The Discourse of ESL Policy: the Impact of the ‘Literacy Crisis’

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Declaration

This thesis does not contain material which has been accepted for any other degree in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by any other person, except where due reference is given in the text.

Signed ________________________________

Mairead Hannan: Master of TESOL
Abbreviations

AGPS: Australian Government Printing Service
ALP: Australian Labor Party
ALLP: Australia's language and literacy policy (DEET, 1991a, 1991b)
CDA: Critical Discourse Analysis
CMEP: Child Migrant Education Program (Commonwealth of Australia, 1970)
CSF: Curriculum and Standards Framework (Board of Studies, 2000a)
DET: Department of Education and Training
DEET: Department of Employment, Education and Training
DEETYA: Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs
The Department: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria (DEECD)
(previously known as DoE, DSE, DEET)
ESL: English as a Second Language, see footnote 1 for explanation of use of this term
ESL Handbook: The ESL Handbook: Advice to school on programs for supporting students
learning (DEECD, 2006c)
ESL Companion: The ESL Companion to the English CSF (Board of Studies, 1996a, 2000b) or the
VELS (VCAA, 2005a)
ESL Continuum: (DEECD, 2008b)
ESL Survey: (DEECD, 2006a)
ILY: UNESCO’s International Literacy Year, 1990
LOTE: A Language Other than English
LFA: Literacy For All: The Challenge for Australian Schools (DEETYA, 1998)
MEA: Multicultural Education Aide
NLLIA: National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia
NPL: National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco, 1987)
OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PoLT: Principles of Learning and Teaching (DEECD, 2008f)
SRP: Student Resource Package (DEECD, 2002)
TESOL: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VCAA: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
VELS: Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VCAA, 2005c)
Victorian schools: Refers to government school system, where the majority of ESL students are educated
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Abstract

The silencing of English as a Second Language (ESL) has occurred concurrently with an alleged crisis in literacy standards that has concentrated funds into early years programs and foundational literacy. The ‘literacy crisis’ has focused teacher attention on standardized assessment and on meeting benchmarks, which shape classroom activities and distort learning activities. The ‘literacy crisis’ has also focused attention on literacy for mother tongue English speakers, at the expense of ESL students. Instead of bilingualism being seen as a resource that can be used to support English literacy development, it is presented as a deficit – a barrier to meeting outcomes in English literacy.

This research focuses on how ESL has fared in this context. Drawing on methods from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the language of policy texts is examined to reveal the current status of ESL in Victorian schools where a self-managed school ‘system’ makes it difficult to ascertain common practice in relation to ESL provision and programs. The thesis builds its theoretical conclusions using ideas from ‘grounded theory’ to connect the discourse of ESL policy to wider social issues as a way of understanding how policy has impacted on ESL in schools. Having examined policy texts and more positive forms of support for ESL in schools, some recommendations are made to right language wrongs and write language rights that support multilingual school students and encourage linguistic adaptability.
Chapter 1: Research problem, research questions, the literature and discourse

The research problem

As an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher in an inner-city government school, I have observed changes to ESL programs, which I believe to be shaped by policy rather than by teachers and school communities. Although the number of ESL students in the government school system has increased, ESL provision and programs in schools are not necessarily a priority. It seems that ESL teachers are in a position where they must continually advocate for ESL programs over other programs that our ‘system’ of self-managed schools wish to offer.

There are many forces for an ESL teacher in a mainstream school to combat. In a recent and thorough examination of the visibility of ESL in schools, Ives speaks of how ESL is ‘silenced’ (Ives, 2008). The silencing of ESL is attributable to competing discourses and priorities relating to an alliance between neo-conservative and neo-liberal principles (Apple, 2004) that deny voice to minority groups and more specifically promote the dominance of a literacy curriculum primarily designed for mother-tongue English speakers (Hammond, 1999; McKay, 1998, 2001).

Support for ESL through policy is weak. Neo-conservative policy has ensured that ESL is subservient to concerns surrounding an alleged crisis in literacy standards. ESL has been subsumed by literacy policy (Lo Bianco, 1999, 2001, p. 36; Michell, 1999) which itself is fraught because of the simplistic notion it has of what it means to be literate and because of ongoing debates in the popular media about literacy standards (Cross & Gale, 2007; Snyder, 2008b). ESL has been neglected under the umbrella of literacy (Lo Bianco, 2001) and a restrictive literacy policy (Lo Bianco & Freebody, 2001, pp. 8-16). Furthermore, wedge politics that undermine an inclusive society (Kalantzis, 1997; Moore, 1995) and the neglect of students’ linguistic resources work

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1 I use the term “ESL”, since it is the official term used by the Department of Education in Victoria to describe the teaching of English to multilingual and immigrant students who do not speak English as their first language. The nomenclature and definitions of English language learners are under review and the preferred term, due to its inclusive nature, at the National Symposium on Assessing English as Second/Additional Language in the Australian Context held in Sydney on 20-21 February, 2009, was “English as an Additional Language or Dialect” (EAL/D).

