Multilingual Education

Neil Murray
Angela Scarino *Editors*

Dynamic Ecologies

A Relational Perspective on Languages Education in the Asia-Pacific Region

Springer

Multilingual Education

MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

VOLUME 9

Series Editors:

For further volumes:
http://www.springer.com/series/8836

Neil Murray • Angela Scarino
Editors

Dynamic Ecologies

A Relational Perspective on Languages Education in the Asia-Pacific Region

Springer

Editors
Neil Murray
Centre for Applied Linguistics S1.74 Social Sciences Building
University of Warwick
Coventry
United Kingdom

Angela Scarino
Research Centre for Lang. & Cultures
School of Comm., Int. Studies & Lang.
University of South Australia
Magill
Australia

ISSN 2213-3208 ISSN 2213-3216 (electronic)
ISBN 978-94-007-7971-6 ISBN 978-94-007-7972-3 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3
Springer Dordrecht Heidelberg New York London

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013957422

Printed on acid-free paper

Springer is part of Springer Science+Business Media (www.springer.com)

Contents

Contributors

Cheryl Ballantyne is currently undertaking PhD research at the University of Western Sydney into the contributions Ningbo volunteer teacher-researchers are making to the teaching of Chinese in western Sydney primary and secondary schools. She is a regular contributor to the ROSETE research team. In her professional role she is a senior officer in the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Education and Communities (DEC), Australia. Between 2008 and 2013 she led the development and implementation of the Western Sydney-Ningbo Chinese Volunteer Teacher-Researcher Partnership in Western Sydney Region. Her previous experience in the NSW public education system includes leadership of school development and improvement strategies, management of regional and state teams, school leadership experience, leadership and delivery of state-wide ESL teacher training, TESOL and primary school teaching.

Dr. Jonathan Crichton is Lecturer in Applied Linguistics and Research Fellow at the Research Centre for Languages and Cultures, University of South Australia. His research focuses on the role of language in interactions in educational and health settings, with a particular interest in contexts of linguistic and cultural diversity. He has published in a wide range of international journals and edited collections, and is the author of *The Discourse of Commercialization* (2010), and co-editor, with C. N. Candlin, of *Discourses of Deficit* (2011) and *Discourses of Trust* (2013), all with Palgrave Macmillan.

Yuko Goto Butler has a PhD in educational psychology from Stanford University. She is currently Associate Professor of Educational Linguistics at the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, where she is also Director of the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) programme. Dr. Butler is interested in understanding how young learners acquire additional language(s) and how this relates to their first language, particularly when considering dynamic social contexts. She is also interested in identifying assessment methods for young learners that take into account the relevant linguistic and cultural contexts in which instruction takes place. Most recently, she has been conducting a longitudinal project looking at the effect of various contextual factors, including parents and peers, on the development of young learners' motivation to learn and their acquisition of language.

Andy Kirkpatrick (a.kirkpatrick@griffith.edu.au) is Professor in the Department of Languages and Linguistics at Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia. He has many years' experience teaching in tertiary institutions in China, Hong Kong, Myanmar and Singapore. His most recent books are *English as an International Language in Asia: Implications for Language Education* (co-edited with Roland Sussex for Springer, 2012) and *Chinese Rhetoric and Writing* (Parlor Press), co-authored with Xu Zhichang (2012). He is chief editor of Springer's book series *Multilingual Education* and of Springer's Open Access Journal, *Multilingual Education*. He is currently President of the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia.

Dr. Michelle Kohler is a Research Fellow at the Research Centre for Languages and Cultures, University of South Australia and Lecturer in Languages Education at Flinders University. She is an experienced language teacher and researcher with a background in languages pedagogy, curriculum and assessment, and with particular expertise in Indonesian and Asian languages. She has been involved in multiple projects in languages education of national significance in Australia, including as the lead author of the evaluation report *The Current State of Indonesian Language Education in Australian Schools*. Her research interests are in intercultural language teaching and learning, languages curriculum and assessment, and pedagogy, with a particular focus on mediation.

Anthony J. Liddicoat is Professor in Applied Linguistics at the Research Centre for Languages and Cultures in the School of Communication, International Studies and Languages at the University of South Australia. His research interests include: language and intercultural issues in education, conversation analysis, and language policy and planning. In recent years his research has focussed on ways on issues relating to the teaching and learning of culture through language study. His publications include *Language-in-education Policies: The Discursive Construction of Intercultural Relations* (2013); *Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning* (2013—with Angela Scarino); *Linguistics and Intercultural Education in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning* (2013—with Fred Dervin); *Introduction to Conversation Analysis* (2011); *Languages in Australian Education: Problems, Prospects and Future Directions* (2010—*with Angela Scarino*); *Language Planning in Local Contexts* (2008—with Richard Baldauf); *Discourse Genre and Rhetoric* (2008); and *Language Planning and Literacy* (2006).

Joseph Lo Bianco holds the Chair of Language and Literacy Education at the University of Melbourne and was formerly Director of the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia. He is President of the Tsinghua Asian-Pacific Forum on Translation and Intercultural Studies and Immediate Past President, Australian Academy of the Humanities. In late 2012 he was invited by the East Asia and Pacific Regional Office of UNICEF to design and begin a research program in SE Asia on questions of language planning and social cohesion and has been conducting research in Myanmar, Malaysia and Thailand on this topic. He is an experienced language planning practitioner and analyst with recent assignments in Ireland, Timor Leste and Sri Lanka. In press is a volume entitled *Language Plan-*

ning and Student Experiences: Intention, Rhetoric and Implementation to be issued mid-2013 by Multilingual Matters. He has published more than 120 refereed articles and over 30 major reports and books.

Zuraidah Mohd Don is Faculty Dean and Chair of the Council of Language Deans at the Ministry of Higher Education. Her research covers a wide field centred on the study of language, ranging from prosody, pragmatics and discourse analysis to corpus linguistics and English Language Teaching. She has collaborated extensively with researchers in other disciplines, including computer studies, engineering, and medicine, and has acted as consultant in connection with the development of speech technologies for Malay. She has over 100 publications, including contributions to journals including *Journal of Pragmatics, Discourse & Society, Text and Talk, Computers in Human Behaviour and World Englishes*.

Neil Murray is Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics in the Centre for Applied Linguistics at the University of Warwick, UK. He is also an adjunct member of the Research Centre for Languages & Cultures at the University of South Australia, where he was previously Head of Language and Literacy. He has 30 years' experience in English language education in Italy, Japan, the UK and Australia, where he has directed and lectured on numerous programmes. He holds degrees in Applied Linguistics from Cambridge, London and Temple Universities and has published widely on academic listening and writing, pragmatics, language testing, academic literacy and access education. His current research interests focus on English language policy and regulation in higher education and English as a lingua franca. His most recent book is *Writing Essays in English Language and Linguistics* (Cambridge University Press) and he is currently authoring a book on Standards of English in Higher Education (CUP).

Anne Pakir is an associate professor at the Department of English Language and Literature and the Director of International Relations at NUS. She obtained her PhD in Linguistics from the University of Hawaii, Manoa and a Master's from U.C. Berkeley (English) on a Fulbright scholarship. She serves on the editorial boards of *Current Issues in Language Planning, English Today, World Englishes* and the book series, *Asian Englishes Today*. Her most recent publication was co-edited with Lisa Lim from Hong Kong University and Lionel Wee, NUS: *English in Singapore: Modernity and Management* (Hong Kong University Press, 2010). She was President of the Singapore Association for Applied Linguistics (1997–2004) and Chair of the AILA 2002 World Congress of Applied Linguistics hosted in Singapore. She was also a past President of the International Association for World Englishes (1998–2000) and a member of the TOEFL Board, Princeton NJ (2004–2009).

Angela Scarino is Associate Professor in Applied Linguistics and Director of the Research Centre for Languages and Cultures at the University of South Australia. Her research and publications are in the areas of language learning, language and culture in education, language assessment and language teacher education. She has served as the President of the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia and President of the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations.

She has led a number of research projects of national significance in intercultural language learning and the assessment of student achievement. Her recent books (co-authored with A. Liddicoat) include *Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide* (2009) and *Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning* (2013 with Wiley Blackwell). She has been an invited consultant advising on languages education and language assessment in Hong Kong, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia.

Andrew Scrimgeour is a Research Fellow at the Research Centre for Languages and Cultures at the University of South Australia, where he has undertaken research into curriculum design, assessing student outcomes and literacy development in Chinese. He has published numerous book chapters and articles relating to Chinese language education and participated in federally funded, collaborative research and professional development projects, including *A Guide to Teaching & Learning Languages* (2009), and the *Student Achievement in Asian Languages Education* (SAALE) Project (2010–2011). In 2009, he was appointed to the national expert group to advise the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) on the development of the national curriculum for languages in Australian schools, and in 2012 was the lead writer for the draft document *Australian Curriculum: Languages for Chinese*.

Prof. Michael Singh is based at the University of Western Sydney and leads the *Research Oriented School-based Eurasian Teacher Education (ROSETE) Partnership*, a research program investigating ways of making Chinese learnable for English speaking school students in Australia. The ROSETE Partnership is a ten year long industry/university Australia/China research program being conducted jointly by the University of Western Sydney, the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities, and the Ningbo Municipal Education Bureau (China). Professor Singh's research and teaching focuses on: (a) improving Australia's China and Chinese literacy through innovations in second language learning that focus on making Chinese learnable; (b) developing forms of work-integrated higher degree research education that take as their primary focus improving students' learning; (c) advancing partnership-driven research-oriented, school-engaged teacher education for innovative twenty first century teacher-researcher education, and (d) internationalising Western Anglophone education through non-Western international students' uses of their linguistic capabilities and critical theoretical tools in Australian educational research and teacher education.

Robyn Spence-Brown is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics at Monash University and Coordinator of the Japanese Studies Program. She teaches Japanese language to undergraduates, and postgraduate units in applied linguistics. Her research interests are in applied linguistics, including language education policy and the teaching of Japanese, language assessment, and ICT and language learning. She has a long history of interest in the teaching of Japanese in schools, and has participated in numerous curriculum and assessment committees. In 2010 she completed (with Anne de Kretser) a major report on the *Current State of Japanese Language Education in Australian Schools*, for the Asia Education Foundation and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Australia.

Prof. Amy B.M. Tsui is Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President of The University of Hong Kong. She assists the Vice-Chancellor in setting the direction and policy for the university's undergraduate curriculum reform, quality assurance of the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula, and promoting teaching excellence at the university. Professor Tsui concurrently holds the position of Chair Professor in the Faculty of Education. She obtained her PhD in linguistics in 1986 at The University of Birmingham, UK, and has published 8 books and nearly 100 journal papers and book chapters in the areas of classroom discourse, conversational analysis, language policy and teacher education. She has also given numerous keynotes in international conferences and serves on the editorial/advisory board of a number of international refereed journals. Her recent publications are *Learning in School-University Partnership: Sociocultural Perspectives* (2009) as lead author, and a co-edited book *Language, Culture and Identity in Asian Contexts* (2007), both by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates (now Routledge).

Part I
The Changing Dynamics Between English Language and Mother Tongues in Asian Contexts

Chapter 1
Introduction: A Relational View of Language Learning

Neil Murray and Angela Scarino

Abstract This introductory chapter, intended to both frame and provide a brief overview of those that follow, takes as its point of departure the realisation that in a world of globalization, where 'super diversity', multiculturalism and multilingualism increasingly characterize communities, and where language contact and cross-cultural interactions have become the norm, a change in the way in which we think about languages and languages education is needed. In particular, languages education needs to be developed on the basis of an understanding of the interplay of all the languages and cultures available in local contexts. In addition, it needs to be developed in such a way that students, as language users and language learners, become effective mediators of meanings across multiple languages, cultures and semiotic systems, thereby undergoing a process of personal transformation. We suggest that the need for such development should urge language planners, policy-makers and educators to adopt a relational perspective on language and languages that both respects and accounts for different world views and which has important implications for curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and evaluation. Each of the chapters of this volume, in its own way, provides insights into the need for and consequences of such a perspective.

Keywords Language ecologies · Relational view of language learning · Superdiversity · Multilingualism · Multiculturalism · Language policy and planning · Socialisation in diverse linguistic and cultural systems · Mediating linguistic and cultural difference · Enculturation · Global Englishes

N. Murray (✉)
University of Warwick, Coventry, UK
e-mail: N.L.Murray@warwick.ac.uk

A. Scarino
University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
e-mail: angela.scarino@unisa.edu.au

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_1, © Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht 2014

1.1 Background

This book was motivated by the realisation that, as result of significant and fast-moving changes to both the global and local contexts in which languages are inevitably situated (see, for example, Blommaert 2010), there is an increased need—some would say compulsion—for those involved in languages education to view individual languages not as isolated entities that are the subject of language policy-making, theorising and practice, but as part of a larger ecology. This ecology comprises multiple languages which, increasingly, are coming into contact with and impacting upon each other, often in subtle and significant ways. Adopting such a view presents the possibility of a richer, more inclusive and egalitarian view of languages and the cultures with which they are intertwined. It also enables a more vibrant teaching and learning environment that is as much about developing the intercultural capability of students—and indeed teachers—as it is about the acquisition of language. Yet, at the same time, it also raises complex and contentious epistemological and pedagogical questions. Resolving those questions to achieve a coherent, holistic approach to languages and languages education is a tall order indeed and appears to be emerging as something of a holy grail for applied linguists and others, provoking research into new and exciting areas of inquiry. Somewhat paradoxically, there is a sense, perhaps, that we are on the cusp of a major change in how we think about not only languages, languages education and the teaching and learning of languages, but also about the role of language and culture in learning more generally. We are only beginning to consider those questions that will need to be addressed if such change is to come about. What is undeniable is the sense of growing momentum, and the contributions that make up this volume provide multi-perspective insights into the thinking and research of scholars who are seeking both to further our understanding of some of the key questions that promise to inform change, and to find satisfactory ways of addressing those questions.

1.2 Multiculturalism, Superdiversity and New Perspectives on the Learning of Languages

The fact of language contact is, of course, not new; it has been happening for centuries. Today, however, the scale and speed of language contact is unprecedented due to the convergence of a series of factors associated with the process of globalisation—as either its drivers or products—including:

- Greater mobility of individuals and communities within and across national borders as a result of technological advancements and political developments;
- New media and an exponential growth in and level of access to electronic forms of information;
- Socio-political realities that drive individuals and communities to migrate as a result of political unrest and/or persecution;

- Skills and knowledge shortages in certain locales, countries and regions; and
- Decisions by individuals and families to uproot and relocate themselves in order to realise aspirations in respect of their education, employment, self-development, and an improved lifestyle.

Collectively, these factors have served not only to create a level of social, cultural and linguistic complexity characterised by Vertovec (2010) as 'superdiversity', and surpassing anything that many migrant-receiving communities have hitherto experienced, but also to alter the very nature of how we might understand linguistic and cultural diversity itself; that is to say, notions of multilingualism and multiculturalism. In particular, it suggests the need for a repositioning in how we view language, and, by extension, the teaching and learning of languages. This need for a shift in perspective is articulated by Della Chiesa et al. (2012) in the following terms:

> In this time of globalisation, language learning is ever more important—central to politics, economics, history and most obviously education … language learning is not isolated, but totally enmeshed with all the important issues of the future of humanity (p. 23) … language learning is not only the means to improve communication, but more importantly a key avenue to promoting global understanding. To understand the importance of language and culture, people need to be familiar with several languages and cultures. (p. 23)

The implications of this new salience and relevance of language and the learning of languages in today's increasingly multilingual and multicultural world are threefold and inter-related. Firstly, the mobility of people today and the consequent convergence of diverse world views, along with the more intricate political and social dynamics that accompany it, must now feature as key concerns in the learning of languages; to teach languages without regard for such concerns is to do a disservice to those who need to communicate effectively and appropriately with whomsoever they come into contact and from whatever language(s) and cultural background they originate. Language planners, policymakers and educators need to recognise and account for the fact, highlighted in Della Chiesa et al.'s OECD study, that multicultural societies contain diverse communities, each of which originates from a context characterised by different configurations of languages. In these contexts there will be different policies, practices and representations concerning languages. Each of the particular languages will have a different history of use and a different place in the educational and social landscape. Different values will be attached to different languages and different varieties of languages. The relationship among the different languages in particular contexts will also be different. Each of those languages will have different roles and purposes in the educational and social/political systems that characterise the contexts in which they exist and evolve. Furthermore, in each such context, people will vary in the nature and strength of their affiliations to different languages and the choices that they make about their use in diverse situations.

Secondly, there is a need to give greater prevalence to the social-psychological dimensions of language use and language learning. The ability to function effectively and appropriately in multilingual, multicultural societies requires language users to assume the role of intercultural mediators of languages and cultures, facilitating communication in the context of diversity without relinquishing their cultural allegiances and sense of who they are. Participants in any given communicative experience need to be encouraged to recognise the need, and demonstrate a willingness, to accommodate not to the particular linguistic and cultural 'norms' of the lingua franca adopted for the current purposes of communication and as used by its traditional native speakers, but rather to those of the particular individual(s) with whom they are interacting. In interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning, interlocutors will draw upon language and cultural references that come from their primary and ongoing socialisation in diverse linguistic and cultural systems. Their different life-worlds and the frames of reference that they bring mean that the exchange of meanings is always a site of negotiation, clarification and explanation.

Thirdly, and a necessary consequence of implications one and two, if language is to enable its users to become mediators of meanings across languages and cultures and to reflect the complex, diverse and interconnected world in which each of us increasingly operates, then those users need to be equipped with sophisticated capabilities for language use. In particular, they need to be sensitive to variation in the way in which meaning is realised in different languages. They need to acquire the 'grammar' of the interlinguistic and intercultural space and ways that enable them to operate productively in that space, able to negotiate different world views and their linguistic and cultural manifestations, while achieving the communicative purpose at hand.

These things entail a broad change of perspective that has implications for languages in education; how they are conceptualised, learnt and taught. In particular, they suggest a need to view language learning as a dual process of learning language and learning to use language, and of developing intercultural understanding as an integral part of the process. In addition, this learning entails a relational view of languages, such that students become effective intercultural communicators in whatever context, and achieve to their full potential without needing to relinquish or sever their own language and cultural roots. A relational view of languages, as the descriptor suggests, focuses on plurality rather than singularity and on the relationships among languages in use, rather than on their objectification. Drawing on Halliday (1993), in the context of education this means, in a pluralistic way, learning language, learning through language and learning about language. In learning language, students learn the language(s) of their primary socialisation and of the communities of users of additional languages which are part of their school education or home experience. In learning additional languages, learners come to see the relationship between those language(s) that are already a part of their repertoire and the additional language being learned. Indeed the learning of the additional language necessarily builds upon the learners' existing linguistic and cultural life-world. And this relationship is integral to learning. In 'learning through languages', students experience the value of language, and indeed multiple languages, as mediums through which to learn and develop new knowledge. Enabling young learners, who may be entering the education system with a home language that is different from the language of instruction, to continue to learn in the language of their primary socialisation while developing the language of mainstream instruction, is crucial to their success in learning. That success is not only to be considered in cognitive terms but also in social/emotional terms, when students see that all the languages in their repertoire are valued. In 'learning about languages' students develop the metalinguistic and metacognitive awareness of, for example, how language works, how particular languages work in distinctive ways, how languages construct meanings, and ultimately, the power of languages to include/exclude and persuade/dissuade, and the power of multilingualism and multiculturalism.

A relational view of language learning can be understood at many different levels. At the contextual level, it signals an ecological relationship among languages in use in diverse settings, recognising that their configuration, their relationships, and choices about their use differ in time and space. At a conceptual level, a relational view of language can be understood as the integral relationships between, for example, language, culture and learning. At an educational level a relational view of language learning signals first and foremost the diversity of learners, with their diverse languages and cultures, diverse life-worlds and diverse ways of understanding and being in the world.

The goal of language learning should be to develop in students an inter-linguistic and intercultural capability that enables and encourages them to communicate successfully across languages and cultures as semiotic systems. It should encourage them to draw upon, as a resource, their diverse prior and evolving experience of using language and the diverse languages that are part of their linguistic and cultural repertoire. In reflecting on the changing face of multilingualism and multiculturalism in education, Stroud and Heugh (2011, p. 424) articulate the need for such a change of perspective in the following terms:

> Classrooms and curricula need to be able to engage with and build on the diversity in semiotic modes that learners bring into the classroom … The shifting nature of learner personae and subjectivities point to the need for new understandings of the teaching/learning process … particularly its individuation to accommodate different types of learning biographies emanating from the heterogeneity of learning.

At the same time, developing this goal does not mean that all norms of language use are abandoned; rather, it means holding both standard use and variation in play simultaneously, ensuring that learners appreciate the differences between and value of both.

At a broad level of analysis, then, we would suggest that a view of language learning framed within a rapidly evolving multilingual and multicultural educational context might encompass a number of characteristics. Such a view would:

- Reflect a shift toward plurilingual approaches to learning languages that takes into account all of the languages in a learner's repertoire and as such provides a counterpoint to the monolingual bias that has traditionally characterised language education work (Cenoz and Gorter 2011; Franceschini 2011);
- Recognise that language and culture are at the core of educational activity—indeed human activity generally—and that educational achievement and proficiency in the language of instruction are strongly correlated (Cook 2005; Stephen et al. 2004);
- Provoke a critical appraisal and probable enhancement of the notion of 'competence' as it is currently conceived, so as to ensure that it captures the relational

positioning of practices that operate between linguistic and cultural systems and the individual's capacity to negotiate the processes of encoding, interpreting and meaning-making across languages and cultures;

- Focus on multilingual practices and related research, including language use behaviours such as translanguaging (Garcia 2009), code-switching, code meshing, polylingualism, and the role of reflection and reflexivity in understanding and engaging in such practices; (Creese and Blackledge 2010; Wei 2011);
- Recognise the diverse contexts of practice that increasingly face policy-makers and practitioners within both languages education and education more broadly; contexts often saturated with information, resources, expectations and experiences and which require investigation and understanding unconstrained by preconceptions so far as is reasonably possible (Blommaert and Rampton 2012);
- Acknowledge the role of identity, multiple identities, and identity formation in language learning and the need to take account of identity theory (Norton 2000) in the shaping of policy and practice;
- Include the deliberate examination of possible tensions between institutional notions of multilingualism as the use of individual languages in particular contexts, and the potential creativity of mixed language practices where multiple languages intersect.

This shift toward what might be referred to as a multicultural and multilingual view of language learning serves to focus the spotlight firmly on the learner, not as some entity dislocated from the object of learning but rather as the very embodiment of it, located at the point of intersection between language, culture and learning, where the language learner assumes multiple roles: learner, user, and person. As *language learner*, he/she uses language and cultural tools to assimilate, create and produce new knowledge and understanding. Here, encultured understandings derived from the home language and culture interact with the encultured understandings of the target language community—a process that serves to highlight the language learning process as subjective, negotiated and in flux. As *language user*, the learner uses the target language for personal expression and to develop a personal voice in the target language. The learner has to perform in the target language, where he/she can be positioned as a legitimate user. In communicating in the target language, the learner has to reconcile the linguistic and cultural demands of communication across languages and cultures; that is, he or she has to become an intercultural user. As *person*, the learner brings a unique personality and identity that will inevitably influence the way he/she engages with and use the target language but which will gradually undergo transformation as they develop their intercultural competence though increasing his/her capacity to engage with the target language and its multifarious users. That is, while there will be some dissociation from or suspension of their personality and identity as they participate in learning and communicating in the target language, over time that process of adjustment or adaptation will fundamentally alter their sense of who they are. In other words, the process of language learning is not simply one of buying into a set of prescribed beliefs and behaviours; it is one of personal transformation manifested in intercultural competence and an increased facility to operate comfortably across languages and cultures.

1.3 Some Implications

This change in how we view language learning and the language learner has important implications for curriculum, pedagogy and assessment and evaluation. Through their stance (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1999), language teachers need to equip their students with the experiences and tools to engage with and traverse linguistic and cultural difference; to encourage them to mediate meanings across languages and cultures and to develop a capability that permits and enables them to draw on whatever languages and cultural knowledge they have at their disposal. Communication itself—and thus language learning—becomes more a process of effectively negotiating difference in the exchange of meaning and employing an ever more developed capability to that end. In developing that capability, students need to be provided with opportunities to reflect on, recognise and exploit relationships between languages; to draw comparisons; to construct and deconstruct meaning, explain relationships between forms and meanings, differences in the nature of those relationships between different languages, and the implications for encoding and interpreting meaning; and to 'move between languages' productively and with ease (e.g. Ortega 2009, 2010).

The ramifications of this change are significant and they bear heavily on another issue that is current and controversial in applied linguistics—English as a lingua franca and the accompanying notion of global Englishes. This issue has great relevance for the kind of multicultural, multilingual view of languages and language learning that, perhaps inevitably, accompanies a relational perspective of languages and languages education.

A key theme running through English as lingua-franca discourse is the idea that because, in today's global world, English is the language of international communication and the majority of interactions conducted in English are between non-native speakers—that is, speakers from Kachru's 'outer' and 'expanding circle' countries (1985)—native speakers, their Englishes and their ownership of English have become irrelevant. Because today, World English belongs to everyone who speaks it and not merely to those traditionally privileged 'inner circle' native-speaker groups, the varieties that they choose to speak are as legitimate as native-speaker varieties. As Widdowson put it, 'how English develops in the world is no business whatever of native speakers in England, the United States, or anywhere else' (1994, p. 385). Those varieties take on local linguistic and cultural flavours as their speakers adopt a pragmatic stance where the means of communication are treated as secondary to the ends, in preference to one that places native speaker norms on a pedestal. Indeed, Canagarajah (2004) argues that because functionality and pragmatics have taken precedence as its users construct English to suit their purposes in any given context at any given time, there is no longer any universal English language or World Standard English (WSE) and Kachru's three circles are 'leaking' as a result of the forces underlying globalisation. Kuo (2006) articulates this shift of perspective and its broad consequences in stark terms:

> Since native speakers are no longer important or relevant in the global spread of English, it now seems rather redundant for L2 learners worldwide to conform to native-speaker norms. L2 learners are now entitled 'privileges' hitherto reserved exclusively for native speakers, such as a claim to ownership, a right to use English without others passing judgements, an equal footing with speakers of other English varieties, and, perhaps more profoundly, a right to shape the future of English (Melchers and Shaw 2003). (Kuo 2006, p. 214)

The notions of English as lingua-franca (ELF), global Englishes and plurilingualism would appear to sit comfortably with a relational view of languages and language learning. Most notably, both allow for the online construction and negotiation of language by interlocutors according to the demands of the situation, where participants are free agents in mediating meanings across languages and cultures in order to 'get business done' as efficiently and effectively as possible. At the same time, they also bring with them pedagogical challenges. For example, how does one reconcile the kind of freedom borne of functionalism and pragmatism of the sort to which Canagarajah (2004) refers and which encourages creativity and mutual intelligibility in favour of adherence to the rules and principles of an 'ideal' (native-speaker) model, with the need to standardise and objectify language to the extent necessary to teach it systematically, particularly to multilingual, multicultural student cohorts?

This rather more nuanced view of the language learner's developing intercultural communicative capability has important ramifications for how it is understood, and, by extension, on what basis it should be assessed. Language learners' communicative capability has less to do with how well their language at a given point in time measures up to that of a given standard—or variety—of English, and more to do with their ability to negotiate meaning through the medium of English with potential interlocutors from multifarious language and cultural backgrounds and who may speak a different variety of English. Increasingly, this is surely the situation that users of English are going to be facing. And the same is true for diverse languages, though perhaps to a smaller extent. As we have seen, interactions in English between non-native speakers predominate in today's globalised world and the increasing acknowledgement of the reality and legitimacy of different varieties of English means that judgements of learners' use of language need to be based on their ability to adapt on the fly to any given interaction both linguistically and culturally, whatever the parameters. Because these parameters are increasingly unpredictable, the extent to which that ability to adapt is manifested, and perhaps the speed and deftness with which it is developed and employed in interactions, should arguably be a primary indicator of a learner's capability.

There is no doubt that such a relational view presents tensions and complexities, but it is also a view that begins to do justice in contemporary times to the need (1) to exchange across languages and cultures not only words, but meanings and (2) to ensure that learners have every opportunity to succeed in learning languages, learning through languages and learning about languages.

1.4 The Chapters

The papers in this volume consider aspects of the relational view of language policy and planning and language learning in the dynamic Asia-Pacific region. English has a dominant place in the landscape across the region as a whole. Chinese has gained increased visibility in the region, with a heightened interest by many countries in expanding its learning. The Australian Government's white paper: *Australia in the Asian Century* (Australia in the Asian Century Taskforce 2012) strengthens (again) the focus on the importance to Australia of the languages of the region—especially Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian and Japanese.

The papers in Part 1 examine the phenomenon of English and local mother tongues in diverse parts of the region. Andy Kirkpatrick demonstrates cogently the impact on local languages of government and institutional policies promoting the role of English in the region as the medium of instruction in institutions of higher education. Such promotion, he argues, is largely a result of internationalisation and a desire by universities to raise their international profile and rankings and ensure their continued financial viability. Inevitably, it seems, the consequence is that in the absence of carefully considered policies that take into account particular contextual circumstances, local languages are dislodged and the use of English disrupts the ecology of the local languages. A relational view of language policy and language learning is necessary, it would seem, to restore ecological 'harmony'. Jonathan Crichton and Neil Murray's chapter considers the notion of harmony—or rather its converse, dissonance—from a different, if related perspective. They reflect on the real tensions that surround globalisation and the consequential shift from a monolithic to a plurilithic view of English, seeing it primarily as a tension between variation and standardisation that is manifested in teaching, learning and assessment. Anne Pakir considers the notion of 'glocal English' in Singapore, where English is used as the working language in a country where the population is distinctively multilingual and where, rightly, policies are in place for maintaining and developing the local mother tongues. Joseph Lo Bianco examines the long-standing debate about 'Asia literacy' in Australia, a country torn in complex ways between its linguistic and cultural base in English and its desire to be part of the Asian region. Based on detailed interviews with the range of students that populate the University of Hong Kong, Amy Tsui analyses in a nuanced way the perceptions of students in relation to their use of diverse languages (Putonghua, English and Cantonese), the meanings that the use of these languages hold for them and the conflictual nature of language use in the context of the internationalisation of universities and the education that they offer. Yuko Goto Butler's study examines the zeal for learning English in Changzhou, China. She looks, in particular, at the impact of this trend both in social and educational terms (specifically, the increasing disparity in levels of achievement between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds) and in terms of its potential impact on the rich existing linguistic ecology. Zuraidah Mohd Don offers a more historically anchored piece that considers the case of an ongoing shift in policy settings for the use of English and Malay as mediums of instruction in Malaysia, with enormous impact on teachers' work and, most importantly, students' progress in learning. As with many of the volume's other contributions, she highlights how ideologically and politically charged policy decisions in this area tend to be.

In each of the papers, in Part 1, there is evidence of disruption and tension surrounding the role of different configurations of languages in different countries of the region—a disruption that emerges from the politics and economics of globalisation and especially relates to the role of English. This state of affairs is highly consequential for language learning and learning in general in the region.

The papers in Part 2 examine the shift towards Asian languages in Australia, where notwithstanding government support for Asian languages, tensions remain around policies, educational provision and the nature of Asian language teaching, learning and assessment. Angela Scarino foregrounds the complexity of assessing and describing students' achievements in diverse Asian languages (Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean) in a context where the framing of assessment has for decades generalised across languages, across learners (who have diverse trajectories of language learning experience at school and at home), and across important conditions such as time-on-task in language learning. She describes the findings of a national study that examined student achievement in Asian language learning (K–12), arguing for the need for context-sensitive descriptions of achievement that respect the diversity of learners. Andrew Scrimgeour, Michelle Kohler and Robyn Spence-Brown depict the challenges involved in making provision for and promoting learning in Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese respectively, in Australian education. Those challenges are fundamentally related to the ideology of monolingualism, notwithstanding Australia's claim to be a multilingual country. Michael Singh and Cheryl Ballantyne describe experimentation with making the teaching and learning of Chinese feasible through a sustained and well-supported partnership. What is clearly evident is that a good deal more experimentation will be needed in Australia if the languages of the region are to be made available and learnt more widely and successfully.

In Part 3, Tony Liddicoat reflects on key themes emerging from the 12 chapters of the volume, highlighting in particular the tensions and possible ways forward in offering opportunities to learn English and Asian languages in ecologically-sensitive and successful ways in the region. Fundamental to success will be a relational view of language learning that is respectful of local ecologies. The gradual unfolding of how that view ultimately comes to be manifested in the years ahead is an enticing prospect indeed.

References

Australia in the Asian Century Taskforce. (2012). Australia in the Asian century: White Paper. Canberra: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/white-paper. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Blommaert, J., & Rampton B. (2012). *Language and superdiversity*. MMG working paper 12-09. Göttingen: Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity.

Blommaert, J. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Canagarajah, A. S. (Ed.). (2004). *Reclaiming the local in language policy and practice*. Mahway: Lawrence Erlbaum.
Cenoz, J., & Gorter D. (2011). A holistic approach to multilingual education: Introduction. *Modern Language Journal*, *95*, 339–343.
Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle S. (1999). Relationships of knowledge and practice: Teacher learning in communities. *Review of Research in Education*, *24*, 249–306.
Cook, V. J. (2005). Multicompetence: Black hole or wormhole? www.tc.colmbia.edu/academic/tesol/SLRF2005/VivianCook.pdf.
Creese, A., & Blackledge A. (2010). Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: A pedagogy for learning and teaching? *Modern Language Journal*, *94*, 103–115.
Della Chiesa, B., Scott, J., & Hinton C. (Eds.). (2012). *Languages in a global world. Learning for better cultural understanding*. Paris: Educational Research and Innovation, OECD Publishing. doi:10.1787/9789264123557-en.
Franceschini, R. (2011). Multilingualism and multicompetence: A conceptual view. *Modern Language Journal*, *95*, 344–355.
Garcia, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: Global perspectives*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
Halliday, M. A. K. (1993). Towards a language-based theory of learning. *Linguistics and Education*, *5*, 93–116.
Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk & H. Widdowson (Eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures* (pp. 11–36). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Kuo, I. C. (2006). Addressing the issue of teaching English as a lingua franca. *ELT Journal*, *60*, 213–221.
Ortega, A. (2009). Acquisition, participation and in-betweenness as metaphors for L2 learning. Paper presented at the first/combined ALANZ/ALAA Conference, Auckland, New Zealand.
Ortega, L. (2010). The bilingual turn in SLA. Plenary delivered at the annual conference of the American association for applied linguistics, Atlanta, GA, 6–9 March.
Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and language learning: Gender, ethnicity and educational change*. Harlow: Pearson.
Stephen, D. F., Welman, J. C., & Jordaan, J. (2004). English language proficiency as an indicator of academic performance at a tertiary institution. *SA Journal of Human Resources Management*, *2*(3), 42–53.
Stroud, C., & Heugh K. (2011). Languages in education. In R. Mesthrie (Ed.), *Cambridge handbook of sociolinguistics* (pp. 413–429). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Vertovec, S. (2010). *Towards post-multiculturalism: Changing communities, conditions and contexts of diversity*. UNESCO: Blackwell.
Wei, L. (2011). Multilinguality, multimodality, and multicompetence: Code- and modeswitching by minority ethnic children in complementary schools. *Modern Language Journal*, *95*, 370–384.
Widdowson, H. G. (1994). The ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, *28*, 377–389.

Chapter 2
English as a Medium of Instruction in East and Southeast Asian Universities

Andy Kirkpatrick

Abstract In this chapter I shall consider the increasing shift to the use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in East and Southeast Asia, with the focus on the university sector. I shall also discuss possible implications of the trend towards EMI in Asian universities for the Australian university sector. The chapter begins with a brief discussion of the recently published Australian Government White Paper, Australia in the Asian Century and this is followed by summary of recent developments concerning the use of EMI in selected European universities. The main part of the paper reviews and discusses the adoption of EMI among selected universities in Asia. Some tentative predictions regarding the use of English and Asian languages in higher education in Australasia conclude the chapter.

Keywords English as a medium of instruction · Higher education · Multilingual education · Asia literacy · English as a lingua franca

2.1 Introduction

In October 2012, the Australian Government released a White Paper entitled *Australia in the Asian Century* (Australia in the Asian Century Taskforce 2012). This is illuminating as it indicates how the Australian Government is trying to position Australia as part of the Asia–Pacific region and the ideas which it believes need to be adopted in order to ensure Australia benefits from what is termed the 'Asian Century'. It calls on all Australians to play their part in 'becoming a more Asia-literate and Asia-capable nation' (p. iii). The Executive Summary of the White Paper recognises that 'Asia is an important source of new ideas, arts and culture, technologies and leading-edge science' (p. 8), yet this is the only mention of Asia as a source of knowledge in the document. It vows to support Australian researchers

A. Kirkpatrick (✉)
Griffith University, 170 Kessels Road, Nathan, Queensland 411, Australia
e-mail: a.kirkpatrick@griffith.edu.au

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_2, © Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht 2014

in their bid to strengthen their partnerships with researchers in the region and promises that, 'Every Australian student will have significant exposure to studies of Asia across the curriculum…' At the same time, 'All schools will engage with at least one school in Asia to support the teaching of a priority Asian language', (i.e. Mandarin, Hindi, Japanese and Indonesian) (p. 15).

While these are fine sentiments, Australian universities' recent record for the teaching of Asian languages is poor, with many languages restricted to a small number of universities and few students undertaking in-depth language studies (Dunne and Pavlyshyn 2012). The White Paper is short on details as to how these promises might be delivered. In the China Daily's *Asian Weekly,* Wilson (2012) summarises critics' responses to the White Paper as being replete with fine aspirations but short on details on how to realise them. He quotes Kanishka Jayasuriya, Director of the Indo-Pacific Governance Research Centre at Adelaide University, as saying that, despite the apparent recognition of Asia being an important source of new ideas, in fact the White Paper appears to 'neglect the growing shift of knowledge to Asia, the growth of research universities in the region—in China, South Korea and India—and the need to build strategic alliances and collaborations with these research institutions'.

I start with this reference to the White Paper as a way of illustrating how Australia is beginning to see how important Asia now is, but, at the same time, still not quite able to free itself from the notion that, in terms of higher education, Asia is a primarily a provider of international fee-paying students rather than a source of knowledge. I shall argue, however, that the trend towards English medium education in universities in the region actually provides an opportunity for Australian students to undertake at least a part of their degree programs in Asia. The irony is that the increased use of English as a medium of instruction has the potential of further advantaging speakers of English and disadvantaging speakers of other languages. It also reduces the role that Asian languages are playing in higher education and research.

2.2 EMI in European Universities

In Europe, the increasing adoption of EMI at universities has been well-documented (Maiworm and Wachter 2002; Wachter and Maiworm 2008). This has been attributed to the Bologna Process, which has encouraged universities across Europe to standardise their degree offerings so as to allow students the opportunity to undertake part of their degrees in different universities. Not surprisingly, this has led to English being adopted as a common medium of instruction, as this makes it easier for both students and staff to move between universities in different countries. This is the paradox of internationalisation, whereby the increased diversity of courses offered in English and the local languages may lead to students coming into contact with fewer languages (Haberland 2011, p. 43).

Phillipson puts it more strongly. What emerges unambiguously 'is that in the Bologna process, internationalization means English-medium higher education' (2009, p. 37). This, in turn, leads to adopting English ways of thinking. 'How can one go along with the use of English without exposing oneself to the risk of being anglicized in one's mental structures, without being brainwashed by the linguistic routines?' (Phillipson 2006, pp. 68–69). Similar views have been expressed in Australia. 'Internationalization has become little more than an entrenchment of the English language as an instrument of power and of an English-speaking worldview as the only legitimated perspective through which the world can be viewed and interpreted' (Trevaskes et al. 2003, p. 5).

In a nuanced recent study of the history of the increased use of EMI at a Dutch university, Wilkinson shows that, when the Dutch initially applied the Bologna approach in 2002, the reasons for the development of EMI courses were to encourage 'student mobility and diploma portability' (2013, p. 7). He also points out that there were comparatively few EMI courses at that time. He argues, however, that in more recent years there has been a large increase in EMI courses and that the reasons have shifted from educational to financial, evidenced in part by the university's attempt to attract students from outside Europe as they are required to pay international student fees. In describing a specific course in European studies in which 'there is no explicit demand on the students to seek source material in a language other than English' (p. 14), Wilkinson also cites concern about domain loss—that English is becoming the language of scholarship at the expense of other European languages. He makes the telling point, however, that while domain loss may be a national concern, it is seldom a concern for an individual university, which is usually happy to let students rely on English (2013, p. 12). I shall argue later that there is little concern for domain loss in Asian universities which have adopted EMI courses.

In their study of attitudes towards EMI courses and the use of English across the campus at the University of the Basque Country, the authors show that there are mixed views across all sectors of the university (Doiz et al. 2013). On the one hand, people acknowledge that EMI has broadened their minds, made them aware of other peoples, and increased their mobility. On the other, some feared the imposition of 'one-way thinking' and of English as the hegemonic language of communication. Many participants also acknowledged their own limitations in English and noted how this made life difficult for them. Importantly, the majority of the few *international* students who were surveyed reported that they wanted to learn the language of the host country and be taught in the local language—made more complex here, as both Basque and Spanish were involved. The authors concluded that English is valued by all three bodies (local students, faculty and administration personnel), although all also bemoan their own limitations in English (2012, p. 13).

In moving from universities outside Anglophone nations to those that are Anglophone, we see related and similar concerns being expressed about how English is dominant at the expense of other languages. This includes the lack of respect for multilingual ability among international students. For example 'Universities in the Anglophone centre appear to have taken a largely myopic stance', have 'a fixation on English and a monoglot ideology', where 'the linguistic repertoires of bi- and multilingual students (are) problematized rather than being treated as multilingual capital' (Preece 2011, p. 122). Potential contributions that international students can make are 'overlooked in the web of anxiety about standards and resources' (Trevaskes et al. 2003, p. 5).

The irony of this is that the nations that are the focus of this chapter, that is, China, South Korea and Japan, along with the ten countries that comprise the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Burma, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, have all promoted the use of English as a language of education in primary and secondary education and many have introduced EMI courses at tertiary level (Kirkpatrick 2011). Recent developments in the use of EMI in selected universities across East and Southeast Asia are the topic of the following section.

2.3 EMI in Asian Universities

At the 2012 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, it was agreed that ways of facilitating staff and student mobility across the region would be examined. This Bologna-like plan will inevitably give further impetus to the establishment of EMI courses. As it is, of the thirteen countries listed above, only Indonesia has not made English a compulsory subject at primary school. In many countries, English is introduced in the third year of primary school (China, for example). In some, it is used as a medium of education in primary school, as well as being taught as a subject (in Brunei and the Philippines, for example) and in Singapore it is the medium of instruction in primary school.

Even in Indonesia—the only country yet to make English a compulsory primary school subject—there is high demand for English from parents and this is a cause for concern for some scholars. '…with the emerging and mushrooming demand for English, schools then drop the local language in order to give more time to English teaching. As a result, in the long run, children and the younger generation can no longer speak the local language. This is culturally and linguistically pitiful' (Hadisantosa 2010, p. 31). Indeed the Indonesian Ministry of Education recently responded to these concerns by announcing that English, along with science, would no longer be taught in primary schools. According to a *Straits Times* report, which was then re-reported in the *Jakarta Globe* of 25 October, the Deputy Minister of Education, Musliar Kasim, is quoted as saying, 'It is too early to teach such hard subjects to the pupils', and that 'Elementary schools won't have English lessons because [pupils] haven't even learnt to understand the Indonesian language yet' (Osman 2012).

The announcement met with protests from those who argued that the removal of English would further delay Indonesia's move to participate in modernisation and globalisation. They were apparently effective as the *Jakarta Globe* of 14 November announced that the Deputy Minister had backtracked, assuring Indonesians that English would continue to be taught as an elective subject in elementary school (English will be taught 2012).

The debate over the role of English has been mirrored in other Asian countries. For example, in 2011, Malaysia abandoned its policy of teaching maths and science in primary school using English as a medium of instruction and has reverted to teaching these subjects through the national language, Bahasa Melayu. This decision was taken as exam results showed that children from poorer and rural backgrounds were failing to cope with learning science and maths through English. Even more radically, the Philippines, after several decades of a bilingual education policy in primary school that saw maths and science subjects taught in English and other subjects in the national language, Filipino, is now implementing a mother-tongue policy which allows the use of twelve other Filipino languages as languages of education for the early years of primary education (Agcaoili et al. 2013).

While this shows that some school systems in the region are now promoting local languages as languages of education, in the great majority of contexts, there has been an increase in the teaching of English. Those who can afford it will send their children to kindergartens where English is taught. They will also send their children to private English medium schools in favour of local government schools. 'To actually forsake the public school system that teaches in your own language for the private one that teaches in English is an increasingly common phenomenon' (Wang Gungwu 2007, p. xiv).

Hong Kong provides an informative example of how the medium of instruction (MoI) at the university level influences the choice of MoI at the primary and secondary levels. English and Chinese enjoy equal status in Hong Kong as co-official languages, although Chinese only achieved this status in 1974. Despite several reports into language education policy over several decades advocating the use of the mother tongue as a MoI—and in the case of Hong Kong's students this remains overwhelmingly Cantonese—the colonial government responded to protests from schools and parents and 'backed down from pressing ahead with Chinese-medium instruction' (Bolton 2012, p. 231). In contrast, it allowed a laissez-faire approach, which meant that almost all secondary schools adopted EMI. An obvious reason for this was that the universities taught all subjects, other than Chinese itself and Chinese-related subjects, in English. The exception has been the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), which was founded in 1963, specifically to offer a Chinese medium university education. In 2004, however, the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor who wanted to improve CUHK's international position and outlook, mandated an increase in the number of EMI courses. This caused an outcry among some students and alumni, with one student taking the university to court on the grounds that the university's charter obliged it to have Chinese as its primary MoI. After some years, the Court of Final Appeal ruled in the university's favour, saying it had the power to choose its own MoI. But as Li (2013) points out in his study of the CUHK case, it was noteworthy that few people outside CUHK took much interest in the case and that the push to retain Chinese as the primary MoI at CUHK met with little support from outside the university itself or from the other of Hong Kong's universities. It was a very local issue, not a societal one (2013, p. 77). It would appear that, generally speaking, people in Hong Kong are happy with English being the medium of instruction at tertiary level.

This is also true at secondary level. The postcolonial government had reversed the laissez-faire policy and insisted that Cantonese be the medium of instruction for all primary schools. It also mandated Cantonese as the MoI, except for those schools which met certain special criteria and would be allowed to continue to teach in English on that basis. This policy, while applauded by academics, was bitterly opposed by parents and after a decade of controversy and minor policy shifts, the government finally caved in to parental pressure and released a revision of the language policy termed *Fine-tuning the Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools* (Hong Kong Education Bureau 2007, 2009). A report into the consequences of the fine tuning showed that there was an increase of over 30% in the classes taught in English, with a corresponding percentage decline in those taught in Chinese (Kan et al. 2011). Other consequences included teachers now having to teach the same subjects in either Chinese or English, depending on whether the particular class has or has not met the criteria for EMI.

As indicated above, a key motivation for the Hong Kong universities' insistence on EMI is their desire to rise in the international ranking scales. At the same time, the Hong Kong Government is keen to make Hong Kong an education hub. International education is one of the government's 'six pillar industries' (Li 2013, p. 67). There is little doubt, therefore, that Hong Kong will continue to promote EMI in its universities, often at the expense of Chinese as a language of education, with local research and publications in Chinese not being viewed as internationally important (Mok 2007, p. 446).

Hong Kong is not the only place in the region which is setting itself up as an international education hub. Singapore—which Hong Kong views as its major competitor—has offered only EMI education for several decades. Malaysia and the Philippines are also vigorously expanding their EMI offerings. Malaysia has more than one hundred partnerships with universities from Anglophone countries and a number of private universities (Gill 2004). Some of these are associated with major Malaysian companies or industries. Petronas University (2012) established by the National Oil Company, is an example: the medium of instruction is English and the website offers international students 'an English speaking environment'.

A second example is the Tunku Abdul Rahman University (UTAR), named after the first Prime Minister of independent Malaysia. UTAR was established in 2002 and has rapidly expanded so that it now has nine faculties spread across four campuses. The primary medium of instruction is English.

There are now more than 40 private universities in Malaysia. It is worth noting that this exceeds the total number of universities in Australia, even though state universities are not included in this list. They all offer English-medium courses. That all these universities are seeking to attract international students is indisputable. As the Malaysia University Portal webpage (2012) dedicated to the private universities states, 'International students should not have any problems studying in Malaysia as English is the primary medium of instruction for all courses and study programs conducted at the private higher educational institutions. For those less proficient in the language, there are numerous schools and institutions offering basic English courses'.

The Philippines has more than double this number of private universities, with some ninety listed on the relevant web page of the Entrance University website (2012). These are all EMI universities. Perhaps the most prestigious university in the Philippines is a state university, The University of the Philippines at Dilman. Some years ago, in an attempt to promote the national language, Filipino, as a language of education and research, the university experimented with offering courses through Filipino and encouraging staff to publish in Filipino. The unpopularity of the policy from both staff and students led the university to abandon the Filipino policy, however, and revert to English medium.

Japan is also embracing international education, although internationalisation in the Japanese context tends to mean that it wants the world to better understand what it means to be Japanese. Japan remains 'a highly ethnocentric and gendered society' (Howe 2009, p. 386). Yet the then President of Tokyo University, which is the nation's top-ranked university, has argued that Japanese universities must internationalise for the sake of diversity (Howe 2009).

The Japanese Government recently introduced the Global 30 Project (2012b), which is designed to attract international students to Japan to study in one of 30 universities. The website announces that 'With the introduction of the "Global 30" Project, the best universities in Japan are now offering degree programs in English. By doing this, these universities have broken down the language barrier which was one of the obstacles preventing international students from studying in Japan. A range of courses in a number of fields are offered in English at the universities under the "Global 30" Project.

The accompanying booklet, *Study in English at Japanese Universities* (Global 30 Project 2012a), lists the 30 universities involved and gives brief details of each. The following excerpts from the Tokyo University and Osaka University entries give a flavour of the booklet. They read:

> The University of Tokyo (Todai) is a comprehensive research University that engages in education and research at the cutting-edge of knowledge across the full range of human endeavour. We provide over 35 degree programs in English in the following 10 graduate schools; Economics; Arts and Sciences; Science; Engineering; Agricultural and Life Sciences; Medicine; Frontier Sciences; Information Science and Technology; Interdisciplinary Information Studies; and Public Policy. In October 2012, 2 new English programs will be launched at the undergraduate level; International Program on Japan in East Asia; International Program on Environmental Sciences. (p. 8)
>
> Osaka University is recognized as one of the leading research universities in the world and at the forefront of technological innovation in Japan. We offer degree programs conducted in English.
>
> Undergraduate level: Chemistry-Biology Combined Major Program and Human Sciences All-English Undergraduate Degree Program.
>
> Graduate level: Special Integrated Science Course and International Physics Course sponsored by Graduate School of Science.
>
> Osaka University welcomes international students of all nationalities with aspiration and commitment to excel. (p. 10)

The aim of the Global 30 project is to attract 300,000 international students; to date, however, results have been disappointing, with less than 22,000 international students enrolled in 2011.

In South Korea, some form of English-fever seems to have taken hold. For example, in what is known as the ‘wild geese’ phenomenon, Korean mothers take their children to study in English-speaking countries, leaving the fathers behind to earn the money to fund their children’s overseas education. In 2007, there were nearly 7000 Korean children in New Zealand schools (Takeshita 2010, p. 274). There is also increasing pressure for Korean universities to adopt English medium instruction. In 2007, the prestigious Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology adopted the policy of enforcing EMI across the entire curriculum, a policy being adopted by an increasing number of Korean universities (Kim in press). However, as Kim also reports, the policy has received criticism (Kang 2012), not least because it places great linguistic demands on both staff and students. Demands for the return to the use of Korean as an MoI are being heard.

Chinese universities are also increasing the number of EMI courses which they offer. As long ago as 2001, the then Premier Zhu Rongji, said that he hoped all classes (at his alma mater, Tsinghua University’s School of Economics and Management) would be taught in English, as China needed to be able to exchange ideas with the rest of the world (Gill 2004).

In addition to the several ‘foreign’ universities setting up in China, offering their programmes through English, of which Nottingham University in Ningpo is a good example, many local universities are seeking to increase their international student numbers by increasing their EMI programmes. While the most prestigious universities may have the staff—and be able to recruit international staff—to be able to deliver programmes through English, there remain concerns. For example, even at Beijing University, while many are proud of the introduction of bilingual and EMI courses, some lament the reduction of Chinese-medium courses. One sociology professor felt that students do not have enough knowledge of the subject in Chinese and that teaching in English would only undermine their grasp of the subject (Hayhoe et al. 2011b, p. 123).

The prestigious East China Normal University in Shanghai is also increasing its EMI programmes. The university’s goal is to attract 5000 international students to live on campus and for 10 % of courses to be ‘taught bilingually’ (Hayhoe et al. 2011a, p. 204), although it is not clear what ‘taught bilingually’ means in practice. The longer term goal is to develop 100 courses taught in English.

Geographical position and prestige can hamper drives toward internationalisation. For example, Southwest University in Chongqing, Siquan, has plans to increase its number of international students from 393 in 2007–1500, but ‘a prohibitive factor is the lack of qualified teachers who are able to teach courses in English’ (Li et al. 2011, p. 234).

China’s University and College Admission Systems (CUCAS) (2012) lists EMI courses offered by Chinese universities. There is particular interest in Bachelor Degrees in Medicine and Surgery (MBBS). The website advises:

> Studying for an MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery) in China has become increasingly popular for international students. Medical schools in China are recognized by the Medical Council of China and many of them are recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the Directory of World Medical Schools. The number of

> English-medium MBBS programs in China is increasing. In general, English taught MBBS programs last six years. After completing basic education, there is typically a year-long internship for practice. The duration of the internship differs according to requirements of each university. Respective universities may have certain additional criteria for applicants to meet, such as a high score in the subjects of biology, chemistry and mathematics. Additionally, although the medium of instruction is English, international students will still need to study Chinese language in order to communicate with patients in the clinics. Many medical schools require foreign students to pass the HSK test (Chinese language proficiency) before graduation.

It is worth noting that the MBSS, although delivered in English, requires students to learn Chinese so that they communicate with their patients. Few universities in Asia, however, appear to require international students to learn the local language. In this it is possible that they underestimate the wants and needs of the students. It is surprising, for example, that universities in China and Hong Kong do not require long-term international students to learn Chinese, as this could be a great attraction for such students, given the importance of Chinese in today's world, as evidenced by the increasing number of international students who are in China undertaking specialised Chinese language courses.

It is also noteworthy that the tertiary section appears able to ignore the National Language Law, Article 10 of which unequivocally states that 'schools and other educational institutions must use Putonghua and standardised Chinese characters as the basic spoken and written language in education and teaching' (Kirkpatrick and Xu 2001).

Indeed, it would appear that, with few exceptions, most Asian universities have accepted that if they want to raise their international profile they need to provide EMI courses. They have done this, but without developing carefully considered language education policies. Yet, with the increase of internationalisation and the consequential increase in the number of EMI courses, universities need to establish language education policies. Different contexts provide different circumstances and different problems. In Europe, for example, the Finnish Minister of Education explained that 'we were realistic enough to see that foreign students who came to Finland to study for a term or two couldn't be expected to do that study in Finnish or Swedish. So the Ministry started to promote English-language education' (Doiz et al. 2013, p. 214). At the same time, the five Nordic countries have language education policies that insist Nordic languages are used along with English. Preisler (2009, p. 26) has argued for a form of 'complementary languages'. This would involve the use of English and the relevant language (Danish in Preisler's context) in some form of complementary distribution. How the languages would complement each other would depend on the nature of the individual programme, i.e. 'the national or international scope of their academic content and orientation of the students' (2009, p. 26)

Generally speaking, in the Asian contexts reviewed here, only few universities have established and implemented their own language education policies. We reviewed the developments at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, which showed how the original charter of the university to provide Chinese medium education has been compromised by the university's decision to embrace internationalisation and increase EMI programmes. It is important to note that the Hong Kong Government's aim is to create a citizenry which is trilingual in Cantonese, Putonghua and English and biliterate in Chinese and English. This laudable policy is undermined by six of the eight government-funded institutions being EMI institutions. Only the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) has a specific language policy whose aim is to produce graduates who are functionally trilingual. This includes setting language exit requirements in each of the three languages that students agree to work towards. The exit requirements vary depending on the L1 of the students and the courses they are undertaking (See Xu (forthcoming) for a full account).

The HKIEd policy also recognises how important it is for language policy to match actual language use. For example, although many universities advertise their courses as EMI, actual practice shows that the students and teachers commonly use the languages available to them in their teaching and learning (Barnard and McLellan in press). A Hong Kong study showed that, in fact, ‘English is a medium of instruction for just over half the lectures’ (Li et al. 2001, pp. 297–298). Instructively, the HKIEd policy makes a crucial distinction between official medium of instruction and classroom language use.

> 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 the course's 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 of 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 courses is English by default, a CMI course may be conducted in Cantonese or Putonghua, subject to the teacher's reference after consulting all relevant factors, such as the students' language backgrounds and abilities. Subject to 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 justified by students' enhanced learning outcomes, do not constitute a breach of the Institute's new LLT policy. (Xu forthcoming)

Xu proposes that higher education institutions in multilingual societies should implement language policies that mirror the multilingual reality of the settings.

2.4 Conclusion and Predictions

I have provided merely the briefest summaries of the development of EMI programmes in universities in selected Asian countries. It is clear, however, that the main goal is to attract international students. The motivations for this are various and include the desire to rise up the various international ranking tables. The financial perspective is also crucial. The financial motivation involves a national dimension in that it is not simply the fees the international students bring, but the fees that local students bring who otherwise might have spent this money overseas as international students in Anglophone countries. Increasing higher education opportunities at home helps prevent the outflow of foreign exchange. In this it provides a correction to the current practice where, overwhelmingly, students from the 'south' buy education from the 'north' (Altbach and Knight 2007, p. 291). The establishment of these new Asian hubs and their increasing success has not gone unnoticed by the US and the UK. For example, the then British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, commissioned a report *Higher Education and Collaboration in Global Context: Building a Global Civil Society* (UK/US Study Group 2009). The authors were a group of senior British and American academics, including university Presidents and Vice-Chancellors. The aim of this report is to 'make the case for a new model of UK/US collaboration, one that will develop multilateral partnerships and bring the longstanding UK/US partnership in higher education to bear in third locations' (p. 1). The promise to build a 'global civil society' in fact appears to be an attempt to ensure the UK and the US remain the prime providers of international education. The global citizens are to be 'shaped by the principles on which the UK and US HE systems rest' (p. 27). There is funding to bring international students to Britain and America, rather less for British and American students to travel overseas. And when they do travel overseas they are to provide education to people 'in a developing country' by 'working with an NGO or in other community service' (p. 29).

The idea that students from Anglophone countries could learn something from studying overseas is absent from the report. It remains largely true that Anglophone universities seem to assume the ideal student should be a monolingual speaker of 'standard' English, 'with considerable expertise in the literacy practices common in Anglo-American academic traditions' (Preece 2011, p. 139). Here again it appears that multilingual international students from a range of different linguistic backgrounds are viewed as being deficient speakers of English rather than being sources of linguistic and cultural knowledge from which monolingual Anglo students could benefit.

In the same way that Asian universities need to introduce carefully thought out language policies which accurately reflect the linguistic situations of their own universities, so do universities in the Anglophone world.

Given the increasing use of English as an international lingua franca, Australian universities need to understand that many different varieties of English are spoken throughout the world—including several varieties of Asian Englishes—and that these are not deficient varieties of British or American English, but established varieties in their own right. At the same time there needs to be an understanding of how English is used as a lingua franca. English language policy is lagging far behind English language practice (Jenkins 2011, p. 926). Evaluating the English of the majority of the world's English speakers using standard norms derived solely from native-speaker British or American is inappropriate. As a Minister in the Cambodian Government said, 'You know, when we use English, we don't think about the United States or England. We only think about the need to communicate' (Clayton 2006, p. 233).

I argue, therefore, that the increasing linguistic and cultural diversity of Anglophone universities, coupled with recent developments in Asian varieties of English and the use of English as a lingua franca, means that they are no longer monolingual English sites—if they ever were—but are multilingual and that they therefore need to adopt contextually nuanced policies of the type proposed by Xu above. Universities need to implement language policies that match the multilingual reality of university and classroom. In particular, EMI courses need to allow the use of languages other than English in the classroom, and students should be encouraged to use the languages they know in order to study and research topics, even when the course is officially EMI.

Despite the fine sentiments expressed in the Australia in the Asia Century White Paper reviewed above, there remains little evidence that universities—whether they be in Anglophone centres or Asia—are actually moving towards adopting such policies. On the contrary, we see an increased use of English as an MoI without any real understanding of what this means. One obvious consequence of this is, as Doiz et al. (2013, p. 216) report 'that many university students do not have sufficient language skills for university courses'.

What, then, are the implications of this increased use of English as an MoI in higher education in East and Southeast Asia. First, it would seem inevitable that the increase in EMI in higher education will further add to the demand for English in primary and secondary education, as parents naturally want what they feel will be the best for their children. Second, it would appear inevitable that the role of languages other than English in higher education and research will be reduced, resulting in domain loss. Together, this strongly suggests that the role of Asian languages as languages of education throughout all levels of education from primary to tertiary will continue to be diminished, unless universities adopt contextually sensitive language education policies which encourage the use of local languages. This should include encouraging international students to learn the local language. The language policy developed by the Hong Kong Institute of Education may offer a model for other Asian universities to consider.

