available. In addition, active communication among teachers should be encouraged to reduce the pedagogical and methodological obstacles which they may encounter in practice (Nishimura-Parke, personal communication December 12, 2012). To put all these suggestions into practice requires a working party with the educational policy stakeholder, which is the SCSA.

6 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to inform debates on strategies for developing JHL in WA by shedding light on the four primary issues impacting on JHL curriculum programming and its recognition as a legitimate secondary school subject. Implementation of these strategies, however, will not automatically enforce the establishment of a sound JHL programme in WA in the near future. Achievement of this goal requires focus on two separate aspects: the development of sound and pragmatic strategies for establishing the JHL programme in WA, and the offering of a high quality HL as a school subject. So far the latter seems to be receiving a great deal of attention, but no course can be established without exploring the former. The success of the course can only be brought about within the mainstream school curriculum, so that students perceive that their school values the target HL (Tse 1998); therefore, the SCSA will play a vital role in establishing JHL in WACE. If the SCSA is to collabo-

rate in the local working party, which currently comprises parents, the Consulate General of Japan in Perth, Japanese language school teachers and university lecturers, it is necessary to separate each member's personal attachment to JHL from the aim of finding effective solutions to founding the program. Parents and Japanese language teachers, especially those with children with JHL, have shown enthusiastic support for JHL and the program, and have indicated a preference for adapting the NSW HSC programme. Because the educational settings in NSW differ from those in WA, practical and informative goals at divided stages based on the specific WA background should be the aim. The implementation of this proposal can be considered not only as a challenge in programme creation, but also a challenge to the capacity of the current educational system in the state.

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A Place for Second Generation Japanese Speaking Children in Perth: Can they Maintain Japanese as a Community Language?

Kyoko Kawasaki

Abstract Community languages and multiculturalism were embraced by Australia's first national language policy, but with the rise of the new agenda in industry and economic development, both have been pushed aside and monolingual ideology is reasserting its dominance. In this chapter I examine the impact of language policies at different levels on the position of the Japanese language as a community language in Perth, Western Australia. I examine the views of family and community toward language maintenance and argue that monolingual ideology is blocking the effort to maintain language diversity in the family and the community. If the spirit of multiculturalism that recognises and values differences is conceived, understood, and practised first in the family and then in the community, it will offer a new way to language maintenance.

Keywords Immigrants · Community language · Language shift · Language policy · Multilingualism · Monolingualism

1 Introduction

In this globalised era, transnational migration is ever vigorous and growing. Australia has a long history of taking in refugees, and has policies of multiculturalism. Fishman (1991) praises Australia's languages policies for their comprehensive nature. However, multiculturalism and multilingualism have been pushed aside by more pragmatic policies focusing on economy and security, and funding for language teaching is declining (Clyne 2008; Liddicoat 2002; Lo Bianco 2005). According to the census in 2011, 25 % of people in Australia were born overseas, 16 % came from countries where English is not the first language, and 19 % speak a language other than English (LOTE) at home. In a country such as Australia where one language dominates the society officially and practically, the languages of immigrants are facing the effects of a language shift to the dominant language. Language shift (LS) can be a shift in the balance between the two languages, or the complete replacement of one language by another (Kipp et al. 1995, p. 115). Although the

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language will survive in the home country, it will be a loss to the family, to the ethnic community, and the society if it is not transmitted to the next generation.

Fishman (1970) reports that language shift usually takes three generations, but that immigrant languages in Australia are not maintained inter-generationally and are unlikely to be transmitted beyond the second generation, making the country 'the graveyard of dozens upon dozens of its immigrant languages' (Fishman 1991, p. 278). Clyne (1982) also notes a very high rate of LS in the second generation in Australia, especially in families of mixed marriage. It is, indeed, the reality of Japanese families in Australia. Although Japanese is a language of economic and political significance for Australia, it does not have a strong presence here as a spoken language. Among the many languages spoken in Australia, immigrant languages are distinguished from English and indigenous languages and called 'community languages'. This chapter examines how the Japanese language is managed as a community language in Australia.

2 Japanese as a Community Language

Since the publication of *The teaching of Asian Languages and Cultures in Australia* (Commonwealth Advisory Committee 1970), many recommendations and attempts have been made to teach Asian languages more widely. Japanese has been on the list of the priority languages from the beginning, and is now the most widely taught language. However, none of the language education projects initiated by the government, such as the National Asian Languages and Studies for Australian Schools (NALSAS), includes support for the teaching of Japanese as a community language. Moreover, the Australian education system is now excluding the children of immigrants from language courses if they have learned the language at home. Although the school is not the main player in language maintenance (Baldauf 2005; Fishman 1991), it still has an important role (Baldauf 2005; Clyne 2001), especially if people of the same ethnic group do not live in close proximity. Although the number of Japanese speakers is growing faster in Perth than in Sydney, the biggest and most multicultural city in Australia, there is no area or suburb that is densely populated with Japanese speakers that allows them to interact with each other daily. The need for teaching Japanese as a community language is increasing as the number of immigrants grows, and many families, especially exogamous families, are concerned about language shift in the second generation. Language maintenance starts in the family, and the support of the minority community is crucial (Fishman 1990, 1991).

Now that LS is being observed in the first generation (Clyne 1982; Fishman 1991; Oriyama 2010), efforts are required of both the ethnic and the wider community to maintain the language. Is it possible for the second generation to inherit their cultural or linguistic heritage if the language is not spoken at home? How are they situated in the multicultural society of Australia? Can they claim a place as the ones

who will inherit the language? In an attempt to answer these questions, this chapter takes the Japanese community in Perth as a case study to examine how and to what extent the government, the ethnic community and the family are transmitting the language to the second generation to achieve a multicultural and multilingual society, from the perspectives of policy making and social inclusion. Whether it is a family or a nation, in the space where people meet and interact speakers make choices about their language use, and those choices become the language policy of the domain of the language behaviour (Fishman 1972; Lo Bianco 1990; Spolsky 2004, 2007). Such policies may not be explicitly stated but they are implied, and they influence the actions of the participants in the domain.

Although the interest of this study lies in the transmission of a community language to the second generation, the term 'heritage language' will be avoided (see Hasegawa, Chapter, "Towards the Establishment of a WACE Examination in Japanese as a Heritage Language: Critical Perspectives" of this volume for a definition of the term). 'Heritage language' has been used in North America in recent years to refer to immigrant as well as indigenous languages. The term 'heritage' in Australia was traditionally used to refer to Indigenous cultures, and does not refer to immigrant languages. Wiley (2005, p. 223) encapsulates the differences between community language and heritage language as 'the former having connection with the living language and the later seeking to reconnect.' Australia's immigrant languages are living. Although a language is lost from one family, it lives in another family; and more families who speak the language will come as new immigrants. Even if not, the same language and culture will live in the home countries. This is not the case with many Aboriginal languages which are facing death despite efforts to maintain them and retain their connection to their cultural roots. However, in recent years, the term 'heritage language' has been used in the context of teaching Asian languages at secondary school. New South Wales (NSW), the state which holds the biggest number of Asian language learners, including immigrants' children, started a heritage language course in 2011 for speakers of Chinese (Mandarin), Indonesian, Korean, and Japanese. This is the first time the term has been officially used to refer to immigrant languages in Australia. It differentiates between language learners with relevant linguistic and cultural backgrounds (e.g. parents speaking the language the child studies) and those who have no such background. This need is especially strong in Year 11–12 Certificate courses, which determine the results for tertiary education entrance (see Zhang and Gong, Chapter, "The Retention of Year 11/12 Chinese in Australian Schools: A Relevance Theory Perspective" of this volume, for the detailed process and politics of course choices). In other contexts, including the education system, the term 'heritage language' is not used; instead, 'community language', 'Indigenous language' or 'bilingual education' (English and an Indigenous language or English and a community language at school) is used. To reflect the tradition and the current situation, this paper uses 'community language' in general, and 'heritage language' to refer to the specific language course in the secondary education system.

Table 1 Number of Japanese nationals and number of people who speak Japanese at home

	2011		2006	
	Japanese Nationals Permanent residents	People speaking Japanese at home	Japanese Nationals Permanent residents	People speaking Japanese at home
Australia	74,679(42,131/56%)	43,690	59,285(28,065/47%)	35,111
Sydney	29,464 (16,212/55%)	12,813	23,573 (11,894/46%)	11,244
Perth	7,248 (3463/47%)	4,045	4,610 (2270/46%)	3,132

3 Japanese Communities in Perth

Perth in Western Australia is often called the most isolated city in the world because of its geographical position. It has no large immigrant communities and there are few established ethnic schools or community language schools. However, due to the resources boom and the global transnational trend of movement between countries, the number of immigrants from Asian countries is rapidly increasing.

Australia has the third largest population of Japanese nationals who are registered with Japanese government offices, including permanent residents and sojourners whose period of stay exceeds 3 months. Since 2001, the population has increased from 41,309 to 74,679 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2012), an 80% increase in 10 years. The population of Japanese nationals in Perth has increased from 2,542 to 6,121 in the same period. Although its share is less than 10% and its population is only 20% that of Sydney, the recent increase is significant, and the actual increase in 2011 was greater in Perth (1,127) than in Sydney (681) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2012). With the growth of population, interest in language maintenance has grown too. It is timely to observe what the families and communities are doing for language maintenance in a growing city such as Perth.

Table 1 outlines the number of people whose nationality is Japanese (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2007, pp. 16–17; 2012, pp. 16–17), and the number of people who speak the Japanese language in the whole of Australia, in Sydney, and in Perth (id n. d.) in the last 2 census years. The column for the Japanese nationals includes the number of permanent residents and their percentage against the whole population of the Japanese nationals. The main reason that the number of Japanese nationals outnumbers the number of people who speak Japanese is that the former includes those who do not speak Japanese at home (e.g. those who are married to non-Japanese speakers, and the new generation born with Japanese nationality but who do not speak Japanese at home). Japanese people who are in exogamous families do not always speak Japanese at home although they use the language outside the home.

The census data indicate that the number of Japanese adult female speakers is twice as great as that of adult male speakers, from which we can infer that the number of Japanese women in exogamous relationships is large. Recent researchers have noted that Japanese women's marriage migration to Australia is increasing (e.g. Hamano 2011; Takeda and Matthews 2009). These women either meet their husbands in Japan and move to Australia, or come to Australia in search of an ideal

lifestyle (Hamano 2011), marry out of their ethnic group and stay in Australia. Although those contemporary marriage migrants are passionate about teaching Japanese language and culture (Takeda and Mathews 2009), mixed marriage is a major obstacle for language maintenance (Pauwels 1984, 2005).

A neighbourhood where a group with the same ethnicity lives together will provide a speech community with favourable conditions for language maintenance without the pressure of the dominant language (Fishman 1991; Kipp et al. 1995). As the city with the fifth largest population of Japanese nationals in the world, Sydney has a geographical area with a dense population of Japanese speakers where the language is used in institutional activities (Oriyama 2010). Perth has no such community per se, no physical space where Japanese people live together and interact with each other, or have occasion to meet together, although the population is growing. Situated in the same country and under the same national policies, Japanese communities in Perth and Sydney share similar challenges, but under the Western Australian state policies and education system, and with their different demography, the community in Perth faces distinct challenges.

4 Language Shift and Maintenance

Language shift is a shift from one language to another that takes place slowly and cumulatively (Fishman 1991). Kipp et al. (1995) describe both language shift and language maintenance as a behaviour of a community, of a group, or of an individual. However, to reverse the shift, or to stop it and maintain one language requires an effort. Mesthrie (1999, p. 42) defines language maintenance as 'the continuing use of a language in the face of competition from a regionally and socially powerful or numerically stronger language'. In countries such as the United States and Australia, where English is the only official language among many immigrant languages, the power and mobility of English is obvious and a minority language can be easily taken over. Studies of immigrant languages in the States indicate that these minority languages are not maintained in the second generation (Krashen 2000; Peyton et al. 2001). The situation is the same in the Australian context (Clyne 1982; Fishman 1991). Fishman (1990, 1991) uses the term 'reversing language shift' (RLS) to refer to the efforts and activities of minorities to improve their language status—more precisely, to create 'the link to intergenerational continuity' (1990, p. 18). He argues that without 'intergenerational mother tongue transmission' (1991, p. 113), language maintenance cannot be achieved.

Many studies have attempted to identify factors that have an impact on language maintenance or shift. Clyne (1982, p. 27) adopted Haugen's (1971, 1979) notion of 'language ecology' to capture the languages of the whole human environment, and examined the factors influencing language maintenance and shift given by Kloss (1966) in the Australian context. Among these, the factors that are relevant to the Japanese community in Australia are *Sprachinsel*—linguistic enclaves—where 80% of the residents speak the same minority language; the educational level of

the parents; numerical strength; linguistic and cultural similarity; the attitude of the majority to the language or group; and sociocultural characteristics (Clyne 1982). These factors are helpful indicators to understand the situation of a community language, but do not predict its future (Kipp et al. 1995). More recent works focus on psychological and behavioural aspects of the speakers, such as identity (He 2008; Kondo 1997; Oriyama 2010), parental attitudes (Li 2006), types of encouragement (Guardado 2002), and motivation (Zhang 2010; Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe 2009). These studies all stress the importance of the role of families in handing down a community language to the second generation.

As the home is the last domain where a community language can persist (Bettoni 1981; Clyne 1982), domain is an important concept in discussions of LS. It is 'the contextualised sphere, or total interactional context of the communication' (Clyne 1982, p. 57), and a speaker can identify and differentiate it from context of situation in which specific act of speech is used (Fishman 1990, p. 69). Sociocultural institutions or social space (Spolsky 2007) such as the family, the school, the club, the church, and the workplace, are examples of domains. Domain analysis can reveal the types of social interaction in which LS occurs (Fishman 1990). In each domain, specific role relationships are observed, whether of mother and child or husband and wife in a family, teacher and pupil in a school, or employer and manager in a workplace. The language use of the speakers varies depending on their role, situation, and domain.

Since each domain has its own language policy (Spolsky 2007, 2012), the analysis of language policy is as important as analysis of domain. Spolsky (2004, 2007) identifies three components: practices, beliefs and management. Practices are what the speakers actually do in a particular domain: as Spolsky (2007, p. 3) puts it, 'this is the real policy although participants may be reluctant to admit it'. Beliefs, the second component, are the speakers' views toward the language. Among those views about language, 'the values assigned to the varieties and features' (2007, p. 4) are most influential in practices and language maintenance. The third component, language management, is intentional and observable efforts to maintain a language or to decide when to use what language. These components are interrelated. In relation to LS happening in an immigrant family, environments in which children acquire their language practices, beliefs such as 'Japanese must speak Japanese' or 'English is more important than Japanese', and the effort of language maintenance are all interrelated and create a language policy at each domain.

Among many empirical studies of language shift and language maintenance, Fishman (1990, 1991) provides a theoretical model of Reversing Language Shift (RSL) and introduces the notion of 'Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale' that measures the status of the language and how well it is linked inter-generationally. In this scale, the higher the rate of disruption, the higher the danger in terms of language loss. On a scale of 1–8, 8–5 are considered to be on the weak side of RSL, mainly concerned with family and community efforts. They require urgent attention but do not necessarily involve the government or policy-makers. Stage 8 is the weakest stage, where no native speakers of the language are available but an effort

to revise the language is observable. Stage 7 is the stage where speakers of a language are all old and past child bearing age: in other words, people of childbearing age no longer speak the language. The main goal of this stage is to establish the link between the old generation and the young generation.

The stage that is crucial to Australian immigrant families is Stage 6. This is the stage that re-establishes the intergenerational link; if this is successful, a language can thrive without going through the higher stages (Fishman 1991). In order to succeed it requires a demographic concentration that enables the young generation to discuss matters of formality and technicality beyond daily family business, and there must be interfamily communications in the neighbourhood. However, the family remains at the core, providing support and protection and resisting outside pressures and influences. With the family at the core, the neighbourhood and the community must play the central role in RSL efforts.

Stage 5 involves literacy, which is a big obstacle especially for languages with scripts different from Roman alphabets. Literacy skills enable the community to form ties and members to interact in various situations including formal ones. Although it involves a form of schooling, the main players are still the family and community. At this stage, programs are minimal and do not require government funding. Stages 4–1 are on the strong side, involving the education system, government, and media—people and institutions situated outside the linguistic community. Stage 4 involves formal education, represented by two types of school (Fishman 1991). One is funded by the specific linguistic community and taught solely in the community language to replace compulsory education. The other is funded by the government and provides some education in the community language. However, schooling in a community language is possible only after intergenerational language transmission. Even with schooling in the community language, the key elements in RLS are the 'family–home–neighbourhood–community nexus' (Fishman 1991, p. 103). Stage 3 is the use of the language in the workforce outside the neighbourhood, involving speakers of other languages. Although language use in the workforce is unlikely to support intergenerational transmission of the language (Clyne 2001), the greater the success of the industry, the more likely that the community or the ethnic group will gain the power (political or economic) to support RSL efforts.

