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Isolating or integrating attention to form in communicative instruction: a dilemma?

Nina Spada

Is it time to DECODE? A new strategy to support languages, education and multilingualism in Australia. Understanding the challenges and responding in kind

John Hajek, AFMLTA Medal Citation

AFMLTA Medal Citation

John Hajek

Parental understandings of bilingualism in the Polish community in Australia

Robert Debski

Predictors of participation in senior secondary languages

Naomi Wilks-Smith, Grant Cooper, Richard Johnson

## Table 1:

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<th>Communicative competence</th>
<th>Cultural aspects</th>
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Welcome to Volume 53 of Babel.

This first issue includes further contributions from the 2017 AFMLTA International Conference held on the Gold Coast in July 2017, as well as articles on Year 12 language learning retention and a study on parental attitudes and understandings about Polish as a community language.

The lead article by Nina Spada on attention to language form in a communicative curriculum is based on her keynote address at the conference. Spada raises questions for language educators in terms of how attention to language form is best addressed in contemporary curricula, and considers how the Australian Curriculum: Languages may influence teachers' decisions around focus on form in classroom language teaching. She explores the benefits and effectiveness of both integrated and isolated approaches to form-focused instruction and concludes that both approaches can play an important role in classroom instruction. She reflects on the increasing complexity of curriculum constructs such as the Australian Curriculum: Languages and the challenges teachers now face in integrating not only grammar into a communication-oriented curriculum, but also attending to content, culture, function and meaning, in teaching a language in an increasingly multilingual and multicultural context.

John Hajek presented the Keith Horwood Memorial Lecture at the conference. His presentation focused on improving support for language education, and in his article he explores the challenges of language teaching in a social context in which a pervasive preference for English monolingualism continues to persist. Hajek uses the COD (Capacity, Opportunity, and Desire) model developed by Grin (2003), and elaborated by Lo Bianco and Peyton (2013), to understand and respond to issues in heritage language teaching and learning. He argues for an extended construct he has titled DECODE (pun intended) that includes, initially, identifying issues in Demand for languages education in school, and the need to Explain or better inform the community of the benefits of language learning in schools, and concludes with the need to Evaluate our successes and reconsider approaches in the light of unresolved issues or challenges.

Naomi Wilks-Smith, Grant Cooper and Richard Johnson continue the theme of promoting language learning in schools by exploring learners’ motivations to continue languages learning in the senior secondary years. Drawing on data from the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth, the authors identify socio-economic status, immigration status, and place of residence as significant predictors of participation in language learning in the senior secondary years. The authors argue for a reconsideration of how languages learning opportunities might be better enhanced to encourage more students from lower socioeconomic groups, in outer urban and regional areas, and from monolingual English backgrounds (as well as other language backgrounds) to not only engage in language study, but to commit to continuing that study through the senior years.

Robert Deboki reports on a study that explores parental attitudes about the value of community languages maintenance, and knowledge of issues involved in language maintenance across generations. He finds that among Polish-born parents and grandparents, knowledge of issues and approaches to language maintenance is weak, and concludes that more needs to be done to assist parents to understand research and strategies to support language maintenance and transmission, and so parents might understand the benefits of heritage language maintenance and be better informed to motivate learners to both continue to learn and to actively use their community language at home and in the community.

Common themes emerge among these articles that reflect some of the challenges we continue to face in the Australian community, and in the language education context in particular. More than a decade after Michael Clyne’s (2006) reflection on the pervasive monolingual mindset afflicting Australian attitudes to community/heritage language maintenance, and language learning in schools, we see a continuing need to rationalise the benefits of language learning and explore ways to assist communities, learners, and policy makers to appreciate these benefits, despite, as Spada highlights, the fact that we are living in an increasingly mobile, interconnected, and multilingual and multicultural world, where monolingualism is a hindrance to effective communication and understanding across countries, communities and cultures.

Yesterday I was sitting in the courtyard of a mosque in a small provincial city in central China. It was time for afternoon prayers. Believers were in the mosque praying and others were still arriving. A man approached me and greeted me in the usual fashion in Arabic, and I replied with the appropriate Arabic response. He then asked (in English) whether I spoke Arabic or English, then spoke to me in English, and welcomed me to the mosque, and asked me if I spoke Chinese, which I do. He then asked me in Chinese if I had completed my prayers. I told him I was Christian. He then excused himself, welcomed me to stay, and went to pray. He didn’t question who I was or why I was there. He moved across linguistic and cultural and religious boundaries without question. This is the new ‘normal’ that we need to instil in our next generation; to be proud of your language and culture heritage(s), to expand your linguistic and cultural horizons, and to celebrate the diversities and rich cultural traditions that others bring to our extraordinarily diverse and dynamic society, that is Australia (and the wider world) today.

Thanks to Kylie Farmer for her assistance in preparation of this issue.

Andrew Scrimgeour  
University of South Australia

Anne-Marie Morgan  
University of New England
Isolating or integrating attention to form in communicative instruction: A dilemma?

Nina Spada, University of Toronto
This paper is a written version of a plenary presentation delivered at the 21st International Conference of the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations (AFMLTA) held on the Gold Coast, Queensland, in July 2017.

INTRODUCTION
The title of this paper raises the question as to whether a choice needs to be made between two alternatives – isolated or integrated attention to form. I will argue that this is not the case but firstly I would like to clarify what I mean by attention to form and isolated and integrated. By attention I mean any effort made by the teacher or the goals/focus of pedagogical materials to direct the learners’ attention to language forms either through direct or indirect instruction or corrective feedback. By form I’m referring to all the different elements of language – at the word level (vocabulary), sentence level (grammar), or inter-sentential level (discourse). I am also referring to the functions and purposes of language use (e.g. social, pragmatic) as well as the intercultural aspect of language, which is a central component of the Languages Curriculum in Australia. Isolated and Integrated refer to the timing of attention to form in the instructional sequence, that is, whether it is provided simultaneously with or separated from communicative practice. This is discussed in more detail below.

Throughout the history of language teaching, attention to form has been accomplished in different ways. Table 1 presents three approaches that span the history of languages pedagogy: 1) Traditional structure-based teaching; 2) Communicative Language Teaching; and 3) 21st century Communicative Language Teaching. In the early days of languages pedagogy there was an exclusive focus on discrete-point grammar instruction and metalinguistic rules, which is characteristic of the grammar translation (GT) approach. GT dominated the field of languages teaching for many decades beginning in the 1500s with the teaching of Latin, rising to prominence in the 18th and 19th centuries and continuing in many places in the world today. In the 1960s the Audiolingual Method (ALM) was introduced and quickly became popular. Often referred to as the “scientific approach” to additional language teaching because of its roots in behaviourist psychology and structural linguistics (Lado, 1964), the ALM focused on memorisation and pattern practice. Although GT and ALM differed in significant ways, the common element was their exclusive focus on language.

### Table 1: Approaches to focusing on form in additional language pedagogy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional structure-based teaching</th>
<th>Communicative language teaching (CLT.1,2…)</th>
<th>21st century CLT Balance, Scope &amp; Depth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on discrete-point grammar instruction (Grammar Translation)</td>
<td>Focus on communication; little attention to grammar</td>
<td>Attention to form, communication, content, social &amp; cultural aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on memorization and pattern practice (Audiolingual Method)</td>
<td>Focus on comprehensible input and communicative interaction (e.g. strong version of CLT; Task-based language teaching (TBLT))</td>
<td>Focus on authentic texts, contexts, language use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on accuracy Linguistic competence</td>
<td>Emphasis on fluency Communicative competence</td>
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</tbody>
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...
In the early 1980s languages pedagogy began to move away from an exclusive focus on language to an emphasis on communication. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is the label that was used to characterise the approach to languages instruction that became popular at this time (for descriptions of the history of language teaching methods, see Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). As most of you know, there are different versions of CLT. One of them, referred to as the strong version (Johnson, 1982) represented a pendulum swing from an exclusive focus on language forms characteristic of GT and ALM to an exclusive focus on meaning/communication. This version of CLT was connected to two theoretical constructs that gained prominence in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) in the late 70s and early 80s: the comprehensible input hypothesis (Krashen, 1984) and the interaction hypothesis (Long, 1981). Both emphasised the necessity for a focus on meaning-based input and interaction and advocated little (or no) attention to form. Both were highly influential in the field of languages pedagogy and contributed to the development of the CLT movement as well as to other instructional approaches based on opportunities for more authentic learning opportunities in the field of languages pedagogy and contributed to the development of the CLT movement as well as to other instructional approaches based on opportunities for more authentic learning opportunities in meaning-based learner/learner interaction such as Task-based authentic learning opportunities in meaning-based contexts (Spada, 1997, p.73). Initially FFI research focused on the development of the additional language grammar but it has expanded considerably to include the effects of FFI on the learning of vocabulary (Schmitt, 2008), pragmatics (Eun Hee & Tadayoshi, 2006) and pronunciation (Lee, Jang & Ponsky, 2015). Two questions that are relevant to FFI and have received quite a bit of attention in the instructed SLA literature are: 1) Are there better times to provide attention to form?, and 2) Are there better ways to draw learners’ attention to form? The first question relates to the distinction between integrated and isolated in the title of this talk. The second question relates to explicit and implicit instruction. Because these pairs of terms are sometimes confused it is important to clarify the difference between them. Explicit attention to form can be provided in different ways. It can come in the form of metalinguistic information (e.g. grammar rules), or explicit guidance and direction about how the target language works without metalanguage provided by a teacher or textbook. It can also occur via explicit practice that is learner generated. Examples of these different ways in which explicit instruction is provided are below.

### Example 1: Metalinguistic information (Italian lesson on the conjugation of the future tense)

1. The future tense (third person) of regular verbs is formed by adding the ending à to the infinitive minus the final e. The future endings of verbs in are ire and are are the same.

2. The spoken stress on 3rd person singular is on the final accented vowel of the ending (This example and Example 4 below are from Benati (2004)).

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Arrivare (to arrive)</th>
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</table>

### Example 2: Explicit guidance and direction (Differences between possessive determiner agreement in French and English)

- Robert voit sa mère.
- Alice voit son père.

### Example 3: Explicit practice (learner generated)

An excerpt of an interaction between two learners engaged in a dictogloss task. This task was originally developed by an Australian educator, Ruth Wajnryb (1990). In a dictogloss, a short, dense text is read to learners at normal speed; while it is being read, students jot down words and phrases; learners then work together in pairs to reconstruct the text and are asked to focus on both accurate language and content. The learners in this example were students in a French immersion program in Canada. The text of the dictogloss that they were asked to read and reconstruct was delivered in French (Kowal & Swain, 2994). It appears in Appendix 1, along with an English translation.

### FORM-FOCUSED INSTRUCTION: EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT

FFI takes a cognitive perspective on language learning and teaching and is situated within instructed SLA research. In the late 1990s I defined FFI as “Any effort to draw learners’ attention to form within communicative and meaning-based contexts” (Spada, 1997, p.73). Initially FFI research focused on the development of the additional language grammar but it has expanded considerably to include the effects of FFI on the learning of vocabulary (Schmitt, 2008), pragmatics (Eun Hee & Tadayoshi, 2006) and pronunciation (Lee, Jang & Ponsky, 2015). Two questions that are relevant to FFI and have received quite a bit of attention in the instructed SLA literature are: 1) Are there better times to provide attention to form?, and 2) Are there better ways to draw learners’ attention to form? The first question relates to the distinction between integrated and isolated in the title of this talk. The second question relates to explicit and implicit instruction. Because these pairs of terms are sometimes confused it is important to clarify the difference between them. Explicit attention to form can be provided in different ways. It can come in the form of metalinguistic information (e.g. grammar rules), or explicit guidance and direction about how the target language works without metalanguage provided by a teacher or textbook. It can also occur via explicit practice that is learner generated. Examples of these different ways in which explicit instruction is provided are below.

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Let us turn our attention now to implicit attention to form, which does not contain any overt signals to form and is contextualised and embedded within a meaningful context. One way to do this is via exposure to exemplars in the input as seen in Example 4. In this task learners are asked to indicate whether they agree or disagree with a list of predictions thought to happen in the next ten years and to compare their responses with a partner. The target feature is the future tense in Italian (see Benati, 2004 for the complete exercise and further examples).

Example 4: Implicit FFI (High frequency input)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sono d’accordo (Agreed)</th>
<th>Non sono d’accordo (Disagree)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Una donna diventerà presidente degli USA. (A woman will become president of the United States)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Si troverà il vaccino per l’AIDS. (An AIDS vaccine will be discovered)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. L’uomo arriverà sul pianeta Marte. (Man will land on Mars)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the next example of implicit FFI, students of Spanish are asked to read the passage Caperucita roja (Little Red Riding Hood) and then to respond to comprehension questions about it. The implicit grammar focus in this case (see highlighting below) is the imperfect tense (red) and preterit (green) in Spanish. The focus on language in this example is slightly more explicit than what we saw in Example 4 where the target forms are not highlighted. (see Appendix 1 for the English translation of this excerpt and Jourdenais et al., 1995 for the complete text and description of the study)

Example 5: Implicit FFI (High frequency input)

Había una vez una chica que vivía en el bosque, Caperucita roja, ese era su nombre porque siempre llevaba una capa roja, visitaba a su abuela los fines de semana. Un día, la madre le dijo: “Caperucita, anda y visita a la abuela, que está enferma, y llévale esta canasta de comida.” En el camino, Caperucita se encontró con el lobo y le dijo: “Hola chica, a dónde vas?”