Ironically, however, this increase in EMI courses in Asian universities allows Australia a chance to achieve some of the aims outlined in the White Paper. This means that Australian universities could be able to establish exchange programmes with these universities to allow Australian students to spend a significant proportion of their degree programmes overseas. At the same time, it is likely that this will also further discourage Australian students from studying Asian languages to any depth. Unless Australian universities and universities throughout the Asia-Pacific adopt language policies that encourage and reward multilingual ability, English appears likely to increasingly dominate higher education both in Australia and in Asia. This changing dynamic between English and Asian languages will, in time, radically alter the linguistic ecology of the region.

References

Agcaoili, A., Arzadon, M. M., Awid, M., Ceso, N. I., III, Faelnar, M. L., Giron, P., Igcalinos, A., Labrador, V., Liwanag, L., & McEachern, F. (2013). Open letter to the Senate re K–12 Bill, Mother tongue based multilingual education (MLE)—Philippines, blog. http://mothertongue-based.blogspot.com.au/. Accessed 1 May 2013.

Altbach, P. G., & Knight, J. (2007). The internationalization of higher education; motivation and realities. *Journal of Studies in Higher Education, 11,* 290–305.

Australia in the Asian Century Taskforce. (2012). *Australia in the Asian century: White Paper*. Canberra: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/white-paper. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Barnard, R., & McLellan. J. (Eds.). (in press). *Codeswitching in English medium classes: Case studies and perspectives from East Asian contexts*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Bolton, K. (2012). Language policy and planning in Hong Kong. In Low Wee-Ling & A. Hashim (Eds.), *English in Southeast Asia* (pp. 221–240). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Clayton, T. (2006). *Language choice in a nation under transition: English language spread in Cambodia*. Boston: Springer.

China's University and College Admission Systems. (2012). http://www.cucas.edu.cn/. Accessed 14 Dec 2012.

Doiz, A., Lasagabaster D., & Sierra, J. (In Press). Globalisation, internationalisation, multilingualism and linguistic strains in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 1–15.

Doiz, A., Lasagabaster, D., & Sierra, J. M. (2013). Future challenges for English-medium instruction at the tertiary level. In A. Doiz, D. Lasagabaster & J. M. Sierra (Eds.), *English-medium instruction at universities: Global challenges* (pp. 213–221). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Dunne, K., & Pavlyshyn, M. (2012). Swings and roundabout: Changes in language offerings at Australian universities 2005–2011. In J. Hajek & A. Woods (Eds.), *The next step. Introducing the language and cultures network for Australian universities* (pp. 9–20). Sydney: LCNAU.

English will be taught, Indonesia's Education Ministry says. (2012). *Jakarta Globe*, 14 November. http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/archive/english-will-be-taught-indonesias-education-ministry-says/556066/. Accessed 11 Aug 2013.

Entrance University. (2012). http://www.entranceuniversity.com/2010/12/list-of-private-universities-in.html#.UMqDboOTyKo. Accessed 14 Dec 2012.

Gill, S. K. (2004). Medium-of-instruction policy in higher education in Malaysia: Nationalism versus internationalisation. In J. Tollefson & A. Tsui (Eds.), *Medium of instruction policies. Which agenda? Whose agenda?* (pp. 135–152). Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Global 30 Project. (2012a). Study in English at Japanese universities. http://www.uni.international.mext.go.jp/documents/Study_in_English_at_Jp_Univ.pdf. Accessed 11 Aug 2013.

Global 30 Project. (2012b). http://www.uni.international.mext.go.jp/study/. Accessed 11 Aug 2013.

Gungwu, W. (2007). Keynote address. In L. H. Guan & L. Suryadinata (Eds.), *Language nation and development* (pp. ix–xvii). Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Haberland, H. (2011). Local languages as the languages of internationalisation: Internationalisation and language choice. *Intercultural Education Review, 9,* 37–47.

Hadisantosa, N. (2010). Insights from Indonesia. In R. Johnstone (Ed.), *Learning through English: Policies, challenges and prospects* (pp. 24–46). London: British Council.

Hayhoe, R., Zha, Q., & Mei, L. (2011a). East China Normal University—education in the lead. In R. Hayhoe, J. Li, J. Lin & Q. Zha (Eds.), *Portraits of 21st century Chinese universities* (pp. 192–220). Hong Kong: Springer.

Hayhoe, R., Zha, Q., & Fengqiao, Y. (2011b). Peking University—icon of cultural leadership. In R. Hayhoe, J. Li, J. Lin & Q. Zha (Eds.), *Portraits of 21st century Chinese universities* (pp. 95–130). Hong Kong: Springer.

Hong Kong Education Bureau. (2007). *The medium of instruction guidance for secondary schools*. Hong Kong: Education Burea.

Hong Kong Education Bureau. (2009). *Enriching our language environment, realising our vision: Fine-tuning of medium of instruction for secondary schools*. Hong Kong: Education Bureau.

Howe, E. R. (2009). The internationalization of higher education in East Asia: A comparative ethnographic narrative of Japanese universities. *Research in Comparative and International Education, 4,* 384–392.

Jenkins, J. (2011). Accommodating (to) ELF in the international university. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43,* 926–936.

Li, J., Lin, J., & Yibin, L. (2011). Southwest University—an unusual merger and new challenges. In R. Hayhoe, J. Li, J. Lin & Q. Zha (Eds.), *Portraits of 21st century Chinese universities* (pp. 221–243). Hong Kong: Springer.
Kan, V., Lao, K. C., Kirkpatrick, A., & Law, A. (2011). *Fine-tuning Hong Kong's medium of instruction policy*. Hong Kong: Institute of Education.
Kang, H.-S. (2012). English-only instruction in Korean universities: Help or hindrance. *English Today, 28,* 29–34.
Kim, H.-J. (in press). Codeswitching by Korean students in New Zealand and lecturers in Korea: Commentary. In R. Barnard & J. McLellan (Eds.), *Codeswitching in English medium classes: Case studies and perspectives from East Asian contexts*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
Kirkpatrick, A. (2010). *English as a lingua franca in ASEAN: A multilingual model*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
Kirkpatrick, A. (2011). English as a medium of instruction in Asian education (from primary to tertiary): Implications for local languages and local scholarship. In L. Wei (Ed.), *Applied Linguistics Review* (pp. 99–119). Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.
Kirkpatrick, A. (2012). English in ASEAN: Implications for regional multilingualism. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 33,* 331–344.
Kirkpatrick, A., & Sussex, R. (Eds.). (2012). *English as an international language in Asia*. Dordrecht: Springer.
Kirkpatrick, A., & Xu Z. (2001). The new language law of the People's Republic of China. *Australian Language Matters, 9,* 14–18.
Li, D. C. S. (2013). Linguistic hegemony or linguistic capital? In A. Doiz, D. Lasagabaster & J. M. Sierra (Eds.), *English-medium instruction at universities: Global challenges* (pp. 65–83). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
Li, N., Leung, D., & Kember, D. (2001). Medium of instruction in Hong Kong universities: The mis-match between espoused theory and theory in use. *Higher Education Policy, 14,* 293–312.
Maiworm, F., & Wachter, B. (2002). *English-language-taught degree programmes in European higher education*. Bonn: Lemmens.
Malaysia University Portal. (2012). International student guide. http://www.malaysiauniversity.net/why-study-in-malaysia/. Accessed 14 Dec 2012.
Mok, K. H. (2007). Questing for internationalization of universities in Asia: Critical reflections. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 11,* 433–454.
Osman, S. (2012). Finding a balance between English and Bahasa Indonesia. *Jakarta Globe*, 25 October. http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/commentary/finding-a-balance-between-english-and-bahasa-indonesia/552313. Accessed 11 Aug 2013.
Petronas University. (2012). http://www.utp.edu.my/index.php?option=com_content&view=article& id=102&Itemid=2121#. Accessed 14 Dec 2012.
Phillipson, R. (2006). Figuring out the Englishisation of Europe. In C. Leung & J. Jenkins (Eds.), *Reconfiguring Europe* (pp. 65–86). London: Equinox.
Phillipson, R. (2009). English in higher education, panacea or pandemic? In P. Harder (Ed.), *English in Denmark: Language policy, internationalization and university teaching*: *Vol. 9. Angles of the English-speaking world* (pp. 2–57). Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press and the University of Copenhagen.
Preece, S. (2011). Universities in the Anglophone centre: Sites of multilingualism. *Applied Linguistics Review, 2,* 121–146.
Preisler, B. (2009). Complementary languages: The national language and English as working languages in European universities. In P. Harder (Ed.), *English in Denmark: Language policy, internationalization and university teaching*: *Vol. 9. Angles on the English-speaking world* (pp. 10–28). Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press and the University of Copenhagen.
Takeshita, Y. (2010). East Asian Englishes. In A. Kirkpatrick (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of world Englishes* (pp. 265–281). London: Routledge.
Trevaskes, S., Eisenchlas, S., & Liddicoat, A. (2003). Language, culture and literacy in the internationalisation process of higher education. In A. Liddicoat, S. Eisenchlas, & S. Trevaskes (Eds.), *Australian perspectives on internationalising education* (pp. 1–12). Melbourne: Language Australia.

UK/US Study Group on Higher Education in a Globalised World. (2009). *Higher education and collaboration in global context. Building a global civil society*. A report to Prime Minister Gordon Brown. http://globalhighered.files.wordpress.com/2009/07/final-report_28_7_09.pdf. Accessed 17 Dec 2012.

Wachter, B., & Maiworm, F. (2008). *English-taught programmes in European higher education*. Bonn: Lemmens.

Wilkinson, R. (2013). English-medium instruction at a Dutch university: Challenges and pitfalls. In A. Doiz, D. Lasagabaster, & J. M. Sierra (Eds.), *English-medium instruction at universities: Global Challenges* (pp. 3–24). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Wilson, K. (2012). Policies without path? *China Daily—Asia Weekly*, 16 November. http://www.chinadailyapac.com/article/policies-without-path. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Xu, Z. (forthcoming) Functional English and Chinese as medium of instruction (MOI) in a multilingual educational context: A case study of two courses in higher education in Hong Kong.

Chapter 3
Plurilithic and Ecological Perspectives on English: Some Conceptual and Practical Implications

Jonathan Crichton and Neil Murray

Abstract Since the 1990s, a number of ideological 'strands' in applied linguistics have added considerable momentum to the debate around how we should conceive of English in a global world that is fast-changing and where English—in its many varieties—is undeniably the prevailing lingua franca. Yet, while the momentum of this debate may have gathered pace, the degree of controversy and the strength of feeling it provokes continue unabated and can broadly be characterised as a divide between the monolithic view of English and the plurilithic view. This is high stakes territory, marking as it does a place where the personal and the scholarly and ideological intersect: it reaches to the heart of notions of identity, history and culture, of the perceived and relative status of English, its varieties, boundaries and relationships to other languages, and of what this means for those concerned. In this chapter, we argue that the debate raises important questions concerning the conceptualisation and practice of English and English language teaching and we explore some of the implications of the plurilithic view vis-à-vis the ecological, pedagogical, commercial and personal questions it raises.

Keywords Linguistic ecology · Diversity · English language teaching · Assessment · Commercialization · Global Englishes · Plurilithic vs monolithic perspectives · English as a lingua franca

3.1 Introduction

The field of applied linguistics, and, by extension, that of English language teaching, has, over last 20 years, grown from an ideological dot on the horizon to become an issue of some considerable prominence and, indeed, controversy. Its increasing

J. Crichton (✉)
University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
e-mail: jonathan.crichton@unisa.edu.au

N. Murray
University of Warwick, Coventry, UK
e-mail: N.L.Murray@warwick.ac.uk

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_3,

prominence is a product of a growing recognition of changing realities around the way in which English is used as the world's principal lingua franca. In response to that change, over the last ten years a critical mass of opinion has coalesced, highlighting the need for a quite fundamental change in the way we view English and its multiple manifestations, and in consequence the manner in which it is taught. Such opinion has been and continues to be informed by a rapidly expanding body of research and associated literature and it has courted controversy because it calls into question ideas held sacred by many engaged in the theorising about and teaching of English.

The issue to which we refer and which will form the focus of the current chapter, concerns the shift away from a monolithic view of English toward what has been termed a plurilithic one (Hall 2012; Pennycook 2008)—a shift also variously characterised as from a monocentric/centrifugal view to a pluricentric/centripetal one. The monolithic view, which has until recently held sway in both the theory around and practice of English language teaching, is underpinned by the notion that the only correct English is that spoken by its native speakers; that is, by those who originate from Kachru's (1985) 'inner circle' countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia. These native speaker varieties collectively mark the standard to which learners of English need to aspire and against which their proficiency is judged by high currency, high stakes tests of English such as IELTS, TOEFL, Cambridge Proficiency and the Pearson Test of English. As such they have traditionally been presented, and indeed received, as the gold standard, a fact reflected in an abundance in materials, both published and otherwise. By implication, non-native speaker varieties of English—where these have been acknowledged—have traditionally been seen as somehow impoverished; indicators of deficit rather than of natural evolution and user adaptability and creativity. This is reflected quite poignantly in SLA discourse, which has traditionally relegated what might today be regarded as realisations of different varieties of English to a subordinate status through constructs such as 'fossilization', 'interlanguage' and 'foreigner talk', which assume a target competence of an idealised native speaker (Firth 1996; House 2003).

For those who uphold this monolithic view of English, the question of the ownership of the language should remain uncontested. Nevertheless, it is an oft-cited fact that today the majority of interactions conducted in English across the globe are between non-native speakers; speakers who may not only bring their own varieties of English to those interactions but who, on any given occasion, create a temporary hybrid 'variety' as they negotiate meaning with their interlocutor for the purposes of the current interaction, using whatever resources they have at their disposal. In other words, questions naturally arise from the recognition of a tension between sociolinguistic reality on the ground (Firth 2009; Seidlhofer 2001) (variation, diversity) and the monolithic perspective (standardisation, uniformity). For those who hold to a plurilithic view of English, this tension is unsustainable and requires theorists and practitioners to call into question inner circle countries as the rightful 'owners' of English. Widdowson has famously claimed that 'how English develops in the world is no business whatever of native speakers in England, the United

States, or anywhere else' (1994, p. 385); Rajagopolan that 'World English (WE) belongs to everyone who speaks it, but it is nobody's mother tongue' (Rajagopalan 2004, p. 111); and Matsuda that provided it is learned as an international language, English should neither come from an inner circle country nor be taught as an inner circle language (2003).

This situation is complicated by what we might call the hegemonic and diversity of use arguments. The hegemonic argument has been running for over twenty years and involves an ideological critique of the global dominance of standard English exemplified in the following quote from Bhatt:

> … the hierarchical structure needed to sustain the sacred imagined [English] community can only be guaranteed if Standard English is accepted by all members as inevitable and the speakers of this standard accepted as uncontested authorities of English language use. How is this ideological manipulation and indoctrination in fact accomplished?… Expert discourse establishes a habit of thought which makes the standard variety of English (British/American) desirable, necessary, normal, natural, universal, and essential, and all other varieties instances of deficit and deviation. The key ideological process is a naturalizing move that drains the conceptual of its historical content, making it seem universal and timelessly true (Bhatt 2002)

The premise of the argument is that English is a primary means, site of and stake in processes of colonialism, imperialism, and neoliberalism that establish and maintain the dominance of the core English-speaking nations. These processes are all the more effective because the ideological effects of English are 'hidden in plain sight', its unique and dominant status being taken-for-granted as 'natural' when, in fact, those who desire it most are those who stand to lose most by its effects. We might recall here a line in the film 'The Usual Suspects', in which it is said of the villain, Keyser Söze, that 'The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist'. As developed within the ideological critique, the mystification of existing power relations is central to maintaining the unassailable advantages English gives to core English-speaking nations (Pennycook 1994, 1998; Canagarajah 1999, 2005; Phillipson 1992, 2009; Tollefson 1991, 1995) and, more insidiously, to ensuring the consecration of linguistic and cultural privilege (Bhatt 2002). It is the latter that leads people—no matter what their first language—to aspire to learn English, thus reinforcing it as the world's dominant language at the expense of other languages and their associated cultures. Advocates of this critique have emphasised the need to analyse and expose hegemonic effects (Phillipson 1992 2009) and 'reclaim the local' (Canagarajah 2005), and have traced the hegemony of English to those discourses about languages and language learning that have become dominant and naturalised in its wake. Recent examples include the argument developed by Pennycook and Makoni (2007), that the discursive construction of languages as 'countable institutions' serves the interests of groups who speak 'languages' so defined.

For the purposes of this chapter, the important point to note is that the ideological critique has tended to assume a monolithic view of English, and indeed requires this for the argument that standard English is a means of central, hegemonic control. In this regard the ideological critique has, perhaps ironically, played its part in perpetuating the monolithic view of English and thereby rendered less visible the diversifying of English away from the standard forms identified with 'inner circle' countries. More broadly, we note a tension between the monolithic view of English and an increasingly influential diversity-of-use view, according to which we are not dealing with one monolithic, hegemonic English voice but with a great diversity of different, locally emergent voices. According to this view, the English language has largely outgrown the norms of the Kachruvian inner circle (1985) and has become not only a useful default means of communication but often also a means of national, regional and local renaissance and resistance by its new expert non-native users (House 2009).

Seidlhofer has characterised this situation in terms of a disparity between two positions:

> On the one hand, there is recognition of the significance and relevance of English as an international language and its necessary functional variation. On the other hand, descriptions of English continue to be focused on the core native-speaker countries. There are two opposing positions: one embracing pluralism, the other ignoring it. (2007, p. 140)

While the reality may not be so starkly polarised, there is no doubt that there is currently a divergence or misalignment between what is happening at the level of theory and associated research, and what is happening in terms of practice; the former is not informing the latter to any significant degree. Attempting to understand why this might be the case raises a number of important questions for the theory and practice of English language teaching. These, we suggest, can be categorised into four broad types of question:

- Ecological
- Pedagogical and assessment
- Commercial
- Personal.

The sequence is significant. Ecology comes first because it is the superordinate: ecological perspectives on English and English language teaching raise conceptual and practical questions that shape and connect the other three areas. In our discussion, the first examples of ecological questions are taken from pedagogy and assessment; the focus is then expanded to the implications for the international commercial markets that both depend on and drive English language pedagogy and assessment practices; and, finally, the focus is brought back to questions arising concerning learners and teachers themselves.

3.2 Ecological Questions

In this section we bring into focus the implications of an ecological perspective on English and English language teaching for the plurilithic view.

The notion of 'ecology' has a long tradition in the social sciences, originating in biology in the mid-nineteenth century, and has over the past 20 years become influential in the literature on language and language learning. In this field, ecology signals an interest in gaining a holistic understanding of the nature of language(s) that foregrounds the complexity of interrelationships between them, their speakers and their social, institutional and cultural environments. This interest, therefore, stands in opposition to approaches to studying language(s) that seek to reduce or idealise these relationships. The literature can be divided into that which tends towards the monolithic view of English identified above and that which is more open to a plurilithic view.

The former approach includes literature that highlights threats to particular languages and the associated linguistic and cultural identities of their speakers. This literature often draws parallels between the ecological values of biodiversity and linguistic diversity (Mühlhäusler 1996; Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson 2008) and has tended to cast English as the nemesis of ecological diversity—a feral presence implicated in, for example, 'linguistic genocide' (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000).

Literature that takes the latter approach includes the work of Candlin, van Lier, Cicourel and Kramsch. Epitomising this orientation to ecology, Candlin (2000, in press; Candlin and Sarangi 2002) has emphasised that people's lives and the language(s) that they use and learn are interwoven into social and institutional ecologies whose constraints and affordances condition the nature of language learning and teaching. As Candlin (in press) explains,

> Ecology has at its heart negotiated interaction: on the one hand among persons within an environment and on the other between such persons and that enveloping environment.

Of the work in this area, Van Lier's (1988, 1997, 2004) has had the greatest influence on classroom learning, according to which

> The concept of ecology embraces not only the context of classroom learning but, more fundamentally, the very definitions of language, of development, and of mind. (1997, p. 783)

Van Lier (2004, p. 20) makes clear that ecology in this sense is not just a 'handy (or trendy) metaphor for applied linguistics' but can also be seen as a profound opportunity (and challenge) for practitioners and researchers, prescribing how language education should be understood as 'a language saturated enterprise' so that its practitioners can 'break through the perpetual stalemate of a system that never seems to change in permanently meaningful ways'. Similarly emphasising the concept of ecology as game-changing, but here in relation to research, Cicourel (1996, 2007) has argued that language researchers need to account for 'ecological validity' by acknowledging the multiple and 'interpenetrating' contexts that may be relevant to the analysis of any instance of language use. Such an agenda, Candlin and Crichton (2011a, b; Crichton 2010) have argued, requires a 'multi-perspectival' approach that both acknowledges and takes as a research focus at particular sites the relationships between researcher, participant, interactional, semiotic and social-institutional perspectives. And within the context of multilingual communities, Kramsch (2008, 2010, 2011; Kramsch and Whiteside 2008) has explored the phenomenology of linguistic ecologies by, for example, tracing how members of such communities use diverse languages in their routine interactions. Kramsch and Whiteside (2008) have argued that such users evidence 'symbolic competence', by which they mean the ability to interpret and choose judiciously not only within but between multiple languages, keeping these simultaneously and reflexively in play in different combinations for diverse purposes and audiences. Kramsch (2008, 2011) has argued that these intimate, dynamic interrelations between languages in people's experience can neither be explained by traditional approaches to the analysis of language use nor acknowledged by current approaches to language teaching and learning.

In sum, the challenge and opportunity the ecological perspective holds for language teachers, learners and of course assessors is to recognise—and acknowledge their own practices as falling within—the complex linguistic and socio-cultural ecologies in which they live their lives. If we bring this perspective to the plurilithic view of English, the implications are profound, seen most clearly in the question of how we are to understand the local ecologies of diverse Englishes, and, in relation to other languages, how English and English language teaching and assessment fit within the local ecologies of different languages and of those who use them.

Of particular relevance to the plurilithic view of English, the force of these questions is brought into sharp focus by the problem of what might be meant by 'local', and from whose perspective. For example, as Pennycook (2010, p. 71) has pointed out,

> … once we start to view global Englishes in terms of local practices, our attention is drawn away from a language entity called English with peripheral variants. We are directed instead to the doing of language in particular localities.

How then do we understand the relationship between the 'global' and the 'local'? Is the local becoming, in Singh and Doherty's (2004) phrase, a 'global contact zone'? In other words, on what basis and according to what principles and perspectives are the boundaries of each variety of English and its associated ecology to be identified? Where and for whom does one end and another begin? And most importantly for practice, what opportunities to sensitize and enrich English language teaching do these questions afford?

The danger is that we become caught in the circularity of which comes first, the boundary or the variety. Current designations of varieties, such as 'Singaporean English', or 'Indian English', and the foci of the growing number of corpora studies tend to beg rather than address this question, but the answer will be significant in deciding how many varieties we are dealing with; indeed, how the notion of 'variety' itself is understood. The problem of circularity points to the fact that it is not possible to know what variety of English to teach without knowing the ecological make-up of the particular classroom. This foregrounds the importance of accounting for multiple perspectives—for example, the individual, professional, institutional, socio-cultural, historical and semiotic (Candlin and Crichton 2011a). The horizon expands further when we consider the relationship between varieties of English and other languages, and how English language teaching is to be conceptualised in this context. Blommaert (2005, 2010) has drawn attention to the effects of linguistic globalisation, arguing that this involves the increasing mutual imbrication of languages, including English, within and between local and local, and local and global contexts. And reaching beyond this, Kramsch's work (2010) underscores the importance of understanding such diversities from the perspectives of individuals themselves, an emphasis that is very much in line with the direction in language teaching advocated by van Lier. Indeed, underscored by all these questions is the issue of what—or rather, whose—standpoint we are to take in addressing them. From an ecological perspective the answer centrally involves the individual learners and teachers as the interpreters of their own and others' experience, and the question of

> …how to identify, describe and relate, in intersubjective terms, actions and contributions of participants in the second language classroom, in such a way that their significance for language learning can be understood. (van Lier 1988, p. 47)

3.3 Pedagogical and Assessment Questions

In terms of pedagogy and assessment, perhaps the key question raised by the plurilithic view is how to acknowledge and embrace this ecological reality in teaching and assessing the different and diversifying varieties of English, a question that immediately raises the issue of mutual intelligibility, which exemplifies the importance of intersubjectivity referred to by van Lier, above. The issue of mutual intelligibility has been the subject of often quite animated discussion in the literature (see, for example, Kuo 2006, and Jenkins' 2012 response) and is closely associated with the plurilithic view of English: if different varieties of English have legitimacy, the challenge is to ensure speakers of different varieties are able to communicate effectively with one another. The early work of Jenkins (2000, 2002) on the pronunciation of English as an international language illustrates the way in which the notion of mutual intelligibility might be realised by providing an empirically based description of a lingua franca 'core', specifying those phonological features essential (and non-essential, or redundant) for intelligibility when English is spoken in lingua franca contexts.

One concern with this kind of intelligibility-driven model of language that arises from a plurilithic perspective is that language and its acquisition can too easily be reduced to what is unproblematic—bereft of the intricate relationships that comprise the ecologies in which language is actually used and interpreted (Cicourel 2007); and, unfortunately, what is 'problematic' can often be what provides language with its richness of meaning and its speakers with the means to finely nuance it, often to important communicative effect. In other words, there may be a temptation to tradeoff precision in and sensitivity to meaning, on the one hand, against a pared-back, less nuanced utilitarianism-born-of-a-mutual-intelligibility model on the other. There is a risk, it seems, that one ends up with a kind of Morse code that allows for a certain universality of access but where language is largely denuded of its interpersonal function and its cultural indices, and ends up impoverished as a resource for making intersubjective meaning. How, then, does one ensure that learners of English develop a pragmatic competence that is sensitive to the ecological richness of language diversity and thereby enables them to express and correctly interpret intended meaning without restricting their ability to realise the variety of speech acts that enable them, for example, to vary levels of politeness/directness with confidence that their message will be understood in ELF interactions, regardless of how deeply embedded that meaning is?

While there are ways of accounting for pragmatics in language teaching pedagogy that reflect a plurilithic perspective and uphold the notion of mutual intelligibility (see, for example, Murray 2012), these necessarily adopt a macro-level approach designed to promote learners' appreciation of the broad and universal principles that govern language choices and help ensure understanding. The idea is that by being aware of the general principles governing how we use language appropriately and are able to correctly express and interpret intended meaning, we are better able to accommodate to our interlocutor, regardless of the variety of English they may be speaking and its sociocultural indices. The ability to accommodate across varieties in this way involves the kind of *symbolic competence* described by Kramsch and Whiteside (2008) and which they distinguish, significantly, from strategic competence thus:

> … strategic competence has been conceived up to now as an individual compensatory tactic (Canale and Swain 1980, 30), whereas the symbolic competence apparent here is a distributed competence that emerges from playing the game. (2008, p. 665)

The 'distributed competence' of which Kramsch and Whiteside speak and which operates between interactants, enables speakers to pragmatically orient themselves to their interlocutor and the local and broader contexts in such a way that they are able to achieve their communicative purpose. This pragmatic 'negotiation' results in a hybrid pragmatics of sorts (Murray 2012). So long as one is interacting and negotiating with people from the same lingua-cultural background—and of course the meaning of the 'same' is precisely what is at issue here—such pragmatics may be refined over time, but whenever speakers need to re-orientate to new interlocutors and do not have recourse to a shared array of subtle meanings (from the 'same' variety of English), it is more likely to result in either misunderstanding and/or an inability to understand and express the kind of subtle meanings associated with, for example, indirect speech acts.

In essence, then, a key pedagogical challenge for traditional approaches is how, without recourse to a standard associated with the monolithic view, one develops students' pragmatic competence and on what basis it can be modelled. More specifically, the concern would be that if students cannot be provided with a micro-level understanding of a singular target language pragmatics that does not need to be continually renegotiated, then what facility can they expect to have available to them when, in current and future contexts, the ability to correctly and appropriately encode and interpret meaning may be critical? The response from an ecological perspective might be that it is precisely the monolithic perspective that gives rise to this construction of learners as standardised in their capacity to interpret and use language (Crichton 2010): rather, learners and teachers need to be acknowledged in teaching and learning as actual and potential experts in the creation of meaning within and across ecologies. The potential tension between these positions is exemplified in the legal or medical professions, for example, where the stakes could not be higher, and a 'reduced', less precise and nuanced form of language might not appear to offer the necessary safeguards to practitioners, or indeed their clients and patients. This has consequences for corpora such as the Vienna-Oxford International

Corpus of English (VOICE n.d.), the Asian Corpus of English (ACE n.d.) and the English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings project (ELFA 2008), the raison d'être for which is articulated on the VOICE website as follows:

> VOICE seeks to redress the balance [of linguistic descriptions predominantly focusing on English as it is spoken and written by its native speakers] by providing a sizeable, computer-readable corpus of English as it is spoken by this non-native speaking majority of users in different contexts. These speakers use English successfully on a daily basis all over the world, in their personal, professional or academic lives. We therefore see them primarily not as language learners but as language users in their own right. It is therefore clearly worth finding out just how they use the language. (VOICE n.d.)

The main emphasis of these corpora is spoken, not written communication, on the grounds that spoken English interactions are

> … immediate and at a remove from the stabilizing and standardizing influence of writing. They are overtly reciprocal and reveal the online negotiation of meaning in the production and reception of utterances, thus facilitating observations regarding mutual intelligibility among interlocutors. (VOICE n.d. Corpus_description, as accessed 2012)

This may be true, but if the purpose of collecting this data is to inform us of how and what language is used in lingua franca interactions in the process of establishing mutual intelligibility, and therefore what we need to be teaching students, on what basis are students to acquire the kind of English that is expected in legal and other professional contexts and that acknowledges both local variation and international standardisation? English as a lingua franca (ELF) interactions, it seems, are characterised by certain features: the tendency to tolerate ambiguity, for example, and the so-called 'let it pass principle' (Firth 1996), according to which ELF participants tend to ignore, or normalise, infelicities around syntax, morphology, phrasing, idiom and lexical choice rather than engage in negotiation behaviours such as repair initiation, requests for information or confirmation and reformulation (see, for example, Mauranen 2006; Mauranen and Ranta 2009). In 2003, Seidlhofer stated:

> As long as a certain threshold of understanding is obtained, interlocutors seem to adopt what Firth (1996) has termed the 'let-it-pass principle', which gives the impression of EIL talk being overtly consensus-oriented, cooperative and mutually supportive, and thus appearing fairly robust. (p. 15)

Can legal, medical and other such contexts where the accurate expression and understanding of meaning is particularly critical, afford to accommodate such ELF interactional behaviours? And this brings us back to ecological issues, for the reality is that a local variety of English and its uses in various professional and other domains may actually be inevitable, preferable and a more accessible, comfortable and secure medium of communication for all concerned: lawyers and their clients, doctors and their patients. There may be a tension, in other words, between the immediate suitability of a local variety that has less global currency, and the contextual generalisability of a global standard that may limit accessibility and more appropriate, nuanced meaning at a local level. If this is indeed the case, then a key challenge—and opportunity perhaps—lies in the question of how to resolve this tension within a plurilithic world and what such a resolution might mean for the teaching and assessment of English language.

Another key question concerns the basis on which, within a plurilithic ideology, English language proficiency can be meaningfully assessed according to traditional approaches (see, for example, Canagarajah 2005; Elder and Davies 2006). If mutual intelligibility is the aim of communication, then notions of right and wrong—of what is and is not an error—risk becoming distinctly fuzzy for the notion of interlanguage (which is associated with second language acquisition theory and premised on the idea of the learner moving along a continuum away from their first language toward the gradual construction of the target language) is difficult to distinguish from those forms that characterise local varieties of English. There may be many such varieties and, as we have indicated, this raises the question of what constitutes a variety: 'When does a variety become a variety?' It would seem, then, that the only valid measure of learners' competence is the extent to which they are able to demonstrate the capacity to employ the kind of symbolic competence proposed by Kramsch that enables them to negotiate interactions, by, inter alia, accommodating and traversing any differences between their own variety of English and cultural frame of reference, and that of their interlocutor. This movement between varieties raises the question of the basis on which informed judgments can be made as to the acceptability of learners' production and interpretations of texts.

The challenge, then, posed for traditional approaches is how to acknowledge the reality of diversity by assessing comprehensibility within and across linguistic ecologies. While, in part at least, solutions might arguably be found in attitudinal change, nonetheless Elder and Davies leave no doubt as to some of the practical difficulties for assessment practices of working within such a frame of reference:

> Calls for new approaches to the assessment of ELF (Jenkins 2005; Lowenberg 2002) have thus far come from those outside the professional language testing field unfamiliar with the constraints and requirements of language testing that we have alluded to in the discussion of issues of measurement here. These approaches are stronger on politics than applied linguistic realities and appear to be a push by claimants from outer and expanding circles for ownership of English (Higgins 2003), or perhaps a plea for official recognition of their legitimacy as users of English and acknowledgment of validity of their intra-and cross-nationally negotiated language identities. (2006, p. 296)

Questions of assessment also arise more broadly, and perhaps more sharply, in relation to the often-cited issue of high-stakes international English language tests such as IELTS, TOEFL and CPE, which are frequently used as gatekeeping mechanisms by educational institutions, border/immigration agencies and professional organisations. These and other such tests are constructed according to an implicit assumption that students will (and should) have studied 'standard English'—that is, English as spoken in inner-circle countries. Until and unless there is a broad change of culture beyond the world of applied linguists, in which the testing bodies, universities, agencies and professional accreditation bodies buy into the ground-level reality of diversity and its implications, it is unlikely that it will gain traction at the implementation level. This, in turn, means that there will be little change to what is taught in the classroom, for pedagogy needs to serve the perceived needs and expectations of receiving institutions and the perceived, needs, expectations and aspirations of the students themselves. However, there arises here a chicken and egg problem, in that there is no meaningful way of establishing standards in assessment without first having some conceptualisation of what it means to be communicatively competent as an ELF speaker, and therefore of what ELF materials need to look like. If international assessment is to acknowledge the reality of diverse linguistic ecologies and communicative competence and its assessment is to be operationalised in pedagogy and assessment via, for example, symbolic competence, then the challenge and opportunity afforded to teachers and materials designers is to reflect this in how they design and deliver effective English language programmes. This leads us to a consideration of commercial questions, the focus of our next section.

3.4 Commercial Questions

The plurilithic view has significant implications for the commercialisation of English as a commodity, which involves an international market that has evolved to benefit from and reinforce the standardisation of English, realised most vividly in the demand for and supply of international teaching publications, teacher training and tests.

The status and desirability of English as a commodity is widely acknowledged. For example, Pakir (1999, p. 104) has observed that 'English has become a global commodity that seems to have no sell-by date attached to it', and Cameron (2012, p. 360) has described it 'as the single most valuable commodity in the global linguistic market'. The demand side of the market in English and the products associated with it, epitomised by teaching publications and tests, is driven by the need for individuals and countries to survive in an increasingly competitive world. In order to compete, people from less developed countries need to access the knowledge, skills and language used by the advanced economies, leading to an accelerating demand for education and employment in the dominant economies, and in particular in English (Chew 2009; Kerekes et al. 2013; Phillipson 1992; Tollefson 1995). On the supply side, providers compete against each other for the attention of consumers by promoting English as standardised, divisible, available at a range of price points, predictably deliverable (i.e. 'learnable'), and the means to achieving consumer (learner) aspirations, which are themselves promoted through local and global advertising (Crichton 2010). This competitive pressure draws publishers, testing and teaching into the international marketing chain as mutually implicated in the standardisation of English for the global market (Block 2002; Crichton 2010; Gray 2002, 2010). Exemplifying this process, Block (2002, p. 121) has argued for the emergence of 'McCommunication', a global tendency to standardise English language teaching and materials 'as a rational activity devoted to the transfer of information between and among individuals in an efficient, calculable, predictable and controllable manner via the use of language, understood in strictly linguistic terms'. Moreover, as Cameron (2008, 2012) has argued, this tendency to standardise is also seen and reinforced through the policies of 'end user' organisations that employ those who are proficient in English, in which the language used by employees is treated as an aspect of the corporate 'brand', to be made uniform through monitoring, codification and training. On a larger scale, standardisation is seen in the global influence on education, migration, employment, and teaching materials of international tests such as IELTS, Cambridge and TOEFL, and in international rankings based on test results seen, for example, in the political, cultural and economic washback of the PISA tests and the underlying interests of the dominant economies at stake in these tests (McNamara 2011).

The key point is that standardisation is not optional in this environment. It is entrenched in the operations of the market in English language teaching because uniformity of English as a commodity enables the production, promotion and sale of English language products to benefit from the economies of scale that allow them to compete and survive in the global market (Crichton 2010). This is as true for teaching publications and teacher education as it is for international tests. The implication, we suggest, is that the existing market is fundamentally challenged by the diversity of local Englishes foreshadowed by the plurilithic view, especially once the ecological and pedagogic questions raised in the previous sections are taken into account. For example, notwithstanding some local sensitivity and product differentiation, publishers currently prioritize economies of scale, but the plurilithic view foregrounds the importance of local sensitivity in the identification of target markets, the varieties of English to be included and their relation to particular linguistic ecologies. This shift in priorities in turn invites innovative responses to questions such as which learners of English are to be taught to communicate with which speakers, and drawing on what resources for the pragmatic 'negotiation' of these interactions? What are the implications for the current, dominant model of homogeneous, global market textbook? What opportunities for and new approaches to locally sensitive textbook design and production does this open up? And with regard to testing, how is international testing to be administered and against which varieties of English are response items to be standardized? More fundamentally, how is the pressure to standardize to be set against the value of acknowledging diversity, and with reference to what standards are reliability and validity to be understood? While the commercial interest in standardisation is immense, if the plurilithic view takes hold, then such questions must inevitably arise, requiring creative responses and a new sensitivity that acknowledge the reality of local Englishes and their intricate relationships to other languages in the lives those who use them.

3.5 Personal Questions

And what of the students' views? What, for example, of the aspirations of people for whom the dominant form of English represents a means of social, professional and material advancement—as the language which is globally most powerful, desirable and therefore manifestly 'legitimate' (Bourdieu 1991, p. 43)? What of the student who wishes to learn English as it is spoken 'traditionally' in inner circle countries—that is, a particular inner circle variety of English—and who desires and expects a syllabus that specifies unambiguous learning targets accordingly? Whatever the reality of diversity on the ground, for a range of possible reasons people may aspire to a standard of English associated with the monolithic view. Furthermore, for some the choice between a local variety and a widely recognised standard may not be exclusive; that is to say they may wish to be proficient in both. To suggest that this aspiration is somehow not legitimate is to invite the same accusations of hegemony that have been levelled against those who hold to a monolithic view of English. This would seem, on the face of it, to be telling learners what they should be doing and, by extension, what they should believe. Does this not risk a kind of (reverse) linguistic imperialism which those in a somewhat privileged position and who see themselves as more informed would foist on learners? And the desire to speak English as it is spoken in inner circle countries is not simply a matter of the perceived prestige of these varieties, it is also often a very practical matter of meeting academic and professional expectations and the requirements of tests such as IELTS and TOEFL that currently serve as gatekeeping mechanisms for institutions of higher education, professional accreditation bodies and immigration departments. And this, of course, raises the question of the likelihood—and indeed the feasibility—of the relevant testing bodies subjecting these and other such tests to a process of recalibration designed to reflect the plurilithic perspective.

This kind of pragmatism among learners may well extend to English language teachers. While there may be a proportion who recognize the need to acknowledge the diversification of Englishes, the challenges of translating this into a syllabus and pedagogy may appear insurmountable. Moreover, most feel duty-bound to teach students according to their needs and aspirations—typically referenced to particular high-stakes test requirements that determine entry into academic and professional organisations, as we have seen. Research conducted by Jenkins in 2007, involving 326 teachers from 12 EC countries, indicated that the majority maintained 'an unquestioning certainty that NS [native-speaker] English (British or American) is the most desirable and most appropriate kind of English for international communication' (2007, p. 197) and that it would not 'at present be feasible to implement the teaching of ELF accents in classrooms in their own countries' (p. 224). Furthermore, while most supported in principle the notion of ELF, they did not accept ELF varieties as legitimate and 'while they would teach ELF accents, they would continue to regard NS accents as correct and would still aspire to an NS accent for themselves' (p. 228).

Perhaps the interesting question is whether and how we can develop pedagogies and materials that acknowledge the complex micro and macro language ecologies increasingly represented in the English language classroom context and which cater simultaneously for both the local and the global. Is there a way of reconciling the two in a manner that meets the needs and wishes of all learners? This question needs careful and canny investigation as we embark on a future where varieties seem certain not only to remain a fact of life but also to multiply, in relation to other languages and varieties, taking on a life of their own and becoming ever more integrated into the life of their communities. It highlights the essential intersection of the personal and the pedagogical aspects of our analysis. Whereas it may be difficult to envisage how such a reconciliation might be realised, the reality of world Englishes makes it difficult to deny the need for such radical innovation that puts front and centre the perspectives of learners and the linguistic ecologies in which they move and which they aspire to join. When viewed in this light, one might reasonably argue that what is often seen as a monolithic–plurilithic dichotomy (a dichotomy which has been our point of departure and frequent point of reference in this chapter) is actually increasingly becoming something of an irrelevance: it may exist at the ideological level, but perhaps it no longer has any meaningful place at the personal and practical level.

3.6 Conclusion

We have argued that a world of multiple Englishes raises fundamental questions about how English and English language teaching and assessment are conceived and practiced. Moreover, we have suggested that these questions range far beyond the classroom to include the wider micro and macro ecologies of languages and cultures relevant to the current and future lives of students, of which varieties of English are a part. Indeed, it is the need to understand Englishes within these ecologies that marks the fundamental conceptual shift away from the monolithic view. We have identified three areas in which, we suggest, these ecological questions apply with particular force: pedagogic questions about the nature of English varieties and their mutual intelligibility beg questions about the boundaries of and relations between varieties of English and between these and other languages; these questions in turn raise questions of their own about the nature of target markets, the content of publications and the validation of assessment; and questions about how students' perspectives challenge assumptions that segregate their interests according to either standardized or local varieties. These questions point not to one or other side of the debate between monolithic or plurilithic views, nor in the first instance to how 'English' and 'English language teaching' are to be conceived, but—and this is the point at the heart of van Lier's work—to the imperative to foreground, respect and trust in the student, her learning and her worlds. Such an agenda transcends the identification of 'needs' and particular 'methodologies'; it requires a dialogue about learning that attends to, discovers, draws on and celebrates ecologies of linguistic and cultural diversity.

References

ACE. n.d. Asian Corpus of English. http://ec-concord.ied.edu.hk/ace/. Accessed 11 Aug 2013

Bhatt, R. M. (2002). Experts, dialects, and discourse. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 12,* 74–109.

Block, D. (2002). McCommunication: A problem for SLA. In D. Block & D. Cameron (Eds.), *Globalization and language teaching (pp. 118–133)*. London: Routledge.

Blommaert, J. M. E. (2005). *Discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blommaert, J. M. E. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power* (trans: G. Raymond & M. Adamson). Cambridge: Polity.
Cameron, D. (2008). Talk from the top down. *Language and Communication, 28,* 143–155.
Cameron, D. (2012). The commodification of English. In T. Nevalainen & E. C. Traugott (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of the history of English (pp. 354–361)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Canagarajah, A. S. (Ed.). (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Canagarajah, A. S. (Ed.). (2005). *Reclaiming the local in language policy and practice*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.
Candlin, C. N. (2000). An interview with Christopher Candlin by Claire Kramsch. *Berkeley Language Centre Newsletter, 16,* 1–4.
Candlin, C. N. (in press). Not so much a memorial as an inspiration: Champion of the ecology of language learning. *Applied Linguistics*.
Candlin, C. N., & Crichton, J. (2011a). Emergent themes and research challenges: Reconceptualising LSP. In M. Peterson & J. Engberg (Eds.), *Current trends in LSP research (pp. 277–316)*. Bern: Peter Lang.
Candlin, C. N., & Crichton, J. (2011b). Introduction. In C. N. Candlin & J. Crichton (Eds.), *Discourses of deficit (pp. 1–22)*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
Candlin, C. N., & Sarangi, S. (2002). Foreword. In C. Kramsch (Ed.), *Language acquisition and language socialization: Ecological perspectives (pp. xi–xv)*. London: Continuum.
Chew, P. G. -L. (2009). *Emergent lingua francas and world orders: The politics and place of English as a world language*. New York: Routledge.
Cicourel, A. V. (1996). Ecological validity and 'white room effects': The interaction of cognitive and cultural models in the pragmatic analysis of elicited narratives from children. *Pragmatics and Cognition, 4,* 221–264.
Cicourel, A. V. (2007). A personal, retrospective view of ecological validity. *Text and Talk, 27,* 735–759.
Crichton, J. (2010). *The discourse of commercialization*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
Elder, C., & Davies, A. (2006). Assessing English as a lingua franca. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 26,* 282–301.
ELFA. (2008). The corpus of English as a lingua franca in academic settings. Director: Anna Mauranen. http://www.helsinki.fi/elfa/elfacorpus. Accessed 11 Aug 2013.
Firth, A. (1996). The discursive accomplishment of normality: On 'lingua franca' English and conversation analysis. *Journal of Pragmatics, 26*(2), 237–259.
Firth, A. (2009). The lingua franca factor. *Intercultural Pragmatics, 6,* 147–170.
Gray, J. (2002). The global coursebook in English language teaching. In D. Block & D. Cameron (Eds.), *Globalization and language teaching (pp. 151–167)*. London: Routledge.
Gray, J. (2010). *The construction of English*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
Hall, C. J. (2012). Cognitive contributions to plurilithic views of English and other languages. *Applied Linguistics*. Advance Access.
House, J. (2003). English as a lingua franca: A threat to multilingualism? *Journal of Sociolinguistics, 7,* 556–578.
House, J. (2009). The pragmatics of English as a lingua franca. *Intercultural Pragmatics, 6,* 141–145.
Jenkins, J. (2000). *The phonology of English as an international language: New models, new norms, new goals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Jenkins, J. (2002). A sociolinguistically based, empirically researched pronunciation syllabus for English as an international language. *Applied Linguistics, 23,* 83–103.
Jenkins, J. (2007). *English as a lingua franca: Attitude and identity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Jenkins, J. (2012). English as a lingua franca from the classroom to the classroom. *ELT Journal, 66,* 486–494.
Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk & H. G. Widdowson (Eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures* (pp. 11–30). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kerekes, J., Chow, J., Lemak, A., & Perhan, Z. (2013). Trust or betrayal: Immigrant engineers' employment-seeking experiences in Canada. In C. N. Candlin & J. Crichton (Eds.), *Discourses of trust (pp. 269–285)*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
Kramsch, C. (2008). Ecological perspectives on foreign language education. *Language Teaching, 41,* 389–408.
Kramsch, C. (2010). *The multilingual subject*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Kramsch, C. (2011). The symbolic dimensions of the intercultural. *Language Teaching, 44,* 354–367.
Kramsch, C., & Whiteside, A. (2008). Language ecology in multilingual settings: Towards a theory of symbolic competence. *Applied Linguistics*. Advance Access.
Kuo, I. (2006). Addressing the issue of teaching English as a lingua franca. ELT Journal, 60, 213–221. doi:10.1093/elt/ccl001 213.
Matsuda, A. (2003). Incorporating world Englishes in teaching English as an international language. *TESOL Quarterly, 37,* 719–729.
Mauranen, A. (2006). Signaling and preventing misunderstanding in English as lingua franca communication. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 177,* 123–150.
Mauranen, A., & Ranta, E. (Eds.). (2009). *English as a lingua franca: Studies and findings*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
McNamara, T. (2011). Measuring deficit. In C. N. Candlin & J. Crichton (Eds.), *Discourses of deficit (pp. 311–326)*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
Mühlhäusler, P. (1996). *Linguistic ecology*. London: Routledge.
Murray, N. (2012). English as a lingua franca and the development of pragmatic competence. *ELT Journal, 66,* 318–326.
Pakir, A. (1999). Connecting with English in the context of internationalism. *TESOL Quarterly, 33,* 103–114.
Pennycook, A. D. (1994). *The cultural politics of English as in international language*. New York: Longman.
Pennycook, A. D. (1998). *English and the discourses of colonialism*. New York: Routledge.
Pennycook, A. D. (2008). Translingual English. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, *31*, 30.1–30.9.
Pennycook, A. D. (2010). *Language as a local practice*. Abingdon: Routledge.
Pennycook, A. D., & Makoni, S. (Eds.). (2007). *Disinventing and reconstituting languages*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters
Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Phillipson, R. (2009). *Linguistic imperialism revisited*. Hyderabad: Black Swan.
Rajagopalan, K. (2004). The concept of 'World English' and its implication for ELT. *ELT Journal, 58,* 111–117.
Seidlhofer, B. (2001). Closing a conceptual gap: The case for a description of English as a lingua franca. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 11,* 133–158.
Seidlhofer, B. (2003). A concept of international English and related issues: From 'real English' to 'realistic English'? Language Policy Division DG IV—Directorate of School, Out-of-School and Higher Education, Council of Europe, Strasbourg. www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/seidlhoferen.pdf. Accessed 18 Nov 2011.
Seidlhofer, B. (2007). Common property: English as a lingua franca in Europe. In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.), *International handbook of English language teaching* (Vol. 15, Sect. 1). doi:10.1007/978-0-387-46301-8_11.
Singh, P., & Doherty, C. (2004). Global cultural flows and pedagogic dilemmas: Teaching in the global university contact zone. *TESOL Quarterly, 38,* 765–774.
Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000). *Linguistic genocide in education—or worldwide diversity and human rights?* Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.
Skutnabb-Kangas, T. & Phillipson R. (2008). A human rights perspective on language ecology. In A. Creese, P. Martin, & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Ecology of language (2nd ed., pp. 3–14)*. New York: Springer.
Tollefson, J. W. (1991). *Planning language, planning inequality: Language policy in the community*. London: Longman.

Tollefson, J. W. (1995). *Power and inequality in language education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
van Lier, L. (1988). *The classroom and the language learner: Ethnography and second language classroom research*. Harlow: Longman.
van Lier, L. (1997). Approaches to observation in classroom research: Observations from an ecological perspective. *TESOL Quarterly, 34,* 783–787.
van Lier, L. (2004). *The ecology and semiotics of language learning: A sociocultural perspective*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Adademic.
VOICE. n.d. Vienna-Oxford international corpus of English. Website der Universität Wien. http://www.univie.ac.at/voice/. Accessed 11 Aug 2013.
Widdowson, H. G. (1994). The ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly, 28,* 377–389.

Chapter 4
Glocal English in Singapore? A Re-exploration of the Localization of English

Anne Pakir

Abstract This chapter re-considers the notion of 'glocal English' or 'glocalism' in discussing the use of English in Singapore. As a global language, English has developed in interesting ways via social media and the Internet all over the world. However, it is only in special polities such as Singapore where it is used as the 'working language' of the country for a multilingual population base, that English has developed into a phenomenon that has to be studied, better understood and perhaps given a label such as 'glocal English.' The chapter will contribute to the ongoing discussions of what it means for English to be a global language and how it adapts as 'a communicative tool of immense political, ideological, and economic power'(Kachru, *Kontalinguistik,* 1996, pp. 906–913) in global-local tensions (e.g. commerce, trade, finance, industry, science and technology versus intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic communication within Singapore). In the shifting perspectives of what English is (really global or truly local?), what it does (for and in education), and how it is used in this country (globally and/or locally), the paper hopes to elucidate the dimensions of teaching and learning English in the Singapore context and perhaps more widely in an Asia-Pacific context.

Keywords Glocal english · English-knowing bilingual communities · Ascendant bilinguals · Singapore · Glocalism · Multilingualism · Language education · Languages in education

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to re-consider the spread of English as a global language and its impact on an ethnically and linguistically diverse nation that uses English ubiquitously as a lingua franca for both international and national purposes.

A. Pakir (✉)
Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore,
3rd Storey, Unit 03-03, Shaw Foundation Alumni House, 11 Kent Ridge Drive,
Singapore 119244, Singapore
e-mail: irohead@nus.edu.sg

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_4,

Exploring what it means for English to be a global language and how it adapts as an immense communicative tool in global-local tensions, this chapter elucidates the kinds of responses from local users of English in Singapore, giving rise to the possibility of examining a notion such as 'glocal English'.

In other words, Glocal English is a unique concept to be explored in the Singapore context where English is used by three distinctive ethnic groups (Chinese: 74 %, Malay: 13 %, Indian: 9 %) and "Other Races": 3 %. Singaporeans (3.29 million) and Singapore Permanent Residents (0.53 million) live in a dynamic 21st century global city, engaging for most of the day in the working language English although they have "ethnic mother tongues" officially designated as Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil and speak several other languages from their multilingual repertoire.

The history of language education and languages in education in Singapore since its independence in 1965 has been marked by a strong bilingual policy, promoting English as the cornerstone, as the medium of education, for all levels of schooling, while compulsory second language provision is at the same time made for the three different ethnic groups in schools: Chinese (Mandarin), Malay (Malay language), and Indian (Tamil language mainly but including options for Hindi, Punjabi, Guajarati, Bengali, and Urdu).

English-knowing bilingualism, defined as proficiency in English and a working knowledge of one's ethnic mother tongue, instilled after five decades in the centrally controlled Singapore schooling system, has given rise to a new phenomenon: that of an ascendant English-knowing bilingual community that draws upon its local roots and cultures to express its own non-English values and multilingual identity. Wei (2000, p. 455) defines an ascendant bilingual as "someone whose ability to function in a second language is developing due to increased use." I define an ascendant English-knowing bilingual community as one that functions increasingly in English but, because of its collective association with other languages and cultures (mainly Asian in this case), taps these links for identity and rootedness. Ascendant English-knowing bilingual communities offer excellent sites for studying glocal English.

4.2 The Idea of English

The rapid spread of English throughout the world witnessed in the last three decades of the twentieth century was accompanied by intense scholarship that tried to establish paradigms for studying the phenomenon. English figured prominently at the top of the applied linguistics agenda whether as an object of enquiry in language education or as a commodity of desire among eager learners of the language with implications for culture and development, pedagogy, and frameworks of study. Furthermore, the rise of the internet generation gave mobility and portability of English an added dimension—that of changing functions, values and meanings of English in the midst of globalization and acceleration brought about by instant connectivity across the world.

"Which English?" "Whose English?" "Who are the proper English?" and "Quo vadis English?" were questions of debate and controversies that drew opposing conclusions. The English as an International Language (EIL), World Englishes (WE) and the more recent English Lingua Franca (ELF) paradigms, produced scholarship of different foci in the teaching and learning of English and the research (Pakir 2010). For example, WE, which celebrates linguistic diversity and the approach that languages change and adapt, argues for multiple standards and recognition of the pluricentric nature of English. The WE (or Kachruvian) paradigm introduced the idea of three concentric circles of English-users: the Inner Circle (mainly found in the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand), the Outer Circle (mainly composed of speakers from former British and American colonies and territories with some familiarity and experience of English), and the Expanding Circle (mainly foreign learners of English). Older proponents of EIL, many found in the Inner Circle, focused on language proficiency and the importance of producing near-native like speakers of the language. On the other end, ELF promoted a new concept of English as a contact language "for groups of English speakers having different first language backgrounds", thus agreeing that the world will see pluricentric Englishes but with an ELF core.

These various categorizations of views of what it means for English were inevitable. As Halliday so aptly described it, English has this dual role, "both as an international language (one among many) and as the (only) global language" and hence "it is not surprising that it figures prominently in applied linguistic activities, with language education at the top of the list. It is prominent even in mother-tongue education … But in second or foreign language teaching it easily predominates" (Halliday 2007, p. 8).

The interesting phenomenon is that as these strands of scholarships overlap and criss-cross, the later EIL exponents such as McKay (2010) argue that what is needed is "a comprehensive view of English use that takes into account the local linguistic ecology and recognizes the hybridity of current English use".

4.3 English in Singapore

In Singapore, the most comprehensive and dynamic idea of English can readily be found. Serving as a global language of trade, commerce, science and technology, English in Singapore has an outward orientation and observes international language standards for teaching, learning, and occupation-related networking. However, as a local language for interethnic communication (and in growing cases for intra-ethnic communication) English in Singapore has a domestic orientation, developing linguistic and discourse features that characterise the local speakers of English, displaying standard as well as non-standard discourses.

Thus we find two opposing directions (as identified variously by Pakir (1994, 2001a, b); Rubdy (2001); Wee (2003); Bokhorst-Heng (2005); and Chew (2006)) regarding the development and idea of English in Singapore. A global and yet local language, English is an unusual lingua franca in Singapore, a country that promotes extensive English-knowing bilingualism and one that is becoming an ascendant English-knowing bilingual community. Competing norms, internationally standardized for the global orientation versus locally indigenized English for a global orientation (Pakir 1994, 2001a, b) have developed over several decades of pervasive English use in Singapore. The identification of Singlish, a variety of English immediately recognizable as Singaporean and often described as non-standard, has been the subject of scrutiny and news commentaries/reports. For example, a recent news clip reported that Yale-NUS professors, teaching at a new liberal arts college that opens at the National University of Singapore in August 2013, took a crash course in “Singapore’s unique colloquial language” (Lee 2013, p. 10). The faculty members (including some from the United States, India and Australia) were willing to do whatever they could to understand the society they were joining “and that includes being able to understand and correctly interpret what is being said around us”, said Charles Bailyn, Dean of the Yale-NUS College. The widespread use of English in Singapore by so many different ethnic groups has led to cultural mixing and hybridity in the language and a variety has emerged that can be “taught” or “caught” in Singapore.

4.4 Glocalization and Singapore

Different ideological perspectives on international spread of English and English as an emergent lingua franca include that of Graddol (1997, p. 33) who posited the static and traditional import-export model versus the post-modern/globalised model. The first emphasised the necessity of one or (at most) two standard models of the English language with clearly defined English language skills to be taught to learners. The second, and more dynamic model, speaks to the modelling of language and culture in terms of flow: communication flow and counter-flow, producing a tension between the global and the local. Within the latter modelling, different norms of English will evolve over time. At the societal level, one can recognise a distinctive trend going global and yet remaining local as a response to shifting times (glocal became an acceptable English word around the time of this discussion and debate, within the decade of 1975–1985). At the sociolinguistic level, I suggested that the tension between global and local resolves itself in the emergence of Glocal English, one that is internationally oriented but locally appropriate and at the same time, one that could be locally oriented but globally understandable. An English in Singapore that is internationally intelligible but requires explanation for linguistic features that reflect deeply rooted substratal language influences.

4.5 Identification and Definition of Glocal English

Two illustrations will suffice, one from a Singaporean poet writing in English (“A poem not too obiang”, Leow 1995) and the other, a rap song (“SAR-vivors”, Phua Chu Kang 2003) used in educating Singaporeans in how to defend themselves against a dangerous bird flu virus that brought about some deaths in Singapore in

2003. They both demonstrate the use of glocal English—internationally intelligible and acceptable, but rooted in Singaporean sensibilities and local cultures.

Leow's (1995) "A Poem Not Too Obiang"
From fiddlesticks and By Jove
I pick my words to find
Alamak
Stirring spicily on my tongue….

Why should I not drink
Teh tarik and discuss
Lee Tzu Pheng
(without putting them in italics)
Among friends who read but
Tread on the trappings of blind
Milton and Shakepearean worship?

Like the prata man's
Flips and flaps of the dough
Taking shape with each dose
Of local flavour
I look for my place
In a Singaporean life

My place in the sun
Is certainly not too LC
For some others' meringue pies
And afternoon tea.

Glocal English is also evident in the lyrics of the rap-song featured in a YouTube video by Phua Chu Kang, a local comedian brought in to be "Uncle Phua CK" to teach Singaporeans to be SAR-vivors! (http: effectmatrix.com). The SARS outbreak in Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore (among other places) in 2003 required local populations to respond by following sanitary habits, and Singapore's fight against the virus in a publicity blitz led by Phua Chu Kang, the well-recognised sitcom local actor, enabled the local population to fight the virus which gave rise to the identified Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). Much of the language incorporates local idioms ("then at least got hope"; "play play", "think no one see you?"), pragmatic particles ("lah", "leh") and loanwords mainly from the Chinese and Malay languages ("kapui", "kena", "tahan").

4.5.1 The Use of Singlish (Glocal English) to Help Contain the Sars Virus in Singapore 2003

Phua Chu Kang's SAR-vivor Rap Lyrics
Some say 'Leh', some say 'Lah'
Uncle Phua says, time to fight SARS
Everybody, we have a part to play
To help fight SARS at the end of the day!
Wash your hands whenever you can
Wash with soap, then at least got hope

When you get home, take a bath quickly!
Kiasu a bit, be safe not SAR-RY!
Try not to travel to SARS Countries
Wait a few months lah, wait and see.
Why you rush to catch that plane?
Use internet lah, USE YOUR BRAIN!

Getting protection from this virus
Means getting healthy, inside us!
Don't work too much, until you're sick
Get exercise and get yourself fit!
Good nutrition and vitamins
Help you to pass the immunity challenge
Eat your proteins, carbo and fibre
Then you can be a…. SAR-VIVOR!!

Chorus
PCK say don't PLAY PLAY
Or this stupid SARS is here to stay
But we can fight this, you and me
Help fight SARS in our country!
SARS is the virus, that I just want to minus
No more surprises if you
Use your brain! Use your brain! Use your brain!
Can't SARS me, baby
And I don't mean maybe
You must be steady, just.
Use your brain! Use your brain! Use your brain!