Fishman considers RSL movements reaching stages 2 and 1 to be successful, because it means the movement is influencing the most powerful and central institutions. Stage 2 is the stage influencing government services and local and national media. Stage 1 represents the attainment of status as a recognised 'co-language of the region' (Fishman 1991, p. 107). At this stage, language is used in the higher education system, the government and the workforce. The presence of a community language in public spheres such as government, schools, universities, workplaces and media can work in favour of the language, but mere presence is not enough. In Australia, public notices are written in many languages. Although Clyne (2001) points out that media are not making much impact in Australia, with 75 radio stations broadcasting in community languages (p. 377) and 117 community language newspapers (p. 383), he stresses the importance of the role of TV, as the presence

of a language in the public sphere gives the language legitimacy for its speakers to use it in the presence of non-speakers. This is what minority communities in Australia need for RLS: a situation where minority language speakers can speak without apology or criticism. This will encourage and foster intergenerational transmission.

5 Social Inclusion and Multilingualism

Since its appearance in the 1990s, the concept of social inclusion/exclusion is mainly concerned with poverty and is used to discuss its causes. Poverty is now understood as an outcome of unequal distribution of resources and opportunities, and exclusion is a 'relational process of declining participation, solidarity and access' (Silver and Miller 2002). While European Union indicators are all concerned with income and unemployment, there are exclusions and disadvantages other than poverty in society. Language use is one of them. As long as there has been a history of research into the relationships between language and disadvantage, linguists have been criticising the restriction of discussions of social inclusion and exclusion to the socioeconomic sphere, ignoring cultural inclusion (Clyne 2008; Otsuji and Pennycook 2011; Piller 2012; Piller and Takahashi 2011). Clyne argues that

> Not only refugees and migrants, but also the aged, disabled, deaf or blind, for instance, all of whom are likely to be socially excluded in some ways, appear to be covered on the agenda only if they are poor, unemployed or homeless. (Clyne 2008, paragraph 3)

Otsuji and Pennycook (2011) criticise the term 'social inclusion' itself, as the term 'inclusion' assumes a 'mainstream' and implies that minorities should be integrated into the mainstream. They warn that promoting multilingualism with this mindset has a risk of promoting plural monolingualism that may result in a form of social exclusion. Plural monolingualism (Heller 2007) or elite multilingualism (Otsuji and Pennycook 2011) expects one speaker to be a native speaker of one or more languages: that is, to be able to speak that language perfectly in all areas of communication. A variation that deviates from the standard, or has a differing degree of competency, is dismissed. This can lead to a form of social exclusion.

A multilingual society should allow multilingual people to make contributions to the society by accepting (including) different forms of languages and different degrees of proficiency as well as different cultural values. Han (2011, p. 385) views multilingualism as 'a cluster of ideologies that recognises and validates multilingual individuals with diverse forms, degrees and compositions of proficiency in their linguistic repertoires, and further supports them to maintain and develop their competencies as they need and/or desire'. This statement covers four key issues relevant to multilingualism. Firstly, multilingualism accepts speakers of different languages and ideologies. Secondly, it does not discriminate between any varieties (standard or dialect). Thirdly, it accepts speakers with different degrees of proficiency as valid speakers. This is the key issue that differentiates multilingualism from plural monolingualism. Finally, it encourages not only the maintenance but also the development of the languages spoken by various individuals.

6 National Language Policies (NPL)

In Fishman's model of RLS, central governmental activity, together with higher education, national media, and a work sphere that involves the speakers of the mainstream language, is the most advanced and fully controlled stage for language establishment (Stage 1). Kipp et al. (1995, p. 124) indicate that the 'policy of the host community toward community languages' is one of the key factors influencing immigrants' language maintenance. This section reviews policies that have or have had some impact on the maintenance of Japanese as a community language.

The National Policy on Languages (NPL) (Lo Bianco 1987) was released and received bipartisan support in parliament in 1987, after a 3-year-long research and consultation project. It was inclined to social justice (Clyne 2008) with a focus on status planning for languages (Lo Bianco 1990) that would include everyone's language in Australian society.

Reflecting this status statement, the Teaching and Learning Policy had three components: English for all, support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, and a language other than English for all. 'A language other than English for all' is the major concern here. This was not only about teaching a second language for practical purposes, but was also about language maintenance and cultural understanding, as the policy promoted the teaching of community languages as mother tongue maintenance and also as second languages. It was a policy of social inclusion and multilingualism. Everyone in Australia was to be involved in at least two languages: the mother tongue and a second language; one of these was to be English. Piller (2012) identifies two approaches in research regarding multilingualism and social inclusion: one that promotes linguistic assimilation to provide greater opportunities, and the other that promotes recognition of minority languages and provision of multilingualism in order for social inclusion to be achieved. The NPL took both approaches without giving priority to either.

The policy should have had a significant impact on the multicultural society of Australia, but it did not. It was replaced by the Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) in a mere 4 years. Ingram (2000) suggests that limited attention to literacy skills and the role of language skills for industry and economic development in NPL created concerns that eventually led to the development of ALLP.

ALLP, issued in 1991, is still the current official national language policy. Although it addresses issues of community languages under the section of Language Other than English, its mention is brief, and the section is mainly concerned with second language education for pragmatic purposes. The only mention of community language in ALLP concerns recommendations on the Commonwealth-run Ethnic School Program, which started in 1981 but was handed down to each state soon after its establishment and absorbed by a broader language program (Priority Languages School Program) in 2002. The disappearance of a program solely dedicated to community languages meant that it became more difficult to obtain funding to grow or maintain community language programs, and indicates the Commonwealth government's disinterest in the issue (Baldauf 2005).

The decline of interest in community languages has coincided with a backlash against multiculturalism. Multiculturalism and multilingualism have been criticised for encouraging immigrants to retreat into ethnic communities (Taylor 2012), or 'a series of ghettos' (Nederveen Pieterse 2004, p. 36) and for dividing society (Nagle 2009). In response to such criticism, cross-cultural dialogue or interculturalism emerged. The philosophy of interculturalism advocates dialogue between different cultures and intercultural communication. This seems to be a positive move; however, interculturalism puts greater emphasis on integration than on accepting diversity (Taylor 2012). Pushed by a call for a unified identity (Nagle 2009), policy-makers seized upon the discourse of integration and abandoned the idea of diversity.

Most recently, the Australian government released the *Australia in the Asian Century* White Paper, which states, 'All students will have access to at least one priority Asian language' (Australia in the Asian Century Task Force 2012, p. 22). There is no mention of maintaining the community languages of Asian immigrants. The reason for studying Asian languages, as stated in the White Paper and other initiatives such as National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program, is that Australia needs skills to remove the linguistic and cultural barriers to connecting with neighbouring countries for economic purposes. In order to achieve this, the government determined to

> [w]ork with business and the community to increase understanding of *the benefits of learning a foreign language* and boost demand for language studies. (Australia in the Asian Century Task Force2012, p. 16; emphasis added)

Although the White Paper acknowledges that 'Asia has become an important part of our Australian identity' (99), Asian languages are not regarded as one of the languages of Australia but as 'foreign language'. In the 1970s when the government and society were seeking a way for harmony with diversity, Australia abandoned the term 'foreign language' and adopted 'community language' to embrace multiculturalism. The legitimacy that Asian languages gained in the NPL as community languages of Australia has now been lost. The status of a language is shaped by its label (Mercurio and Scarino 2005), and the label 'foreign' indicates not only that the language exists outside the country, but that the speakers also exist outside the country. Asian languages are seen as no more than a tool for English-speaking Australians to communicate with others in order to enhance Australia's economic capacity. The White Paper does not present a society that is inclusive of community language.

Studies in North America suggest that policy makers and the general public regard language learning as a national and personal gain, but that linguistic diversity creates insecurity in society (Crawford 1992; Cummins 1995; Kondo-Brown 2006). Mainstream English-speaking children are encouraged to learn another language to become bilingual, while immigrant children are 'encouraged to become speakers of English at the expense of their HL (Heritage Language) maintenance or development' (Kondo-Brown 2006, p. 6). The same view is reflected in the Australian government's 2012 White Paper: Asian languages as foreign languages are welcome, but are ignored as community languages. Bourdieu (1977) regards a variety of a language as a form of symbolic capital. The distribution of the capital is unequal,

and its values are decided by those who dominate a particular linguistic market, so that 'a language is worth what those who speak it are worth' (Bourdieu 1977, p. 652). If we follow this argument, the current national policies regarding language can be interpreted as implying that Japanese speakers in Japan have (economic) value to Australia, but Japanese speakers in Australia do not.

7 Policies and Practice in Education System

The federal government's initiative to teach Japanese, and the general public's interest in the language, are evident in the number of students studying the language at school. In 2008 the enrolment in Japanese at primary schools was over 224,000, and at the secondary level over 126,000 (de Krester and Spence-Brown 2010); that is, about 10% of the whole student body. This is a significant number considering the fact that LOTE is not compulsory. Many community language speakers are also enrolled.

In 2011, NSW initiated a heritage language course in Japanese, Chinese, Indonesian, and Korean as one of the courses that would determine the student's graduation and admission to university. This was the result of the increased number of immigrant children who speak those languages (Nishimura-Parke 2012). The number of Japanese immigrants is increasing rapidly, resulting in the presence of children who already have some cultural background and linguistic skills being included in the mainstream school system. The syllabus includes a rationale for the establishment of the course:

> This heritage language course enables students to strengthen their personal connection to their heritage, including a mature and positive appreciation of their heritage language and culture. It will enhance the development of their bilingual and bicultural identity. (Board of Studies New South Wales 2010, p. 6)

The use of terms such as 'heritage' and 'identity' indicates that this course is for ethnic Japanese students. However, another paragraph reads, 'By providing for students from local Japanese communities and the wider Australian community who already have some knowledge of Japanese language and culture …' (Board of Studies New South Wales 2010, p. 6), which implies that the course is for everyone who has 'some knowledge of Japanese language and culture'. It has the same spirit of social inclusion as the community language teaching in NPL: that is, teaching for mother tongue maintenance in the language community and for intercultural understanding for the wider community.

On the surface, it is a good move to offer a course that can provide opportunities to develop higher linguistic skills and deeper cultural understanding than a mainstream course teaching Japanese as a second language, but the effect is to exclude 'heritage speakers' from the mainstream course. Both courses are included among those that determine university placement. The presence in a mainstream course of speakers who have some background (e.g. one or both parents are Japanese, have lived in Japan etc.) creates feelings of 'unfairness' especially if the language is re-

garded as difficult, as Japanese is. This feeling of unfairness is particularly strong in Chinese courses where those who have a Chinese background outnumber those who do not (Zhang and Gong, Chapter, "The Retention of Year 11/12 Chinese in Australian Schools: A Relevance Theory Perspective" of this volume).

To overcome this 'unfairness', eligibility criteria were set up. To be eligible for the mainstream course (called continuers course), the student may not have lived in Japan for more than 3 years and may not have received more than 1 year of formal education in Japanese. The following table outlines the eligibility criteria for the continuers course and the heritage language course (Table 2).

These criteria create another sense of unfairness. One of the criteria for the continuers course is 'Students do not use the language for sustained communication outside the classroom with someone with a background in using the language.' In other words, if a student uses some Japanese with a family member who is a native speaker of Japanese, regardless of their literacy skills, they are not eligible for the mainstream course. This makes such students feel that they are excluded and given an extra burden, because the heritage course requires a high level of writing skills with a significant number of Chinese characters (*kanji*) although the eligibility criteria include no statement regarding literacy skills. The fact that speakers of European languages with the same background can remain in a mainstream course adds to the feeling of unfairness.

The sense of unfairness is even stronger in WA, whose education authority body is planning to introduce the same heritage language course in 2014, borrowing the syllabus and the assessment materials from NSW. The eligibility criteria and the examination for the heritage course were introduced in 2012. This means that some students who had been studying Japanese as a second language up to Year 10 have been excluded from the award course starting in Year 11. The choices for them are to take the examination for the course as a private candidate without receiving any tuition[1] or to give up Japanese and choose another subject. A number of students have been forced to give up Japanese as a result. The authority in WA keeps the details of eligibility undisclosed (see Hasegawa, Chapter, "Towards the establishment of a WACE examination in Japanese as a heritage language: Critical perspectives" of this volume, for a more detailed account).

What the authority is doing here is excluding the speakers of community languages for the benefit of mainstream students who are learning the language as a second language. Clyne (2001, p. 375) strongly argues against this kind of move:

> While there are good reasons for examining recent arrivals with substantial experience of schooling in a country where the language is spoken in a different way from other students, this does not apply to, say, second or third generation Australians with a limited background in the language. For them, what they have achieved in the language due to determination deserves credit and special treatment and the suspicion of an unfair advantage is a serious demotivation for maintenance of reversing language shift.

[1] In WA, the assessment of the award course comprises classroom assessment and examination. The assessment for private candidates is 100% examination. If a student wishes to take a subject not taught at school, this option is available. Although the course has not been introduced yet, one private school has allocated 1 hour per week to teach one student.

Table 2 Eligibility for continuers and heritage language courses in NSW. (Source: Board of Studies NSW 2010)

Courses	Target candidature	Eligibility criteria
Continuers	Students are learning the language as a second (or subsequent) language. Students typically have studied the language for 200–400 h at the commencement of Stage 6 (In languages where Extension courses are offered, the Extension courses are available to HSC Continuers course candidates only)	Students have had no more than one year's formal education from the first year of primary education (Year 1) in a school where the language is the medium of instruction Students have had no more than three years' residency in the past 10 years in a country where the language is the medium of communication Students do not use the language for sustained communication outside the classroom with someone with a background in using the language
Heritage	Students typically have been brought up in a home where the language is used, and they have a connection to that culture. These students have some degree of understanding and knowledge of the language. They have received all or most of their formal education in schools where English (or another language different from the language of the course) is the medium of instruction. Students may have undertaken some study of the language in a community, primary and/or secondary school in Australia. Students may have had formal education in a school where the language is the medium of instruction up to the age of 10	Students have had no formal education in a school where the language is the medium of instruction beyond the year in which the student turns 10 years of age (typically Year 4 or 5 of primary education)

The policy of excluding students with cultural advantage reflects the view of language as a commodity (Clyne 2001). Education authorities are preventing 'discounts' by raising the 'prices' for the advantaged. This is exactly how Asian languages are depicted in the *Asian Century* White Paper.

The other problem with the system is that there are no primary or lower secondary programs leading to the heritage language course. Students are included in Japanese as a Second Language up to Year 10. When entering the award course in Year 11, some who are deemed to have advanced knowledge of the language are referred to the heritage course. There is a significant gap between the Year 10 program and the heritage language course in terms of the linguistic and cognitive skills required.

From the point of view of the maintenance of community language, 2 years of a heritage language course at the end of secondary education is not enough. Although the eligibility criteria state that the heritage course targets students who have received all or most of their formal education in English, it is designed for those who have received formal (compulsory) education using Japanese as the language of

teaching medium. In order to make use of the heritage language course, the children should develop strong literacy skills before Year 11, as the course requires substantial writing and *kanji* knowledge. Although the course is called 'the heritage language course', it is difficult for the second generation to develop the literacy skills that allow them to benefit from the course, without any formal support at earlier stages. For the success of the course, a structured and more constructive approach from the early stages of the school system is required.

8 Policies and Practice in the Community and Family

For efforts in RSL to be effective, there needs to be a community in which people live and communicate inter-generationally in 'the informal daily life of a speech community' (Fishman 1991, p. 93). If the speakers are concentrated in the area, they can reinforce each other and create new social and linguistic norms for the community that can facilitate the acquisition of the language by younger generations. If the speakers are not concentrated, the community needs strategies to facilitate the speech community that connects families with each other.

Although the Japanese community in Perth is scattered and does not provide the informal daily life of a speech community, there are some groups and institutions that help children develop Japanese as a community language. Some are volunteer groups and others require fees. Major volunteer groups are playgroups that are connected to another group run by retirees. There are about 30 such Japanese playgroups operating around Perth. Although they provide excellent activities to connect different generations, the meetings with the older generation are infrequent, and they only cater for preschool children. Many Japanese parents notice that their children's language shifts to English as soon as formal education in English starts, even if they have previously spoken Japanese at home. Significant institutions within the Japanese community in Perth that support the learning of Japanese as a community language, apart from the families, are The Japanese School and The Saturday School.

8.1 Interviews

In order to investigate the policies of families and institutions and their roles in the community regarding the maintenance of Japanese as a community language, 13 Japanese speakers involved in the teaching of Japanese language as a community language were interviewed in November and December 2012. All the participants were born in Japan and migrated to Australia, but none was naturalised or planning to gain Australian citizenship. Of the 13 participants, 8 represented families, and 7 had spouses whose first language was English. One had a Japanese spouse whose first language was Japanese. Interview participants were introduced by ac-

quaintances of the researcher. Another five speakers were from the education sector, including both Japanese and mainstream schools. They were contacted directly by the researcher.

The interviews with representatives from families were conducted in Japanese in a one-to-one semi-structured format; they were asked about their customary language use at home and outside the home, the usages of family members, and their opinions about teaching Japanese to their children. An individual interview format was selected so that each participant could talk freely about their private lives while their privacy was protected. One of the teacher interviews involved three people together for their convenience; this interview did not involve their private lives. Interviews with teachers were mainly concerned with the heritage language course. The participants talked about their situations and their views.