**EFFECTS OF EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT INSTRUCTION ON ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT**

The question as to whether implicit or explicit language instruction is more beneficial for languages learning has been investigated in several research syntheses and meta-analyses (Goo et al., 2015; Norris & Ortega, 2000, Spada, 2011; Spada & Tomita, 2010). The results indicate that explicit instruction is more effective than implicit instruction. However, for the most part, the studies reviewed tracked learners’ progress using grammar tests, which are measures of explicit knowledge. Thus, it is not surprising that explicit instruction was found to be more effective when explicit knowledge was measured. More research is needed to look at the effects of explicit and implicit teaching on learners’ abilities to use language communicatively and fluently before we can be confident of the advantages of explicit instruction (Doughty, 2003). It may be the case that different types of instruction lead to different types of knowledge. Let us now turn our attention to the question of whether there may be better times in the instructional sequence to draw learners’ attention to form, that is, via integrated or isolated FFI.

**FORM-FOCUSED INSTRUCTION: ISOLATED AND INTEGRATED**

The distinction that Patsy Lightbown and I made between integrated and isolated FFI (Spada & Lightbown, 2008) is as follows. Integrated FFI refers to attention to form that is embedded in communicative practice; isolated FFI refers to attention to form that is separated from communicative practice. It is important to emphasise that both types of FFI include attention to form and meaning. Thus, isolated FFI is not the same as traditional structure-based approaches to languages instruction in which the focus was on language only. Instead, isolated FFI refers to instruction in which attention to form is delivered separately from communicative practice but both are included. Integrated FFI refers to instruction in which attention to form and language occurs simultaneously; this was illustrated in the diclofing activity in Example 3 above. Importantly, attention to form within isolated or integrated FFI can be explicit or implicit. The distinction between these two FFI approaches is not how attention to form is provided but when it is provided in the instructional sequence.

While there have lively debates about the separation and integration of language form in the pedagogical literature, there has been little research to explore their effects on additional language learning. Some of the pedagogical arguments in support of isolated FFI are that it is the ‘natural way to teach’ and it is part of traditional presentation/practice pedagogy. It has also been argued that humans are limited capacity processors and cannot pay attention to everything at once; focusing on both form and meaning is particularly difficult for low proficiency learners (Van Patten, 1990). Another argument is that if attention to form is provided separately from communicative practice it is more motivating because there is no interruption in communicative interaction (Raines, 2002). On the other hand, arguments in support of integrated FFI include the claim that it is more efficient. That is, when learners have the opportunity to communicate and receive feedback on form at the same time, students get ‘two for one’. It has also been argued that Integrated FFI is more motivating than Isolated FFI because immediate help is available to learners precisely when it is needed (see Spada & Lightbown, 2008 for more discussion of the arguments in support of Isolated and Integrated FFI).

One of the first studies I carried out to investigate Isolated and Integrated FFI was a questionnaire study in which we asked teachers and learners about their opinions and preferences for each type of instruction (Spada et al., 2000). It was primarily a validation study to test whether the questionnaire items were measuring the constructs – Isolated and Integrated FFI. Table 2 presents a selection of some of the statements that are included in the teacher questionnaire. (To see the complete questionnaire for teachers and learners go to the IRIS Repository [Instruments for Research into Second Languages database] at: https://www.iris-database.org). As you can see, four of the items were designed to measure preferences for Isolated FFI (2, 4, 6, 8) and four for Integrated FFI (1, 3, 5, 7). In a subsequent study we administered the questionnaire to approximately 100 teachers and 500 learners. This included teachers and learners of English as a second language in Canada and English as a foreign language in Brazil. The results revealed that both groups of teachers had a clear preference for integrated over isolated FFI but they also indicated that they valued Isolated FFI. Similarly, both groups of learners expressed a clear preference for integrated over isolated FFI and also indicated that they valued Isolated FFI (Valéo & Spada, 2016). Many teachers and learners wrote comments on the questionnaire to qualify their choices by pointing to factors such as “it depends on the instructional context, the learners’ proficiency”. Indeed some of them indicated that having to make a choice between the two types of FFI was difficult and went so far as to say it was not fair to ask them to make a choice!
Table 2: Sample items on Teacher Questionnaire – Preferences for Isolated and Integrated FFI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I prefer teaching grammar as part of meaning-based activities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Students learn grammar more successfully if it is separated from context.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. When students learn grammar in a meaning-based context, they will be able to successfully express their meaning.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I prefer teaching grammar separately from meaning-based activities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The most effective way to teach a new structure is to present it within a meaning-based context.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Grammar should be taught separately from communication activities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Separate treatment of grammar fails to develop language knowledge, which students can use outside the classroom.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I prefer lessons that teach grammar separately from communication.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We interpreted these results as pointing to the complementarity of both types of instruction and the acknowledgement that each contributes to learning in important ways. This led us to explore whether there might be different contributions of Integrated and Isolated FFI to additional languages learning in subsequent research. Additionality for this came from a theory in cognitive psychology referred to as Transfer Appropriate Processing (TAP) (Blaxton, 1989; Morris et al., 1977). TAP claims that when we learn something, for example, a new word, our memories record the word learned and also the cognitive and perceptual processes that were engaged while learning it. Subsequently, when we try to remember the word, we also recall aspects of the learning process. Therefore, the greater the similarity between how we learn something and our later efforts to retrieve that knowledge, the greater the chances are of success. When we extend TAP to languages learning, we might hypothesize that target language knowledge learned in isolated grammar activities will be more easily retrieved in communicative interaction and that target language knowledge learned in communicative interaction will be more easily retrieved in communicative interaction (Lightbown, 2008). To be sure this hypothesis is consistent with the observation of many teachers and researchers. Students who perform well on grammar tests and have learned their additional language in traditional structure-based ways are not necessarily fluent users of the test items in spontaneous speech and many fluent speakers whose language acquisition took place primarily outside the classroom perform poorly on tests requiring metalinguistic knowledge or the retrieval of individual language features that are isolated from a communicative context. We decided to examine the question as to whether isolated and Integrated FFI might lead to different types of language knowledge in an experimental classroom study.

The study took place with adult learners of English in Canada with a wide range of first language backgrounds (Spada et al., 2014). They were studying English in a community-based program and were in four intact classrooms characterised as representing an intermediate level of proficiency. The students received instruction on a specific language feature (the passive voice) and this was delivered via Integrated and Isolated FFI. In two of the classes, learners participated in activities where attention to form was always embedded within communicative practice (i.e. Integrated FFI) and in the other two classes, teaching and learning were separate activities for form and meaning-based practice (i.e. Isolated FFI). The instruction spanned 12 hours of class time delivered over three days. The same content (i.e. themes and topics) was covered in the instructional materials and the same amount of time was given to form and meaning-based practice in both instructional groups. The only difference was that learners in the Isolated FFI classes did their form-focused activities separately from their communication and meaning-based activities and learners in the Integrated FFI classes did their form-focused activities embedded within communicative practice. (See Spada et al., 2014 for more details about the instructional activities)

Two language tests were used to measure learners’ knowledge of and ability to use the passive voice in English before and after the instruction. This included 1) an error correction task in which learners were asked to correct ungrammatical sentences, and 2) a picture-cued story telling oral production task in which learners were prompted to produce the target form in a communicative context. Based on TAP theory we predicted that learners in the Isolated FFI classes would do better on the error correction task and learners in the Integrated FFI classes did their form-focused activities embedded within communicative practice. (See Spada & Lightbown, 2008 for more discussion about the instructional activities)

These findings might lead to the conclusion that as long as learners receive a combination of form and meaning-based practice, differences in the timing of attention to form may be less important than the fact that both are included in the overall instructional approach. More research is needed to explore this question, however, because only a few studies have been done to investigate the effects of Isolated and Integrated FFI on languages learning and the findings are mixed (e.g. Fice & Adams, 2010; Elgün-Gündüz et al., 2012). It may also be the case that the benefits of a particular type of FFI depend on several factors many of which were raised by the teachers who completed our questionnaire. For example, Isolated FFI may be more effective when less salient language features are the target of instruction and are not easily heard or noticed in the input (e.g. plurals in French). Isolated FFI may also be more beneficial for low-level proficiency learners who are not able to make the form-meaning connections because they are having difficulty understanding the input. Isolated FFI may also be a better choice when all learners share the same first language background and are bound to make the same mistakes when learning the additional language – for example moving from a language without grammatical gender (English to Italian French or Spanish). On the other hand, Integrated FFI might be beneficial for complex language features with rules that are difficult to teach in an isolated manner (e.g. honorifics in Japanese). Integrated FFI might also work better with task-essential structures – ones that are highly likely to occur in communicative tasks (e.g. the use of the conditional tense in hypothetical situations) (Spada & Lightbown, 2008 for more discussion).

FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

The second perspective on drawing learners’ attention to language within meaning/content-based instruction is Functional Grammar (FG). FG takes a social view of language and learning and is based on systemic functional grammar conceptualised by Michael Halliday, one of Australia’s, indeed one of the world’s, renowned linguists. Systemic functional grammar focuses on the purposes to which language is used, on the functions of language within discourse and makes explicit links between social context, meaning, words, grammar and text (Halliday, 1978, 1994). It begins with a focus on meaning and helps additional language learners understand the forms that work together to make that meaning. FG has been the focus of recent investigations with immigrant children mainstreamed into English-medium schools in the United States (e.g. de Oliveira & Schleppegrell, 2015) and in English-medium instruction in universities throughout the world (Coffin & Donohue, 2014). The concepts and practices of FG are particularly relevant to those teaching in CLIL programs, which are growing in Australia and elsewhere. What FG does in practice is to support academic development by drawing students’ attention to the ways language is used in school/curricular subjects. This is important because what we have learned from many years of research in
content-based language teaching programs is that language learning does not “take care of itself”, that quality (not just quantity) of classroom input and interaction is important for language learning and the effective integration of language and content is key to learning both (Lightbown, 2014). Each must be given equal attention and FG is intended to do this within the context of academic discourse. Below are a few examples of how language and content have been addressed within a FG approach. Even though they focus on school-age immigrant children who are learning English and other subjects simultaneously, they are relevant to the teaching of any language within CLIL and immersion programs and also in teaching language as subject matter.

The first example comes from a middle school classroom in California where the students are working with a passage from their history textbook. The teacher is helping the students think about how history texts talk about agency (who is doing what to whom?) by analysing key sentences. As seen in the excerpt below the teacher helps the students identify “its citizens” as the agents of “financing Rome’s huge armies and paying heavy taxes”. The teacher asks students what “its” refers to and helps them recognize that the reference is to “Rome’s citizens”. This helps to focus their attention on how English uses pronouns.

To finance Rome’s huge armies, its citizens had to pay heavy taxes. These taxes hurt the economy and drove many people into poverty.

The discussion continues along these lines, identifying “these taxes” as the same as “heavy taxes” and recognizing that the agent of “hurt the economy and drove many people into poverty” is “taxes” (see Schleppegrell et al., 2008 for more details of this example and others). The researchers report that discussions like these help students to better understand and think critically about what they were learning about history and at the same time they were also learning more about how English works.

Another challenge facing students when learning about how to use appropriate academic language is the use of conjunctions. That is, learners of additional languages tend to draw on everyday conjunctions when more academic ones are needed. For example they use “and” multiple times rather than the contrastive and consequential conjunctions that would better express the meanings between the clauses as illustrated in the sentences below. The first “and” links two clauses that might better linked with “but then” or another contrastive meaning, and the second “and” could be more effectively replaced with a conjunction of consequence – “so the salary grows”.

“... they had the agriculture and they develop a new economy, and the salary grows for the people...

Research carried out with English learners in CLIL programs in Spain shows that when teachers raise students’ awareness of these differences, they not only improve their production but also their comprehension of texts in which more academic conjunctions are used (Linares and Whittaker, 2010).

In another study Sprecher (2007) investigated the use of a different conjunction that was motivated by a student’s question: “Maestra, qué quiere decir ‘although’ en español?” (“Teacher, how do you say ‘although’ in Spanish?”). This is not an easy question to answer because what’s important about conjunctions is how they function to make logical connections in text so giving a definition is not very helpful. The researcher who worked with the learner in this study reports how the process of deconstructing text and talking about grammar helped the student begin to adopt the academic features he will need to be a successful writer in his content classes. This can be seen when one compares the two drafts of the student’s writing below:

First draft: The people of the others countries are helping. Although the help can’t give all the people. It is almost impossible to help everyone.

Second draft: The world is helping now with food, money, clean water, and clothing. Although this help is necessary, it is impossible to help everybody.

The discussion continues along these lines, identifying “these taxes” as the same as “heavy taxes” and recognizing that the agent of “hurt the economy and drove many people into poverty” is “taxes” (see Schleppegrell et al., 2008 for more details of this example and others). The researchers report that discussions like these help students to better understand and think critically about what they were learning about history and at the same time they were also learning more about how English works.

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Communicating: Using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning.

Understanding: Analysing and understanding language and culture as resources for interpreting and shaping meaning in intercultural exchange.

One critical feature of this curriculum that differs from what I have been talking about so far is the emphasis on culture and the interaction between language and culture. Indeed, the interrelationship of language, culture, and learning provides an important foundation for the Australian Curriculum: Languages. Liddicoat and his colleagues describe intercultural learning as a process of “developing with learners an understanding of their own language(s) and culture(s) in relation to an additional language and culture” (Liddicoat et al. 2003, p. 15). This contrasts with FFI in which the emphasis is on language form primarily at the sentential level and from FG with its emphasis on language functions and forms within discourse. Nonetheless, an intercultural approach to languages teaching and learning is more similar to FG because it is rooted within a social semiotic and sociocultural perspective on learning and is also influenced by studies in intercultural education and intercultural communication (Kramsch, 2011).