Some say 'Leh', some say 'Lah'
Spread kaya, but don't spread SARS!
Everybody, we have a part to play
To help fight SARS at the end of the day!
If you're sick don't go to work
Even if your boss is a jerk!
Don't be a hero and continue working
Wait the whole company 'kena' quarantine!

Wear a mask when you see doctor
See the same one, don't be a doc-hopper!
Wait at the clinic, stay in one spot
Don't spread your germs at the coffeeshop
Think you got SARS? Call 9-9-3
Ambulance will come for free
To check you up at Tan Tock Seng
Where they know about SARS like I know Ah Beng

Hey, if you 'kena' home quarantine
Don't go out, except in your dreams!
'Tahan' a while and cooperate!
Don't give everybody a big headache

Chorus
Some say 'Leh', some say 'lah'
Keep the place clean, and keep out SARS

Everybody, we have a part to play
To help fight SARS at the end of the day
Keep our country clean and green
Because nowadays, the germs are mean
Don't leave food for stray dogs or cats
Unless you want to keep their germs as pets

Cover your mouth if you cough or sneeze
You think everyone want to catch your disease?
Don't 'kapui' all over the place
You might as well 'kapui' on my face!
Don't throw your tissues all over the shop
Think no one see you, so you don't stop?
Make me sick when people don't care
Make you sick when you breathe the air

Even when things are getting better
Don't do things and become a regretter
Think SARS is gone? Your head ah!
But listen to me, and we'll be ok lah!

Glocal English in Singapore is easily identifiable as in the two examples given above. More problematic, however, is its definition. In 1999, I attempted to define a glocal language as "globally appropriate but culturally relevant". In terms of the sociolinguistic realities of Singapore, English will remain its most global language (until perhaps Mandarin becomes a strong contender in the future). But along with other English-knowing multilingual speakers throughout the world, Singaporeans have turned the language into a multifaceted one, serving both global and local needs. Going glocal (that is, going global while maintaining local roots) makes for greater awareness of intercultural and cross-cultural exchanges. The term "Glocal English" can be defined as English that is global and yet rooted in the local contexts of its English-knowing bilingual users. Glocal English is a language that has international status in its global spread but at the same time expresses local identities. In developing a new role as a global-local language, English supports local users and their uses for it, while serving to connect the world. This phenomenon of Glocal English is most often to be found in the countries where English has an institutionalized role, achieving range and depth in its spread.

The glocalization of English in Singapore results from different kinds of cultural demands made on English and in the population's response to globalist and localist tensions. As Alsagoff avers (2007, 2010), the variables of globalism and localism produce cultural models of orientation that reflect contemporary patterns of English use in Singapore: in globalism—economic capital, authority, formality, distance, and educational attainment; in localism: socio-cultural capital, camaraderie, informality, closeness, community membership. Glocalization of English in Singapore suggests that language and identity are intertwined and fluid. Alsagoff (2010) offers a model variation of the use of an indigenized English in multilingual multicultural speech communities—"developed from a perspective that allows us to see language as a meaning-making and identity-creation resource in a culturally grounded manner" (p. 126).

4.6 Some Concluding Questions

An Asian multilingual population in a dynamic twenty-first century global city using English as a global language and a local language, as an international lingua franca as well as an intra-national one, has become English-knowing and an ascendant English knowing bilingual community. The way this community uses the global language English presented an opportunity to reconsider the concept of Glocal English.

In light of the shifting perspectives of what English means to Singaporeans (really global or truly local?), what it does (for and in education), and how it is used in this country (globally and/or locally), the chapter raises the question of how the language is to be taught in Singapore schools (Pakir 2000). Can we hope to elucidate the dimensions of teaching and learning English in the Singapore context and perhaps more widely in an Asia-Pacific context? There will be the challenges to education and pedagogy and the expected ideological debates, for example, teaching only standard English (and suppressing Singlish or ignoring Glocal English); assessing English proficiency in Singapore with an external reference framework only; and examining role models presented by "native" versus "non-native" teachers of English in Singapore.

In the light of the above re-consideration of glocal English in Singapore, we are left with further questions: Are the current paradigms of teaching and learning English sufficient for today's world, or do we need to radically re-think, re-formulate and re-examine our assumptions about what we do as researchers and practitioners in the enterprise of teaching English? Secondly, what can the current controversies among scholars working in different paradigms tell us about international English language education? And finally, how can we apply the answers to specific contexts, such as those found in the Expanding Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Inner Circle as identified by Kachru?

References

Alsagoff, L. (2007). Singlish: Negotiating culture, capital and identity. In V. Vaish, S. Gopinathan, & Y. Liu (eds.), *Language, capital, culture: Critical studies of language in education in Singapore* (pp. 25–46). Rotterdam: Sense.

Alsagoff, L. (2010). Hybridity in ways of speaking: The glocalization of English in Singapore. In L. Lim, A. Pakir, & L. Wee (eds.), *English in Singapore: Modernity and management* (pp. 109–130). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Bokhorst-Heng, W. (2005). Debating singlish. *Multilingua, 24*, 185–209.

Chew, P. G. L. (2006). Asian realities in language learning: The case of Singapore. *CELEA Journal, 29*, 1–11.

Graddol, D. (1997). *The future of English*? London: British Council.

Halliday, M. A. K. (2007). *Language education. Vol. 9 of Collected works of M.A.K. Halliday*. London: Continuum.

Kachru, B. B. (1996). English as lingua franca. In H. P. H. Goebl, Z. S. Nelde, & W. Wölck (eds.), *Kontalinguistik* (pp. 906–913). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Lee, J. (2013, April 28). Yale-NUS profs speak Singlish? Steady lah! *The Sunday Times*, Top News, 10. http://newshub.nus.edu.sg/news/1304/PDF/SINGLISH-st-28apr-p10.pdf. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Leow, A. (1995). A poem not too obiang. In E. Thumboo (ed.), *Journeys: Words, home and nation, an anthology of Singapore poetry (1984–1995)*. Singapore: UniPress.

McKay, S. (2010). English as an international language. In N. H. Hornberger & S. McKay (eds.), *Sociolinguistics and language education* (pp. 89–115). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Pakir, A. (1994). English in Singapore: The codification of competing norms. In S. Gopinathan, A. Pakir, W. K. Ho, & V. Saravanan (eds.), *Language, society and education in Singapore: Issues and trends*. Singapore: Times Academic.

Pakir, A. (2000). The development of English as a 'glocal' language: New concerns in the old saga of language teaching. In W. K. Ho & C. Ward (eds.), *Language in the global context: Implications for the language classroom* (pp. 14–31). Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre.

Pakir, A. (2001a). Bilingual education with English as an official language: Sociocultural implications. In *Georgetown University round table on languages and linguistics 1999* (pp. 341–349). Washington: Georgetown University Press.

Pakir, A. (2001b). English as lingua franca: Multiforms, multimedia, multi-disciplines. In E. Thumboo (ed.), *The three circles of English* (pp. 77–90). Singapore: Unipress.

Pakir, A. (2010). English as a lingua franca: Negotiating Singapore's English language education. In L. Lim, A. Pakir, & L. Wee (eds.), *English in Singapore: Modernity and management* (pp. 261–279). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Phua Chu Kang. (2003). SARS-vivors. Rap lyrics. The use of Singlish to help contain the SARS virus in Singapore. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_OPsfAhXUSE. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Rubdy, R. (2001). 'Creative destruction': Singapore's speak good English movement. *World Englishes, 20*, 341–355.

Wee, L. H. A. (2003). The birth of a practice: Know in colloquial Singapore English. *World Englishes, 22*, 5–13.

Wei, L. (Ed.). (2000). *The bilingualism reader*. London: Routledge.

Chapter 5
Asia and Anglosphere: Public Symbolism and Language Policy in Australia

Joseph Lo Bianco

Abstract This paper uses some instances of foreign language use by politicians, including their refusal to do so when invited, in order to open a line of questioning about the cultural messages involved in public displays of foreign language competence, especially Asian languages in the Anglosphere. The intention is to explore the role of influence and attitudes on the ecology of languages education, specifically in the Australian setting, as it accommodates culturally in an effort to integrate into institutions and structures of the Asia Pacific region. Tensions, contradictions and ambiguities arise in this process of disordering and re-ordering of world alliances, and have led to Australia being branded a 'torn country', unable to reconcile its historic national culture as a secure member of Anglosphere with its regional identity in Asia. Public use of foreign languages can be seen as a kind of barometer taking the pulse of aspects of a community's attitudes to foreign language competence.

Keywords Kevin Rudd · John Kerry · Mahathir Mohamad · Asia literacy · Asian century · Manchurian candidate · Language symbolism · Ecological language policy

5.1 No French Today

On Friday 8 February 2013, Massachusetts Senator John Kerry famously "refused" to speak French.

The video, available online (BBC 2013), clearly shows the sequence of request and decline, as a reporter asks him to add "a little French" to his answer. The question commenced in English and all its substantive content was conveyed in English before the reporter, appearing to lower her voice, used French to ask that in his reply he might use "a little French, possibly, please". It wasn't asking much and

J. Lo Bianco (✉)
University of Melbourne, Grattan Street,
Parkville VIC 3010, Australia
e-mail: j.lobianco@unimelb.edu.au

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_5,

was remarkable for its hesitation and overt politeness, constituting perhaps more an invitation than a request.

But Kerry "demurred" and "declined" according to one source (Epstein 2013), and flatly "refused" according to others (BBC 2013; Wolfe 2013).

The incident occurred during Kerry's first press conference after his appointment by President Barack Obama as Secretary of State to replace Senator Hillary Clinton, and few people in the room could have been unaware of Kerry's "history" with French and France. In any case, in the United States, the "Anglosphere" (Bennett 2004; Roberts 2006), and probably in all national states, public use of another nation's languages can be risky for politicians. Language use has long been known to involve "acts of identity" (LePage and Tabouret-Keller 1985) but public display of "foreign" language competence can occasionally imply identities of entirely the wrong kind. The adjectives "official" and "national", which we use to describe some languages, already suggest that we imagine that such languages "belong" to particular places, and the adjective "foreign" underscores that some languages ultimately belong elsewhere.

Kerry was meeting John Baird, Canadian Minister for Foreign Affairs. The question the Canadian-accented reporter asked him invites his views on claims that some Canadian citizens might be implicated in terrorism offences and requests comment about the Keystone XL pipeline being constructed to transport crude oil from Alberta drilling fields to various US destinations.

Given the Washington DC location it can be safely presumed that no one present was unable to speak English. Kerry's answer and demeanour is rich with nuance; he appears slightly surprised, recovers, and calmly states: "Not today. I got to refresh myself on that"—adding pragmatic complication to cultural slight.

Kerry was not being asked to explain, clarify, or transact any business in French, or to translate misunderstood information, or to supply missing nuance or detail, or to propose original or unique comments. There was, in short, no specifically communicative quotient to the French he was being asked to use. He was in effect, being asked perform an act of identity, to display linguistic symbolism; that of a powerful representative of the Anglosphere performing public bilingual capability in the capital of free market capitalism. The refusal, however, can be seen to be both about languages in general and French in particular. Of course, as a major international language French is regularly used in Washington press briefings by Francophone heads of state, as are most national official languages. But Kerry "represents" the United States, and his "Not today" answer to a request so modest suggests something about how few and small the concessions the powerful within Anglosphere can be expected to make to multilingualism.

The news the reporter possibly imagined herself communicating (to French Canadian and general Canadian audiences, and to the wider world), was subverted. Instead of a hoped-for "US Secretary of State speaks French!", the news became: "John Kerry refuses to speak French" (Wolfe 2013) on Global Post, "America's world news site" (http://www.globalpost.com/), the BBC and elsewhere. In Wolfe's report this is 'breaking news', and she uses a resource English supplies for discussing French in English: "Pardon my French? So says Secretary of State John Kerry, who refused to speak the language during an appearance with Canada's foreign minister Friday."

One of the ways that foreign languages are rendered colloquially in English is through expressions like "double Dutch", "It's all Greek to me" and "Pardon my French". The first two equate the use of languages other than English with incomprehensibility or unintelligibility, with being "dense", whereas "Pardon my French" is a euphemism for swearing, i.e. "my French" stands for "bad" language.

Another colloquial expression that addresses the attitudes discussed here is "Manchurian candidate", the accusation of the sleeper agent "embedded" within a state but loyal to a rival. Here foreign languages cue not incomprehension or swearing, but evokes suspicion or questionable loyalty. Such meanings are elevated during "tense times" (Lo Bianco 2008), and, as it transpires, Kerry's refusal was interpreted to be more about politics than proficiency.

According to Wolfe, Kerry's refusal "raised eyebrows among Francophiles, mainly because Kerry is known to speak French and attended Swiss boarding school as a child". The BBC's extensive report supplied additional information:

> Mr Kerry's knowledge of French prompted scorn from the right-wing US press during his unsuccessful bid for the presidency in 2004, due to the souring of US-French ties over the war in Iraq. Since then, he has played down his language proficiency…

The Canadian foreign minister attempted remediation (Epstein 2013), offering to speak in both French and English, as though the issue was failed comprehension but the 2004 "scorn" heaped on Kerry for his "ties" to France during "tense times" appear to account for his "Not today".

Within old conceptions of languages tied to nations, the three Anglosphere nations represented in this paper, Australia, Canada and the United States, lingually embody the transition from the period of historical and therefore linguistic dominance (Ostler 2006), *between* French *and* English, as rivals in colonial expansion, *from* French *to* English (Cha and Ham 2008), and now from West (*either* French *or* English) to East (Asian languages, and Chinese in particular). New kinds of language-national couplings arise and gain symbolic presence in public debate, specifically language use in the press conferences of the "Asian century", the claimed time "when China rules the world" (Jacques 2009).

5.2 迎接 to Sydney, Mr Hu

Five years before Kerry's "Not today", Kevin Rudd, Leader of the Australian Labor Party, Leader of the Opposition, and aspirant Prime Minister welcomed Mr Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China, to Sydney, in Chinese. This public display of his knowledge of Chinese positioned him against his domestic political rivals in diverse ways and underscored Australian regionalism, like the North American regionalism, as an inevitably multilingual encounter. The media reaction to Rudd's public Chinese, however, revealed attitudes and symbolic messages similar to, and in some interesting ways different from, reactions to Kerry's reluctance to use French, and these have to do with the particular effects of the "Asia century" on Australia, essentially for reasons of geography.

On 8–9 September 2007 the leaders of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) were meeting in Sydney, just prior to the commencement of a strongly contested Australian Federal (Commonwealth) election. Rudd was pitted against the long-serving incumbent John Howard, of the Liberal National party coalition, in power since winning office on 2 March 1996. Howard had replaced Labor Prime Minister Paul Keating, who had made Australian integration into the dynamic economic zone of Asian economies a major priority of his period in office. Australia had been instrumental in the creation of APEC, and this body itself came to symbolise Australian presence on the international scene, effective diplomacy, and multilateralism, often preferred by smaller political entities because they make available alliances, deals and negotiations that can lessen the excessive influence in bilateral dealings held by big powers. APEC also symbolises Australia's new international identity, seeking to replace western and Anglosphere-dominated structures, with Pacific Basin and Asian-centred ones.

On the APEC (2013) website it describes itself as "the premier Asia-Pacific economic forum" and states that it is committed to "championing free and open trade and investment" and fostering "regional economic integration, encouraging economic and technical cooperation, enhancing human security, and facilitating a favourable and sustainable business environment."

In these statements it mirrors the essentially economic basis of large-scale international cooperation, but it adds a highly significant twist. The members of APEC are described not as nations or countries but as "member economies". The website explains this choice:

> APEC has 21 members. The word 'economies' is used to describe APEC members because the APEC cooperative process is predominantly concerned with trade and economic issues, with members engaging with one another as economic entities.

The official host of the 2007 APEC summit was John Howard, as Prime Minister, and among the "special guests" were two 'stand-outs', China's President Hu Jintao, and George W. Bush, then serving as 43rd President of the United States. Although the Australian election campaign had not officially commenced, the nation was in the mood for a political contest between Howard's increasingly unpopular incumbency and Rudd's fresh promise. Collocated with Rudd's name in much media reporting at the time was the term: "Mandarin speaking". In an anonymous piece in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, entitled "Rudd outshines PM with language skills", it was reported that: "Labor's Mandarin-speaking leader Kevin Rudd upstaged John Howard today in a stunning piece of linguistic one-upmanship at a state lunch for China's President Hu Jintao" (SMH 2007a).

Despite acknowledging that "The Prime Minister's own speech went down well", the article goes on in purple prose about the apparently universal surprise involved in an Anglosphere leader speaking in Chinese:

> [B]ut when Mr Rudd started addressing the leader of one-quarter of the world's population—fluently in his own tongue—the effect was stunning. There was an almost audible intake of breath among the scores of Chinese political and business heavyweights in the audience. Many sat bolt upright in their chairs, beaming at Mr Rudd's virtuosity. (SMH 2007a)

That public use of Chinese for greeting should cause “intake of breath” and sitting “bolt upright in… chairs” surely owes more to habituated expectations than a single individual’s “virtuosity”.

The ‘effects’ of course were not all so admiring. If the Chinese “heavyweights” witnessing this symbolic display were impressed, others were decidedly unimpressed. The article then deploys a classic of folk commentary about language, its symmetry with music, saying: “The effect could not have been greater had the family’s precocious nine-year-old played a Chopin prelude perfectly for the visiting relatives after Christmas lunch.” It seems rather extraordinary that soon after comparing the use of Chinese for words of welcome to musically precocious children the article claims that “… it worked so well because Mr Rudd was not acting like a show-off.”

This was not, of course, the perspective of Liberal party officials and politicians, who the next day repudiated Rudd’s use of Chinese with precisely the claim that he was indeed showing off: “Foreign Minister Alexander Downer has taken a swipe at the opposition leader for flaunting his Mandarin language skills during the APEC summit” (SMH 2007a). Continuing the theme of surprise by foreign guests that an Australian political leader could speak Chinese, a second report the following day details Mr Downer’s dismissive attitude:

> Asked if he was impressed by Mr Rudd’s language skills, Mr Downer, a French speaker, said he was not one to flaunt his talent with foreign tongues. "Remember I am the foreign minister so whether I can speak French or not seems to be reasonably immaterial.” It’s not something that I can speak French that I have paraded in all of my years in politics, though it’s been quite useful to me as the foreign minister from time to time. (SMH 2007b)

The article offered criteria for when to judge if public use of a foreign language in Australia is not showing off, “flaunting” or “parading”. These were that Rudd “… spoke at length in English first, displaying a commanding grasp of China’s history and development … before seeking his audience’s indulgence to welcome Mr Hu personally in Chinese” (SMH 2007b).

But “showing off” resides as much in reception as in intention, according to the article, which notes that Rudd’s Chinese fluency “… must have made Mr Howard squirm in his seat” (SMH 2007a).

Similarly interesting from the perspective of symbolic content is another quality that serves to rescue public display of Chinese from criticism, when the writer says: “[H]e spoke not for a few lines but for a few minutes” (SMH 2007a). The first piece concludes with repartee exchanged between representatives of both political parties about the gift of two pandas to the Adelaide Zoo, wrapping up, amusingly, in support of a comment by Mr Rudd, with: “Touche!” (SMH 2007a).

The criteria for rescuing public use of foreign languages from criticism as ‘showing off’ or youthful precocity appear to be the prior and extended use of English, presumably devoted to using language transactionally, that is, to send substantive messages rather than “symbolise” anything and seeking the “indulgence” of the non-Chinese speakers present. The display of knowledge of Chinese history and development, the restriction of the Chinese to welcome comments made “personally” to Mr Hu in Chinese, and the “indulgence” granted by the non-comprehending

Australians in the audience, were debated in online blogs on digital and in print and social media forums. These criteria rescued Rudd from the charge of "flaunting" for his supporters, but failed to persuade detractors.

It should be kept in mind that Australian politicians are notoriously monolingual as evidenced in research on their language competencies and language learning biographies (Lo Bianco 2007). In responses to a survey questionnaire administered to a sample of members in all nine parliaments: six states, two territories and the one Federal parliament, the vast majority had no or very rudimentary knowledge of languages other than English. It is notable that while those claiming second language skill tended to make their bi or multi-lingual capability a feature of their public persona, they were quick to qualify this by stressing the 'unifying' and 'national' role of English in Australia, and reporting that they limited their second language skills to instrumental usefulness to support the national interest or to family and private domains.

5.3 From Asia Literacy to Asia Capable

Soon after APEC a Federal election was called and Rudd was elected 26th Prime Minister of Australia on 24 November 2007. However, he was to serve only two and half years of his term before being replaced in an internal Labor party spill on 24 June 2010 by deputy Prime Minister, Ms. Julia Gillard. As the "Mandarin speaking" Prime Minister, Rudd was the Australian politician most closely associated with languages, Asia and a post–English-only strategy for international engagement. Under his leadership language policy was fashioned according to his view of a China-centred Asianism; funding major new China studies centres and installing a new schools languages funding program with priority given to the same four languages of trade, commerce and strategic relations (Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean), which had prevailed in language education policy since 1994, before being abolished by the Howard government in 2002. However, the most revealing and suggestive of Rudd's language education policy-making was a single "event", the Australia 2020 Summit (Australia 2008), held on 19–20 April 2008. This was an exercise in national visioning under his direct guidance, from which grew a strong politics of preparation for the "Asia Century", occasionally the "China Century", the "region", "our region" and other ways to discursively mark the nation's international environment. It was during this activity and later under Gillard's leadership in 2012, that the two-decade old meta-policy of "Asia literacy" came to be challenged by a new rubric of "Asia-capability", both terms relying on problematic notions of "Asia" as a text to be read or a task to be undertaken. Producing "Asia-capable" workers and students is now offered as the organizing aim for public education and professional training in occupational skills.

Participants in Rudd's Summit 2020 were selected on the basis of invitations and nominations and were described as Australia's 'best and the brightest'. The entire exercise functioned like a publicly displayed hands-on workshop, its invited members "selected" from diverse social formations and many "committed" interest groups. It was preceded by preparatory summits in schools and other sites across the country, culminating in the gathering of one thousand of the presumably very 'best and brightest'. The ethos and operation of the Summit were devoted to national reconstruction, with Asia, Asian languages and Asian integration a very strong theme, alongside indigenous reconciliation and social progress. Broader questions of 'multiculturalism' were significantly downplayed (see Lo Bianco and Aliani, 2013, for an analysis of the Summit as a 'style' of policymaking).

Languages were carefully positioned in the preparatory literature and in the final material of the Summit, according to their purposes and place. In this material the new arrangements of global economic power are rendered unstoppable and Australia is positioned as uniquely "advantaged", but only potentially, since only a concerted national effort can transform potential advantage into actual benefit. This effort relies on the nation developing "international literacy" capable of exploiting Australia's felicitous geography and vast natural endowments to fully exploit the emergent global order. In the Final Report the nation is interpreted as having a literacy deficit, whose overcoming is treated as critical to future national economic wellbeing. A special place is accorded to inbound foreign students who are represented as crucial to the viability of Australian higher education. A special urgency is attached to the claim that there is "decline" in usage of English as a first language in the world, despite immense evidence of the continuing expansion of English as a lingua franca in Asia. The Final Report notes that: "It is estimated that approximately two-thirds of the world's population will not speak English as a first language by 2050" (Australia 2008). Finally, as far as communication literacy is concerned, the Final Report provides evidence that despite two decades of priority status and special funding provision there persists a "crisis" in enrolments in Asian language study.

Practically all references to languages in the pre-Summit material and in the Final Report are linked to Asia and 'Asia literacy' (sometimes regional or international literacy); immigrant languages, especially European ones or non-trade centred Asian ones, are rarely tied to education, culture or commerce, but are instead linked to welfare, citizenship processes and, on one occasion, to some kind of symbolic inclusion. Indigenous languages are seen only under the rubric of heritage and occasionally tied to cultural maintenance for indigenous groups. Asian languages, however, are constituted as essentially foreign, and "in the service not of civilisation, or even knowledge in a more or less cultural sense, but instrumentally as tools in facilitating Australian economic and security purposes in the region" (Lo Bianco and Aliani, 2013, p. 36). No European or World language other than Asian ones is linked to commerce in any way, nor to any imagined or projected Australian future, and there is no mention of multicultural aims for any purposes other than those which might support the region-centred economic internationalism that drives the report.

The Final Report runs to 399 pages, including syndicate reports, and concludes with a series of "By 2020" declarations. Some examples are:

> By 2020 Asian studies and the teaching of Asian languages will be commonplace. (p. 396)
> [B]y 2020, a key goal will be a national strategy for Australia's place in Asia covering our identity, Asia literacy and membership of regional bodies. Policy should be geared for Asian engagement through absorption of Asia literacy into the national psyche, including funded programs and investments in language, culture and education. Every student from kindergarten to year 12 should be fluent in an Asian language. (p. 399)
> [B]y 2020 Australia should be a republic with a female Prime Minister of non-Anglo extraction, a bridge between East Asia and the declining west and a country trusted and accepted as part of Asia. There should be seamless interaction between Australia and the Asian region, its cultures and languages. (Australia 2008, p. 399)

The Prime Minister who replaced Kevin Rudd is indeed female, although her "extraction" while "non-Anglo" is rather close, actually Celtic, that is, Welsh, but few other parts of the above fantasy have any realistic chance of realization.

After the bitterly contested overthrow of Rudd, Gillard continued the national visioning activity, though using a more conventional modality. On 28 September 2011 she commissioned the preparation by mid-2012 of a "landmark national strategy" on Australia's preparedness for "the Asian century" (Gillard 2011), allocating it two essential aims, an "intellectual task … fully to comprehend the implications of the Asian century, fully to describe its opportunities and risks" and a "public task" whose aim is "to ensure [the] implications are understood in every part of our nation."

On its release in October 2012 the White Paper confirmed the longstanding national policy practice of harnessing education and cultural life to supporting the now bi-partisan agenda of regional engagement motivated by economic and strategic concerns, with Gillard declaring in her foreword:

> This White Paper is a plan to build on our strengths and shape our future. It details how, by 2025, Australia can be a winner in this Asian century by becoming more prosperous, more resilient, and sharing the new opportunities. It calls on all of us to play our part in becoming a more Asia-literate and Asia-capable nation. (Australia in the Asian Century Taskforce 2012, p. iii)

Australian plans for Asia integration are premised on maintenance of an essentially bipartisan commitment to the US Alliance, as Gillard herself evidences in an address to a joint meeting of the US Congress on 10 March 2011. The following gives a flavor of Gillard's speech:

> There is a reason the world always looks to America. Your great dream—life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—inspires us all. … You have an ally in Australia. An ally for war and peace. An ally for hardship and prosperity. (As cited in Conley 2011, p. 34)

Not surprisingly, she was considered to have

> … sounded at times fawning, even a little obsequious. But from inside the US House of Representatives, it was apparent that Ms Gillard pushed all the right buttons to ensure that the Australia-US alliance remains as strong as ever. (Coorey 2011)

Australia therefore strides Anglosphere and US Alliance for security, and Asian Century discourse in economics and cultural/linguistic futures. Despite this, however, the White Paper fails to innovate conceptually or to ask substantive questions about Australia, Asia or global relations beyond trade-connected but nation-bounded separations. It shows little awareness of the new global dynamic of transnational identities, of the vast population mobilities (Castles and Miller 2009) or the networks and nodes of person-to-person linkages that disrupt and subvert national control (Castells 2009). The connections and possibilities imagined are mired in the binaries of older concepts of bounded national states linked by commercial relations. The *Australia in the Asian Century* White Paper, like the 2020 Summit, relegates the knowledge of languages, and the cultural identities, networks, values and interests of Australians of non-Anglo, but non-Asian “extraction” to the silenced margins of non-consideration, while indigenous language and culture knowledge are oriented only to internal community and mostly heritage orientations. The cultures and languages of Asian Australian communities are treated ambiguously, occasionally recruited to serve, in marginal roles, when they coincide with commercial interests, but the overwhelming emphasis of the White Paper is that the Asian Century requires essentially ‘new learning’ by established communities rather than language maintenance among the multicultural population. The collective effect of the White Paper is to depict an essentially unaltered world, with little appreciation of transnationality in culture or commerce, an antiquated depiction of states inhabited by their ‘natural’ citizenship, speaking “national” languages, interacting with increasingly powerful foreign others, who in their bounded geo-political spaces speak ‘foreign’ languages.

Despite recommending that by 2025 every Australian child should have access to one of four Asian languages (comprising three of the ‘classic four’: Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese, with Hindi replacing Korean), the White Paper provided no specific additional funding for this ambitious scheme, suggesting that 2025 is as unlikely as 2020 to realize the ambitions of policy.

However, even within its own assumptions and categories, some of the strongest advocates of regional economic integration and strategic foreign relations policy in conventional nation-state terms gave the report a sharply critical reception (AIIA 2013) for underestimating risks of conflict and turbulence in the region, perhaps supporting Conley’s (2011) assertion that Australians may be the “biggest dreamers” in relation to forecasts about future prosperity, regionalism and security.

5.4 Australia Torn

From 1988, the Bicentenary of the Federation of the British Colonies, into the Commonwealth of Australia through to the election of the Howard government in 1996, Australia engaged in a period of intense national identity debate.

It was at this time that Australia was accused of cultural treachery. In the work of American political philosopher, Samuel Huntington (1993, 1996), and international relations scholar, Owen Harries (1993), Australia was declared a “torn country”, defined essentially as a nation whose leaders are seeking to “shift” from its historical or predominant/inherited culture and civilization to another. Instances cited of such a process include Russia, Turkey or Mexico, seeking to become “western” with

Australia cited as the sole counter example, a Western nation seeking to "become Asian". In this rather dubious interpretation, Australia's Asia-integration policies marked it as a cultural renegade.

This status was 'earned' under the Prime Ministership of Paul Keating and his energetic pursuit of Asian engagement, linked to some radical domestic cultural politics, such as taking a strong stand of apology and reconciliation regarding historical atrocities committed against Aboriginal people, severance of ties to the British monarch as titular head of state, and a radical interpretation of the cultural as well as military and economic consequences of Asia-engagement.

Keating was defeated at the 1996 election by John Howard, who embraced Anglosphere ideas, and declared that Australia would refuse to "choose between our history and our geography", meaning he would not repudiate the historical Britishness of Australia simply because geo-political strategy and economics required Asian engagement. Howard's is therefore a conservative, and Keating's a radical, approach to "Asia" (Beeson and Jayasuriya 2009).

We can see here how the politics of Asian engagement in Australia differ from global moves in recent years to promote Asian Studies, and specifically Chinese teaching (Tsung and Cruickshank 2010), and to adapt to the rapid transfer of economic production and wealth to Asia. In the radical version of Asia-engagement advanced by Keating, and the China-centred version promoted by Rudd, what is requested domestically of Asia-engagement is deep-rooted cultural adjustment. For conservative critics, as we have seen, this implies a civilizational 'tearing away' from Anglosphere, and indeed even from Western culture in general. Academic intellectuals and policy makers have collaborated with and helped to forge Australia's brand of Asia engagement, moving between academic-research domains and government policy environments (Beeson and Jayasuriya 2009) in keeping with the "triumph of neoliberalism and the waning of ideological politics of the 1960s" (p. 373), during the shifts from Cold War positions and alliances. In the scramble of loyalties and alliances that follow we can see how languages can symbolize national allegiance, so that in Australia it has become competitively useful to announce interest in learning Chinese, when Asian engagement can reflect "anxieties and vulnerabilities" of national and political identity of a "settler society that is both 'in and out' of its immediate region" (p. 374). The depiction of Australia as an Anglosphere nation with Asian geography and a multicultural population provides a backdrop of cultural nuance to interpret public use of "foreign" languages.

5.5 "Once You Become Asian, We will Think About That"

If the reaction from some elements in Anglosphere was to despair at cultural treachery, reaction to Keating's Asian engagement energy in some parts of Asia was outright scorn. After the creation of APEC, Australia had expressed a desire to join ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. This was interpreted by Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, as suggesting a much deeper level of identification with Asia than either trade or security and essentially a wish to make Australia an "Asian nation" (Fitzgerald 1997). This prospect was considered to have a numerical quality by Singapore's Goh Chok Tong who argued in 2003 that Australia would need a 50 % Asian population to be a fully accepted member of the region (Conley 2011, p. 13)—impossible to achieve under the current non-discriminatory immigration policy.

As reported by Kimina Lyall, Southeast Asia correspondent for *The Australian* (2002), Dr Mahathir, when asked by an Australian journalist for an assessment of Australia's prospects of joining ASEAN after his departure from office, responded that "Once you become Asian, we will think about that!" Mahathir's policing of who belongs in Asia and in its regional structures and organisations perfectly matches Huntington's (1996) prescription of how and who belongs in Anglosphere, both accept that membership is possible for outsiders, but both impose cultural and linguistic criteria for admission, and in the case of Mahathir and Goh racial-ethnic measures as well. This boundary marking for membership of political space is more flexible for languages, but still fosters attitudes that consider public use of "foreign" languages beyond their prescribed zones of domination akin to expressing national disloyalty.

In the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall there was a wave of theorizing about the future of the world. This was a moment of optimism within Anglosphere and its prescription of liberal capitalist democratic nation states, iconically expressed by American political scientist Francis Fukuyama (1992) as "the end of history" and the triumph of Anglosphere values. It was given overt cultural and linguistic shape in *The Anglosphere Challenge*, a book by US businessman James Bennett (2004), about the unique virtues claimed for the legal traditions and cultural values attaching to English-speaking nations. According to Bennett, Anglosphere is a precise entity, not a nation, or a group of nations, or a trans-national institution, but a 'network civilization', which though lacking a unified political structure has grown from the traditions of England to the expanded post-colonial English-speaking nations to spread and include other proximal areas:

> To be part of the Anglosphere requires adherence to the fundamental customs and values that form the core of English speaking cultures. These include individualism, rule of law, honoring contracts and covenants, and the elevation of freedom to the first rank of political and cultural values. (Bennett 2002, p. 1)

But because the nations that comprise Anglosphere are diverse in culture and tradition, unifying and distinguishing values and political ideologies become attached to speaking English and so rely on an excessive linguistic determinism. Indeed its two key parties, the US and UK, were forged in their separation one from the other, in war and revolution, so that the founding existence of one is premised on the rejection of some characteristics (e.g. monarchy) of the other. It is apparent in 2013 that Anglosphere formulations were premature, not to say self-congratulatory, inured from alternative visions and criticisms, and sustained by apologist history (Roberts 2006). If Bennett's account had remained within historical analysis it might simply have to deal with disagreement, but his forecast as to its inevitable prevailing can be accounted against the evidence of the present:

> The Anglosphere's continuous leadership of the Scientific-Technological Revolution from the seventeenth century to the twenty-first century stems from these characteristics and is thus likely to continue for the foreseeable future. (Bennett 2002, p. 3)

The predictions of continued Anglosphere domination and success post-1989 failed to anticipate the 'emergence of China' (Lo Bianco 2007) and the loss of confidence and political traction for America that would follow the Global Financial Crisis of 2008. More critical is Bellocchio's (2006) analysis, in which Anglosphere consists of the soft power victory of the United States after World War II and also the powerful triumph of the British in preventing unification of continental Europe, thereby shifting the locus of geo-strategic power to the Atlantic.

During their close relationship, John Howard and George W. Bush both declared admiration for Andrew Roberts' *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples Since 1900*, which Roberts' (2008) own website describes as:

> … brilliantly reveals what made the English-speaking people the preeminent political culture since 1900 … a phenomenal success story … an enthralling account of the century in which the political culture of one linguistic world-grouping comprehensively triumphed over all others.

5.5.1 The Manchurian Candidate

In the Cold War political thriller, *The Manchurian Candidate* by Richard Condon, the son of an American political family is brainwashed into assassinating for the Communist Party. Popular film adaptations in 1962, starring Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, Janet Leigh and Angela Lansbury and a 2004 version starring Denzel Washington, Leiv Schrieber, Jon Voight and Meryl Streep have led to the term *Manchurian Candidate* entering the political lexicon. It describes a 'sleeper agent', someone working 'for the other side' who has managed to infiltrate under the protective legal and cultural boundary that separate inside from outside in political terms. As in all espionage, authentic language is indispensable to proper conduct of the role, but used domestically, authentic language of the other exposes the user to the charge of being on the other side, or overly sympathetic to it. Kerry's French reluctance derives in part from this charge during a time of Franco-American tension, and several such allegations were made against Kevin Rudd during his time as Prime Minister.

In one interview conducted by Barrie Cassidy on ABC Television in 2009 with then Opposition Spokeswoman for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop, the following exchange took place:

> BARRIE CASSIDY: …you …dismissed him as the Manchurian candidate and implied that he was an ambassador for China.
> JULIE BISHOP: … Kevin Rudd has been labelled the Manchurian candidate nationally, internationally for a very long time…White dubbed him the Manchurian candidate; a defence strategist talked about him as the Manchurian candidate … in February of 2008 … Middleton put to Kevin Rudd: "you realise that you're known as the Manchurian candidate in Tokyo"… Mr Rudd brushed it off and said, oh he doesn't speak Japanese or something. … in the middle of last year there was a whole article about Kevin Rudd, his

> relationship with China in 'The Economist' magazine and it was headed 'The Manchurian candidate'. (ABC 2009a)

Then Opposition leader Malcolm Turnbull also made allegations of this kind:

> In fact he spent most of the time talking about his proposal that China have greater representation on the IMF… He mentioned China 20 times in that interview and Australia only five times … Now if you'd missed the introduction when he was announced as Australia's Prime Minister, you could've sworn he was a senior member of the Chinese Communist Party. (ABC 2009b)

5.5.2 "Foreign" Languages and Foreign Interests

To know a language implies and requires knowing its speakers and their lives and society more intimately than to not know the language and yet this knowledge, required for learning, occasionally exposes the learner/speaker to allegations of favouring the interests of the other, potentially acute in times of tension (Lo Bianco 2008). To quarantine foreign language use from the vulnerability of allegations of being 'on the other side' may depend on widespread rather than rare foreign language skill. Yet Australia's efforts for language acquisition are faltering (Sturak and Naughten 2010) and the financial investment required to achieve the regularly proclaimed government aims are vastly beyond what is ever likely to be made available. Tomazin (2009), for example, cites studies estimating that $11 billion is needed to make "half the population fluent" in an Asian language.

5.6 Languages Education Policy, a More Dynamic Ecological Depiction

In previous work (Lo Bianco 2010a, b), I have identified three interacting sources of language policy: what is declared in official texts, what is achieved as consensus or becomes a dominant view from public debate, and thirdly and most subtly, what models of public language behaviour are provided for a society. These diverse sources of how language policy is made are different kinds of public activity, the first in texts that are produced in politico-legal environments, the second is in the realm of argument-discourse in which ordinary citizens and professional bodies feature prominently, and the third involves cultural and political elites whose performance, or performative action on language sets trends or establishes desirable modes of expression. These three sources can contradict each other and all co-exist in the 'agitational space' of public life.

This chapter has discussed the third and most diffuse of these, the models of public display of bilingualism, specifically Chinese speaking, by former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd within the context of formal policy and public debate. The reactions to his use of Chinese, like those of Senator Kerry in the United States, suggest some of the conditions under which public use of languages other than English in the Anglosphere is safe, welcome, or admired, and some under which the speaker becomes vulnerable to accusations of elitism or even national disloyalty. For all countries in the Anglosphere, the current socio-political and economic moment, the specific Asia-centred kind of globalisation which is well established and increasingly recognised, poses questions about whether English will need to share its currently unquestioned pre-eminence as the language of global exchange and convenience.

If we are to look for answers to this question we will need to be attuned not only to the formal announcements of new policy, official reports, or laws, but also to the language behaviours of key individuals in culture and politics and to the reception they receive from the wider public. In doing this systematically we can devise a more dynamic approach to patterns and priorities of future language education and increase acceptance of public foreign language use.

References

ABC. (2009a). Julie Bishop joins Insiders. *Insiders*, Reporter Barrie Cassidy, ABC TV, 5 April. http://www.abc.net.au/insiders/content/2009/s2535196.htm. Accessed 12 Mar 2013.

ABC. (2009b). Turnbull denies 'yellow peril' accusations. *LateLine*, ABC TV, 30 March. http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2008/s2530451.htm. Accessed 12 Mar 2013.

AIIA (Australian Institute for International Affairs). (2013). McCarthy, Wesley attack Asian white paper. 25 February. Australian Institute for International Affairs, NSW Blog. http://glovercottages.wordpress.com/2013/02/25/mccarthy-wesley-attack-asian-white-paper/. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation). (2013). Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation. http://www.apec.org. Accessed 6 Aug 2013.

Australia. (2008). *Australia 2020 Summit. Final report*. Barton ACT Australia: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, One National Circuit. http://apo.org.au/research/australia-2020-summit-final-report-0. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Australia in the Asian Century Task Force. (2012). Australia in the Asian century: White paper. Canberra: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/white-paper. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

BBC. (2013). John Kerry refuses to speak French at news conference. 9 February. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-21392034. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Beeson, M., Jayasuriya K. (2009). The politics of Asian engagement: Ideas, institutions, and academics. *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, *55*, 360–374.

Bellocchio, L. (2006). *Anglosfera. Forma e forza del nuovo Pan-Anglismo*. Genova: Il Nuovo Melangolo.

Bennett, J. (2002). An Anglosphere primer. Paper presented to the Foreign Policy Research Institute. http://explorersfoundation.org/archive/anglosphere_primer.pdf. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Bennett, J. (2004). *The Anglosphere challenge: Why the English-speaking nations will lead the way in the twenty-first century*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Castells, M (2009). *Communication power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Castles, S., & Miller M. (2009). *The age of migration: International population movements in the modern* world (4th ed.). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cha, Y.-K., & Ham S-H. (2008). The impact of English on the school curriculum. In B. Spolsky & F. Hult (eds.), *Handbook of educational linguistics* (pp. 313–328). London: Blackwell.

Conley, T. (2011). Dreams and nightmares: Australia's past, present and future in Asia. August. Asie. Visions 42. Institut français des relations internationals, Center for Asian Studies.

Coorey, P. (2011). Gillard pushes the right buttons as she woos the US. Sydney Morning Herald, 10 March. http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/politics/gillard-pushes-the-right-buttons-as-she-woos-the-us-20110310–1bob4.html#ixzz2NJ9ZhrXl. Accessed 6 Mar 2013.

Epstein, J. (2013). Kerry declines to answer question in French. Politico, 8 February. http://www.politico.com/politico44/2013/02/kerry-declines-to-answer-question-in-french-156512.html. Accessed 9 Mar 2013.

Fitzgerald, S. (1997). *Is Australia an Asian country*? Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Fukuyama, F. (1992). *The end of history and the last man*. New York: Free Press.

Gillard, J. (2011). Speech to the Asia Link and Asia Society Lunch. Melbourne. http://www.pm.gov.au/press-office/speech-asialink-and-asia-society-lunch-melbourne. Accessed 11 Mar 2013.

Harries, O. (1993). Clash of civilisations. *The Weekend Australian*, 3–4 April, 19.

Huntington, S. (1993). The clash of civilisations? *Foreign Affairs*, *72*(3), 22–49.

Huntington, S. (1996). *The clash of civilisation and the remaking of world order*. New York: Simon and Shuster.

Jacques, M. (2009). *When China rules the world: The end of the Western world and the birth of a new global order*. London: Penguin.

LePage, R. B., & Tabouret-Keller A. (1985). *Acts of identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lo Bianco, J. (2007). Our (not so) polyglot pollies. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, *30*(2), 1–21.

Lo Bianco, J. (2008). Tense times and language policy. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *9*, 155–178.

Lo Bianco, J. (2010a). The importance of language policies and multilingualism for cultural diversity. *International Social Science Journal*, *61*, 37–67.

Lo Bianco, J. (2010b). Language policy and planning. In N. H. Hornberger & S. L. McKay (eds.), *Sociolinguistics and language education* (pp. 143–176). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Lo Bianco, J., & Aliani R. (2013). *Language planning and student experiences: Intention, rhetoric and implementation*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Lyall, K. (2002). Hello again, I'm quitting: Mahathir. *The Australian*, Thursday, 4 July.

Ostler, N. (2006). *Empires of the word: A language history of the world*. New York: Harper Collins Perennial.

Roberts, A. (2006). *A history of the English-speaking peoples since 1900*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

Roberts, A. (2008). A history of the English Speaking Peoples Since 1900. Andrew Roberts website, Books. http://www.andrew-roberts.net/pages/books/history_of_english_speaking.asp. Accessed 10 Mar 2013.

SMH (2007a). Rudd outshines PM with language skills. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 September. http://www.smh.com.au/news/apec/rudd-outshines-pm-with-language-skills/2007/09/06/1188783403621.html. Accessed 1 Mar 2013.

SMH (2007b). Bit of a Downer on speaking Mandarin. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 September. http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/bit-of-a-downer-on-kevins-chinese-chat/2007/09/07/1188783466709.html. Accessed 1 Mar 2013.

Sturak, K., & Naughten Z. (2010). The current state of Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean language education in Australian schools. Asia Education Foundation. http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/NALSSP/Documents/CurrentStateAsianLanguageEducationOverarchingReport.pdf. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Tomazin, F. (2009). $ 11b plan to teach Asian languages. *The Age*, 10 June. http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/11bn-plan-to-teach-asian-languages-20090609-c28 l.html. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Tsung, L., & Cruickshank K. (2010). *Teaching and learning Chinese in global contexts*. New York: Continuum.

Wolfe, S. (2013). John Kerry refuses to speak French. Global Post, 9 February. http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/americas/united-states/130209/john-kerry-refuses-speak-french. Accessed 4 Mar 2013.

Chapter 6
English as Lingua Franca on Campus: Cultural Integration or Segregation?

Amy Bik May Tsui

Abstract To enhance global competitiveness, internationalization of staff, students and programs have become an essential part of the strategic plan of universities in recent decades. These internationalization initiatives have had a profound impact not only on the learning spaces but also the social spaces in universities, especially universities in non-English speaking countries. Based on in-depth interviews with a purposive sample of 60 students at a tertiary institution in Hong Kong, this paper examines the impact of the use of English as a lingua franca inside and outside the classroom on the interaction amongst students from diverse linguistic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. It observes that the way in which each student positioned themselves in these social spaces had led to intercultural understanding or misapprehension, social integration or segregation, and fragmentation or coherence of the community. It argues that a "lingua franca" should not be narrowly conceived as solely referring to a common linguistic code; it should also be conceived as a common discourse mediated by multiple languages, a discourse which embraces and celebrates cultural diversity, empathy and mutual respect.

Keywords Intercultural understanding · Linguistic rights · Cultural segregation · Cultural stereotyping · Communication apprehension · Presentation of self

6.1 Introduction

The past two decades have witnessed keen competition in the higher education (HE) sector on a global scale. This has been exacerbated by the inclusion of "internationalization" in the metrics of international rankings, measured in terms of the ratio of local to international staff and students recruited from other parts of the world. Internationalization has become a magic word in the strategic plans of most

A. B. M. Tsui (✉)
The University of Hong Kong, Pok Fu Lam, Hong Kong
e-mail: bmtsui@hku.hk

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_6, © Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht 2014

universities and the recruitment of staff and students worldwide is a priority. The rationale for creating an international mix of staff and students is that it helps students develop an international outlook, enhances intercultural understanding, and facilitates intercultural integration.

The internationalization of staff and students in a higher education institution necessarily involves the need to use a common language (*lingua franca*) for teaching and learning as well as for communication on campus. Since English is the de facto language of global literacy, it has become increasingly the de facto language of teaching and learning in universities which have recruited a significant number of international students. As a number of scholars have pointed out, internationalization is tantamount to English-medium education (see for example, Phillipson 2009). This has created difficulties for non-English mother tongue students, both local and international. Indeed, in the third global survey on internationalization in HE conducted by the International Association of Universities, language barriers were identified as the second or third greatest obstacle to internationalization by universities in Europe, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific region (Egron-Polak et al. 2010).

In the last decade or so, there has been a growing literature on the sociopolitical impact of English medium of instruction in HE in Asian countries like South Korea (Byun et al. 2011), Thailand (Hengsadeekul et al. 2010), Indonesia (Haryanto 2013; Ibrahim 2001), Japan (Hashimoto 2009) and China (Tsung and Cruickshank 2009), and in continental Europe as a result of the Bologna Process (Brock-Utne 2007; Coleman 2006; Hilmarsson-Dunn 2009; Kerklaan et al. 2008; Lauridsen 2009; Tender and Vihalemm 2009; Vigers and Tunger 2010; Wächter 2008). However, little attention has been paid to another equally important aspect, the medium of communication amongst students outside the classroom. The choice of language for interacting amongst students and for conducting student activities outside the classroom, whether official or unofficial, has a serious impact on students' relationships and the coherence of their communities.

This paper reports on a study on the medium of communication that is used inside and outside classrooms at a university in Hong Kong and what impact it has on students' university experience as the student population becomes increasingly internationalized. The study was conducted on a purposive sample of undergraduates across ten Faculties via semi-structured interviews on a number of aspects of their experience of interacting with students of different cultural backgrounds. The findings show that internationalization did not necessarily lead to intercultural understanding and social integration. This paper argues that the way in which students position themselves in relation to the social space and the way they perceive the legitimacy of their claim over this space can lead to social inclusion or exclusion, cultural alienation or integration and accommodation. It further points out that these issues are highly complex and cannot be resolved *just* at policy level. They must be grappled with by students as they live out their roles as responsible global citizens.

6.2 The University Context

When the study was conducted, the university concerned had a student population of 22,150. There were over 6,500 non-local students from 72 countries, two thirds of them from mainland China and one-third from other parts of the world[1]. There were also over 800 exchange students from 180 universities around the world. Over 50% of teaching staff were non-local, coming from 33 countries. The medium of instruction in university has always been English. However, because the majority of students are Chinese and Cantonese speaking, the language used outside the classroom is predominantly Cantonese for oral communication; this includes everyday conversations, activities organized by students in student residences and on campus, and meetings of student organizations. For written communication, publicity materials and email messages were bilingual at times but mostly in Modern Standard Chinese until recent years. In 2008, the university Senate determined that English should be used as the *lingua franca* on campus to create an inclusive environment and to enhance intercultural communication and integration.

6.3 The Study

6.3.1 Data Set

To investigate the impact of language use outside the classroom on non-local students' relationship with local students in the university, in-depth interviews with students were conducted. Sixty students identified through purposive sampling were invited to participate in the study. Twenty were local students, 20 mainland students and 20 international students[2] coming from 13 countries outside of Hong Kong and China.

The interviewees were selected according to the following parameters:

1. Faculties to which they belonged (to ensure that most Faculties were represented);
2. Whether or not they were office bearers of student associations responsible for organizing activities, to see whether they had different views regarding language use because of their different roles;
3. Whether or not they lived in student residences where there are many student activities and there is expectation of participation by residents;

[1] As of 2013, the number of non-local students has increased to over 9,000, coming from over 80 countries.

[2] "Local students" refers to local Chinese students; hereafter "LS" for individual students. "Mainland students" refers to mainland Chinese students; hereafter "MS" for individual students, "IS" for international students.

Table 6.1 Background information of interviewees

	LS ($n=20$)	MS ($n=20$)	IS ($n=20$)
+Hall resident	8	17	15
− Hall resident	12	3	5
+SA office bearers	9	14[a]	3
− SA office bearers	11	6	17
+Overseas education	2	0	6
−Overseas education	18	19	10
Missing data[b]	0	1	4
+Exchange	10	8	4
− Exchange	10	11	12
Missing data[b]	0	1	4

$n=60$

[a] More than half of them were office bearers of the CSSAUD, Mainland Chinese Students and Scholars Association, Undergraduate Department

[b] Missing data refers to cases where the information was not elicited from the interviewees

4. Whether or not they had overseas learning experience, as the experience of interacting with students from diverse linguistic and ethnic backgrounds may have an impact on their interaction with other students on campus.

Table 6.1 shows how students were distributed according to the above four parameters.

Semi-structured interviews of between 30 and 90 minutes were conducted with students individually. In some cases, groups of two or more were interviewed owing to time constraints. Information regarding interviewees' linguistic backgrounds and their views on the following were elicited:

1. Medium of instruction policy at the university
2. Medium of teaching and learning in the classroom
3. Medium of communication in student activities, student residences, and the impact of the choice of language on their participation
4. Medium of communication and the impact on intercultural understanding and social integration on campus.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim. The analysis of interview data went through two iterations. The first focused on identifying existing practices in the medium of communication inside and outside the classroom. The second focused on identifying common themes which emerged from (3) and (4) above. Clarification was sought from the interviewees where key information was missing and to ascertain that there was no misinterpretation. There were, however, a small number of cases where, because students had already left the university, further information could not be obtained. These were marked as 'missing data' in Table 6.1 above.

Table 6.2 shows the linguistic backgrounds of the interviewees.

Table 6.2 Linguistic background of interviewees

	LS (n=20)	MS (n=20)	IS (n=20)
English as L1	1	0	13
English as L2	18	1	5
Understands or speaks Cantonese	1	19	2
Understands or speaks PTH	18	20	6
Knowledge of L3	10	4	14

6.4 Findings

In the following sections, I provide an overview of the findings relating to the actual practices of language use on campus and present these according to the major issues that emerged from the analysis of the interview data.

6.4.1 Language Policy and Implementation at the University

The policy of using English as a medium of teaching and learning was supported by all interviewees on the following grounds: (1) the international nature of the university, (2) the importance of English as the language of global communication, (3) global competitiveness, and (4) better preparation for graduate studies and the workplace.

Mainland students indicated that they chose this university in Hong Kong over and above top universities in China because of its medium of instruction and its high academic standing internationally. Most focused on the pragmatic value of English for their future careers and graduate studies. International students also indicated that they would not have chosen this university if the medium of instruction was not English. They were interested in Asia and China studies and felt that an English medium of learning enabled them to pursue their academic interests in these areas. Local students took the medium of instruction policy for granted; the majority came from English medium secondary schools and therefore did not have major difficulties with lectures in English.

While all interviewees reported that lectures were conducted in English, there were variations in the medium used in laboratory work, group discussions and tutorials. In some Faculties, tutorials and group discussions were always conducted in English; in others, some local Chinese professors switched to Cantonese when addressing questions asked by local students, but would switch back to English when reminded that some non-local students were present. This reminder was necessitated by the fact that it became increasingly difficult to distinguish Hong Kong Chinese students from mainland Chinese students.

In discussion groups involving international students, English was used most of the time. However, in groups consisting of local and mainland students, Cantonese was used as all mainland students interviewed could understand Cantonese to varying degrees, except for some terminology for which they depended on translation by their peers. Similarly, students would switch back to English when mainland Chinese students indicated that they could not follow the discussion.

All mainland students interviewed wanted teaching to be conducted in English, including group discussions and tutorials. They pointed out that although most of them could understand Cantonese, they could not express themselves very well in the language, yet were nonetheless reluctant to use English when the rest of the class was using Cantonese because they did not wish to stand out or to be perceived as arrogant. Local Chinese students, however, preferred to use Cantonese in group discussions.

The attitudes of international students varied somewhat towards the use of Cantonese by peers when asking questions and conducting group discussions, and the occasional switch to Cantonese by professors during lectures. Some felt that all academic activities should be conducted in English so that all non-Chinese speaking students could participate.

When the study was conducted, many student activities, including those in student residences, were conducted in Cantonese. Strong views were expressed by both local and non-local students regarding the choice of language in this realm. Some international students were disappointed that student activities, publicity materials, and bulk emails sent out by the Students' Union and student associations were mostly in Chinese for they felt deprived of the opportunity to participate. All international students reported that they were able to get translations from their peers when student activities were conducted in Cantonese, and while some had an open and accommodating attitude, others expressed dissatisfaction that the translation was often a "one-line account" of what was going on.

Most local students felt that conducting activities in English was less efficient compared to conducting them in their native language and considered it strange to use English in student activities when most participants were Chinese. They explained that because international students seldom joined the activities, they used Cantonese, and that if international students showed up, they would use English.

6.4.2 Linguistic Choice, Social Inclusion and Exclusion

When students were asked whether the linguistic medium was a barrier to gaining access to academic and student activities, and what impact it had on them, it was found that while all interviewees wanted to participate fully in academic and student activities, their perceptions of whether they had been granted access to these activities, and hence whether they felt included or excluded as a member of a community, varied considerably.

Adeel (IS), a Pakistani who speaks Urdu and English as his first language, was an Engineering student at the time of the interview. Despite receiving good support from the university's international office, he felt abandoned when English was not used in the classrooms or labs. He shared his experience of going to club activities: after having been welcomed in English, he was left on his own and the activities continued to be conducted in Cantonese. He commented, "… you feel completely abandoned and completely excluded."

Ted (IS), who speaks English and French as his first language, was a Journalism and Modern Chinese Studies double major student. He had studied half a year in Beijing and half a year in Singapore, and spent a year in a UK college. He liked drama but could not take part in acting because the play was in Cantonese. He interpreted this as unwillingness on the part of local students to grant him access to participation, commenting, "They don't really want me to join." This view was shared by Park (IS), a Business and Economics student from South Korea, who speaks Korean as her first language and Putonghua as her second language. She received her English medium secondary education in Singapore, and was learning Cantonese at the time of the interview. She said that when she received announcements about student activities in Chinese, her reaction was, "They don't want international students; they just target local students."

Some international students saw the use of Cantonese in class as denying them access not only to the content of the lecture but also to the local culture. For example, Ray (IS), a student from the Philippines, was resentful about professors and students making side remarks and jokes or citing examples in Cantonese, as he saw these as part and parcel of the local culture, something he came to the university to learn about. Not being able to understand the local culture contributed to his feeling of social exclusion. He remarked:

> All important things you have to understand …Your lectures and everything. To a certain extent, you demand English there. On the side, you have these side comments or stories [in Cantonese] that may not affect you. … you just let it go if you can't really understand it. … but sometimes I feel excluded. The reason why you come to Asia is to engage in the culture and the fact they start speaking about these news stories/clippings is just part of the culture. You feel you can't understand what's going on. Everybody [the local Cantonese students] is laughing and I want to laugh as well.

Other international students, however, were more accommodating or empathetic. They preferred group discussions to be in English but felt the use of Cantonese acceptable since local students were the majority and Cantonese was their mother tongue. For example, Owen (IS), an Engineering student from Cameroon who speaks French and English as his first language, had an open mind about language use both inside and outside the classroom. He found it perfectly reasonable that Cantonese was used in laboratory sessions because the aim was to make students understand the instructions for laboratory work and he was satisfied that he could get translations from his group members. He commented as follows:

> If students asked questions in Cantonese, it means students have particular questions [problems] understanding the explanation in English, so the objective is to make this student understand. So if the students get the answer in Cantonese, I think it's OK. … If the student who asks [the question] cannot understand [the teacher's response in English], he [the teacher] can address him in Cantonese.

Owen (IS) also expressed his views on the use of Cantonese in student activities in hostels as follows:

> I don't feel excluded because the hall is like the society. That is what happens when I graduate from this university. The city, the signs will be in Chinese. … So it's like a community. So I think it's okay and I have to make efforts to get used to it.

Timothy (IS), a Social Sciences student from Finland, speaks Finnish as his first language and three other languages: Swedish, French and English. He was learning Putonghua at the time of the interview and, like Owen, felt that the university's language policy favored international students. He empathized with local students who had to learn through another language even when their professors were local Chinese. Although he was the only non-Chinese student in the class, he did not feel isolated because his fellow students were friendly and liked to hear different viewpoints and learn about different cultures. When asked about his reactions to students asking questions in Cantonese in class, he replied:

> I think it's very right. Language is a very important part of your cultural heritage. If they ask questions in Cantonese, it is quite reasonable. I mean, I have already got a lot of information during the lecture, and if I have questions, I can go and ask in English, too. … I don't mind them using Cantonese. If I feel that I want to learn something more, or it is important, I can ask someone next to me to translate for me.

Owen (IS) did not mind student activities conducted in Cantonese although he would like to see them conducted in Putonghua so that he could practice using it. He said he could always get the most important parts translated for him and he understood that business could be conducted much quicker in Cantonese. He continued:

> I like the atmosphere when they speak in Cantonese. Even though I cannot understand it, but I can feel it. Once in a while, I may say "Okay lah" and my friends will realize that he is there and they will switch to English. You just need to point out that you are here and you don't understand Cantonese to get your concern heard. It would be arrogant to expect other people to use just English.

When Timothy (IS) was asked whether he felt isolated or excluded when activities were conducted in Cantonese, he replied, "I wouldn't say isolated. I would say I am different in a way, but I insist (on) not using the word 'isolated'." He felt that words like "isolated" and "excluded" were negative and that he was just an exception. He continued, "It would be arrogant to expect other people to use just English."

Harry (IS), a Canadian Chinese born in Hong Kong but brought up in the UK, was an Architecture student able to speak Cantonese but unable to read or write Chinese. He was also more prepared to accept that Hong Kong was now part of China and therefore one could not demand that everything be in English.

6.4.3 Claiming Space and Linguistic Rights

Another finding that emerged was that students' attitudes towards linguistic choice differed between lectures and group activities in the classroom, between activities organized by the Students' Union and by interest clubs, and between compulsory and optional activities in student residences.

All non-Cantonese interviewees expected lectures to be conducted in English, it being the official medium of instruction at the university. Accordingly, they felt they had the right to claim the space where formal learning took place. For example, Ray (IS), cited above, pointed out that he "demands" English in lectures. However, for informal asides in a lecture, his stance was "you just let go if you can't understand it." In other words, Ray made a distinction in his right to claim the space between different components of the same lecture. Tiran (IS), an Engineering student from Sri Lanka, preferred the use of English for lectures but would accept the use of Cantonese in labs. However, he also distinguished between whether the questions asked in labs were general questions or specific to the individual. He said, "… in labs, if a person asks questions in Cantonese you can't actually complain, it's their language, but if it's a general question I would prefer them to talk in English."