Each interview was approximately one-hour long. All were audio-recorded except one, for which notes were taken. The recordings were transcribed in Japanese and then translated into English where necessary by the author. This section reports features and policies of the following institutions, incorporating the comments of participants with their pseudonyms:

- The Japanese School (*Nihonjin Gakko*)
- The Weekend Japanese School (*Hoshu jugyoko*)
- Families

8.2 The Japanese School (Nihonjin gakko)

The Japanese school (literally school for the Japanese) is a full-time school funded by the Japanese government; its purpose is to provide Japanese compulsory education for nationals temporarily residing overseas. This can be viewed as the first type of the school at Stage 4 of Fishman's model, wherein the school teaches solely in the language, replaces compulsory education, and is supported by the community—although in this case the school is instead funded by a foreign national body.

Some permanent residents whose families include speakers of languages other than Japanese send their children to this school in order that they may acquire the language with native speaker proficiency. The school constitutes a domain of Japanese language use for the child. However, this choice is not available for everyone. First of all, it involves high costs as the school is registered and operates as a private school in WA. Second, as a rule the child must hold Japanese citizenship to enrol. Third, it operates according to a different calendar, which separates the school community from the local community. The curriculum is monolingual and code switching between Japanese and English is discouraged if not prohibited. Since the purpose of the institution is to support the education of Japanese children who will go back to Japan, it does not see Japanese as a community language in Australia, and nor does it promote multiculturalism in Australian society.

8.3 The Weekend Japanese School (Hoshu jugyoko/Hoshuko)

The Weekend School is partly funded by the Education Department of WA but mostly by the Japanese government. It is called *hoshu jugyoko or hoshuko* in Japanese. The word *hoshu* means a supplementary lesson, which is, in this case, supplementary to the mainstream Japanese curriculum. The objective of the school is to prepare children for a smooth transition to the Japanese curriculum when they go back to Japan. Indeed, the main funding support comes from the Japanese government and many of the enrolled children are sojourners. Those non-permanent residents who do not choose to enrol their children in The Japanese School[2] send them to *hoshuko*.

The weekend school in Perth opened in 2005 with 80 students. As of 2012 the enrolment is 161 from pre-school to year 7, of whom 52 are in pre-school. While Fishman (1991) reports that most community schools in Australia are not successful in literacy education, the Japanese *hoshuko* is an exception. As a 'supplementary' school, it must support children to maintain literacy skills at level equivalent to those of students in Japan. The group therefore primarily caters for children who use Japanese as their first language. It is not considering offering classes in Japanese as a community language, partly because the skills of speakers of Japanese as a community language are too diverse for the school to cater for, but mainly because the parents want their children to achieve the same level of skills, including literacy, as are found in children in Japan. Responding to the parents' need, the school offers lessons following the Japanese government-endorsed curriculum and textbook.

In Japanese language education for primary school age children, the government-endorsed Japanese textbook plays a major role. One interviewee, Chieko, does not send her children to *hoshuko* but uses the same textbook to teach her children at home:

> It is important in order for my children to be accepted in a Japanese school (when they go to Japan for holidays). I'm not sending children to hoshuko, so I'm trying to cover the same content as hoshuko at home. The reason why the textbook is important is that I don't know what to teach by myself. The textbook is important to know what Japanese children in Japan are learning.

Chieko commented that she would choose a government textbook over a language textbook for Japanese children overseas for the same reason: 'what the Japanese children in Japan are learning' is the legitimate language that her children must learn.

The need for legitimacy comes from the way the subject Japanese was introduced and managed in the compulsory education system in Japan. The subject is called *kokugo*, which means 'national language'. *Kokugo* education started in the Meiji era (late nineteenth century) as part of the modernisation of a country aiming to be a rich and strong nation. The Tokyo variety was chosen as the standard language

[2] Over 90% of long-term temporary stay families in Australia from Japan send their children to *local* schools rather than the Japanese school so that their children have opportunities to learn Englis; parents' attitude is quite different in Asian countries, where English is not the medium of education and the priority is the children's re-adjustment to Japanese society and its education system (Mizukami 2007).

and was imposed on children and the public through compulsory *kokugo* education. The strong monolingual policy legitimatised one variety of language (Doerr and Lee 2009), and imbued both the subject and the textbook with authority. Although there are a few different textbooks, they are all based on the same curriculum and endorsed by the government. The policy still influences the way the language is transmitted as a community language in Australia in the twenty-first century.

Those parents who teach their children at home with the government-endorsed textbook, and those who expect *hoshuko* to give their children the same language skills as children in Japan, are tied to the idea of 'legitimate language' and want their children to be 'ideal native speakers' of Japanese. No one can blame parents who hope for an ideal; however, their view is a form of plural monolingualism. As the monolingual ideology does not accept different varieties or different degrees of proficiency, they can promote a form of social exclusion (Otsuji and Pennycook 2011).

To serve its purpose, *hoshuko* rejects applications made by children whose literacy skills are below the target level of each school age.[3] It does not desire to include the whole Japanese community or promote a multilingual society; it was established for the benefit of native speakers of Japanese rather than for community language speakers and is a closed society for those who accept its plural monolingual ideology and pay the fee. However, within its group of selected families, the school promotes the network of its families and children and provides a sense of belonging. It is a true domain of social interaction. Children study, make friends, play, eat, and communicate not only with friends, but also with teachers and friends' parents. It provides a similar speech community to The Japanese School, with limited contact time. Enrolments in *hoshuko* have doubled in 7 years, and saw a significant rise by 25 % in 2013 to 200 students. However, as the school has grown it has become short of space and resources, including human resources. Cost is another issue, and many parents find it a financial burden to send more than one child to *hoshuko*. Others find it too much of a commitment to drive a long way and wait three hour while their children attend class.

Given its purpose, resources and fees, *hoshuko* is not a speech community available to everyone. The wider Japanese community needs a space that serves as a domain of interaction where Japanese speakers meet and interact not only with people of their own generation but inter-generationally. Such a space should provide the same sense of belonging and promote a multilingualism that recognises and accepts a variety of linguistic forms and different degrees of competence.

8.4 Family

Many studies point out that the family is the most important domain and institution for immigrant children to develop their family language (e.g. Clyne 1982, 2001; Fishman 1972; Pauwels 2005; Spolsky 2007). However, it is also reported that lan-

[3] They admit children with lesser linguistic skills and enrol them in a lower class: for example, a Year 5 child may be in a class of Year 2 according to the child's literacy skills, if the child and parents are willing.

guage maintenance at home only, without any community input, is very difficult, especially if not all family members speak the language (Pauwels 2005; Kipp et al. 1995): for instance, although there are no data to prove it, it appears that many Japanese women are in an exogamous relationship. It is also often the case that a family stops putting an effort into teaching or using the language at home when children start attending a language class (Baldauf 2005).

The biggest obstacle for Japanese families, especially exogamous families, is the lack of contact with Japanese speakers. Participants from three families in this study practise the one-parent, one-language policy. Of them, two report that both parents understand both languages. Other families confess that speaking in Japanese in front of a family member who does not understand the language would ruin family time. Mika, one of the participants, was married to a fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) worker, one who spends a full week or two at a mining site in a remote area and then comes home for a week. He explicitly told his wife not to talk to their children in Japanese while he was away, as he feared he would not be able to communicate with them.

Not only the FIFO family, but two other families of mixed marriage, have stopped talking to their children in Japanese. The other five families still use Japanese but find its use declines once the children start school. It is often the case that children who have a Japanese speaker as a parent but did not learn to speak the language at home are studying Japanese as a second language at school. Two other families who were interviewed for this study, as well as Mika, have such children.

Among the families of Japanese immigrants, including the exogamous ones, the ideology of plural monolingualism is prevalent. The Japanese mothers who participated in this study do not see themselves as bilingual speakers, although they are capable of carrying out day-to-day duties, and communicating with their spouses and their children's teachers at school, in English. They speak to their children in Japanese because they do not want their children to learn 'wrong English'. For the same reason, they do not want their spouses whose first language is not Japanese to speak in Japanese. One of the participants, Sachiko, said of her husband's use of Japanese, "No, I don't like it. I'm like 'Stop it! It's embarrassing. Your Japanese is not good!'"[4] She uses the word 'embarrassing (*hazukasii*)', implying that his Japanese is not acceptable to Japanese speakers. Another participant commented that she did not care if her husband spoke in English or Japanese, but when he made mistakes in Japanese, she laughed.

Tse (2000, p. 195) argues that as language has a symbolic value in a language group, one needs to possess legitimate competency in that language in order to be accepted or gain membership. Bourdieu puts it more strongly: 'Speakers lacking the legitimate competence are *de facto* excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required, or are condemned to silence' (1992, p. 55). Spouses of Japanese speakers are condemned to silence if their competency is deemed to be inadequate. In this sense, plural monolingualism is managing the family language policy.

[4] Original comment in Japanese is *Iya desu. 'Yameteyo. Hazukashii. Umakunainoni'tte*.

Smolicz (1981) proposes a core-value theory which argues that each ethnic group has core values that 'represent the heartland of the ideological system and act as identifying values which are symbolic of the group and its membership' (p. 75). He argues that if a language is a core value of an ethnic group, it is likely to be maintained. Oriyama (2010, p. 85) reports the words of a second-generation Japanese immigrant in Sydney: 'Japanese person who can't speak Japanese is not Japanese.'[5] For this speaker, language has a symbolic value in his identity. Japanese speakers in Perth share a similar view. Yoshiko, a Japanese woman in an exogamous relationship, spoke of her son Andrew:

> Where parents are mixed (marriage), Andrew is not Japanese. He is strongly associated with Australian culture. He likes football and cricket instead of baseball. He would watch a baseball game in Japan, but he likes football here and collecting AFL cards.

Yoshiko makes other similar comments regarding her son's association with Australian sports, making the point that she did not force her son to speak Japanese because he was not Japanese and that it was natural for him not to be able to speak Japanese, as if her son's cultural association was an excuse for not speaking Japanese. Also, since her husband expressed feeling of isolation, she stopped talking to her son in Japanese when her husband was present.

The plural monolingualism of Japanese families demands all or nothing: either to gain native speaker competence in two languages or abandon one. Many parents who send their children to *hoshuko* expect their children to gain the same linguistic competency as children in Japan. Husbands who speak a little Japanese are not accepted as they are not Japanese and do not speak Japanese with native-like competence. Mothers who believe their children should be raised as Australian do not take their children to a Japanese playgroup or speak to them in Japanese (Sone 2009). However, Yoshiko, who once abandoned the idea of teaching Japanese to her son, changed her mind when she went to Japan with Andrew. She saw Andrew and his grandmother on very good terms, and felt sad that they could not communicate well. Andrew started to understand some Japanese during the visit, and she now hopes to maintain his Japanese so that he can be connected to her mother. For her, Japanese language is not just a factor to contribute her son's identity; it is a means to tie the family inter-generationally.

Some parents, especially those in mixed marriages, accept fluidity. Two out of three participants who have their children attend *hoshuko* do not expect their children to be perfect bilinguals. One of them is not confident with her English and needs their children to have enough Japanese proficiency to communicate with her. The other wants her children to be able to communicate with her parents, who cannot speak English. Both think the study at *hoshuko* is very demanding with much homework, and that the literacy component is unnecessary for their children. They send their children there because there is no other place that teaches the language, and no other domain where they can practise it to maintain communicative competence.

[5] Original wording reads *Nihongo shaberenai nihonjintte nihonjinnjanai desuyone*. (Oriyama 2010, p. 99).

9 A Place for the Second Generation

The previous sections have examined policies and practices at various levels in an attempt to find a place or a domain for second generation Japanese speakers to develop their Japanese competence. What has become evident is that Australian society, including the education system, is interested in Asian cultures and languages as long as they remain foreign. Many opportunities are provided for those who wish to study Japanese as a foreign language, but few for second-generation speakers who wish to develop their language as a community language. The '1.5 generation', born in Japan and immigrating after attending schools in Japan in their early years, have opportunities to develop their Japanese, including literacy skills; but those who were born in Australia and have limited opportunities to acquire literacy skills cannot meet the requirements of the courses for heritage learners, including those offered by community schools.

Diversity is a key factor in community language. As the background of each family is different, its policy and practice, as well as the children's language competence, are diverse, although the influence of the Japanese policy of 'one language for one nation' remains strong. Some want their children to be perfectly bilingual in English and Japanese. Others give up when they find out that native-speaker proficiency is not possible. Kawakami (2010) warns educators away from the idea that children learning Japanese outside Japan should all aim to gain proficiency at the same level as the Japanese children in Japan possess. He argues that in order to help children live in the multicultural world, we need a paradigm shift in goal setting and assessment that considers and respects the diverse nature of learners. Edwards (1994, p. 33) views multilingualism as 'the ability to speak, at some level, more than one language.' This is vague, but captures the diverse nature of community language and the fluidity of its speakers. As long as we cling to plural monolingualism, language shift cannot be reversed in a community without a close linguistic enclosure. Such is the Japanese community in Perth. We need a paradigm shift in terms of what it means to maintain a language, and what level and kind of language competence second-generation children need, so that the community can contribute to a multilingual, socially inclusive, society.

Kawakami (2008) proposes the term Children Crossing Borders (CCB) to refer to migrants' children who frequently cross the borders of nations, cultures and language categories. Second-generation Japanese speakers in Perth are CCB. They may not frequently cross national borders, but they cross the borders of cultures in their daily life. They may speak Japanese at home and study it at school as a second language, but they spend most of their time using English. They may meet other Japanese immigrants, but most of their friends do not know much about Japan. Others of them cross national borders frequently. The families interviewed for this study had made trips to Japan several times after their children were born, with frequency ranging from three times in 12 years to twice a year. CCB language skills are also diverse. Some can read and write Japanese just like Japanese children of the same age. Many others do not speak much, but understand some. Kawakami (2008, 2010)

argues that there is no point specifying vocabulary, grammar or *kanji* as language acquisition goals. The goal for these children is to develop intercultural competence that enables them to interact and negotiate with those who have different values and backgrounds, to make meanings through interaction, and to be able to articulate those meanings. This is in line with Han's view of multiculturalism that recognises varieties and differences. He stresses the importance of skills to *overcome* conflicts rather than avoid them, because it is the experience of communication failure that develops and nurtures 'intercultural competence'. Interaction is a meaning-making process, and children need to be trained as meaning-makers to develop intercultural competence (Scarino 2009).

Liddicoat et al. (1999) view intercultural competence as the new paradigm in language education. They argue that being multilingual allows us to participate in multiculturalism, while inability to speak a second language keeps the speaker an observer. This is where the community can be involved in supporting second-generation Japanese speakers, giving them a place where they can participate in multiculturalism without falling into the debate of diversity versus integration. This argument takes us back to the inter-generationally intact family–neighbourhood–community link in Fishman's model. A space/occasion that can facilitate 'the informal daily life of a speech community' (Fishman 1991, p. 93) needs to be established. Such a space/occasion can create a community that will allow participants to experience different values, and conflicts as well as friendships. It does not need to be Japanese-only, which may promote plural monolingualism and reject imperfect speakers. Han's (2011) observation of inclusive linguistic practice at a Chinese church in Canada is a good example: the church accepts any language as a legitimate code and code switching occurs frequently in order to get things done. Old-timers learn the language of newcomers, and newcomers learn each other's language. Many people speak imperfectly, but neither speakers nor listeners mind.

Families also need to create a multicultural space in which everyone may participate. As Fishman (1972, p. 443) puts it, 'Multilingualism often begins in the family and depends upon it for encouragement.' It is this encouragement that the second-generation Japanese speakers in Perth need, encouragement that accepts different codes and different varieties. It is a challenge for a family, but a mixed marriage family is a multicultural society in itself. It is an ideal domain to teach children how to face and overcome conflict. If someone feels isolated because of the language use of the group, this can be used to open up a new conversation. To avoid the situation is one choice and to negotiate is another. By including those who don't speak Japanese and those whose Japanese lacks native proficiency, the family and the community can create a place for second-generation speakers to participate in multicultural communication. Such a community would also include Japanese immigrants' spouses who do not speak Japanese.

In Fishman's RLS model, the next stage after the community link is a community language school. The RLS opportunity provided by the community school in Perth is limited. Unless the Perth community vitalises the link of family–neighbourhood–community, RLS may not be achieved.

10 Conclusion

It is difficult to hold an optimistic view about the situation for the second-generation Japanese speakers in Perth now that multiculturalism has been marginalised in policy-making scenarios and the education sector is mainly concerned with teaching Asian languages as foreign languages. There are other factors also working against RLS, such as the neighbourhood situation (living away from other Japanese speakers) and the family situation (the presence of non-Japanese-speakers); but one of the most significant factors is the monolingual ideology, or elite multilingualism, that prevails on both sides of the relationship. Based on a monolingual ideology, mainstream schools discourage the use of language other than English (Han 2011), the community school excludes those whose language skills do not match those of children in Japan, and families discourage members from speaking in Japanese if their Japanese is not good. A monolingual policy makes it possible for everyone to participate in social activities, and one language can create unity and hold people together. However, it can also exclude people who deviate from the norm. If the community and families shift the ideology to discard exclusionist policies and preserve multilingualism, so that different varieties of language including different degrees of proficiency as well as different values are accepted, they can create a place for the second generation—a place where they can interact to create meaning and learn to negotiate with others. Such a place is not a given in current Australian society. It must be gained by the second generation themselves, or created by the family and the community. In this the role of the family cannot be overemphasised. It is the family, with the support of the community, that can best encourage, motivate, and equip their children to gain an inclusive place.