On the surface then, it would seem that intercultural instruction is more compatible with integrated FFI precisely because it is embedded within cultural meanings and contexts. However, intercultural teaching is also about language forms and how they are used differently across languages. Therefore, it is also compatible with isolated FFI because of its contrastive focus on specific language features that students need to know and use to express meaning across languages. This leads me to wonder whether there are particular aspects/ features of intercultural teaching and learning that might more compatible with isolated or integrated FFI. When I took a look at some of the sample lesson plans for a wide range of languages within the Australian Department of Education document entitled: Intercultural Languages. Liddicoat and his colleagues presents the two strands of the curriculum: Integrated and Isolated FFI might relate to the Australian Languages Curriculum. Figure 1 presents the two strands of the curriculum: 1) Communicating (using language), and 2) Understanding (analysing language and culture).
CONCLUSION

In my presentation I have discussed two distinct approaches to focusing on language within communicative and content-based programs: Form-focused instruction and Functional grammar. I have reviewed some of the research that shows benefits for both a focus on language integrated with communicative instruction and practice as well as on forming relationships that are separate from it. Both serve important roles in the teaching and learning process. I have also tried to make the argument that CLT has evolved and expanded considerably since its introduction in the early 1980s. Indeed 21st century CLT reflects a greater balance, scope and depth; it includes not only attention to form, meaning, communication, and function but also to culture and context. Also the goals for teachers and learners within 21st century CTL are to achieve linguistic, communicative, functional and intercultural competence as well as a range of other competencies discussed in the applied linguistics literature such as symbolic competence. I have pointed out some of the challenges for language teachers and learners in the 21st century and have seen how in my view make rocket science look easy in comparison. Nonetheless, I believe that we should be thinking about how we can live in a world where multiple languages and cultures are valued and respected and taught and learned is important, indeed crucial work – something that the languages educators in this audience do every day.

REFERENCES


APPENDIX 1

Dictagloss
(French text)

(English translation)
I had a frightening dream the other night. I was walking down a long narrow passage in the metro. Suddenly I heard footsteps behind me. I turned around and saw a naked man with carrot colored hair streaked with purple highlights. He was holding a huge black pillow. The expression in his eyes was diabolic.

Little Red Riding Hood (English translation)
Once upon a time there was a little girl who lived in the forest. Her name was Little Red Riding Hood because she always wore a red cape when she visited her grandmother on weekends. One day, her mother said, “Little Red Riding Hood, go and visit your grandmother, who is sick, and bring her this basket of food.” On the way, Little Red Riding Hood met a wolf who said: “Hi little girl, where are you going?”

Nina Spada, University of Toronto*

Dr. Nina Spada is Professor Emerita in the Language and Literacies Education program at the University of Toronto where she teaches courses in second language (L2) acquisition, research methods, and the role of instruction in L2 learning. She joined the faculty of the University of Toronto in 2000 after 15 years at McGill University in Montreal, Canada.

Dr. Spada is a leading international expert on the role of instruction in second language acquisition (SLA). Her large-scale research on the contributions of form-focused instruction in classroom SLA has received continuous national and international research funding for over 30 years and her work has had a significant impact on the conceptualization and design of research investigating the teaching and learning of second languages in classroom settings elsewhere.

Included in Dr. Spada’s numerous publications are over 100 articles in journals and collected editions and 4 books/edited volumes. Particularly noteworthy is the recognition Dr. Spada has received as a co-author of How Languages are Learned published by Oxford University Press. This award-winning book is used internationally as a standard text on second language learning. The 4th edition was published in February 2013 and it has been translated into Arabic, Chinese, Korean and Japanese.

Dr. Spada is regularly invited as a keynote speaker at conferences throughout the world. She has also made significant contributions to international projects related to the teaching and learning of second and foreign languages including those sponsored by the World Bank and the European Commission on the Teaching and Learning of Second/Foreign languages. She has given workshops and presentations to a broad range of audiences in Canada, US, Europe, South America, Australia, Asia and the Middle East.

Dr. Spada is Past President of the American Association for Applied Linguistics.
Is it time to DECODE?
A new strategy to support languages, education and multilingualism in Australia.
Understanding the challenges and responding in kind

John Hajek, The University of Melbourne
The Keith Horwood Memorial Lecture is a biennial lecture presented at AFMLTA International Languages Conferences by an eminent Australian languages educator, at the invitation of the executive of the AFMLTA. The presentation is adapted for print publication in Babel, following the conference. At the 2017 conference, held on the Gold Coast, Queensland, John Hajek invited the audience to consider a toolkit of ideas to increase engagement with languages and to promote and foster multilingualism. The paper also responds to the more recent call for students to engage with (digital) coding skills, and in some jurisdictions to use this as a replacement for learning languages. This timely provocation, in which Hajek uses humour to unpick the coding and monolingualism predilection, which he acronymously frames as a call to DECODE, ranges across popular culture and media to demonstrate the ridiculousness of a monolingual focus in any country, and Australia in particular, despite media sentiment to do otherwise.

PREFACE
I would very much like to thank the AFMLTA executive and the conference organisers for kindly inviting me to deliver the Keith Horwood Memorial Lecture this year (2017). It is a genuine honour for me to accept the invitation. I would also like to express my gratitude to the executive for allowing me to use humour as tool of exposition in this lecture.

Keith Horwood was originally at The University of Melbourne and I was a student at the Language Centre named after him for many years. I also worked in the centre. So it is heart-warming to come full circle, and to be able to talk to you as part of this important and historic event in Languages education in Australia.

INTRODUCTION
My mission today is to provide, if at all possible, some potentially useful tools, facts and ideas to help us reframe the way we can help motivate and support languages education and multilingualism in Australia.

Of course, some of the issues and things I will be presenting today many of you have heard before, but they remain just as important today and need to be considered again.

Ideally, one thing that we should aim to achieve is a virtuous circle for languages education in this country, i.e. to get it out of the classroom and into all parts of school, down the hallways and into public spaces; into homes, society and then actually back into the classroom. The DECODE strategy that I outline later in the presentation is intended to be one part of that reframing and in itself provides a virtuous circle for action.

USING HUMOUR TO MAKE A CASE
I need to make it very clear that while my intent is always serious, my approach, after many years of experience, is often wry and even humorous. While I have talked widely about Languages education and multilingualism in very serious terms, I have also found humour allows us to engage with and discuss these same topics in a potentially different and more effective way. Of course, while I have a million ideas bubbling away, only a few can be presented here.

The power of humour is really important for us. It is a powerful tool that breaks down barriers and allows people to understand things in a different way, particularly people who are yet to understand them in the ways that we would like them to. It can change hearts and minds and that is really important for us because we do need to find more effective strategies that work to promote languages and language learning – to students, school communities, policymakers, public influencers and to the general public. Apart from anything else, laughter is very good for you; it’s good for your health and wellbeing. So I invite you please to laugh as we move through the lecture – in the appropriate places of course.

THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE
The global challenge for us as languages educators is this: how do we make languages indispensable in our education system and in our society? To meet this challenge, the starting point is to understand what the barriers are so that we can address them, and actually achieve our goal of making languages indispensable.

To begin with, we need to consider the reasons why languages are not thriving in our schools across the country. Of course, the problem is much greater than our classrooms and the situation we see in them in many ways reflects the general social situation. We are not alone, however, in Australia. It is the fundamental challenge of all first language (L1) English-speaking countries including Canada, New Zealand, and the UK, even if English is not the L1 for many of its citizens.

The elephant in the room is of course English, which for those who are not from L1 English-speaking countries is possibly somewhat ironic, but it really is a big problem for us. It is what we might term the Anglophone paradox. There is no doubt that English is (currently) the most important language in the world, given its status as global lingua franca. There are certainly competitors such as French and Spanish, but in any ranking, we recognise the incredible importance and value of English. That status for L1 English-speakers is of course a huge privilege. It gives us incredible social, cultural and economic clout. At the same time however, this privilege is also in many respects a curse – something that we as languages teachers understand but that many others do not. It creates significant problems for us as native speakers of English – in its ability to distort our worldview, and our ability to learn and teach languages successfully.

A critical problem is that the language learning cost benefit formula is totally skewed for L1 English speakers. In other words, the process of learning English and obtaining all the privilege and benefits of being L1 English speakers is effortless, given that most of us learn it from birth. This means that it is difficult for our policy-makers, and for much of the broader public, to understand the level of resourcing and effort required for children of
What the Anglobubble does is to cut us off from the rest of the world too often. It can easily make us oblivious to what is happening around us. A simple example will suffice to show how global phenomena sweeping the world can bypass us completely – simply because they happen in a language other than English. The cartoon sensation, Masha and the Bear, has taken the world by storm and ironically, it is the Anglobubble that is yet to take notice.

A single episode, Recipe for Disaster, in Russian, has already had more than three billion views. It holds the record for the most viewed non-music clip in the world. It is about to hit us in the English-speaking world because Netflix has seen the light and has decided to start broadcasting it – with English dubbing rather than sub-titling. I will come back to Masha and the Bear later.

So what happens when we combine the monolingual mindset and the Anglobubble together? Typically, and unfortunately, we get under-investment and inadequate policy and support for languages education, as well as for multilingualism in the wider societal setting. We have difficulty in getting the message across to society, that language learning and multilingualism are good for educational outcomes, particularly in English, personal development and economic and social wellbeing. Instead, negative attitudes towards languages and multilingualism are common, and they are often difficult to displace. These attitudes are frequently expressed in the popular media by well-known figures, such as Steve Price, as in the following telling example:

**LET’S DITCH THE STUDY OF LANGUAGES**

The new national curriculum will, after establishing Italian and Chinese, also teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Why? Can’t someone explain to the bureaucrats and educators that this is a massive waste of time and resources? English, as anyone with regularly travels will tell you, is the universal language of business, diplomacy and entertainment (Steve Price, Herald-Sun, February 2nd 2011).

Not dissimilar views about English and other languages have also been stated in the same newspaper by Tom Elliott, a popular driving radio host in Melbourne, also with considerable influence. In an opinion-piece critical of the public use of languages other than English, he is adamant that “compulsory use of English should be viewed as a gift to migrants, not an imposition” (Herald-Sun June 29, 2017). And, like Price, he is clear in the same piece about English as a global language: “[i]t is the world language of business, the internet, computer programming, popular music and air travel.”

These claims are easy to unpick:

(a) While it is true that much business is done in English, most commercial activities around the world are in fact conducted in a wide range of languages, from small purchases at the local market to, for example, trade between Spanish-speaking Latin American countries, which logically use … Spanish. Why would they use English? Even in Australia, a significant amount of business – wholesale and retail – is not necessarily conducted in English.

(b) Computer programming: it is not clear what the source for this claim is but it is obvious that any Australian buying software in Australia will most likely encounter it in English. But having recently bought a mobile phone online via a Melbourne-based company, I can confirm it is not necessarily the case. The phone – made in China it turns out primarily for a Chinese market - arrived set up entirely in Chinese with no software in English. Why would it be in English if you have more than a billion consumers who prefer Chinese? No attempt was made by the local reseller to accommodate me, the Australian customer who thought he was buying locally.

(c) As for popular music, it is hardly surprising that the commentator thinks it is all in English – since that is the normal daily experience of most Australians. They have little or no access to or awareness of popular music in any other language, a point I return to later.

(d) With respect to the Internet, the power of English in this context is declining rapidly. Where once it dominated, it now plays a much more diminished role as other languages rapidly expand their reach. By way of example, the world’s biggest users of Twitter are in fact Indonesians communicating in Indonesian and other local languages in Indonesia, which makes sense when the population of Indonesia is around 267 million, and that there are 185 million mobile phone users in Indonesia, all Internet connected.

(e) The idea that air travel is conducted by implication only in English is obviously not always the case. People use languages other than English at check-in and on planes. My own recent air travels within Argentina confirm the use of Spanish on the ground and in the air in that country. It was in turn a great motivator to learn and to use that language.

Given the views so strongly expressed by public commentators in the Australian context, we have a real challenge: how do we get the Australian public, and the ill-informed commentators who influence them, to understand that you need more than English to operate in the world? And how can we do this in a way that is compelling and perhaps surprising?

**THE POWER OF POPULAR CULTURE TO MAKE OUR CASE**

I want to propose a slightly overarching strategy or frame, which I abbreviate as DECODE, and which I will outline in simple detail later. But before I do so, I would like to discuss immediately one component within that strategy: using popular culture to our advantage. Given our attempts over decades
as language educators to be taken seriously, especially by policy makers, it seems that we have in the interim not made use of popular culture as a powerful tool to make our case – to students, parents and to those who might not yet support languages education.

One surprising but often overlooked tool that I have found very effective in getting people to think about the challenge of multilingualism is to recycle and to repurpose Anglo pop culture. While any pop culture is a potentially useful tool for making our case, Anglo pop culture is particularly good because there is nothing easier for English speakers to understand. Seeing yourself, regardless of what your first language is, is a very powerful lens for adjusting looking at and understanding the world, particularly when you see yourself in a context that you might not otherwise expect. The effect can be quite disarming, as I have shown elsewhere, e.g. the compelling use of the Cup Song, made popular in the teen hit film Pitch Perfect, translated into Gaelic to successfully motivate young language learners in Ireland (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hz63M3v11nE).