Similarly, as membership of the Students' Union is automatic and students have to pay a membership fee, the non-local interviewees made a strong claim to their right to participate fully as members of the Union through the medium of English. For example, Eddie (IS), a Business and Economics student from Indonesia who speaks English as a second language but also some Putonghua, expressed his dissatisfaction about the exclusion of international students because of the language barrier. He said,

> … the Student Union does not have any international students on their executive committee because … international students cannot speak Cantonese and will decrease the efficiency of the Union operation. I think that is true naturally, but is ridiculous. International (students) are also part of this university, of the SU, they should also have the same right.

The use of Cantonese in Students' Union activities was criticized by non-local interviewees as not a legitimate representation of the entire student body. For example, Peng (MS) studying Science, said, "The Students' Union election campaign was in Cantonese. I don't feel that I was represented by SU (Students' Union)." In other words, non-local students felt they should have the same rights as local students to claim the learning space and activity space officially due them, and to determine the medium of communication which would afford full participation by all.

The interviewees also claimed "personal space" and their linguistic right within it. For example, Ted (IS) found it acceptable if students switched to Cantonese when they had difficulty expressing themselves in English and he would ask for a translation. However, if the students started using Cantonese right away without even trying to use English, he would feel excluded despite understanding some Cantonese. In other words, the initial attempt made by local students to use English, though unsuccessful, was taken as an indication of respect for his rights.

Mainland students expressed a similar claim to their linguistic rights in relation to their own personal space. Mary (MS), a Business and Economics student, commented:

> Although some mainland students can speak Cantonese, they would feel respected if local students used Putonghua with them. If they used only Cantonese in their activities, then I would not feel respected. If they used Putonghua to ask me what language they should use, I would definitely say Cantonese but I would feel much better, I would feel respected … I feel that it is a kind of (language) right.

A stronger, more explicit claim to linguistic right was made by Seng (MS), also a Business Administration student, who said:

> I feel that I am not respected when they use Cantonese straight away. So what do I do about this? I speak Putonghua to them. They use their native language, I use mine. … I think it should be an English environment and if they speak their native language (Cantonese), why shouldn't I? … they can talk in Cantonese between themselves, but just do not do it in front of me. I feel I am not respected.

It is interesting that Seng (MS) expected others to respect his personal space and its associated linguistic right, and when it was not respected, he would reclaim the space by using his own native language, Putonghua.

6.4.4 Communication Apprehension: Foreign Language Anxiety and the Interpersonal Self

All interviewees were asked to comment on their interactions with fellow students from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and whether the language of communication had any impact on those interactions. A third issue that emerged from the interview data was that communication apprehension was common amongst local students *and* mainland students. Further probing into the causes of such apprehension revealed the existence of more complex underlying reasons than the perceived passiveness and lack of interest in other cultures.

Most international students remarked on the reticence of local students in group discussions and tutorials, and observed that international students were asking most of the questions. They felt it was less of a language problem than a cultural factor—that Chinese students were afraid of losing face when they said the wrong thing. For example, Ted (IS) found local students reticent in tutorials but felt that it was not because their English was problematic but because they were afraid of making mistakes. To him, this was a cultural issue. He commented on local students as follows:

> I asked some of the students why they don't speak out, it turns out like because they are afraid of getting things wrong. But, I think it's a cultural thing. Like they lose face by giving the wrong answer. But to be honest, I really don't care. If I say something and that is wrong, at least I would learn something from it, and then teacher could explain why what I said was wrong or whatever. But that is because it is always the way when I was at school, 'cos you are always encouraged to answer questions, whether it's wrong or right or whatever.

Although Ted (IS) felt comfortable most of the time with fellow students in the student residence, he was unhappy that he was never actively approached by local Chinese students and that, generally, he had to take the initiative and approach them. He said, "Like local students, they won't, especially those I know from class, they won't say hi or where're you from. It's like it's always me saying hello. They won't come to me; I have to go to them." He drew the conclusion that local students were not interested in him and his culture. He said, "They brush me aside because I am a foreigner, a *gwai lo*[3]."

[3] Gwai Lo can be translated literally as "ghost people". In Hong Kong, all Chinese people are referred to as "people" and all non-Chinese Caucasians are referred to as "ghosts".

Ray (IS) shared Ted's view about many local students being unwilling to speak in English because they were afraid of embarrassing themselves, especially when their English was weak. He felt that this was a crucial reason for the lack of social integration between local and non-local students. Mary (IS) recounted her unpleasant experience of sharing a room with a local student with whom she had minimal interaction. She said,

> We never speak, like we never ever speak [to each other]. The only thing she said was, "Last semester, I didn't have a roommate." I tried to talk to her and there is zero interaction. There are these two other exchange students on my floor and they said she just doesn't really talk to exchange students. Her English is … poor, but it is not impossible to understand. It took a while to have the literally two conversations with her. It took a while for her to speak up. It's fine, I understand it; I don't mind, we don't have to have conversations about [dusty air], but it would nice to be able to say: "Did you have a good day?"

However, interviews with local and mainland students revealed the complexity of their apparent passiveness in voicing their opinions, and in engaging in discussions and conversations in English. For example, Amy (LS) who had come through English medium secondary education, had no anxiety speaking in class; however, she felt uncomfortable speaking to "native-speakers" of English. She said, "English is not my mother tongue and I will make a lot of grammar mistakes, and I hate '[making] grammar mistakes." Her fear of making mistakes had more to do with the fact that she felt unable to represent herself adequately in a weaker language. Inability to engage in everyday conversation in English was another concern, even when their English for academic study was good. A number of students talked about their anxiety in interacting with their peers in English, particularly with non-Chinese speakers. For example, Tommy (LS), a Social Sciences student, found it difficult to engage in a conversation in English with "native-speakers" of English because he could not fully understand them but felt embarrassed to let them know. He lacked confidence in using English and went to the university's English Centre to improve his English so that he could interact more with international students. Similarly, Gennie (LS), a Law student, was nervous about using English for everyday interaction. She felt she did not have the linguistic competence to engage in "small talk". She felt more comfortable using English to discuss academic studies or interacting on a one-to-one basis in English. She also found it difficult to ask her friends to use English when there was a non-Chinese speaker in a group because they were reluctant to do so. She initially had a close relationship with an international student but they became distant because of the language barrier.

Anxiety was also experienced by mainland students. Seng (MS) said he was able to use his facial expression and body gestures to bring his speech alive when he spoke in Putonghua but when he spoke in Cantonese he somehow lost that ability. He said, "When we talk in Putonghua, I can be a very interesting person. But if we communicate in other languages, I just don't know how to be an interesting person." This applied to both English and Cantonese. He felt caught in a dilemma when students asked questions in Cantonese, commenting, "I am at a loss when all students ask questions in Cantonese. If I ask a question in English, I would stick out from the rest, and yet I don't feel confident about my Cantonese."

Another cause of communication apprehension had more to do with students' perception of self in relation to other people, rather than a lack of confidence in their own English proficiency. For example, in commenting on his readiness to participate orally in class, Seng (MS) said, "If I know the right answer, I would speak up. But if I am not sure about it, I wouldn't say anything. … In mainland China, we get most of what we need for exams in class and actually both instructors and students value class time. So if you give the wrong answer, you are wasting other people's time."

Lillian, a local Medical student, despite speaking three languages, Chinese, English and Japanese, and having been educated in English medium schools, was not confident when interacting in English with *local* students who had overseas learning experience and whose English was very fluent. However, she had no anxiety interacting with professors in English because, unlike her more capable peers, they would not criticize her English. Fung, another local student studying Chinese Literature, was much more at ease with international students because he knew they would accommodate his mistakes: "I have no problems interacting with international students. I am not afraid of making mistakes because I know they would not mind my grammar mistakes. Getting my message across is more important."

The above findings showed that whether local and mainland students participated or not was determined not so much by their capacity to communicate clearly in their non-native language but rather by whether they could adequately represent themselves in the language, how they were perceived by others, and the relationship between self and group.

6.4.5 Cultural Differences and Cultural Stereotyping

A fourth issue that emerged from the data was the way in which cultural stereotypes were being constructed by the three groups of students as a result of perceived cultural differences. The following description of international students given by Tommy (LS) was shared by many local students.

> The international students are 'open-minded', particularly about sex, and they ask a lot of questions. They hang out in Lan Kwai Fong[4]. They travel around and outside Hong Kong in a big group, and they seldom participate in student activities.

Tommy pointed out that international students were not interested in joining their activities because their values and interests were different. He said, "(M)aybe because they thought that the content and the nature of the activities were silly [childish] rather than because of any language barrier." In his view, international students were less inclined to learn Cantonese probably because they did not find it useful.

Andy (LS), an Arts student, who received his secondary education in the UK, was an office bearer of a Faculty student association and was aware of the cultural differences amongst students. At the time of interview, the Tibetan riot broke out and students posted their viewed on the "Democracy Wall"—a campus wall

[4] Lan Kwai Fong is an area in a busy financial district with many pubs and restaurants serving western cuisines, and where western festivals such as Halloween and New Year countdown are held.

designated for putting up "big character posters" on which students expressed their views in writing in large Chinese characters or letters. Andy cited as an example of cultural differences the contrasting views regarding whether the riot was justified and whether Tibet should be given independence. He felt international students and staff had not tried to learn about the local culture and that there should be greater opportunity for interaction amongst local and international students.

International students, however, resented being stereotyped. For example, Ted (IS) was annoyed that just because he was Caucasian, people assumed he was American (when he was European), that he could not understand Cantonese (when he could) and was ignorant about Asian culture (despite having taken Asian studies courses). He had also taken lessons in martial arts for seven years, yet was treated as a complete novice when he joined the Martial Arts Club. He remarked:

> I am good at martial arts. But when I was trying to join the club, it was like everything is in Cantonese and they just think we white guys don't know anything about Kung Fu (martial art) which is quite offensive. … And also the teacher cannot speak English.

He was also very annoyed that he was taken as an exchange student "who is lazy and hangs out in Lan Kwai Fong". He continued, "But I am not an exchange student and I don't like Lan Kwai Fong. And my GPA [Grade Point Average] is 3.6 [out of 4]." He further pointed out that the image of exchange students being lazy was constructed, for some exchange students he knew were very hard working.

While local students felt that international students did not reach out to them, international students felt that local students were reluctant to move outside of their comfort zone, and to allow room for international students to enter. Ray (IS) made the following observation,

> I think it is because the local students have their comfort zones. It is their territories. … They are not going to give you enough room to change us. When we come in, we are basically removing them from their comfort zones. … Most local students have a psychological barrier. They are not willing to understand international students' culture and … share with us their local culture.

Ray's observation was shared by Harry (IS), who said, "Every night we meet, we always say *that local one* or *this class* or *this bunch of locals*. And we complain about this every time." However, Harry admitted that he had not learnt Cantonese and Chinese culture and did not have the incentive to learn them. Alex (IS), a Law student, whose first language is English and second language is Chinese, admitted that he had not really attempted to interact with local students to learn more about the local culture and language, yet felt discriminated against linguistically. He did not believe mutual respect really existed between local and international students, and that they each formed their own enclaves. Park (IS) was learning Mandarin-Chinese when the interview was conducted; however, she felt she could not form a close bonding with local students even though they were welcoming when she approached them. Local students told her that it was difficult to break down the barrier between local Chinese and Korean students because the latter had strong bonding. In Park's view, many local students did not realize that many international students wanted to have cultural exchanges; they simply assumed that international students wanted to stick together.

Interviews with mainland students confirmed the cultural chasm amongst the three groups of students. Mainland interviewees felt that the barrier was caused not only partially by language but also by differences in values, lifestyles and cultures of learning. Mainland Chinese students were focused on the "core" business of university life—namely to study hard and learn as much as possible. By contrast, local and international students led a "very colorful life". Peng (MS) made the following observation:

> Local students and international students do not understand why PRC [People's Republic of China] students spend a lot of time in the library. … They feel that we are bookish and not participative. PRC students feel that local students do not spend their time doing their core business properly—which is to study.

Seng (MS) confirmed this perception of mainland students. He said,

> They (local and international students) often regard mainland students as academic monsters and nothing else. Yes, we admit we are academic monsters, but we don't want to be regarded as academic monsters *and* nothing else. We *are* academic monsters and many things else. … We pay much higher fees and we need to make the most out of our study. If the tuition fee is lowered, PRC students would be more willing to spend time on other things.

Munli (MS), Vice Chairman of the Mainland Student Association, saw this relationship between local and mainland students as one of mutual discrimination.

Jing (MS) and Kun (MS), both studying Law, felt that the cultural gap between mainland students and the other two groups were not just caused by linguistic barriers, but by different political beliefs. Jing found the concepts of freedom and democracy that he came across in Hong Kong alien and remote. Kun (MS) felt isolated and discriminated against in his first year of study because mainland China was often criticized by international students, especially those from the U.S.. He said:

> The foreigners [referring to those international students], they regard themselves as superior. … especially those Americans. They always criticize Chinese people. There is nothing you can do about it. … and for a typical Mainland Chinese like me who is patriotic… we feel offended. They are quite offensive remarks for me, so we just don't talk to them.

However, Kun (MS) managed to engage in frank discussions with these students and the situation improved. He was subsequently able to make friends with them in the second year. When local students told him that they had changed their perceptions of mainland Chinese students, he felt welcomed and recognized.

6.4.6 Linguistic Choice and Intercultural Accommodation

The findings reported above pertained mostly to problems that arose from linguistic and cultural barriers which resulted in segregation rather than integration, exclusion rather than inclusion, and intercultural misunderstanding rather than understanding. However, there were also a number of cases where members of the three groups of students were able to establish a cordial relationship, build friendship and enrich their understanding of each other's culture.

Instead of criticizing international students for not being willing to learn the local language, that is, Cantonese, Fung (LS) felt it would not be reasonable to expect international students on exchange for only one semester to learn Cantonese. He maintained, however, that they could learn about the local culture despite not speaking the local language. He took pride in helping international students understand the local culture, such as "yum cha" (Cantonese word for having "dim sum" in a Chinese restaurant), and in introducing unique features of the local culture and slangs. In return, he learnt a great deal about the cultures and lifestyles of international students and became more aware of cultural differences. He believed that he could help them feel part of the student body and the university community by interacting with them in English. He therefore made a conscious effort to use English most of the time in activities and ensured that publicity materials he produced were in English or bilingual.

Jing (MS) maintained that it was reasonable for local students to use Cantonese as this was their mother tongue. Although he could not fully express himself in Cantonese, he had had no problems getting along with local students and felt that if a student chose to study in Hong Kong, they should try their best to understand the local culture and learning Cantonese was a good way in. Equally, he felt that local students should learn Putonghua to enhance the communication with mainland students.

While all international students said that they were interested to learn more about the local culture, some of them only paid lip service, as outlined previously. Timothy (IS) and Ted (IS) were amongst those who actually put this into action. They chose a mainland Chinese student and a local student respectively as their room-mates. Most interviewees perceived willingness to learn another language as indicative of interest in the culture. Eddie (IS) remarked, "Language is a big factor, the other factor would be whether or not I or them (local students) is willing to embrace the difference, whether we would just try our best to communicate, whether it's me doing my best to show that I care by speaking Cantonese, or them to speak in English, it has to be both ways." Munli (MS) felt that learning the local language is important for building personal relationships: "If you don't know Cantonese, you cannot get into others' hearts." Gennie (LS) felt much more comfortable interacting with Mainland students because she felt they were more prepared to learn Cantonese whereas international students expected local students to communicate in English.

Anne (IS), a Business student, belonged to the third generation of Chinese in Malaysia. She speaks Mandarin at home but received primary school education in Mandarin Chinese and subsequently half in English and half in Bahasa Melayu in school. She could also speak Cantonese. Being able to understand the languages of the other two groups facilitated her communication with all three groups of students. She often acted as the bridge between local and international students on social occasions when Cantonese was used.

In addition to breaking down the linguistic barrier by learning each other's language, the opportunity to exchange different views and perspectives was also very important. For example, Seng (MS) initially felt that European students were arrogant and local students had a sense of superiority. However, sharing a room with a Swedish student allowed them to get go know each other's culture. Like Kun (MS), he was able to establish a good relationship with both international and local students.

6.5 Discussion

The findings reported above showed that the implementation of the university's policy of using English as a *lingua franca* on campus varied in different domains. Those variations were responded to differently by students; difference emanating from different perceptions by individual students of the social spaces that were constituted by the coming together of students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Wenger (1998) pointed out that participation is an important source of identity formation. This involves being able to engage with other members of the community, to contribute to the construction of meanings that matter in a community, and to share a common repertoire, including a shared discourse. It is through these processes that the coherence of a community is developed. These processes are mediated by language, and in a community consisting of members from diverse linguistic backgrounds, the use of a *lingua franca* seems to be essential for those members to participate in these processes. However, from the interview data cited above, we can see that students' perceptions of whether they had been granted access to these processes depended on their perceptions of what the mediating language(s) should be. Students who held a monolinguistic view—a view that only English should be used—felt their access to participation was denied when languages other than English were used. Therefore, instead of making an effort to move from peripheral participation to full participation, these students resisted what they perceived to be a form of "linguistic domination" (of Cantonese) by non-participation, hence developing an identity of marginality (Wenger 1998). By contrast, students who held a plurilinguistic view—a view that such processes can be and should be mediated by more than one language—were able to participate more fully in the community, to develop an identity as a member of the community and to integrate with the rest of the community.

Internationalization of the student body has been based on the assumption that bringing students from diverse backgrounds into the same physical space would create a social space conducive to intercultural understanding. This assumption is based on a conceptualisation of social spaces as homogenous. In recent years, studies in the fields of social geography and the sociology of space have problematized such a conceptualisation. Spaces are conceived today as processual, relationally ordered systems. Accordingly, investigating the topological dimensions of one or more cultures no longer means observing the way structures are *ordered in space* but looking into how these structures *form spaces.* As Low (2006) pointed out, as a form of organization of the juxtaposed, spaces epitomize simultaneities. They are an expression of the possibility of pluralities. These social spaces are always open and indefinite with respect to future formations. This applies to national territorial spaces as well as to the micro-spaces of everyday life.

The findings presented above showed the simultaneity of the social spaces constructed by the students and the claims they made to these spaces. Bourdieu (1989) pointed out that although perceptions of the social world are also products of previous symbolic struggles and express symbolic power relations, objects of the social world can be perceived and constructed in different ways. Therefore, we must take into account the contribution individuals make in constructing the social world through the way they position themselves in relation to others within it. It is always possible to define or redefine and delimit meanings of a social world and the individual's position within it, and hence the meaning of their social identity. Some students positioned themselves by "othering" or "naming" other groups of students. For example, the international students "named" the local students as "the locals" or "that local bunch", whereas the international students were "named" *gwai lo*, and the mainland students "academic monsters". As Bourdieu (1985) observed, "naming" is a way of imposing one's view of the division of the social world and one's position within it. Such positioning makes it possible to identify members who occupy similar positions, who are likely to have similar dispositions and therefore to produce similar practices and adopt similar stances. This can be seen from the fact that international students, despite their diverse and cultural backgrounds, seemed to have little problem getting along with each other. As the international students pointed out, this was because they were "in the same boat".

The "othering" or "naming" of other groups is closely associated with cultural stereotyping. The three groups of students interviewed in this study all noted the cultural differences amongst them. The reluctance by some students to overcome linguistic barriers and cultural prejudices led to the stereotyping of each group by treating its members as homogenous. For example, international students were stereotyped as sexually permissive, hanging out in pubs and not taking their academic work seriously by the local students, and mainland students were stereotyped by the international and local students as "academic monsters" with no interest in anything except their academic work. The local students were stereotyped by the international students as being passive in class, not interested in other cultures and exclusive. The interview findings showed that such stereotypes were merely the consequence of a lack of understanding of different cultures. For example, the concept of "self" and "other" and the relationship between the two varied considerably between cultures. While some international students perceived the self as independent, and were therefore much more ready to act according to what they considered to be right for themselves, many Chinese students perceived the self as interdependent and unobtrusive, and were therefore much more concerned about how they would be perceived by their peers and the impact of their action on the rest of the group (Scollon and Scollon 1995; Triandis 1995; Itakura and Tsui 2011). Another example is the anxiety generated by speaking in a foreign language, which has been well documented (see for example, Horwitz et al. 1986). This study provided ample evidence that such anxiety was debilitating and resulted in reticence, both in academic and social settings. We have seen that cultural stereotyping, a form of "othering", contributed to segregation and disharmony in the community. The findings also showed, however, that students who were willing to embrace linguistic and cultural difference, who were empathetic, and who positioned themselves as members of the community who needed to find out about the meanings that mattered, who were keen to contribute to the co-construction of meanings that were important in the community and the repertoire that was shared within it, were able to integrate into the student community and gain an enriching experience.

6.6 Concluding Remarks

As universities are increasingly internationalized, there is a pressing need for a common language that will enable staff and students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds to interact. However, that language should not be narrowly conceived as solely referring to a common linguistic code; it should also be conceived as a common discourse mediated by multiple languages, a discourse which embraces and celebrates cultural diversity, empathy and mutual respect. It is of paramount importance that in bringing together students of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, the social spaces formed are mutually enriching rather than mutually exclusive.

References

Bourdieu, P. (1985). The social space and the genesis of groups. *Theory and Society, 14,* 723–744.

Bourdieu, P. (1989). Social space and symbolic power. *Sociological Theory, 7,* 14–25.

Brock-Utne, B. (2007). Language of instruction and research in higher education in Europe: Highlights from the current debate in Norway and Sweden. *International Review of Education, 57,* 367–388.

Byun, K., Chu, H., Kim, M., Park, I., Kim, S., & Jung, J. (2011). English-medium teaching in Korean higher education: Policy debates and reality. *Higher Education, 62,* 431–449.

Coleman, J. A. (2006). English medium teaching in European higher education. *Language Teaching, 39,* 1–14.

Egron-Polak, E., Hudson, R., & International Association of Universities. (2010). *Internationalization of higher education: Global trends regional perspectives—IAU 3rd global survey report*. Paris: International Association of Universities.

Haryanto, E. (2013). Language policy: Administrators and teachers' view on English as medium of instruction implementation in Indonesia. *Journal of Education and Practice, 4(2)*, 48–56.

Hashimoto, K. (2009). Cultivating "Japanese who can use English": Problems and contradictions in government policy. *Asian Studies Review, 33,* 21–42.

Hengsadeekul, C., Hengsadeekul, T., Koul, R., & Kaewkuekool, S. (2010). English as a medium of instruction in Thai Universities: A review of literature. In *Selected Topics in Education and Education Technology: Proceedings from the 9th WSEAS International Conference on Education and Educational Technology* (pp. 89–94). Iwate: Iwate Prefectural University.

Hilmarsson-Dunn, A. M. (2009). The impact of English on language education policy in Iceland. *European Journal of Language Policy, 1,* 39–59.

Horwitz, E., Horwitz, M., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *Modern Languages Journal, 70,* 125–132.

Ibrahim, J. (2001). *The implementation of EMI in Indonesian universities: Its opportunities, its threats, its problems and its possible solutions*. Paper presented at the 49th International TEFLIN Conference. Surabaya, Indonesia: Kristen Petra University.

Itakura, H., & Tsui, A. B. M. (2011). Evaluation in academic discourse: Managing criticism in Japanese and English book reviews. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43,* 1366–1379.

Kerklaan, V., Moreira, G., & Boersma, K. (2008). The role of language in the internationalisation of higher education: An example from Portugal. *European Journal of Education, 43,* 241–255.

Lauridsen, K. M. (2009). National language policies in the era of globalisation: The case of Denmark. *European Journal of Language Policy, 1,* 29–38.

Low, M. (2006). The social construction of space and gender. *European Journal of Women Studies, 13,* 119–133.

Phillipson, R. (2009). English in higher education: Panacea or pandemic? *Angles on the English-Speaking World, 9,* 29–57.

Scollon, R., & Scollon S. (1995). *Intercultural communication. A discourse approach*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Tender, T., & Vihalemm T. (2009). Two languages in addition to mother tongue—will this policy preserve linguistic diversity in Europe? *TRAMES: A Journal of the Humanities & Social Sciences, 13,* 41–63.

Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism and collectivism*. Boulder: Westview.

Tsung, L. T. H., & Cruickshank K. (2009). Mother tongue and bilingual minority education in China. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 12,* 549–563.

Vigers, D., & Tunger V. (2010). Migration in contested linguistic spaces: The challenge for language policies in Switzerland and Wales. *European Journal of Language Policy, 2,* 181–203.

Wächter, B. (2008). Internationalisation and the European higher education area. Report prepared for the Bologna process seminar Bologna 2020: Unlocking Europe's potential—contributing to a better world, Ghent, 19–20 May. http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/BolognaSeminars/documents/Ghent/Ghent_May08_Bernd_Waechter.pdf. Accessed 28 Apr 2013.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chapter 7
Socioeconomic Disparities and Early English Education: A Case in Changzhou, China

Yuko Goto Butler

Abstract As English has increasingly come to be seen as a lingua franca and a means towards success in a globalizing world, considerable time, effort and resources are being invested in teaching and learning English around the world. In East Asia, the seemingly excessive zeal for learning English has been referred to as *English fever*, and in recent years it appears to have spread among even young learners. The zeal may potentially have a significant impact on local linguistic ecologies and a substantial societal cost. Drawing from a case study of the wider social and linguistic contexts for English learning among young learners in Changzhou, China, this chapter illustrates how parental socio-economic status (SES) and parental behaviors and beliefs about their children's English learning influence their children's English performance at the early stages of their English learning. The chapter also describes Changzhou's recent policy efforts to minimize achievement gaps by SES while at the same time trying to meet increasingly diverse student needs, and addresses the potential impact of these policies on the local linguistic ecology.

Keywords Socioeconomic status · Young learners · English education · China · Parents · Achievement gaps · Linguistic ecology

7.1 Introduction

"Enjoy English, Enjoy Life!" proclaimed a banner displayed in an English classroom at a primary school in Changzhou, China, in 2011. Later in this chapter, I probe alternative interpretations of this pro-English slogan. For now, however, I use it to symbolize the zeal for learning English that has gripped East Asia—a language acquisition quest so intense that some scholars have termed it *English fever* (e.g. Park 2009). As English has gained increasing value as a lingua franca, and as a good command of English has become an indispensable "basic skill" for success in global

Y. G. Butler (✉)
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, USA
e-mail: ybutler@gse.upenn.edu

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_7, © Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht 2014

society (Graddol 2006, p. 72), people around the world have invested substantial time, energy, and money in learning and teaching English. But such zeal comes with potentially significant societal costs. In this chapter, I consider the impact of the focus on English-language acquisition in one Chinese city both in terms of a widening achievement gap between students of different socioeconomic backgrounds and in terms of its potential negative impact on the existing rich linguistic ecology.

This chapter draws from my research on the wider social and linguistic contexts for English learning among children in Changzhou, an eastern city in Jiangsu Province in mainland China (Butler 2013). In my study, I sought to understand how parents' socioeconomic status (SES) relates to their home linguistic and literacy environment (both in their first language[s] and English), their support for their children's English learning, their attitudes about English and English education, and how parents' behavioral and attitudinal differences by SES may in turn relate to their children's English learning in the early stages of their English education (defined as the elementary school years). Of particular relevance for this book, I also asked parents to indicate whether they felt it was acceptable for their children to speak English better than their home languages. I describe Changzhou's preliminary efforts to minimize achievement gaps by SES while trying to meet the increasingly diverse needs of its students. Finally, I report some stakeholders' initial reactions to the policy proposal and consider how these policies may affect the language ecology in Changzhou.

My focus on SES stemmed from my belief that to pay attention only to what is going on in formal English-language classrooms may result in a distorted and incomplete picture of English-language acquisition. That is because wealthier parents and their children typically have greater access to various forms of English education outside of the classroom—including a variety of learning materials, tutoring by native speakers, English camps, and study abroad programs—than do children from poorer backgrounds. Additionally, parents' expectation of their own children's success learning English may differ depending on their socioeconomic status (SES), and it is reasonable to assume that young learners are highly susceptible to the influences parental behaviors and their attitudes toward English education. And yet, roles of parental supports for and attitudes toward their children's language education have rarely been the focus of research in foreign language acquisition.

Changzhou served as a rich environment for this study. The city has experienced a rapid economic expansion in recent years, which has in turn increased socio-economic disparities within the city. An influx of migrant workers from neighboring rural areas has contributed to the city's growing socio-economic disparities. Although no reliable statistics are available, it is reasonable to assume that the migrants also contribute to the diversification of local dialects beyond Mandarin, which is the language of school instruction. Additionally English, being recognized as a powerful lingua franca, appears to be gaining greater significance in the lives of Changzhou's children, who already possess complex linguistic repertories of local dialects and Mandarin. Within such a multilingual context with varying degrees of accessibility to English, this chapter considers the role of SES in second language acquisition (SLA).

7.1.1 Growing Socioeconomic Disparity and Educational Challenges in East Asia

In recent years, growing socioeconomic disparity has received considerable attention in public discourse in East Asian countries. The expanding global economy and falling birth rates have brought an infusion of workers crossing national and regional borders. Consequently, many schools are facing rapid diversification of their student bodies in terms of socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. As student populations diversify, concerns about unequal access to education have arisen in contexts where it was once believed that people had relatively egalitarian schooling, at least during the period of compulsory education (Hannum et al. 2010).

In China's case, a recent rapid expansion of the economy has created tremendous disparities by SES among school-aged children. Now that the school attendance rate during the nine years of compulsory education has reached almost 100 % (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2009), concern has shifted toward unequal access to the *quality* of education rather than the *quantity* of education; the issues include disparities in educational expenditures and teacher qualifications across schools. Substantial gaps in the quality of education between rural and urban areas, as well as between wealthier coastal and poorer inland provinces, have been widely documented (Hannum and Park 2007).

When it comes to English education in China, the different pace and status of economic development among the country's regions create different demands and expectations for the residents' English education (Huang 2011). In fast-developing economic giants such as Shanghai, wealthier parents rush to send their children to private schools called *Min Ban Xue Xiao* ("people managed schools"), which can provide their children with a much higher level of English education—for example, Chinese-English bilingual immersion—than the English education in regular schools (Lin 2007). Zou and Zhang (2011) write that for many parents in Shanghai, "English is more than just a school subject; it permeates into many aspects of social life" (p. 191). At the same time, a number of applied linguists have addressed concerns about poorer or linguistic minority students having limited resources for English study. Some researchers argue that putting increased emphasis on English in the educational system will give the majority Han group greater power, leave minority groups on an "[unequal] footing" with the majority Han, and "further threaten" minority languages (Feng 2012, p. 370).

7.1.2 Relationships Between Students' Achievement and Parental Factors

Extensive research in education has examined various parental factors and their influence on children's school achievement. In summarizing the results of the existing research, Wigfield et al. (2006) identified four major parental factors:

- **Parent, family, and neighborhood characteristics:** These include variables such as family income, occupation, educational background, culture[1], ethnicity, and other environmental factors. Among these variables, household income, parental education, and parental occupation are often used as indicators of SES.
- **Parents' general beliefs and behaviors:** Parental behaviors or philosophies around how to educate children in general, including variables such as child-rearing beliefs, efficacy beliefs, parenting styles, and knowledge of appropriate teaching.
- **Parent-specific behaviors:** Specific experiences that parents provide for their children, including the amount of time spent with them, teaching strategies, and career guidance.
- **Parents' child-specific beliefs:** Including parents' expectations of their children's performance and perceptions of their children's abilities, talents, and interests.

It is important to note that the four parental factors above are interconnected, with child and sibling characteristics (e.g., children's past performance, gender, aptitude, and attitudes), and they all influence the child's achievement both directly and indirectly.

Moreover, the role of parents in the child's achievement has shown variations within and across cultures. Of particular relevance to this chapter is that previous research has found cross-cultural differences between East Asian and American parents with respect to their causal attribution of performance. Chinese and Japanese parents tend to attribute high performance to effort, while American parents emphasize innate talent more strongly than Asian mothers (Stevenson and Stigler 1992).

7.1.3 Parental Influence on Children's Language Learning

In the context of learning English as a second language (ESL, such as immigrant children learning English in an English-speaking host country), parental SES has been found to be associated with the learners' English language/literacy development and achievement in other school subjects (e.g. see Goldenberg et al. (2008) for a review of U.S. studies). One of the complications of examining the effect of parental SES in children's ESL/literacy development and school achievement is that the parental SES is usually confounded with other important social variables such as language-minority status, race, ethnicity, and school. According to Goldenberg et al.'s review, there are three major findings. First, low-income and language-minority parents show willingness and often obtain means to assist their

[1] Although Wigfield et al. (2006) did not list "language" in their first category, given the strong relationship between culture and language, one can assume that language is an important component of the parental characteristics.

children's academic study at school; however, the effect of their involvement on the child's achievement tends to be rather minimal. Second, having a rich literacy environment at home (e.g. having many books) is a good predictor of a child's later literacy performance at school in general. Third, children's first language (L1) and second language (L2) use at home are usually correlated with their literacy development in L1 and L2 separately, and the L1 or L2 use at home tends to show weak but negative correlations with their literacy achievement in the other language. However, it is important to note that there is some conflicting evidence reported as well. In addition to these three major findings, parental English skills were found to be correlated with students' English proficiency (e.g. Carhill et al. 2008), indicating that parental English skills can be considered as a type of indirect modeling at home.

In English-speaking countries, it has been reported that parental factors play important roles in both the children's foreign language and heritage language education. In the United States, for example, students with lower SES backgrounds tend to have limited access to foreign language education from the outset (Pufahl and Rhodes 2011; Sung et al. 2006). Papademetre and Routoulas (2001) described a case in which Greek parents in Australia often made utilitarian choices with respect to their children's heritage language learning; in light of a limited public role of Greek language in Australian society, the parents did not consider the availability of Greek language education a priority when deciding on their children's school.

In the field of English as a foreign language education, however, parental factors have received scant attention by researchers. This may be due in part to the assumption that all foreign language learners have limited exposure to the target language outside the classroom; thus, researchers may see contextual factors outside of the classroom as relatively unimportant. However, when it comes to English, we can no longer make this assumption. Children have varying degrees of access to English outside of their formal classrooms. And presumably, parents—rather than their children—are responsible for many of the decisions regarding young learners' English learning in and outside of the classroom.

One of the few empirical studies to consider parental effects on young learners' learning English as a foreign language is the Early Language Learning in Europe (ELLiE) project. This longitudinal, cross-national collaboration involves seven European countries: Croatia, England, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, Spain, and Sweden. Among the variables that the study examined, parents' educational level was correlated with children's comprehension in target foreign languages, including English. The amount of exposure to the target language outside the classroom and the parents' use of the target language at work were also found to influence the children's proficiency (Enever 2011).

In a case study of early foreign language education in Hungary, Nikolov (2009) reported that parental educational levels influenced their children's choice of a target language (children with more educated parents tended to choose to study English as opposed to German). The parents' educational level also influenced their performance both in English and German. Similarly, in a study conducted in China among older students (secondary school students in Shanghai), Zou and Zhang

(2011) reported that the students' English performance, as measured by an in-house written exam, differed according to their parents' educational level.

7.2 The Study: The Effect of Parental Factors in Early English Learning in Changzhou

As a case study, I examined parental behaviors and beliefs in relation to their SES and the effect of SES on young learners' English learning in Changzhou, an eastern city in Jiangsu Province in China. What I report in this section is part of a larger project investigating various contextual factors, including parental factors, and involving both quantitative and qualitative analyses. I summarize some of the major findings from Butler (2013) which contains detailed quantitative-analysis results from a cross-sectional component of the project (conducted in 2011).

Three research questions guided the study: (1) What is the relationship between parents' SES and their underlying behaviors and beliefs about their children's English language learning? (2) What is the relationship between parents' SES and their children's English learning? and (3) What is the relationship between children's English proficiency and their parents' behaviors and beliefs toward their children's English language learning?

The participants in the study were 198 fourth-, 191 sixth- and 183 eighth-grade students (572 total) and their parents. 'Young learners' conventionally refers to students through elementary school (i.e. the sixth-grade level in the Chinese context), but the present study also included eighth-graders so that a comparison across higher grade levels could be made. The participants were recruited from two sets of elementary and secondary schools, one in a lower SES area of the city and the other in a higher SES area. For the sake of convenience, I refer to the lower SES schools as "L-elementary school" and "L-middle school" and the higher SES schools as "H-elementary school" and "H-middle school." Of the 572 participating students, 32 students in each grade (96 total) were chosen, using stratified random sampling, as a focus group for an in-depth analysis of their English learning, including a speaking assessment (described below).

Based on the unified curriculum at the provincial level, all the participants received English education at school four times a week beginning in third grade, using uniform textbooks by local Chinese teachers of English. At H-middle school, additional supplemental material was also used.

An extensive survey was distributed to the participating parents through their children's teachers (the return rate was 94.9%).[2] In keeping with the major parental factors identified in Wigfield et al. (2006) and described above, our survey included the following components: (1) the parents' characteristics (i.e. SES); (2) parents' indirect behaviors (language/literacy environment at home, parents' self-rated English proficiency); (3) parents' direct behaviors (parents' direct assistance to help

[2] If the parents could not read Chinese, the information was collected orally.

Table 7.1 Summary of parental survey. (Source: Adapted from Butler 2013)

Factors	Variables	Measures
SES	Income	4-level ordinal: (1) less than 30,000 RMB; (2) 30,000–70,000; (3) 70,000–150,000; (4) more than 150,000
	Father's and mother's education	6-level ordinal; aggregated due to high correlation between Father's and Mother's educational levels
Indirect Behaviors	Books in Chinese and English	6-level ordinal for each
	Parents' English proficiency	5-level Likert scale for father and mother separately; aggregated due to high correlation between the two items
	Language spoken at home	Percentage of use of English, Mandarin and other languages/dialects
	Father's and mother's use of English at work	Binary for each
Direct Behaviors	Degree of study/school involvement	4 items in a 5-level ordinal scale (e.g., frequencies of helping their children's English study)
	Private lessons	Binary (if Yes, the frequency and cost)
Beliefs about English ed.	Role of English	4 items in a 7-level Likert scale (e.g., "I think that English ability is indispensable to be competitive in the world.")
	Parents' responsibility	4 items in a 7-level Likert scale (e.g., "I think that it is the parents' responsibility to make sure that the child receives a good English education.")
	Effort (the attribution for successful English learning)	1 item (the percentage of effort as opposed to innate talent)
Belief about their own child	Belief about abilities/success	4 items in a 7-level Likert scale (e.g., "I am confident that my child Is capable of acquiring a high command of English.")

their children's English study); (4) parents' general beliefs about English education; and (5) parents' beliefs and expectations concerning their children's abilities/success in acquiring English. See Table 7.1 for a summary of the variables used in each factor.

As an outcome measure for the students' receptive skills in English, the listening and reading/writing portions of the Cambridge ESOL Tests were administered to all the participating students. The Young Learners' English Tests (YLE) were administered to the fourth- and sixth-grade students (the Starters and Movers levels were used, respectively), and the Key English Test (KET) was administered for the eighth-grade students. As a speaking measure, focus group students ($N=96$) were asked to tell a story based on a wordless picture book. Based on the recorded stories produced by the students, their performance in four sub-domains (fluency, grammar, speaking vocabulary, and pronunciation) was evaluated by two trained raters using a 9-level Likert scale adopted from the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA). The inter-rater reliability between the raters was 96.4%.

Table 7.2 Correlations among parental variables

	4th	(N = 196)	6th	(N = 169)	8th	(N = 178)
	Income	Parents' education	Income	Parents' education	Income	Parents' education
Indirect behaviors						
Books in Chinese	0.44**	0.43**	0.40**	0.45**	0.36**	0.29**
Books in English	0.02	0.11	0.21**	0.21**	0.38**	0.41**
Parents' English	0.36**	0.49**	0.35**	0.53**	0.31**	0.51**
Direct behaviors						
Study involvement	0.29**	0.31**	0.07	0.04	0.30**	0.33**
Beliefs about English ed.						
Role of English	0.10	0.06	−0.21**	−0.31**	0.13	0.05
Parents' responsibility	0.03	0.05	−0.15	−0.23**	0.28**	0.20*
Effort/talent	0.06	0.01	−0.03	−0.03	0.05	−0.05
Beliefs about child						
Beliefs about abilities/success	0.03	0.12	0.01	−0.05	0.43**	0.34**

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$
The full correlational results can be found in Butler (2013)

7.3 Findings

7.3.1 *Result 1: The Relationship Between Parents' SES and Their Behaviors and Beliefs*

As expected, the two SES variables (income and parents' educational levels) were highly correlated at all three grade levels (the correlation coefficients were 0.59, 0.68, 0.72 for the fourth-, sixth-, and eighth-grade students' parents, respectively). Therefore, I use income as the primary SES indicator for the rest of the analyses. See Table 7.2 for the results of the correlational analysis among the rest of the variables.

Variables included in *Indirect Behaviors* (concerning the language/literacy environment at home and parents' English proficiency) were generally correlated with the SES variables across the three grade levels; the only exception was *Books in English* among the fourth-graders' parents. Higher SES parents appeared to start buying more English books at the sixth- and eighth-grade levels, although we need longitudinal data to confirm this observation. Higher SES parents also had a richer home literacy environment as far as the number of books was concerned and had a better command of English, as expected.

Two additional variables in *Indirect Behaviors* (i.e., *language spoken at home* and *parents' use of English at work*) were excluded in the correlational analysis because of skewed responses, but these variables deserve a close look. Figure 7.1 shows the results of *language spoken at home* by SES. In Fig. 7.1, the lowest and the second lowest income groups were classified as *Low SES* and the highest and the second highest income groups were classified as *High SES*. Most families used both Mandarin and other dialects at home, and the percentage of Mandarin use at

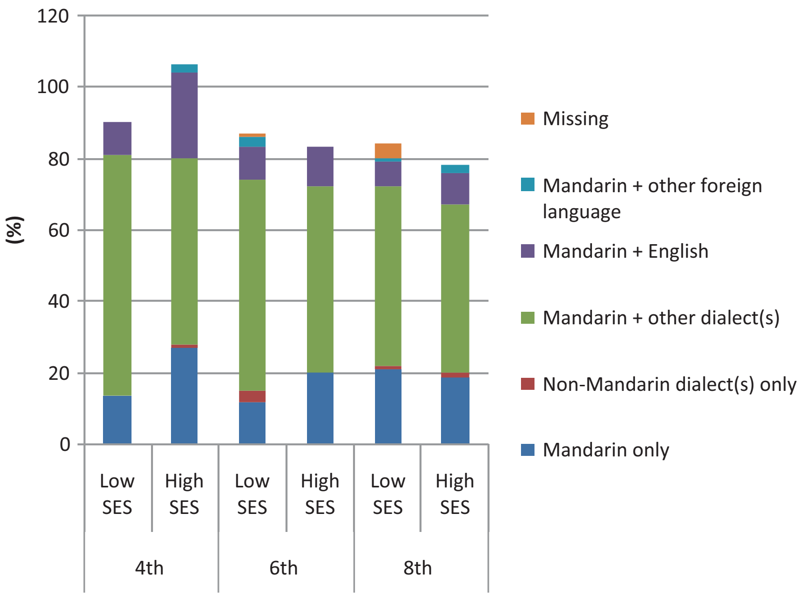


Fig. 7.1 Home language use by SES

home turned out to be correlated with SES.[3] Of particular interest to the current study is the finding that approximately 10 % of the families in this sample (except the High SES group at the fourth-grade level) used English as well. More than 20 % of the fourth-grade High SES group claimed that they used English at home. However, judging from the fact that most of these families who claimed to use English indicated that their use of English was composed of less than 10 % of their language use at home; one may speculate that many of these parents used simple English (e.g., greetings and common expressions) with their children, especially while their child's English still was at a basic level. If this speculation is correct,[4] while using English at home certainly suggests parents' enthusiasm for their children's English education, its effect on children's English performance may be minimal.

Another variable, *Indirect Behaviors, parents' use of English at work,* had a skewed response; in our sample, very few parents used English at work. This contrasts sharply with the situation reported in the European ELLiE study described

[3] The percentage of Mandarin use at home was significantly correlated with the parents' income and educational levels at the fourth- and sixth-grade levels (r=0.32 and 0.38 respectively). At the eighth-grade level, only the parents' educational level showed a significant but lower correlation (r=.21). The stronger association between the parental SES and Mandarin use at home among students in lower grades may in part be related to the fact that younger students have more recent migrant parents. In any event, the use of Mandarin did not correlate with the students' English performance at any grade levels that we examined. Finally, although the number was very small, some parents used a foreign language other than English at home (mostly Japanese) in addition to Mandarin, even though none of them were ethnically related to the language.

[4] Our interview data with the focus-group students also support this conclusion.

Table 7.3 Private lessons by SES

	4th		6th		8th	
	Low SES (N=89)	High SES (N=104)	Low SES (N=80)	High SES (N=77)	Low SES (N=82)	High SES (N=77)
Portion receiving private lessons (%)	10.1%	35.5%	13.8%	48.1%	11.0%	26.0%
Average cost/month (RMB)	176.00	472.35	235.00	393.63	241.67	341.05
Average frequencies of lessons/week	2.14	2.49	2.3	2.74	2.43	2.17

earlier, where parents' use of the target language at work was one of the factors that significantly influenced the child's foreign language learning (Enever 2011).

As for *Direct Behaviors*, direct parental involvement in English study and school activities was already correlated with SES at the fourth-grade level, if not earlier. Though significant correlations were not found among sixth-graders' parents, correlations became significant again at the eighth-grade level. Another variable, *Private Lessons*, is also worth mentioning here, although it was not included in the correlational analysis because it was a binary variable. As Table 7.3 shows, larger portions of higher SES parents provided their children with private English lessons. Among those who did, for all three grade levels they spent more money on average for private lessons than lower SES parents, although the quality of the lessons could not be determined from our data. The frequencies of private lessons differed minimally across SES and grade levels.

Unlike parental behaviors, parental beliefs did not show a clear pattern by SES. Both belief measures showed no significant correlation with SES at the fourth-grade level, and the variables even indicated marginal but significant negative correlations among the sixth-graders' parents. At the eighth-grade level, parental beliefs about their responsibility for their child's English learning showed significant correlation with SES, as did their beliefs about their own child's abilities/success in English learning. Of particular interest are parental beliefs about what English learning success should be attributed to. Our participating parents, regardless of their SES and the children's grade level, generally reported that effort should account for around 70% of learning success, showing a strong preference for effort rather than natural talent as the key to English learning. This is consistent with Stevenson and Stigler's (1992) finding that East Asian mothers believed strongly that effort is the key to achieving academic success in general.

7.3.2 Result 2: The Relationship Between Parents' SES and Their Children's English Learning

Figure 7.2 shows the result of Cambridge scores (Z scores) in listening and reading/writing by four SES categories (income was used as an SES measure). At the fourth- and sixth-grade levels, students' performance did not seem to differ much by par-

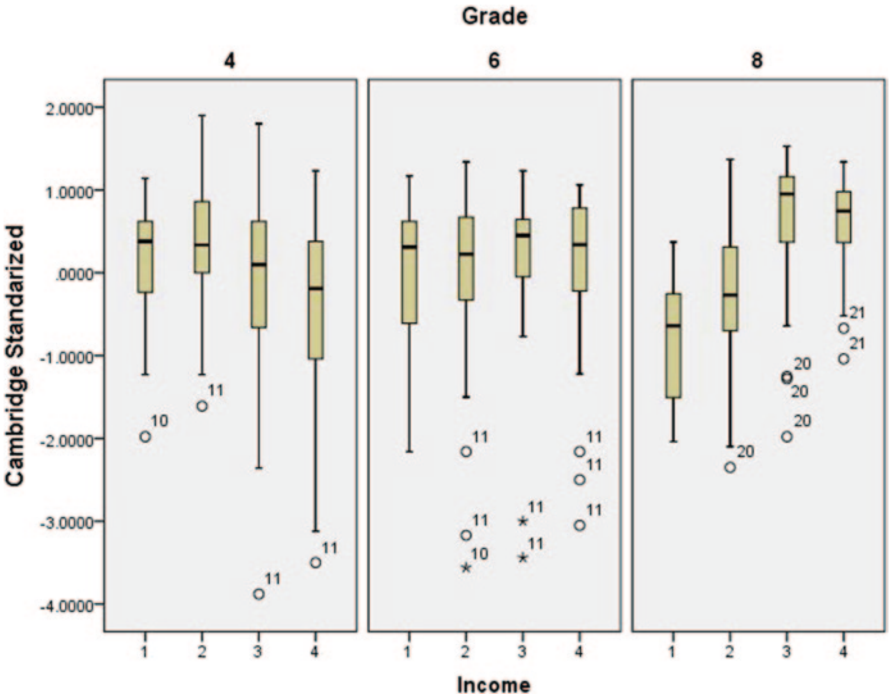


Fig. 7.2 *Box* plots indicating the relationship between Income and Cambridge scores. *Note:* The *numbers* attached to outliers indicate which schools the students attended: 10 represents the L-Elementary School, 11 the H-Elementary School, 20 the L-Middle School, and 21 the H-Middle School.

ents' SES, but there was a substantial difference by SES at the eighth-grade level. It is reasonable to assume, due to the sampling method employed, that *school* is a confounding factor. After controlling for the school factor, there was no significant income effect at the fourth-grade level ($F(3, 188)=1.22$, $p=0.31$) and a marginal but significant effect at the sixth-grade level ($F(3, 152)=2.89$, $p<0.05$, $\eta^2=0.05$). At the eighth-grade level, an ANCOVA could not be performed because the test of homogeneity of slopes indicated that the relationship between the KEY scores and the school differed significantly as a function of income. This result is not surprising given that, as is common among elite schools in China, H-middle school in our data had a *de facto* tracking system by accepting students according to their academic performance, adjusting their instruction accordingly.

Figure 7.3 indicates the mean scores of each group in the speaking test. As mentioned previously, all participating students were examined for listening and reading/writing performance, although speaking performance was tested only among the 96 focus group students. Due to the relatively small sample size, results for speaking performance should be considered tentative.

Focusing on the first two bars in each sub-domain, there were already significant differences in all four sub-domains at the fourth-grade level (the second year of

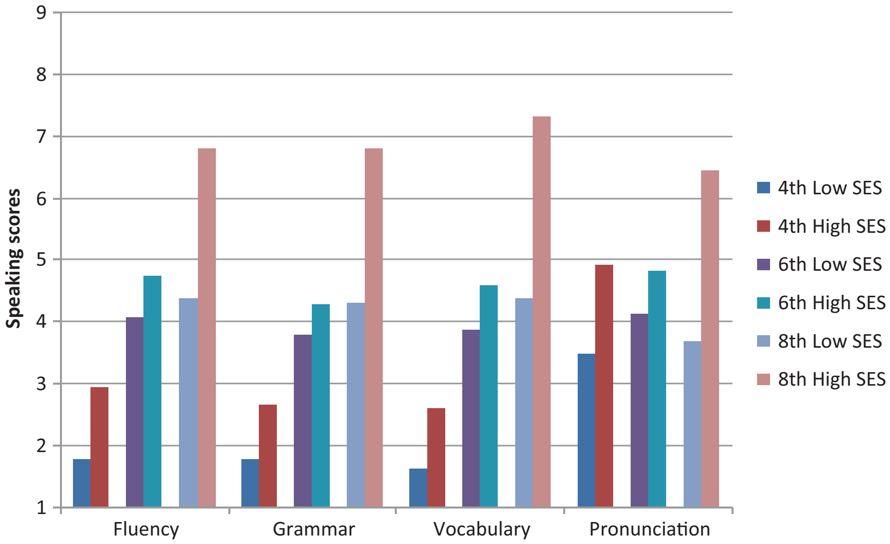


Fig. 7.3 Speaking performance by SES

the students' English learning). Though the difference by SES appeared to narrow somewhat at the sixth-grade level, there were substantial differences at the eighth-grade level across the sub-domains. Of particular interest was pronunciation. The fourth-graders already showed much higher scores in pronunciation than in other domains, suggesting younger learners' ability to acquire foreign pronunciation. At the same time, pronunciation scores among lower SES groups did not show substantial improvement across grade levels; lower SES students seemed to be stuck at the fourth-grade performance level. Longitudinal data are needed to confirm this observation.

7.3.3 Result 3: The Relationship Between Children's English Proficiency and Their Parents' Behaviors and Beliefs

After conducting full correlational analyses among all the parent variables, eight variables were chosen as predictors of the students' English performance. Because the sample size for the speaking test was rather small, only the listening and reading/writing scores were used as a dependent variable. A series of multiple regression analyses was conducted to see the effects of parent-related variables first and then the effect of *school*. As Table 7.4 shows, as the grade level increased, the parent-related variables accounted for an increasingly large percentage of the English score variability; the adjusted R^2 increased from 0.14 (fourth-graders) to 0.21 (sixth-graders) to 0.50 (eighth-graders). Thus, at the eighth grade level, one-half of the English score variability was explained by the parent-related variables. *School* added an

Table 7.4 Regression analyses for variables predicting English scores (listening and reading)[a, b]

	4th graders (N=178)				6th graders (N=146)				8th graders (N=143)			
	Model 1 (Parents)		Model 2 (Parents+School)		Model 1 (Parents)		Model 2 (Parents+School)		Model 1 (Parents)		Model 2 (Parents+School)	
	SE B	β	*SE B*	β	*SE B*	β	*SE B*	β	*SE B*	β	*SE B*	β
SES (income)	0.08	−0.29**	0.11	0.03	0.08	−0.09	0.09	0.09	0.07	0.39**	0.07	0.05
Books in English	0.11	0.10	0.11	0.13*	0.10	0.09	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.05
Parents' English	0.10	0.12	0.10	0.12	0.10	0.00	0.09	0.08	0.09	0.14	0.07	0.12
Study/school involvement	0.11	−0.20*	0.11	−0.22**	0.08	−0.08	−0.8	−0.10	0.09	−0.08	0.07	−0.08
Private lessons	0.18	0.03	0.18	0.08	0.16	0.09	0.16	0.21*	0.15	0.05	0.13	0.02
Role of English	0.07	0.06	0.07	0.02	0.08	−0.12	0.07	−0.13	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.05
Parents' responsibility	0.07	−0.08	0.07	−0.10	0.08	−0.11	0.08	−0.15	0.06	−0.26**	0.05	−0.21**
Beliefs about child	0.08	0.21**	0.07	0.21**	0.08	0.51**	0.08	0.46**	0.06	0.46**	0.05	0.36**
School			0.22	−0.42**			0.19	−0.40**			0.13	0.57**
R^2(Adjusted R^2)	0.18**	(0.14**)	0.25**	(0.21**)	0.25**	(0.21**)	0.32**	(0.28**)	0.53**	(0.50**)	0.69**	(0.67**)
ΔR^2			0.06**				0.08**				0.17**	

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

[a] Standardized scores were used to make comparison across grade levels possible.

[b] The full regression analysis results can be found in Butler (2013).

additional 6% and 8% of the score variation for the fourth- and sixth-grade levels, respectively, and the figure went up sharply to 17% at the eighth-grade level. Among the parent-related variables, *parents' beliefs about their own child's abilities/success* was consistently indicated as a strong significant predictor of the students' English performance, at least in listening and reading/writing. Other parental variables were not consistent predictors.

7.4 Discussion

In sum, we found differences in parents' indirect and direct behaviors by SES. Parents of higher SES tended to provide a language/literacy environment that is considered favorable in the literature and to show more direct involvement in assisting their children to learn English. At the same time, some of the influential predictors found in the ELLiE study in Europe, such as parents' use of the target language at work, were not influential predictors in our case, indicating that some of the home environmental factors related to English learning in China may be very different from those in Europe. Unlike parental behaviors, we did not find a clear association between SES and parents' beliefs. Our participating parents, regardless of their SES, attributed their children's English learning success to their children's effort.

Stevenson and Stigler (1992) claimed that, given such an effort-centered conceptual system, people believe that anybody can succeed at learning as long as they make sufficient effort. This contrasts with mothers who believe that innate talent plays a larger role in academic success. Under such an effort-centered conceptual system, it is likely that the opportunity to learn is a critically important condition for success.

According to our data, at the primary school level Chinese parents' beliefs about their children's competence in learning English did not correlate with their SES. However, at the eighth-grade level, the lower SES parents started showing lower expectations for their children's success in English learning. The parents' beliefs about their own children's abilities/success turned out to be a strong predictor of the students' English performance. Moreover, the school factor is increasingly influential over the students' English performance. There were only marginal differences in listening and reading/writing performance by SES at the elementary school level, but there was a substantial difference at the eighth-grade level.

As suggested in the literature (e.g., Pomerantz et al. 2005; Wigfield et al. 2006), it is likely that all these variables have reciprocal relationships. By the time their children go to middle school, lower SES parents may start seeing that the window of opportunity is closing for their children and they lower their expectations accordingly, which in turn may have a negative effect on the children's perception of their own competence as well as their actual English performance. Conversely, lower English performance leads the parents to gradually lower their expectations for their children's English learning success.

The study also found that there was already a significant difference by SES in speaking performance at the fourth-grade level, if not earlier, though this should be considered a tentative result because of the relatively small sample size. Considering the recent strong emphasis on communicative production abilities in English teaching, the performance gap in speaking by SES at an early stage of English learning can have serious consequences. Apparently, *school* is a confounding factor, and we need to examine more closely classroom instruction as well as the influence of private lessons in order to understand the underlying reasons for the differences in speaking performance.

7.4.1 Changzhou's Effort to Narrow Gaps

Disparities in SES among children are a pressing issue for educators around the world. In the general education literature, there is a well-documented association between students' school achievement and their parental SES background across different contexts. A number of theories have been proposed to explain the association. Such theories can be roughly classified into three types: *cultural deficiency theories*, *institutional deficiency theories*, and *cultural conflict theories* (Hampton et al. 1995, p. 484). Cultural deficiency theories predict that lower SES groups develop their own distinct culture, such as a culture of poverty, that prevents students from achieving and which also reproduces poverty over generations. Institutional deficiency theories argue that lower SES groups have limited resources and unequal access to quality education, which in turn limits their success. Finally, cultural conflict theories assume that there is a conflict of interest between a powerful ruling class and a subject class; they predict that people of lower SES, as a subject group, will not do well in school because of their limited (or lack of) cultural capital, such as providing their children with the kind of parental support expected by the school and mainstream society.

The study I have described was exploratory in nature and was not intended to test which of these theories best explain the achievement gap by SES in Changzhou. However, I did find that *school* is increasingly influential on the students' English performance. There were differences by SES in parental behaviors but little difference with respect to parental beliefs about English education in general and their children's success (at least until the middle school level in the case of the latter variable). Parents' zeal for English education for their children was intense regardless of their SES backgrounds. Figures 7.4 and 7.5, which are based on the study's parental survey, indicate their zeal. Remarkably, 73.3 % of parents responded at least somewhat positively to the statement, "I have no problem if my child will be able to speak English better than our home language(s)." Even in the case of Mandarin, 62.3 % of the parents showed at least somewhat positive responses to "I have no problem if my child will be able to speak English better than Mandarin." The latter result was particularly surprising considering the fact that Mandarin has gained traction as a lingua franca in Greater China. If we put all the results together, institutional deficiency theories, which attribute lower SES students' poorer achievement to their limited access to resources and high-quality of education, may provide a good explanation for Changzhou's situation.

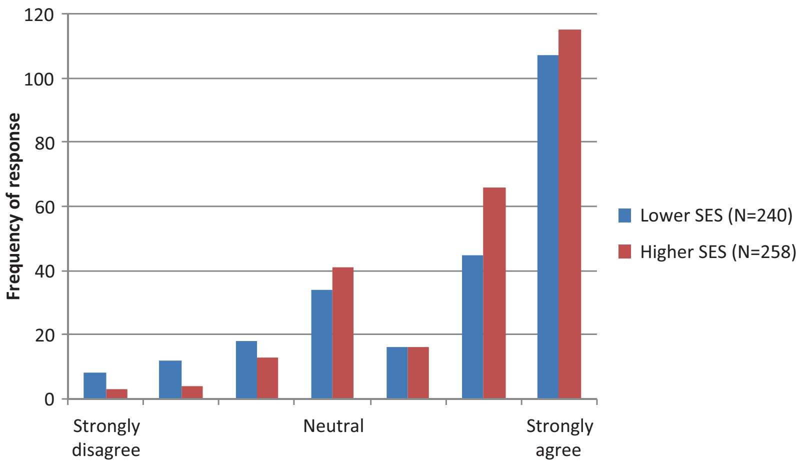


Fig. 7.4 Parental responses to the statement "I have no problem if my child will be able to speak English better than our home language(s)" by SES

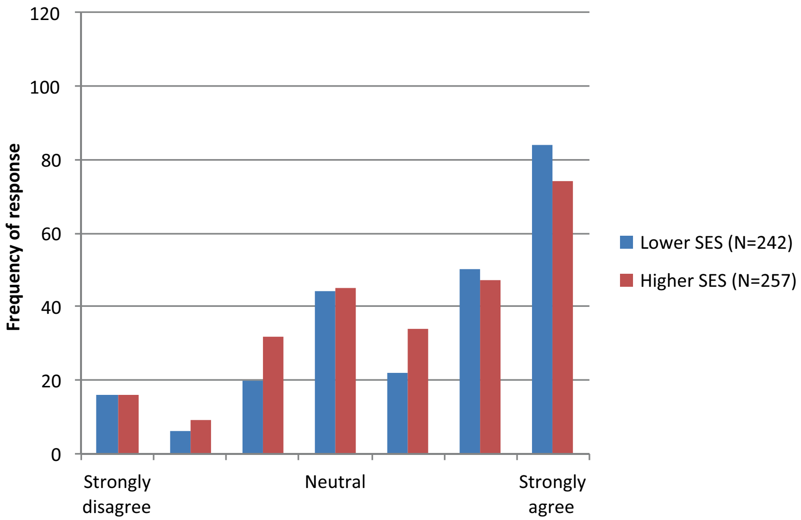


Fig. 7.5 Parental responses to the statement "I have no problem if my child will be able to speak English better than Mandarin" by SES

Recently, the issues of unequal access to resources and quality education by SES seem to have attracted substantial attention at the local policy level in Changzhou. As is often observed in Chinese cities, there has been a recognizable ranking among schools in Changzhou, even at the compulsory education level (until the ninth grade). In principle, children attend designated schools according to where they live. However, prestigious schools attract students and their parents who live outside the designated area, and such parents can pay an extra fee to send their children to those schools. Prestigious schools are able to select students, and parental educational background and social status can be important criteria for selection. Thus the traditional perception that school is a means to promote social mobility no longer reflects reality. Schools in China are increasingly becoming a means to perpetuate social-economic class conditions. Changzhou's schools are no exception to this trend.