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Tamil Language in Multilingual Singapore: Key Issues in Teaching and Maintaining a Minority Language

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Abstract This chapter focuses on how Tamil, a minority language in Singapore, is being maintained by institutionalising it. As one of four official languages in Singapore, Tamil is taught from pre-primary to junior colleges as Mother Tongue, but its survival is threatened by the linguistic heterogeneity of the wider Indian community and a shift among Tamil–English bilinguals towards the link language or lingua franca of Singapore, English, even in the home domain. Tamil is now a household language to only about 37 % of the Indian population. This emerging pattern of language use has been of concern to policy makers and curriculum planners, and has led to a review of pedagogical approaches that questions the functionality and relevance of the language variety being taught in schools. To survive, the Tamil language has to live beyond the boundaries of the classroom and respond to the changing needs of a younger generation of Tamil bilinguals, and the continual demographic changes of twenty first century Singapore.

Keywords Bilingualism · Language maintenance and shift · Language policy · Minority language · Tamil curriculum · Tamil language

1 Introduction

The Indian population in Singapore constitutes about 9.2 % of the total resident population of 3.7 million (Singapore Department of Statistics 2011). This translates to some 348,000 ethnic Indian residents in Singapore. Of these, 188,591 are Tamils. Chinese form the majority of 74.1 %, followed by Malays at 13.1 %. Clearly, the Indians are a minority in multiethnic, multicultural, multilingual Singapore. However, it is important to define 'Indians' in the Singaporean context in order to make sense of the language situation that has evolved there. The Department of Statistics classifies Indians as people of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi or Sri Lankan origin. This South Asian cluster is not a homogeneous entity in terms of language, religion or culture: linguistically, for instance, it includes speakers of a spectrum of South Asian

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languages that can be broadly categorised as either Dravidian (Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu) or Indo–Aryan (Hindi, Punjabi, Gujerati, Urdu). As Rai (2009) points out, the linguistic heterogeneity that exists among ethnic Indians in Singapore is a cause for concern, even of contention, with respect to language policies and language planning issues.

The 2010 census figures (Singapore Department of Statistics 2011) on household language usage among Indians indicate that about 37% of ethnic Indians aged five and over identify Tamil as the most frequently spoken language at home, while for some 42%, English is the dominant language; other Indian languages are spoken by around 13% of the population in question. While Tamil seems to have an edge over what Rai (2009) terms 'minor South Asian languages' (p. 145), English clearly prevails as the language of choice in Indian households.

The shift towards English is evident not only in the Indian community but also in both the Chinese and Malay communities (Saravanan 1993). This phenomenon has implications for corpus planning which include, but are not limited to, orthography, grammar and vocabulary; in the case of Tamil, this language shift poses major challenges in maintaining the Tamil language and sustaining its vibrancy beyond the classroom.

This chapter presents the discussions and arguments that focus on maintaining the Tamil language and the tensions that have surfaced in the process. It also puts forward some recommendations that may contribute to the maintenance of the Tamil language in Singapore in the twenty first century.

2 Tamil in Singapore: Its Diasporic Roots

Tamil, a Dravidian language distinct from the Indo–Aryan languages of India, found its way to Singapore with the settling of the first Indian diasporic communities from various parts of the Indian subcontinent from 1819 to the 1940s, while the colony was under British rule. Many came from Tamil Nadu in South India, where Tamil is the scheduled or official language. During this time, two significant events drove the Tamil language to the fore: the 'politicisation of labour' (Rai 2009, p. 147) in Singapore and the Dravidian movement in South India. The Dravidian ideology glorified the Tamil language and culture and 'gave impetus to the development of a Tamil identity and significant meaning to the Tamil language' (Purushotam 2000, p. 46); its spread to Singapore led to the teaching of Tamil, as opposed to the other Indian languages, in community schools there.

Although Tamil dominated in terms of its numbers of speakers, primarily because of the high numbers of forced or semi-forced migrants from Tamil Nadu under British rule (Mesthrie 2008, p. 497), its relative position was undermined by pressure from other South Asian linguistic groups, particularly of speakers of languages of North Indian origin. This included Hindi, a language that has particular

prestige both as the language of Hinduism and through its perceived link with Sanskrit (Vaish 2008), to the detriment of Tamil.

There is a need to examine the key factors that have shaped the current situation of Tamil in Singapore. One way of approaching this is to study different but interrelated perspectives. The first, sociohistorical: an examination of the status of the Tamil language in Singapore during colonial rule. This perspective will be useful in explaining the sociological and psychological elements of the language within its environment, past and present.

3 Tamil and Tamils in Colonial Singapore: A Brief Look

In a sociolinguistic sense, language is a complex entity that is intimately and inextricably linked with its speakers; the reverse also holds true. The social implications of a language marking the solidarity or identity of individuals or groups may have far-reaching effects. This can be explained in terms of the correlation that exists between attitudes towards language and the people who speak it (Preston 2002). Typically, from a non-linguistic point of view, notions of 'prestige' or 'stigma' can be attached to or withheld from whole languages or language varieties by a dominant group, who hold power on the basis of socioeconomic status. Such judgements can be harmful if the language in question is not of a dominant or prestigious variety, or if speakers of the language belong to a lower socioeconomic class. This was the case with Tamil.

In the Singaporean context, the identity of ethnic Indians during colonial rule was predetermined by some of the ruling British elites. The Indians—mostly Tamil-speaking South Indians—found themselves positioned on 'the lower rungs of the social order' (Sandhu 1993, pp. 779–780). Only a fraction were educated (Lal 2007), perhaps because these Indians, predominantly from the south of India, were primarily labourers and convicts. As Lal explains, these convicts, including 'untouchables' from the lower castes, were part of the forced labour responsible for the infrastructure of Singapore, from building bridges to constructing roads; the indentured labourers were contracted to work through an exploitative system, paid low wages and expected to meet the 'extreme demands' of their employers. Their socioeconomic standing, not surprisingly, determined the status of the language they spoke: Tamil. The negative stereotyping of the Indians as the 'coolies and blackmen of Singapore' (Sandhu 1993, p. 779) not only marginalised the community but also attached a stigma to the language spoken by these labourers. Tamil was considered a 'coolie language' (Schiffman 2003, p. 105), which means 'language of the labourers'. Although Schiffman's claim reflects the complexities of Tamil language and its perceived status, it is not clear if this sentiment represents the views of a significant section of the Tamil community, particularly among the younger generation today.

4 Tamil: Post-Independence

The Tamil Language was accorded official status in 1965 following the independence of Singapore. It is one of the four official languages, the others being Mandarin, Malay and English as put forth by the Republic of Singapore Independence Act of 1965. Malay is the national language, while 'for all practical purposes, English has become the *de facto* dominant working language' (Kuo 1977, p. 11).

The emergence of a new political landscape following Singapore's independence in 1965, together with a change in demographics, set in motion a complex dynamic of languages at work. Tamil, already in low standing among the other languages current in Singapore, was threatened with further weakening as the new nation invented itself: its position within the multilingual, multi-ethnic environment of Singapore was to undergo renegotiation. First, it was a minority language even among the four official languages. Second, it co-existed with other South Asian languages of Dravidian or Indo–Aryan roots and could not claim to be representative of the Indian population. Third, it was stigmatised as the language of labourers. Being situated in such a position in the process of nation-building proved to be a challenge to its survival. Kuo commented on the position of the Tamil language based on the 1970 census findings:

> The only official language that is losing ground in Singapore is Tamil. This was not true only nationally, but even for the Indians. The literacy rate in Tamil among the Indians has decreased by [9.8 per cent] … One untold fact is that there are fewer Indian youths who are literate in Tamil, probably because of its limited functions in socio-occupational mobility and in cross-ethnic communication. [This] makes it a rather insignificant language in this multilingual society. It would be interesting to observe the future trend of Tamil literacy since a bilingual program is being actively promoted in the educational structure in Singapore. There is some possibility that the literacy rate in Tamil may become stabilised if the Indian children at school are motivated to learn Tamil at least as a second language. (1980, p. 56–57)

Two issues central to Kuo's observations with regard to the fall in Tamil literacy a few decades ago point to the seeming lack of currency of the Tamil language and its non-use in 'cross-ethnic communication'. The latter can be explained in terms of the distinctive dissimilarities, including the use of different scripts, between the ethnic languages and particularly between the Dravidian and Indo–Aryan languages. The decline in Tamil literacy was partly the consequence of the emigration of some older Tamil-speaking Indians to India following Independence (Kuo 1980); partly because the bilingual policy was still in the early stages of incorporation into the educational system, which may have contributed to the apparent decline in literacy rates. Kuo's classification of 'Indian youths', a blurred concept compared to more specific terms such as Tamil youths or Indians whose Mother Tongue is Tamil, lacks precision and aggregates different groups whose languages differ from each other under a single word.

Against the depressing Census findings reported by Kuo (1980), Gopinathan (1998) presents a positive change in literacy rates in Singapore's official languages, based on 1980 and 1990 census data which record that literacy in Tamil increased

by 0.1%, a significant turnaround from the 1970 figure. The increase in Tamil literacy may be attributed to the implementation of the 'interventionist' bilingual policy (Gopinathan 1998, p. 21) whereby ethnic Indians, regardless of their mother tongues, were allocated Tamil as their 'second language' at school. Not surprisingly, in attempting to linguistically 'cement' disparate ethnic groups by prioritising Tamil and marginalising other ethnic Indian languages, the bilingual policy became fraught with tensions.

5 Studies on Tamil and Tamils in Singapore

Schiffman's (2003) assertion that the Tamil language 'is reduced to the domains of home and family, and then only for the uneducated' (p. 109) appears to be a misrepresentation or even an underestimation of Tamil language use. It suggests that Tamil is exclusively used by the uneducated. Whether 'uneducated' in this context means 'not English-educated' or 'having had little or no education' is a distinction that is not made clear. Nor is there an indication of the 'other domains' where Tamil has apparently diminished in its use. In contrast, Vaish et al. (2010) pinpoint the maintenance and stability of Tamil in 'the domains of family and friends and media' (p. 176).

Schiffman (2003) also points to demography as a factor that has reduced the use of Tamil in Singapore: that is, to the numerical strength of the ethnic group and its distribution within national boundaries (Harwood et al. 1994). In particular, Schiffman blames the inflexible housing policy in Singapore, which he asserts has led to the dispersion of the Tamil-speaking community to such an extent that there is no opportunity for Tamil to be used as an intra-ethnic language. Schiffman's argument can be justified on the grounds that the sporadic contact between Tamils is likely to reduce use of the language, although the importance of racial integration and racial mix explains the Singaporean government's move away from forming ethnic enclaves or 'ghettoisation' on sociopolitical grounds.

As pointed out by Sim et al. (2003) in a study of public housing and ethnic integration, the government introduced a revised housing allocation policy in 1989 'to attain a racial distribution in the new towns and estates that was in line with the racial profile of the nation' (p. 297). It introduced the Neighbourhood Racial Limits policy that specified the ethnic proportion to be maintained in each neighbourhood in response to the re-emergence of ethnic enclaves (Sim et al. 2003). The tension between creating racial harmony and promoting linguistic homogeneity within defined spaces is one that is hard to reconcile.

Despite the housing policy scattering the Tamil community, it has access to a unique ethnic heritage enclave known as Little India, a designated area comprising shops and restaurants that represent the Tamil culture and language. This is also the venue for cultural shows and fairs to mark cultural and religious celebrations such as the Tamil New Year, the Tamil Harvest Festival and Deepavali. This unique space provides opportunities for Tamils to congregate and speak Tamil in intra-ethnic communication, although this may not be sufficient to propagate the language.

In a sociolinguistic study of the use of Mother Tongue in Tamil families, Saravanan (2001) reports a preference for English over Tamil, particularly among parents who are educated and whose socioeconomic status is high. This phenomenon is reiterated in Schiffman's (2003) study, which observes that the language is not being maintained by the educated section of the Indian population. These observations seem to crystallise the general perception that Tamil is not an economically viable language, thus the switch to a more dominant language, in this case English. In another study, Saravanan (1993) reports that the Tamil language is now associated with low socioeconomic status by young Tamils themselves, in part due to the few career opportunities that it offers; Saravanan gives three reasons that explain Mani and Gopinathan's (1983) claim that the status of Tamil is lower than the other official languages in Singapore: the international status of English; the numerical dominance of Chinese speakers; and the currency of Malay as a regional language. Tamil language seems to be in a precarious position.

This is a dismal picture of the Tamil language in terms of its status, value, usage and functionality, despite government initiatives in institutionalising Tamil from pre-primary to pre-tertiary levels. It may be too late to reverse the trend, given the number of factors have led to its decline. Schiffman (2003, p. 119) claims that the Tamils themselves point to the Tamil teachers, parents, the young people, the Ministry of Education and the curriculum developers as forces that have worked against the growth of Tamil. For example, Tamil teachers generally emphasise the speaking of formal Tamil rather than conversational forms, and the younger generation is drifting towards English, the dominant and prestigious language, in conversations. Ramiah (1991) and Sobrielo (1986) argue that the decline in the use of the language in the home and friendship domains can be attributed to the Tamil–English shift. The findings of a study on language use patterns carried out by Ramiah, based on a sample of 1600 primary school students, highlights a preference for English over Tamil, particularly among the younger children. The reasons given again point to the relatively low social status of Tamil speakers on one hand and the low economic value attached to the language on the other. Sobrielo's findings mirror those of Ramiah in terms of the correlation between age and language choice: her study included respondents between the ages of 12 and 70, and observed that the older respondents maintained the language while the younger respondents demonstrated a shift from Tamil to English (Sobrielo 1986). This pattern is reflected in the 2010 census report on home language use in which only about 41 % of ethnic Indians aged between 25 and 44 predominantly used Tamil while around 83 % aged between 60 and 69 spoke Tamil in the home (Singapore Department of Statistics 2011).

This trend leads to the argument that the maintenance of a language is closely tied to the home domain, via intergenerational transmission of the language. Spolsky (2012), like others, argues that the lack of this critical transmission in the home may lead to language loss. He considers that the influences from external domains such as schools can create conflict between the standard form of language that is taught and the varieties that are spoken in homes, especially of immigrant families. This predicament of intergenerational transmission in immigrant Japanese families in Perth, Western Australia has been highlighted by Kawasaki (Chapter, "A Place

for Second Generation Japanese Speaking Children in Perth: Can they Maintain Japanese as a Community Language" of this volume) who cites exogamous marriages and 'elite multilingualism' as factors that work against language transmission. While reiterating the importance of the family unit in maintaining the immigrant or community language among second generation immigrants in a largely monolingual setting such as Australia, Kawasaki also highlights the significance and impact that state or national policy can have on the survival of minority languages.

Based on the 1990 and 2000 census data and the Sociolinguistic Survey of Singapore 2006, Vaish et al. (2010) observe that 'there are clear signs of language shift from Tamil to English' (p. 176) in schools. This means that there is a need for schools, which typically teach the standard variety of the language, to engage their students in the variety that they are exposed to in the home so that they do not lose their heritage language. Fishman (1980, p. 169) stresses that 'the flow of language maintenance influence is much greater from *home-and-community into school* than from the school into the home' [emphasis in original]. This same tension, which has implications for corpus planning and pedagogical approaches, is already apparent in Singapore with respect to the teaching of Tamil.

6 Tamil in Schools: A Chronological Perspective

Since its implementation as a second language in some 90 schools in 1976 (Souza 1980), there have been concerns about Tamil Language (TL). As early as 1978, the Tamils' Representative Council (TRC), established in 1951, pointed out that 'fewer Indian students [were] opting for Tamil' (p. 228). One reason for this could be that no aided mission schools offered Tamil as a second language, many government schools also did not, and those that did were not evenly distributed across the nation. One significant initiative taken by the TRC was to lobby for the teaching of Tamil in all schools at primary, secondary and junior college (the equivalent of Year 11 and Year 12 in Australia) levels. To encourage more students to learn TL, the TRC undertook a campaign that included mailing appeal letters to Indian parents and approaching the press to publish the list of schools that offered Tamil as a second language (Arasumani 1987). Although no data are available with respect to the outcome of the campaign, the actions taken by the TRC highlight the extent of challenges faced in offering Tamil in schools in the early years of the bilingual policy, and the likely repercussions of having no access to TL in schools: learning another mother tongue instead, for instance.