It is at this point then I want to introduce the 1950s American sitcom, I Love Lucy, starring Lucille Ball, a very famous monolingual American comedienne and her Spanish-speaking Cuban husband, Desi Arnaz. It turns out that what language plays a very important role in the show, often to wildly humorous effect – something we can use very powerfully to make the case for languages. For instance, how do we explain to people that actually not everyone overseas speaks English, or that actually perhaps English is not always sufficient? Lucy can help us here, through laughter. In this brief clip (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1xMDn-Btkk), Lucy is in Paris on her first trip overseas. She speaks no French – again both with Finnish subtitles. In a short hilarious scene, Desi is forced to make use of chain translation (Desi Arnaz) arrives. In a short hilarious scene, Lucy is in Paris on her first trip overseas. She speaks no French – again both with Finnish subtitles. In a short hilarious scene, Desi is forced to make use of chain translation (Desi Arnaz) arrives. Lucy can help us here, through laughter. In this brief clip (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1xMDn-Btkk), Lucy is in Paris on her first trip overseas. She speaks no French – again both with Finnish subtitles.

There are so many things you could say about this clip – from the inconsistent translations, to the cultural stereotypes at play, and the complexities of intercultural communication. All in all, however, one simply cannot help but laugh, with so much to discuss or not. However, the message about the value of language skills when travelling is clear – something that we can easily use to convince students and parents that the languages are a great thing to learn. The two examples are a good demonstration of the value of using authentic materials, and the ability of such materials to help us make the case.
POP MUSIC AND THE ALMOST COMPLETE LACK OF OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG AUSTRALIANS

One of the big issues for language learners in Australia is that music in languages other than English is practically ‘inaudible’. I looked at the number of times a pop song sung in a language other than English reached number one in Australia in the last 54 years. On average, based on the data in Table 1, this has occurred once every 5.4 years, a disappointing indictment of multiculturalism in this country.

Table 1: No.1 songs in Australia sung (at least partly) in a language other than English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song and artist</th>
<th>Highest Position</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Gangnam Style” PSY</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Korean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Jai Ho!” A. H. Rahman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Aserejé” Las Ketchup</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“La Copa De La Vida” Ricky Martín</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Macarena” Los del Río</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“La Bamba” Los Lobos</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“99 Luft Ballons” Nena</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Moskau” Dschinghis Khan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Sukiyaki” Kyu Sakamoto</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Volare” Domenico Modugno</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Italian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In none of the cases listed in the table are they songs that first made it big in Australia. In each case, they have kicked and screamed their way onto commercial playlists on Australian radio because they are global hits that have unexpectedly pierced the Anglobubble – meaning that even those who decide what music is played in Australia have not been able to resist them (although they often do). When Gangnam Style exploded across the Anglobubble it was thanks only to Korean-Americans in Los Angeles, who spread the word on Facebook, causing a stir in the West Coast music industry. This latter fact in turn caused a press sensation in the US that was then quickly picked up in media outlets in Australia and the UK looking for easy derivative material to report on. Commercial radio stations in Australia withstood to the last – even warning listeners on one station that they couldn’t play Gangnam Style in prime-time morning drive because it was too much!

It is at this point I want to come back to the Anglobubble pop star, Justin Bieber. A resolute monolingual (although he does try from time to time to use a few words in other languages), Justin Bieber, the recently resurrected global music sensation, has become – somewhat unexpectedly – our biggest and most successful language champion.

I don’t care where help comes from, but he has achieved something of a miracle in the Australian pop music context. The number one song in Australia for eight weeks (May–July 2017) was (mostly) in Spanish. Bieber sings the initial verse in English, while the rest of his contribution is in Spanish. The original clip, presented only in Spanish by Luis Fonsi and Daddy Yankee, was viewed more than a billion times within 97 days of its release in early 2017. It was a global smash everywhere in the world, except the Anglobubble, until the moment Luis Fonsi and Daddy Yankee re-recorded the song with Justin Bieber. Suddenly, with Bieber’s star power, commercial radio stations across the English-speaking world flocked to play the recording in high rotation, and the rest is history. So thank you, Justin Bieber. Please start singing in French, Japanese, I don’t care what language, because it obviously works.

In the interim, the original music clip, entirely in Spanish, has now amassed more than five billion record-breaking views on YouTube. And thanks to Justin, we have – as predicted by our approximately five-year cycle – a number one song not exclusively in English, in Australia. I also foresee increased interest in Spanish in Australian schools and universities as a result – something already borne out informally by reports to me.

TELEVISION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG AUSTRALIANS?

If we turn our attention to television, in an otherwise barren language landscape, SBS, the Special Broadcasting Service, comes immediately to mind. We are very proud of it. It is the world’s first ethnic television broadcaster, broadcasting in over 70 languages on radio and over 40 languages on television. For those of us who grew up in the late twentieth century in Australia and are from a non-English speaking background, this was and remains our great hope. We were finally visible on television in a range of languages in prime time - all subtitled, every night of the week.

Sadly this is now only a memory, as it has not been the case for some time. Through a process of stealth, SBS has exited multilingual broadcasting in prime time. Here is an image of programming on SBS’s three non-Indigenous TV channels, taken in May 2016.

There is nothing in a language other than English – a situation that has existed for some years now under our noses. What happened? The simple reason is ratings. SBS’s need to raise revenue through advertising, a result of changes to government funding policy, drives a need for increased ratings to maximise viewer numbers. It turns out few Australians are willing to watch broadcasting that is subtitled. Australians find it more convenient to watch television in English, and unfortunately SBS has followed, without a whisper.
BACK TO COD – IT IS NOW TIME TO DECODE

If Capacity, Opportunity and Desire are weak in Australia, as I think I have shown, then what can we do? The COD model is clearly helpful in allowing us to evaluate the situation. However, it needs to be expanded because it is neither dynamic nor activist enough. Moreover, it does not give us clear agency. For real impact, we need to dynamise it by turning COD into DECODE. It is a very simple, clear buzzword that includes COD and makes clear our position about the incompatibility of code as a language with respect to languages education. We need a simple catchy term that is easy to break down and understand, as follows:

- Demand – high quality language education
- Explain – the benefits and address the concerns
- Capacity – be able to provide proficiency through learning
- Opportunity – insist students be able to use their language knowledge
- Desire – generate and support desire and willingness
- Evaluate – assess effectiveness and start again

It is clear that in the situation we have long found ourselves in in Australia, we need to demand high quality language education as a right for all of our students. It is a key learning area - one of eight such areas - and, in fact, all schools should be providing languages education.

We also need to explain, and this is really critical - to policy-makers, the public, our students, our stakeholders - what the benefits are of language education and multilingualism, and also address the concerns. I understand there are concerns, and they can be addressed.

As already discussed, capacity, opportunity and desire, are also required. But critically, when we need to evaluate, we need to assess through research and evaluation the effectiveness of our strategy to promote languages education. DECODE is intended also to be a virtuous circle that allows for constant assessment and improvement from start to finish: Did this work? Why didn’t this work? What could we do better?

And we need a two-pronged approach to DECODE. In the first instance, we need a whole of school approach fostered locally from the bottom up by languages teachers, the best language champions we have, located across the country. DECODE provides all of us with a simple mechanism to assist us as languages activists. There are a great many effective techniques generated and used by languages teachers in this country that can be shared and used around the country to foster languages education successfully. Lane (2016), for instance, takes a whole of school approach to languages promotion providing a long list of successful activities and events. Howard (2014) describes her use of speech night, while Venning (2016) uses the flash mob to promote Japanese in her school. There are of course many other brilliant languages teachers in Australia who do similar wonderful things and share their results at the AFLMTA conference and similar events in Australia.

We also need a whole of society approach. It needs to be national and top down. This is harder to effect, and that is why we have the Modern Language Teacher Associations and the AFMLTA. The work of these associations is critical to the health of the sector and enables us to lobby for and enact bigger picture solutions.

We need a really clear, positive message across all fronts: educational, personal, intercultural, social, cognitive, and so on. Often there is a lot of focus, particularly in policy-making, on the economic and trade benefits of languages education. I am very cautious about this type of justification as it is not a driver in school education and I do not think it is going to impact on the life of most students directly when they ultimately enter the workforce. But the other ones I have just listed – educational, and intercultural, are critical – something I will come back to later.

We need sustained promotion in the school communities, i.e. parents, teachers, students, as well as sustained national promotion and action – always with positive images, ideas and faces. And things that people can talk about - heroes and champions - are very important. The Queensland Department of Education has identified a group of language champions whose job it is to work directly with schools to promote languages education. I hope that it will be successful and serve as a model for the rest of us. And we need to offer other practical solutions.

HOW TO GENERATE OPPORTUNITY?
THE 3% SOLUTION

Well here is a crazy idea: if we want to generate opportunity, I suggest we apply the 3% solution – to address the inaudibility of languages in youth culture in this country. That is, all radio stations should have a 3% non-English language music quota – in prime time. You can hear the squawking and squealing already from lazy radio stations that simply copy American and British playlists. But these broadcasters are already subject to a number of quotas (some much bigger), so this is hardly a major imposition on them. There is no doubt the 3% solution would have a significant effect. If our students cannot hear the languages that they are studying around them, we are shutting down their capacity to use their language skills. But if we give students languages on an audible platter, they will listen and learn – in a similar way to young people in Finland and elsewhere.

We also need to do something about SBS television and bring it back to bilingual prime-time broadcasting. If such prime-time broadcasting is possible across channels in Finland, it should be possible here on one dedicated network, as SBS is technically charged to do. A fixed language quota – with English sub-titles - for prime-time SBS TV, is now long overdue.

It is at this point we come back, as promised, to Masha and the Bear. The global success of Masha and the Bear shows that people are willing to extend themselves if the product is interesting enough and fascinating enough. The record-breaking episode, Recipe for Disaster, with its more than three billion views, is subtitled. Clearly children around the world love it and have been happy to seek it out and watch it over and over. SBS should be paying attention. It clearly has not.

GOOD NEWS STORIES

We also have good news stories to share that make a powerful case for the value of languages education, e.g. in addressing NAPLAN testing and the anxiety around English literacy and numeracy generated by it – especially among school principals.


In another article, the Sydney Morning Herald under the headline "Bilingual kids do better at NAPLAN" (June 21, 2014) reported the success story of Campbell Public School in 2014 which has two programs in tandem: (a) English-medium and (b) bilingual Korean and English with largely non-Korean participation.

The principal at the time reported that "NAPLAN results for the Year 3 students in the bilingual program were particularly impressive.” He is also quoted as saying:

“Our students in the bilingual class, as a group, outperformed our non-bilingual students in both literacy and numeracy quite significantly.

We did have a suspicion that they would be higher than the rest of the group, but we were surprised how much higher.

And recall that literacy and numeracy tests are in English, not in Korean – which has an entirely different writing system and grammatical structure. We can be sure they would have done a lot better than the English-medium comparators in Korean literacy and numeracy as well, but that is by the by, of course.

One of the themes that principals are prone to throw at us is of course the crowded curriculum. The good news is that many of us are doing wonderful work engaging with the issue through CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). We can combine language learning with different learning areas, and teach maths, or science, or history or arts in the target language. We need to get the message across that knowledge, literacy and numeracy skills are transferable and can be achieved in other languages and aligned with expected outcomes in English. Think also about the Finnish example mentioned above: students learning as many as five languages, to a level of proficiency such that they can use the
language in their daily lives to negotiate with others, and do so without any disadvantage in international testing of maths and science outcomes, and without claims of being hampered by a crowded curriculum. It comes back to Clyne’s (2005) issue of mindset.

If you want to teach a child to learn to read and write, English would logically not be anyone’s first choice given the idiosyncrasies of its spelling system. In the case of many other languages, such as German or Italian or Indonesian or Finnish, where the relationship between letter and sound is consistent and clear, children learn to read and write much more quickly. Italian children, for instance, learn to read and write on average about two years earlier than children in English. What’s more, we need to remind everyone that those literacy skills in Italian are transferable, thereby facilitating literacy acquisition in English.

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING FOR UNDERSTANDING AND EMPATHY

The Australian Curriculum: Languages is now with us, and with its emphasis on intercultural learning and understanding, provides us with a useful tool to show and promote the benefits of languages education. We are really well placed with this curriculum, as language educators, to have a real effect in our schools to foster social cohesion and wellbeing. Social cohesion is of course the buzzword of the moment, as government policy-makers across Australia grapple with things such as youth disengagement and the need for improved social harmony and wellbeing. If we want to make our society better, we need all of these approaches, as well as improved empathy.

The challenge for us then is to make the case for improved social cohesion, intercultural understanding and empathy through the language curriculum in such a way that is easy and clear to understand by everyone — including the most negative in their views about multilingualism and languages learning. I have an ‘I Love Lucy’ clip that can warm the hardest heart and bring out a belly laugh while making very clear the value of language and its intertwined relationship with culture.

In this particular scene (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nX9OeOrVEQI), Lucy is still in Paris, and she is about to have a very significant intercultural learning experience. She is off to have her first meal alone in a French café, but is unable to understand what she has ordered. When her meal arrives, she is shocked to discover a problem with her ordered dish:

*Waiter, this food has snails in it!*

Hilarity continues as she misuses the tongs by placing them on her nose, rather than using them to hold the snail-shells from which she can then extract the meat. Still lacking in courage, after the waiter removes the snail-shells, Lucy then attempts to use the tongs and shows her how to use the tongs correctly, she then insists on ketchup so she can coat the snails before facing them again. The scene is so ridiculous we can’t help but laugh. I am sure many of us have had a similar experience in a different language and country — as I did recently in Myanmar, unable to communicate while at lunch - to the bemusement of the locals as I did everything wrong.