In 2012, to reduce discrepancies in the quality of education and resource allocation among schools, Changzhou started implementing innovative policies at the compulsory education level. Of note are three new policies: (1) a teacher rotation project; (2) a free tutoring project; and (3) changes in high school admission policies.[5] The aim of the teacher rotation project was to allocate human resources more evenly across the city and to ensure "equal" access to compulsory education for all. To achieve this goal, subject-area teachers (including English teachers) who had worked for the same school for more than six years were subject to transfer to a different school. In this way, "highly qualified teachers" would not be concentrated in prestigious schools, and their knowledge and experience would be shared with teachers who work at schools with fewer resources. The city expected that 15 % of its teachers would eventually be transferred in this way (Changzhou Educational Information Center 2012b). The free tutoring project was intended to make education more accessible to all, regardless of their background, and to improve the city's social services. Subject-area teachers were asked to give students individualized tutoring in the community on weekends on a "voluntary" basis. Any parent could sign-up for this service and ask for assistance with any academic difficulties that their children encountered (Changzhou Educational Information Center 2012a). According to an officer I interviewed in the Education Bureau in May of 2012 (immediately after the policies were implemented), the rising cost of private education and achievement discrepancies by parental SES were among the motivations driving this project. Finally, Changzhou was planning to make some changes to its high school admission process. Instead of selecting students purely on merit (i.e., exam scores), prestigious high schools would have to accept a certain quota of their students from less prestigious middle schools. The purpose of this policy was to encourage parents and students to enroll in the designated elementary and middle schools near their homes and to narrow achievement gaps among schools (Changzhou Educational Information Center 2011).

It is premature to discuss the effect of these policies at the time of writing (September 2012); however, one can readily imagine that stakeholders' initial reactions to these policies might vary. Indeed, English teachers of the participating students in our study (two teachers at each school, 12 teachers in total) held varied views depending on their current teaching positions and contexts. With respect to the teacher rotation project, for example, some teachers (those who were working at lower SES schools in particular) expressed excitement about the relocation

[5] High school education is not compulsory in China, but the admission process substantially impacts the compulsory stage of education.

because "it is a good opportunity to learn more about teaching in a new environment" (a teacher in L-middle school). But others worried about the uncertainty of a new teaching environment. According to the officer I interviewed in the Changzhou Education Bureau, the idea for this policy came from Japan, which has had a long-running teacher rotation system. However, there appears to have been very little empirical investigation into the effectiveness of the Japanese teacher rotation system. According to Minamimoto (1994), who examined Japanese principals' and teachers' perceptions of the rotation policy, both groups said that the primary benefit of the policy is to improve teachers' teaching quality and to have new stimuli at school by accepting teachers from different schools. However, it is unknown to what extent the teacher rotation policy contributes to equalizing the quality of education and narrowing achievement gaps across schools in Japan. As for the free tutoring project in Changzhou, it was already recognized as a convenient stepping stone for teachers seeking promotion. A teacher at H-elementary school told me that she decided to do it "voluntarily" during the summer because "it would be good for my promotion."

In addition to the three general education policies that Changzhou implemented, some changes in English education were taking place at the Jiangsu provincial level in 2012, including modifications to the curriculum and a renewal of textbooks. Among various changes made in the new textbook series, one of the most notable features was its difficulty level; the new textbooks lowered the standard. One of the teachers at H-middle school in our study expressed her concern at this, saying, "If you look at Shanghai, their textbooks are already much more difficult than ours. I cannot believe that they are making the textbooks easier than the current ones!" However, this change appears to have been intended to meet diversifying student needs rather than uniformly lowering the standard in the region, judging from the fact that the schools were still allowed to use any supplemental material, including old textbooks, if they wished to do so. An officer at the Changzhou Education Bureau highlighted growing concern among policy-makers and educators that "English is increasingly becoming a heavy burden for many students."

The lower standards appear to be a response to what Gil and Adamson (2011) described as "resistance to the tendency for competence in English to be used to judge a person's talent and value" (p. 38). As a core academic subject at school, English is playing an increasing role in China's education system, and sometimes talented students in other subjects cannot access higher education due to their poorer performance in English. As suggested by my quantitative analyses, if parental SES influences young learners' English achievement at an early stage of their English learning, its potential impact on their motivation, self-esteem, and career choice can be substantial. The officer at the Changzhou Education Bureau remarked that "English should remain just a tool for those who need to use it in China, but it should not be a burden for our students." She argued that by reducing the minimum English requirement, the new policy will grant schools and individual students the flexibility to adapt English education to their own needs and purposes. If we accept her explanation of the intention behind the new English education policy, the slogan "Enjoy English, Enjoy Life!" on display at L-elementary school (introduced at the beginning of this chapter) may allow for multiple interpretations. It could mean "If you enjoy being good at English, you will have a happy life" but it could also mean "Don't let English interfere with your life too much. Just enjoy it, and then you will have a happy life."

Changzhou's new policies seem to reflect these two conflicting attitudes toward English. On the one hand, by accepting the premise that English is important for everybody as a powerful lingua franca in the global world as well as a major barometer of one's general academic achievement in the Chinese educational system, the policies try to narrow gaps in access to English learning between students with advantageous and disadvantageous backgrounds. Considering the parents' zeal for their children's English learning, even at the expense of losing their local and national languages, such policies may help English gain more power in their educational system. On the other hand, the new policies that modify the English curriculum and lower the standards of the English-language textbooks seem to reflect policymakers' fear of English playing too important of a role in their education system; the new policies appear to be attempts to reduce the significance of English-language learning by giving schools and teachers more autonomy in deciding their English teaching standards. However, given the fact that school is strongly confounded by students' SES backgrounds, as my analyses showed, and that the standards are more likely driven by student performance at individual schools, the policies may unwittingly contribute to widening gaps in achievement among students depending on their background.

7.5 Conclusion

As English is increasingly recognized as a lingua franca of political and economic power in the world, the zeal for learning English appears to be intensifying even among young learners in East Asia. In this chapter, using Changzhou as a case study, I have examined parental behaviors and beliefs by SES and their relation to children's English learning. I found that, whereas higher SES parents offered more support for their children's English learning both directly and indirectly, parental beliefs about the importance of their children's English education and their own children's competence in learning English did not show differences by SES for children at elementary school. Parents, regardless of their SES background, tended to highly value English education, even at the expense of their local and national languages. Such attitudes could change the linguistic ecology of the region drastically.

At the eighth grade level, parental SES had an impact on children's performance in listening and literacy, with children of lower SES parents performing at lower levels than their high-SES counterparts. Additionally, lower SES parents showed a decreased expectation for their children's English learning. In speaking, which is increasingly promoted as an important competitive skill in global markets, our data showed that the parental SES had an impact on their children's performance even at the beginning stages of their English learning at elementary school.

In response to concerns about growing socioeconomic disparities and achievement gaps by SES, Changzhou implemented a series of new policies intended to minimize “unequal” access to quality English education. The effects of such policy initiatives are yet unknown. Ironically, the new policies may contribute to the empowerment of English in their education system, given the excessively strong parental support for English education. At the same time, Changzhou decided to grant greater autonomy to individual schools in defining their own standards of English learning because of their concerns over English being too powerful in its education system. Considering the fact that schools are confounded with SES, giving autonomy to schools may eventually develop wider gaps in English achievement by SES and may create an “English divide” within the community.

The dilemma faced by Changzhou is probably not unique to that city. Although there is no easy solution, we should not forget that children are exposed to a wealth of knowledge and experience through their local languages both at home and in the community. It would be unfortunate if we ignore such rich and valuable local resources and impose English as a critical barometer of their academic achievement.

References

Butler, Y. G. (2013). Parental factors and early English education as a foreign language: A case study in Mainland China. *Research Papers in Education* 28. doi:10.1080/02671522.2013.776625.

Carhill, A., Suárez-Orozco, C., & Páez, M. (2008). Explaining English language proficiency among adolescent immigrant students. *American Educational Research Journal, 45,* 1155–1179. doi:10.3102/0002831208321443.

Changzhou Educational Information Center. (2011). Changzhoushi tuijin jiaoyu youzhi junheng fazhan youguan zhengce jiedu. [Interpretation of the policy for forwarding balanced development of high quality education, 5 May.] http://www.czedu.gov.cn/disp_4_476_17453.shtml. Accessed 28 Apr 2013.

Changzhou Educational Information Center. (2012a). Changzhoushi jiaoyuju guanyu kaizhan “youxiu jiaoshi mianfei daoxue gongyi huodong” de tonggao. [Changzhou Educational Bureau’s notice of initiating “free tutoring from experienced teachers, 14 May.”] http://www.czedu.gov.cn/disp_4_795_10059087.shtml. Accessed 28 Apr 2013.

Changzhou Educational Information Center. (2012b). Guangyu yinfa “2012nian changzhoushi jiaoyuju zhishu yiwu jiaoyu xuexiao jiaoshi lungang jiaoliu fang’an” tongzhi. [Printing notification for the teacher rotation projects in the compulsory education schools directly supervised by Changzhou Educational Bureau, 26 June.] http://www.czedu.gov.cn/disp_4_219_10060407.shtml. Accessed 28 Apr 2013.

Enever, J. (Ed.). (2011). *ELLiE: Early language learning in Europe*. Manchester: British Council.

Feng, A. (2012). Spread of English across Greater China. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 33,* 363–377. doi:10.1080/01434632.2012.661435.

Gil, J., & Adamson, B. (2011). The English language in Mainland China: A sociolinguistic profile. In Feng (Ed.), *English language education across greater China* (pp. 23–45). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Goldenberg, C., Rueda, R. S., & August, D. (2008). Sociocultural contexts and literacy development. In D. August & T. Shanahan (Eds.), *Developing reading and writing in second-language learners* (pp. 95–129). New York: Routledge.

Graddol, D. (2006). *English next*. Manchester: British Council. http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-research-english-next.pdf. Accessed 28 Apr 2013.

Hampton, S., Ekboir, J. M., & Rochin, R. I. (1995). The performance of Latinos in rural public schools: A comparative analysis of test scores in grades 3, 6, and 12. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Science, 17,* 480–498. doi:10.1177/07399863950174005.

Hannum, E., & Park, A. (Eds.). (2007). *Education and reform in China*. London: Routledge.

Hannum, E., Park, H., and Butler, Y. G. (2010). Editors' introduction: Emerging issues for educational research in East Asia. In E. Hannum, H. Park, & Y. G. Butler (Eds.), *Globalization, changing demographics, and educational challenges in East Asia* (pp. 1–14). Bingley: Emerald.

Huang, B. (2011). Economic development and the growing importance of the English language in Guangxi. In A. Feng (Ed.), *English language education across Greater China* (pp. 212–227). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Lin, J. (2007). Emergence of private schools in China: Context, characteristics, and implications. In E. Hannum & A. Park (Eds.), *Education and reform in China* (pp. 44–63). London: Routledge.

Minamimoto, O. (1994). Kyoshi-no shokugyoteki syakaika-no jushokenkyu. [An empirical study on teachers' professional socialization.] Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Hiroshima, Japan. http://ir.lib.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/metadb/up/diss/diss_otsu2552.pdf. Accessed 28 Apr 2013.

National Bureau of Statistics of China. (2009). *China statistical yearbook 2009*. http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2009/indexeh.htm. Accessed 28 Apr 2013.

Nikolov, M. (2009). Early modern foreign language programmes and outcomes: Factors contributing to Hungarian learners' proficiency. In M. Nikolov (Ed.), *Early learning of modern foreign languages: Processes and outcomes* (pp. 90–107). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Papademetre, L., & Routoulas, S. (2001). Hellenic language and culture study in South Australian schools: Parents' perspectives. In E. Close, M. Tsianikas, & G. Frazis (Eds.), *Greek research in Australia: Proceedings of the 3rd Annual Conference of Greek Studies* (pp. 169–187). Adelaide: Flinders University Department of Languages. http://dspace.flinders.edu.au/jspui/bitstream/2328/25581/1/Leo%20Papademetre%2c%20Stephen%20Routoulas%20.pdf. Accessed 28 Apr 28 2013.

Park, J.–K. (2009). "English fever" in South Korea: Its history and symptoms. *English Today, 25,* 50–57. doi:10.1017/S026607840900008X.

Pomerantz, E. M., Grolnick, W. S., & Price, C. E. (2005). The role of parents in how children approach achievement. In A. J. Elliot & C. S. Dweck (Eds.), *Handbook of competence and motivation* (pp. 259–278). New York: Guilford.

Pufahl, I., & Rhodes, N. C. (2011). Foreign language instruction in U.S. schools: Results of a national survey of elementary and secondary schools. *Foreign Language Annals, 44,* 258–288. doi:10.1111/j.1944-9720.2011.01130.x.

Stevenson, H. W., & Stigler, J. W. (1992). *The learning gap: Why our schools are failing and what we can learn from Japanese and Chinese education*. New York: Touchstone.

Sung, H., Padilla, A. M., & Silva, D. M. (2006). Foreign language education, academic performance, and socioeconomic status: A study of California schools. *Foreign Language Annals, 39,* 115–130. doi:10.1111/j.1944-9720.2006.tb02253.x.

Wigfield, A., Essoles, J. S., Schiefele, U., Roeser, R. W., & Davis-Kean, P. (2006). Development of achievement motivation. In W. Damon, R. M. Lerner, & N. Eisenberg (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 3. Social, emotional and personality development* (pp. 933–1002). Hoboken: Wiley

Zou, W., & Zhang, S. (2011). Family background and English learning at compulsory stage in Shanghai. In A. Feng (Ed.), *English language education across Greater China* (pp. 189–211). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Chapter 8
English in Malaysia: An Inheritance from the Past and the Challenge for the Future

Zuraidah Mohd Don

Abstract This paper is concerned with the Malaysian language policy in the context of education. The Malaysian government has not only to balance the need for Malay as the national language with English as the global language, but also to cater for the language needs of different immigrant communities. The situation is far from static, and the role of English in particular has changed from colonial language to foreign language to global language. The goal of the language policy has also changed from using the national language to build a unified nation and create a national identity following independence, to seeking to play a full part as a developed nation on the international stage by the year 2020.

Keywords Malaysia · Nationalism · Language education · Language policy national development · National integration · Language of instruction · English · Malay · Vernacular languages

8.1 Introduction

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic state of around 28.6 million people consisting of Malays (65 %), Chinese (26 %), and a smaller community of Indians, who together with the native and indigenous people of Sabah and Sarawak and other ethnic minorities make up the remaining 9 %. Malaysians speak or have recently spoken an estimated 140 different languages, of which 138 are living and 2 are now extinct (Lewis et al. 2013). The national and official language is Malay, and almost all Malaysians speak Malay. The Chinese speak Hokkien, Cantonese, Hainan, Hakka or Mandarin as their mother tongue. About 85 % of the Indians speak Tamil, while others have Malayalam or Telugu as their mother tongue. Educated urban Malaysians, especially Indians or those whose parents come from different ethnic groups, tend to regard English as their first language. The majority of Malays speak varieties of Malay as

Z. Mohd Don (✉)
University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
e-mail: zuraida@um.edu.my

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_8, © Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht 2014

their mother tongue, and learn Standard Malay (i.e. *Bahasa Melayu*) through formal education beginning in preschool. The linguistic diversity reflects the unique pluralism of present-day Malaysia, with each ethnic group having associated linguistic and religious affiliations which intensify divisions within Malaysian society. Since independence in 1957, the preservation and maintenance of national unity and the creation of a national identity have, consequently, been key political objectives.

This chapter addresses two related issues. The first is language education in Malaysia in its historical context, and this leads on to the second, which is concerned with the status of English, Malay, Chinese and Tamil in post-colonial Malaysia. British Malaya became independent in 1957, and in 1963 merged with Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore to form Malaysia (although Singapore was soon to leave in 1965). The experience of Malaysia may in this way be rather different from those of other post-colonial states and multilingual societies. The choice of the medium of instruction in education at different levels is a conscious decision taken by the government according to local conditions and global trends, and has always been a controversial issue.

Following independence from British rule, there was resurgence in loyalty and support for Malay as the national language. Malay has strong claims in view of its historicity, ethnicity, autonomy and vitality (Fishman 1972). It was historically widely used as a lingua franca in much of the archipelago, and has been and remains the lingua franca for inter-ethnic communication and also the language of the Malays as the largest ethnic group in Malaysia (Asmah 1987, p. 65).

In a speech delivered at the University of Singapore on 9 December 1964, Tunku Abdul Rahman, the first Prime Minister of Malaysia, stressed that: “It is only right that as a developing nation, we want to have a language of our own. If the National Language is not introduced, our country will be devoid of a unified character and personality—as I would put it, a nation without a soul and without a life” (cited in Hassan 2004). This sentiment is preserved in the now familiar slogan *bahasa jiwa bangsa* ‘language is the soul of the nation’.

In this way, Malay came to represent nationalism as opposed to colonialism, and its establishment as national language and official language was an attempt to assimilate the people through a common language through which to communicate and understand each other’s values (Asmah 1985, p. 44). Its status as the national language is enshrined in the *Constitution of Malaysia, 1981, Article 152*, with the proviso that this does not restrict the use, development and growth, and teaching and learning of vernacular languages including Mandarin and Tamil. Given its special status, any change in language policy with regard to the place and role of English and other languages in Malaysian schools and higher education institutions has to be discussed in relation to Malay.

Language education policy in Malaysia belongs to the politics of a plural society in which politics and education overlap, and plays a significant role in helping Malaysia achieve its goal of unity and development. At present, the need for unity has been joined by the need to compete internationally on an equal footing as a developed nation, and ‘… unity is critical to building a productive and competitive Malaysia and achieving Vision 2020’ (Malaysia 2010, p. 64). To ensure growth and compete globally Malaysia needs the human capital for an efficient and competitive economy (World Bank 2007; Malaysia 2001).

8.2 Language Education in Malaysia: A Historical Perspective

This section traces language and education policies in Malaysia, showing how current policies are an extension of developments in the past and how they are formulated on the basis of social, political and economic factors. The development of education in Malaysia can be divided into three stages:

1. The colonial period and nationalism
2. The independence period and national integration
3. The globalisation period and national development.

In order to understand policy decisions regarding language in education, it is important to be aware of Malay as the national language, English as an international language, and also of the mother tongues of the dominant ethnic groups, in particular the Chinese and Indians, which provide them with a sense of identity and belonging. One of the major challenges is to strengthen the position of Malay as a medium of instruction in the formal education system, and to ensure that English promotes rather than obstructs nation building. As the symbol of national identity and patriotism, Malay serves to promote integration in the formal education system. The position of English is ambiguous, because it is necessary for economic development and global competitiveness, and yet it is viewed with suspicion because of the fear that English will affect the position of Malay as the medium of instruction in education. While balancing English and Malay, Malaysia also has to take into account the linguistic needs of the other ethnic groups.

8.2.1 The Colonial Period and Nationalism

From the early days of British involvement in Malaya, there was restricted contact between the British and the local Malay population. The British had learnt from the Indian Mutiny of 1857 not to meddle in Islamic affairs, and the inept handling of local affairs by the first British Resident in Perak led to his assassination in 1875. The result was that the Malays did not, in general, cooperate with the British (Alatas 1977) and the British did not interfere in Malay affairs. The British solved the resulting labour shortage problem by bringing in large numbers of Indians to work on the rubber estates, and even greater numbers of Chinese to run the tin mines. In this way the British formed closer ties with immigrant minorities than with the native population.

Economic development concentrated on the west coast between Penang in the north and Singapore in the south, and this is where the main towns were to emerge and where English schools were located. The government schools were established largely to provide civil servants, and were complemented by missionary schools with a broader educational outlook (Gaudart 1987). Both types of school used English as the medium of instruction and developed on English lines. At the end of 11 years of education the students could sit for the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate Examination and go on to tertiary education abroad in any Commonwealth country. The establishment of the Medical School in Singapore in 1905 gave these students the opportunity to study further locally. In 1920, the Medical School became the King Edward VII College of Medicine, and in 1949 it merged with Raffles College to form the University of Malaya.

English-medium schools were open in principle to all ethnic groups, but because of their location in the urban areas, the majority of their students were in practice urban Chinese, accompanied by a few urban Indians and urban Malays. This is because different ethnic groups were concentrated in different geographical areas, and earned a living in different ways. Malays were typically rice farmers living in small towns or 'kampungs', while the Indians lived on rubber estates and the Chinese worked in business and trade, and lived in the cities and urban areas. Vernacular schools were set up, with Malay, Mandarin or Tamil as the medium of instruction to cater for the needs of local communities, but these would not have the status of the English schools.

The effect of English schooling was to create largely urban élites within each community, separate from the rest of the community (see e.g. Asmah 1995). In this way, English-educated élite Malays, Indians and Chinese would have more in common with each other than with their own communities. They not only shared a common language but also western values, ideology and even lifestyle. English was already then the language of economic opportunity and social mobility functioning as a 'high' language in the domains of education and the legislature and judiciary.

The situation was very different for the mass of the population of Malaya. In assessing the education that was provided, it is important to remember that until 1867 Malaya was ruled by the East India Company, which was essentially a commercial enterprise. Serious interest in providing vernacular education in Malay followed the transfer of the Straits Settlements in 1867 to the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Lim 2008, p. 2). The government did not provide Chinese education, but allowed the Chinese community to set up their own vernacular schools, mostly in towns, with the assistance of mainland Chinese authorities interested in overseas Chinese education. Chinese schools received financial support from private individuals and organisations and had access to the well developed education system of mainland China, complete with curricula, textbooks and teachers supplied directly from China. The schools followed a traditional form of Chinese education, and government control, along with some financial support, was extended to these schools in 1920, following the introduction of the registration of schools (Kua 1999, pp. 23–37).

The Indians were less fortunate. A rudimentary Tamil education was provided at primary level by rubber estate owners, usually in dilapidated buildings. These schools were partially subsidised by the government because of ties with India, and to satisfy the need for a supply of labourers to work in the rubber plantations (Asmah 1993, p. 66). Most of the teachers who came from India were not well trained, and the children from the estates were discouraged from studying English or attending English schools.

The Malay community benefited least from education during this period, largely because the majority were poor and lived in the village rather than town. Some rural education was provided at primary level by Islamic schools and government-funded village schools known as *sekolah pondok* 'hut schools' (Mior Khairul 2011, p. 35). These schools offered seven years of education in principle but four years in practice became the norm (Ozay 2011); the teaching was in Malay and included reading and writing in both Rumi (Romanised) and Jawi (Arabic) script, simple arithmetic and some basic geography. The restrictive nature of this education held the Malays back, as the aim was to give them a practical education to prepare them for lives, similar to their fathers, as farmers and fishermen, thereby preserving traditional Malay society. English was not taught as a subject because it was believed that children should begin their education in their own mother-tongue, but this meant they did not have the language to enrol in English-medium secondary schools in the towns, and there was no secondary education available for them in Malay. A consequence of the lack of access to secondary education was that poor Malays were largely excluded from the developing economic system of British Malaya.

Historical accounts of Malay rural education in the British colonial period have been heavily influenced by remarks made by Sir Frank Swettenham in his 1891 annual report on Perak, and which are worth quoting at some length (cited in De 1980, p. 111):

> The one danger to be guarded against is to teach English indiscriminately. It could not be taught except in a few schools, and I do not think it is at all advisable to attempt to give to the children of an agricultural population an indifferent knowledge of a language that to all but the very few would only unfit them for the duties of life … regular attendance at school will be of material advantage to them … while they will be likely to prove better citizens and more useful members of the community than if imbued with a smattering of English ideas which they would find could not be realised.

With the hindsight of a hundred years, these remarks may well appear racist towards Malays; but that is to misinterpret a historical document. The remarks have to be interpreted in the context of the English class system, in which the perceived purpose of the education of the poor was to improve morals and teach them to accept their station in life (Knowles 1997). Swettenham was also probably being realistic, for there would have been no secondary education for poor children to progress to, and in this respect Perak was not very different from England. In addition, Malaya was at the time ruled as part of the Indian empire, and a problem associated with people known as Bengali Baboos was perceived to have been caused by over-education, a matter of which Swettenham was surely mindful.

Swettenham was concerned to develop Malay-language education (Ozay 2011, p. 474). In his Malay sketches (Lim 2008, p. 5; Swettenham 1900), he sought to portray

> … the Malay as he is in his own country, against his own picturesque and fascinating background … The position he occupies in the body politic is that of the heir to the inheritance. The land is Malaya, and he is the Malay.

In his interest in Malay education he was followed by the Malay scholar Wilkinson, who from 1899 sought to provide libraries for Malay vernacular schools (Lim 2008, p. 6) and served as Federal Schools inspector from 1903 to1906. He began the tradition of publishing in Malay, including a Malay Literature Series for schools published in collaboration with the MPH publishing company (which still survives as a retail bookshop chain). Wilkinson was a leading figure for future developments regarding nation building and the establishment of Malay as the national language in the modern era (Ozay 2011, pp. 474–475).

Despite the efforts of some enlightened colonial administrators, the vernacular schools generally provided a poor education. The low standards of Tamil schools were just adequate for the education of estate labourers; the Chinese education was too Chinese-centred to be relevant to life outside the Chinese community; and the Malays were trained to be literate in Malay but given no incentive to become more than farmers and fishermen. The Chinese probably benefited most from the education system. Chinese education continued beyond the primary level to secondary education, and so helped to create a large Chinese élite, in contrast to Malay and Tamil education, which were offered only at primary level (Asmah 1985).

By the end of the colonial period, the Malay community formed a majority, but a large proportion of the Malay community was educationally and economically disadvantaged. English created 'an identification of a racial group with a particular type of vocation or industry and hence its identification with wealth and poverty…' (Asmah 1987, p. 63), and in the eyes of many Malays English was responsible for making the Chinese rich and the Malays poor. This was the motivation for Malay nationalists to fight to make Malay the national and official language in education and administration. It was believed that the change of status would provide Malays with the linguistic power and capital they needed to advance economically.

8.2.2 The Independence Period and National Integration

Following liberation from Japanese occupation at the end of the Second World War, the British faced the problem of building a nation out of the disparate communities of Malaya, which led to the formation of the Malayan Union in 1946 and the Malayan Federation in 1948. This period saw an upsurge of nationalism and rapid political changes. The Malays were opposed to the Malayan Union as it proposed to give equal citizenship to the immigrant communities, thus putting them on an equal footing with the Malays and posing a threat to traditional Malay privileges. However, they agreed to the formation of the Malayan Federation, which recognised the special status of Malays as the indigenous people of the land (*Bumiputera* 'sons of the soil'), and at the same time gave citizenship to the immigrant ethnic groups. The unquestioned acceptance of Malay as the national language became a condition of citizenship; as Asmah puts it, "… the institution of Malay as the national language and official language… was a barter for the acquisition and equality of citizenship for the non-Malays" (1979, p. 11).

A change in the political scene inevitably brought a change in education policy, which at the time of independence was already highly complex. Many schools had been destroyed during the Japanese occupation and the Department of Education was preoccupied with restoring schools and putting them in order. This was also the time of the Cheeseman Plan and the New Education Policy. Council Paper 53 of 1946 (Malayan Union) proposed the continuation of the four separate education systems at primary level, with English taught as a subject in vernacular schools and provision for the transfer of pupils from vernacular schools to English schools (Cheeseman 1949, pp. 545–550). This was followed by the Barnes Report of 1951, which advocated a bilingual system of education with Malay and English as the official languages. With the emergence of Malay nationalism and the growing awareness of the inadequacies of Malay education, the Malay nationalists rejected this proposal on the grounds that the over-emphasis on English in the education system was colonial and anti-Malay.

The Razak Report of 1956 proposed that English should be retained at least for a time, but that Malay should be phased in as the national language, particularly in education and in connection with government—for example as a qualification for entry into government service (Gaudart 1987). At the secondary level, students could choose to continue their education with Malay as the language of instruction or in English-medium school with English as the language of instruction. The medium of instruction at tertiary level was English.

8.2.2.1 English and Malay

After gaining its independence in 1957, Malaysia was faced with the challenge of not only making Malay the national language to unite a people of diverse ethnicity, religions and beliefs, but also to establish it as the medium of instruction in its education system to replace English. There was a need, then, to restructure society by correcting the economic imbalances among the ethnic groups, and in the process to integrate the Malaysian people primarily through the means of education. The legal status of Malay and English in the early years of independence was provided for in the first two clauses of Article 152 of the Malaysian constitution, which came into force upon independence in 1957, and which accorded Malay the status of the national language, while English was retained as co-official language alongside Malay for a period of ten years. English was to be used in both Houses of Parliament, in the Legislative Assembly of every State, and for all other official purposes. While the status of Malay as the national language was unquestioned, its official functions remained vague and ill defined.

The desire to enhance the status of Malay as the national language led to the proposal in the Rahman Talib Report of 1960 that English and Malay should be used as the 'official languages' of education, but with 'the intention of ultimately using the national language as the main medium of instruction' (cited by Gaudart 1987). A change in attitude is detectible in the Rahman Talib Report, which by promoting English and Malay as the official languages, and by recommending that secondary school public examinations be conducted only in these languages (Gaudart 1987), put pressure on other schools to convert to Malay or English medium.

The Rahman Talib Report led to the Education Act of 1961, the preamble to which refers to "the progressive development of an educational system in which the national language is the main medium of instruction" (cited by Gill 2007, p. 114). The Act laid out the foundation for a national system of education with Malay as the national language and the medium of instruction. As a sense of nationalism continued in post-colonial Malaysia, the 1963/1967 National Language Act categorically terminated the co-official status of English, and made Malay the main official language in the country. Although English was degraded to the second most important language, it still retained its official functions in the government administration and education.

Education policy was overtaken by the events of 1969, when interethnic violence broke out and continued for several days. In its wake, policies were introduced to support the supremacy of Malay. In 1970, the decision was taken to phase out English as a language of instruction in stages, replacing it with Malay, and to convert all English-medium schools to Malay-medium schools (Gaudart 1987). The intention expressed in the Second Malaysia Plan of 1971 was that Malay should be introduced progressively for all subjects except English and other languages, at primary level by 1975 and at secondary level by 1982 (Asmah 1985, p. 42).

From 1970, the national education system provided for "national schools" using Malay as the language of instruction alongside 'national-type schools' using English, Chinese or Tamil as the language of instruction, but including English and Malay as compulsory subjects (Asmah 1985, pp. 41–42). The New Education Policy of 1971 reaffirmed the status of English as the second most important language in the Malaysian education system after Malay, which officially became the medium of instruction in higher education institutions (HEIs) in 1983.

The main losers were the English medium schools, which were converted to Malay schools, as English was actively phased out in favour of Malay. The role of English was drastically reduced from being the medium of instruction in the education system to being a subject taught at school and the language for science and technology in universities. By the 1980s, the bulk of the Malaysian population had gone through a Malay-language education, and many Malaysians had much less access to English than the older generation that had grown up in the 1950s and 1960s. There was in consequence a steep decline in the standard of English language proficiency. Asmah regarded the decline as a natural process: 'It is unrealistic to aim for a level of proficiency equivalent to that attained by students in English schools when learning and teaching is done in Malay…' (1983, p. 338).

The effect of phasing out English is that the situation remained much as it was at the time of independence. It made little difference to the élites, for it is in the nature of élites to perpetuate themselves. Malaysia still had an urban English-speaking multi-ethnic élite and Malaysians who studied abroad in Australia, the UK or the

United States continued to come back with flawless English. At the other end of the scale were large numbers of people who had acquired just enough English to carry out basic job-related tasks such as selling in markets or at food stalls and working in shops or businesses. In between these two groups was a rapidly growing class of people who would find that the command of English they had acquired in the course of their education was not sufficient for the demands of their careers.

8.2.2.2 Chinese and Tamil Education

This account has so far concentrated on Malay and English, but the Malaysian government has also had to provide for education in community languages. At the time of independence, the government inherited a system with built-in contradictions. While the promotion of Malay was seen as central to the creation of national unity and identity, there were powerful players with a vested interest in the promotion of vernacular languages for the preservation of their own community unity and identity. The Chinese community in particular, having independently developed its own education system (Gill 2007, p. 111), sought to preserve Chinese education (Kua 1998). The Indian community set up Tamil schools with support from the government.

Until after the Second World War, it was still not clear that the Chinese and the Indians had come to settle permanently (Kennedy 1993, p. 295), but the formation of the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) in 1946 followed by the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) in 1949 showed that these communities were a permanent component of the population which had to be catered for in educational provision. The Barnes report of 1951 which proposed a national system using Malay and English as the medium of instruction also recommended a withdrawal of funding from Chinese and Tamil schools, in the expectation that the immigrant communities would be integrated or return to their countries of origin, so that there would be no long-term need to provide for their languages (Gaudart 1987; Gill 2007, p. 111). An important consequence, had this report been implemented, is that vernacular schools would have been replaced by national schools.

The Chinese response led in the same year to the publication of the Fenn-Wu report of 1951, which advocated a multilingual education system, favouring mother tongue education. It proposed that Chinese schools should continue, but that their students should be trilingual in Chinese, Malay and English. This proposal was taken into account in the 1956 Razak Report, and in the subsequent Education Ordinance of 1957. A similar compromise was written into the language policy presented in the Malaysian constitution of 1957. On the one hand, it specifies Malay as the sole national language, to be used for all official purposes, while on the other hand, no restrictions are placed on the use or teaching of other languages except for official purposes.

The promotion of Malay in the Education Act of 1961 contrasted with the intention expressed in the Education Ordinance of 1957 to create an education system “acceptable to the people as a whole” and to preserve and sustain “the language and culture of peoples other than Malays living in the country" (Gill 2007, pp. 113–114). Section 21(2) of the Act empowered the Minister to convert vernacular schools into national schools (Segawa 2007, p. 39). The 1963/1967 National Language Act shattered any remaining hopes the dominant minority groups might have entertained to make their languages collectively official.

The system of "National schools" and "National type schools" which came into being after 1970 gave children the opportunity to learn using their own mother tongues in Chinese and Indian primary schools, although Malay was the medium of instruction for national primary and secondary schools and for public HEIs. The Education Act of 1996 repealed section 21(2) of the 1961 Act, which had empowered the Minister to convert schools to national schools, and for the first time recognised private educational institutions alongside government and government-aided institutions. On the other hand, the new Act specified Malay as the normal language of instruction, except in certain exempted circumstances (Segawa 2007, pp. 37–40). In this way the Act fell short of guaranteeing the future of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction.

The system of "National type" schools led to the establishment of 1,280 Chinese-national type schools and 60 private Chinese secondary schools, and just over 500 Tamil schools, of which more than 300 were located in the estates. The independent and private secondary schools which make up less than 15 % of the total can choose the medium of instruction, with Malay and English as compulsory subjects. Malay and English are compulsory subjects at all levels if either is not the medium of instruction.

The direct consequence of mother-tongue education at primary level is that students are being compartmentalised and segregated according to the type of school they attend. To facilitate national integration at this level, the government introduced a new type of primary school in 2004 known as Vision Schools, of which there are five in different parts of Malaysia. Two or three primary schools—National, National type (Chinese) and National type (Indian) schools—share the same compound or *Vision School Complex*, each with its own buildings joined to each other by a link-way. The aim is to foster solidarity among the students and instil in them the spirit of oneness to produce a generation that is tolerant without regard for ethnicity or religion. The schools are independent of each other and follow their own curriculum, but they share the school facilities and organise activities which encourage participation of students from different ethnic groups. In 2007, a new educational language policy took an important step towards multilingualism by allowing Mandarin and Tamil to be taught as one of the subjects in the national school system.

8.2.3 The Globalisation Period and National Development

While the Malaysian government was pursuing its policy of phasing English out, global developments were creating a situation in which Malaysia could not do without English, and would in fact face a rapidly increasing need for a highly educated workforce with the ability to operate in English at an international level. With the perfect vision of hindsight, the period in which English was phased out is now generally referred to as a period in which standards of English were allowed to decline. It is not that the need for English was not understood or recognised, for the Razak Report of 1956 clearly saw the continuing need for English. The problem is both internal and external. The internal problem is not that the good intentions for teacher training and maintaining standards of English outlined in the second, third and fourth Malaysia Plans of the 1970s and early 1980s were not acted upon (Gaudart 1987). The external problem was caused by globalisation and the use of English as the global language.

Globalisation, with English as the language of global communication, has been taking place at least since the nineteenth century and has been accelerating since 1945. There is, of course, no specific point at which English became a global language, but in retrospect it is clear that a major change has taken place—an example of what Handy (1989) calls discontinuous change. This change created a rapidly growing demand for Malaysians to be able to communicate in English at an international level, at the very time when the phasing out of English as the language of instruction after 1969 had reduced national levels of competency in English and the number of Malaysians able to use the language at the required level.

The growth of education in Malaysia has enabled many people to obtain a good education and even gain entrance to the university, with the result that the number of qualified people has rapidly increased. The problem is that without sufficient English, it is difficult for people in this group—including teachers and academics—to perform appropriately or even to obtain employment commensurate with their qualifications and aspirations. At a lower level, Rosli and Malachi (1990) found a huge difference in performance in English between rural and urban schools. There has been no improvement in opportunities for the rural poor. By the end of the 1980s, Malaysia was probably less equipped to face the demands of a globalised world than it had been thirty years before, with a rapidly growing class of people who would find that the command of English they had acquired in the course of their education was not sufficient for the demands of their careers.

The challenge of globalisation and the knowledge economy (k-economy) brought about a major re-think of the policy on language in education. It was now necessary to go beyond language and national unity, and to recognise the role of language in national development. The hegemony of English thus posed an enormous challenge to Malaysia, still preoccupied as it was with the building of a nation state and promoting the supremacy of Malay in public administration and education. The creation of a unified monolingual education system with Malay as the medium of instruction in order to nurture and promote national integration had been overtaken by global events. In the new world, internal development needs and external demands required the use of English to serve as a vehicle for economic mobility and advancement.

According to Gill (2006), 'In this context of globalisation and the knowledge economy, the definition of nationalism has shifted from that of linguistic nationalism… to that of "knowledge-driven nationalism" and "development oriented nationalism" as conceptualised by the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr Mahathir "In these present times, linguistic nationalism is driven by national development forces—the acquisition, mastery and innovative use of knowledge and information in the fields of science and technology—forces essential for the development of the nation".

Growing recognition of the need for international English in the context of the k- economy was to bring about a *volte face* in government policy towards English. A new direction was taken in the 1990s in connection with Vision 2020, which was initiated by Tun Mahathir Mohamed during his time as Prime Minister, with the aim of getting Malaysia recognised as a developed nation by the year 2020. Achieving Vision 2020 would need the full support and participation of the Chinese community, and a united nation (Bangsa Malaysia). English was reinstated as the medium of instruction in the reform of tertiary education.

The association of English with the k-economy was translated at school level into the need for higher standards in maths and science. The decision was taken shortly before Mahathir's resignation to re-introduce English as the language of instruction for maths and science in English at all levels from preschool up to university with effect from 2003. The teaching of science and mathematics in English started in primary one, secondary form one and lower form six (equivalent to the UK 'O-level'), and was later to be implemented in stages at all levels. It was proposed that, by the end of the transitional period, students would take the monolingual English paper instead of the bilingual paper to be answered in either English or Malay.

Mahathir reasoned: "Education is for the purpose of acquiring knowledge. The most important thing is the acquisition of knowledge. If you have to use a language which makes the knowledge more easily accessible, you should use that language" (interview conducted by Gill 16 June 2005, and cited in Gill 2007, p. 109). The rationale was that as textbooks and the results of scientific research were published in English, it was important for Malaysians to have access to the originals. Attempts to write textbooks in Malay or to translate them from English had not been able to keep up with the rate of change and the need to revise textbooks.

For such a policy to succeed, students and teachers would need a sufficient command of English. Teachers who had been through a Malay language education would need further training to ensure that they had a sufficient command of English to use it as the language of instruction. Corresponding measures would be needed to ensure that textbook writers had the ability to write textbooks in English. Student progress would need to be monitored to ensure that students had the English language skills to benefit from being taught in English. Particular attention would have to be paid to the teaching of English at pre-school level, for teachers would need a sufficient command of English to teach it in the classroom to young children, and learning materials would have to be produced by materials writers with the necessary command of English and a sufficient understanding of early learning. What actually happened according to Asmah (2007, pp. 355–356) is that:

> In making such a dramatic switch there was no step-by-step or year-by-year changeover schedule as was the case when the English schools were converted into Malay-medium

> national schools. Nor was there any warning given to teachers, parents, textbook writers, and publishers on the change that was suddenly to come. Teachers instead experienced hands-on on-the-job training in teaching these subjects in English and retired teachers fluent in English were brought back to teach in the schools. Textbooks were written as the teaching proceeded.

In addition to these educational issues, the interests of different parties had to be taken into account. Chinese and other vernacular schools were adversely affected by the re-introduction of English for maths and science from 2003 (Gill 2007, p. 115). To the extent that Chinese schools were outperforming national schools, the change was not seen to be necessary and the tried and tested teaching of maths and science in the mother tongue was replaced, at least for a certain number of classes per week, by experimental teaching in English.

In the face of considerable opposition, the government had to give in to the immense pressure from the mother-tongue education lobbyists to change the policy once again, despite support from the urban educated Malaysians. The decision was taken in 2009 to drop English as the medium of instruction for maths and science with effect from 2012. As a result, these two subjects are, at the time of writing, taught in Malay in national schools, and in the mother tongue in Chinese and Tamil schools.

Once again, those most affected were children from less privileged backgrounds, particularly those in rural areas. Although firm assurances were given that English would remain an important subject after 2012, it was not clear how the mass of schoolchildren would in practice gain access to English. The problem remains unsolved, and as recently as 2012, a government *Report on education reform and process of consultation* comments thus on the decline in English:

> The declining level of English language proficiency among students and graduates is a major concern, as English is the global language of communication and proficiency is required for research, learning and commerce. Students may not be able to achieve the same level of proficiency as native speakers or those who went through the British education system which used English as the medium of instruction. … further reform is needed in order for students to be proficient as second language users. (ASLI-CPPS, PROHAM and KITA-UKM 2012, p. 3)

The focus of attention here is on developments at school level, but corresponding problems were also emerging at university level. The Private Higher Educational Institutions Act of 1996 oversaw the establishment of private universities, including Malaysian campuses of overseas universities. Private universities used English as the language of instruction and sought to provide their students with marketable skills, and as a result their graduates were employable in the private sector. Public universities, by contrast, used Malay as the medium of instruction. English is generally used for the teaching of postgraduate courses. To support Malay as a language of knowledge, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia ('The National University of Malaysia') was founded in 1970 at the beginning of the switch from English to Malay. The problem was that graduates educated in Malay and without a sufficient command of English were unable to find employment, particularly in the private sector, commensurate with their qualifications (Gill 2007, p. 110). The findings from a survey conducted by the Malaysian government on 60,000 Malaysian graduates show that the main reasons for graduate unemployment include poor English proficiency and poor communication skills (Malaysia has 60,000 graduates unemployed 2005).

A long-term consequence of the phasing out of English is that some students taught in local languages do not have the English they require at university level. Many students enter university with an insufficient command of English, and for some of these students it is already too late to raise their English to the standard required to obtain employment commensurate with their qualifications in an increasingly competitive international jobs market. The relegation of L2 to a subject for study rather than a medium of instruction affects students' conversational competence and this may in turn affect their ability to function at the level required as part of a world-class workforce in the global k-economy (1993, p. 13).

In order to be successful economically, or indeed to play any kind of role at a global level, Malaysia has to adopt an international outlook and treat English as the language for communicating with the rest of the world. The Deputy Prime Minister recently announced by that by 2016 students may be required to get a pass in English in the fifth form exam to obtain the Malaysian certificate of education (SPM), on the grounds that it is necessary for the Malaysian workforce to be proficient in English because '… all the Government's economic transformation programmes, which are private sector-driven to create a high-income economy, will only succeed if we expedite and emphasise the use of English' (Kok 2013). This involves a further *volte face* decision.

8.3 Discussion and Conclusion

One of the abiding fears that provide motivation for the phasing out of English is that English is a threat to Malay. Malay has official status in Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia and does not have the profile of a threatened language. For many societies throughout history, the use of an international language alongside the national language has been the normal state of affairs, and so the relationship between English and Malay is not an unusual one.

Doshi (2012, p. 28) raises two pertinent issues concerning the promotion of English for national development: 'Would increased learning of English in school delegate a lesser role to the national language and threaten its vitality? Would language competencies and communication patterns of the national language be cancelled out by any increased focus of English?' She argues that this would not be the case because the two languages have different functions: Malay facilitates national unity and integration while English is essential for global communication. There is no necessary clash, but this is not always how the relationship between the two languages has been seen. While the perception remains, the 'threat to Malay' will alas continue to bedevil policy on language in education.

There are two factors which are likely, in due course, to change perceptions: national ambition and unemployment, particularly graduate unemployment. National ambition is associated with the new policy Vision 2020. The original emphasis was on economic growth, and the role of English in bringing about economic growth was not recognised until later, with the result that English as the language of instruction for maths and science was not introduced until 2003. The Malaysian government takes for granted that universities have a key role to play in national development, and this is made explicitly clear in speech after speech delivered by the Minister for Higher Education (see Mohd Izani and Harshita 2011). Although the universities are seen as catalysts for economic growth, even here the connection with English was not clearly recognised until early this century. The ambition was set for Malaysia to become a regional hub in higher education, even though the achievement of this goal required an academic workforce with a command of English sufficient to the task. The question is whether such a workforce exists.

Employability is likely to be the irresistible force that changes attitudes, for Malaysia needs an educated workforce with a command of English to operate effectively in a globalised world. The world of work in Malaysia is changing in response to the challenges of the k-economy and the need for a workforce with good English:

> The K-economy demands a brain-intensive, thinking, creative, innovative and disciplined workforce. … with the rise of the K-economy, a global transformation that cannot but gather pace, there has been a fundamental structural shift whereby economic value will increasingly come from knowledge-intensive work and increasingly less from physical production (although this will remain important). (The National Brains Trust 2002, p. 1)

For the individual, particularly for the graduate student, the need for global English becomes the need for enough English to get a job. The present system is creating a class of unemployable graduates, the Malaysian equivalent of what is known in China as the "ant tribe" (Lian 2009), and so the urgent need is for a remedial strategy for students already at university, to ensure that they graduate with an acceptable standard of English. In this connection, Malaysian universities have recently been involved in an initiative to provide their students with the English skills they need to become employable.

The growing awareness of the need for graduates to acquire employable skills brings into focus the role of not only English but also other languages as additional linguistic capital to increase employment prospects. In addition to English, Malaysian universities offer courses in French, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, Thai, and Korean to give students the opportunity to learn a third language.

Malaysia has an urban English-speaking multi-ethnic élite, and Malaysians studying abroad continue to come back with excellent English. However, in the new globalised world, it is inappropriate to have good English for the élites and poor English for everybody else. There is a huge reserve of unexploited talent among students from humble backgrounds, talent which Malaysia can ill afford to waste. It must be particularly disappointing for such students to succeed in their academic studies only to find themselves unemployable on account of their lack of English.

This discussion of issues arising from policy on language in education has brought into focus three interrelated problems: (1) the perceived threat to Malay, (2) unemployability, and (3) the urban/rural divide. English is not a threat to Malay because the two languages operate in different domains. On the other hand, the construction of English as a threat is extremely damaging, because it interferes with the setting of realistic goals for students in school. Malay students especially cannot be expected to be highly motivated to learn English if it is perceived as a threat to their mother tongue. This affects students in rural areas most of all. Students who are surrounded by English every time they go shopping or go into town can see for themselves the point of learning English. But the situation must be very different for rural students for whom English is a foreign language spoken in a far-off country of which they know little. It would be unrealistic to expect rural students in their early teens to grasp the geopolitical importance of the language they are forced to study, and see its connection with their own career on the far side of a hoped-for university education.

The present expectation is that a pass in English at SPM level is likely to be made compulsory for secondary school students in 2016. The fear of course is that the need to learn English will be transformed into a mere need to get a pass in the English examination. But on the positive side, this will create a window of opportunity to provide students with a better understanding of what they are learning English for, and of what will be expected of them in future years. In order to achieve this, the challenge will be to get students in school, especially those in rural areas, to see themselves as the sort of people who go to university and get jobs that connect them to the rest of the globalised world.

References

Alatas, S. H. (1977). *The myth of the lazy native*. Abingdon: Routledge.

ASLI-CPPS, PROHAM & KITA-UKM. (2012). *Report on education reform and process of consultation*. Bangi: Institutes of Ethnic Studies.

Asmah, H. O. (1979). *Language planning for unity and efficiency: A study of the language status and corpus planning of Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya.

Asmah, H. O. (1983). *The Malay peoples of Malaysia and their languages*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Asmah, H. O. (1985). The language policy of Malaysia: A formula for balanced pluralism. In *Papers in Southeast Asian linguistics*, *No. 9*, *Language policy, language planning and sociolinguistics in South-East Asia* (pp. 39–49). Pacific Linguistics A-67. Canberra: Australian National University Press.

Asmah, H. O. (1987). *Malay in its sociocultural context*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Asmah, H. O. (1993). *Language and society in Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bhasa dan Pustaka.

Asmah, H. O. (1995). Language policy and management in Malaysia. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication, 6,* 157–165.

Asmah, H. O. (2007). Malaysia and Brunei. In A. Simpson (Ed.), *Language and national identity in Asia* (pp. 337–359). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cheeseman, H. R. (1949). *Malaya: Post-war policy in education. The year book of education*. London: University of London, Institute of Education.

De, L. T. K. (1980). Colonial education in Burma and Malaya: The move away from Indian education policy. *Malaysian Journal of History, Politics and Strategic Studies, 10,* 105–113.

Doshi, A. (2012). Changing tides: The story of English language in Malaysia. In M. D. Zuraidah (Ed.), *English in multicultural Malaysia: Pedagogy and applied research* (pp. 15–30). Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press.

Fishman, J. A. (1972). *Sociolinguistics: A brief*. Rowley: Newbury House Publishers.
Gaudart, H. (1987). English language teaching in Malaysia: A historical account. *English Teacher, 16,* 17–36.
Gill, S. K. (2006). Change in language policy in Malaysia: The reality of implementation in public universties. *Current Issues in Language Planning, 7,* 82–94.
Gill, S. K. (2007). Shift in language policy in Malaysia. *AILA Review, 20,* 106–122.
Handy, C. (1989). *The age of unreason*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
Hassan, A. (2004). One hundred years of language planning in Malaysia: Looking ahead to the future. Language in India 4, 11 November. http://www.languageinindia.com/nov2004/abdulla2.html. Accessed 29 Apr 2013.
Kennedy, J. (1993). *History of Malaya* (3rd ed.). Kuala Lumpur: Synergy.
Knowles, G. (1997). *A cultural history of the English language*. London: Edward Arnold.
Kok, T. (2013). Timeline for SPM English. The star online, 6 March. http://www.thestar.com.my/Opinion/Letters/2013/03/06/Timeline-for-SPM-English.aspx. Accessed 11 Aug 2013.
Kua, K. S. (Ed.). (1998). *Mother tongue education of Malaysian ethnic minorities*. Kajang: Dong Jiao Zong Learning Centre.
Kua, K. S. (1999). *A protean saga: The Chinese schools of Malaysia* (3rd ed.). Kajang: Dong Jiao Zong Learning Centre.
Lewis, M. P., Simons, G. F., & Fenning, C. D. (Eds.). (2013). *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, (17th ed.). Dallas: SIL International. http://www.ethnologue.com. Accessed 30 Apr 2013.
Lian, S. (Ed.). (2009). *Ant tribe: A record of inhabited village of university graduates*. [Chinese: 蚁族:大学毕业生聚居村实录]. Guangxi: Guangxi Normal University.
Lim, P. H. (2008). Malay schools and school libraries in the Straits Settlements under British colonial rule before the Second World War, 1876–1941. *Malaysian Journal of Library and Information Science, 13*(1), 1–15.
Malaysia. Economic Planning Unit. (2001). *Third outline perspective plan, 2001–2010* (Vol. 2009). Putrajaya: Economic Planning Unit. Prime Minister's Department.
Malaysia. Performance Management and Delivery Unit (Pemandu). (2010). *1 Malaysia: Government transformation programme: The roadmap*. Putrajaya: Performance Management and Delivery Unit, Department of the Prime Minister.
Malaysia has 60,000 graduates unemployed. (2005). http://www.malaysia-today.net/Blog-e/2005/11/malaysia-has-60000-undergraduates.htm. Accessed 3 Apr 2013.
Mior Khairul, A. B. M. J. (2011). Sistem pendidikan di Malaysia: Dasar, cabaran, dan pelaksanan ke arah perpaduan nasional. *Sosiohumanika*, *4*, 33–48.
Mohd Izani, M. Z., & Harshita A. H. (Eds.). (2011). *Meneraju kegemilangan ilmu*. Putrajaya: Ministry of Higher Education.
The National Brains Trust. (2002). *Education 2020: Fundamental goals, critical objectives and strategic intervention points*.
Ozay, M. (2011). A brief overview of relations between Malay language and national awareness. *International Proceedings of Economics Development and Research*, *5*, 473–477.
Rosli, T., & Malachi, E. (1990). A comparative study of the achievement and the proficiency levels in English as a second language among learners in selected rural and urban schools in Peninsular Malaysia. *English Teacher*, *19*, 48–57.
Segawa, N. (2007). Malaysia's 1996 Education Act: The impact of a multiculturism-type approach on national integration. *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, *22*, 30–56.
Swettenham, F. A. (1900). *The real Malay: Pen pictures*. London: J. Lane.
World Bank. (2007). *Malaysia and the knowledge economy: Building a world-class higher education system*. World Bank.

Part II
Asian Languages in Australia: The Challenges of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Chapter 9
Recognising the Diversity of Learner Achievements in Learning Asian Languages in School Education Settings

Angela Scarino

Abstract In the context of globalisation and super-diversity we are seeing in education an increasing mobility of students, global flows of knowledge and the internationalization of teaching and learning. This phenomenon influences learning in general and language learning in particular. In languages education there is an increasing diversity of learners with diverse life-worlds and learning trajectories, and an increasing diversity of languages offered in different settings. The impact of this diversity in education is particularly marked in assessment because of its characteristic tendency towards generalisation and standardisation. In this paper I discuss the impact of globalisation on ways of describing frameworks of learner achievement that recognise the diversity of learners. I describe a recent national study that investigated learner achievements in Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean K–12, relative to learner background and time-on-task. The resulting context-sensitive descriptions of learner achievements provide a framing of learner achievements in a way that does justice to students' diverse linguistic and cultural repertoires.

Keywords Learner diversity · Learner achievements · Language assessment frameworks · Standards · Time-on-task · Learner background

9.1 Introduction: The Context of Diversity and Its Impact

In the context of globalisation and super-diversity (Vertovec 2010) in education, the mobility of students, the flow of knowledge globally (Appadurai 1996) through the use of communication technologies and the internationalisation of education are increasing. The phenomenon of diversity, though not new, is proceeding at an unprecedented pace. It has changed the nature of linguistic and cultural diversity in classrooms in all parts of the world (Blommaert and Rampton 2012), and has

A. Scarino (✉)
University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
e-mail: angela.scarino@unisa.edu.au

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies*, Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_9, © Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht 2014

had a marked impact on learning in general and on languages learning in particular (Blommaert 2010). In this context, it is increasingly important to develop language capabilities.

There are several markers of this diversity in education, one of which is the increasing student mobility in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. So-called 'international students' are an integral part of the contemporary educational landscape, with students moving to centres such as Singapore, Hong Kong and various cities in Australia to undertake a part of their primary, secondary, and tertiary education in a country and in a language and culture that is not the one of their primary socialisation. (See Chap. 6 for a discussion of the student experience of international education in Hong Kong.)

Diversity in education also has an impact on the role of English as a lingua franca and as, arguably, the dominant language in education. English may be learnt in the region as a second or foreign language (ESL and EFL) as well as a medium of instruction or medium for learning. The prominent role of English, in turn, impacts on all other world languages used within the local ecology of language use. For example, in Singapore the learning of English and the use of English as a medium of instruction has an impact on the learning of Chinese, Malay, Tamil and other Indian languages, which have the status of 'mother tongues' in the local ecology. It also influences world languages offered as 'third languages' in Singapore (see Chap. 4). In Australia, for example, the dominance of English and the Australian Government's recently renewed prioritisation of the development of Asia literacy and the learning of languages of the Asian region (Australia in the Asian Century Taskforce 2012) influences which world languages are offered in Australian education. In turn, the relationship between languages in the local setting in the dynamic context of globalisation influences the evolving language policy formulation, experimentation and implementation (Lo Bianco 2012).

The impact of this diversity on education is marked because of the crucial role of language in learning where both the use of language and the process of learning are focused on the exchange of meanings (Halliday 1993). Learning is mediated through language in the context of culture where the latter is understood as a lens through which we interpret and create meaning. Language and culture shape both the process of learning and students' success in learning (Cole 1996). Students learn through languages and across local and global linguistic and cultural contexts. They come to learning with diverse personal life-worlds, experienced in diverse linguistic, cultural, social and personal contexts; they come with diverse educational and life trajectories, diverse knowledge, understandings and values, and diverse motivations, expectations and aspirations in learning. The life-worlds of students are not just a part of the context of learning but rather, they are constitutive of learning (Scarino 2010). Stroud and Heugh (2011) explain that globalisation changes the very nature of multilingualism and language learning in contemporary times. They highlight that 'the shifting nature of learner personae and subjectivities points toward the need for new understandings of the teaching/learning process' (Stroud and Heugh 2011, p. 424). Leung et al. (1997) propose a new set of terms to capture the necessary reconceptualisation of language learning within the classroom realities created by this linguistic and cultural diversity. They suggest replacing the terms 'native-speaker' and 'mother tongue' with the concepts '*language expertise*', '*language inheritance*', and '*language affiliation*'. They state:

> … the term *language expertise* refers to how proficient people are in a language; *language affiliation* refers to the attachment or identification they feel for a language whether or not they nominally belong to the social group commonly associated with it, and *language inheritance* refers to the ways in which individuals can be born into a language tradition that is prominent within the family and community setting whether or not they claim experience in or affiliation to that language. (p. 555)

These three concepts capture dimensions of students' linguistic (and cultural) profiles that are influential in learning.

In teaching and learning languages in the Australian context, for example, diversity is manifested in the relationship or affiliation that students have with the target language. For example, some students learn Chinese as a second language, whereas others, such as international students from mainland China studying in Australia, have learnt and use it as a first language. For others still, as a result of the long history of migration from China to Australia, Chinese is learnt as a 'heritage' or community language; it is within this group that there is the greatest variation in students' use of language in terms of domains, registers and overall expertise. The different affiliation that diverse students have with the target language has consequences for their learning.

It is in the area of assessment that diversity has the most consequences. Assessment is a crucial site in language learning and is perhaps the most visible dimension of education, as it is where learner achievements, or learning outcomes, are accounted for. The consequences are most powerful in the tendency towards international assessment schemes such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) or the International Baccalauréate in general education, and in national/international referencing systems in language assessment such as the ACTFL scale in the USA or the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The latter, for example, is gaining currency well beyond Europe and is being seen increasingly as an international framework. It has become a dominant influence on teaching, learning and assessment around the world, thereby extending the generalisation and standardisation of assessment to a global level (McNamara and Elder 2010). The use of this framework has been well documented (see McNamara and Roever 2006; Shohamy 2008; Alderson 2005). Assessment in language learning, with its tradition of generalisation and standardisation, becomes increasingly complex because of the diversity of learners' profiles, languages and cultures; the policy settings; and the contexts and conditions of learning (e.g. time-on- task) (Elder 2000).

The focus of this chapter is on assessment of languages learning in Australia in the context of the diversity described above—the diversity of students with their own linguistic and cultural profiles and trajectories, an increasing diversity of languages in each national/state/local context, each with its distinctive history in Australia of migration and education, and the diversity of courses. It considers specifically the assessment of learner achievements in Asian language learning in a way that takes this diversity into account.