Currently, 93 secondary schools provide TL within curriculum time, including some academically prestigious schools; secondary students whose schools do not offer Tamil have the option of learning it at Umar Pulavar Tamil Language Centre (UPTLC) once or twice a week or at 11 other school-based centres after school in the afternoons (Ministry of Education 2012).This is a significant increase over the 1999 figures where only 81 secondary schools, apart from UPTLC, and five school-based centres offered Tamil as Mother Tongue (Ministry of Education 2000). With

Table 1 Resident population aged 5 years and over by language most frequently spoken at home. (Singapore Department of Statistics 2011)

Ethnic group/language	2000	2010
Chinese	100.0	100.00
English	23.9	32.6
Mandarin	45.1	47.7
Chinese dialects	30.7	19.2
Others	0.4	0.4
Malays	100.0	100.00
English	7.9	17.0
Malay	91.6	82.7
Others	0.5	0.3
Indians	100.0	100.00
English	35.6	41.6
Malay	11.6	7.9
Tamil	42.6	36.7
Others[a]	9.9	13.8

Figures are in percentages

[a] It is not clear exactly what languages constitute 'others', particularly for the Indians; it may not necessarily illustrate an increase in other non-official Indian languages

more secondary schools and school-based centres offering Tamil, the Ministry of Education's initiative to support the teaching and learning of Tamil not only reflects the demand for TL learning in schools by stakeholders, particularly parents, but also suggests a growth in resources. The number of students learning Tamil in secondary schools and centres in 2010 was 10,300. Some 70% primary schools now offer Tamil as Mother Tongue (Ministry of Education 2010, quoted in Kadakara 2011).

7 Census Figures

One way of gauging Tamil in terms of language choice is by comparing the 2000 and 2010 census figures for the languages spoken at home among the Indian community. These are represented in Table 1.

There was a 6% increase in the number of Indians who spoke English at home in 2010 compared with the year 2000. In contrast, there was a 6% decrease in the use of Tamil as a household language. The increase in the use of English in the home domain is also seen in the Chinese and Malay ethnic groups; there is an emerging pattern of a shift towards English in all three groups, although to varying degrees. In the case of ethnic mother tongues, there was an increase of 2.6% in the use of Mandarin among the Chinese; the biggest drop, of 8.9%, was seen in Malay, among ethnic Malays. Based on the 2010 census figures, Malay and Tamil use in the home domain, compared to Mandarin, seems to be on the decline.

Notwithstanding inherent problems such as instances of codeswitching and of perception versus reality, in using census data one can roughly gauge the Tamil

usage profile. Although statistics point to a decline in its use as a household language, this should not be interpreted as a definitive representation of the language losing its ground because of the shift towards English. As can be seen in Table 1, *all* ethnic groups showed varying degrees of increase in the use of English. Furthermore, a relatively smaller percentage of decline is seen in the use of Tamil compared to the dip in the use of Malay.

A pertinent point is the increase of about 4% in the use of 'other languages'—which may not exclusively refer to the other Dravidian and Indo–Aryan languages but may include other non-Indian languages spoken in the Indian community. While the terminology 'others' is blurred, the overall increase suggests a rise in the use of other, non-official Indian languages. This may be the consequence of the settling of the new Indian diasporic community since the 1990s, which according to Rai (2009) has been an impetus for the development of other South Asian languages, particularly Indo–Aryan languages.

This emerging pattern has been a cause for concern among Tamil Singaporeans who fear that the influx of non-Tamil speakers from South Asia, who currently outnumber the Tamil-speaking population, may jeopardise the position of Tamil. This issue was raised at Parliament recently by Nominated Member of Parliament Mr. R. Dhinakaran, who called for government support to maintain the official status of Tamil in Singapore (Peravai February 2013). The growing popularity of Bollywood among the non-Indians in Singapore (Ng 2010; Rubdy et al. 2008) may also position Hindi as a significant minor South Asian language. However, it can be argued that it is unlikely that these non-Tamil speakers all belong to a particular exclusive dialect group. Even if there were to be increased support for some other South Asian languages in response to the numerical growth of their speakers, they would not automatically supersede Tamil or be officially recognised. Tamil is intimately linked with the history of Singapore and has already secured the position of an official language, with institutional support ensuring that it is maintained; and Tamil leaders, including politicians, have been pivotal in situating Tamil as an important language in Singapore, especially from the early 2000s.

8 Tamil and Media

The maintenance and promotion of Tamil language in Singapore via the three main media platforms—radio, television and newspaper—have undergone notable changes in response to the demands of a fast-changing world and a modernised Singapore. Not until October 2008 could a local Indian audience enjoy a television channel dedicated to Indian programs, predominantly in Tamil. Previously, Tamil programs constituted only a segment of a channel that offered other programs in English (xinMSN Entertainment 2013). The extension of air time was a milestone that paved the way for a proliferation of locally produced Tamil programs, bolstering the language and at the same time making it as prolific as the Malay channel in terms of air time (the Chinese channel has 24 h broadcast). Not only do Indians have

access to a local Tamil channel now, but they also can tune in to Tamil programs produced in South India via cable television.

The current Tamil radio station, *Oli* 96.8 FM, is a 24 h broadcast service that has played a pivotal role in promoting the Tamil language. Tamil radio had humble beginnings in 1936 with a 4 h allocated time-slot; in August 2001 it became a non-stop Tamil channel that earned accolades internationally for its charity work (xinMSN Entertainment 2013), gaining recognition for Tamil language and the Tamil community in Singapore and beyond. It has worked collaboratively with organisers of the month-long annual Tamil Language Festival in promoting the use of spoken Tamil, particularly targeting younger generations. A notable achievement of *Oli* 96.8 was its collaboration with primary schools in providing an hour-long weekend program, *Ilam mottugal*, where students interact with popular radio deejays in Tamil and showcase their talents. Other initiatives of *Oli* 96.8 in promoting the use of Tamil as an intra-ethnic language include staging cultural shows and events for the Tamil community.

Singapore has only one Tamil newspaper, *Tamil Murasu,* one of the oldest in the world, established by Govindasamy Sarangapany, a Tamil language activist, in 1935. Since then it has transformed in terms of layout and content in response to the changing needs of the Singaporean Tamil population as well as of the 'new' Tamil diaspora from South Asia (AsiaOne News September 4 2010). The daily paper also serves 'as a study guide to Tamil language students' (Singapore Press Holdings 2013, p. 5). A significant effort in promoting the language was the introduction of the e-paper version of *Tamil Murasu*. Murugaian Nirmala, the former editor of *Tamil Murasu,* summed up one of its primary objectives as 'to preserve the Tamil Language, especially among the younger generation' (AsiaOne News September 4 2010).

An overview of the role of media in maintaining and promoting the use of Tamil language among the current Tamil community has been encouraging. Tamil media in Singapore have embraced the shift from traditional media platforms to digitised forms which make access to the language 'anytime, anywhere' possible. It is evident that opportunities exist for Tamils of different generations to be engaged with the language either actively or passively through the Tamil media, and to use it as a link language.

Insofar as maintenance of a minority language is concerned, it becomes apparent that the 'convergent efforts of enough speakers, cultural grass-roots associations [and] linguists… supported… by national or international institutions' are crucial in realising their common goals (Breton 2003, p. 214). Although the Tamils are numerically disadvantaged and the language they speak bears little economic value, the support that the Tamil language has received, especially since the 2000s, attests to the effective leadership that has in some ways been the cornerstone of the survivability of the language so far. The onus is on each Tamil individual to be engaged with the language in order to maintain it in the foreseeable future.

9 Language Policy in Singapore

9.1 Language Policy and Language Planning in the Wider Context

In the twenty first century, language diversity faces a range of challenges across multilingual settings, each with a unique history and social dynamic. There is ongoing tension between supporting multilingualism for its rich 'resources' and for the maintenance of traditions and cultures on one hand, and unifying people of different linguistic backgrounds via a common language on the other. This dichotomy gives rise to schools of thought that view language, and hence language policies, from different perspectives, political, economical or social. This is evident in several language policies and planning in polities characterised as 'multilingual or plurilingual (Edwards 1997; Spolsky 1978, 2012) in which one language typically dominates. In the case of Singapore, language groups have been treated as homogeneous and static entities, particularly in the treatment of ethnic mother languages.

9.2 Situating English in Singapore's Language Policy

One important factor that has weighed heavily on the survival of the Tamil language is the nationalistic language planning policy of Singapore. Considering the heterogeneity of the population and the political ideology that was in part rooted in meritocracy, it became necessary on the grounds of pragmatism that English, a 'world language and the language of science and technology' (Gopinathan 1977, p. 55), be given official status. As Sharpe and Gopinathan (2002) note, when it gained self governance in 1959 Singapore saw the potential of the English language to act as a springboard for success in life in terms of more job opportunities and better living standards. This political decision, part of the nation-building process, translated into a bilingual policy which was implemented in the 1970s. An important speech in 1986 by then Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister of Singapore Tony Tan underscores the intent, rationale and the so-called benefits of the bilingual policy:

> that each child should learn English and his mother tongue I regard as a fundamental feature of our education system… Children must learn English so that they will have a window to the knowledge, technology and expertise of the modern world. They must know their mother tongues to enable them to know what makes us what we are. (Kwong et al. 1997, p. 11; emphasis added)

The ideological concept that shaped the bilingual policy, also referred to (perhaps a little ironically) as 'English-knowing bilingualism', seemed to possess desirable qualities that would be bestowed upon the people through the passage of education and effected a shift towards English in all ethnic groups (Kuo 1977; Gupta and Yeok 1995; Saravanan and Hoon 1997; Saravanan et al. 2007). English became synonymous with prestige, and took root as the de facto, de jure and working language. As 'the implementation took hold' (Gopinathan 1998, p. 20) language policies were

refined in such a way that a divide was created between the now dominant language, English, and the ethnic mother tongues that were to be heritage languages for students.

In essence, the language policy has been prescriptivist. To use Kaplan and Baldauf's (1997) words, it 'largely ignored… the total *ecology* of the linguistic environment' (p. 269; emphasis in original). Given the complexities of the linguistic situation in Singapore, together with the challenges in planning and implementing the education and language policy, it is no surprise that sections of the population voiced dissatisfaction, particularly concerning the compartmentalisation of mother tongues taught at schools.

9.3 Voices of the South Asian Minorities

In Singapore the term 'Indian', which refers to both ethnicity and race, is complicated as it superficially homogenises the group as a collectivity regardless of the origins of its members. The linguistic diversity is also downplayed by institutionalising Tamil as a Mother Tongue. This problematic classification was exacerbated by official educational policy that determined that one's Mother Tongue was Tamil by default if one was categorised as 'Indian', based on the father's ethnicity (García 2011). This resulted in Tamil being designated as the second language—the first being English—for student speakers of other South Asian languages, including Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu. Not surprisingly, this policy sparked criticism from the non-Tamil speaking South Asian minorities, primarily on the grounds of lack of recognition and linguistic differences (Rai 2009). One of the key problems was the strain that non-Tamil speaking students were constantly under in having to learn, and learn in, two languages that were not their mother tongues (Rai 2009). Saravanan (1993) observed the 'antipathy' (p. 287) expressed by speakers of the Indo–Aryan languages towards Tamil.

Eventually the language problems encountered by the students paved the way for a series of fundamental changes that meant more language options for them. In 1991 the Ministry of Education (MOE) recognised Hindi, Bengali, Gujerati, Punjabi and Urdu, classified as Non-Tamil-mother-tongues (Vaish et al. 2010), at primary, secondary and pre-tertiary levels, in response to the poor academic performance of the students whose mother tongues these were. However, there was a sting in the tail: the teaching of these languages had to be undertaken by the communities. The national language policy which clearly recognised Tamil as an official language did not alter.

10 New Initiatives in Maintaining Tamil

10.1 Spoken Tamil in Schools

Curriculum planners and policy makers have to make informed decisions that will enhance the learning of Tamil, the teaching of which has been a constant challenge

for its teachers. The declining use of Tamil in Singapore has been correlated with its pedagogical approaches and curriculum (Saravanan 1998; Schiffman 2003; Lakshmi and Saravanan 2011). This issue has been a contentious one as it involves both corpus planning and status management. This is in part due to the insistence of Tamil purists that teaching should be of Literary Tamil (LT), a high variety that sharply contrasts with the varieties spoken in homes. Schiffman (2003) refers to the chasm that exists between the literary and spoken languages as 'extreme diglossia' (p. 106), and this linguistic gap is implicated in the underlying issue of which Tamil corpus should be incorporated into the curriculum.

The conflict narrows to the teaching of Tamil in the school and the variety to be taught. In Singapore, Lakshmi and Saravanan (2011) have carried out extensive research on Standard Spoken Tamil (SST). Their primary aim is to inform the need to establish an appropriate curriculum incorporating SST, aimed at developing students' oral skills at primary and secondary levels. This proposed initiative is transformational in that it seeks to position SST as an 'additional resource for the teaching and learning of Tamil' (p. 3) by adapting Schiffman's (1999) framework, which includes a reference grammar for standard spoken Tamil. They consider this the variety 'with the widest communication currency' (p. 15) which most students, if not all, can identify with, as opposed to LT. Their recommendation highlights the urgency and importance of establishing Tamil as a living language in Singapore in the twenty first century, and departs from the long-held notion that only the literary form of Tamil should be taught in classrooms (Saravanan 1993).

The shift to the spoken variety is largely a response to two other studies, one carried out by the Centre for Research in Pedagogy and Practice and undertaken by Lakshmi, Vaish, Gopinathan and Saravanan, and the other by the Tamil Language Curriculum and Pedagogy Review Committee (TLCPRC) in 2004 and 2005. The TLCPRC was formed by the Ministry of Education in 2004 to review the teaching and learning of the Tamil language. Important findings point to two facts: first, students are not motivated to learn Tamil because they claim the textbooks are difficult and learning the language is no more than an academic exercise required to progress to the next level; and second, the Tamil taught in schools neither corresponds with nor complements the spoken variety used outside the classroom. Therefore, students learn a variety (as stipulated by the respective authorities) that has limited or no application in their daily lives (Lakshmi and Saravanan 2011). The mismatch between 'classroom language' and the spoken one appears to be one of the factors discouraging students from using the language. The teaching of the spoken variety in classrooms, strongly recommended in the report by Lakshmi et al. (2006), has since been introduced in schools as 'Spoken Tamil' (ST), variety slightly different to SST, in an attempt to make learning the language more meaningful in current contexts, particularly in day-to-day oral communication.

10.2 Changes in the Tamil Curriculum

The TL Curriculum Framework was designed following the recommendations put forward by the TLCPRC (Ministry of Education 2005). The main aim of the revised

syllabus was to make Tamil a living language beyond the classroom (Ministry of Education 2010). A three-pronged framework addressed the pedagogical approaches needed to stimulate students' interest in learning Tamil, the need for assessments to be meaningful, and the creation of a syllabus flexible enough to address changing needs. An important shift in the focus in the Secondary School syllabus was a new emphasis on productive skills such as speaking and listening. This called for the teaching of ST in the classroom, to motivate and encourage students to converse without difficulty or reservation with their friends and the community at large.

New pedagogical approaches to making Tamil a living language (for example, with the use of multimodal materials) were other initiatives undertaken to sustain interest among students, by providing meaningful contexts in which to study Tamil. These syllabus changes were responses to the perceived needs of Indian students amid a constantly changing language use profile, and recognised that collaboration among the home, school and public domains was necessary, even vital, to achieve the objectives of the revised curriculum, including fluency in speaking the language.

Other desired outcomes, which resonate with TLCPRC's vision for Tamil language, were outlined in a press release (Ministry of Education 2005). Two in particular were that the Tamil Singaporean (as opposed to the usual generic term 'Indian') will comfortably converse with another Tamil Singaporean in Tamil, and will speak the language at home, with children. Whether or not the objectives of the revised MOE syllabus are successfully achieved over time depends on a complex network of factors, one being the motivational level of young learners with respect to using the language that they are familiar with, outside the school domain. Similarly, working towards realising the vision of the TLCPRC will necessarily situate the individual, family and society at the forefront in maintaining the language.

10.3 New Syllabus

In secondary schools, Tamil is now taught in three streams according to students' ability: Higher Tamil Language, Tamil Language and Tamil Language 'B' Syllabus (TLB). TLB was introduced in 2006, primarily to assist students who could not cope with the standard syllabus. Practical communication skills are emphasised to sustain the interest of the student in learning the language and appreciating its cultural links (Ministry of Education 2012). Although it is not an examinable subject at O Level, a pass is required if a student intends to progress to junior college. The middle stream, Tamil Language, is a core O Level subject, and a pass is required for progress to junior college (Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board 2013).

Keeping abreast with advances in technology, *MurasuAnjal,* a Tamil text input software program, was introduced to schools in 2009 by the Ministry of Education to encourage students to search the Internet using Tamil language and 'to imbue in them a lifelong love for Tamil' (Iswaran 2010). This is a laudable effort to promote the use of the language virtually, considering the relatively small number of students who learn Tamil in schools, and underscores the vision of making Tamil a living language in Singapore.

10.4 Government Support

As well as establishing Tamil as an official language, the government has been supportive of its promotion, particularly in the education domain. One noteworthy initiative is the introduction of the BA Tamil Language and Literature undergraduate program, a collaboration between Madurai-Kamaraj University in South India and SIM University, the only Singaporean university to offer a Tamil degree programme (SIM University 2012). It is hoped that this program will lead to more teachers with a degree qualification in Tamil (Balakrishnan 2007). Another initiative that caters specifically to Tamil teachers and language professionals is the Master of Education in Tamil Language offered by The National Institute of Education, where a subsidy from the Ministry of Education is available (National Institute of Education n.d.). These programs have been established fairly recently, and demonstrate the government's efforts to ensure that the teaching of Tamil meets high standards and responds adequately to the expectations of the Tamil curriculum; the initiatives also promise career opportunities in the Tamil language.