The message of this clip is clear: it is about the value of intercultural understanding and language knowledge. The lack of linguistic and cultural capacity has clearly impacted on Lucy’s ability to enjoy the exciting opportunity offered by a lunch in Paris. If Lucy had had the opportunity to learn French language and customs in school, she might have understood what escargots meant before ordering them, and might have gained some prior understanding of French cultural practices around food. Or even more directly, with the right language skills, she could have asked the waiter straightforwardly when ordering. In any case, the link between language and culture is clear.

**BACK TO DESIRE: HOW CAN WE MAKE THE WORLD WANT WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER IN 60 SECONDS?**

Even if we are able to provide adequate capacity and opportunity to our young Australians, the question remains: how do we generate desire? And here I think is the real challenge: desire is the ultimate driver for successful language learning, as it is in other parts of our students’ lives. The attention of our students is shortsighted and shorter than ever, so we need to assume we have little time to capture their imagination.

A successful strategy to generate desire should ideally be quick and powerful. A persuasive example we might do well to study, if not emulate, is Armani’s television advertisement for its Sì perfume. It stars Cate Blanchett, coupled with totally compelling visuals and voice-over in Italian (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4301J32wiI). These 60 seconds highlight what desire really is and how easy and effective it can be — with a great product and well-designed campaign - to generate it. Not surprisingly, as a result of this single ad, sales of Sì went through the roof.

We also have a great product and we should always remember this, no matter how difficult circumstances can seem at times. Languages education offers something really valuable and important to our students and to society. Through the use of a simple frame such as DECODE to guide us, coupled with good ideas, humour, positivity, tenacity and clever marketing, I have no doubt that we can move this country to a place where high quality languages education (and not code as language) is the norm for all students in Australia.

Thank you very much.

**John Hajek, The University of Melbourne**

Professor John Hajek is professor of Italian Studies and director of the Research Unit for Multilingualism and Cross-cultural Communication (RUMACCC) at the University of Melbourne. He completed his university studies in Australia, Italy and the United Kingdom. He has previously also held research fellowships in the UK and Australia. His research interests are very broad, extending from languages education to language typology, phonetics, phonology and Italian linguistics.

An active language learner and teacher, he has also been involved in the promotion of language studies and multilingualism for many years — to language professionals but also to the general public.

Much of his research and promotion activity is done through RUMACCC where he works closely with colleagues. RUMACCC runs regular seminars, as well offers early literacy materials to a range of different communities. RUMACCC is also actively involved in a range of language-related research projects — ranging from the use of technology for language teaching in remote/regional areas to language issues in medical care.  

**REFERENCES**


CITATION

Professor John Hajek has a long and distinguished career as a languages educator, and has made exceptional and outstanding contributions to the field as a leader of languages education in Australia.

John was awarded his PhD from the University of Oxford, and has other degrees from the Universities of Melbourne, Florence and Padua, in the fields of arts, languages and linguistics. He is currently Professor of Italian and a linguist in the School of Languages and Linguistics at The University of Melbourne, and is Director of the Research Unit for Multilingualism and Cross-cultural Communication (RUMACCC). He was a founder of the Languages and Cultures Network of Australian Universities (LCNAU), as a recipient of a prestigious Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) grant.

For RUMACCC, John continues the work of multilingualism pioneer Michael Clyne, reaching out to communities to promote their languages, and conducting research and providing assistance to communities to retain, maintain and strengthen community languages. This work extends to engagement in East Timor, with Sudanese and other minority language users, and communities with endangered languages. His work in this field alone has significantly influenced attitudes to languages and both the pattern and quality of languages education arising from government, educators’ and policy-makers’ decisions, shifting the monolingual mindset and bursting the anglobubble, with widespread recognition of his contributions for the benefit and value of a culturally and linguistically diverse nation.

For LCNAU, John has brought together teachers of languages in Australian universities in a networked community that now meets regularly, shares research and teaching expertise, and acts as an advocate for languages teaching and learning. The establishment of an online portal of all languages programs available at Australian universities, to allow prospective students across the country to find a program right for them, is one of the outcomes of the early work of this now strong professional network.

John’s many contributions to the professional engagement of teachers of languages in schools and universities; and to the learning of languages in pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, in universities and in community schools extends to numerous projects to promote languages education, and to advocate for the importance of language recognition nationally and internationally in the political arena. He has presented keynote plenaries throughout the world, including several at AFMLTA international conferences and notably the Horwood Address in 2017.

John’s work with schools and teachers of languages in schools is extensive, including consultations with Education Services Australia on pre-school and early years languages programs, with AFMLTA, with education departments and governments across Australia, and, of critical importance, with individuals and groups of languages teachers. His willingness to share and collaborate, to engage and give unlimited time to the profession has had a profound effect on languages teaching over the past decade. He has been engaged in collaboration for a Vietnamese-English bilingual school, and has been active in the bilingual schools sectors, including for Italian-English schools and preschools. His work on literacy in these areas informs the collaborations and programs adopted in the schools, as well as engaging local communities.

John’s work in the school languages education space has led to development of new curricula, approaches to languages education, language teacher preparation, and community attitudes to learning languages and extending understanding and recognition of plurilingual Australia. He has provided extensive professional learning sessions for teachers of languages, across all the states and territories of Australia.

In summary, Professor Hajek has made exceptional contributions to the languages education field in Australia, that clearly meet the criteria for the AFMLTA medal. These contributions span community, school and university programs, and involve work with students, teachers, schools, departments, government, industry and communities. We believe him to be a highly deserving recipient of this award.
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The aim of this study was to assess Polish-background parents’ and grandparents’ attitudes about the value of community language maintenance and bilingualism, their knowledge of those issues, and the relationship between these two variables. It also aimed to identify topics related to raising children bilingually that are of interest to immigrant families. A five-part questionnaire was distributed to Polish-background parents and grandparents living in four capital cities in Australia. 118 carers returned the questionnaires. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient, and thematic analysis for the qualitative elements. Findings indicated that families in the study held very positive attitudes towards bilingualism Polish language maintenance. However, the research demonstrates that the relationship between immigrant parent/grandparent attitudes towards raising children bilingually and their actual knowledge about bilingual learning is likely to be weak. It warns that it may be difficult to predict if increasing immigrant families’ knowledge in this area will change their attitudes and result in higher language maintenance and bilingualism levels. The participants wanted to learn specific methods and techniques of language transmission, strategies to motivate children to learn and use the community language and useful language teaching aids.

INTRODUCTION

The decision to maintain a community language can be influenced by personal, linguistic and sociocultural factors (Corklin & Lourie, 1983), among which parents and grandparents, acting as motivating agents and sources of community language input, are among the most important. Parents who believe that they can influence the linguistic future of their children achieve best results in raising their children bilingually (De Houwer, 1999). In multilingual families, parents are crucial in developing and implementing family language maintenance, which involves decisions concerning patterns of language use, engagement of children in language education and the possible language input and output opportunities that the family create for their children (Clyne, 2005; Schwartz, 2010). Subject literature also underscores the role of grandparents in raising children bilingually (Clyne, 2005; Smolcz & Secombe, 1985), Clyne (2005) argues that grandparents can increase the amount and intensity of interaction in the community language for children, although he warns that reliance on grandparents as the only source of the language is risky, especially if the contact with them is casual. On the other hand, Leuner (2008) claims that the role of grandparents in language maintenance is overestimated, as only a small number of Polish-background children in her study had their grandparents in Australia and they made a small contribution to the community language use in the family.

Available research on community language transmission highlights the match between parental attitudes towards community language maintenance and the resulting level of community language maintenance or shift in the second generation (Cho, 2008; Enstice, 2007).
2012). According to Pearson (2008, p. 123) ‘positive attitudes of parents, siblings and peers toward a language can add value to the language and make it more attractive to the child’. Likewise, De Houwer (1999) states that positive attitudes are the first step for parents in determining how they will use the community language with their children, which contributes directly to the development of their language skills. However, positive attitudes of parents towards community language transmission do not always convert into actual support for the community language in the home environment (Smolcz & Secombe, 1988).

While a considerable number of studies investigate parental attitudes towards community language maintenance, there is practically no research on parents' knowledge of the issues of child bilingualism and the impact of such knowledge on language transmission success or failure. A notable exception is a study by Smith and Gibbard (2011), which demonstrates that when parents are informed about how language development is influenced by the quality and quantity of interaction they have with their children, they modify their linguistic behaviour, which in turn results in the children gaining considerably higher word counts. Also, there appear to be no studies investigating the possible relationship between parents’ knowledge of issues related to bilingual upbringing and their attitudes towards it. The assumption is often made that increasing parents’ knowledge in this area will help develop their positive attitudes towards bilingual upbringing. However, research on the public’s understanding of ‘scientific’ approaches to learning suggests only a weak positive relation between understanding ‘scientific’ approaches and having a positive attitude towards it (Allum, Sturgis, Tabourazi & Brunton-Smith, 2008).

There is a need to study the relationship between understanding bilingual upbringing research, having a particular attitude towards it and the resulting outcomes in language transmission and use. Examining those relationships is important in order to know how to enhance public awareness and appreciation of the benefits of community/heritage language maintenance and child bilingualism.

POLISH LANGUAGE IN AUSTRALIA

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the number of people speaking Polish at home is declining (53,590 in 2006; 48,070 in 2016). This trend results from Polish (like other community languages) being maintained more in first generation immigrants than second generation (Clyne, 2005). It is worth noting that the number of people in the ABS data who declare Polish ancestry, and who may use Polish in interactional domains other than their own home, is in fact growing (163,582 in 2006; 183,968 in 2016). Nonetheless, Polish is among the languages that could be lost to Australian society in the long term, especially in view of the foreseeable absence of a new immigration wave. The difficult situation of Polish in Australia contrasts with the growing number of Polish language speakers and learners in other parts of the world, as a result of Poland’s joining the European Union (EU) in 2004, a change in the main direction of the Polish emigration from intercontinental to intracontinental, and the elevation of the country’s international standing as a major European democracy and economy (Dabrowska, Miodunka, & Pawfowski, 2012). Before Poland’s joining the EU, less than a hundred thousand people of Polish descent lived in the UK. Today, Poles form the largest ethnic minority in this country, estimated at over one million people, and Polish is the most popular second language (Dabrowska, Miodunka, & Pawfowski, 2012). The increasing presence of Polish is also visible in Asia. A new Polish studies section will open soon at Sichuan International Studies University in Chong Qing, taking the number of university-based Polish language programs in China to 17 (W. Martyniuk, personal communication, 8 July 2018).

Research on Polish as a community language in Australia spans several decades. Among the prominent themes found in the subject literature are: patterns of Polish language use (Janik, 1996; Johnston, 1967; Debski, 2009; Leunier, 2008); Polish language as a ‘core value’ (Smolcz, 1981; Smolcz & Secombe, 1985), language and identity (Wierzbicka, 2007), impact of new technologies on Polish language maintenance (Debski, 2006), and bilingual phonological development (Debski, 2015). Attitudes towards maintaining Polish have also been researched. Johnston (1965) reported Polish-background parents’ unfavourable attitudes towards assimilation in the area of language both in metropolitan and country Australia. In a more recent study by Leunier (2008), Polish-background parents claimed that it was important for Polish to be maintained, so that their children speak it fluently and correctly. No studies were found in the subject literature of Polish language maintenance in Australia examining carer (parents/grandparents/other ‘s) attitudes towards and knowledge of child bilingualism. Also, no research was located about the relationship between parent/grandparent attitudes, their self-assessed knowledge and their knowledge of the value of community language maintenance and bilingualism. In an effort to start filling these gaps, the present study poses the following research questions (RQ):

1. What attitudes towards the value of maintaining the community language and bilingualism are prevalent among Polish-background parents and grandparents?
2. How do Polish-background carers (parents/grandparents) self-assess their knowledge of the value of maintaining the community language and bilingualism?
3. How knowledgeable are the carers about those issues?
4. What is the relationship between the carers’ attitudes towards and knowledge of the value of maintaining the community language and bilingualism?
5. What topics related to raising children bilingually are of greatest interest to the Polish-background carers?

The research questions are based on several assumptions and expectations. RQ1 will allow description of carer attitudes towards the value of maintaining Polish and for comparisons with the results of earlier studies, as well as towards bilingualism, a new trend in the subject literature. RQ2 and RQ3 will enable comparison of the participants’ self-assessed knowledge of the value of Polish language maintenance and bilingualism with their actual knowledge on those issues. The aim of RQ4 is to measure the strength of the relationship between carer attitudes towards and knowledge of the value of maintaining the community language and bilingualism in order to determine if the level of this correlation is similar to or different from that in research of public understanding of ‘science’ issues (Allum, Sturgis, Tabourazi & Brunton-Smith, 2008).

It is assumed in RQ1-RQ4 that the “value of maintaining the community language” in the eyes of children may be significantly elevated by the opportunity to use it for education, work and leisure purposes in Australia and overseas. Thus, the perceived usefulness of the community language in a range of communicative domains may contribute to the decision to maintain it (Clyne, 2005; Weinlein & Louie, 1983). It is also assumed that the perceived “value of bilingualism” is relative to the awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of being bilingual. Finally, RQ5 is expected to shed light on which specific topics related to raising children bilingually are of interest to carers, so that we can achieve a better match between their expectations and the content of seminars and workshops that are organised for them.

THE STUDY

Participants

Participants in the present study were 118 members of the Polish community in Australia, recruited before a series of seminars entitled “What carers should know about bilingualism and raising children in more than one language” held in four capital cities in Australia in August-September 2015, supported by the Polish Consulate General in Sydney. As the seminars were held in rooms located on the premises of Polish clubs or churches in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth, the participants were also recruited from among other visitors who volunteered their participation. Sampling in this way provides for enhancing the representativeness of the study sample by not limiting it to those members of the Polish community who were interested in raising children bilingually.