9.2 Language Assessment in Australian Education: Some Issues

Notwithstanding the context of diversity described above, paradoxically in current times in Australia, language policy and language education policy settings are fragile. Nevertheless, some 60 languages are formally assessed at the end of the secondary cycle of education. The results gained at Year 12 level are used not only to report the culmination of student achievements throughout the years of schooling, but also in the calculation of the score that determines entry to tertiary education. Various community groups within Australia's migration history have sought to ensure that their language would be offered in the schooling system (see Scarino (2008) for a detailed discussion). Thus, language policy and practices are also influenced by migration history. The practical complexity of the assessment of language education in Australia results from the highly diverse classes, in which second language learners often sit beside first language or 'heritage' language learners, notwithstanding differences in language expertise, language affiliation and language inheritance. At Year 12 level, there is some provision for different kinds of courses that are intended to recognise these differences, with 'eligibility criteria' established by the assessment authorities with the intention of ensuring that students take the course that best matches their profile.

In Australian education the medium of instruction is Australian English. English as a Second Language (ESL) is also offered to provide for students who do not have English as the language of their primary socialization. The goal of ESL is essentially to move students as quickly as possible into mainstream education in English, with overall success in learning correlating highly with success in ESL learning. Literacy in English only is prioritised across the curriculum and formal national testing of literacy takes place at different points along the K–12 continuum. A range of languages is offered in the curriculum as L1 or L2 or 'heritage' languages, but very few schools are able to make distinctive provision for different learning groups in a way that would reflect the students' diverse expertise and affiliation with the language being learnt. Thus several languages circulate in classrooms and in schools; English dominates; Asian languages are currently prioritised, with Chinese now being the most widely spoken language in Australia after English (Orton 2008); and world languages are made available through various forms of provision, through both mainstream and community programs. No connection is made among the various languages that form a part of the students' educational experience, that is, their compulsory learning of English as a school subject, their developing literacy in English for learning across the curriculum, their learning of languages as additional languages, and the use of the diverse languages that students may bring to their learning.

Despite this diversity, language assessment is seen essentially as a monolingual activity, in the sense that it takes place within each single, specific language. It is not conducted in a way that is relational, that is, that takes into account, holistically, the diverse languages that are a part of each student's repertoire and their contribution towards students' learning. The corollary of this diversity is that in the assessment process ways should be developed to conceptualise, elicit, judge and validate student achievements relationally within and across their holistic, linguistic repertoires. This, however, remains a goal for the future. To my knowledge, there is no system that takes into account, through the assessment process, the holistic nature of students' linguistic and cultural repertoires. In other words, there is no system that makes a relational assessment of language learning that aligns with current conceptualisations of language learning as a bi- or multilingual activity (Ortega 2010), or assesses for multilingual competence (Shohamy 2006).

The persistently monolingual character of language assessment and the use of a singular, common reference point is particularly evident in the generalised approach adopted in the standards-based frameworks that dominate languages education in Australia and beyond. In the languages area these frameworks have traditionally been generic, that is, the descriptions of standards are intended to be used for all languages regardless of: (1) their inherent differences, (2) the differing degree of challenge they present for diverse learners, (3) the local context of learning in terms of policy and practice and as in the case of the CEFR, and (4) whether the system pertains to child or adult learners.

There are major issues in using a singular common set of criteria or scale to reference the assessment of diverse students. Questions arise, such as: What conclusions can be drawn legitimately about students' language learning or their overall language and learning capabilities when students (e.g. ESL students) are assessed in a language that is not their own or when students (e.g. second language learners of world languages) are assessed against 'native-speaker' or 'mother-tongue' standards? Addressing these questions is a major challenge in the assessment of both language learning and learning across the curriculum. Using English language learning as an example, Leung and Lewkowicz (2008) describe this problem as follows:

> The use of common assessment criteria for all students without exception may be justifiable on the grounds of an 'inclusive' approach to education. Here 'inclusiveness' is taken to mean common educational treatment irrespective of differences in terms of language background… In terms of useful assessment outcome, however, the appropriateness of using first language development models for the assessment of second language development is questionable. (p. 306)

A recent national research study examined the diversity in student achievements in specific languages. In contrast to the prevailing, generic curriculum and assessment frameworks for languages (see Scarino 2012), this study was designed to focus on the differences in student achievements and it is described next.

9.3 The Student Achievement in Asian Languages Education Study: An Example of a Context-Sensitive Conception of Learner Achievements

The Student Achievement in Asian Languages Education (SAALE) study (Scarino et al. 2011) is a national project that begins to address the variability that is a natural part of language assessment in the context of diversity. Two key dimensions of this variability that impact on language learning are the time allocated to language learning and the learner's language background (see Elder et al. (2012) for a detailed discussion of these dimensions). The SAALE project involved two studies:

1. An investigation of the impact of two variables on student achievement in learning languages: time-on-task and learner background;
2. Conceptualising, gathering and analyzing assessment data to provide initial baseline descriptions of learner achievements in learning specific languages.

The SAALE study considered assessment along the K–12 continuum at three points: Years 6/7 marking the end of the primary cycle, Year 10 and Year 12, marking the end of the secondary cycle. It involved four specific languages of the Asian region: Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean. It sought to address the question of legitimate achievements (Scarino 2012); that is, what it is that students learning languages in schools, K–12, could legitimately be expected to achieve in learning particular languages in the Australian educational context. The notion of 'legitimacy' here is intended to address what are often unrealistic expectations—policy makers' aspirational sense of what language learning outcomes can be achieved; community members' sense of achievement as referenced always to native-speaker norms, and students' own desires to be able to 'communicate', often without understanding the entailments of being able to do so. It also captures language assessment researchers' desire to better understand learner achievements in language learning by establishing empirically grounded descriptions which acknowledge the reality of different achievements, in different languages, for different learner groups, and that reflect different amounts of time spent on language learning—in other words, developing understandings of achievements in language learning that are context-sensitive.

9.3.1 Methodology

The methodology of the study included both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. It included gathering data from students on their language background and the amount of time they had spent on learning the target language. Two questionnaires were developed; the first was a learner background questionnaire designed for individual students regarding their language background. It included:

- Student's country of birth,
- Parents' country of birth,
- Time spent in a country where the target language is spoken,
- Year of arrival in Australia,
- If born overseas, the age on arrival,
- Actual years of study completed overseas,
- The language of instruction of the overseas education,
- The study of the target language overseas,
- Target language learning in Australia (actual years of study),
- Participation in target language learning at community school,

- Learning of other subjects through the medium of the target language in Australia,
- Learning of other languages at school, in addition to the target language,
- Languages used at home and domains of use.

The second was a program profile questionnaire designed to capture from participating schools, details about time-on-task. This included:

- Years of instruction,
- Years of compulsory study,
- Other languages offered at the school,
- The availability of a study abroad program,
- The availability of transition arrangements with other schools,
- Practices for streaming or grouping students,
- Specific information about the program at three year levels: number of students, learner background, number of lessons per week, duration of lessons.

The methodology also included language tests for reading, writing and oral. At Years 6/7 and Year 10, tests were designed, recognising the need to capture a wide span of achievement. For Year 12, existing language examination data were used as provided by the curriculum and assessment authorities of the participating states. Details of test specifications and the test instruments can be found in Scarino et al. (2011). The sample of test takers across the four languages included 1,874 students.

The tests were administered, together with the learner background questionnaires by the language teacher in each participating school. Oral tests were conducted by members of the language-specific expert panels established for the project. All oral tests were digitally recorded for subsequent grading and analysis.

9.3.2 Results

Marking procedures were established for each test in each of the four languages (see Scarino et al. (2011) for full details regarding the criteria, processes and descriptors developed for grading at each year level). Assessors were trained by the expert panel chair and all samples were double marked.

The quantitative analysis included reliability analyses to ensure that the scores yielded by the tests provided a sound foundation to be used for subsequent analyses. It also involved cross-referencing data from the language background questionnaires and program profile questionnaires to scores on the tests, and analyzing the impact of time-on-task and language background as the variables of interest to the study. Three major categories of learner background were identified: first language learner, background language learner and second language learner. Each grouping was described as follows:

- First language learner
  - Born in a country where the target language (or a variety of it) is an official medium *AND* arrived in Australia at the age of eight or more (and therefore

is likely to have had more than two years' experience of formal schooling through the medium of the target language, or related variety, before arrival in Australia) *AND* the target language was the first language used before starting school *AND/OR* uses the target language at home.

- Background language learner
  - Born in Australia but with one or more parents born in a country where the target language is an official medium *AND* the target language was the first language used before starting school *AND/OR* uses the target language at home OR Born in a country where the target language (or a variety of it) is an official medium *BUT* arrived in Australia before the age of eight (and therefore has limited experience of target language medium instruction).
- Second language learner
  - Born in a country where the target language (or a variety of it) is *NOT* the official medium *AND* does not have more than one parent born in the country where the target language is official medium *AND first* language before school *AND/OR* language used at home is *NOT* the target language or a variety of it.

Students were allocated to one of the three groupings according to the questionnaire data. The validity of these groupings was explored.

9.3.3 Findings

The findings regarding language background include the following:

- That the statistical analysis supports language background groupings used for descriptions of achievement.
- That first language learners consistently achieve at higher levels than second language learners.
- That there are highly variable levels of performance among background language learners, not always statistically distinct from the first language learner group.
- That learners with first languages which are 'related' to the target language (e.g. Japanese students learning Chinese) do better than those whose first language is not related.
- That studying additional languages may aid achievement.

The findings regarding time-on-task include the following:

- That there is some difficulty in disentangling time variables from language background.
- That studying the target language for longer at primary school yields high levels of achievement at Year 6/7.

- That early starters do not necessarily do better at Year 10 (Indonesian and Japanese).
- That intensity of instruction (via bilingual education or study abroad) yields higher levels of achievement.

The qualitative analysis of students' written and oral responses drew upon the quantitative analyses as indicated above. The analyses were undertaken by language-specific panels, working together as a group. Each panel for each language determined the learner groupings that were relevant to the particular language, based on the statistical analyses. For example, all three groups were relevant for Chinese, whereas for Indonesian, only one group (namely the second language learner group) was relevant.

Written and oral samples were selected as representative of 'high' and 'average' score levels for each grouping relevant to the specific language. Panel members annotated the samples, often referencing other examples in the data set, noting features that characterized 'high' and 'average' responses in relation to each of the assessment criteria for each assessment task. Examples of language use, characteristic of the level, were documented. These annotations were used by panel chairs to draft initial holistic descriptions of learner achievements. These drafts were reviewed by members of the expert panel, the research team as a whole, a wider group of experienced teachers and finally, all state and territory government and non-government jurisdictions. The descriptions for all year levels, for all relevant learner groupings for each language can be found at http://www.saale.unisa.edu.au/project.html. Exemplar responses were selected and commentaries prepared to illustrate the descriptions developed. An example of a description of high student achievement for Year 6/7 Indonesian, Second Language Writing, and an example and commentary are provided at Appendix A.

9.4 Reflection

The SAALE study provides the first empirical study undertaken in Australia that has sought to describe learner achievements in a way that is sensitive to the specificity of particular languages and the diversity of learners and conditions for learning, and that is captured in the two major structural variables that influence language learning: time-on-task and learner background. As such, it constitutes the first attempt to investigate and formulate descriptions of student achievements in language learning that respect the specificity of learning the four Asian languages in the Australian setting. It is also sensitive to the diversity of learners learning the particular language, by recognising that the achievements of first language learners, background language learners and second language learners will necessarily be different. This differentiation gives a sense of legitimacy to expectations about achievement. Furthermore, it is sensitive to differential time-on-task given that, in Australia, K–12 continuity in learning a language cannot be assumed. For these reasons we propose such *context-sensitive descriptions of learner achievement in language learning* as a means of appreciating the need to take account of the complexity of language learning by diverse learners. These kinds of descriptions have the potential, then, to inform understanding about legitimate achievements on the part of the learners themselves, their teachers, schools and communities, and they provide a basis for informing practice. As such they resonate with Spolsky's reflection that in the future of language assessment, it will be necessary to replace simple unidimensional scales and scores by complex profiles showing a wide range of plurilingual proficiency of anyone tested (Spolsky 2008). This is a markedly different approach from that taken in the CEFR, as the most prominent assessment framework in use internationally.

The limitations of the SAALE study also need to be highlighted. Although the study has provided a baseline that is empirically derived, it was not feasible to conceptualise learner achievements as 'multilingual competence' (Shohamy 2006) or 'plurilingual proficiency' (Spolsky 2008). The research team understood that to introduce elements in the testing that were beyond current teaching and learning practice would risk its capacity to attract participants to the project. A much more elaborated conceptualisation reflective of language use practices in the context of multilinguality and diversity is warranted. Furthermore, the study involved a single iteration with a limited sample; it relied on self-report data about the learner, and program profiling, and it used a single set of assessment tasks for a very wide span of learning. These were mitigated at least to some extent by the wide network of expertise that was established and drawn upon throughout the study. Nevertheless, they remain important areas for further research.

9.5 Conclusion

The SAALE study confirms clearly that the diversity of learner background and time-on-task make a difference to learner achievements. It also confirms that achievements are necessarily different in different languages, given the inherent differences in the languages themselves, their learner cohorts in particular contexts, and their history and status in the particular educational context. Further iterations using a relational view of languages and language learning would need to be incorporated in future research that aims to better understand student achievements. In Australia, a failure to take into account the language-specific and context-sensitive nature of learner achievements presents a risk. Taking Chinese as an example, it may mean that the educational systems put at risk their capacity to produce second-language users of Chinese because of the de-motivating force of the comparison of second language learners' students' performance with that of first language or background learners of Chinese (Orton 2008).

The context-sensitive descriptions provide a clearer understanding of the nature and standards of learner achievements in a way that does justice to students' diverse linguistic and cultural repertoires. They enable the field of languages education to move beyond hypothesised generalisations about learner achievements towards some realistic sense of diverse learner achievements for diverse language learners that can be communicated to the different interested parties. In this way, they provide a more nuanced and realistic orientation towards the learning of Asian languages in Australia, creating the potential for all learners of these languages to make progress and gain satisfaction from doing so. In addition, in implementing such descriptions the educational system would have a more informed basis for understanding learner achievement and for ongoing policy formulation, experimentation and research.

Appendix A. An Example of a Description of Student Achievement for Year 6/7 Indonesian, Second Language Writing—High and an Example Response and Commentary

Description: Year 6/7 Indonesian, L2 Writing—High

Forms and Structures

Students create simple sentences using the subject-verb-object construction. Students use the structure of the adjective following the noun at the clause level when modelled (e.g. *Tempat favorit saya rumah teman*).

They use a possessive pronoun following the object if modelled (e.g. *Nama teman baik saya* Alice) and the possessive form *-nya* (e.g. *Teman saya namanya James*, *rupanya tinggi*).

Students use the simple verb *suka* to express their preferences (e.g. *Saya suka…*). They negate verbs by using *tidak* (e.g. *Saya tidak suka…*) and use compound verbs (e.g. *Saya tidak suka membaca buka, Saya suka main tenis*).

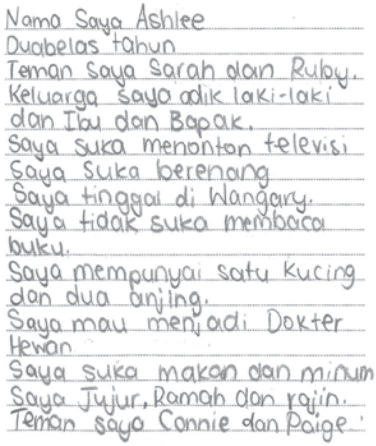
Activities are typically described using *ber*- verbs (e.g. *belajar, berbelanja, berjalan*) and a small range of formulaic *me*- verbs (e.g. *membeli, menonton, mendengarkan*). Verbs are used at times with auxiliaries and adjectives extending the idea (e.g. *Saya suka sekali… Saya mau ke sekolah naik bis*).

Students use prepositions of place *di*, *dari,* and *ke* to refer to where events are located (e.g. *Saya mau ke sekolah naik bis*, *Saya tinggal di … Saya berasal dari* Australia).

Students use cardinal numbers following the noun (i.e. as an adjective) to refer to quantities, including when describing people (e.g. *Kakak saya satu. Adik saya dua, Saya ada dua kakak*).

Occasionally preferences or opinions are attempted using comparatives and superlatives, for example, *Saya suka sekali futbal*, *… lebih kecil (daripada) kamar saya*. Opinions are occasionally expressed using colloquial terms that reflect a judgment (e.g. *asyik*).

Fig. 9.1 Sample response to self-introduction task


Nama Saya Ashlee
Duabelas tahun
Teman Saya Sarah dan Ruby.
Keluarga Saya adik laki-laki
dan Ibu dan Bapak.
Saya suka menonton televisi
Saya Suka berenang
Saya tinggal di Wangary.
Saya tidak suka membaca
buku.
Saya mempunyai satu Kucing
dan dua anjing.
Saya mau menjadi Dokter
Hewan
Saya suka makan dan minum
Saya Jujur, Ramah dan rajin.
Teman saya Connie dan Paige.

Task: Self-introduction

Learner Background and Program Context

This student is a second language learner at school. Her first language is English. She and her parents were born in Australia. The student has studied Indonesian at school for six years. The Indonesian program has two 50-minute lessons per week (Fig. 9.1).

Features of Achievement in This Example

The student provides a range of information, including personal details such as name and age, family, pets, likes and dislikes, and future career. The response is sequenced logically, moving from personal details to family, hobbies, preferences, and friends.

The student refers to quantity using the numbers and the nouns for animals (*anjing, kucing*) to describe her pets. She uses several adjectives to describe her own character (i.e. *jujur, ramah, rajin*).

She uses the personal pronoun *saya* and its possessive form accurately (e.g. *keluarga saya*, *teman saya*). She uses a range of simple verbs such as *suka, makan, minum, tinggal* as well as formulaic *ber-* and *me-* words (e.g. *berenang, membaca, mempunyai, menonton*). She uses the formulaic phrase *saya mau menjadi* to state her preferred occupation.

Spelling is accurate throughout including less familiar words such as *dokter hewan*.

The student creates cohesion using the simple conjunction *dan*. The response is structured using a series of sentences starting with *saya,* with occasional variation of subject (e.g. *teman saya, keluarga saya*).

References

Alderson, C. J. (2005). *Diagnosing foreign language proficiency. The interface between learning and assessment*. London: Continuum.

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Australia in the Asian Century Task Force. (2012). Australia in the Asian century: White Paper. Canberra: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/white-paper. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Blommaert, J. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blommaert, J., & Rampton, B. (2012). Language and superdiversity. MMG working paper 12-09. Göttingen: Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity.

Cole, M. (1996). *Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline*. Cambridge: Belknap Books.

Elder, C. (2000). Learner diversity and its implications for outcomes-based assessment. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics, 23*(2), 36–61.

Elder, C., Kim, H., & Knoch, U. (2012). Documenting the diversity of learner achievements in Asian languages using common measures. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics, 35,* 251–270.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1993). Towards a language-based theory of learning. *Linguistics and Education, 5,* 93–116.

Leung, C., & Lewkowicz, J. (2008). Assessing second/additional language of diverse population. In E. Shohamy & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopaedia of language and education: Vol. 7. Language testing and assessment* (2nd ed., pp. 301–318). New York: Springer.

Leung, C., Harris, R., & Rampton, B. (1997). The idealized native speaker, reified ethnicities and classroom realities. *TESOL Quarterly, 31,* 543–560.

Lo Bianco, J. (2012). Afterword: Tempted by targets, tempered by results. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics, 35,* 359–361.

McNamara, T., & Elder, C. (2010). Beyond scales. In A. J. Liddicoat & A. Scarino (Eds.), *Languages in Australian education: Problems, prospects and future directions* (pp. 193–202). Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

McNamara, T., & Roever, C. (2006). *Language testing: The social dimension*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ortega, L. (2010). The bilingual turn in SLA. Plenary delivered at the annual conference of the American association for applied linguistics, Atlanta, GA, 6–9 March. PowerPoint available at http://www2.hawaii.edu/~lortega/.

Orton, J. (2008). *The current state of Chinese language education in Australian schools*. Melbourne: Education Services Australia.

Scarino, A. (2008). The role of assessment in policy-making for languages education in Australian schools: A struggle for legitimacy and diversity. *Current Issues in Language Planning, 9,* 344–362.

Scarino, A. (2010). Language and languages in the curriculum. In A. J. Liddicoat & A. Scarino (Eds.), *Languages in Australian education: Problems, prospects and future directions* (pp. 157–178). Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

Scarino, A. (2012). A rationale for acknowledging the diversity of learner achievements in learning particular languages in school education in Australia. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics, 35,* 231–250.

Scarino, A., Elder, C., Iwashita, N., Kim, S. H. O., Kohler, M., & Scrimgeour, A. (2011). Student achievement in Asian languages education. Part 1: Project report. Report prepared for the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). http://www.saale.unisa.edu.au/doclib/part_i_all.pdf. Accessed 6 May 2013.
Shohamy, E. (2006). Imagined multilingual schools. How come we don't deliver? In O. Garcia, T. Skutnabb Kangas, & M. Torres-Guzman (Eds.), *Imagining multilingual schools* (pp. 171–183). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
Shohamy, E. (2008). Language policy and language assessment: The relationship. *Current Issues in Language Planning, 9,* 363–373.
Spolsky, B. (2008). Historical and future perspectives. In E. Shohamy & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopaedia of language and education: Vol. 7. Language testing and assessment* (2nd ed., pp. 445–454). New York: Springer.
Stroud, C., & Heugh, K. (2011). Languages in education. In R. Mesthrie (Ed.), *Cambridge handbook of sociolinguistics* (pp. 413–429). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Vertovec, S. (2010). Towards post-multiculturalism: Changing communities, conditions and contexts of diversity. *International Social Science Journal, 61,* 83–95. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2451.2010.01749.x.

Chapter 10
Dealing with 'Chinese Fever': The Challenge of Chinese Teaching in the Australian Classroom

Andrew Scrimgeour

Abstract 'Chinese fever' (中文热 zhōngwénrè) is a term commonly used in the media to describe the increasing interest in learning Chinese that has coincided with China's growth as a global economic power. China's remarkable rise, and developments in Asia more generally, have resulted in a review of Australia's position in regard to Asia, outlined in the *Australia in the Asian century white paper* (Australia in the Asian Century Taskforce 2012) and an ongoing call for improved 'Asia Literacy' in our classrooms. This chapter explores issues of language learning in the 'Asian Century' from the perspective of the Australian language classroom, with a focus on 'Chinese fever' in particular.

The chapter reviews the Australian context for 'Chinese fever' and China's role in promoting and supporting Chinese language learning internationally through the Hanban organisation, including the curriculum and resources they make available for learning Chinese in Australian schools. The role of Chinese in school language learning in ensuring the future success of 'Chinese fever' and Asia Literacy more generally in Australian classroom contexts is discussed.

Keywords 'Chinese fever' · Chinese language · School language learning · Soft power · Hanban · Australian curriculum

10.1 'Chinese Fever' in the Australian Context

This is the age of 'Chinese fever' (中文热 *zhōngwénrè*) and 'Asia literacy' has become a national priority. The economic opportunities created by China's extraordinary rise as a key player in the world economy have contributed to Australia's economic prosperity Australia over the last decade or more. *The Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians* (MCEETYA 2008) notes the growing impact of China and other Asia-Pacific nations on the world and the huge

A. Scrimgeour (✉)
University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
e-mail: Andrew.scrimgeour@unisa.edu.au

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_10,

shift in geopolitical power that creates a need for all Australians to become 'Asia literate'.

The shape of the Australian curriculum (ACARA 2012), the foundation document for the development of national curriculum for Australian schools, includes three cross-curriculum priorities; contemporary issues about which young Australians should learn and which are addressed in the Australian Curriculum. One of these priorities is 'Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia', often referred to as 'Asia literacy'. Asia literacy is intended to provide students with the skills to communicate and engage with the peoples of Asia in order that they can effectively live, work and learn in the region. The idea is that students should learn about and recognise the diversity within and between the countries of the Asia region, and develop knowledge and understanding of Asian societies, cultures, beliefs and environments, and the connections between the peoples of Asia, Australia, and the rest of the world. It is noteworthy that the study of an Asian language is not explicitly referred to in this aspirational document. More recently, the *Australia in the Asian century white paper* (Australia in the Asian Century Taskforce 2012) recommended that all Australian students have the opportunity and be encouraged to undertake a continuous course of study in at least one priority Asian language: Chinese (Mandarin), Hindi, Indonesian and Japanese (2012, p. 16). The promotion of the study of Asian languages, though not always well-funded or supported, is seen as an imperative from a political and economic perspective. Asia literacy and Asian language learning are together seen as a form of twenty-first century literacy, a strategic necessity for Australia. In this context 'Chinese fever' is playing an important role in fostering interest in Chinese language learning in particular and 'Asia literacy' in general.

With the rise of China in global, economic terms, the study of Chinese has been given greater priority in languages education in Australia (Liu and Lo Bianco 2007; Orton 2008). However, issues related to the teaching and learning of Chinese have created a complex and challenging condition in many Chinese language classrooms. It is generally recognised that the Chinese language has distinctive oral and written forms and is acquired at a slower rate than other languages. In addition, the diversity of learners' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and prior learning experiences creates a challenging classroom environment. Further implications for attempts to improve learner outcomes arise from a rapid increase in the employment of native-speaker teachers of Chinese with limited experience of the Chinese second language classroom, indeed of the Australian education system more broadly. Finally, the availability of resources suitable for learners of Chinese as a second language in the Australian context is frequently questioned despite a surge in publications from China in recent years. Overall, these issues create a situation in which 'Chinese fever' does not serve as effectively as it might to promote Chinese language learning and help achieve national goals for learners in the Australian community. This chapter explores these issues is some detail, firstly in terms of the conditions within the Australian Chinese classroom, and secondly in terms of China's responses to 'Chinese fever' in Australian schools and elsewhere.

In general terms, interest in Chinese language learning in Australian schools has grown, particularly when supported by national initiatives such as The National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP) (operating 2008–2012). Provision of Chinese language programs in schools has increased, along with participation by second language learners with access to such new programs. There has also been a notable increase in participation in many established Chinese programs by students who speak Chinese at home. There are currently over half a million speakers of Chinese in Australia today. The 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics census data confirms Chinese (Putonghua/Mandarin, Cantonese and other regional languages) is now the most common language spoken at home after English in Australia. 1.6 % of the Australian population claim to speak Putonghua (Mandarin) at home and another 1.2 % Cantonese, making Chinese for the first time the most common 'second language' spoken in the country. Indeed, China is today the largest source of non-English speaking migrants to Australia, with the result that increasing numbers of students with some background or proficiency in Chinese are enrolling in Chinese language programs despite the fact that such programs were generally not originally designed to address their particular needs.

Learners bring to their learning of Chinese a very diverse range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, a wide range of language knowledge and prior language learning experiences of Chinese or other languages, and a wide range of attitudes, motivations and dispositions. That is, their relationship with 'Chinese fever' varies considerably, and their Chinese language learning needs are equally diverse. In the SAALE project report (Scarino et al. 2011), three learner groups were identified and their learning achievements described in the Chinese classroom. These learner groups were defined as: (1) second language learners (L1) who are introduced to learning Chinese at school and who in general have no prior linguistic or cultural association with Chinese; (2) background language learners (HL) who were born in Australia and use Chinese at home (though not necessarily exclusively) and who tend to be effectively bilingual in Chinese and English; and (3) first language learners (L1) who were born in Chinese-speaking communities overseas and have undertaken at least primary schooling in Chinese overseas and undergone their primary socialisation as well as initial literacy development in Chinese.

How learner diversity plays out in the Chinese classroom is reflected in data from an inner urban high school (see Fig. 10.1) below. Three groups of learners were identified, namely L2, HL and L1. Figure 10.1 illustrates changes in the participation rate of each learner group over year levels. The total number of learners studying Chinese at each year level remained fairly constant, with approximately thirty students in each year level from Year 8 to Year 11. Whereas second language learners form the majority of Chinese learners in Year 8, by Year 12 none remain. The numbers of Chinese home users increases steadily until Year 11, then declines at Year 12. First language learners are limited in the middle school years but constitute the majority by Year 12.

There are a number of reasons why second language learners may be more likely to 'drop out' of language learning, but the presence of native speakers or home-users of Chinese in classrooms is often raised as a key factor in declining rates of

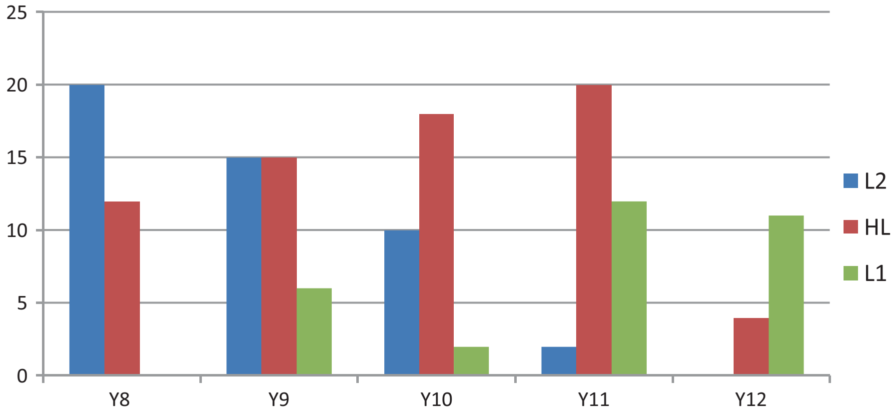


Fig. 10.1 The Chinese classroom

participation by non-background learners in school-based programs. There have been efforts to address this issue of learner diversity and provide appropriate courses for learners of diverse language backgrounds in Chinese (Liu and Lo Bianco 2007). Orton (2008) notes that by senior secondary school the teaching and learning of Chinese in Australia is overwhelmingly a matter of Chinese teaching Chinese to Chinese. In the context of increasing learner diversity, addressing this complexity and meeting the challenges of serving the Chinese language learning needs of such a diverse group of learners remains a major priority.

Teachers themselves play a key role in determining the extent to which national goals of Asia literacy, or more particularly Chinese literacy, are achieved. Orton (2008, 2011) argues that native speaker and non-native speaker teacher responses to issues of learner background and differences remain poorly understood. Recently graduated, China-born and educated native speakers are increasingly employed to meet the growing need for Chinese language learning in schools. These teachers bring a fresh and contemporary insight into Chinese language and culture to Australian classrooms; however, their preparation for the experience of teaching in the Australian second language classroom is often limited. A study of the experience of one group of native Chinese trainee teachers as they adapted to the conditions of the Australian Chinese language classroom (Scrimgeour 2010) identified how these teachers were forced to rethink their role, their practices, their relationships with learners and with the two languages and cultures that interact in the Australian languages classroom. They came to recognise that their prior experience overseas and of teacher education in Australia had not adequately prepared them for their new context and learning culture, the challenges of teaching their native language through the medium of their second language, and the task of engaging students in the study of a language they assumed would be extremely popular in this age of ‘China fever’. The realities of ‘Chinese fever’ in the classroom challenged their professional knowledge and expectations of their task, and challenged their personal values and beliefs about what should be happening in the Chinese second language classroom. They discovered a different culture of learning in the learners themselves, in the established patterns of learning, and in the levels of personal engagement that children are accustomed to and expect to find in the Australian classroom. Teachers were surprised to discover that 'Chinese fever' is not as strong as they had anticipated, and achieving their goals proved particularly challenging.

The organisation commissioned to promote and support the study of Chinese internationally is the Office of Chinese Language Council International, or Hanban (汉办), also known as the Confucius Institute Headquarters. A public institution affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education, the Hanban (2011a) is 'committed to providing Chinese language and cultural teaching resources and services worldwide, it goes all out in meeting the demands of foreign Chinese learners and contributing to the development of multiculturalism and the building of a harmonious world'. The Hanban is now a well-recognised institution of Chinese language teaching internationally, and represents China's evident desire to contribute productively to the task of Chinese teaching and learning at all levels of education and beyond.

The work of the Hanban is largely carried out through the establishment of Confucius Institutes in universities and education systems around the world. The intentions of Confucius Institutes are to provide formal, authoritative Chinese language textbooks as well as the most formal and primary channel of Chinese language teaching for all global Chinese language learners (2011b). It highlights a clear intention to support, develop and influence the way in which Chinese language learning is promoted, and how it is taught and learned. The *China Daily* reported that, by the end of 2010, more than 322 Confucius Institutes had been established (China Daily 2011, 18-03-11) and more than 40 million people were learning Chinese around the world (People's Daily Online 2010). The Hanban and Confucius Institute statements of objectives (Hanban 2011a, b) focus on teaching Chinese as a *foreign* language (TCFL) to 'foreign' learners of Chinese. There is no explicit reference to the presence of Chinese speakers living overseas and potentially participating in school-based language programs. Perhaps arguments for 'Chinese fever' are less relevant to this group, who might be assumed to need no encouragement to study their mother tongue. The Hanban does, however, support Chinese learning among overseas Chinese, but addresses their needs differently and separately, despite their being integrated in most language classrooms overseas.

The reasons for Hanban fostering 'Chinese fever' are twofold: to respond to the international interest in learning Chinese and to advance China's national interest. In response to the presence of a perceived anti-China feeling in some sections of the Western media, the Hanban and its promotion of Chinese language learning is seen as an efficient way to promote 'soft power', projecting China and China's world view positively beyond its own borders (Gil 2008, 2009). Nye (2004) describes soft power behaviour as efforts to set the agenda in a way that shapes the preferences that others express; of promoting the attractiveness of one's own ideas without the use of force, coercion, or military power. From the Hanban perspective, promoting a positive view of China and improving the perceptions and understanding of China can be achieved through the process of learning Chinese and engaging in related cultural activity.

Promoting Chinese language learning is therefore seen as a way of projecting an image of China abroad. The promotion of Chinese and of cultural understanding are important tools in China's 'charm offensive' (Kurlantzick 2007) and 'impression management' (Paradise 2009). Zhao and Huang (2010) refute the notion of soft power promotion, but argue similarly that Chinese language is an important element in the future unity of the world. They argue that Confucius Institutes open up the opportunity for people to learn about Chinese language and culture by promoting Chinese and teaching about the philosophy of harmony, in the name of Confucius (2010, p. 140). The Hanban itself similarly declares that its primary goal in meeting the learning needs of foreign students is to 'contribute to the development of multi-culturalism and the building of a harmonious world' (Hanban 2011a).

Confucius Institutes are devoted to 'enhancing understanding of the Chinese language and culture by these peoples, to strengthening educational and cultural exchange and cooperation between China and other countries, to deepening friendly relationships with other nations, to promoting the development of multi-culturalism, and to construct a harmonious world' (Hanban 2011c). The President of the Hanban Organisation, Liu Yandong (State Councillor and currently the only female member of the 25-member politburo of the Chinese Communist Party), declared that through learning each other's languages 'different cultures should respect and learn from each other and seek common ground while shelving differences'(Xinhuanet 2009). 'In recent years, the spread of Chinese language fever has demonstrated that the Chinese language is not only a tool for communication, but also a tool to help people live in harmony' (People's Daily Online 2006a). This perspective emphasises the role of Chinese as the carrier of China's time-honoured culture. It implies an indispensable and inevitable link between learning Chinese and understanding the nature of what it means to be Chinese. Much of the reasoning behind this understanding of the link between Chinese language and culture is reflected in the term 'harmony', 和谐 héxié. 'Harmony' is an indispensable term in China that has both a social and political tone and expresses an aspiration to a consonant, balanced relationship between peoples, races, cultures and nations. It does not, however, always appear in translation as 'harmony'. In Figs. 10.2, 10.3, and 10.4 below, harmony may be used to mean 'better', 'improvement' or 'advancement'—terms used to reflect China's preferred relationship with its own people and with the rest of the world.

Building a notion of harmony between China and the rest of the world and between the way in which the rest of the world sees China and China's preferred image of itself abroad is a very important part of the Hanban's understanding of its role. The Hanban reinforces the notion that China is unique and that through engaging with its language and traditions learners will come to respect what it means to be Chinese and to understand China on its own terms. History is drawn upon to reinforce the relationship between the present and the past, between language learning and cultural understanding. 'More than 2,000 years ago, Confucius vowed: The highest level of courtesy is living in peace and harmony. Noble people live in harmony while retaining their unique characters. He emphasised harmony, concord and peace. He advocated a combination of harmony and cooperation' (*People's Daily* Online 2006b).

Fig. 10.2 A ‘harmonious society’, in a new year’s couplet. (On a doorway in Shanghai)

Fig. 10.3 Harmony as ‘improvement’. (A billboard at a construction site, 2010)

Discussions of ‘Chinese fever’ in the press provide ample opportunity to promote this persuasive notion. The *People’s Daily* (People’s Daily Online 2006a), reported how a Confucius College had successfully promoted the national reputation for China and quelled the fears of the rest of the world towards the new superpower. The President of the Confucius College said that experience had taught him that ‘the promotion of Chinese language is conducive to the elimination of the “China threat theory”’. A New York academic also noted that ‘most Westerners only read (negative) articles about China’s Tibet and human rights issues from newspapers and other media. Under such circumstances, she suggested, ‘*everyone should learn Chinese for at least one year*. *I started to learn Chinese in the 1970s. It did change my way of thinking*.’ [Italics added]. By engaging with Chinese fever, what learners learn isn’t just a language, but how to be in harmony with China. But there are other benefits of ‘Chinese fever’ for learners as well.

From the Chinese perspective, the benefits of learning Chinese are clear. According to the *People’s Daily* (People’s Daily Online 2006b), ‘experts of Chinese language conclude 10 causations on Chinese language fever which are, that it is full of various magic things and legends in Chinese culture; faith and arts that has been

Fig. 10.4 ‘Equality, unity, cooperation and harmony’ between ethnic groups. (A public billboard, Hotan, Xinjiang)

continuous for about 1,000 years; the serenity atmosphere from Chinese land; China has a population of 1.3 billion and Chinese language is used by the most people in the world and so on. However, the reason for most foreign students’ choice to Chinese language is that Chinese language will be a prosperous tool for their careers in the future’ (original translation). Ultimately, despite the sense of a time-honoured culture, the reason most students apparently choose to study Chinese is that it will bring prosperity and success.

The future appears bright for those who learn Chinese. The *People’s Daily* reported that successful learners will be ‘envoys for the friendship between China and Britain … Study Chinese, it will bring you opportunities and wealth in the coming decades!’ says a billboard in Paris. In the past, people tried to learn English … Nowadays, learning Chinese has become an option in many countries, with “British linguists” advising students “if you want to be a leader, learn Chinese!” (People’s Daily Online 2006a) (Fig. 10.5).

China’s contribution to ‘Chinese fever’ has included provision of a formal, authoritative Chinese language curriculum and textbooks through which to deliver it. The Hanban-developed International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education (ICCLE) (Hanban 2008) represents an attempt to produce a curriculum that provides a reference for planning, a framework for assessing language competence, and a basis for the development of resources that cater for a variety of Chinese language learners, especially students at primary and high schools, as well as people from all walks of life, irrespective of their language background. It aims to represent the needs of all learners in one framework and assumes one linear trajectory

Fig. 10.5 Private language school billboard, Melbourne. (http://www.chinaqw.com/hqhr/xq-sd/200905/15/163294.shtml)

of learning and achievement. There are no references to learners with a Chinese background in the document.

A review of the ICCLE (Scrimgeour and Wilson 2009) highlights the challenges in developing a generic curriculum to meet the needs of all learners in diverse contexts. Two main concerns identified were the limited conceptualisations of the language and culture associated with language use, and the assumptions about learners and learning processes inherent in the ICCLE curriculum. The curriculum document argued that ‘objectives and skills have been adjusted and linguistic and cultural knowledge reorganised to suit more novice learners, so difficulties of Chinese language learning have been considerably reduced’ (Hanban 2008). In reality, rather than reducing the difficulties of language learning, the curriculum reduces the content to formulaic and atomised language knowledge and simplistic representations of culture, neither of which represent an active and purposeful experience of engagement with the contemporary world of Chinese speakers. It seems to be at odds with the Hanban’s own objectives of creating a better understanding of culture through the language, promoting a more harmonious relationship between nations, and better opportunities for learners as a result.

The Hanban also produces or sponsors a range of textbook series for foreign students, each produced for learners in a wide range of countries and from a wide range of language backgrounds, including English, French, Arabic, Japanese, Thai and Indonesian. The titles given to these textbooks, such as ‘Happy Chinese’, ‘Chinese Paradise’ and ‘Easy steps to Chinese’, underpin the assumptions of China fever

Fig. 10.6 Sample textbooks produced for foreign school-aged learners overseas

(enthusiasm and engagement) and tend to cover up or ignore the issues for second language learners. Learning Chinese is not easy; it is not necessarily a happy experience, especially when teacher expectations of 'Chinese fever' among learners is high. For most learners, it's an uncertain paradise (Fig. 10.6).

Given the representations of the Chinese language and the processes of learning implied in these textbooks, most learners would argue perhaps that the task is not as the titles suggest. Language in each unit is represented simply as a set of words, some sentence patterns and a text presented in a manner that provides little engagement for learners. There is no dialogue with learners, no goals are established or purposeful tasks set, and there is no mediation for learners, in English, of any of the new concepts or linguistic challenges inherent in the content of the chapter. Surprisingly, there are almost no cultural references at all, beyond explicit references to places and the inclusion of poems—both as mechanisms for drilling pronunciation. Neither does the term 'harmony' appear. The topics covered tend to focus on life in China (e.g. Tiananmen Square and the museums that border it), providing little opportunity for learners to share information about their own world and experiences. The nature of communicative activity represented tends to be restricted to recreating model dialogues of a limited number of exchanges, perhaps developing into a piece of prose based on a model text. Learners' own communicative needs or interests are seldom acknowledged. Students listen, they speak, they read, they write—but for no clear purpose and with no particular audience in mind.

The possibility of learners being able to navigate their way through textbook content is limited and appears to be largely teacher-dependent. English language use is restricted to headings and vocabulary translations. Learners are dependent on the teacher to build links between learners' prior knowledge and experience and the new content of each chapter. The processes of learning implied in this format might be characterised as substitution or pattern drills, where understanding is assumed to derive from repetitious practice but the actual nature of the metalinguistic or intercultural understanding learners develop is never explored in depth. The particular learning needs of young, school-based learners are not evident in the content. There is limited opportunity for engagement with the task and interaction using Chinese and this, along with a lack of clarity of goals and learning purpose, means that learners are unlikely to feel motivated.

There are significant challenges for students attempting to cross into the world of Chinese. There is often a sense of an impenetrable barrier between the young foreign learner and success in learning and using the language—what McDonald (2011) refers to as a 'Great Wall' in Chinese language teaching and learning, a wall often too high for most students to scale. It is not just an issue of the language itself, despite its real challenges; it is equally about the way in which the task of learning the language is presented to young second language learners. These learners do not have the knowledge and skills to scale this wall alone, and learners find it nigh on impossible to achieve the expectations set by those from 'inside the wall' and vested with responsibility for organising, resourcing and implementing a coherent curriculum. The assumption inherent in the Hanban curriculum, in Chinese language learning materials, and frequently in native teachers' mindsets, is that enthusiasm, commitment and hard work will suffice to 'crack the code' of Chinese and understand its cultural context of use. Learners infected with 'Chinese fever' will, it is assumed, find it an easy, enjoyable journey into 'Chinese paradise'.

From an English language, alphabetic perspective Chinese is challenging and it takes considerable time and effort to grasp the complexities of its phonology, its orthography, even its relatively straightforward syntax. However, the representations of language, culture and learning inherent in the Hanban curriculum, textbooks and much of the teacher practice implied within them leaves the task of making sense of the language system and its cultural context of use almost entirely in the hands of the young learner. That task is often overwhelming. The fever fades; at worst it is replaced with a fear, a rejection of that which cannot be understood, and a realisation that expectations as presented through classroom learning activities, tasks and tests lead to nothing but failure; a paradise lost. The world of Chinese language and culture is abandoned. The promises of success go unrealised.

Engaging with 'Chinese fever' means aspiring to enter the gates, to be accepted into and develop a personal relationship with the world of the Chinese speaker. Second language learners never, however, become 'native speakers'; they are always '*lǎowài'* (老外), the 'old outsider', a colloquial (but not derogatory) term for 'foreigner'. Most *lǎowài* learners never quite measure up, never quite get it right. If and when *lǎowài* do measure up, they are vested with a title; they become '*zhōngguótōng*' (中国通), a 'China hand', a 'China expert'. It is a title that the Chinese bestow upon those who display insider knowledge and a willingness to operate and communicate in Chinese ways. The successful learner is given a special status, not an insider status, but recognition of their ability to scale the wall and perform in acceptable ways. From a *lǎowài* perspective, becoming a *zhōngguótōng* is evidence of much hard work, the accumulation over time of knowledge of what it means to be Chinese, and is displayed and deployed in interactions with other speakers. From the Hanban perspective, there is a further goal that the foreign learner needs to achieve for successful engagement with 'Chinese fever' to become *zhōngguótōng*. It is about friendship and the good sense and courtesy to 'be objective' about China and display a knowledge and acceptance of 'Chinese ways of doing' that extends beyond everyday communication; to be in harmony with the Chinese view of its own world, incorporating the values and assumptions about China, its culture, peoples, history and its place in the world. Being *zhōngguótōng* is a form of recognition, a reward for effort, but it also assumes tacit acceptance of things from the Chinese perspective; of engaging with China and its people on its/their own terms, leaving one's own values, beliefs and practices at the gates. The 'soft power' goal is achieved by this acceptance. The *zhōngguótōng* understands and accepts China as she wishes to be seen, and shares that acceptance with others.

In the current context, where the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is developing a curriculum for languages across the school years from Foundation to Year 10, it is important to reflect on which representation of Chinese language and culture is appropriate for a school-based curriculum. It is an opportunity to recognise the challenges and difficulties of learning and using the Chinese language and culture that demand careful consideration. These include:

- Relating Chinese to learners' own first languages and building language knowledge in a comparative and conceptual way;
- Recognising the important role of English language in mediating learning and developing understanding of language as a system;
- Being more purposeful by focusing on the communicative interests and needs of diverse groups of learners in their own context, rather than focusing on limited content and structure per chapter with little communication outcome intended;
- Addressing the challenges learners face in learning Chinese by focussing on oral and written language development as separate and distinctive, with their own trajectories in terms of the nature and rate of development; and
- Designing courses for second language learners which also attend to the needs of home users of Chinese likely to be present in the same classroom (Scrimgeour 2011, p. 36).

In the context of the Asia literacy to which Australia aspires, the definition of China literacy that needs fostering needs to balance the Chinese view of its own world with the needs and interests of both the learners and the context in which they will learn and use the language—which is just as likely to be in their own local cultural milieu as in China itself.

There are two perspectives which may play a role in developing a curriculum for Chinese language learning and contribute to Asia literacy development for young

Australians. One perspective is the insider view. We can accept the language and culture and the means to acquiring *zhōngguótōng* status in the way China understands it, translated by the knower, as represented in the content, concepts and processes reflected in curriculum and textbooks produced by China for foreign consumption. From this perspective, content and topics appear to be relevant but are treated in a superficial and descriptive manner without an exploration of issues, alternatives or comparisons across cultures and contexts, and with little sense of authenticity or purpose to language learning and use. Forbidden topics are overlooked, participants excluded and moments in history forgotten, and what we receive is a clean, polished and unproblematic view of China and of Chinese language and the process of acquiring a working knowledge of it. We often find a unidirectional and unquestioned representation that anticipates a willing acceptance of ‘the other’. It is not there to be challenged or critiqued, it is there to be repeated, remembered and performed.

The second perspective is that of the outsider, of developing an understanding of China which comes through experience with and interpretation of the process of learning the Chinese language and exploring its cultural world from the learner’s own perspective; an active and intercultural process of informed insight into what it means to be Chinese; not rejecting, not refusing, but understanding in a deeper sense why it is that Chinese culture and society and its communication practices are the way they are in all their regional and generational diversity. This is the challenge that we face in developing a curriculum for Chinese in our schools. What we aspire to for Chinese language education in Australian schools is something that is a deeper form of learning about Chinese language, Chinese speakers and the Chinese world. We do want to understand China’s presence as a country and as a civilisation, but we also want to understand ‘China’ as a presence in the individuals with whom we interact almost daily in our world. We cannot exist in our own local context without engaging in some way with the Chinese world. Today it forms a part of our community. This necessarily causes us to make comparisons between the values, practices, and beliefs of different communities, recognising that the local Chinese community is adapting to the Australian way of life while maintaining some things which we might think of as distinctively Chinese. It deepens our own understanding of the world, of our principles, and our values. And that is probably one of the most important aspirations we can have for young learners.

What Australian learners need is not just a Chinese literacy for *lǎowài*, the Hanban representation, of how the Chinese believe it should be taught, understood, and incorporated into learner’s world-view. There is a Chinese literacy for Australians, a local and global literacy, a recognition that young people are engaging with each other in dynamic forms and contexts of interaction across geographical boundaries. It is an engagement with the broader Sinophone world for young Australians. School learners of Chinese are learning to explore and understand Chinese life worlds locally and globally, are learning to interact with an increasingly hybridised Chinese culture that exists within our own communities as well as in its own domain.

Overall, *The shape of the Australian curriculum: Languages* (ACARA 2011) provides a timely opportunity to construct a curriculum relevant to both the distinctiveness of the Chinese language as an object of study in the Australian context, and the needs of the diverse learners present in many classrooms. One of the most significant initiatives outlined in the Shape Paper is the recognition of the need to develop a curriculum that is sensitive to diverse needs of different learner groups. In the case of Chinese, learners are identified according to three major groupings: second language learners, background language learners, and first language learners—recognising that within all these groups there will be differences in knowledge and experience in learning and using Chinese.

Particularly from the Chinese perspective, and from a national policy perspective, the rationale for learning Chinese seems obvious enough given current social and economic circumstances and the prevailing 'Chinese fever'. However, the rationale for learning Chinese in compulsory school-based programs and the curriculum designed for each group needs to be relevant to each cohort of young learners, based on their own linguistic and cultural backgrounds and expectations in the Australian context, as well as the expectations of their parents and the wider community.

Responding to both the diversity within the learner group and the distinctive challenges of learning a character-based writing system and tonal spoken language highlights the need to go beyond the basic task of deciding how to scope and sequence the learning of Chinese language and culture and the development of communication skills in Chinese. There needs to be a consideration of how curriculum content might best reflect the learners and their learning experiences of Chinese language and culture in the Australian context. The curriculum needs to anticipate an intercultural orientation of comparing, contrasting and reflecting on the nature of Chinese and English as systems for meaning-making in *local* and global cultural contexts; of developing language awareness by comparing forms and relating language use to contextual and cultural variables; of comparing contemporary Chinese, local and other cultures and relating learners' own experiences to those of their Chinese peers in diverse contexts. It also needs to provide a focus on ways of developing learners' understanding of the learning processes required as well as the communication experiences likely to be encountered as they learn to learn the language.

The curriculum needs to recognise Chinese language and culture as a global and a local phenomenon, to focus on the contemporary experience of young Chinese in local and global contexts, and on the experiences of those who live and interact within with the world of Chinese speakers no matter where they live. Importantly, the curriculum requires a focus on meaningful communication and needs to ensure that all learners, irrespective of their background and experience, are given opportunities for personal communicative experiences; to be exposed to authentic language in use, and to have the opportunity to actively construct their own interpretations and meanings from what they see, hear, read, and do. The focus must reflect the particular needs of each group of learners in the context of their own everyday oral interaction, in the context of their own culture, with a clear and ongoing opportunity for reflection on their lived experience.

The world of Chinese speakers is not limited to the boundaries of the motherland, the People's Republic of China (PRC). It includes a great diversity and dynamism in terms of cultural values and beliefs, practices and social institutions. It includes Chinese speakers of multiple nationalities, ethnicities, cultures, and locations, wherever we encounter them—what Barmé (2005) defines as a Sinophone world, increasingly hybrid and dynamic in a globalising world. It is not a simple, geographically or politically defined notion; it is much more complex, much more diverse and much more dynamic than textbooks for foreign consumption suggest. McDonald (2011) argues we need to go beyond the *zhōngguótōng* aspiration and aim to become Sinophone in our own right, to develop our own Chinese ‘voice’, and find a way of creating a self-defined reference point for our relationship with Chinese culture and language, developing a role or identity that gives us a place and comfort zone within the broader Sinophone world. It takes away the sense of the geographical link between the language, its culture and traditions and the PRC, and places the language in the broader context of its contemporary use. Chinese language does not exist in nor does it ‘belong’ to one place; it is all around us.

10.2 ‘Chinese Fever’: What’s the Cure?

With the rise of China and the subsequent development of ‘Chinese fever’, the Hanban and other proponents of Chinese language learning internationally have promoted a positive image of Chinese language and culture, and have assumed its attractiveness to learners. Obstacles to the Hanban and the Australian Government achieving their related but distinctive aims in implementing their Chinese language learning objectives are well documented—this includes the shortage of qualified teachers and appropriate resources (Orton 2008, 2011; Zhao and Huang 2010; Scrimgeour 2011), the need to recognise and responding to learner diversity in the classroom (Liu and Lo Bianco 2007), and appropriately conceptualising the task. The issue is profound, as Zhao and Huang (2010) make plain in their conclusion:

> Optimism abounds in the Confucius Institutes, and in the current climate of world economic recovery, China continues to be in a prime position to spur world economic growth and take on a leading role in the political and cultural world scene in the immediate future. Those people who are now making the effort to learn about China and its language will be justifiably pleased to receive the knowledge and insight they will be afforded regarding this most important global player in the ever more interconnected world community. The conditions and facilities available for learners of Chinese—throughout the entirety of history—have never been better than they are right now, and they are going to improve further. In this sense, Hanban and the Confucius Institutes have a role to play in networking CFL curriculum worldwide and teaching about the philosophy of harmony, in the name of Confucius. (2010, p. 140)

The positive and self-assured stance in relation to what China has to offer through the Hanban and the likelihood of success for both learners and China’s soft power goals has for the most part gone unchallenged and many fundamental issues have been overlooked. It is beholden on local education systems to recognise and respond to these challenges and issues in ways appropriate to the local context and which show a sensitivity to the learner’s perspective, recognition of learner diversity in the classroom, and an understanding of the distinctive needs of each learner group and their learning pathways in school-based contexts.

References

ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority). (2011). *The shape of the Australian curriculum: Languages*. http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/Languages_-_Shape_of_the_Australian_Curriculum.pdf. Accessed 18 Aug 2013.

ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority). (2012). *The shape of the Australian curriculum*. Sydney. http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/The_Shape_of_the_Australian_Curriculum_V3.pdf. Accessed 18 Aug 2013.

Australia in the Asian Century Task Force. (2012). *Australia in the Asian century: White Paper*. Canberra: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/white-paper. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2011). *Community profile*. Australia: Language spoken at home. http://profile.id.com.au/australia/language. Accessed 18 Aug 2013.

Barmé, J. (2005). New sinology. http://ciw.anu.edu.au/new_sinology/index.php. Accessed 18 Aug 2013.

China Daily. (2011). http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/usa/epaper/2011-03/18/content_12192300.htm. Accessed 23 Oct 2011.

Gil, J. (2008). The promotion of Chinese language learning and China's soft power. *Asian Social Science*, *4*(10), 116–122.

Gil, J. (2009). China's Confucius Institute project: Language and soft power in world politics. *The Global Studies Journal*, *2*, 59–72.

Hanban. (2008). *International curriculum for Chinese language education* 国际汉语教学通用课程大纲. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Hanban. (2011a). About us—Hanban. http://english.hanban.org/node_7719.htm. Accessed 25 Oct 2011.

Hanban. (2011b). About us—Confucius Institute Headquarters. http://english.hanban.org/node_7716.htm. Accessed 25 Oct 2011.

Hanban. (2011c). Confucius Institute constitution and by-laws of the Confucius Institutes. http://english.hanban.org/node_7880.htm. Accessed 23 Oct 2011.

Kurlantzick, J. (2007). *Charm offensive: How China's soft power is transforming the world*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Liu, G., & Lo Bianco, J. (2007). Teaching Chinese, teaching in Chinese and teaching the Chinese: Australian perspectives. In J. Lo Bianco (Ed.), *Emergence of Chinese language policy* (pp. 95–117). Dordrecht: Springer.

McDonald, E. (2011). *Learning Chinese, turning Chinese*. Oxon: Routledge.

MCEETYA (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs). (2008). *The Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians*. Canberra: MCEETYA.

Nye, J. S. (2004). *Soft power: The means to success in world politics*. New York: Public Affairs.

Orton, J. (2008). *Chinese language education in Australian schools*. Melbourne: The University of Melbourne.

Orton, J. (2011). Educating Chinese language teachers—Some fundamentals. In L. Tsung & K. Cruickshank (Eds.), *Teaching and learning Chinese in global contexts*. London: Continuum.

Paradise, J. F. (2009). China and international harmony. *Asian Survey*, *49*, 647–669.

People's Daily Online. (2006a). Chinese language fever brings opportunities and harmony to the world. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200607/13/eng20060713_282787.html. Accessed 23 Oct 2011.

People's Daily Online. (2006b). "Chinese fever" constantly warms up. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200608/11/eng20060811_292154.html. Accessed 23 Oct 2011.

People's Daily Online. (2010). 40 million people worldwide study Chinese. http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90782/90872/7112508.html. Accessed 23 Oct 2011.

Scarino, A., Elder, C., Kim, S. H., Iwashita, N., Kohler, M., & Scrimgeour, A. (2011). *Student achievement in Asian languages education*. Report. Canberra. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. http://www.saale.unisa.edu.au/project.html. Accessed 18 Aug 2013.

Scrimgeour, A. (2010). The yin-yang of Chinese language teaching in Australia: The challenges native speaker trainee teachers face in the Chinese classroom. In *Languages in Australian education: Problems, prospects and future directions*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

Scrimgeour, A. (2011). Reflections on Chinese teaching in Australian schools, with recommendations for future resource development. *Confucius Institute*, *14*(3), 30–37.

Scrimgeour, A., & Wilson, P. (2009). A review of the international curriculum for Chinese language education. *Babel*, *43*(2), 35–7.

Xinhuanet.com. (2009). Senior official calls for enhancing int’l Chinese language education. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-12/11/content_12633620.htm. Accessed 23 Oct 2011.

Zhao, H., & Huang, J. (2010). China’s policy of Chinese as a foreign language and the use of overseas Confucius Institutes. *Education Research Policy and Practice*, *9*, 127–142.

Chapter 11
The Teaching and Learning of Indonesian in Australia: Issues and Prospects

Michelle Kohler

Abstract Currently, learners of Indonesian in Australian schools comprise the largest cohort of school learners of the language outside Indonesia itself. It is currently the third most studied foreign language in Australian schools. However, while this may appear a healthy state of affairs, the teaching and learning of Indonesian is experiencing a number of challenges that are threatening its place and future in the educational landscape. This paper analyses the current state of Indonesian in the schooling sector in Australia using statistical data and interviews conducted with key stakeholders as part of a larger report commissioned by the Australian Government. The paper also includes discussion of an extract of classroom interaction that highlights the issues and challenges in the teaching and learning of Indonesian in Australian schools.

The paper concludes by highlighting the ecological relationship between Indonesian and the broader social, cultural and political context in which it resides. It is a relationship of ambivalence and unease as Australia considers its identity and position in the Asia-Pacific region and its relationship to its nearest Asian neighbour.

Keywords Languages education · Indonesian · Asian languages · Retention · Programs · Teaching and learning · Relationship · Perceptions

11.1 Indonesian in Australian Education: A Brief History

Indonesian has a long history as a language studied in Australian education, having been introduced during the 1950s (Read and Reeve 2010). There have been a number of Australian Government policies and initiatives that have supported

M. Kohler (✉)
University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
e-mail: michelle.kohler@unisa.edu.au

Flinders University
e-mail: michelle.kohler@flinders.edu.au

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_11,

its implementation in schools since that time. Unlike many other languages in the Australian education system, Indonesian has never had a large and politically active local community of speakers and its teaching in schools was not a response to the pressure to maintain a local language speaking community.

There have been a number of distinct periods in recent history during which events and associated policies have impacted on Indonesian in schools, commencing in 1955–1970 with the introduction of the language by the Australian Government for political purposes, and particularly as a demonstration of opposition to the spread of communism through Asia (Worsley 1994). The period 1970–1986 witnessed a decline in Indonesian due to political turmoil in East Timor and growing economic difficulties in Australia (Worsley 1994). The third period, 1986–1992, saw a revival in the study of Indonesian due to growing economic ties between the two countries. During this third period, in 1987, the first Australian federal policy on languages was developed (Lo Bianco 1987). Indonesian was included as one of many languages recommended for 'wider teaching' in schools.

Arguably the most significant period for Indonesian language education commenced in 1994 with the release of a Senate Report, *Asian Languages and Australia's Economic Future* (Rudd 1994). As a result of the report, a new initiative, the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy (NALSAS) (MCEETYA 1994) was introduced aimed at building social capital in Australia in order to generate greater economic ties with Asia. The strategy identified as priority languages for study in schools the four languages of Australia's largest Asian trading partners: Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean. The NALSAS coincided with an effort to develop a national curriculum for Australian schools in which Languages (other than English) were recognised as one of eight required areas of study. Together, these two initiatives created conditions in which there was a rapid uptake in study of the language in many schools across the nation.

The NALSAS ceased in 2004, although a further commitment to Asian languages was made under the Rudd government in 2008, when Indonesian was one of four languages to receive targeted funding as part of the National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Project (NALSSP) (DEEWR 2008). As part of this initiative, reports into each of the languages were commissioned by the Australian Government. This paper draws primarily on the findings of the report for Indonesian (Kohler and Mahnken 2010). In 2012, NALSSP funding ended; however, in the meantime, the Australian Government commissioned a White Paper, 'Australia in the Asian century'. The paper, which canvassed public submissions, was released in October 2012 (Commonwealth of Australia 2012). It highlights the importance of a robust and quality education sector in maximising Australia's economic and social opportunities in Asia in the future. Most significantly for Indonesian, it states that, 'all students will have access to at least one priority Asian language' (including Indonesian) (Australia in the Asian Century Taskforce 2012). While not government policy as such, the White paper nonetheless signals the need for continued support from the Australian Government for Indonesian as a priority language in schools and in tertiary education.