Another government initiative was the formation of The Tamil Language Council (TLC) in 2001, with the support of the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts; its primary objectives are to encourage the speaking of Tamil among the community and to link the language with youth via up-to-date technology (Tamil Language Council 2013).

10.5 Tamil Language Festival

The month-long Tamil Language Festival first took place in 2006, with the aim of promoting Tamil as a link and living language among the diverse Tamil-speaking population of Singapore, including immigrants and transitional workers from South Asia and, most importantly, Tamil language students. This festival, organised by the TLC and supported by the Ministry of Education's Tamil Language and Learning Promotion Committee, is another initiative to bolster the Tamil language by recognising it as an important heritage language. Organisers and partners of the 2013 festival (including Indian Tamil-speaking university students) hosted a range of activities to cater to different sections and age groups, inviting academics, writers and artistes from Tamil Nadu, India and Malaysia to participate. The festival showcases Tamil language and culture, and is instrumental in maintaining and encouraging the use of the language in Singapore in enjoyable and innovative ways. More importantly, it demonstrates to Singaporean Tamil speakers, especially to the younger generations, that they are part of a wider linguistic community with an international presence.

10.6 Role Models

Mr S. Iswaran, Second Minister for Home Affairs and Second Minister for Trade and Industry, leads the TLLPC in its promotion of Tamil language as a living language

in Singapore. The minister, who speaks fluent Tamil, represents an emerging group of prominent Tamil speakers from various sectors of the community including education and media. Tamil television, radio and newspapers allow the younger generation to see Tamil speakers employed as DJs, TV presenters, newsreaders and reporters. Besides being examples of successful, educated Tamil speakers, they lead in breathing life into the language among the Tamil community.

India-born Nominated Member of Parliament Mr Ramasamy Dhinakaran, a fluent Tamil speaker, requested that he might deliver a speech in Tamil, before one in English, at a recent parliamentary proceeding (Channel NewsAsia 2013). Another prominent Indian Member of Parliament, Mr K. Shanmugam, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Law, has presented speeches in Tamil, including National Day Messages. By identifying with the Tamil language, these politicians and other Tamil leaders play a crucial role in raising the status of the language by speaking it with command in public and to the media. This is a marked change from Saravanan's 1993 report that the Tamil community wanted more opportunities for Tamil to be used in Parliament and at cultural events; Saravanan highlighted two senior MPs' lack of command in Tamil during the election campaign in 1989, which, as she points out, 'failed to capture the affection of the Indians' (p. 281). There has been a positive change over the last two decades in terms of Tamil use by prominent figures at public events; this should encourage younger generations of Tamils to speak the language confidently and use it as a link language.

11 Conclusion: Re-packaging Tamil in Twenty First Century Singapore

In colonial Singapore, Tamil came to be associated with the coolies or labourers of South India, attracting negative connotations to the use of 'coolie language'. Post-colonial Singapore has repositioned Tamil within a dynamic multilingual society, alongside other heritage languages—Malay and Mandarin—by according it official status, although early studies (e.g. Saravanan 1993; Schiffman 2003) that focus on various sociolinguistic aspects of Tamil in Singapore have invariably highlighted its perceived comparative lack of economic value, functionality and lower status, attributing this to its decline in use in homes and in the public sphere. The government's bilingual and housing policies have also been implicated in its decline.

Notwithstanding the seemingly dismal picture of Tamil language in Singapore in the 1990s and early 2000s, efforts at maintaining the language have been gaining momentum since the 2000s with continual institutional support. Sections of the Tamil community have stated their vision of repositioning Tamil as a link, heritage or living language. For this to gain root in industrialised and digitised Singapore, Tamil needs to be re-packaged as a language that Tamils in Singapore can identify with and use, without reservations. This could begin by burying existing notions of Tamil as having little economic value or as spoken only by the economically disadvantaged or the uneducated. That it was the language of the labourers—whose

contribution to colonial Singapore was instrumental—in the *past* has to be viewed positively rather than be seen as cause for embarrassment.

Academics and educationists have called for new pedagogical approaches, and a revised curriculum has been implemented in an effort to encourage spoken Tamil beyond the school domain. Current moves towards the inclusion of more local flavour, and a more appealing textbook layout teamed with interactive pedagogical approaches that stay abreast of changing technology, signal a positive environment in which Tamil may flourish. While schools have taken a proactive approach by incorporating Spoken Tamil into the curriculum to encourage its use in intra-ethnic communication and to inculcate an active interest in the language among young people, more needs to be done at corpus management level. The ultimate question is which variety of Tamil needs to be maintained, considering Singapore's unique multilingual setting. If the underlying intent is to make Tamil live in Singapore, it is crucial for curriculum planners to consider how teaching it can adequately and effectively respond to the changing needs of the current generation.

Some of these responses may include immersion programs for students in collaboration with academic institutions in Tamil Nadu, and working with local Tamil media to organise road shows that encourage the speaking of Tamil. Further, the examination format, including items tested, needs to be reviewed so that it runs parallel to the overarching objective of making Tamil a living language. Students will learn Tamil more readily if the classroom language is a variety that they are familiar with, rather than literary Tamil. More importantly, Tamil should not be learnt as a 'subject' for the purpose of academic advancement. To effect a change in the mindset will mean re-examining the curriculum and Mother Tongue requirements with reference to academic progression. A question to bear in mind is whether purism in corpus planning will position Tamil as a living language in Singapore.

Tamil needs to be actively used and maintained in Singapore by the Tamil community at large, regardless of socioeconomic bearing. This means a conscious effort to speak Tamil at home: not necessarily exclusively, but in such a way that it is not marginalised. The language will continue to live in Singapore despite challenges and changes if Tamils from all walks of life embrace their language with the right attitude. It is not a question of whether Tamil will 'feed you' (Saravanan 1993, p. 281) that matters: whether the language has economic value or functionality is largely irrelevant if it is primarily positioned as carrying the Tamil culture, identity and heritage. This requires disentangling Tamil from its negative stereotyping as a language of labourers, spoken by the disadvantaged; these associations drawn from the past have no relevance in a contemporary society where young, educated Tamils are actively promoting and speaking Tamil via various platforms, including the media.

Tamil is also gaining impetus with the arrival of Tamil speakers from India, whose contribution has been valuable (Lakshmi and Saravanan 2011). A remarkable growth in the number of Indians with university education over the last 10 years, the highest percentage in 2010 among all ethnic groups (Singapore Department of Statistics 2011), has added value and status to Tamil language in Singapore.

What is critical is for Tamil speakers simply to speak the language, whatever variety one has been exposed to, whenever and wherever an opportunity arises. To judge from current efforts to repackage Tamil and encourage its usage in contemporary Singapore through a wide range of activities, initiatives and platforms, it is possible that Tamil will strengthen. Most importantly, if a conscious effort is made by Tamil-speaking Singaporeans to identify with and speak the language, Tamil may even thrive.

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Functional English and Chinese as Mediums of Instruction in a Higher Institution in Hong Kong

Zhichang Xu

Abstract Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is a vibrant multilingual society whose official languages include Chinese and English. The language policy of Hong Kong calls for biliteracy (Chinese and English) and trilingualism (Cantonese, *Putonghua* and English), reflecting its complex multilingual situation. In this chapter, I shall review the multilingual language policies of Hong Kong, and issues regarding the medium of instruction (MOI) in the educational context with focus on the tertiary sector. I shall analyse two courses offered in one of the eight government-funded higher education institutions (HEIs) and discuss issues of functional English and Chinese as the MOI in alignment with the local institutional language policy. I argue that in multilingual societies, higher education institutions should make language policies compliant with the regional language-in-education policies, and adopt models of MOI that align with the realities of linguistically diverse teaching and learning communities.

Keywords Language policy · Biliteracy and trilingualism · Medium of instruction · Functional literacy · Hong Kong tertiary education · Multilingual society

1 Introduction

Hong Kong is one of the most vibrant multilingual societies in the world. Its population of over 7 million people is predominantly ethnic Chinese (approximately 95 %). The remaining population comprises South Asian (e.g., Indian, Pakistani, Nepalese, Indonesian and Pilipino), East Asian (e.g., Japanese and Korean), European (e.g., British), and North American (e.g., American and Canadian) residents, as well

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as tourists and visitors from all over the world. Since 1997, an increasing number of people from the Chinese mainland have migrated to this World City, forming a dynamic community of Chinese *Putonghua* speakers in Hong Kong. According to the Official Languages Ordinance (Department of Justice of HKSAR 1974), '(1) the English and Chinese languages are declared to be the official languages of Hong Kong for the purposes of communication between the Government or any public officer and members of the public and for court proceedings; (2) the official languages possess equal status and, subject to the provisions of this Ordinance, enjoy equality of use for the purposes set out in subsection (1)'. Since 1997, English has co-existed as an international language in Hong Kong alongside *Putonghua* as a national language and Cantonese as a local language, under China's national policy for Hong Kong commonly known as 'One Country, Two Systems'. The HKSAR government has mandated a language policy of biliteracy (written Chinese and English) and trilingualism (English, Cantonese and *Putonghua*). This has been widely regarded as a language-in-education policy, and the Hong Kong SAR government has continued to emphasise it through its annual Policy Address (PA): 'it is the SAR Government's goal to train our people to be truly biliterate and trilingual' (1999); 'it is our policy to promote bi-literacy and tri-lingualism' (2001); 'we must upgrade our biliterate and trilingual proficiency' (2005; cited in Lee and Leung 2012, p. 4). Although the Official Languages Ordinance specifies that the official languages possess equal status and enjoy equality of use, in reality people hold different views towards these languages. Lee and Leung's (2012, p. 19) research shows that Cantonese, as the 'mother tongue' of the majority of Hong Kong people, has not been given an 'official' status comparable to that of English and *Putonghua*. Morris and Adamson (2010, p. 148) observe that 'Cantonese does not have as high a status in Hong Kong as English, or (after 1997) as *Putonghua*', which, as Kirkpatrick and Chau (2008, p. 34) point out, is becoming 'increasingly important instrumentally in people's daily lives, with the great increase of Mainland tourists and contacts with the Mainland'. In terms of English, Evans (2000, p. 200) predicts that 'since English will continue to play an important role in the upper echelons of business, the professions and tertiary education in the SAR, Hong Kong parents and students will continue to regard a successful English-medium education as a prerequisite for socio-economic advancement'. The use of code-mixing and code-switching among Cantonese, English, *Putonghua* and other languages, as well as varieties of English, is common in both the classroom and society. Kirkpatrick and Chau (2008, p. 34) point out that 'the people in Hong Kong have maintained a very pragmatic attitude towards English', while Li (2011) notes that English continues to exert tremendous influence on the local vernaculars, and that local Hong Kongers code-switch between Chinese and English partly due to the medium-of-learning effect.

The issue of MOI in modern Hong Kong started to emerge in the 1970s, when the British colonial government planned to introduce a policy of using Chinese as the MOI. The Green Paper on language education in 1973 recommended that Chinese become the usual language of instruction in the lower levels of secondary school, and that English be studied as a second language. This recommendation was strongly opposed by parents and schools and resulted in the 1974 White Paper which

adopted a less rigid approach to the issue; but in early 1997, before Hong Kong was due to be handed back to China, 'the government abandoned the *laissez-faire* policy that had allowed secondary school principals to choose the medium of instruction and limited the number of English medium secondary schools to about a quarter of the total (100 and later 114 out of a total of 460)' (Kirkpatrick and Chau 2008, p. 34). Since that time, language-in-education policies in Hong Kong have been proposed and fine-tuned, and much controversy and debate have centred on the use of languages in Hong Kong schools. Morris and Adamson (2010, p. 156) argue that 'the choice of the medium of instruction is crucial for pupils' learning. Pupils learn best through a familiar language. If pupils do not have sufficient competence in the language that is used as a medium of instruction, they tend to learn superficially and to lack autonomy and self-expression'. However, in 2008 and 2009, the government language-in-education policy was altered, allowing schools more flexibility in using EMI (English Medium of Instruction) for one or more subjects for different classes, a fine-tuning that was intended to diversify MOI arrangements. However, this policy appears to have militated against the HKSAR's own biliterate and trilingual policy by advantaging English in the educational system.

The language-in-education policies that have been proposed and adapted so far are mainly concerned with Hong Kong primary and secondary schools. It is commonly assumed that both the public and a number of the private universities follow a predominantly English-medium system, and that most of Hong Kong's universities are officially English-medium. Certainly the University of Hong Kong, one of the first universities established, has used English as its medium of instruction since its inception in 1911. When, over half a century later, the Chinese University of Hong Kong was founded in 1963 with the aim of promoting Chinese language and culture in Hong Kong, a research paper commissioned by the government on the educational needs of Hong Kong recommended that 'there should be more Chinese medium schools where English is taught as a second language' (Tsui et al. 1999, p. 200). This recommendation was rejected because of parental preference and concerns about economic development. To date, the Chinese University of Hong Kong has remained the only one with bilingual Chinese and English as its MOI; it has a 'statutory mandate to teach through the medium of Chinese' (Li 2013, p. 69):

> To be globally competitive, CUHK must acknowledge the importance of English as an international language. At the same time, the University must also honour its mission and re-affirm its commitment to the promotion of Chinese culture and language, as well as its dedication to the preservation and development of indigenous culture and language in Hong Kong. (*Report of the Committee on Bilingualism, CUHK*, cited in Li 2013, p. 73)

Apart from these two leading universities, a majority of other universities and higher institutions in Hong Kong offer their courses in English. However, Li et al. (2001, p. 306) report that 'higher education in Hong Kong suffers from disparities between espoused theory and theory in use', and challenge the assumption that for most programmes in Hong Kong universities, English is the MOI. They point out that 'policy for the language of instruction ranges from an official statement that English is the language of instruction, through allowing some use of Cantonese, to a more open policy' (p. 294), and their research findings show a mis-match: while

most universities and programmes of study in Hong Kong have a formal policy of English as the official language of instruction, 'English is the medium of instruction for just over half of the lectures', and the majority of other types of class, including tutorials, laboratories and consultations with lecturers, make more use of Cantonese or mixed codes (pp. 297–298). This 'mis-match', they argue, has existed for some time without being adequately addressed. The MOI issue in tertiary institutions in Hong Kong remains largely uncharted territory.

While this volume primarily explores issues surrounding multilingual education as they emerge in Australia (cf. Chapters, "Occupying the 'Third Space': Perspectives and experiences of Asian English Language Teachers", "Changing Perspectives of Literacy, Identity and Motivation: Implications for Language Education", "Constructing Meaning from the Unfamiliar: Implications for Critical Intercultural Education", "Can Teachers Know Learners' Minds? Teacher Empathy and Learner Body Language in English Language Teaching", "Code-switching and Indigenous Workplace Learning: Cross-cultural Competence Training or Cultural Assimilation?" and "The Retention of Year 11/12 Chinese in Australian Schools: A Relevance Theory Perspective", in this volume), Chapter, "Tamil Language in Multilingual Singapore: Key Issues in Teaching and Maintaining a Minority Language" and this particular chapter, "Functional English and Chinese as Mediums of Instruction in a Higher Institution in Hong Kong", extend the discussion to two other multilingual societies in the Asia Pacific region, Singapore and Hong Kong. In this chapter, I shall review the biliterate and trilingual language-in-education policy of Hong Kong, and discuss issues regarding the MOI in the context of tertiary education. I shall take two courses offered in one of the eight government-funded higher education institutions in Hong Kong, 'Teaching English as an International Language: Research Writing Project', and 'Second Language Acquisition and Chinese Learning'. These will act as case studies, and allow an analysis of relevant issues of functional English and Chinese as the MOI in alignment with the local institutional language policy. I shall argue that in multilingual societies such as Hong Kong, higher institutions should make language policies compliant with the regional language-in-education policy, and adopt models of the MOI that align with the multilingual realities of the teaching and learning communities.