### Table 1: Study participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Grandparents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number (%)</td>
<td>118 (100)</td>
<td>40 (34)</td>
<td>78 (66)</td>
<td>65 (57,0)</td>
<td>49 (43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age of arrival in Australia</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Forty (34%) of the participants were male and seventy-eight (66%) were female, and sixty-five (57%) were categorised as parents and forty-nine (43%) as grandparents. Their age ranged between 22 and 75 (M = 50.3) and the mean age at which they arrived in Australia was 26.9 years. The mean age of the parents was 41.8 and of the grandparents was 62.1. Except four who were born in Australia and two who were born in a country other than Poland or Australia, the majority of the participants (112) were born in Poland. Ninety-seven of them declared that they had Polish partners, while nineteen had partners they described as Australian and two had partners described as neither Polish nor Australian.

**METHOD**

A five-section questionnaire was developed to collect data from the participants. The first section asked respondents to provide demographic information, such as age, sex, place of birth, age of arrival in Australia and ancestry of partner. The second section assessed respondents’ attitudes about the value of the Polish language maintenance and Polish-English bilingualism of their children. In the third section, respondents were asked to self-assess their knowledge of such issues as the position of Polish in Australia and overseas, bilingualism, benefits resulting from bilingualism, potential problems resulting from bilingualism, and teaching Polish to children.

The next section assessed respondents’ knowledge of the above-mentioned issues by asking them to determine the truth-value of 10 statements describing their current state of knowledge on the status of the Polish language and bilingual child development. The final open-ended section requested that respondents propose two issues related to raising children bilingually about which they wanted to increase their knowledge.

The questionnaire was piloted with two adult members of the Polish community in Melbourne, prior to use with the 118 participants.

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient, and thematic analysis for the qualitative elements.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

**Attitudes towards the value of maintaining Polish and child bilingualism**

The Polish-background carers were asked to express their support for three statements related to the value of knowing Polish and the impact of bilingualism on their children on a five-point Likert scale (Table 2). For the purposes of quantitative analysis, the responses were assigned numerical values (strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, neither disagree nor agree = 3, agree = 4, strongly agree = 5) and the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) scores were calculated for each statement for parents, grandparents and the whole group.

The results of the analysis reveal that the carers’ attitudes towards their children’s bilingualism and the usefulness of Polish in their work and school environments were positive, indicated by the high mean scores ranging from 4.67 to 4.24 and 4.12 respectively, for the combined group of respondents. Despite overall expressing positive attitudes, the carers were the least certain about Polish being an asset to their children in the school environment (M=4.12), and it was this issue which most polarised the respondents’ opinions (SD=1.00). On the other hand, the carers had fewer doubts that bilingualism as such will have a positive impact on the children (M=4.67, SD=0.81). The attitudes of the parents and grandparents in the study followed a similar pattern. The parents, however, were more positive than grandparents in their attitudes towards bilingualism and the usefulness of Polish in the work environment, and equally positive in their assessment of the value of Polish at school. In particular, the parents expressed more positive attitudes than the grandparents in regards to the usefulness of Polish in their children’s future work environment.

**SELF-ASSESSED KNOWLEDGE ON THE VALUE OF POLISH AND CHILD BILINGUALISM**

The respondents were asked to self-assess their knowledge of the position of Polish in Australia, bilingualism, advantages of being bilingual, potential problems resulting from bilingualism and teaching Polish to children, on a 4-point scale. For the purposes of quantitative analysis, their responses were again assigned numerical values (I have no knowledge = 1, I have some knowledge = 2, I have considerable knowledge = 3, I have expert knowledge = 4). The mean scores and the standard deviations for each of the questions for parents, grandparents and the whole group are presented in Table 3.

**Table 2: Attitudes of carers towards the value of maintaining Polish and impact of bilingualism on their children/grandchildren.**

| Item | Parents | | | | Grandparents | | | | | | Carers Combined | | | |
|------|---------|---|---|---|---------|---|---|---|---|---------|---|---|---|
| 1. Knowing Polish will be an asset for my child / grandchild at school | 64 | 4.12 | 0.93 | | 44 | 4.07 | 1.11 | | 108 | 4.12 | 1.00 | |
| 2. Knowing Polish may be useful to my child / grandchild in their future career | 65 | 4.54 | 0.87 | | 46 | 4.15 | 1.08 | | 111 | 4.24 | 0.96 | |
| 3. Bilingualism will have a positive impact on my child / grandchild | 65 | 4.81 | 0.58 | | 47 | 4.45 | 1.03 | | 112 | 4.67 | 0.81 | |

**Table 3: Carers’ self-assessment of their knowledge on the value of maintaining Polish and child bilingualism.**

| Item | Parents | | | | Grandparents | | | | | | Carers Combined | | | |
|------|---------|---|---|---|---------|---|---|---|---|---------|---|---|---|
| 1. Position of Polish in Australia and overseas | 62 | 2.14 | 0.89 | | 46 | 2.28 | 0.76 | | 113 | 2.26 | 0.90 | |
| 2. Bilingualism | 62 | 2.61 | 0.87 | | 47 | 2.83 | 0.88 | | 114 | 2.74 | 0.89 | |
| 3. Advantages of being bilingual | 61 | 2.82 | 0.80 | | 44 | 3.04 | 0.80 | | 110 | 2.94 | 0.81 | |
| 4. Potential problems resulting from bilingualism | 62 | 2.08 | 0.99 | | 44 | 1.95 | 1.09 | | 111 | 2.04 | 1.04 | |
| 5. Teaching Polish to children | 61 | 2.52 | 0.86 | | 45 | 2.82 | 0.92 | | 110 | 2.68 | 0.90 | |
The respondents were quite conservative in the assessment of their knowledge of issues related to raising children bilingually. The analysis of their responses in this section reveals that the carers assessed their knowledge of potential problems resulting from bilingualism as the lowest (M=2.04, SD=1.04) and of the position of Polish in Australia and outside of Poland the second lowest (M=2.26, SD=0.99). They assessed their knowledge of the advantages of being bilingual (M=2.94, SD=0.81), bilingualism (M=2.74, SD=0.89), and teaching Polish to children (M=2.68, SD=0.90) more highly. Again, the responses of the parents and grandparents in the study followed a similar pattern, but this time the grandparents, overall, claimed to have more knowledge about raising children bilingually than the parents.

**KNOWLEDGE ON THE VALUE OF POLISH AND CHILD BILINGUALISM**

In order to assess the respondents’ knowledge of raising children bilingually, they were asked to determine as true or false 10 statements related to: 1) the value of the Polish language in Australia and in the world [statements 1 - 3], determined by the extent of its use and status as a core cultural value; and 2) the value of becoming bilingual [statements 4 - 10], indicated by the advantages and disadvantages of being bilingual (Table 4). The statements were based on relevant subject literature identified in the literature review. It was assumed that many of the study participants would be familiar with research concerning raising children bilingually that has been disseminated through the national and ethnic press, radio and television, and through community languages conferences and seminars.

A number of patterns can be seen in these data, several of which demonstrate the respondents’ knowledge of issues related to raising children bilingually. It is notable that almost all (92%) of the carers identified as ‘true’ that bilingual development of children should start as early as possible for best results; most of them (75%) thought that bilingualism was unlikely to have negative impact on children’s progress at kindergarten or school; and a great majority (73%) understood that bilingualism would not lead to speech disorders. On the other hand, only 57% of the carers understood that the child’s mixing of the two languages was not a sign of language development difficulty; and only just over half of them (53%) appreciated the role of bilingualism in the acquisition of a third and subsequent languages. A great majority of the respondents (72%) either did not see a connection between the development of the child’s early reading skills in Polish and their learning to read in English at school, or were unsure if a connection exists.

### Table 4: Carers’ knowledge on the value of maintaining Polish and child bilingualism (N=118).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement (TRUTH VALUE; evidence)</th>
<th>Not sure/Do Not Know</th>
<th>Correct Answer</th>
<th>Incorrect Answer</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[1] The number of people who use and learn Polish around the world is diminishing (FALSE; Dabrowska, Modunka, &amp; Pawlowski, 2012)</td>
<td>65 (55%)</td>
<td>21 (18%)</td>
<td>28 (24%)</td>
<td>4 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[2] Polish is among the ten most commonly used languages in Australian homes (FALSE; ABS, 2016; Clyne, 2005)</td>
<td>78 (66%)</td>
<td>16 (14%)</td>
<td>20 (17%)</td>
<td>4 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[3] Research demonstrates that Polish holds a special value for Polish people (TRUE; Smolizc &amp; Secombe, 1985)</td>
<td>33 (28%)</td>
<td>84 (71%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[4] There are more monolinguals than bilinguals in the world (FALSE; Clyne, 2005; De Bot, 1992)</td>
<td>52 (44%)</td>
<td>21 (18%)</td>
<td>41 (35%)</td>
<td>4 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[5] Raising children bilingually as early as possible brings best results (TRUE; Bangma &amp; Riemersma, 2011; Byers-Heinlein, Burns, &amp; Werker, 2010)</td>
<td>4 (3%)</td>
<td>109 (92%)</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
<td>3 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[6] The child’s mixing of Polish and English is a sign that the child experiences difficulties with bilingual upbringing (FALSE; Grosjean, 1982; Lindholm &amp; Padilla, 1978)</td>
<td>33 (28%)</td>
<td>67 (57%)</td>
<td>12 (10%)</td>
<td>6 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[7] Learning two languages at the same time will have negative impact on the child’s progress at kindergarten or school (FALSE; Bialystok, Craik, &amp; Luk, 2012; Ianco-Worrall, 1972)</td>
<td>18 (15%)</td>
<td>89 (75%)</td>
<td>4 (3%)</td>
<td>7 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[8] Bilingualism has no impact on learning a third and subsequent languages (FALSE; Bialystok, 1988; Cummins, 1984)</td>
<td>18 (15%)</td>
<td>63 (53%)</td>
<td>32 (27%)</td>
<td>7 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[9] Bilingualism can lead to speech disorder (FALSE; Genesee, 2009; Meisel, 2004)</td>
<td>20 (17%)</td>
<td>86 (73%)</td>
<td>7 (6%)</td>
<td>5 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[10] Polish reading skills acquired at home will have no impact on learning to read in English at school (FALSE; Collier &amp; Thomas, 1995; Krakshen &amp; Biber, 1987)</td>
<td>16 (14%)</td>
<td>33 (28%)</td>
<td>59 (50%)</td>
<td>10 (8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents displayed poor knowledge of the current status of Polish in Australia and in the world. A vast majority of respondents (86%) either did not know whether Polish was among the 10 languages most commonly used in Australia, did not provide an answer to this question, or answered it wrongly. Similarly, a majority of them (82%) either did not know whether the use of Polish in the world was growing or diminishing, did not answer the question, or provided the wrong answer to the question in additional probing about this issue. Those who provided answers to those questions seemed to overestimate the extent of use of Polish in Australia and underestimate the extent of its use in the world. Most of the respondents (71%) were well aware that that Polish has been identified as a core identity value to Polish people.

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CARER ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE**

A Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient, a measure of linear association between two variables (Christensen, 2007), was calculated for two pairs of variables. The relationship between the respondents’ attitudes towards the value of bilingualism and of Polish language maintenance to their children (Table 2) and the respondents’ knowledge about the value of Polish language maintenance and issues of bilingualism/bilingual upbringing (Table 4) was weak (R = 0.1738, R2= 0.0302). The correlation between the carers’ attitudes towards the value of Polish language maintenance in Australia (Table 2, items 1 and 2) and their knowledge on the position of Polish in Australia and the world (Table 4, items 1-3) was also weak (R = 0.1552, R2 = 0.0241). The relationship between the respondents’ attitudes towards child bilingualism and their knowledge of the issues of bilingualism was not calculated, as nearly all carers in the study expressed very positive attitudes towards the value of bilingualism for their children.

Topics related to raising children bilingually identified by parents and grandparents

The questionnaire respondents submitted 62 entries, which flagged issues related to raising children bilingually about which they wished they had more knowledge. The entries varied: some were succinct, in the form of single words or phrases (e.g., “accent”, “teaching aids”), and some were more elaborate, in the form of a more complex idea (e.g., “What
can we do if a child does not want to speak Polish? The entries were compiled into one document and subjected to thematic analysis (Guest, 2012; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The three strongest themes that emerged from the dataset concerned language transmission/teaching methods and aids (N=15), bilingual development (N=10) and motivation (N=9) (Table 5). The carers expressed their wish to extend their practical knowledge of various methods, strategies and techniques of language transmission and to become more familiar with the available Polish teaching aids, such as course-books and computer programs. The entries that were allocated to the “bilingual development” theme addressed several issues, but mainly the dynamic of bilingual development and its impact on children. The carers wanted to know when to start teaching the child a second language, whether to teach the two languages at the same time, about the critical periods of language acquisition and the potential problems they and their children could encounter. A strong and homogenous theme that emerged from the qualitative data concerned motivating children to use and learn Polish. The carers wanted to know how to motivate children to learn and to use Polish, including in communicative situations when all interlocutors are second generation immigrant children.

The carers (N=5) were also interested in the influence the social environment may have on their child’s bilingual development, in particular the school environment, siblings and extended family. A few others (N=5) wanted to learn more about the impact of bilingualism on language development and whether it could cause language delay or disorder. The same number of carers were interested in knowing more about how to transmit Polish culture. Finally, three participants asked questions related to trilingualism. It seems that the study participants were active cares who were seeking information on how to support their children’s bilingualism. They felt a knowledge gap for themselves, that the research questions identified and described in more detail.