Most significantly, the White Paper reflects a continued interest in Australia in education as a national resource for building Australia's capacity for engagement with Asia. The study of Indonesian in Australia has had a strong association with economic opportunity and national security and the White Paper signals that this association will continue into the future.

11.2 The Rationale for Teaching and Learning Indonesian in Schools

Within the education context, rationales for the teaching and learning of languages reflect perceptions of the nature of those languages and their relationship to Australia. For Indonesian, this translates into rationales that typically focus on the geographical proximity and economic opportunity offered by Indonesia for Australians. The following extract reflects sentiments frequently found in rationale statements in support of Indonesian:

> Indonesian is the official language of Australia's nearest northern neighbour, being spoken by more than 200 million people throughout the Indonesian archipelago, as either their first or second language.
>
> With increasing numbers of Australians living and working in Indonesia and Indonesians living, working and holidaying in Australia, employers are recognising the usefulness of Indonesian language knowledge and skills. An ability to communicate in Indonesian, in conjunction with other skills, provides students with enhanced career opportunities in areas such as tourism and hospitality, commerce and trade, diplomacy, banking and international finance, government, law, politics, science and technology, education, research and advertising, media, and translating and interpreting. It also enables them to recognise the value of being an effective communicator within the service industries. On a more personal level, the ability to communicate in Indonesian enhances enjoyment and appreciation of Indonesian culture through film, literature, music, cuisine, art, religion and travel. (WACE 2011, p. 3)

This extract reflects the fact that studying Indonesian is largely pragmatically motivated by the potential for commercial benefit and the possibility of career and cultural opportunities.

Indonesian is the only language of the four priority Asian languages that is written using the Roman alphabet. This feature of Indonesian in particular has contributed to a perception of its 'ease' for study in the Australian context. It has developed a reputation in the schooling sector as 'the easy Asian language', and this has enhanced its appeal as the preferred language for study, particularly in some rural and low socio-economic areas (Kohler and Mahnken 2010). These areas present additional challenges in terms of the quality and sustainability of language programs, including difficulties in attracting and retaining appropriately qualified staff and community attitudes towards language learning which reflect a perception of it as less valuable, unnecessary and even detrimental to the curriculum as a whole. As a result, Indonesian language programs have experienced a certain vulnerability as a result of community attitudes, budget constraints and staffing. This has contributed to its fragility and significant decline in Australian schools over the past decade in particular.

A major absence, or at least an underplayed aspect of learning Indonesian, is that of cultural identity and values, and their centrality to understanding both the language and culture of Indonesia. In particular, the fact that Indonesia is the most populous Moslem nation in the world receives little attention in rationale statements and in the teaching and learning of the language in schools. There seems to be a tension between acknowledging the fundamental inseparability of religion and Indonesian language and culture, and the predominantly secular nature of schooling in Australia, where the topic of religion is routinely avoided. Instead it is the broader narrative in the Australian community, largely framed by the Australian media, which dominates the perception of Indonesia amongst the general community, including students. Depictions of Indonesia in the Australian media, particularly since the events of September 11 in the United States and the Bali bombings of 2002, have focused on Islamic extremism. In her study of media representations, Mahoney (2010) found that there were increasing depictions of Indonesia as Islamic and that these were tied with acts of terrorism and religious extremism. Such public discourse undermines community support for Indonesian language learning, and contributes to the taboo of exploring religion, particularly Islam, in the teaching and learning of Indonesian.

Rationales for the teaching and learning of Indonesian in Australian schools thus typically focus on learning to use the language for economic and leisure opportunities. There is little attention to the personal enrichment dimension of learning for the individual, particularly in relation to developing spiritual and moral understandings of self and other. The Australian Government's rationale for teaching Indonesian in schools is clear and concerns the nation's economic and security interests. This rationale is far removed, however, from individual learners who are less clear about why it is important for them personally to learn Indonesian. This disjuncture exacerbates the instability of Indonesian language programs in schools as highlighted in the next section.

11.3 The Profile of Indonesian in Australian Schools: Students, Programs and Teachers

11.3.1 Students

The most recently available data on student enrolments show that approximately 191,000 students, the majority of whom are second language learners, currently study Indonesian in Australian primary and secondary schools. This figure represents 5.6% of the total student population across the school education system. Table 11.1 shows that Indonesian is the second largest of the NALSSP languages in terms of student numbers and the third largest of all languages studied in Australian schools (Liddicoat et al. 2008 [2007]).

The table reveals a relatively strong base for Indonesian in primary schools and a dramatically lower number of enrolments in the junior and upper secondary levels. More specific enrolment data by phase of schooling shows the following

Table 11.1 Indonesian compared with all NALSSP enrolments (2008)

Language	K–12[a]	Year 12[b]	% out of NALSSP	% out of NALSSP	% out of	% out of
			K–12 total	Y12 total	K–12 total	Y12 total
					3,434,291	202,453
Chinese	92,931	5,191	14.5	44.6	2.7	2.6
Indonesian	191,316	1,311	29.9	11.3	5.6	0.6
Japanese	351,579	4,969	55.0	42.7	10.2	2.5
Korean	3,190	177	0.5	1.5	0.1	0.1
Total	639,016	11,648			18.6	5.8

[a] K–12 data drawn from education systems, not including Year 12 numbers for SA AIS, NT AIS, NT CEC

[b] Year 12 data drawn from state and territory Curriculum and Assessment Authorities

Table 11.2 Total number of students enrolled in Year 12 Indonesian (2005–2009). (Data drawn from State-based Curriculum and Assessment Authorities)

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
No. of students	1907	1576	1442	1311	1167

Table 11.3 Enrolments in Indonesian over a twenty-year period. (Data for 1988 drawn from Worsley (1994))

Year	Primary	Junior Secondary	Year 12
1988	5,938	18,987	1,054
2008	123,538	64,333	1,311

breakdown: Kindergarten—Year 6 (123,538), Years 7–10 (64,333) and Years 11–12 (3,713) (Kohler and Mahnken 2010). The level of participation at senior secondary level is particularly concerning (see Table 11.2), with the numbers being comparable to those typically associated with small candidature languages, that is the languages of small migrant communities in Australia, such as Polish or Serbian. Furthermore, compared to the other NALSSP languages, for the same data period, less than 1 % of all Year 12 students in Australian schools studied Indonesian. Thus, despite the NALSAS and NALSSP initiatives, designed to increase Year 12 students completing school with an Asian language, the study of Indonesian has actually waned significantly. The concern at the senior secondary level becomes even greater when a longitudinal perspective is taken into account. Figures for Year 12 enrolments in Indonesian over a five-year period show a steady decline, with a reduction of 740 enrolments overall.

When an even longer-term perspective is taken, the data reveal how, over a twenty-year period (see Table 11.3), Indonesian has expanded into primary and junior secondary levels yet seen little change at the senior secondary level.

Overall, the data presented in this section reveal that participation in the study of Indonesian is in decline. While there was an expansion in the initial years of the NALSAS, student enrolments have reduced by approximately 10,000 students per year between 2001–2008 (Kohler and Mahnken 2010). Over the past two decades, Indonesian has gained and lost large numbers of enrolments at primary and junior secondary levels, and there has been little change in numbers at the senior secondary level. Thus, while government initiatives and funding support have had some positive impact on participation, this has not been sustained over time and Indonesian remains in a precarious state in Australian education as a result.

11.3.2 Programs

As might be expected given the participation data, the largest number of Indonesian programs is in primary schools, with a total of 711 programs across all Australian schools. While, at one level, this figure appears quite high (compared to other languages such as Chinese), the program numbers are in fact declining. Program numbers in Victoria, the state of Australia with the largest presence of Indonesian programs, show that in the government sector, the number of primary programs has declined from 407 in 1998 to 224 in 2008. Interstate, in the New South Wales government sector, the number of primary programs has fallen from 251 in 1998 to 56 in 2005 (Kohler and Mahnken 2010). Given the initial expansion of Indonesian in the primary school sector, its current decline in primary school programs is significant. It reveals an underlying fragility that, if not addressed, seems likely to result in few, if any, programs in future.

Then there are structural issues, a number of which impact on Indonesian programs. These include limited time allocations, particularly in primary schools where a language program is typically delivered by the language teacher during the time allocated to the class teacher for planning. This results in time allocations of between 30 and 60 min per week on average in primary schools. Such conditions make it extremely difficult to develop substantive language learning and many students and parents feel dissatisfied as a result.

These program conditions are similar for all languages; however there is, as mentioned earlier, a particular issue for Indonesian in relation to the distribution of programs. While there has been no study detailing program distribution data, there is a common perception among stakeholders that there are a large number of Indonesian programs in rural and low socio-economic areas. Programs in these areas are subject to increased pressures due to the instability of staffing, teacher isolation, limited curriculum options and strained finances as a result of the need to cater for greater numbers of students with learning difficulties. This profile contrasts with that of other NALSSP languages that are typically concentrated in middle-class, urban areas. There appears to be a correlation between perceptions of intellectual challenge and the nature of schools where particular languages are studied. Furthermore—and a connected point, the perceived social status of particular languages would appear to be an important factor in determining which languages are adopted in particular schools: there are very few prestigious schools that offer Indonesian.

Structural factors, then, combined with community perceptions of the language as easy and low-prestige add to the obstacles facing Indonesian programs in the schooling sector.

11.3.3 Teachers

The teaching and learning of Indonesian is substantially impacted by the profile of teachers. It is difficult to present a comprehensive profile of teachers of Indonesian in Australia due to the limited availability of teacher data across all education systems. There are reports among stakeholders of both an under- and over-supply of teachers of Indonesian, indicating the changing demand for teachers based on shrinking enrolment figures. In primary schools, the language teacher is typically the *only* teacher providing the language program to all students across the school. This places particular demands on the individual teacher, and in particular on their subject and pedagogical knowledge. Yet, for a large number of teachers of Indonesian, particularly in primary schools, their qualifications are in generalist teaching and they lack formal qualifications specifically in languages pedagogy. Furthermore, while the majority of teachers of Indonesian are second language learners of Indonesian (that is, having no background in the language), many in the primary school sector have minimal or no formal qualifications in studying the language. Education authorities and teachers themselves recognise the need to improve teachers' linguistic, cultural and pedagogical knowledge, and they willingly participate in in-country scholarships and professional learning programs related to Indonesian. There remain concerns, however, about the quality of Indonesian language teaching and how this may also be contributing to low levels of engagement and participation beyond the years during which language study is compulsory.

11.4 Issues in Teaching and Learning

Concerns about the quality of teaching and learning are not particular to Indonesian, or indeed even to language teaching. For Indonesian, however, there is the additional challenge created by representations of Indonesian language and culture in teaching and learning: Given the backdrop of the kind of media-coloured community perceptions of Indonesia discussed earlier, it is essential that through their Indonesian language learning students develop an alternative narrative to current public discourse about Indonesia—a more accurate representation. This presents a real challenge for Indonesian language teachers who typically do not have the theoretical framings or expertise to achieve this. This tension is highlighted in the following extract featuring a teacher of Indonesian interacting with her middle school students of Indonesian (Kohler 2010).

Participant	Dialogue
Teacher	Lets think about why these places are important and why an Indonesian may want to visit them. Think back to why it was important to learn about Indonesian places of interest. Do you think any of them are the same as our well-known places or why we should study about them here?
Rose	Well, it's part of our history and part of our culture.
Teacher	Who can remember the word for history? It started with an 's'. *Sejarah*. So, we should study about well-known places because it tells us information about our past. What other reasons do you think we should study about these places? Now, all of you would have done the Barossa Seppelts study tour in Year 9. Why do you think you were sent there to go on an excursion?
Rose	To learn about the German heritage.
Teacher	Yes, the German heritage. And learning about wine techniques. That tells us about our past and our heritage. What other reasons? What do you think Logan? Why should we study about well-known places in Indonesia?
Logan	So it can help you learn about the culture.
Teacher	It helps you learn more about the culture. Who can remember the word for culture? *Kebudayaan*
Shannon	It's a long word.
Teacher	So we are able to learn a different way of life. How people live differently than the way we live. Why they do certain things compared to the way we do them?
Rose	It can be like um how Adelaide is identified.
Teacher	Yeah, so it can be how Adelaide is identified as a state, as a capital city. *Identitas*. Besides history, identity and culture is there anything else?
Simon	Religion.
Teacher	Religion. Who can remember about religion? Who knows the word for religion? It starts with an 'a'.
Nina	*Agama*
Teacher	Agama, thanks Nina. Who can think of any places related to religion?
Simon	The churches.
Teacher	Yes, the churches. We can also say there are mosques… (describes various places). Can we be a bit more specific and give examples of places and how they link to *identitas*, our culture and our religion? Why do you think people visiting the Barossa Valley is important?
Rose	We've got a lot of famous wines.
Teacher	Australians are more likely to go to the Barossa Valley because they know there's good wine produce there and they can sample different types of foods as well. This sort of links up to our next question as well. If you were an Indonesian person would you be more likely to go to the Barossa Valley than not want to go?
Rose	It would depend on how much history that they know about South Australia.
Teacher	So, it depends on the Indonesian person's knowledge or interest in South Australia.
Nina	They might not know about it but they might go there and think (I'll learn all about it and they might taste some wine and buy some wine).

Participant	Dialogue
Teacher	So, OK. Think a little bit about Indonesian culture and think more about their way of life and the majority of Indonesians. What is the main religion of Indonesia?
Several	Moslem.
Teacher	Moslem. And what's part of the religion?
Joanne	They don't drink.
Teacher	They don't drink. The majority of Moslems wouldn't drink alcohol. So, do you think if a Moslem person were to come to South Australia, would they be more inclined to go to the Barossa Valley or to Kangaroo Island?
Several	Kangaroo Island
Nina	The Barossa
Teacher	Why do you still say the Barossa Valley? Why do you think that?
Nina	Just because they can't drink doesn't mean they couldn't try it to see if they liked it.
Teacher	Guys, if that's their religion and they were brought up respecting the beliefs …the pillars of Islam, why would you then go against that?
Nina	You have to do something…like you can't just stay that person all of your life. You have to take risks. You have to do stuff.
Joanne	They might still go to the Barossa for other things not just for the wineries or not even just go for the wine.
Teacher	Indonesians who come to Australia may just come and visit the Barossa Valley just to see what it looks like and other places of interest in that area than the wineries. So, can you see now how you've got to think about culture and religion when you think about what places people are more inclined to go to. If…we've said that we have got a lot of churches. If you were a Moslem person, would you be more inclined to go and visit a church or would you go somewhere else like would you try to find a mosque or a *mesjid* and look at how it's structured and its architecture in Adelaide?
Nina	Well, we're still Catholics or Christians and when we go to Indonesia we still go to their mosques. It's pretty much the same thing.
Teacher	I just want you to be aware that you have to think a bit more about the culture and the background rather than just saying it's a well known place and everyone would want to go there because that may not be the case.

The extract opens with an invitation to students to consider the cultural significance of local places. The teachers' questions are broad, with students responding in similarly broad terms such as the importance of places to history and culture. There is a pattern of students providing ideas in English and the teacher labelling these with a single word in Indonesian, 'the word for history'. The teacher is uncomfortable with not using the target language, hence she creates labels for the ideas students provide about culture. She frames culture in terms of 'how people live differently', and 'why they do certain things'. The teacher is positioning culture as difference, as 'other', and her students are observers of difference. In this way, culture becomes a series of disconnected words in the target language, there is very little at this point with which students can connect. As the interaction proceeds, the class explores people's motivations for visiting significant places and their relationship to religion. The teacher prompts students to 'think a little about Indonesian culture … their way of life …', which is too vague; and she follows this with a more specific question, 'What is the main religion of Indonesia?' She then uses a generalisation: 'The majority of Moslems wouldn't drink alcohol'. She tries to create insight into another perspective by positioning students as cultural insiders: 'If you were a Moslem'; however, she then repositions them as cultural outsiders with the comment, 'Guys, if that's their religion and they were brought up respecting the beliefs … the pillars of Islam, why would you then go against that?' Culture, particularly Islamic beliefs, is presented as belonging to others and as monolithic. Students raise other possible motivations reflecting their own values, 'take risks' and 'go…for other things'; however, the teacher struggles to validate these views, '(they) may just come to see what it looks like …' She recognises that she is in unfamiliar territory and makes a generalisation in order to make a point about the variability of culture, which she has not been able to do in the interaction: 'be aware that you have to think a bit more about the culture and the background'.

This extract reflects some of the challenges in the teaching and learning of Indonesian in Australian schools. Firstly, the teacher is attempting to explore cultural differences yet she does not herself have a clear conceptual framework for doing so. Secondly, she has limited metalanguage with which to explore the nature of culture in a manner that is accessible to her students. Rather than depicting language and culture as interrelated, she separates them, presenting culture as 'difference' belonging to others, and the target language as the code for labelling difference. She struggles with the pedagogy required to manage students' varied and at times contradictory responses, and moves away from problematising culture to reducing it to generalisations.

The issues evident in this extract are not particular to this teacher but they are deeply rooted in the teaching and learning of Indonesian in Australia. The positioning of Indonesian within Asian Studies and Social Science departments, for example, particularly at tertiary level, is a major factor that shapes the teaching of Indonesian language and culture. Typically, language and culture are separated, with the structure and form of the language being taught in dislocation from its cultural context, generally explored through politics, history and sociology. In the schooling sector, in policy and curriculum spheres, Indonesian has been positioned generically within the 'Languages' learning area, rendering its distinctive nature and needs vis-à-vis teaching and learning largely invisible. Even within the smaller grouping of four Asian languages within the NALSAS and NALSSP, the particular state and nature of Indonesian in respect of its teaching and learning, has received limited attention.

Another major influence on Indonesian language teaching and learning in recent decades has been Communicative language teaching (CLT). The emphasis of CLT on purposeful use of the target language found fertile ground in Indonesian language teaching in Australia due in large part to the geographical proximity of Indonesia and the expectation among teachers and learners that opportunities might well arise to use the language for communication with Indonesians, either in Indonesia or Australia. As a result, curriculum and pedagogy have since tended to focus on oral language use and transactional language in particular. Tasks such as bargaining in markets or booking hotel accommodation were, and continue to be, a common feature of classroom activity.

In the past decade, the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) has issued a number of travel advisories that have been interpreted, particularly by state education authorities, as a ban on student travel to Indonesia. While many Indonesian language teachers are frustrated with this action and see it as undermining the rationale for learning Indonesian, it presents an opportunity to consider the potential value of learning the language—or indeed any language—for students who are unlikely to visit the country in which it is spoken as a native language. In this regard, there has been some interest amongst Indonesian language teachers in recent work in Australia concerning intercultural language teaching and learning (Scarino et al. 2007) a primary goal of which is for students to become intercultural mediators (Byram et al. 2002). This approach sees language and culture as integrated, semiotic systems, and positions learners as navigators of meaning within and across at least two languages and cultures; the target language and culture, and their own language and culture. As such learners develop an interpretative and reflective capability, decentring from their own language and culture and in the process developing self-awareness (Byram et al. 2002; Kramsch 2007; Liddicoat and Scarino 2013). For learners of Indonesian, the opportunity to truly engage with the distinctive nature and cultural worldview of Indonesian language and culture, make connections with their own language and culture, and in doing so, learn how to become intercultural mediators, may provide an alternative rationale that resonates with learners in their immediate lives.

11.5 Future Prospects

For as long as it has featured in Australian education, Indonesian language teaching and learning has been subject to the changing dynamics of the Australia–Indonesia relationship at the socio-political level. In the past decade in particular, negative perceptions of Indonesia within the Australian community have intensified and these, together with structural impediments of the kind discussed, have led to a decline of Indonesian language study in schools. Nevertheless, there is cause for optimism in the prospects for the teaching and learning of Indonesian in Australian schools. In the policy sphere, for example, the White Paper is the strongest signal of a commitment to Australia's engagement with Asia. The paper outlines the increasing opportunities in the business and trade, national security, tourism, health and education spheres and makes a direct connection between Australia's future prosperity and its social capital—capital developed through education including the study of Asian languages.

Within the education sphere, there are a number of positive initiatives, many instigated and supported through the Australian government, which continue to be effective in supporting the teaching and learning of Indonesian. Teacher in-service initiatives to improve language proficiency, and programs designed to build sister-school partnerships through technology, continue to enhance Indonesian programs. In addition, the development of Indonesian within the Australian Curriculum presents an opportunity to address specificity of content for teaching and learning, and standards of achievement for judging the quality of student learning. Such specification is necessary to provide a basis for shared dialogue among Indonesian language educators and the community concerning the nature and quality of learning Indonesian in schools.

Within the broader societal context, Indonesia is a maturing democracy, one that is undergoing strong economic growth and political and social reform. As part of this development, it is strengthening its international perspective, and this includes the learning of English. Indonesian Government policy is that all secondary schools offer English in the curriculum and, while English language learning is officially an extra-curricula activity for primary schools, it is nonetheless offered by the majority. At a time when the demand for learning English is increasing in Indonesia, the demand for learning Indonesian is decreasing in Australia. This is a pivotal moment in the relationship where the potential for engagement and mutual understanding exists and could be enhanced by both parties learning each other's languages. It remains to be seen whether Australia will meet this challenge.

The teaching and learning of Indonesian represents a valuable avenue through which young Australians can participate in another view of the world and broaden their understanding of themselves, their region and the world. A number of interrelated issues and challenges remain however, and efforts to bring about reform in relation to policy, operational conditions, teacher supply, and quality of the curriculum and of teaching, need to continue. A major challenge is that while Indonesian has a place in the national agenda of government, it does not have a stable place in the hearts and minds of many Australian students and their communities. To achieve such stability, it is necessary that individual students recognise that studying Indonesian and engaging with Indonesia offers a gateway to a unique 'otherness', a way of being that can only be known through learning the language(s) and culture(s) of Indonesia. Should such a shift occur, Indonesian will continue to be an important part of the ecology of languages in the Australian educational landscape, and of the ecologies of languages in the Asia Pacific region.

References

Byram, M., Gribkova, B., & Starkey, H. (2002). *Developing the intercultural dimension in language teaching: A practical introduction for teachers*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Commonwealth of Australia. (2012). *Australia in the Asian century*. Canberra: Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/white-paper. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

DEEWR (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations). (2008). National Asian languages and studies in schools program homepage. https://deewr.gov.au/national-asian-languages-and-studies-schools-program. Accessed 18 Aug 2013.

Kohler, M. (2010). *Moving between knowing and being: a case study of language teachers' mediation of the intercultural in practice,* Unpublished doctoral thesis, School of Communication, International Studies and Languages, University of South Australia.

Kohler, M., & Mahnken, P. (2010). *The current state of Indonesian language education in Australian schools*. Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Kramsch, C. (2007). *On being a language teacher*. The language connection, National languages conference of the Australia federation of modern languages teachers associations. Perth: Australia.

Liddicoat, A. J., Scarino, A., Curnow, T. J., Kohler, M., Scrimgeour, A., & Morgan, A. M. (2008 [2007]). *An investigation of the state and nature of languages in Australian schools*. Report to the department of education, employment and workplace relations. Adelaide: Research centre for languages and cultures education, University of South Australia.

Liddicoat, A. J. & Scarino, A. (2013). *Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning*, Wiley=Blackwell: Malden MA

Lo Bianco, J. (1987). *National policy on languages*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Mahoney, I. (2010). *Constructing Indonesian Islam in the context of the War on Terror: A critical analysis of how the Australian press framed the 'other'*. University of Queensland.

MCEETYA (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs). (1994). National Asian languages and studies in schools program. http://www1.curriculum.edu.au/nalsas/about.htm. Accessed 15 May 2012.

Read, J., & Reeve, D. (2010). *Teaching Indonesian in Australia*. Unpublished book chapter. http://altcfellowship.murdoch.edu.au/Docs/Read-Reeve_Indonesian_in_Oz.pdf. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Rudd, K. (1994). *Asian languages and Australia's economic future: A report prepared for the Council of Australian Governments on a proposed national Asian languages/studies strategy for Australian schools*.

Scarino, A., Liddicoat, A. J., Dellit, J., Crozet, C., Car, J., Crichton, J., et al. (2007). *Intercultural language teaching and learning in practice*. Adelaide: Document Services, University of South Australia.

WACE (Western Australia. School Curriculum and Standards Authority). (2011). *Indonesian: Second language syllabus statement*. http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/internet/Senior_Secondary/Courses/WACE_Courses/Indonesian_Second_Language?1351476775880. Accessed 25 Oct 2011.

Worsley, P. (1994). *Unlocking Australia's language potential: Profiles of 9 key languages in Australia: Vol. 5 Indonesian/Malay*. Canberra: The National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia.

Chapter 12
On Rocky Ground: Monolingual Educational Structures and Japanese Language Education in Australia

Robyn Spence-Brown

Abstract The low levels of language study in Australia are often attributed to the lack of motivation of students and deficiencies in the implementation of language programs. This chapter suggests that such problems are linked to deeper issues, and that the most powerful determinant of language learning rates is the nature of the general educational structures in which language education is embedded. Drawing on data from the most widely taught language in Australia, Japanese, it discusses structural determinants of program delivery and student choices, from primary to tertiary levels, and their impact. These diverse structures all reflect the monolingual educational ecology in Australia. The chapter argues that until language learning is taken seriously enough to prompt fundamental structural reforms, other efforts will only result in marginal improvements. More generally, it confirms the importance of looking beyond the specifics of languages education to the broader social and institutional ecologies in which they sit.

Keywords Language education in Australia · Monolingual mindset · Language study continuation · Ecology of language education · Japanese as a second language · Education policy

12.1 Introduction

The low levels of language study in Australia have been lamented over many years, and there have been frequent calls for more support for language teaching and encouragement for students to pursue language studies. There has also been a succession of ambitious policy statements and programs, setting out targets for greatly increased participation. Governments, education systems, schools, other organisations and individual teachers have invested considerable resources and effort to support teaching, to make language study attractive and to retain students, but with

R. Spence-Brown (✉)
Monash University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
e-mail: robyn.spencebrown@monash.edu

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), Dynamic Ecologies, Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_12,

little long-term success, particularly in the later years of schooling (Liddicoat 2010; Lo Bianco 2009).

In terms of Asian languages, the latest in the line of policy announcements has been the Federal Government's White Paper *Australia in the Asian Century* (Australia in the Asian Century Taskforce 2012). Undeterred by previous failures, this major policy document reaffirms the government's commitment to the study of Asian languages in strong terms, in addition to Asian literacy more broadly. It sets the 'national objective' that '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'. A second objective is that 'All students will have access to at least one priority Asian language: these will be Chinese (Mandarin), Hindi, Indonesian and Japanese'. These goals are envisioned as being achieved through 'full implementation of the Australian Curriculum', by making access to high quality Asian language curriculums 'a core requirement through new school funding arrangements' and through working with the State and Territory governments and other stakeholders on 'detailed strategies', including use of the NBN (National Broadband Network).

While one should not expect a fully worked implementation plan in a document such as the White Paper, the contrast between these confidently-expressed ambitious targets and the sketchy description of the measures which are expected to ensure their achievement give little confidence that this latest statement will have any more lasting impact than its predecessors. The fact that the previous priority language, Korean, has been dropped, and Hindi installed in its place as a mainstream foreign language in schools, without any regard to such matters as the lack of teaching materials and trained teachers, or the university courses that would produce them, gives further cause for concern. As a rhetorical flourish underlining Australia's consciousness of the importance of India to its economic future, this proposal makes sense, but while it is easy to make such policy pronouncements, it is much more difficult to translate them into practical mass educational initiatives.

Past policies on Asian languages were supported by two major sets of Federal initiatives targeting an increase in the number of students studying Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean: the NALSAS (National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools) program instituted in 1995 and withdrawn early in 2006, followed by the similarly targeted but less well-funded NALSSP (National Asian Languages and Studies in School Program), which ran from 2008–2012. Funding was directed at various areas, including teacher training and re-training, curriculum projects and support for schools for language programs. There is some evidence that the NALSAS program succeeded in promoting a growth in numbers of students studying Asian languages, particularly Japanese and Indonesian, especially at Primary level, (Erebus Consulting and Dept. of Education & Training Australia 2002), and then, by its withdrawal, precipitated or at least influenced their decline in recent years (Asia Education Foundation 2010; de Kretser and Spence-Brown 2010). This can be interpreted both as evidence that increased funding and the programs it supports does help increase student numbers, but also as confirmation that the underlying structures are not able to support language learning without continued additional boosting and incentives.

As Liddicoat and others have pointed out, a major reason for such policy failures may be that policies and programs have set ambitious targets but have not addressed fundamental implementation issues, such as teacher supply, in effective ways (Liddicoat 2010). In 2012, the modestly funded and short-lived NALSSP was flatly judged not to have succeeded, and the federal government's most immediate response to this was to fail to renew the kind of programs it supported. It did, however, continue to fund the semi-government organization Asia Education Foundation (AEF)[1] to boost engagement with Asian literacy more generally, with a secondary focus on Asian languages (O'Keeffe 2012). The AEF has recently released a major report entitled 'Building demand for Asia Literacy: What works' (Asia Education Foundation 2012) which sets a blueprint for this task. In addition to programs targeting students and parents, it advocates targeting school leadership in order to build attractive programs in schools.

In the AEF report, cultural and structural impediments to language learning are noted as a major problem and identified as 'workforce capability, the establishment of continuous and contiguous pathways for study, adequate time allocation for effective teaching and learning, and the removal of disincentives to study languages at senior secondary level' (Asia Education Foundation 2012, p. 8). However, the major focus in this document is on programs for students and parents to increase motivation to learn Asian languages. This builds on an existing discourse around low levels of participation or continuation, which suggests that the problem lies primarily in the motivation and choices of the individual student. Typical of this perspective is a recent web post headed 'Asia literacy: Boost supply or demand?' (Carr 2011) which suggests that while government reports focus on greater supply of classes and teachers, it is the low interest of Australian students that is the major issue.

Clearly, individual interest and motivation are important. Perhaps even more important, however (though harder to influence), is the collective perception at a societal level (including at the school level) of the value of the study of languages. Evidence for this is starkly apparent in the current crisis facing Indonesian (see Chap. 11 with regard to the situation in schools, and Hill (2011) with regard to the tertiary sector). The carefully targeted 'building demand' initiatives are therefore certainly needed, and very welcome. However, in formal educational settings, individual motivation and choice are shaped and constrained by educational structures. An important case in point is the length and nature of compulsory language learning, which is by far the strongest determinant of the number of students studying languages below the senior secondary years. In Australia, the duration and nature of compulsory language education is determined by a mix of State and Federal

[1] AEF is a joint activity of Asialink, (an initiative of the University of Melbourne) and Education Services Australia (which is jointly owned by all Australian Education Ministers). It receives core funding from the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

government policy, the imperatives of the overall educational environment and individual school curriculum choices.

The impacts of institutional structures and policies are no less important in the post-compulsory years, when languages are almost always offered on an elective basis. While interest and perceptions of relevance are important, senior secondary subject choices are often made on more pragmatic grounds, and are extremely sensitive to changes in policy, often policies totally unrelated to language education per se.

Drawing on data from the most widely taught language in Australia, Japanese, this chapter discusses some of the impacts of educational structures on the quality and breadth of language offerings and student choices from primary to tertiary levels, and the evidence of their impact on continuation and attrition. These policies and institutional structures vary widely, but can all be traced to an overarching feature of Australia's education system and society more generally: its monolingual perspective. As commentators such as Clyne (2005), Lo Bianco (2009), Liddicoat and Scarino (2010) and others have noted, despite its multicultural nature, Australia has been ambivalent towards both the maintenance of home languages and education in additional languages, and this 'monolingual mindset' is reflected in its educational institutions in myriad, sometimes obvious, and sometimes covert ways. In terms of the theme of this volume, the 'ecology' of education in Australia is still overwhelmingly monolingual, and within this inhospitable environment, initiatives to promote languages struggle to overcome the forces acting against them.

12.2 Institutions, Structures and Policies

The importance of educational structures and the policies that shape them is recognised and discussed by most serious commentators on language education. Major reports such as *An investigation of the state and nature of Languages in Australian schools* (Liddicoat et al. 2007) and Lo Bianco's *Second languages and Australian schooling* (Lo Bianco 2009) put policy at the front and centre of the discussion. However, the focus is usually on language education policies. The pernicious influence of more general educational policies and structures, while not ignored, has received less concerted attention, perhaps because their effects are more indirect and are out of the control of educational leaders in the languages area to influence. In this chapter, in addition to acknowledging the role of language policy, I want to highlight some of the ways in which general educational structures in Australia fail to treat language learning seriously, and therefore do not make provision for language study on a widespread basis. While such structures tend to be deeply embedded and will be difficult to change, I suggest that their reform, and indeed reform of the more general presumption of monolingualism on which education is based, must be a priority if Australia is to take seriously the need to increase the study of Asian and other languages.

The policies and structures which influence language education can be grouped into three major categories:

1. National and state languages policy and languages education policy.
2. National and state educational policy and structures more broadly.
3. School system and individual school policies and structures.

Languages education policy/structure is a subset of educational policy/structure in general, and may be supported or constrained by other aspects of policy. The policy and structural choices that schools make are constrained by both the general educational environment and the language education environment, while the choices of students are made in the immediate context of the school, but are also constrained by larger educational structures such as university entrance arrangements.

Institutional structures and policies at all these levels constrain choices in two ways: directly, by making it easier/more attractive or more difficult/less attractive to teach or study a language, irrespective of individual beliefs about the attractiveness of language study; and indirectly, by influencing perceptions about usefulness or importance. For example, positive rhetoric about language study will be much less powerful if it is at odds with the messages embedded in institutional structures, which tend to suggest that language is a marginal subject, for the committed few, rather than a mainstream discipline, which will develop skills essential for the modern world.

12.2.1 National and State Language Education Policies and Structures

The absence of adequate, coherent and enforced National and State policies on and support for languages and language education has been lamented by every major report on language education. As many commentators have pointed out, the problem is not so much the lack of policy, but the diversity of policies across states and areas, and the frequent gap between policy rhetoric and reality. Successive statements of national goals of Australian education identify languages as a key learning area, but they have not been translated into action sufficient to strengthen language education on the ground in any significant way (Liddicoat and Scarino 2010). As Lo Bianco has noted:

> A large number of reports, enquiries, official policies and implementation programs is testimony to a lively concern for improvement, unfortunately undermined by lack of consensus about priorities and failure to devise an enduring rationale for what is ultimately needed: high standard, articulated, compulsory language education. **While there appears to be public appreciation of the importance of second languages, there is less appreciation of the degree of institutional commitment, levels of funding and provider change required to achieve effective language knowledge through formal education**. (Lo Bianco 2009, p. 6 my emphasis)

While no state can claim to have implemented the kind of high standard, articulated language education that Lo Bianco advocates, some have done better than others. The impact of policies mandating language study that are backed up by realistic procedures and support for implementation is very clear. For example, in the Australian Capital Territory, when the teaching of languages from year 3 to year 8 was mandated, enrolments increased by over 200 %, and interestingly, most schools seem to have gone beyond the mandated years and established language programs from year 1. On the other hand, in states where policies on the delivery of language in primary and lower secondary levels have been weak, such as New South Wales, participation is correspondingly low.

It is not policy alone that makes the difference, however. It needs to be implementable, supported and enforced, and compatible with the broader education agenda and environment. For example, despite its good record in terms of participation and retention, policy on the number of hours that language should be taught in primary schools in Victoria is almost universally ignored, as has been noted in the Department's own highly informative annual reports (e.g. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Victoria 2011, see DEECD website for reports from 2006 on). Schools argue, with some justification, that the targets are just not possible to achieve within the current broader funding and organizational structures, and as there seem to be no specific sanctions for schools which do not meet them, the targets are treated as 'aspirational' and therefore of limited practical significance.

At the year 12 level, a recent study on the teaching of Japanese (de Kretser and Spence-Brown 2010) found that as far as language-specific policies go, the nature and range of courses offered at years 11 and 12, including 'Beginners' courses[2], VET (Vocational Education and Training) courses, 'Continuers' courses and courses for home background (heritage) and first language speakers, and the eligibility rules that apply to entry into Continuers courses, had a profound effect on student options and choices, and hence on retention. For example, at year 12 level, numbers in Continuers courses had risen in Victoria over the previous 10 years, but there had been a decline in student numbers in 'Continuers' courses in New South Wales. de Kretser and Spence-Brown (2010) attributed this, at least partly, to the fact that New South Wales has a Beginners course while Victoria does not. In New South Wales, the number of Beginners has grown as the number of Continuers has decreased, suggesting that the two year *ab initio* course may in some areas be replacing more serious continuous study. In addition, the rules restricting entry to the Continuers course are much stricter in New South Wales than in Victoria, creating a disenfranchised group of home background students ineligible to take the Continuers course, but not proficient enough for the Background speaker course. These entry rules are clearly an aspect of language in education policy, although arguably they are shaped

[2] Beginners courses are *ab initio* courses for students who commence studying a language in year 11, while Continuers courses (called different names in different states) are directed at students who commenced their language study in the junior secondary years or earlier. All states have Continuers courses, but not all have Beginners courses.

not so much by language education concerns as by the need to rank students for university entrance.

Other broader educational settings relating to the number of subjects taken in year 12 have also affected numbers, probably even more substantially, as will be discussed below, and undoubtedly the decisions made by schools to offer or not offer programs influence the choices available to individual students. It is evident that there is a complex mix of language-specific and broader policy settings, combined with school level issues which determine opportunities for language learning directly and indirectly. In other words, each student and school makes choices within a dynamic ecology, and changes in one area can have often unforeseen effects throughout the system.

12.2.2 Educational Policy and Structures More Broadly

The impact of educational policy and structures relating to language study itself on language learning rates and continuation is obvious. What is not always quite so transparent is that the impact of wider educational structures can be as significant, if not more significant. I will single out one issue at primary level—the roles of teachers, and two issues that significantly affect retention at the senior secondary level: the number of subjects required to complete a high school certificate, or that can count towards a tertiary entrance score, and the rules relating to eligibility and the scaling of marks in year 12. I will also briefly discuss the structure of courses at tertiary level, where there is considerable evidence that changes unrelated to language teaching significantly influence student uptake.

12.3 Staffing of Primary Programs

There have been enormous changes in the nature and content of primary education over the past decades, including the introduction of new curriculum areas, such as languages, not covered in earlier times. This has led to both a ‘crowded curriculum’ and to issues concerning the expertise of generalist teachers to cover all its aspects. Despite the increasing complexity of primary education, and the greater demands placed on it, the nineteenth century model of one generalist teacher per class, who delivers all or most of the curriculum, has not significantly changed. The current model for primary teaching assumes a full-time classroom specialist allocated to a single class, where a specialist teacher can only be employed at extra cost, in addition to, not as a replacement for, the classroom teacher. In languages, however, while there have been some attempts to teach through the use of pre-packaged programs delivered by classroom teachers, the use of teachers with at least some specialist training in or knowledge of the language is widespread and is acknowledged as essential[3]. At the same time, because the role of specialists is peripheral to the general curriculum delivery model, and is not clearly mandated in staffing arrangements or covered explicitly in budgets, language teaching has been allocated only minimal amounts of time (usually the time allocated to generalist teachers for curriculum planning) and language teachers have often been employed under temporary and exploitative arrangements. Language also competes with other specialist areas, such as music, art, science and physical education, for whatever scarce resources for specialist teaching exist.

Immersion teaching and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), whereby other curriculum content is taught using the target language, has the potential to increase the number of hours of exposure to the language, without the need to displace other curriculum areas, and thus address issues of a crowded curriculum. However, unless such programs employ generalist teachers who are also language specialists, or change delivery in other areas so that generalist teachers use their time productively elsewhere while their classes are being taught by CLIL teachers, they do not provide a sustainable model within existing funding constraints. This is perhaps why many CLIL programs are being implemented in rather minimal (and probably ineffective) ways, covering perhaps a single unit or term, rather than the much more extensive programs envisaged by CLIL advocates.

There have been moves internationally to review the way in which teaching is organized and to increase the role of subject specialists—notably in the far-ranging Cambridge Primary Review, conducted in the UK (Alexander 2009). In Australia, also, research shows that in areas other than language, specialists are being used in some schools, and there have been calls to re-consider existing models of delivery (Ardzejewska et al. 2010). A corollary of this is that models which bring specialists into the teaching establishment would also need to redefine the responsibilities of generalist teachers, in order to free up time and resources, something that would involve enormous cultural and industrial changes.

In summary, experts advocate for good language programs, delivered by properly trained language teachers, as an integral component of the curriculum and allocated adequate periods of time. However, in an era of competing priorities and limited budgets, it is difficult to achieve this without changes to curriculum delivery models and staffing structures more broadly, as well as similarly broad changes within the training of primary teachers. While the need for better arrangements for employing language teachers is universally acknowledged by commentators, to date, the teaching of languages has not been taken seriously enough to precipitate such changes, with the exception of a few successful bilingual programs, and isolated instances of school-based innovative arrangements. In general, the broader ecology in primary education remains decidedly unfriendly to the language programs which have relatively recently been transplanted into them.

[3] There have been some suggestions that more classroom teachers should be equipped with the skills to teach languages but this is unrealistic in the short term as a widespread solution given the current workforce and teacher training arrangements.

12.4 Examination and University Entrance Policies

At the other end of schooling (senior secondary) Liddicoat et al. (2007) and others have drawn attention to the perceptions amongst Australian students that it is difficult to achieve good scores in year 12 Asian language subjects, especially the scaled scores which count towards university entrance. This is particularly the case in languages with large numbers of home background learners, such as Chinese, as Orton (2008) has pointed out, citing this as a major cause of the very poor retention rates of non-Chinese background students. One of the reasons for this is not the difficulty of the subjects per se, but the fact that in most states year 12 marks in all subjects are scaled in a complex cross-subject process which assumes that there will be a normal curve of ability within subjects, and also that on a cohort basis, the level of difficulty of a subject can be determined by comparing results of students in that subject with their results in other subjects. In the case of languages with large numbers of background speakers these assumptions are patently not valid. As has been clearly demonstrated in the SAALE study described in Chap. 8 (Scarino et al. 2011), learner background has a significant impact on proficiency at all levels of schooling, including at year 12. Even in the case of subjects with much smaller numbers of students with extensive exposure to the language outside school, such as Japanese, their presence is enough to distort results at the top end of the mark range, or at least to be perceived to be doing so, when scaling is applied to regulate the proportion achieving scores in each grade band.

To counter these realities, as well as to cater better educationally for students with very different backgrounds in the language, most states have introduced a range of different examinations for different cohorts of students within Asian languages (although not in languages more generally). As discussed above, some States have established up to four different streams, with varying restrictions on who can enrol, relating not directly to language competence but to factors such as country of residence and education and family background. (See Scarino et al. 2011, pp. 27–32.) However, there has been limited success in reducing the problem, and the necessity of fairly arbitrary cutoff points in deciding which students can take which subject has given rise to a separate set of problems relating to students at the margins of each group. The fundamental cause of the problem will not be solved by the provision of a small number of different units, because of the range of different background factors which militate against languages showing the kind of normal curve and consistent link with performance in other areas evident in most other subjects.

In artificially limiting the proportion of students who can achieve at a given score level, the institutional structures surrounding year 12 achievement do not lend themselves to fairness, and they thus discourage many students who perceive that they do not have a chance to do well. Students with a background in the language also face overwhelming incentives to take the least demanding course they qualify for, even if educationally they would benefit more from a more challenging one. Because these procedures are linked to a much wider assessment regime, covering other subjects which are more justifiably standardised on a normal curve, and because the decisions based on results in year 12 are extremely high stakes, there has been very little success in addressing these issues, despite the clear damage that they are causing to language study. Where high stakes issues are involved, the monolingual mindset becomes clear: language is not important enough to prompt more than surface changes to the system.

12.5 The Number of Subjects Taken at Year 12

The scaling of exam results is a serious problem, which lies within the realm of both language-specific and general policies, but an even more fundamental issue affecting language study is the space within students' study programs to accommodate language in the first place. Under the NALSSP strategy, state and federal governments called for a major increase in the number of students taking languages at year 12 to ensure that at least 12 per cent of students completing Year 12 would be fluent in the languages of our key Asian neighbours—China, Indonesia, Japan and Korea by 2020 (Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations 2008). However, the issue of how to free up space for students to take a language without having to sacrifice other important subjects has not been addressed. Compared to the heyday of language study at year 12 in the 1960s, the number of choices available to students has increased exponentially, but the number of subjects that students can take, or are encouraged to take, in year 12 is relatively inflexible. Most states specify a minimum of four subjects in order to satisfactorily complete year 12, and encourage the taking of a fifth by including it in tertiary entrance calculations, so that the average number of units completed is roughly five (Group of Eight 2012). Students who wish to take a science-based course at university are often forced to take prerequisite subjects of English, mathematics (often two subjects), physics and chemistry, so have very little room in their programs to include anything else.

Recently, changes have occurred in both South Australia and Western Australia which have resulted in students needing to take fewer units at year 12 level in order to graduate or qualify for university entrance. While the norm across Australia has been five subjects (already low in international terms), more students in these states will now study four or less subjects in year 12, although they will also complete a research project unit, which in effect, takes up one 'slot' in their curriculum choices. The Western Australian changes, which allow students to successfully complete the WACE (Western Australian Certificate of Education) with lower level units, were fully implemented in 2010. A recent unpublished review of the results by the Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (cited in Hiatt 2012) showed that by 2011 only half of the units in all subjects completed by year 12 students were at the highest (stage 3) level. Students were opting to take the lower level unit 1 subjects, to avoid having to take examinations.

South Australia has for some time had one of the highest participation rates in Japanese across the school years, but the retention to year 12 has been much less impressive. There was a substantial dip in 2008, from 269 Continuers to only 180, perhaps associated with the introduction of a Background speaker course, which changed eligibility rules for Continuers, making even exchange students who had spent a year in Japan ineligible to sit (de Kretser and Spence-Brown 2010). The Background Speaker course only attracted seven students (up to 16 in 2010). From 2011, the rules for the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) changed, resulting in most students only completing units in four year 12 level disciplines. A report on the first year of operation records substantial decreases in the number of students taking common year 12 languages from 2010–2011: Italian Continuers (27 % decrease), Japanese Continuers (21 %), French Continuers (20 %), German Continuers (17 %). Year 11 enrolments also decreased by around 20 % (SACE Board 2012b, pp. 74–75).

In contrast, in Victoria, large numbers of students taking a year 12 language take it as one of six subjects. While it is possible to qualify for year 12 completion (Victorian Certificate of Education) with four subjects, five is the norm, and six is quite common amongst higher ability students, as both the fifth and sixth subjects contribute extra points towards the score used to rank students for university entrance, the ATAR[4]. Year 12 subjects can be taken in year 11 by qualified students, and for high achieving students in many schools taking one year 12 subject in year 11 is the norm. Although the sixth subject only adds a small amount to the ATAR, this gives students a big competitive advantage in entry to high ATAR courses, and thus acts as an incentive to complete more subjects at year 12 level. In 2008, 11.4 % of students who completed 'Japanese Second Language' and 77.4 % of those taking 'Japanese First Language' completed the units before commencing year 12, but anecdotally it seems that an even higher number take another year 12 subject in year 11, making room for language amongst the five subjects studied in their final year of school (de Kretser and Spence-Brown 2010).

A further encouragement to language study is the 'language bonus' which is added to the ATAR in certain states for students who have studied a language. Again, practices vary across states, from those states where it is universally applied, like Victoria, to those where it is applied only by selected institutions or for selected courses. The combination of a language-friendly general educational structure (the encouragement to take six year 12 subjects) and the language-specific 'language bonus' policy provide a powerful incentive for students to continue language study to year 12 level in Victoria, and it is likely that this is a major cause of the significantly higher retention to year 12 in Victoria compared to other states such as New South Wales and South Australia.

[4] 'Australian Tertiary Admission Rank' is used in ranking students for tertiary entrance purposes (except in Queensland). It represents the student's percentile rank in relation to all other students in their cohort. This score is based on scaled marks in eligible year 12 subjects but is calculated differently in different states. For example, in South Australia it is based on the aggregate of the best four (scaled) subjects only, but in Victoria it is based on the scaled subject score in one of English, English Language, Literature or ESL, the next best three ATAR subject scores permissible, and 10 % of the fifth and sixth permissible scores that are available. (See Tertiary Institutions Service Centre 2013; Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre 2013).

The narrowing of the curriculum at the senior secondary level is a serious concern, and languages are one of the primary casualties because for many students language is their fifth or sixth subject, after prerequisites for university entrance have been satisfied. Students in Europe and Asia routinely study foreign languages, whether they are specialising in the humanities or in sciences, but they also usually study a greater number of subjects in the final years of schooling than do Australian students. Changes in the structures of senior secondary courses and their use for tertiary placement seem to have been implemented with the commendable objectives of improving the opportunities for students at the bottom end of the educational spectrum. However, their ‘unintended’ consequence has been a narrowing of the educational experience and a reduction in numbers of language students to dangerously low levels. Despite the reductions in language enrolments having been identified as an issue by the review panel for the changes to the SACE in South Australia, the response of the Board charged with managing the SACE failed to acknowledge this as a serious concern, or to take up suggested changes that might have freed up space in the year 12 curriculum (SACE Board 2012a).

12.5.1 School System and School Policies and Structures

Below the national and state level policies lie the less formal policies and structures implemented by individual schools, both more generally and for language specifically. As has been noted, state government language education policies are often treated as ‘advisory’ rather than mandatory, so it is really at school level that important choices are made. Arguably, broader structures, particularly funding arrangements and requirements from other subject areas, are often more influential than language policies on the decisions made.

School principals and school councils have increasing power in many areas, even in government schools, and in private schools they are even more autonomous, so the impact of the attitude towards the language education of school leaders is great. A flourishing language program almost invariably indicates the presence of a supportive principal, while the opposite is also the case. Choices made at school level include issues such as the year of commencement of programs, the duration and intensity of instruction, timetabling, facilities provision (including ICT facilities), special programs such as sister school programs, school trips and language assistant programs, and of course, curriculum and pedagogy. In addition, schools make important choices about the staffing of languages programs, as has already been discussed. De Kretser and Spence-Brown (2010) drew attention to many of these factors, and provided examples of structures which supported or hindered the teaching of Japanese. Many other experts have noted the importance of policies, structures and actions at the level of grass roots implementation, and it is encouraging to see that the AEF recommendations target them, at least for Asia Literacy more broadly, through advocating effective programs to influence school leaders, and to bring about change at a whole-school level.

While the attitude of individual principals and teachers is important, choices at school level are also influenced by, and interact with policies at higher levels. For example, senior language class numbers are often marginal, and where they dip below a sustainable level (due, for example, to changes such as those in South Australia) the impact is magnified as schools cut senior programs, influencing students at lower year levels to drop languages as well. At the senior secondary level then, as at other levels, we see the complex interactions of specific language education policies, broader educational structures and school-level choices, sometimes reinforcing each other to support or suppress language learning, and sometimes working at cross-purposes, so that a positive component in one area of policy is cancelled out by a negative component in another. Within the dynamic ecology of the school, small changes in both the broad and local environments can have large consequences.

12.6 Institutional Factors in Tertiary Language Study

At tertiary level, there are very few courses in which language study is required, and the courses that do exist tend to be those which will appeal to students who are already committed to language study. Language study is most clearly supported in courses within Arts faculties, and within some business and Economics courses. Most other courses do not actively promote language as an option, and some make it impossible to pick up a language until later in a course, or only allow study of one or two elective units.

However, there is strong evidence that when structures change to allow easier access to language study, numbers increase. For example, when the University of Melbourne introduced a requirement, as part of the so called 'Melbourne model', that students take at least four 'breadth' subjects outside of their core discipline, there was a very large increase in enrolments in language courses, mainly due to students in other faculties taking up a language to fulfill this requirement (Nettlebeck 2009, p. 11). The 'breadth' requirement not only created a clear 'slot' in a degree which a language could occupy, it sent the message that students needed broader skills such as languages in addition to the narrow skills in their chosen disciplinary area. In other words, it created a language-friendly ecology. Unfortunately, such structures and policies are still in the minority in Australian tertiary institutions. As an Australian Academy of the Humanities report points out, of those students who do take a language outside their home faculty, many students enrol late in their course and therefore cannot continue their study after the first year. This is often because they do not have room in their course for out-of-faculty electives until later year levels. A recent study of students at a large Australian university confirmed that lack of room in course structures for extended language study, and other structural factors such as timetable issues are major factors in students dropping out of a tertiary Japanese course (Northwood and Thomson 2012). In sum, at the tertiary level too, there is evidence that a greater number of students are interested in studying a language than currently do so, but they are constrained by the limited opportunities in many courses, as well as by practical difficulties such as unsynchronized timetables.

12.7 Conclusion

It is clear that both language-specific and non-language specific policies and educational structures are significant in determining the degree to which Australian students engage in language study. While motivation and interest in language learning is certainly basic to the decisions of students to take up or continue languages studies, these are not enough unless the general educational environment is conducive to language learning as well. The role of language education policies in supporting or failing to support language study in Australian schools and other institutions is well understood and much debated. However, there is perhaps less focus than there should be on the role of wider educational policies and structures in influencing the languages area. Despite successive statements and reports which proclaim the importance of language study, there is evidence that this rhetoric and the special programs flowing from it has failed to make much impact in what is essentially a monolingual educational environment, which neither highly values nor makes adequate provision for second language maintenance and acquisition. In many cases, policies designed to support language learning prove ineffectual when wider structures militate against them.

Put simply, some of Australia's most basic educational structures, from the way in which teaching is organised in primary schools, to the number of subjects which can count towards one's university entrance rank, fail to make serious provision for language study. In this unfavorable environment, positive policies targeting language programs directly, or aimed at increasing student motivation to continue with language study are destined to continue to have limited success. Until language learning is taken seriously enough to prompt wider structural reforms, at a policy and school level, other efforts to improve participation in language programs will struggle to make a significant impact.

Like other studies in this volume, this chapter confirms the importance of looking beyond the specifics of languages education to the broader social and institutional ecologies in which they sit. While it has focused on the Australian environment, this is inevitably linked to the wider international environment. In many ways, the 'monolingual' mindset in Australia is the antithesis of the strong emphasis on English education in other areas of the Asia-Pacific addressed in this volume. However, both can be seen as linked to the increasing role of English in the world as a lingua franca. At the same time, wider interaction across the region continues to influence demands for change at a rhetorical level in Australia, particularly in regard to Asia literacy and intercultural skills (as evidenced in the recent White Paper, Australia in the Asian Century Taskforce 2012), even if this has not filtered down to all levels of policy formation. We can expect that there will be further changes within global and national ecologies, and it is to be hoped that they may change the balance in Australia between the forces that support and suppress language education for the better.

References

Alexander, R. J. (Ed.). (2009). *Children, their world, their education: Final report and recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Ardzejewska, K., McMaugh A., & Coutts P. (2010). Delivering the primary curriculum: The use of subject specialist and generalist teachers in NSW. *Issues in Educational Research*, 20, 203–219.

Asia Education Foundation. (2010). *The current state of Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean language education in Australian schools: Four languages, four stories*. Melbourne: Asia Education Foundation.

Asia Education Foundation. (2012). *Building demand for Asia literacy: What works*. Melbourne: The University of Melbourne, Asia Education Foundation.

Australia in the Asian Century Task Force. (2012). *Australia in the Asian century: White Paper*. Canberra: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/white-paper. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Carr, A. (2011). Asia literacy: Boost supply or demand? The Interpreter, 27 October. Lowy Institute for International Policy. http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/?d=D%20-%20Asian%20languages%20in%20Australia. Accessed 12 Apr 2013.

Clyne, M. (2005). *Australia's language potential*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.

de Kretser, A., & Spence-Brown, R. (2010). *The current state of Japanese language education in Australian schools*. Carlton South: Education Services Australia.

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Victoria. (2011). *Languages in Victorian Government schools 2010*. http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/LOTE/2010-schoolslist.pdf. Accessed 12 Apr 2013.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). (2008). *Becoming Asia literate. Implementation arrangements for the National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program*. http://foi.deewr.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/implementation_arrangements_for_the_national_asian_languages_and_studies_in_schools_program.pdf. Accessed 13 Mar 2013.

Erebus Consulting, Partners, Australia. Dept. of Education, Science, & Training. (2002). *Evaluation of the national Asian languages and studies in Australian schools strategy: A report to the Department of Education, Science and Training*. http://www1.curriculum.edu.au/nalsas/pdf/evaluation.pdf. Accessed 12 Apr 2013.

Group of Eight. (2012). *National trends in year 12 course completions*. Policy note number 6. http://www.go8.edu.au/__documents/go8-policy-analysis/2012/go8policynote6_year12completions.pdf. Accessed 12 Apr 2013.

Hiatt, B. (2012). Academics say schools are letting down kids. *The West Australian*. http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/-/breaking/12837959/academics-say-schools-are-letting-down-kids/. Accessed 3 May 3013.

Hill, D. T. (2011). Indonesian in Australian universities: A discussion paper. http://altcfellowship.murdoch.edu.au/Docs/ALTC_NTF_Discussion_Paper.pdf. Accessed 12 Apr 2013.

Liddicoat, Anthony J. 2010. Policy change and educational inertia: Language policy and language education in Australian schooling. In *Languages in Australian education: Problems, prospects and future directions*, ed. Anthony J. Liddicoat and Angela Scarino. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Liddicoat, A. J., & Scarino A. (Eds.). (2010). *Languages in Australian education: Problems, prospects and future directions*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Liddicoat, A. J., Scarino A., Curnow T., Kohler M., Scrimgeour A., & Morgan A.-M. (2007). *An investigation of the state and nature of languages in Australian schools*. Canberra: Report to Department of Education, Science and Training.

Lo Bianco, J. (2009). *Second languages and Australian schooling*. Victoria: ACER.

Nettlebeck, C. (2009). An analysis of retention strategies and technology enhanced learning in beginners' languages other than English (LOTE) at Australian universities. Canberra: Australian Academy of the Humanities. http://www.humanities.org.au/Portals/0/documents/Policy/Research/Languages/txt/BeginnersRetentionLASP2.pdf. Accessed 3 May 2013.

Northwood, B., & Thomson C. K. (2012). What keeps them going? Investigating ongoing learners of Japanese in Australian universities. *Japanese Studies*, 32, 335–355.

O'Keeffe, D. (2012). New strategy for Asia literacy: Garrett. *Campus Review,* 6 February. http://www.campusreview.com.au/blog/2012/02/new-strategy-for-asia-literacy-garrett/. Accessed 30 Apr 2013.

Orton, J. (2008). *Chinese language education in Australian schools*. Parkville: The University of Melbourne.

SACE Board. (2012a). SACE directions and actions. http://www.sace.sa.edu.au/documents/10336/699134/SACE+Directions+and+Actions.pdf. Accessed 10 Apr 2013.

SACE Board. (2012b). Evaluation panel. First year evaluation of the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE). Final report. http://www.sace.sa.edu.au/documents/10336/75239b10-acfe-425e-84f0-9cb88d8e2d08. Accessed 18 Aug 2013.

Scarino, A., Elder A., Iwashita N., Sun Hee Ok Kim, Kohler M., & Scrimgeour A. (2011). *Student achievement in Asian languages education*. Australian Government. http://www.saale.unisa.edu.au/doclib/Full_Report.pdf. Accessed 18 Aug 2013.

Tertiary Institutions Service Centre. (2013). Australian tertiary admission rank. Tertiary Institutions Service Centre. http://www.tisc.edu.au/static/guide/atar-about.tisc?cid=19358#tea. Accessed 18 Aug 2013

Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre. (2013). Year 12 and ATAR. http://www.vtac.edu.au/results-offers/y12-atar.html. Accessed 18 Aug 2013.

Chapter 13
Making Chinese Learnable for Beginning Second Language Learners?

Michael Singh and Cheryl Ballantyne

Abstract Making Chinese learnable for beginning second-language learners in English speaking countries is a fragile undertaking. Major pedagogical problems confront Chinese language teaching and learning. Teachers from China lack the necessary education for making Chinese learnable for many students, and in particular lack the knowledge for researching improvements to their own teaching. Consequently, teachers of Chinese can make learners feel the language is impossible to learn. In part, these pedagogical problems may be redressed through innovations in teacher-researcher education. Singh and Ballantyne report on a project which engages teacher-researchers from China in making Chinese learnable for monolingual English speaking primary and secondary school students.

Keywords Making Chinese learnable · Pedagogical problems · Chinese language teaching/learning · Teacher-researcher education · Language learnability · Intercultural learning · School retention strategies · School-engaged language education

13.1 Fragile China

From mid-2008 to 2012, 35 volunteer teacher-researchers from China have been helping stimulate the learning of Chinese in western Sydney schools. Making Chinese learnable for beginning second-language learners has been the bane of every one of them. This chapter indicates that there are several layers of learnability at stake in their work, not unlike the debates in the field at large (Bertolo 2001; Birdsong 2009). There is the prevailing managerial sense of learnability as providing for access to Chinese, and there is the more sophisticated psycho-linguistic sense of theorising

M. Singh (✉)
University of Western Sydney, Sydney, Australia
e-mail: m.j.singh@uws.edu.au

C. Ballantyne
NSW Department of Education and Communities, Sydney, Australia
e-mail: Cheryl.ballantyne@det.nsw.edu.au

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_13,

the cognitive processes involved in language learning. Our research takes an educational focus, investigating complex pedagogical triggers of learnability without reducing these to rationalistic mechanisms. Specifically, we are studying the volunteers as they learn to become teacher-researchers of Chinese through facilitating the learning of Chinese by monolingual English-speaking school learners who are just beginning to learn the target language. We use the terms 'volunteers' or 'volunteer teacher-researchers' for the university students, and 'learners' for school students. This is to distinguish between the multi-directional, intercultural flows of learning involved in the research reported here. This means that the contrasting direction of the intercultural flow for L2 learners is from their L1 English to Chinese, while for the volunteers it is from their L1 Chinese to English. Our research is concerned with the multi-directionality of these flows.