2 Language Policy and the Medium of Instruction

Before the People's Republic of China resumed sovereignty of Hong Kong in 1997, the city had been a British colony for over one and a half centuries. Between 1842 and 1974 'there was no statutory provision for what constituted the official language(s) in Hong Kong' and 'English was by practice the sole language used for all official matters within all three (executive, judicial and legislative) branches of the government during the period' (So 1996, p. 41). In 1974, the government enacted the 'Official Languages Ordinance' (Department of Justice of HKSAR 1974)

to establish which were the official languages of Hong Kong, their status and use. Although the Ordinance states that the official languages possess 'equal status' and enjoy 'equality of use', in reality Hong Kong is a diglossic society with high (H) and low (L) language varieties serving different functions in different domains. According to Snow (2010, p. 158), the diglossic pattern in Hong Kong can be referred to as 'double overlapping diglossia' in which 'English plays the H role in relationship to Chinese, and—within the Chinese language frame of reference—Standard Chinese plays an H role in relationship to Cantonese':

> Cantonese clearly functions as an L variety. It is generally learned in the home as the native language of most people in the society, and is the variety used for most daily speech. While it is sometimes used as a written language, such use is confined largely to texts that are considered informal or lacking in prestige and seriousness. Standard Chinese and English, in contrast … are generally not used for daily in-group conversation, they are learned primarily in school, and they dominate the relatively prestigious domain of written language. (Snow 2010, p. 158)

Kirkpatrick and Chau (2008, p. 32) perceive the language situation in Hong Kong as 'one country, two systems, and three languages': that is, the People's Republic of China is 'one country', the Republic and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region are 'two systems', and Cantonese, *Putonghua* and English are 'three languages'. These three languages co-exist, serving local, national and international functions for intranational and international communication. Bolton summarises the current relationship among the three languages:

> English still enjoys high prestige as a co-official language of government and law, and as the dominant language of higher education and the business community. Cantonese enjoys an unequalled status in many domains of high and not-so-high use, including Legco, the mass media, popular culture, and much else. *Putonghua* has yet to be heavy-handedly imposed as the language of national and official power on China's most dynamic and prosperous southern city, which is still enjoying the benefits of the 'one country, two systems' policy. (2012, p. 235)

Language policy has been a controversial issue in Hong Kong from the nineteenth century. Morris and Adamson (2010, pp. 150–154) point out that 'language policies for education have changed in Hong Kong as circumstances have changed', and they divide the policy changes into four historical periods, including colonial elitism (1860s–1950s), vernacularisation (1950s–1990s), firm guidance (1997–2008), and fine-tuning (2009–). Colonial elitism refers to the 'buffer class of an educated elite from the local population' who tended to study at British universities, were fluent in English, and served the interests of the colonial rulers. The 'vernacularisation' period witnessed a number of attempts by the local government to focus on Chinese teaching, to implement Chinese as the MOI, and to establish schools and institutions, including the Chinese University of Hong Kong, as Chinese mediums of instruction (CMI) in 1963. The 'firm guidance', initiated by the government in 1997 as the 'Medium of Instruction Guidance', required schools to opt for CMI unless they could demonstrate that the teachers and students had the ability to cope with English as the medium of instruction (EMI). The 'fine-tuning' since 2009 has allowed individual schools to decide which subjects to teach in which MOI.

Bolton (2012, p. 221) views the official language policies throughout the 1990s in Hong Kong as becoming 'more interventionist', in contrast with the laissez-faire approach to language planning during the colonial period. *The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China* (Chinese Government 1990), which was adopted on 4 April 1990 by the Seventh National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China at its Third Session and put into effect as of 1 July 1997, defines what the official languages are and regulates official language policies in Hong Kong. Article 9 states that 'in addition to the Chinese language, English may also be used as an official language by the executive authorities, legislative and judiciary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region'. In addition, Article 136 of the *Basic Law* (Chinese Government 1990) states that 'on the basis of the previous educational system, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall, on its own, formulate policies on the development and improvement of education, including policies regarding the educational system and its administration, the language of instruction, the allocation of funds, the examination system, the system of academic awards and the recognition of educational qualifications'.

In line with the *Basic Law*, the 1997 Policy Address by the Chief Executive of the HKSAR defines explicitly the post-1997 'biliteracy and trilingualism' language policy. Biliteracy includes written Chinese and English and trilingualism includes spoken Cantonese, English and *Putonghua*. This policy was 'with particular reference to the use of languages in the civil service in the 1990s, but, by 2002, this had been extended to the general population' (Bolton 2012, p. 228).

In terms of the background to this biliterate and trilingual language policy, it is worth pointing out that prior to 1997, *Putonghua* had a low status in Hong Kong and was 'rarely found in the curriculum in schools' (Morris and Adamson 2010, p. 149). However, with the 1997 handover and the Chinese Mainland's rapid economic growth, 'people in Hong Kong began to appreciate the value of *Putonghua*. Many government officials, members of the business community and popular entertainers became proficient in the language' (Morris and Adamson 2010, p. 149). Apart from the handover and the growing economy of China, the *New Language Law of the People's Republic of China* (cited in Kirkpatrick and Xu 2001), which was endorsed by the Standing Committee of the 9th National People's Congress on 31 October in 2000 and effected on 1 January 2001, also contributed to the increasing status of *Putonghua* in Hong Kong. According to the *Language Law*, 'the State promotes the use of *Putonghua* and standardised Chinese characters' (Article 3); 'citizens have the right to learn and use Modern Standard Chinese … Local government and their relevant departments must take measures to popularize *Putonghua* and to promote standardized Chinese characters' (Article 4); and 'schools and other educational institutions must use *Putonghua* and standardized Chinese characters as the basic spoken and written language in education and teaching. Exceptions can be made if laws state otherwise' (Article 10). Although HKSAR may enjoy that status of 'One Country, Two Systems', the success of the promotion of *Putonghua* throughout the Chinese mainland, including Guangdong province which borders Hong Kong, has significantly influenced the language policy of the HKSAR. Boyle (1995, p. 302)

argues that '*Putonghua* has now entered the equation and must be seen as a new future possibility in the medium of instruction debate'; and Bolton (2012, p. 234) argues that in the context of the HKSAR, whose systems of government and administration are expected to 'converge' with those of Mainland China, 'the question may be not whether *Putonghua* will be introduced as an official teaching medium, but *when*'.

The language policy of 'biliteracy and trilingualism' has a direct bearing on the language-in-education policy for schools, in terms of which language (English or Chinese) should be the MOI for schools in Hong Kong. Tsui et al. (1999, p. 197) point out that beneath the issues of language policy and MOI, 'there are political, social, economic and educational concerns'. Both educational and political agendas are at work. The balance between 'the need to strengthen the national identity of Hong Kong people and the need to maintain the international outlook and economic development of Hong Kong' had a major impact on the medium of instruction policy (p. 196). Prior to 1997, educators had advocated using Chinese as a medium of instruction in schools of Hong Kong. However, parental concerns, and social and economic agendas put forward by the government, overrode educational preferences, and the Government's intention was for individual school authorities to decide whether the MOI should be English or Chinese for any particular subject in junior secondary forms. This policy lasted until 1997, when the government announced in its *Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools* (Legislative Council of HKSAR 1997) that 'Chinese should be the basic MOI for all local public sector secondary schools. If a school should, after careful deliberation, intend to adopt English as the MOI, the school must provide sufficient information and justification to ED [Education Department] to support such choice', and that 'mixed-code teaching should not be used in schools'. This firm MOI *Guidance* (Legislative Council of HKSAR 1997) argues that 'the use of Chinese as MOI will lift language barriers and raise our students' interest in studying. They will be better able to understand what is taught, analyze problems, express views, and develop an inquisitive mind and critical thinking. Mother-tongue teaching thus leads to better cognitive and academic development'. Of the 421 government and government-subsidised secondary schools, 307 adopted Chinese as the medium of instruction (CMI schools) and only 114 retained English as the medium of instruction (EMI schools). It is worth pointing out that what Chinese or the 'mother tongue' was in the Hong Kong context was by no means straightforward, particularly after the handover of Hong Kong to China. Bolton (2012, p. 235) argues that 'for many Hong Kong people, the notion of "mother tongue" education may evoke fear of the imposition of the "big brother tongue", as there is widespread suspicion that Cantonese-medium education may segue into *Putonghua*-medium education at some point in the not-too-distant future'.

The *Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools* has engendered constant challenges, controversies and debates among employers, parents, school principals, teachers, and students. Li (2009, p. 82) summarises a number of 'salient concerns' regarding the implementation of the *Guidance* for the 'mother tongue education' in Hong Kong schools, including that (1) employers find it difficult to

recruit employees with the levels of English and *Putonghua* skill needed for the workplace; (2) parents resent dwindling opportunities for their children to be educated in English; (3) principals of CMI schools are weary of adverse consequences brought about by the public's perception that their teachers and students 'lack the competence' to teach and learn in English; should this lead to dwindling student numbers, it would pose a threat to the schools' survival; (4) teachers—in CMI and EMI schools alike—find it difficult to abide by an Education Bureau guidance against any form of code alternation; and (5) students of CMI schools are sometimes stigmatised and labelled 'second best', while EMI students have to cope with varying degrees of cognitive problems when learning through a language that they are not completely familiar with.

In May 2009, the Education Bureau of Hong Kong issued a policy paper, *Fine-tuning of Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools*. This paper signalled a significant shift in government policy from the 1997 *Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary Schools*. One of the changes was that 'starting with Secondary One level from the 2010/2011 academic year onwards, secondary schools can enrich their English learning environment by introducing different MOI arrangements to suit different needs of their students'. Other associated recommendations were that (1) secondary schools were permitted to supplement mother-tongue teaching with the adoption of English as the MOI in up to 25% of total lesson time (excluding the time spent learning English as a subject), and could allocate time to one or two non-language subjects in English; (2) having regard to the students' ability to learn in English, the teachers' readiness to teach in English, and associated support measures, secondary schools could also opt to teach some or all non-language subjects in English at junior secondary levels—provided they met prescribed criteria.

This policy marks two salient departures from the 1997 *Guidance*, in that teaching modes become more diversified, including CMI, CMI/EMI mixed code, and EMI, and schools are no longer classified as CMI or EMI. Earlier research by Lin (2005, p. 51) remarks that the 'dominance of English in post-1997 Hong Kong seems to be even more steadfastly maintained by a neocolonial, complex modern capitalist regime of culture, now that any public criticism of English linguistic dominance can be powerfully neutralised by the neocolonial globalising capitalist economic and technological discourses'.

Morris and Adamson (2010, p. 157) draw a number of competing principles that have driven language policies in education, including that (1) all citizens should have the opportunity to learn the national language and any other language that has political benefits; (2) for social justice, all citizens should have the opportunity to learn the languages of their daily communication and cultural identity; (3) for economic development, citizens should learn the language of key trading partners, or at least a common international language; and (4) it is vital for developing deep learning, learner autonomy and self-expression that learners learn through a familiar language. In addition, Lin (2006, p. 287) argues that 'practical bilingual pedagogies can be developed to help students in bilingual education programmes to access dominant linguistic resources and discourses by capitalizing on their indigenous linguistic and cultural resources'. Morris and Adamson (2010, p. 160) point out that

'one recent trend has been to acknowledge the need for flexibility in the policy, with the devolution of some decisions regarding language policy from the central government to schools. This allows schools to find a language policy that works best for them'. In the following section, I shall look at language-in-education policies in the tertiary education context, and discuss functional biliteracy and trilingualism, which have been stipulated in the newly implemented language policy in one of the eight government-funded higher education institutions in Hong Kong.

3 Institutional Language-in-Education Policy, and Functional English and Chinese as Mediums of Instruction

The review in the previous section indicates that issues of medium of instruction are mainly concerned with secondary schools in Hong Kong. It is commonly claimed that Hong Kong tertiary education is primarily carried out in English. However, Li et al. (2001, p. 306) report that 'higher education in Hong Kong suffers from disparities between espoused theory and theory in use', and challenge the assumption that for most programmes in Hong Kong universities, English is the medium of instruction. Their research finds that while most universities and programs of study in Hong Kong have a formal policy of English as the official language of instruction, 'English is the medium of instruction for just over half of the lectures' (pp. 297–298). This 'mis-match', they argue, has existed for some time without being adequately addressed.

Hong Kong currently has one self-financing institution, the Open University of Hong Kong, and eight statutory universities funded by the University Grants Commission: Chinese University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Lingnan University, and University of Hong Kong. The Chinese University of Hong Kong is officially a bilingual institution, while the language policy of the Hong Kong Institute of Education promotes functional trilingualism and biliteracy. All other institutions are officially English-medium.

This section introduces the institutional language-in-education policy of one of the eight government-funded higher education institutions (HEIs), hereafter referred to as HEI-8, which implemented a newly drafted and approved policy in March 2012. HEI-8 was established in 1994 through the merger of three former colleges of education, one technical teachers' college and one institute of language in education. It provides undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs for preservice and in-service teachers, as well as offering other bachelor of arts, master of arts, and doctoral programmes. It currently has over 8,000 enrolled students and over 1,000 staff members. The aim of its new language policy is to strengthen the language proficiency of students, with the explicit language learning outcomes of being biliterate in Chinese and English and trilingual in Cantonese, English and

Putonghua. Since the majority of HEI-8 students have Cantonese as their first language (L1), the policy primarily addresses their needs for language enhancement support in English, *Putonghua* and standard written Chinese regardless of their L1. International students and non-local Chinese students are facilitated in their Cantonese learning and immersion. The institution's policy states that graduates must develop a reasonably high level of English proficiency, in particular a solid foundation in academic literacy and a demonstrable mastery of field-specific terminologies in their respective discipline(s) and profession(s). The policy asserts that a reasonable command of *Putonghua* will give graduates an edge in job hunting, as well as an important tool for intellectual and cultural enrichment. Setting language exit requirements (LERs) for English and *Putonghua* is a measure to ensure that the graduates achieve their intended language proficiency outcomes. LERs for both English and *Putonghua* are benchmarked against internationally recognised texts, including the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and *Putonghua* Shuiping Ceshi (PSC). For example, for English majors the exit requirement is 7 IELTS and 3A–3B PSC. For non-English majors it is 6–6.5 depending on disciplines, and 2B–3B for PSC. HEI-8 backs up this language policy with a series of measures, including subsidising students taking the LERs tests and requesting all students to take language enhancement units in the first 2 years of their major programme studies, or taking equivalent hours of preparation courses for the LER tests as electives. The policy is so designed that students are guided to meet LERs for English and *Putonghua* before they graduate.

Within the new institutional language policy, there is an item on the language of learning and teaching (LLT) known as the LLT policy. This policy makes an operational distinction between MOI and CL:

> The MOI, to be adhered to strictly in all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, bears on the following: (a) the **course outline**, including synopsis, aims and objectives, main assigned readings, teaching and learning activities, and course intended learning outcomes; (b) **formative assessment** in writing, including major assignments and quizzes; and (c) **summative assessment** such as the final exam. Accordingly, all assessed activities of an EMI course should be in English, while those in a CMI course should be in Chinese.
>
> 'Classroom language' (CL) refers to the language of interaction between teacher and students and among students in the classroom (lectures, tutorials, labs and so on). While the CL of an EMI course is English by default, a CMI course may be conducted in Cantonese or *Putonghua*, subject to the teacher's preference after considering all relevant factors, such as the students' language backgrounds and abilities.
>
> Subject to the moment-by-moment classroom learning and teaching needs, the teacher of a CMI or EMI course may find it necessary to switch to some other language(s). It should be noted that classroom code-switching, which is typically driven and justified by students' enhanced learning outcomes, do not constitute a breach of the Institute's new LLT policy.

The notion of functional Chinese and English as mediums of instruction is also raised. Given its wide range of programmes and the increasing diversity of the HEI-8 community, including the marked presence of non-local Chinese and international students and staff members, a number of key factors are considered in determining what should be set as the medium of instruction. These factors include (a) the nature

of discipline; (b) the usual language of the workplace for graduates of a particular programme; (c) how comfortable the lecturer and the students are in using Chinese (Cantonese/*Putonghua*) or English; (d) students' and staff members' proficiency in English, Cantonese, and *Putonghua*; and (e) the handling of classes of students with different L1 backgrounds, including Cantonese-dominant local students, English-dominant international students, and *Putonghua*-dominant non-local Chinese (primarily Mainland Chinese) students.

Work on functional literacy and functional multilingualism has been conducted by a number of researchers worldwide, including Baker (2011), Clyne (2003), Creese and Blackledge (2011), Hornberger (2003) and Lin (2006). Functional literacy is a 'skills' approach to literacy. According to Baker (2011, p. 314), 'effective functioning implies that the student or adult will contribute in a collaborative, constructive and non-critical manner to the smooth running of the local and national community. Such functional literacy can imply accepting the status quo'. Hornberger (2003, p. 323) has proposed a model of 'continua of biliteracy', defining biliteracy as any and all instances in which communication occurs in two (or more) languages in or around writing in terms of four nested sets of intersecting continua characterising the contexts, media, content, and development of biliteracy.

Functional bilingualism refers to 'an individual's *use* of their bilingual ability', and it concerns 'when, where, and with whom people use their two languages' (Baker 2011, p. 5). In a multilingual educational context, students and teachers make constant judgments about the choice of an appropriate language, depending on the domains (time and place) and targets (people) they face. Clyne (2003, pp. 47–48) argues that 'bilinguals are not double monolinguals', and that 'they employ the resources of both their languages, so that each language has certain functions, and various combinations of the languages have particular social and communicative meaning'. Similarly, according to Clyne (2003, p. 48), 'trilinguals are not triple monolinguals', and most of them assign 'specific functions to each language not only for social reasons, but to give them practice'. In Hong Kong, Lin (2006, p. 294) has summarised the 'functional distribution' of Cantonese and English in the teacher talk of EMI school lessons based on previous research on bilingual pedagogies, and shows that functional distribution appears to be on a continuum: English (L2) is used for 'text-dependent, formal, didactic and memory-based' teacher talk, in contrast with Cantonese (L1), which is preferred for 'text-independent, informal, explanatory and understanding-based' teacher talk.