Table 5: Topics related to raising children bilingually identified by parents and grandparents as being of interest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Example Entries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language transmission / Teaching</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Language teaching when father and mother speak different languages. / How much time per day should I spend teaching my child Polish?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching aids</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching aids. / Computer programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual development</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Is teaching two languages at the same time best? / How much time a day should I spend teaching Polish?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dynamics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological / neurological development and benefits. / Impact of bilingualism on personality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>How can I motivate my child to want to learn Polish? / How to motivate children to use Polish among themselves?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>What is the impact of the school environment? / The influence of older siblings on community language learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech pathology</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Can teaching my child Polish cause language delay? / Is it true that bilingualism can cause language disorder?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture transmission</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Teaching Polish culture. / Contacts with Poland and the maintenance of culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trilingualism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The impact of learning three languages at the same time. / How fast can a bilingual child learn a third language?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Support of Polish organisations. / Education opportunities in Poland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCUSSION
The results of the present study support the view that Polish background carers have positive attitudes towards the impact of bilingualism on their children. However, they are less convinced that knowing Polish will be a useful skill in their children’s lives, which perhaps is a major factor contributing to the relatively low levels of Polish language maintenance in the second generation in Australia (Clyne, 2005). We might propose that although Polish carers regard Polish as an important part of Polish identity and a “core value” (Smolicz, 1981) and see bilingualism as providing a range of benefits to children, they are less certain about the usefulness of knowing Polish and do not put enough effort into transmitting it. This finding underscores the importance of perceived minority language value/status as a factor in language maintenance or shift (Conclin & Lourie, 1983). The qualitative data confirm that Polish-background children are not motivated to learn Polish, which is a source of concern to their parents and grandparents. The carers want to know how to motivate their children to learn the community language. It seems that Dörnyei’s (1998) work on motivational strategies in language learning, although mainly aimed at formal classroom settings, could provide useful guidelines to carers undertaking to maintain a community language. The fact that the parents in the study were consistently more positive than the grandparents in their attitudes towards both Polish and bilingualism may represent a shift in the Australian society at large towards valuing community languages and bilingualism more in recent years. On the other hand, it may be a consequence of the fact that while the parents expressed their attitudes towards hypothetical situations, the grandparents based their opinions on experience raising their own children and watching their careers.

The respondents in general were conservative in the self-assessment of their knowledge on raising children bilingually. They admitted to not being familiar with information regarding the status of Polish in Australia and in the world. They assessed their knowledge of the issues of bilingualism somewhat more highly, which is consistent with their more positive attitudes towards bilingualism than the value of Polish discussed earlier. Overall, more grandparents than parents declared having knowledge on the various aspects of bilingual upbringing, which may stem from their longer exposure to those problems, first as parents and then grandparents, and is quite logical.

The respondents’ low self-assessment of their knowledge about the position of Polish in Australia and overseas was confirmed by the results of the questionnaire. A great majority of them overestimated the popularity of Polish in Australian homes, at the same time underestimating the extent of its use in the world. It seems that the Polish community has not yet noted the decline of the popularity of Polish, and its fall from being in the top 10 (ABS, 1986) to being number
32 of the most commonly used language in the home environment in Australia (ABS, 2016). Neither have they noted the ascent of the status of Polish overseas (Dabrowska, Miodunka, & Pawłowski, 2012), indicated by the rapidly growing number of people using and promoting it elsewhere. The qualitative part of the questionnaire revealed that the Polish-background carers were not interested in obtaining more information about Polish, either believing that they already had sufficient expertise in this area or that such expertise was not important.

The carers’ knowledge of the issues of bilingualism varied. It is encouraging to see that they knew that raising children bilingually should start as early as possible and that bilingualism would not have any harmful impact on the child’s cognitive and linguistic development, although many considered language mixing a sign of disrupted language development, contrary to the prevailing view in the subject literature (e.g. Bialystok et al., 2012). Also, many of them did not realise the positive impact of bilingualism on the learning of subsequent languages and the transfer of reading skills between the two languages of bilingual children. The qualitative section of the questionnaire showed that the carers wanted to have more knowledge on topics related to raising children bilingually and emphasised practical over theoretical issues. They expressed interest in gaining more skills in the methods and techniques of language transmission, including specific teaching aids. They were also interested in the dynamics of bilingual child development and its impact on children, including issues related to speech pathology. Also, they enquired about the influence of the environment on their children’s bilingualism, about issues of culture transmission and trilingualism.

The relationship between the respondents’ attitudes towards and knowledge of the investigated issues of raising children bilingually was weak. This result confirms the weak relationship between understanding a ‘scientific’ issue and having a positive attitude towards it by the general public found in previous research (Allum et al., 2008; Evans & Durant, 1995). Therefore, we might conclude from this result that it is difficult to predict whether increasing immigrant carers’ knowledge on issues related to raising children bilingually and bilingualism will in fact result in improved attitudes and higher levels of community language maintenance and bilingualism.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to consider immigrant carer attitudes towards child bilingualism as a factor in community language maintenance. The research indicates that it may be difficult to predict to what extent increasing immigrant carers’ knowledge of the issues of raising children bilingually will improve their attitudes towards it and result in improved language maintenance at higher bilingualism levels. It seems that community initiatives supporting bilingual upbringing should focus more on practical hands-on workshops introducing specific methods and techniques of language transmission, strategies used to motivate children to learn and use the community language, and useful language teaching aids.

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Robert Debski

Dr Hab. Robert Debski is Associate Professor and Assistant Dean (Speech Pathology) in the Faculty of Polish Studies, Jagiellonian University in Krakow. He is also Honorary Academic in the Department of Community and Allied Health, La Trobe University, Melbourne. Robert is the author / editor of books and articles on community language maintenance, bilingual speech-language pathology and CALL. He has recently co-authored an emergent literacy program and booklets for pre-schoolers speaking Polish and English in Australia. Supported by the Polish National Centre for Science, he is currently describing the developing phonology of bilingual preschool children speaking Ukrainian and Polish.
INTRODUCTION
Across Australia, concerns have been raised about the relatively small number of students who complete their secondary schooling with languages as one of their subjects (Ministerial Council on Education, 2005; ACARA, 2016). The participation data indicates that this has been the case for a number of years, with enrolments in languages ranging between 10% and 11% from 2010 to 2016 for total numbers across all languages. Comparatively, 2016 enrolments in Languages (10.2% of students) were surpassed by those in the Arts (26.7%), Health and Physical Education (30.5%), Information and Communication Technology and Design and Technology (33.7%), Sciences (52.4%), Humanities and Social Sciences (57.3%), Mathematics (71%) and English (77.8%) (ACARA, 2016).

Current student enrolment figures in languages subjects in senior secondary years are in stark contrast with the 1950s, when the study of an additional language was a pre-requisite for university study in Australia, and acted as a major incentive for students in secondary schools to study languages. At that time approximately 40% of Australian students in the senior secondary years studied a language (Muller, 1996). This figure needs to be contextualised against the participation rate in senior secondary schooling, which was considerably lower than currently. During that time the study of an additional language in Australia was viewed predominantly as an intellectual endeavour and languages were seen as a way to promote scholastic enrichment as opposed to developing the linguistic skills needed to interact with members of the relevant language community (Pauwels, Winter & Lo Bianco, 2007). In the 1970s and 1980s, the removal of this university requirement to have studied a language in the final years of schooling resulted in a substantial reduction in the proportion of secondary school students studying languages, falling to 16% by the 1980s (Muller, 1996). Another possible influence on this decrease in student enrolments was the publication of the Wyndham report (1957), which deemed language study to be elitist, and argued for removing the mandatory study of languages as a pre-requisite to university studies. As mentioned above, the latest national data available (2016) shows that enrolments have further declined with just over one in ten students completing their secondary schooling with a language subject (ACARA, 2016).

In a drive to increase student participation in languages in the senior years, Australian governments have invested in strengthening the provision of programs in the years prior to Years 11 and 12. These policies and strategies include The National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) initiative between 1994 and 2002, The National Statement on Languages Education in Australian Schools between 2005 and 2008 (Ministerial Council on Education, 2005), The National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP) between 2008 and 2012 (Department of Education, 2010) and The Australian Government White Paper ‘Australia in the Asian Century’ (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011). These government initiatives reflected the prioritisation of languages as a learning area, particularly...
Asian languages. Governments at both national and state and territory levels continue to promote languages as an important learning area, but with most emphasis on early years programs in the past five years. Despite this prioritisation of languages as a learning area, and specific programs calling for increases in languages participation, student participation rates in senior secondary schooling has, depending on the education jurisdiction (state and territory, and government, independent and Catholic), either waned or stagnated.

This paper reports on an investigation into predictors of senior secondary students’ participation in languages study across Australia. Current knowledge is advanced by analysing data from groups of students who are more likely and least likely to study languages in senior secondary school in Australia.

INVESTIGATION OF PREDICTORS OF STUDENTS’ SENIOR SECONDARY PARTICIPATION IN LANGUAGES STUDY

Data and sample

The Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) was used to analyse predictors of students’ participation in languages study in senior secondary schools. LSAY tracks a nationally representative sample of students aged 15 until they are 25, and their transitions from school to tertiary education and or work. LSAY Y09 is linked with the 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which provides a set of individual and school-level measures. The collection of the Y09 sample will continue until 2019.

This dataset is a secondary data source (that is, the authors did not collect the data in the course of their research) and as such has advantages and disadvantages for analysis and applicability to the research outlined here (Schutt, 2006). In relation to this paper, there were a number of advantages in using this data set, including its representative scope of a large number of young people, the relative ease of access as an online source, and its low cost. One disadvantage of using this dataset was the incomplete information about the possibility of students choosing a language at their school and the specification of which languages were studied. In addition, it is unknown whether students had access to a preferred language at their schools. While the implications of these limitations will be discussed in more detail below, the reader should keep in mind that the discussion is based on these secondary data that have been collected for other purposes.

Yearly data collection in the LSAY is considered as a ‘wave’. For example, year one of the LSAY is labelled Wave 1, year two is called Wave 2, and so forth. The dependent variable (Languages Participation [LBA024B]) was collected in Wave 2 while the independent variables (Socio-Economic Status, Immigration Status, and Location) were elicited in Wave 1 of the LSAY. Overall, 7078 (87.2%) students were in Wave 2. While it may not always be the case, students around this age would commonly be 16 years or older at the time of data collection in Wave 2. It may not always be the case, students around this age would commonly have the option to ‘opt-in’ to languages programs.

ANALYSIS

Multiple logistic regression was the most appropriate technique for the purposes of this investigation because the response variable is binary. That is, students either participated in languages study or did not. This analysis produced odds ratios (OR) measuring the association between an exposure (Socio-Economic Status, Immigration status, Location) and an outcome (Student participation in Languages). Only students still attending school in Wave 2 were selected in the analysis. The rationale for these criteria was that, firstly, students need to be attending school before they are presented with an option to participate in a languages program; and, secondly, the focus of this study is students’ languages participation in senior secondary years and hence it was necessary for participants to be 16 years or older at the time of data collection in Wave 2. These points should be kept in mind when interpreting the results of this paper.

MEASURES

Three measures were analysed to determine their impact on senior secondary participation in languages:

- Socio-Economic Status (SES)
- Immigration Status
- Location

Socio-Economic Status

In the LSAY dataset, a composite measure of Socio-Economic Status (SES) called the Economic, Social and Cultural status (ESCS) index was adopted (OECD, 2005). The ESCS index is derived from the highest level of parents’ occupations classified using the International Standard Classification of Occupations (known as the HISEI), parental education converted to years (PARED) and access to possessions at home as a surrogate measure of wealth (HOMEPOS). Further information about this measure can be found in Schulz (2006) and OECD (2005).

Immigration Status

In this paper, the terms and definitions of immigration status from the LSAY data are used. Students were categorised into one of the following: Australian-born (students born in Australia with both parents born in Australia), First-generation (students born in Australia with at least one parent born overseas) and Overseas-born (students born overseas with both parents also born overseas).

Table 1: Results of Logistic Regression Predicting Student Participation in Languages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>LB</th>
<th>UB</th>
<th>Nagelkerke R²/ χ² (df)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>43.01</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;.001**</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>.054/ 193.63*** (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aus. born¹</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>69.04</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;.001**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Gen</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>30.15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;.001**</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas-born²</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>60.04</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;.001**</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro³</td>
<td>37.78</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>31.34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;.001**</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>8.09</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;.004*</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. **Significant p<.001, *Significant p<.05, SE = standard error, CI = confidence interval, LB = lower bound, UB = upper bound, 1 Reference category

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following table presents the data on each of the variables that predict student participation in languages study.

Location

Geographical location in the LSAY data was coded with respect to the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs Schools Geographic Location Classification (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016):

- Metropolitan – including mainland state capital cities or major urban districts with a population of 100,000 or more
- Provincial – including provincial cities and other non-remote provincial areas with an approximate population of 50,000-99,999
- Remote – All other non-metropolitan and provincial areas including restricted accessibility of goods, services and opportunities for social interaction.
As shown in Table 1, as students’ Socio-Economic Status (SES) increased, so too did the odds of reporting participation in a languages subject (OR = 1.43, 95% CI, 1.28-1.59). This finding indicates that SES is a significant predictor of students’ senior secondary participation in languages study. Knowledge of this may be used to inform targeted support for students with low SES backgrounds. This finding complements other qualitative research discussing the relationship between students’ participation in languages and their SES background (e.g., Carr & Pauwels, 2006). Similar to other learning areas, SES status impacts students’ participation in a range of complex and interconnected ways, some of which are characterised as ingrained systemic failures in the education system (Jones, 2013). Considering the relationship between lower SES status and lower levels of literacy issues including language processing, comprehension and production (Fernald, Thorpe, & Marchman, 2010; Hof, 2006; Huttenlocher et al., 2010) it is conceivable that students’ formative years with reduced literacy experiences may impact upon participation in languages study later on in their schooling.