The challenges these volunteers face in making Chinese learnable are, however, not exceptional in countries where English is the pedagogical language of schooling (Zhang and Li 2010). In Australia, for instance, 94 % of English-speaking learners drop out of Chinese lessons before completing secondary school (Asia Education Foundation 2010; Orton 2008). The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) stated that the "uptake by second language [learners] remains fragile at all phases of [Australian] schooling" (ACARA 2011, p. 5). In New South Wales there is a major problem in the retention of second-language (L2) learners studying Chinese from primary to the end of secondary school. The learning of Chinese by English-speaking learners in Australia is as fragile as fine bone china.

Facilitating the learning of Chinese by beginning second-language learners in English-speaking school communities in a multilingual country such as Australia is a challenge. How to make Chinese *learnable* requires considerable research. To illuminate the issues, we examine a partnership-driven, teacher-researcher professional learning program for volunteer university graduates from Ningbo (China) who support the learning of Chinese in western Sydney (Australia). To avoid any misapprehensions, these 'volunteers' are higher-degree, teacher-research candidates and not fly-by-night backpackers. They undertake Australia's only 18 (MEd Hons) to 36 (Phd) month specialist higher degree research program in Chinese language teacher education. Can the 94 % drop-out rate be mitigated by volunteers engaging in teacher-research to stimulate Chinese learning for beginning second-language learners? Seeing the worldwide fever for learning Chinese language through a solitary grain is a useful way of research, similar to methods employed in many fields. Educational research is no exception. The New South Wales-Ningbo-Western Sydney Partnership, which entails a program of research-oriented school-engaged teacher education, is an instance of this larger phenomenon (NSW DEC 2012).

13.2 Pedagogical Problems of Learning Chinese

Governments around the world riding a policy-wave of Asia engagement, present the learning of Chinese as a life-boat for learners to better understand the currents making China a worldly presence. This is the key goal of the Australian

Government's unfunded program for *Australia in the Asian Century* (Australia in the Asian Century Task Force 2012)*;* ACARA's (2011) *Australian Curriculum on Languages*, and the New South Wales *Chinese K-10 Syllabus* (Board of Studies NSW 2003). The rising generation of children is expected to acquire the capabilities for networking with people around the world. This is a means to establishing person-to-person relationships of interdependence and trust with people previously seen as having cultural sensibilities unrelated to Australian children's everyday interests, and to consolidate these relationships over the long term (Asia Education Foundation 2011; DEEWR 2008; Singh 1995). Such trust-based networking has the advantage of securing fine-grained, credible information to counteract inaccurate cultural misconceptions.

While the policy-wave increases, teachers struggle against unfathomable currents of high drop-out rates, as L2 learners continuously retreat to English as their haven. This is not unlike the situation for Chinese language education in the UK. Our analysis of Zhang and Li's (2010) report identifies an interrelated series of key problems. This includes the failure to mobilise the educational interests of beginning L2 learners; the failure to address their needs for rewarding or successful learning experiences, and the failure to meet the requirement to sustain their desire for learning Chinese. Table 13.1 highlights the need for pedagogical research rather than further work in theoretical linguistics and modelling of language acquisition. Pedagogy, working out how to enable L2 learners to learn Chinese, is the domain of inquiry of primary concern to teacher-researchers.

Like many teachers of Chinese in English-speaking countries, the New South Wales-Ningbo-Western Sydney volunteers have not had the professional education needed to counteract the high drop-out rate among L2 learners. Prior to their arrival in Australia, they have not acquired the professional knowledge, skills or stance to work as bilingual teacher-researchers (Singh and Cui 2011).

Australia cannot continue to ignore the problems relating to the learning of Chinese that result in high rates of dissatisfaction and attrition among L2 learners. The New South Wales-Ningbo-Western Sydney research-oriented, school-engaged teacher education program is a direct response to these challenges.

This Partnership trains the volunteers to be bilingual teacher-researchers whose focus is on supporting school communities in developing 'school retention strategies'. Such strategies are defined as the most successful changes that schools produce in an organised, collaborative manner to address the problems of sustaining the retention of beginning L2 learners' learning Chinese throughout Years K–12. Working within an integrative framework, three interrelated and overlapping areas provide the focus for 'school retention strategies' (Haché 2001; Jones 2012).

We see learnability linked to strategies for effecting retention. We have identified three interrelated components to the pedagogical triggers likely to make Chinese learnable. These concern L2 learners' everyday language uses in their local sociocultural environment and both the restrictions and the enabling conditions for learning the target language. In this instance, a key question is what is the *status* of Chinese in local English-speaking school communities and how can this be enhanced? Exactly what aspects of the target language can beginners learn in this context? That is, what is the *corpus* (input) of Chinese that can be made learnable for emergent

Table 13.1 Major pedagogical problems with Chinese language education in the UK. (Source: Adapted from Zhang and Li 2010)

Areas of pedagogical concern	Key pedagogical questions
Learners' responses	Find Chinese difficult to learn and less than rewarding, and are made "to feel that Chinese is inaccessible and impossible to learn" (Zhang and Li 2010, p. 93)
Teachers	Lack capability to adapt existing materials or to create their own materials to meet the learning needs of L2 learners
	Few qualified teachers of Chinese, and few have formal teacher education in the UK
	Lack the necessary education in Chinese and second-language learning
Teacher-research and debate	Teachers unequipped with knowledge and skills for researching their own teaching
	Learning of Chinese in the UK not well researched, and there is a need for research and debate about appropriate Chinese language content and methods, as well as professional learning
	Lack of research and debate concerning learning of Chinese
Methods, materials and textbooks	Designed from the point of view of the Chinese language itself rather than the needs of beginning L2 learners
	Give little consideration to how L2 learners would use Chinese in the local environment, where there is limited exposure to the language
	Are not based upon research into how L1 English learners learn Chinese
	Are not designed with regard to the British context
Syllabus	Inadequate for meeting "the needs and objectives of … how L1 English speakers learn Chinese" (Zhang and Li 2010, p. 92)
Tests	Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (Chinese Proficiency Test) has been in the UK for two decades, but the annual number of candidates is never more than 200
Coordination	Lack of "cooperation between various organisations and institutions" (Zhang and Li 2010, p. 95)

learners? What professional stance, methods, materials and conditions can enable successful learning of the target language? Successful *acquisition* is judged in terms of mobilising L2 learners' interests, creating a sense of reward and forming a desire for continued learning of Chinese. School-based organizational learning and change over time is integral to these concerns. Minimally, this means using the designated time for Chinese lessons for the purpose of learning forms of Chinese that L2 learners can actually use in their local environment at other times, and thereby extending the time invested in learning Chinese.

Thus, along with the volunteer teacher-researchers, we are researching three interrelated 'school retention strategies'. *Status strategies* refer to the ways in which schools and teachers work to increase the learning and use of Chinese, and thus increase the value of Chinese in their community. The presumed global dominance of English presents a key challenge of raising the status of Chinese in many English-speaking countries. Status strategies concern providing the means, through the exercise of power and control of resources, to realise each school's proposed retention strategies, and includes planning itself as a key aspect of the prestige of Chinese. *Corpus strategies* concern the relationship between L2 and L1, and comprise the development of a professional stance and methods for transfer from the learners' L1 to the L2 by engaging local sociolinguistic practices. *Acquisition strategies* concern developing teachers' knowledge, skills and professional stance with respect to Chinese as a second language, through evidence-driven, theoretically informed research.

13.2.1 Sino–Australian Characteristics of Chinese Learnability

The Partnership between the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities, the Ningbo Municipal Education Bureau and the University of Western Sydney is a transnational, multi-level, inter-organisational innovation for increasing the learning of Chinese. The Chinese Government's project of making Chinese a world language is integral to the creation of this Sino–Australian network of Chinese language education (Zhao and Huang 2010). The New South Wales-Ningbo-Western Sydney volunteers are part of the world-wide explosion in the provision of Chinese language education through connections among education systems, universities and schools.

In 2006, a disparate group of educational organisations, learners, parents, school teachers and university teacher-researchers from China and Australia took the first tentative steps in establishing Chinese learning as a priority in participating schools for the period 2008–2013. Since then the New South Wales-Ningbo-Western Sydney Partnership has been extended for another 5 years. Important for sustaining this partnership has been the continuing expansion of this network, adding connections via sister-school relationships, cultural exchanges and field placements by Australian teacher education candidates. Orton (2008, p. 21) judged this Partnership as being an "enormously positive collaboration [that] has [been] engendered between all involved in the schools, the Regional Office, the University and the very outgoing Chinese participants themselves." However, this venture in networking education has not been fixed or even crystallised.

The first seven university graduates from Ningbo arrived in Sydney in mid-2008 to undertake a Master of Education (Honours) research degree at the University of Western Sydney. The significance of their program of teacher-researcher education is captured in the New South Wales Government's (2012, p. 5) discussion paper, *Great teaching, inspired learning,* namely, that "high performing [education] systems build into their teaching degrees and career professional development a requirement for rigorous and continuous research". This Partnership aims to produce well-qualified teacher-researchers who can contribute to the evidence-driven development of new knowledge about pedagogies of learnability.

Through the work of volunteer teacher-researchers the Partnership brings together two world languages, English and Chinese. Although 38 % of learners in western Sydney speak a language in addition to English, mostly Asian or Pacifika languages, the schools necessarily assign the highest status to English. We prepare the volunteers to work in schools by providing them with a theoretic-pedagogical framework as a basis for reworking their professional stance and creating methods and materials to use in teaching for transfer from English to Chinese. Central to this framing for making Chinese learnable is the volunteers' ethnographic investigation of learners' local, every day, recurring uses of English. From this evidence volunteers establish how and why such sociolinguistic practices can be used to have learners learn Chinese during lessons—and afterwards. Integral to this framework is developing their knowledge by experimenting with teaching/learning strategies that use the sociolinguistic and cultural similarities between English and Chinese to facilitate learning (cf. Ringbom 2007; Ringbom and Jarvis 2009).

The total number of volunteer teacher-researchers who have participated in the Western Sydney–Ningbo Partnership over 5 years (35) falls short of the initial agreement of ten volunteers per cohort. The Ningbo Municipal Education Bureau's inability to provide ten new volunteers each year has impacted on the level of support provided to schools. This has been particularly evident as interest in the Partnership has grown and the number of schools wishing to participate has increased. Whilst other Chinese education bureaus have been invited to participate in the Partnership by sponsoring graduates and/or experienced teachers to undertake the program, to date no firm undertaking has been made. This remains an ongoing challenge.

13.2.2 Challenges in Making Chinese Australian

The analysis of primary evidence collected during the first 5 years of the New South Wales-Ningbo-Western Sydney Partnership identified directions for better educating novice teacher-researchers so they can make positive contributions to Chinese language learning in Australian schools (Ballantyne 2012a). The analysis presented below provides some insights into the development of the volunteers as teacher-researchers and their efforts to teach Chinese to L2 learners in western Sydney schools.

13.2.3 Developments in Making Chinese Learnable

Here we summarise our analysis of key developments in what the Western Sydney–Ningbo Partnership has achieved in stimulating the learning of Chinese. Each year the Partnership has generated increases in the number of learners learning Chinese. For instance, in 2012, the number of learners studying Chinese in 17 western Sydney primary schools was 4,271, an increase from 4,017 in 2011 and 3,989 in 2010. The majority of primary learners learning Chinese are being supported by volunteers working with non-Chinese-speaking teachers. The Partnership has also generated interest in Chinese language in participating high schools, especially in Years 7 and 8. In 2012, 1,454 learners in 12 western Sydney high schools were learning Chinese, an increase from 1,358 in 2011, 931 in 2010 and 876 in 2009. Of the learners studying Chinese in high schools, 1,256 were in eight high schools participating in the Partnership. This increase in numbers of learners studying Chinese has been complemented by positive school community interest in the volunteer program (Ballantyne 2012b).

Analysis of self-evaluation data from participating schools reveals that primary schools value the regular exposure to Chinese language and culture provided by volunteers. Secondary schools value the volunteers as 'authentic' cultural and linguistic role models who provide current knowledge about popular culture in China and support for teachers of Chinese to Years 7–10.

Analysis of interviews conducted with volunteers indicates their emphasis on their own professional learning as teacher-researchers and the formation of strong professional networks. They report that evidence-driven, theoretically informed school/university integrated education is a major driver of their professional learning in becoming teacher-researchers of Chinese in Australia. The evidentiary basis of their learning includes critical self-reflection, observation of experienced teachers, and mentoring relationships, along with feedback and advice from teachers, supervisors and colleagues.

13.2.4 Issues in Making Chinese Learnable

The volunteers' theses, the interview data, observations of their participation in weekly teacher-researcher training workshops and seminars, and documents indicating partner organisations' future projections have been analysed. This analysis reveals concerns relating to learning cultures, pedagogical issues, and the volunteers' use of their intercultural development to inform their teaching. Each of these issues is examined below.

13.3 Learning Cultures

In the initial months of their 18-month MEd (Hons) program, volunteers are challenged by the educational cultures of western Sydney schools and classrooms. Analysis of evidence from interviews with volunteers, as well as their theses, suggests they focus initially on their own professional self-learning. This is typical of beginning teachers, who gradually shift from a focus on themselves, to what they have to teach, and then to the needs and interests of learners.

Evidence of this transformation is provided in the thesis of Chen (2011, p. 6), whose culture of learning was confronted by western Sydney classrooms.

> What I saw was that the dignity of the teacher and teaching was greatly challenged, which in turn challenged my moral and professional understanding of being a teacher.

Three critical incidents transformed her professional stance. The first problematic instance, relating to classroom management, arose from a:

> … lack of familiarity with how Australian [learners] behave in schools and … I lacked experience in managing [learner] behaviour—I shifted my traditional Chinese‘ beliefs of classroom management to adapt to the Australian classroom context. (Chen 2011, p. xii)

The second critical instance arose from a:

> … lack of experience with planning and preparing lessons without a fixed and mandatory textbook context. … My memories of the experience of learning in high schools are dominated by textbooks (Chen 2011, pp. xii, 3)

Many volunteers long for textbooks to provide a sequential course and methods they assume, from their own school experiences in China, to be effective for second-language learning. The disciplined concentration on teaching, rather than learning, is secured through textbook-centred interaction. Textbooks, rote learning and memorisation feature highly in their views—*jiao shu* (teach the book) balanced by *yu ren* (cultivate people) (Jin and Cortazzi 2006). The third source of perturbation came from the:

> … realisation that my teaching strategies were not helping my learners learn Mandarin … realised the need to develop my understandings of Western pedagogy to improve the learners' learning outcomes. (Chen 2011, p. xiii)

It is not surprising that the volunteers' experiences reflect the key challenges identified by Chinese graduates undertaking the practicum during their teacher education in Australia:

1. Unfamiliarity with Australian cultures of learning
2. Perceived low levels of learner motivation
3. The consequent additional responsibilities required in planning in order to engage [learners]
4. The need to see language learning from the learner's perspective rather than from the teacher's first language perspective
5. The difficulties in teaching the first language in the second language, English (Scrimgeour 2010, p. 130).

Evidence of Chen's (2011) professional learning moved from learning to motivate local L2 learners through modelling herself on the behaviours of local classroom teachers, to navigating management strategies appropriate to Australian learning cultures. Through studying appreciative learning methods she succeeded in managing in-class learning behaviours and building a productive rapport with them. Jin and Cortazzi (2006, p. 9) define 'culture of learning' as

> … taken for granted frameworks of expectations, attitudes, values and beliefs about how to teach or learn successfully and about how to use talk in interaction, among other aspects of learning.

The volunteer teacher-researchers' initial expectations about learning Chinese as a second language in Australia are necessarily informed by the learning cultures in China (Li 2010; Wu 2010; Chen 2011). There, second language teaching is characterised by mass learning, the disciplined, concentrated attention of learners, and the high pace and intensity of teacher-centred interaction (Jin and Cortazzi 2006).

13.4 Pedagogical Issues

Volunteer teacher-researchers' initial understandings of pedagogy lack any sense of learner-centred teaching and learning, the importance of scaffolding in lesson design, formative and summative assessment strategies, program planning, and behaviour management strategies. Moreover, they arrive equipped with cultural activities at hand to share with learners, for example calligraphy and kite-making. Such activities provide western Sydney learners and school teachers with rich and valuable experiences of a static view of Chinese culture. Incorporating a dynamic, contemporary view of culture—especially the doing ordinary, everyday twenty-first century Chinese culture entails (Sacks 1984)—in volunteers' Chinese language teaching, has been challenging for a number of reasons.

A static view of Chinese culture comes through the *International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education* (ICCLE) (Hanban 2008). Many volunteers have been trained in its delivery and regard it as a reliable source to inform their pedagogical content knowledge and practices. This is indicative of the increasing influence on Chinese language education internationally of the marketing of Chinese language and culture by the Office of Chinese Language Council International. Part of China's strategic 'opening up' to the West is the rapid increase of Confucius Institutes throughout the world. Zhao and Huang (2010) argue that these Institutes provide Hanban with a means for establishing ownership of the pedagogy of Chinese language and culture education. This entails the world-wide dissemination of Chinese language materials and textbooks, and the increase in opportunities for volunteers to teach Chinese around the world.

This has been compounded by the language methodology training volunteers received during their first semester of school experience. This training concentrated on a communicative approach to language teaching, which not surprisingly, many volunteers made the focus of their research. However, communicative activities provided important survival skills and understandings to volunteers, "dropped in the deep end" in challenging western Sydney classrooms.

To address these pedagogical challenges, successive cohorts of volunteer teacher-researchers have engaged in reading, reflecting and discussing the difference between dynamic and static views of culture (Liddicoat 2002; Scarino and Liddicoat 2009). Through these conceptual tools they debate the pedagogies used by teachers who speak Chinese and their suitability for the learning needs and interests of Australian L2 learners. The challenge for volunteers is to develop an intercultural orientation to language learning in preference to the pedagogies they acquired in China as a basis for their work in schools.

13.5 Volunteers' Own Intercultural Learning

Volunteers' theses contain accounts of their intercultural development of English-in-use in Australia. This is exemplified by the reflections of Li (2010, p. 200) on classroom practice from February 2009:

> When [learners] said ‘dao’ clearly and correctly, I appreciated their first good try and wanted to encourage them. However I found that I could only say ‘good’ and ‘great’. I found that I could not give [learners] immediate and suitable (English and Aussie like) comments, such as fantastic, brilliant, fabulous when they did what I told them, because it was hard for me to express these words that were too emotional for me … I felt strange and uncomfortable when I spoke like this although I knew it was a normal expression for English speakers ….

In September, 2009, her reflection on a speech she delivered to a visiting delegation of Chinese educators stated:

> My presentation was in Chinese. Since university I have not given a presentation in Chinese. I was used to doing English presentations and using English expression in the presentation. But this time, in order to show our respect, we decided to give a Chinese presentation.
> Then I found a strange thing. I had grown used to using some emotional word in English, such as appreciate, amazing, fantastic, dear, sincere, and so forth. I was used to expressing my thoughts. However, when I had to say similar things in Chinese, I felt really strange and awkward. Why did I feel this way? Then I realised, in Chinese culture, people are not used to expressing feelings like this. We feel uncomfortable saying “I love you”, “I miss you”, or offering praise publicly. Some words that are common in English made me feel weird in Chinese.
> … when people are learning a foreign language, it is inevitable for them to learn about and adapt to the related culture. I have learned English for a long time. But before I went to Australia to teach I did not feel this because I did not actually use this language when I was in China, even though I studied at an English-speaking university. However, when I started teach here, I had to use English and learn how to speak or use it in an English way. I gradually got used to these expressions and thought it was common to hear emotional words.
> When I was saying those words and expressing in an English way, I did not treat myself as the same person who speaks Mandarin. As I was talking in English, I set up a different scene for myself, so that I could behave or even think in a more English way. So I could express this in English but I felt strange expressing it in Mandarin. (Li 2010, pp. 203–204)

Volunteer teacher-researchers’ reflections on their intercultural experience and learning of English-in-use in Australia provide powerful intellectual engagement with the dynamics of culture, and the interrelationship between culture and language. Li’s reflections describe her development of intercultural competence (Liddicoat 2005, 2008; Lo Bianco et al. 1999). This includes noticing and comparing cultural perspectives in Chinese and English, evaluating her own use of English in China and in Australia, and recognising her own development of the bilingual ability to use English appropriately in intercultural situations. Transferring this learning to volunteers’ work as teacher-researchers is, however, an ongoing challenge. Determinations about what *Chinese language* beginning L2 learners are to study—and how—and whether they will retain their desire to learn it until the end of Year 12—are the subject of informed scholarly disputation. Based on the foregoing account and related research (Han 2012; Han and Yao 2012), the following section outlines the proposed reconstruction of the New South Wales-Ningbo-Western Sydney Partnership over the next 5 years.

13.6 Reconstructing Efforts to Make Chinese Learnable

A strong and enduring partnership has been established between the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities; the Ningbo Municipal Education Bureau and the University of Western Sydney. To date this Partnership has provided volunteers a collaborative school/department/university program of education in second-language learning and classroom-based teacher-research to stimulate the learning of Chinese in participating schools. In July 2012, the Partners renewed their commitment, signing a new Memorandum of Understanding and extending the current project to 2017. Renewal of the Partnership provides opportunities to reconstruct the conceptual design for supporting volunteers' contributions to Chinese language education for beginning L2 learners, and strengthening the focus on the retention of learners of Chinese. Embedded within these plans are findings from the project to date.

13.6.1 Strengthening School Retention Strategies

A 94 % drop-out rate (Asia Education Foundation 2010; Orton 2008) and a raft of challenges in making Chinese learnable for English-speaking learners (Zhang and Li 2010) call for research into creative approaches to strengthening school retention strategies. The corrosive effects of current strategies on L2 learners' interests and sense of reward from learning Chinese (see Table 13.1), require school-based organizational strategies that will enhance parents' and teachers' expectations about their children learning Chinese. Helpful though they may be, more contextual studies of L2 education are unlikely to directly address pedagogical issues of learnability. For instance, analysis of macro-level governmental policy-making (Baldauf 2008; Jones 2012) or micro-level interpretation of these policies by school language-education planners (Freeman 1996) will not directly help in this regard. Given the vagueness of Government language policy, school-engaged teacher-researcher studies are necessary to address the ways in which local school requirements and organizational learning affect strategies for making space for L2 education across the year levels, in the face of high stakes demands in areas such as literacy and numeracy testing. Our immediate focal point will be the transition from primary to secondary school.

Over the next 5 years volunteers will identify, investigate and support school strategies to improve L2 learners' retention with respect to learning Chinese. They will contribute to research-based knowledge about integrated strategies that address the status, corpus and acquisition of Chinese, to bring about changes in L2 learners learning Chinese across the school years. A particular research focus will be the transition from primary to secondary school.

Future research will build upon the findings from the first cycle of inquiry. Volunteers will be encouraged to investigate the effect on beginning L2 learners' retention of their personal professional stance, methods and associated curriculum materials. The volunteers will (1) employ a research-based understanding of learners' everyday uses of English within and outside school; (2) focus on methods that use the sociolinguistic and cultural similarities between Chinese and English to teach the target language, and (3) be informed by careful consideration to how beginning L2 learners use Chinese in local sociolinguistic and cultural practices. This is unlike studies which spotlight the linguistic features of Chinese, emphasise the linguistic differences between L1 and L2, and adopt an exclusive focus on the use of Chinese in China.

The next 50 volunteer teacher-researchers have an increasing wealth of evidence-driven, theoretically informed studies to inform their decisions about what *Chinese language* to teach western Sydney's L2 learners. Volunteers' theses provide an important archive in this regard, as well as detailed methods for generating rigorous and credible evidence. Of particular importance will be their 'development-research-redevelopment' of methods that engage local sociolinguistic practices and use the learners' L1 in learning Chinese (Cummins 2008; Hornberger and Link 2012; Koda and Zehler 2008; Littlewood and Yu 2011).

13.6.2 Chinese in Australia Language Education

A 'Chinese in Australia Language Education' Program has now been jointly developed by the Department of Education and Communities and the University of Western Sydney. The Program, which commenced in 2012, replaces the Department's Language Teaching Methodology Program. The Program supports volunteer teacher-researchers exploring the use of learners' L1 (English) for learning the target language (Chinese). Pedagogically, this means teaching for transfer between the learners' L1 to the L2. To demonstrate what 'teaching for transfer' (Cummins 2008) means for using learners' L1 (English) to learn L2 (Chinese), the volunteers are explicitly encouraged to use their L1 (Chinese) in learning concepts presented in their L2 (English) (Singh and Cui 2011). For instance, to develop their understanding of 'personal, professional stance' (Scarino and Liddicoat 2009), and what is meant by teaching for transfer, they are asked to express this concept in Chinese (职业观). 'Professional' may be expressed as 职业, which means 'occupation, profession'. The concept of 观 "guan" has two parts, 又 and 见 meaning 'to see again', which together may be translated as perspective, stance or viewpoint. In this way volunteers develop a better understanding of both 'personal, professional stance' and the value of using learners' English to learn Chinese.

This Program aims to strengthen volunteers' understanding of and engagement with research into intercultural language learning. Preparing volunteers to assist schools in the development and delivery of *Chinese language* programs requires them to understand a dynamic view of culture. Moreover, given the 94 % drop-out rate (Asia Education Foundation 2010; Orton 2008) and problems in making Chinese learnable for English-speaking learners (Zhang and Li 2010) there is no 'one best practice' of second language learning. The volunteers' educational program prepares them to implement learning and assessment strategies using resources that are explicitly related to this orientation to L2 learning. To increase the learnability of Chinese for beginning L2 learners, and thus the sense of reward gained through successful learning, volunteers use L1 sound associations and linguistic borrowings in Chinese to increase learners' vocabulary development. Volunteers also learn to link their teaching to the learners' interests, stages of learning and the Key Learning Areas that are the focus of current curricula. To support these activities volunteers learn to use a range of authentic materials such as web-based, virtual and visual texts to portray twenty-first century everyday Chinese culture. Likewise, by using language learning games, gestures and small group interactive tasks they learn to stimulate and enhance the success of learners' L2 learning. The volunteers' formative and summative assessment strategies include learner self-assessment, monitoring learners' L2 learning and observing their intercultural competence.

The Chinese in Australia Language Education Program is informed by a theoretic-pedagogical framework based on intercultural language learning theory. At the core of the support provided to volunteers are weekly tutorials where they explicitly discuss their diarised observations and reflections on their intercultural and sociolinguistic encounters in western Sydney. These are compared and contrasted with their understanding of similar situations in Chinese cultures.

For the volunteers, their education as teacher-researchers in western Sydney engages them in dynamic pedagogical processes that develop their professional intercultural and sociolinguistic competence in English and Chinese (Singh and Cui 2011). They are challenged to explore language/culture as interrelated and inseparable, language being the vehicle through which cultural practices are defined, described, developed and changed. Intercultural dynamics engaged in through volunteers' experiences, observations and reflections are used as evidence for analysis in their theses. They explore social, cultural and linguistic similarities, comparisons and contrasts using their knowledge of Chinese and English. In particular, the differences and similarities in the 'cultures of learning' (Jin and Cortazzi 2006) in Sydney and Ningbo are subject to close examination based on evidence collected through extended periods of classroom observations prior to teaching, and discussion with teaching colleagues, school-based supervisors and university educators.

Volunteers are guided through an exploration of their learners' local sociolinguistic practices in English, to stimulate their consideration of the Chinese language and culture that will interest and engage western Sydney learners. This involves consideration of learners' ages and stages of L2 learning; ways of increasing time-on-task through extra-curricular learning experiences, as well as ways to integrate current classroom learning activities into their own Chinese learning programs. Strategies for assessment, learning of Chinese language, the integration of culture in language learning, and materials for increasing the learnability of Chinese for L2 learners are also explored (Ballantyne 2012a).

The approach to making Chinese learnable adopted in this Program focuses on redeploying Chinese in local sociolinguistic practices where English is otherwise used by learners. Integral to this is an emphasis on using learners' existing interests to frame making the learning of Chinese a successful experience. This is in preference to a stance or methods that prioritise the linguistic structures of Chinese or communicative processes.

13.7 Conclusion

At the beginning of our research collaboration in 2006 we were concerned about pedagogical questions relating to the learning of Chinese, as an enabling condition, for beginning L2 learners to learn this language. This entails making Chinese an Australian language in schools which use English-only pedagogies. We confided in each other to being equally perturbed by the emphasis on the linguistic differences between Chinese and English. Now we are particularly troubled by the fixation on Chinese linguistics as the only source of knowledge about methods for teaching Chinese. This is only a part of the knowledge L2 teacher-researchers require for educational decisions about how to make Chinese learnable for beginning L2 learners in western Sydney, if not in English speaking countries more generally. We do not see methods such as these as vehicles for realising Australian or Chinese government policies for increasing Chinese language learning in this country.

Over the years we discovered that neither of us has any enthusiasm for a professional stance, methods or materials that begin from the presupposition that Chinese is difficult for foreigners to learn, and which then proceed to make learning Chinese unrewarding for beginning L2 learners. To us, such approaches to Chinese language education seem to provide the basis for self-fulfilling prophecies that 'justify' the failure of L2 learners' learning of the target language. Our inclination is to see the problems of making Chinese learnable reside, in part by teacher-researchers' use of enabling pedagogies and their personal professional stance. Our focus on 'school retention strategies' addresses pedagogical questions of learnability, namely: (1) what 'Chinese' can beginning L2 learners learn; (2) what uses can they make of this 'Chinese' locally; (3) how can teacher-researchers help them in doing so, and (4) and what might explain why this makes Chinese learnable.

However, as we began to work together on the New South Wales-Ningbo-Western Sydney Partnership, somewhere along the line we started to have the teacher-researchers consider how Chinese could be relevant to the local sociolinguistic practices of L2 learners in Western Sydney. Learning always requires time. In particular, we shared approaches that use learners' knowledge of English to learn Chinese. We agreed to being fans of methods and curriculum materials that are grounded in research-based understandings of how L2 learners actually learn Chinese, and less concerned with abstract linguistic theories.

In giving form and substance to the New South Wales-Ningbo-Western Sydney Partnership we have seen the volunteer teacher-researchers from China succeed, learn how to use their bilingual communicative capabilities and engage in open-minded discussions. Like the volunteers, we too have adjusted to working with each other, and other people and situations without being held back by timidity, rigidity or mistrust. For these young Chinese volunteers their teacher-research opens up the prospects for substantial economic, social, cultural and geographic mobility.

We hope this account of our travails provides warrant for our novel approach to the education of bilingual teacher-researchers and development of 'school retention strategies.' Given the conditions under which Chinese language education occurs, researching pedagogy is no trivial matter. Having exposed our substantive assumptions, these ideas may also help others in similar circumstances increase the number of L2 learners studying Chinese from primary through to the end of secondary school.

References

ACARA. (2011). *Shape of the Australian curriculum: Languages*. Sydney: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.

Asia Education Foundation. (2010). *The current state of Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean language education in Australian schools*. Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Asia Education Foundation. (2011). *National statement on Asia literacy in Australian schools 2011–2012*. Melbourne: The University of Melbourne.

Australia in the Asian Century Task Force. (2012). *Australia in the Asian century: White Paper.* Canberra: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. http://asiancentury.dpmc.gov.au/white-paper. Accessed 19 Aug 2013.

Baldauf, R. (2008). Rearticulating the case for micro language planning in a language ecology context. In A. J. Liddicoat & R. Baldauf (Eds.), *Language planning in local contexts* (pp. 18–41). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Ballantyne, C. (2012a). *Chinese native-speaker volunteers' contributions to the teaching and learning of Chinese as a second language in Australian schools.* Unpublished report, NSW Department of Education and Communities, Western Sydney Region.

Ballantyne, C. (2012b). *Teaching Chinese to L2 students in western Sydney.* Unpublished presentation, University of Western Sydney and Monash University Joint Symposium.

Bertolo, S. (Ed.). (2001). *Language acquisition and learnability*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Birdsong, D. (2009). Uninterpretable features: Psychology and plasticity in second language learnability. *Second Language Research, 25,* 235–243.

Board of Studies, NSW. (2003). *K–10 Chinese syllabus*. Sydney: The Board.

Chen, H. (2011). *A Chinese beginning teacher's professional identity transformation.* Unpublished M.Ed (Hons.) thesis, University of Western Sydney.

Cummins, J. (2008). Teaching for transfer. In J. Cummins & N. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education* (2nd ed., Vol. 5, pp. 65–75). Dordrecht: Springer.

DEEWR. (2008). *Becoming Asia literate*. Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Freeman, R. (1996). Dual-language planning at Oyster bilingual school. *TESOL Quarterly, 30,* 557–582.

Haché, D. (2001). The ethnolinguistic profile of a Franco-Ontarian school board. *Language, culture and curriculum, 14,* 112–129.

Han, J. (2012). How critical information literacy challenges Chinese international research students. *Local global: Identity, security, community, 9,* 110–126.

Han, J., & Yao, J. (2012). Reflections on the teaching of English academic writing. *Journal of Hebei University, 37,* 133–138.

Hanban. (2008). *International curriculum for Chinese language education* (English ed.). Beijing: Foreign Languages Teaching and Research Press.

Hornberger, N., & Link, H. (2012). Translanguaging and transnational literacies in multilingual classrooms. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 15,* 261–278.

Jin, L., & Cortazzi, M. (2006). Changing practices in Chinese cultures of learning. *Language, Culture and Curriculum, 19,* 5–20.

Jones, J. (2012). Language at the brink of conflict. *Language Policy, 11,* 119–143.

Koda, K., & Zehler, A. (2008). Conceptualising reading universals, cross-linguistic variations, and second language literacy development. In K. Koda & A. Zehler (Eds.), *Learning to read across languages* (pp. 1–9). New York: Routledge.

Li, Y. (2010). *Constructing the identity of a Mandarin teacher in Australia.* Unpublished M.Ed (Hons.) thesis, University of Western Sydney.

Liddicoat, A. J. (2002). Static and dynamic views of culture and intercultural language acquisition. *Babel, 36*(3), 4–11.

Liddicoat, A. J. (2005). Teaching languages for intercultural communication. In D. E. Ingram & D. Cunningham (Eds.), *An international perspective on language policies, practices and proficiencies* (pp. 201–214). Belgrave: Federation Internationales des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes.

Liddicoat, A. J. (2008). Pedagogical practice for integrating the intercultural in language teaching and learning. *Japanese Studies, 28,* 277–290.

Littlewood, W., & Yu, B. (2011). First language and target language in the foreign language classroom. *Language Teaching, 44,* 64–77.

Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J., & Crozet, C. (1999). *Striving for the third place*. Canberra: National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia.

New South Wales (NSW) Government. (2012). *Great teaching, inspired learning*. Discussion paper. Sydney: NSW Government. http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/news/greatteaching/gtil.pdf. Accessed 18 Aug 2013.

NSW DEC. (2012). *Western Sydney Region strategic plan 2012–2014*. Sydney: NSW DEC.

Orton, J. (2008). *Chinese language education in Australian schools*. Melbourne: The University of Melbourne.

Ringbom, H. (2007). *Cross-linguistic similarity in foreign language learning*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Ringbom, H., & Jarvis, S. (2009). The importance of cross-linguistic similarity in foreign language learning. In M. Long & C. Doughty (Eds.), *The Handbook of language teaching* (pp. 106–118). London: Blackwell.

Sacks, H. (1984). On doing "being ordinary". In J. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of social interaction* (pp. 413–429). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scarino, A., & Liddicoat, A. J. (2009). *Teaching and learning languages.* Carlton South: Curriculum Corporation.

Scrimgeour, A. (2010). The yin and yang of Chinese language teaching in Australia. In A. J. Liddicoat, & A. Scarino (Eds.), *Languages in Australian education* (pp. 127–143). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Singh, M. (1995). Edward Said's critique of orientalism and Australia's 'Asia literacy' curriculum. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 27,* 599–620.

Singh, M., & Cui, G. (2011). Internationalising western doctoral education through bilingual research literacy. *Pertanika Journal Society Science and Humanities, 19,* 535–545.

Wu, T. (2010). *Teacher engagement in second language (L2) classrooms: Teacher-as-researcher.* Unpublished M.Ed (Hons.) thesis, University of Western Sydney.

Zhang, G., & Li, L. (2010). Chinese language teaching in the UK. *The Language Learning Journal, 38,* 87–97.

Zhao, H., & Huang, J. (2010). China's policy of Chinese as a foreign language and the use of overseas Confucius Institutes. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice, 9,* 127–142.

Part III
Tensions in the Linguistic Space

Chapter 14
Tensions in the Linguistic Space

Anthony J. Liddicoat

Abstract This chapter examines some of the significant issues that emerge from a consideration of language in education policies in the Asian-Pacific region. The chapter identifies a number of areas in which significant tensions exist between languages and speakers. It argues that, in the language ecologies of the region, policies create a contestation for space that privilege some languages, and their speakers, and marginalise others. This contestation for space relates to issues such the place of linguistic variation, questions of ownership, the identity positions of various types of speakers and the articulation between policy and practice. These contestations have implications for linguistic diversity in the region as policies seeks to reduce diversity.

Keywords Language policy · Language ecology · Language education · Linguistic diversity · Multilingualism · Language and identity · Standard languages · Linguistic variation

14.1 Introduction

The title of this paper presupposes an ecological metaphor of the coexistence of languages in societies and for speakers. This metaphor provides a useful entry point for investigating the ways that languages exist as social phenomena. It allows languages to be seen as existing within a linguistic space that is bounded and finite and in which languages influence each other in complex, and often competing, ways. This paper will review the educational contexts discussed in this volume in order to identify a number of tensions that exist within the linguistic space. It will argue that the linguistic space is a contested space and it is a space in which values and ideologies are always at play and languages compete for symbolic power. The constraining of diversity within the linguistic space of education creates a contested space

A. J. Liddicoat (✉)
University of South Australia, Box 2471, Adelaide, South Australia
e-mail: tony.liddicoat@unisa.edu.au

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9, 217
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3_14,

in which languages and their speakers can either win or lose and such winning or losing results from the ideologies of value that exist in that space.

14.2 Standardisation and Variation in Language

Language education, by its very nature, interacts with questions of language standardisation in that it is based on the teaching of prescriptions about language based on standardised varieties (Liddicoat and Curnow 2003). The prescriptive orientation of language education is, however, challenged in the case of pluricentric languages, where multiple standards may exist. This issue of multiple standards has long been an issue in the teaching of English, where two dominant standard varieties—US and UK English—and a number of less dominant varieties—Australian, Canadian, New Zealand, South African Englishes—compete as potential targets for learners. There is a parallel tension between global and local English and between Asian languages as local and international languages. Asian languages, especially Chinese with its varying standards in mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, do have an international role that creates possible tensions and conflicts in educational contexts because of the diversity that exists within these languages. Tensions caused by diversity appear to become particularly salient when the language moves beyond its local contexts and enters the international field.

These standards themselves are abstractions and the process of labelling languages, for example as the English language or as American English, British English, etc., represents an ideological construction of linguistic uniformity (Pennycook and Makoni 2007) that masks the actual variability that exists within standard varieties and fails to acknowledge that the boundaries between standard and non-standard varieties are actually quite porous in the language use of speakers. Such complexities of language are glossed over by language teaching, which has tended to present standard varieties as complete and unproblematic instantiations of language that language learners are expected to assimilate into their linguistic repertoire. This problem is not unique to English: it can also apply to other languages, especially pluricentric languages. The entities that people name as languages are not as solid and as fixed as they are represented as being and instead they are fluid and highly variable. The naming of a language is in effect an attempt to categorise and delimit aspects of linguistic practice that are fundamentally varied and variable. The naming of languages casts a language as a singular entity—the English language, the Chinese language, etc. and effectively masks the underlying internal plurality of languages.

The ideology of standard languages persists extremely strongly, and particularly in the area of education. The problem that education has with diversity is not actually new and it is not unique to English. Language education has always had problems with diversity, especially with stylistic diversity—there are whole registers of language that never get into the classroom—and with regional variants—classrooms have been sites for dialect levelling and convergence of use on recognised standards. For example, I recently experienced a situation in which a student of

Japanese, who had spent some time in Japan, used the Japanese pronoun *ore* 'I", when addressing a teacher. Sociolinguistically, *ore* is considered a vulgar form of the pronoun typically used among males and its use in a classroom context would not be appropriate (Shibamoto Smith 2003). Rather than dealing with the problem of selecting appropriate contexts for using such a form, the teacher corrected the student by telling him *ore* was not a *real* Japanese word, thereby invalidating the students' knowledge of and experience of Japanese as an element of his language learning. In much teaching practice, and in teaching materials, variability is typically edited out of the 'real' language.

Expansion of the learning and use of language varieties also adds further complexity to an already complex situation as new varieties emerge among new populations of speakers. The result is that there come to exist in the linguistic landscape tensions between established varieties and emerging varieties that are manifested strongly in educational contexts. In such contexts there is an ideological contest for value among the various varieties that exist in an educational setting that typically validates established "native speaker" varieties and stigmatises emerging varieties—a value system that is expressed by speakers of established varieties and assimilated by speakers of emerging varieties. This can be seen concretely in the situation of English in Singapore (see also Chap. 4) in which an emerging variety is spoken in many cases as the first language of school students, but is marginalised in schools that recognise only an exogenous British variety as an educational norm. Thus, the existence of Singapore English as a variety is rendered problematic by language planners and educators, and this permeates the ideological understanding of the nature and purpose of the variety in its own linguistic ecology (Rubdy 2007). In such contexts where English is seen as a fixed entity with norms that have been historically shaped and asserted, deviation from those norms is seen as deviation from that fixed entity into something else. That is, emerging varieties of the language are not seen as new, purposeful and communicatively and socially valid varieties, but rather as corrupted versions of the standard. Such languages need to be eradicated from the linguistic space. There is a tension therefore at the planning and educational levels between linguistic realities and an imagined linguistic ideal that is resolved through practices of language planning and education that make no place for existing or emerging linguistic realities in projected future language use.

Within education systems, the distinction between traditional standards and emerging varieties is typically misrecognised as a distinction based on educational quality and standards, and this misrecognition represents the key barrier to consideration of the contribution of actual practices and processes of language in educational contexts. It is a misrecognition that is defended by those whose status is enhanced by the domination of the traditional varieties in the education system, whether they are speakers of what are perceived to be sanctioned standards or whether they are those who have acquired those standard varieties as additional languages. The equation of standard varieties with educational quality has been challenged by some writers, especially in the field of English language education (e.g. Jenkins 2006; Kirkpatrick 2007; Seidlhofer 2004). Such studies propose a possible alternative to the teaching of traditional standard varieties of English based on the realities of global patterns of English language use and the emergence of new English varieties and recognise the multilingual reality of English as it is used. This view replaces the idea of a single standard language with a conceptualisation of English as a multilingual language that is the language of multiple cultures (Honna 2005) and in which complexity and variation are always present.

The framing of English as multilingual and multicultural is a way of recognising in academic discourses the variability that exists in English, but it is largely a discourse that is confined to discussions of the role and nature of *English* in education. That is, there are few parallel discourses for other languages that accept the variation inherent in language as a starting point for determining how language is to be taught. The ideal of teaching a language from the perspective of diversity is not simply a pedagogical approach; it is an ideological position about what constitutes language and language education. At the moment, the ideologies of English in education seem to be diverging from the ideologies of other languages in education, at least in academic discourses. As a result of this divergence, there is a potential for tension in the ecology of language education around what it actually means to uphold the idea of diversity, when diversity has for long been considered as inimical to quality. If English is taught from a perspective of diversity, but teachers of other languages do not see that teaching in such a way is legitimate, this could have consequences for the status of English in language education. Those consequences stem from the extent to which it is potentially acceptable for English to be different as a taught language and how much diversity education can tolerate in terms of what is taught as a language. The way this problem is resolved in education is, as Crichton and Murray (Chap. 3) argue, a high-stakes one that itself raises complex issues and questions.

14.3 Ownership of Languages

One problem that emerging varieties raise is the question of ownership of languages, and the question of ownership is strongly linked to the idea of standard languages. There is a particular mentality in the English-speaking world that English is owned by what Kachru (1985) has called the inner circle countries and that others may have the right (even the obligation) to use it, but that does not confer the right to alter the language. One consequence of the appearance of emerging varieties of English has been a sense of entitlement among speakers of English characterised by cultural triumphalism, expressed for example in ideas such as the Anglosphere, accompanied by a sense of insecurity about linguistic diversity (see Chap. 5). The hyperbolic assertion of cultural superiority and its accompanying discourse of triumphalism is paralleled by a discourse of insecurity because there is a sense that the Anglosphere is losing control of the language.

The ideologies of linguistic ownership conflate ideologies of standard languages as authoritatively correct prescriptions for language use with ideologies of the native speaker as custodians of such prescriptions and arbiters of their use (Liddicoat and Tudini 2013), with control over and a right to pronounce on linguistic norms that is not available to non-native speakers or even non-traditional native speakers. Ideas of custodianship of language norms are widespread and may often be institutionalised in bodies such as the Académie Française or the Spanish Real Academia or in texts such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Custodianship of norms is typically understood as necessary in order to protect and conserve the quality of the language and the status of custodian is typically jealously guarded. Ownership is not, however, simply an issue of custodianship of norms but is also manifested in ideas of legitimacy (Norton 1997) that equate maximum legitimacy with being a native speaker, so that the native speaker is definitionally understood as a legitimate speaker. The result is a dichotomy between the legitimate native speaker and the less legitimate non-native speaker. This dichotomy may pose real practical problems for learners of a language in interaction with those perceived to be native speakers of the language. For example, Tsui (Chap. 6) has indicated that in Hong Kong people may be reluctant to speak in a particular language because they feel that they are less able to speak the language than their native speaker interlocutors. The idea of the dichotomy between native and non-native speaker, and the issues of ownership and legitimacy that this implies, become problematic when new groups of speakers emerge who do not share the norms and prescriptions of the original custodians of the language, but have legitimacy as users on the grounds that the language is their normal language of communication. Ownership of English is therefore becoming contested as new varieties emerge; and this contestation is consequential, not only for how English is understood as a language but how its diverse speakers are positioned as communicators and educators.

The ownership of English is something that has been discussed at length in the academic literature about English (e.g. Higgins 2003; Kachru 1985; Norton 1997; Rajagopalan 2004), but the same discourse is less obvious in other linguistic contexts, although it exists. For example, there are claims made in the Francophone world to consider French as an African language promoting the legitimacy and ownership of African speakers of French (Dumont 1990; Kouadio 2007). Such claims are in conflict with the idea of the Académie Française as the institutional custodian of French and their rejection of African varieties as legitimate versions of French. Such contestation is possible in any pluricentric language and for any language with a significant population of new speakers. It is, for example, potentially relevant for Chinese where competing written versions exist and the right of the mainland government to modify the language is not accepted throughout the Chinese speaking world. In many diasporic Chinese communities, the continued use of traditional characters represents a political statement that reflects perceptions of the ownership of the Chinese language.

The experience of English has been that expanded learning and use of a language decentres that language from its traditional speakers and constructs it as a common property. It appears that when a language attains the status of a global or international language ownership of that language is contestable and contested and native speaker legitimacy is brought into question.

14.4 Identity Positions

Although the ownership of languages may be contested, the native speaker–non-native speaker dichotomy nonetheless remains an important identity position in the communicative ecology. Such identity positions influence communication in a number of ways through the relative power over language and the perceptions of legitimacy as a speaker.

The presence or absence of a native speaker influences the communicative dynamic of any interaction and there is a potential difference in the dynamic that occurs in a classroom, meeting or other context when a native speaker is present compared to when there is no native speaker present because the ideological construction of the native speaker as an arbiter of language is always potentially present in such situations. The ideology of the native speaker is a pervasive ideology—it exists generally within societies and is not simply an academic construct. This ideology is a pressure that every non-native speaker feels at some point in their interactions with native-speaking others. Tsui's chapter (Chap. 6) demonstrates how linguistic anxiety can influence the performance of one's identity. Being required to use an additional language is problematic for the act of self-presentation and this is an issue which needs to be taken into consideration as part of the communicative ecology as it interacts with questions of identity. If language is recognised as central to the performance of identity, the inclusion or exclusion of languages from a communicative ecology represents the potential for inclusion or occlusion of possible identities within that ecology.

The identity positions that speakers may adopt is a significant question in language classrooms because such classrooms have often constructed fictitious identities for language learners that position learners within the target language and occlude their own identities. This means that a native-speaker pseudo-identity, that may even involve taking on a target language name, is given greater legitimacy than the learner's own identity. In effect, such stances in language classrooms represent a legitimisation of native-speakers as language users and delegitimise the learner as speaker, thereby reinforcing the differential power of native speakers.

The identity positions of native speakers may also be constrained when language and communication is not the most salient feature of their context. This is often the case for native speaker teachers when they teach outside their home countries and cultures. In these contexts, the predominance and prestige of the local educational culture may act as a constraint on the ways in which the native speaker can enact their role as teacher in the classroom. Singh and Ballantyne (Chap. 13) for example show that the cultural mismatch between Chinese teachers and Australian schools can work to marginalise the Chinese teacher and in turn undermine appreciation of the value of learning the language. In this case, native speakers are positioned as cultural outsiders and, while they may preserve legitimacy as speakers, it is not their role as speakers on which they are evaluated, but rather their role as members of a local educational culture. Such situations point to the normative role that context can play in intercultural situations.

14.5 Policy and Practice

The articulation between policy and practice in language education is a significant point of tension in the linguistic landscape of the region. Policy often appears to be only weakly associated with practice in many contexts. It is either the case that practice responds to something other than policy because of problems related to the implementation of policy or that policy produces practices that differ from those intended.

The situation in a number of countries is that there is very clear policy but there is a problematic connection between policy and practice. In the Australian context (see Chaps. 9–12), in 2011, there was a very clear goal for the learning of Asian languages—in this case, that 12 % of students would study a designated Asian language at year 12 level. The goal is clear, but quite problematic, given that only about 13 % of Australian students at year 12 level study a language at all, and that this 13 % is spread over a very large number of languages. Such a goal can only be realised through sustained practice to achieve it. However, there has been no such practice developed within the Australian educational system. The sorts of activities that have been adopted in Australia as the result of the goals of education policy are not those that will lead to the educational outcome that is projected—for example, they involve materials development, short term professional learning activities for teachers, and documentation of teaching practice. Nothing has actually addressed the systemic causes of low enrolments in languages or increased the capacity of educational systems to deliver programs in the targeted languages. Spence-Brown makes the point that institutional structures are very important in constructing the ways in which policy is implemented and its overall effectiveness when translated into practice.

Such problems also exist in other countries. For example, in Malaysia (Chap. 8), there has been a policy shift to change the language of instruction in Science and Mathematics from Malay to English. This has been implemented by mandating a change in the language of instruction without consideration of what practices need to be put in place to transform a teaching force educated to teach these subjects in Malay to Malay-speaking students into one that can teach these subjects in English to Malay-speaking students. That is, the pedagogical practices required to teach Maths and Science in the students' second language have not been addressed.

In reality, well developed policy means very little if it is not accompanied by an equally well developed plan to implement it. The result in the Asia-Pacific region has often been that the policies developed are not implementable because the processes of implementation do not exist to achieve policy goals.

One correlate of the policy-practice disconnect is that education policy goals may not be best achieved in schools and that students transfer out of government school structures in order to secure the outcomes that policy seems to promise (Chap. 7). The failure of government schools to secure the promises of government policy means that language education becomes divided along class lines and benefits most those who are able to afford alternative forms of education. In contexts such as China where the learning of a particular language has become a proxy for educational achievement and personal value, the consequences of a class-based cleavage in educational opportunity go far beyond the level of attainment that is possible in the language. In Australia, similarly, the best learning of foreign languages usually occurs in elite private schools, which lie outside the scope of government language-in-education policy. There is a serious cause for concern when the best sites for the achievement of government education policy goals are found outside the contexts for which the policies have been developed. Kohler (Chap. 11) has indicated that there is another side to this in that in Australia, the teaching of Indonesian appears to be located in lower socioeconomic areas and so the opportunities for language learning in such programs are influenced by the broader educational disadvantages suffered by such schools. If certain languages are restricted to contexts in which educational provision is most problematic, then what opportunities are there for good language education in these languages?

These issues raise questions about the extent to which policy is actually able to meet the expectations it generates. In reality, it is often difficult to gain a sense of the relationships that exist between policy and achievement in language education. In most parts of the region, there are strong policy expectations, often articulated as benchmarks and goals, but there is less information about what is actually being achieved in response to those expectations. There is, however, also a risk that language programs may not deliver the level of learning envisaged. Scarino (Chap. 9) shows that the situation in Australia is particularly poor and there is evidence that levels of achievement in some languages at least are quite low, and that they vary enormously between different contexts. The work of governments at both state and federal levels to expand language learning therefore may have seen an increase in programs and participation, but it remains questionable how much these actually contribute to learning. Spence-Brown (Chap. 12) notes that the problems for learning are in many cases problems related to implementation. She notes that schools in Victoria do not fulfill the recommended hours of learning indicated in policy documents and that this may in fact be the norm not the exception. In a context where policy recommends 150 min of language teaching, but practice delivers only 30, there is little chance that policy objectives can be realised. In the Australian context, it appears that, at least at lower levels of schooling, there is a significant amount of language teaching happening, in terms of numbers of programs, but it remains questionable whether there is a significant amount of language learning in terms of the development of language capabilities.

In many parts of Asia, there seems to be a similar problem: while there appears to be much teaching of English and English programs are proliferating, the results of these programs in terms of the development of English language abilities do not seem to be commensurate with the amount of activity. Thus, Zuraidah (Chap. 8) shows that a strong policy emphasis on English in Malaysia has not led to the development of levels of English language capability that are expected, and policy changes respond to this shortfall without really considering its cause. Butler (Chap. 7) shows that Chinese schools do not deliver the sorts of language learning that parents expect given the policy rhetoric around the importance of English. Pakir (Chap. 4) calls parents the “invisible language planners”; however, in local contexts they are probably much more visible than this suggests and it is often parental pressure that shapes particular schools' programs of language teaching and learning. Parents can exercise a very strong influence on the language practices of the schools, but the influence they exert is not always well informed, although it may be a response to the expectations generated by policy.

14.6 Linguistic Diversity

Perhaps the most significant tension in the linguistic space revealed by the papers in this volume lies in the ways in which language in education policies are dealing with linguistic diversity, both within and outside education. Language in education policy appears to emphasise a narrowing of linguistic diversity.

In the Asia-Pacific region, language in education policies usually construct the linguistic ecology, especially in schooling, as being one in which at the most two languages are available to learners. In some cases, the focus is on fewer than two languages and the linguistic ecology is constructed in terms of widespread monolingualism. This is the case, for example, in Australia, where policy entrenches a monolingual world view in which there is space for some foreign language teaching, but limited expectations of overall achievement. That is, the policy does not really provide an ecological space for the additional languages it teaches in the communicative repertoires of Australians. More frequently, the region's language education policies emphasise bilingualism, usually in the form of a national language plus English. In other regions, such as for example, the European Union, bilingualism is no longer the focus for language learning in educational contexts but rather the emphasis is on plurilingualism involving a national language plus two others, and in some cases more. It appears that plurilingualism is not a feature of educational thinking about languages in most parts of the Asian-Pacific region and that has consequences for the linguistic ecology, especially in minority language contexts, where such thinking does not make space for the inclusion of learners' home languages within a bilingual framing of education or an openness to plurilingualism that could include home languages in addition to other forms of language learning. The policy focus on bilingualism at most creates a significant tension in a region where plurilingualism outside the educational system is widespread but largely ignored.

One consequence of this limiting of the linguistic ecology to two languages is that the linguistic space in education is seen as limited and the introduction of a new language into the linguistic space of schooling entails a loss of other languages that may occupy that space. Languages are therefore put into competition with each other for space in schooling. The choice of English as an additional language in most Asian school systems appears simple on the surface, but it seems that this choice is in reality oversimplified. English is obviously an important language but this importance has come to be understood as English being the *only* language of importance for all students in the region. The language policy decision in much of the region has been that English will be the only additional language in the system at most levels of education. This represents a real problem for the maintenance and development of diversity because English tends to force other languages, especially local languages, out of the educational system. The choice of English is therefore manifested as a choice against diversity, not for the increase of diversity, through the introduction of an additional language into the linguistic ecology of schools. Thus, the introduction of English into the primary school curriculum in Indonesia as a 'local content subject' has often displaced the local languages of Indonesia, which no longer have a space in the curriculum (Hadisantosa 2010, see also Chap. 2).

Language in education policies that on the surface seek to increase language repertoires by facilitating the learning of an additional language can constrain diversity in other ways. It can mean that languages are allocated exclusive spaces within the curriculum and that the entry of one language into that space means that another is excluded. This is the case for English and Malay as media of instruction in Malaysia: the introduction of one language means the exclusion of the other and more nuanced approaches to language learning and use are closed down by such decisions. Such approaches not only have consequences for the learning of language and curriculum content, but may potentially have consequences for the intellectualisation of languages by excluding them from certain discursive domains (Gonzales 2002). It can also mean that the social context of language use can be brought to serve the reduction of linguistic diversity that is the aim of education policy. Thus, in Singapore the complex diversity of Chinese varieties becomes reduced to official Mandarin not only in schools but in society at large, as expressed through the Speak Mandarin Campaign (Bokhorst-Heng 1999).

Such processes reflect Calvet's (1987) metaphor of *langues glottophages*—cannibalistic languages—that consume their less prestigious counterparts. Language in education policies represent both the domain in which such languages operate and the mechanism through which they consume other languages when policy settings focus on the restriction of linguistic diversity rather than on its realisation through education. Introducing a new language into a linguistic ecology does not mean that all other things stay the same, it means a reorganisation of roles and spaces, and that reorganisation may in turn mean that a language is lost from the ecology.

14.7 Concluding Comments

The papers in this volume reveal that language policy, especially language in education policy, is characterised by much activity across the various polities in the Asia-Pacific region. They reveal that in different contexts there are different policy needs and different policy goals, while at the same time revealing a number of communalities across contexts. Each context shows that the policy work that is undertaken in a particular polity does not simply address the problems posed for language learning but constructs those problems in complex ways and through these constructions creates new, often unacknowledged, problems in turn. They show that the linguistic space is a contested space and it is contested largely because it is a constrained space. The space made available to languages in any society is a space in which values and ideologies are always at play and languages compete for symbolic power (Bourdieu 1982). The constraining of diversity within the linguistic space of education creates a contested space in which languages and their speakers can either win or lose and in which win or loss results from the ideologies of value that exist in that space. The tensions described above derive from the contestation that policies engender in the linguistic ecologies they seek to influence.

References

Bourdieu, P. (1982). *Langage et pouvoir symbolique*. Paris: Arthème-Fayard.

Calvet, L.-J. (1987). *La guerre des langues et les politiques linguistiques*. Paris: Payot.

Dumont, P. (1990). *Le Français langue africaine*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

Gonzales, A. (2002). Language planning and intellectualisation. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *3*, 5–27.

Hadisantosa, N. (2010). Insights from Indonesia. In R. Johnstone (ed.), *Learning through English: Policies, challenges and prospects* (pp. 24–46). London: British Council.

Higgins, C. (2003). "Ownership" of English in the outer circle: An alternative to the NS-NNS dichotomy. *TESOL Quarterly*, *37*, 615–644.

Honna, N. (2005). English as a multicultural language in Asia and intercultural literacy. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, *14*, 73–89.

Jenkins, J. (2006). Current perspectives on teaching world Englishes and English as a lingua franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, *40*, 157–181.

Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk & H. G. Widdowson (eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures* (pp. 11–30). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kirkpatrick, A. (2007). *World Englishes: Implications for international communication and English language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kouadio, N. G. J. (2007). Le français: Langue coloniale ou langue ivoirienne? *Hérodote*, *126*, 69–85.

Liddicoat, A. J., & Curnow, T. J. (2003). Language descriptions. In A. Davies & C. Elder, *Handbook of applied linguistics* (pp. 25–53). Oxford: Blackwell.

Liddicoat, A. J., & Tudini, V. (2013). Expert-novice orientations: Native speaker power and the didactic voice in online intercultural interaction. In F. Sharifian & M. Jamarani (eds.), *Intercultural communication in the new era* (pp. 181–197). New York: Routledge.

Norton, B. (1997). Language, identity, and the ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, *31*, 409–429.

Pennycook, A., & Makoni, S. (2007). *Disinventing and reconstituting languages*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Rajagopalan, K. (2004). The concept of 'world English' and its implications for ELT. *ELT Journal*, *58*, 111–117.

Rubdy, R. (2007). Singlish in the school: An impediment or a resource? *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *28*, 308–324.

Seidlhofer, B. (2004). Research perspectives on teaching English as a lingua franca. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *24*, 209–239.

Shibamoto Smith, J. (2003). Gendered structures in Japanese. In H. Marlis & H. Bussmann (eds.), *Gender across languages: The linguistic representation of women and men* (pp. 201–225). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Index

N. Murray, A.Scarino (eds.), *Dynamic Ecologies,* Multilingual Education 9,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-7972-3, © Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht 2014