Creese and Blackledge (2011) argue that the current pedagogical method of keeping languages of medium of instruction separate makes multilingual development more difficult than it need be. They suggest that 'translanguaging' and 'heteroglossia' be regarded as bilingual pedagogies, arguing that 'as participants engage in flexible bilingualism, the boundaries between languages become permeable' (p. 8). They also propose that 'flexible bilingualism be used by teachers as an instructional strategy to make links for classroom participants between the social, cultural, community and linguistic domains of their lives' (p. 17). This 'flexible bilingualism' bears a resemblance to the system of 'complementary languages' in tertiary education proposed by Preisler (2009, p. 26), whereby 'two languages will be functionally distributed within the individual programme according to the nature of its components'.

The overlapping of languages by student and teacher in terms of function can also be represented on a continuum ranging between what Baker (2011, pp. 318–319) calls 'functional literacy' and 'critical literacy', the former fulfilling fundamental functions such as working on worksheets, answering questions, reading words with or without comprehension, writing in correct grammar, and learning to do but not necessarily to think; the latter involving active participation in reading and writing, sharing ideas with both peers and teachers, constructing and critically examining meaning, developing consciousness and critical thinking skills, and ultimately learning and interpreting the world.

At the consultation stage for drafting the new institutional language policy for HEI-8, a large-scale questionnaire survey was conducted in March 2011, in which approximately 790 students from 11 academic programmes participated. Regarding questions related to the medium of instruction and classroom language use, the students' views varied. Slightly more than half of the respondents (56.25%) thought that 'if the medium of instruction is Chinese (Cantonese or *Putonghua*), then no English should be used in class (lectures, tutorials, labs, etc.)', while the others either disagreed or remained neutral about this statement. A similar percentage (60.38%) of respondents agreed that 'if the medium of instruction is English, no Chinese should be used in class (lectures, tutorials, labs, etc.)'. A higher percentage of respondents (67.18 and 68.45%) held a more flexible view of code-switching in terms of classroom language use when responding to the two questions, agreeing with items such as 'In a Chinese-medium class (Cantonese or *Putonghua*), the teacher should have the flexibility to switch to English, provided the switch facilitates teaching and learning', and 'In an English-medium class, the teacher should have the flexibility to switch to Chinese (Cantonese or *Putonghua*), provided the switch facilitates teaching and learning'.

The survey results show that there is considerable leeway in making decisions regarding the medium of instruction and classroom language use. For example, a CMI course can be conducted in either Cantonese or *Putonghua*, depending on the nature of the course and the students' and lecturer's language backgrounds and abilities. In addition, as stipulated in the new language policy, 'classroom code-switching, which is typically driven and justified by students' enhanced learning outcomes, does not constitute a breach of the Institute's new LLT policy'. The survey findings offer support for promoting functional biliteracy and trilingualism in the tertiary education context in Hong Kong.

4 A Case Study of MOI and Classroom Language for Two Courses

The choice of MOI and CL use in a multilingual classroom has always been confounded by complexities. As pointed out by Martin (2003, p. 83), 'the relationship between classroom practice and language policy is not a simple and straightforward one'. In this section, I shall describe the practices of MOI and classroom language

use for two courses offered at HEI-8 to illustrate how functional biliteracy and functional trilingualism are practised inside and outside the classroom in the context of tertiary education in Hong Kong. So far, HEI-8 in its attempt to establish functional biliteracy and functional trilingualism is one of the first higher education institutions in Hong Kong to support the local HKSAR government language policy.

The two courses are offered by the former Department of English (currently Department of English Language Education, and Department of Linguistics and Modern Language Studies), and the former Department of Chinese (currently Department of Chinese Language Studies, and Department of Linguistics and Modern Language Studies). These courses are hereafter referred to as ENG-1 and CHI-1. ENG-1 is a project- and consultation-based course, entitled *English as an International Language: Research Thesis Project*, in the programme of Master of Arts of Teaching English as an International Language (MATEIL). CHI-1 is a classroom teaching-based course, entitled *Second Language Acquisition and Chinese Learning*, in the programme of Master of Arts of Teaching Chinese as an International Language (MATCIL).

ENG-1 requires students to complete a research thesis within a period of two semesters under the supervision of a project supervisor. Students choose their own research topics based on their understanding of English as an International Language (EIL) theories and pedagogy gained by attending plenary lectures and a series of workshops. They are expected to seek advice on the selection of project topics with their supervisor, work on their proposals and complete their theses within the two semesters. The aims of the project are for the students to improve their ability to conduct EIL-related research and to orient themselves with the discourse of the academic EIL community. In addition to content-based learning outcomes, there is also a language learning outcome, which is to demonstrate the students' academic literacy in terms of reading, writing, communication and critical thinking.

As this course is project- and consultation-based, throughout the two semesters there are plenary lectures introducing state-of-the-art subject area content and research methodology. There are workshops on writing literature reviews, collecting and analysing research data, and writing research reports. The students have regular consultations with their supervisor, individually or in groups. The four supervisors for this course include an English L1 professor, an English L1 associate professor, and two *Putonghua* L1 assistant professors. All have varying degrees of functional knowledge of the local language, Cantonese. The students in this course include Cantonese L1 local students, *Putonghua* L1 Chinese mainland students, and English-speaking (not necessarily English L1) students from Southeast Asia and other countries; all are competent users of English regardless of their L1. The medium of instruction specified in the course outline is English.

English is exclusively used for the course outline, main reading materials and formative and summative assessment tasks, and is also primarily used for lectures and workshops, and online communication through emails or Blackboard online discussion forums. However, both Cantonese and *Putonghua* are code-switched or code-mixed with English in classroom interaction between supervisors and students, and among students, and in individual or group consultations. In circum-

stances where *Putonghua* L1 supervisors have consultations with *Putonghua* L1 or Cantonese L1 students, both *Putonghua* and Cantonese are natural choices for functions such as engaging in small talk before or after a consultation. There are also circumstances where students express explicitly whether they will use their first language to communicate with their supervisors. Even if the medium of instruction for this course is English, the practices of translanguaging, heteroglossia, flexible MOI and classroom language, and complementary language use are common.

CHI-1 is a classroom teaching-based course. It provides grounding in research, theory and practice in relation to second language acquisition and Chinese learning. The objectives of the course are for the students to gain a systematic knowledge of the theories of second language acquisition and Chinese learning, and to apply relevant knowledge to the observation, research and analysis of Chinese acquisition in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Major topics for this course include theories in second language acquisition (SLA), second language teaching methodologies, English and Chinese grammar in contrast, linguistic difficulties found in a native English speaker learning Chinese and suggestions for assistance (a case study), factors affecting Chinese language learning in a multicultural milieu, and glocalisation (globalisation and localisation) issues in Chinese language learning. The assessment tasks include an in-class written test on the theory and practice of SLA and second language teaching methodologies, and an essay on the theory and practice of SLA and Chinese learning.

The four lecturers involved in teaching the course and supervising the students for their essay assignments include an English L1 chair professor with high proficiency in *Putonghua* and written Chinese, a Cantonese L1 professor of English with high proficiency in *Putonghua* and functional competence and performance in French and German, and two *Putonghua* L1 assistant professors with high proficiency in English and a functional knowledge of Cantonese. The students include a majority of *Putonghua* L1 Chinese mainland students, Cantonese L1 local students, and a small number of heritage Chinese speakers from multilingual countries in Southeast Asia and beyond. All are competent speakers of Chinese with competent literacy in Chinese reading and writing. They have varying degrees of functional English, a prerequisite for admission to the programme. This is a bilingual course, with the mediums of instruction being Chinese and English.

The course outline is in a bilingual version of Chinese (traditional characters) and English. The main reading materials are in either Chinese (including both traditional and simplified Chinese characters) or English. The formative and summative assessment tasks are set in bilingual Chinese and English, and the students have the flexibility to choose either Chinese or English to complete their assessment tasks. The medium of instruction is highly dependent on the context of interaction, including who the lecturers are and what topics are explored: for example, one of the *Putonghua* L1 lecturers has chosen *Putonghua* as the primary medium of instruction while the other has opted for English. The Cantonese L1 lecturer gives lectures and interacts with students in a systematic trilingual manner as his lectures are about ‘English and Chinese in contrast’, involving a systematic comparative analysis of English and Chinese (including *Putonghua* and Cantonese) in lexis, syntax, dis-

course and pragmatics. The English L1 lecturer lectures and interacts with students primarily in English, but also frequently uses a mixed code of English and Chinese *Putonghua*. Outside the classroom, when students have consultations with their lecturers, negotiating the medium for communication is ongoing. The general pattern is that *Putonghua* is predominantly used when students interact with the *Putonghua* L1 and Cantonese L1 lecturers, but English is more common with the English L1 lecturer. When Cantonese L1 students interact with the Cantonese L1 lecturer, Cantonese and *Putonghua* become their natural mediums of communication. This CHI-1 course appears to be an exemplary course for functional Chinese and English as mediums of instruction with systematic and dynamic practices of translanguaging, heteroglossia, flexible MOI and classroom language, and complementary languages in a multilingual higher education setting.

5 Implications and Conclusion

Having reviewed the language policies in Hong Kong, and institutional language-in-education policies, as well as issues of medium of instruction for two courses in the higher education context as a case study, in this section I shall explore the implications for institutional language-in-education policy-making, and for teachers and students in the tertiary education sector.

First of all, it would be practical to have institutional language-in-education policies that aligned with the government language policy of biliteracy and trilingualism. Currently English is the dominant medium for education in the tertiary sector in Hong Kong 'at the expense of Chinese and at the expense of the government's own language policy' (Kirkpatrick 2011, p. 110); this should be critically re-evaluated and modified. Higher education institutions in Hong Kong should review their language-in-education policies and consider models of MOI and CL that align with the multilingual reality of the diverse linguistic repertoires of the local teaching and learning communities as well as the wider sociocultural context. Lin (2005, p. 51) argues that 'by travelling between different disciplinary perspectives, we can develop interilluminating, transdisciplinary, critical, theoretical and analytic lenses for researching language-in-education policies and practices in (post-/neo) colonial contexts'. Preece (2011, p. 139) suggests that universities in the Anglophone centre (such as the UK) should keep pace with the 'changing student demographic and need to devise institutional language policies that take pluricentric, rather than monocentric, perspectives to linguistic diversity'. In increasingly decolonised societies such as Hong Kong, both political and educational agendas should be considered in creating a linguistically diverse tertiary education sector. In addition, higher education institutions in Hong Kong and other multilingual societies should develop and implement policies that help revitalise the local language, as well as promote the national and international lingua francas as languages of education.

Second, there should be coherence and continuity among the language-in-education policies from primary to tertiary education. The current mother tongue edu-

cation in primary schools, fine-tuned MOI policies for secondary schools, and the predominantly English-medium education for universities should be re-aligned to form a coherent and sustainable progression. It should be noted that the prevailing English-medium education in the tertiary sector in Hong Kong has been exerting a backwash effect on the attitudes, preferences and choices of parents, students, teachers and other stakeholders for MOI in primary and secondary schools; therefore, the issues of MOI for tertiary education should be re-examined to ensure a sensible coherence and continuity of language-in-education policies within the Hong Kong educational system and beyond, and also to ensure the continuing and sustainable literacy development of the students and a progressive transition from functional to critical biliteracy and trilingualism. Language education planning agents need to recognise the functional use of languages within a multilingual educational context while maintaining a critical perspective. This critical perspective, however, cannot occur in the absence of the functional use and application of languages.

Third, it should be acknowledged that schools and universities in Hong Kong are authentic multilingual spaces in which the multilingual repertoires of teachers and students, and multilingual resources, should be treated as linguistic and cultural assets. Kirkpatrick and Chau (2008, p. 41) believe that 'in multilingual sites such as Hong Kong schools, the multilingual resources of both students and teachers need to be respected and exploited. To deny multilingual teachers and students the right and opportunity to switch between their shared languages is to deny them the opportunity and right to operate effectively, whether they be language teachers or subject teachers'. For the tertiary education sector, Preece (2011, p. 121) proposes that universities should be imagined as 'sites of multilingualism' with 'a vital role to play in contributing to the development of pluralistic, multicultural and multilingual societies at national, regional and global levels, in educating critical citizens of the world'. Kirkpatrick (2011, p. 116) further points out that 'Asian universities can create conditions for higher education to become multilateral and multilingual. This would allow local languages and English to play complementary roles in education'.

Fourth, in terms of the complementary roles of local languages and English in the context of multilingual education, translanguaging practices should not be merely acknowledged but considered the norm for universities in a multilingual society. Canagarajah (2011, pp. 4–5) defines translanguaging as a 'social accomplishment' and a 'creative improvisation according to the needs of the context and local situation'. The assumptions underlying translanguaging, he notes (p. 1), are that, for multilinguals, languages are part of a repertoire that is accessed for their communicative purposes; languages are not discrete and separated, but form an integrated system for them; multilingual competence emerges out of local practices where multiple languages are negotiated for communication; competence does not consist of separate competencies for each language, but is a multicompetence that functions symbiotically for the different languages in one's repertoire; and, for these reasons, proficiency for multilinguals is focused on repertoire building—that is, for developing abilities in the different functions served by different languages—rather than total mastery of each and every language. Translanguaging and heteroglossia

are manifestations of universities as sites of multilingualism, so any attempt to impose strict guidelines on language use is unnatural and unsustainable. 'What current classroom studies show is that translanguaging is a naturally occurring phenomenon for multilingual students. Translanguaging cannot be completely restrained by monolingual educational policies' (Canagarajah 2011, p. 8). In a multilingual educational context, pedagogy should emphasise the translanguaging competence of the student and teacher rather than enforcing the separation of languages for learning and teaching. A pedagogy based on competence can enable both student and teacher to recognise that they can use their languages for different functional goals in the classroom. Functional biliteracy and trilingualism pedagogies are not only feasible but are embraced by Hong Kong students. According to Li (2013, p. 81), 'in terms of language functions assigned to Cantonese in society as well as its role in education, there is little evidence that the expanding role of English (highly marked) and *Putonghua* (just beginning) in higher education takes place at the expense of Cantonese. Rather, both languages are embraced as useful linguistic capital for Hong Kong students'.

The choice of any MOI in a multilingual educational context is an ongoing, dynamic negotiation rather than a static or ossified policy stipulation. The MOI is highly context-dependent. As far as the Hong Kong educational context is concerned, Li, Leung and Kember point out that

> standards of English and students' ability to cope with English instruction vary between institutions and between programmes within institutions. Those studying business and engineering need to be fluent in English. For those doing courses in social work or health fields almost all their clinical experience and future interaction with clients is conducted in Cantonese. The need for *Putonghua*, for many students, is also becoming more apparent. There are also variations in the disciplinary requirements. In some disciplines, the literature and terminology are almost entirely in English, but others make a greater use of local material. (2001, p. 306)

The institutional language-in-education policy of HEI-8, which stipulates functional biliteracy and trilingualism, recognises the increasing linguistic diversity of teachers and students and acknowledges the variation across disciplines. This policy offers legitimate space for the negotiation of MOI at the levels of an individual course, programme, faculty, discipline, and institution, so that the institution as a whole can play an integral role in contributing to the development of a biliterate and trilingual society.

Last, both teachers and students should voice their views and concerns over issues of language-in-education policies and the MOI for their courses, programmes and institutions. As pointed out by Martin (2003, p. 84), 'it is the classroom participants, teachers and learners, ultimately, who make decisions about which languages are most appropriate for different events in the classroom and their views need to be heard'. While drafting the language-in-education policy for HEI-8, the institutional committee on language policy established consultative processes and platforms through campus-wide questionnaire surveys and consultation interviews with academic units (including the language centre, various faculty members, and programme coordinators), non-academic units (including the finance office, the of-

fice of information technology and services, international office, research centres, and the library), and a diverse body of students (including representatives from all programmes). In addition, opinions and responses were elicited from external programme examiners and review panel members, stakeholders, language experts, and policy makers. These consultations and regular ongoing meetings of the standing committee on language policy have enabled the committee to draft an institutional language-in-education policy that not only incorporates teachers' and students' voices but also addresses their concerns and dilemmas at institutional level, so that the policy does not only stipulate language requirements but also provides measures and incentives and facilitates the support of teachers and students, to accomplish the mission of biliteracy and trilingualism in Hong Kong society.

A well-consulted and established institutional language policy is only one step contributing to the development of biliteracy and trilingualism in Hong Kong. There are still challenges in terms of implementing and adapting the policy, and in how other institutions and the public react to it. No language-in-education policy involving issues of MOI in a multilingual society can be one-size-fits-all. The relationship between policies and language practices is by no means simple or straightforward. Multilingual language policies face challenges in both the classroom and the community: for instance, at the classroom level there are challenges of providing materials and interacting in languages which are not necessarily spoken by all participants; and at the community level there are challenges of attitudes favouring the language of power. Hong Kong is a changing society with its own specific post-colonial characteristics. Language-in-education policies and multilingual MOI models in such a society should pave the way for all schools and higher education institutions to become multilingual sites with major languages co-existing in a complementary way. Further research is needed to investigate how institutional language policies may be customised to align with the aspirations of the public and the government's language policy, and how they may be implemented to accomplish these outcomes.

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