One way of explaining the underlying mechanism of how SES may act as a barrier to participation is to consider the different cultural capital students bring to the classroom and the commonly valued cultural capital in the languages classroom. It might be reasonable to conclude that the cultural capital that is valued in the senior secondary languages classroom does not typically align strongly with the cultural capital possessed by students from low-SES backgrounds (Bourdieu, 1977). Students from low-SES backgrounds who do not have much languages-related cultural capital may find it more difficult to value the importance of learning another language, and hence not select the subject.

If there is a desire to address this low SES participation rate of students in languages study, policy makers and educators need to consider students of diverse backgrounds more accessible to students from low SES backgrounds. There is a need to ensure equity of access to quality language programs for all students, and to increase understanding of the value of the benefits of learning additional languages. Funding towards supporting quality in classroom programs with strong pathways for continuity to increase the likelihood of students continuing their study of languages appears warranted.

Another approach may be to fund initiatives specifically assisting students from low SES backgrounds to experience international travel to target-language countries. Whether or not a student had visited a target-language country has been reported to have some influence on language learning attitudes, and the means to travel abroad is significantly influenced by the students’ SES status (Gayton, 2010). Research conducted in one of the lowest SES areas in the state of Queensland reported that of the 66 target-language students who had travelled abroad, and none anticipated doing so (Carr & Pauwels, 2006). So even the ‘imagining’ of a use for additional languages is absent in these cases, and hence it would likely be a significant factor in subject choice.

While these studies focus on more immediate influences (e.g., access to international travel), there may also be other formative factors in decision-making that may be just as salient, if not more so, but are not visible in the LSAY data. For instance, compared to infant children from high SES families, low SES samples show lower levels of language processing, language comprehension and language production (Fernald, Thorpe, & Marchman, 2010; Hof, 2006; Huttenlocher et al., 2010) which may impact on students’ language skills in their later years of schooling.

While there is qualitative evidence to support the link between SES and students’ language study participation, the authors are unaware of any quantitative research that has investigated SES as a predictor of Australian students’ participation in a languages subject in secondary school. As Cruickshank and Wright (2016) point out, there needs to be consistent data collection to show that SES is a key factor in language uptake.

This paper continues the equity debate about SES participation in languages study, through pointing to an empirical data base that indicates that SES is a significant predictor of participation in languages study in senior secondary years. Initiatives that assist and promote students’ participation in languages from diverse SES backgrounds needs to be a priority for governments and educator stakeholders alike.

IMMIGRATION STATUS

Immigration status was also a significant predictor of students’ participation in languages study. Relative to ‘Australian-born’ students, ‘first generation’ students were more likely to participate in languages (OR = 1.58, 95% CI, 1.34-1.87). Further to this finding, ‘overseas-born’ students were more likely to participate in languages programs than Australian born students (OR = 2.41, 95% CI, 1.93-3.02). It is probable that many first-generation Australians and overseas-born students would have family experiences where languages in addition to English are spoken at home. Such experiences may explicitly or implicitly foster a bilingual mindset, where students see value in learning more than one language. Relative to students who are only exposed to English at home, it is plausible that students with a home environment where more than one language is used may be more likely to value and choose languages subjects- even if the additional language they choose to study is their family heritage language.

Another factor to consider may be Australia’s immigration policies. For instance, countries such as Canada and Australia reserve a large proportion of their long-term migrant intake for skilled workers (Hugo, 2006; Kaushal & Lu, 2014). In countries where such policy is implemented, there is evidence to indicate that levels of academic skills of these migrants are superior to those of domestic-born students (Akther & Robinson, 2014). Students with skilled worker parents are also likely to have a relatively high SES. As discussed above, SES is a predictor of secondary Languages participation, and hence has a relationship to immigration status.

Compared to overseas-born and first generation students, there is evidence to indicate that Australian-born students see bilingualism as less important (Clyne, 1991). There is also evidence to indicate that overseas-born and first generation students are commonly encouraged by family members to study their heritage language (for example, Chinese students study Chinese) (King & Fogle, 2006). It is conceivable that students immersed within a bilingual home environment (or one that values bilingualism) may be more likely to choose languages. The role of home languages in students’ study of additional languages in senior secondary school is worth further investigation as is the importance of developing further strategies to support and maintain home languages while offering additional languages – and home languages- at school.

A limitation of this analysis is that the data set does not specify which language is being studied by which students, so it is not known whether the languages studied by students are their heritage languages or other languages. Further research might investigate the relationships between SES, immigration status and students’ study of home languages or others in secondary schools.

The pedagogical practices of languages teachers in schools, and policy underpinning these practices, may all allow for important consideration with regards to immigration status and languages participation. For example, with a high population of Chinese background students in Australian schools, the learning of Chinese as a second language or English speaking students is often seen as unattainable, due to the competition in class with students who speak Chinese at home (Orton, 2005). Although this has been addressed to some extent by the separation of first language learner, second language learner and background language learner levels in the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2016), and in state and territory senior curricula. In practice, students from diverse backgrounds and with highly variable skills and experience in the language are frequently in the same class, are taught the same content, and, in the case of those students born in Australia, sit the same exams. However, this same argument does not account for the equally large decrease in the continuation of Indonesian in the senior secondary years of schooling, which has very few heritage students. Further research about patterns of specific languages and who chooses to study them and why is needed.

LOCATION

Relative to ‘metropolitan’ students, ‘provincial’ students were less likely to participate in languages (OR = .54, 95% CI, .445-.670). Moreover, ‘remote’ students were less likely to participate in language programs than metropolitan students (OR = .70, 95% CI, .529-.927). The pattern of results indicates that the further away a student lives from a metropolitan setting, the less likely they are to participate in languages study in the senior secondary years.

While this same finding has appeared in previous research, the size of the sample in this paper adds validity to others, including earlier studies by Carr and Pauwels (2006) who had similar findings, but with smaller samples. One explanation may be that there are different levels of access to languages subjects in different geographical areas (for example, rural vs. city schools). Schools in regional and rural Australia tend to have fewer resources and smaller staff sizes, and are often less able to employ specialist staff or offer specialist subjects or programs (Lamb, Glover & Walstab,
Another possibility is that metropolitan students are more likely to live in diverse multicultural communities. Their globalised cities are filled with people who speak a range of languages to interact and make meaning. These students are immersed in a ‘global village’, full of different cultures, norms and languages. Compared to the comparative hegemony of monolingualism and monoculture in regional or rural Australia (perhaps with the exception of Indigenous peoples, and pockets of ethnic and cultural communities in some regional centres), it may be the case that the value of learning another language is clearer to metropolitan students.

Other research confirms that students from regional and remote areas are less likely to study a language than those from urban areas, and suggests possible reasons (Asia Education Foundation, 2014). For instance, children in regional and rural Australia are less likely to see or interact with newly-arrived migrants within their community (Radford, 2016), unless there is a specific program to move migrants from a particular background to a region, such as with the recent Syrian migrants, who have been placed in regional NSW cities. Also, non-metropolitan schools are typically less likely to be able to access languages subjects (Asia Education Foundation, 2014): Department of Education and Training, 2016a) and there may be teacher shortages (Evans & Morgan, 2016). The value placed on learning languages is also commonly lower in regional/rural Australia, relative to their metropolitan counterparts (Carr & Pauwels, 2006).

Considering more deeply the implications of location as a predictor of learning languages in senior secondary school makes clearer the need to ensure equity of access to language programs for students in regional and remote locations of Australia. There is a need to explore sustainable approaches towards the offering of programs in these regions, which may include the role of distance education and online delivery.

One attempt to improve the provision of language programs in regional and rural Australia is the ‘Innovative Languages Provision in Clusters’ (ILPIC) initiative in Victoria (Zbar & Lane, 2012). This initiative has seen clusters of schools share a teacher, resources and innovative methods of language delivery such as online learning. One important consideration appears to be the persistent challenge of attracting teachers of languages into rural schools. Some steps have already been undertaken to address this concern. The ‘Language Teacher Register’ in Victoria for example (Department of Education and Training, 2016b), was established to enable schools that are looking for teachers to connect with teachers of languages who are looking for jobs. This initiative has provided practical support towards the provision of language teachers in schools. Although the language teacher register was created to support language teachers in all areas in the state of Victoria, there is anecdotal evidence to indicate that it is particularly helpful for rural areas. For example, it is not effective for use in other Australian states and territories.

Targeted support for increasing languages learning opportunities in regional and remote locations is needed, including provision of quality programs, the inclusion of alternative modes of provision (such as distance education and online delivery), addressing sustainability of programs, attracting teachers, and providing incentives for students.

**DISCUSSION**

SES, immigration status and geographical location are unlikely to be the only factors that impact on students’ participation in languages study. Further research is needed to understand patterns and choices of subject selection, and how young people view languages and languages learning. A number of additional factors have been suggested in this paper to help impact on student participation that would be worth further research including:

**LACK OF ACCESS TO A PREFERRED LANGUAGE**

A significant barrier for students who do not choose to study a language in the senior secondary years is the lack of access to their preferred language in their school (Asia Education Foundation, 2014).

Where access to a student’s preferred language was available, students sometimes reported not feeling that they made sufficient progress in the language with short time allocations contributing to this feeling (Asia Education Foundation, 2014; Lo Bianco & Aliani, 2013). Due to small student numbers in the senior secondary years, classes are often combined to include students of varying abilities and experiences in the language, further reducing opportunities for each student to feel that they could make sufficient progress in the language.

**BONUS MARKS AND POLICY INCENTIVES**

Broader policy and school systems may also impact students’ participation in languages. For example, the weighting of marks allocated for languages, which will contribute to scores for access to university programs, differs in each state and territory. Victoria offers an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) bonus of additional marks for studying an additional language in the senior secondary years. This is a major incentive for students to continue the study of languages throughout Year 11 and 12 and may explain in-part why Victoria has the largest enrolment numbers in languages in Years 11 and 12 (17% compared with other states in Australia (11%) (Victorian State Government Department of Education and Training, 2016). It is not the whole reason, however, as the same bonus is also offered in some other states, including South Australia. Higher participation rates in languages study across the years of schooling in Victoria, and a more definitive policy around languages study across all the years of schooling may also contribute to the Victorian participation rates.

**ENROLMENT FLEXIBILITY**

Flexibility for students learning languages in different year levels and in different modes of learning may impact on participation in languages study in the senior secondary years. Students may or may not be able to take the senior secondary languages subject of their choice in earlier year levels, and may or may not have the flexibility to study languages through College Language Schools, which could serve to extend the provision of languages beyond mainstream schools.

These differential options and pathways warrant further consideration. There is also variation at the state level regarding the number of subjects that students can take in their senior years of secondary school. In some states, as few as four, and often five subjects are generally selected in Years 11 and 12; while in others, the selection of six subjects is more usual. Extending the number of subjects students can select may promote greater uptake of languages (Asia Education Foundation, 2014).

Other complexities include certification at the end of secondary school. There is evidence to suggest that modifying the structure of senior secondary certification to allow recognition of different levels of study will boost senior secondary languages enrolments (Asia Education Foundation, 2014).

The literature reviewed describes a range of barriers, at school and at a broader systemic level, which may impede plans to improve levels of student participation in languages in senior secondary school. The findings of this study contribute to this literature on debates about equity and trends in languages participation, and confirm the need for more comprehensive data and methods of collecting information about languages participation.

**CONCLUSION**

The LSAY data revealed predictors of students’ senior secondary participation in languages in Australia. SES, immigration status and geographic location were found to be significant predictors of students’ participation. Future research in this area may explore initiatives and/or policy change that make languages more accessible to all students. Studies may focus on students who fit multiple characteristics of under-representation, such as Australian-born and remote students from low SES backgrounds.

Research may also attend to initiatives that aim to attract under-represented students into languages programs. This paper confirms that underlying issues of access and equity...
impact on languages participation in Australian senior secondary languages programs. There is a need to learn more about why students of particular demographic cohorts are not participating in languages study in secondary schooling, and to target policy and planning to increase access and equity for these groups.

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Naomi Wilks-Smith

Naomi Wilks-Smith is a Lecturer in the School of Education at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. She is an experienced teacher who has taught in a variety of educational settings in New Zealand, Japan and Australia. She has taught in mainstream classrooms, language centres, bilingual schools, and has been a specialist Japanese language teacher. Naomi is currently the Coordinator and Lecturer of Languages and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages courses in the Bachelor of Education program in the School of Education. Her research interests include second language teaching methods, bilingual education, and gesture-based approaches to teaching additional languages.

Grant Cooper

Grant Cooper is a lecturer in science and STEM education at RMIT University. He is an educator, researcher, lecturer and maker. At present, his research interests include the examination of STEM education discourse, participation trends in STEM-related fields and how digital technologies such as VR have the potential to transform teaching and learning spaces. Grant’s research interests also cover the use of statistical analysis in the field of education.

Richard Johnson

Dr. Richard Johnson currently teaches in undergraduate and postgraduate programs in the School of Education, RMIT University. Richard’s research and teaching interests include intercultural teaching and learning and preparing teacher education undergraduates to make the transition to the teaching profession.
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