2 “The ESL Handbook” (DEECD, 2006c) maintains that 25% of students in Victorian government schools are from non-English speaking backgrounds. As well as general multilingualism across the population, Michell confirms that numbers of immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds have increased are mostly educated in government schools (Michell, 2009).

3 This view was re-articulated by many contributors to the National Symposium on Assessing English as Second/Additional Language in the Australian Context held in Sydney on 20-21 February 2009.

4 See (Lo Bianco & Freebody, 2001) for a description of more complex notions of literacy.
together as an impediment to bilingual literacy that could be used to support ESL students’ literacy development in English.

Neo-liberalism asserts the rights of the individual and the primacy of market forces in resource allocation whilst devolving government responsibilities to schools (Apple, 2004). It offers a simplistic understanding of power and voice of minority groups (Faulks, 1999). Neo-liberalism claims to prioritise choice and the individual, but this is accompanied by state regulated content and assessment (Apple, 2004, p. 23), the imposition of economic-rationalist managerial styles on schools (Apple, 2004, p. 15; Lingard, 1994) and, consequently, the de-professionalisation of teachers (Lingard, 1992) whose voice is further diminished as a result of accountability measures that are not conducive to positive learning experiences.

The alliance of neo-conservative and neo-liberal agendas, involving the marketisation of education, the neglect of multilingual communities and imposing assessment requirements (Apple, 2004), has had a restrictive and detrimental effect on ESL provision and programs. In order to understand how these issues interconnect and contribute to the silencing of ESL, I research policy documents from 1986 to today to identify dominant discourses over time and their impact in Victoria. The socio-political contexts of each era are also relevant to this research and are described briefly in Chapter 3.

The shift in policy discourse from 1986 to the present is dramatic. In 1986, the principles of multiculturalism and universal education had culminated in the National Policy on Languages (NPL, Lo Bianco, 1987), where multilingualism and ESL provision were nurtured. But a gradual reduction in components that support ESL and restriction in the scope of policy followed in 1991 with The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP, DEET, 1991a) and again in 1998 with Literacy for All (LFA, DEETYA, 1998). These three key policies are described in Chapter 4.

The ALLP was characterized by an economic discourse in response to a perceived economic crisis and a further policy shift is to be found in LFA which was accompanied by an alleged crisis in the literacy standards of Australian school students, hereon referred to as the ‘literacy crisis’ (1997-2007). In Chapter 5, the impact of neo-liberal discourse and a self-managed schools ‘system’ on ESL provision in Victoria is explored by examining the Department’s curriculum and support documents.
Changing discourses in federal ESL policy exhibit changing orientations towards multilingualism and language rights. Ruiz (1984, p. 16) proposes that there are three such underlying orientations in public policy in relation to minority languages, which regard multilingualism as:

- a ‘right’ which needs to be asserted in the interests of equity and human rights;
- a ‘resource’ which enriches, enables equity and cultural transformation; or
- a ‘problem’ which needs to be eradicated.

By locating the orientations towards multilingualism and language rights of three key national policies, it was possible to identify the dominant discourses of each and a pattern of gradual restriction that has impacted negatively on ESL. Over time, these discourses have contributed towards the gradual erosion and silencing of ESL and of educational equity as a value inherent to education. These issues are discussed in Chapter 6.

To guide the research, I used the following questions to reveal and understand how ESL provision and practice have changed so dramatically since I began teaching in 1990 and the responsibilities ESL teachers are left with to ensure the existence of ESL programs.

Research questions:

1. How has the discourse of ESL policy changed from 1980s to the present, particularly since the alleged ‘literacy crisis’ of 1997?
2. How and when does ESL become addressed as a ‘policy problem’?
3. To what extent has ESL in Victoria been influenced by policy that responds to an alleged ‘literacy crisis’?

These research questions are addressed directly at the end of Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 2 describes the methodology and the methods used to collect and analyse data retrieved from the policy texts. Chapter 3 describes the socio-political contexts of eras relevant to each policy. Reflection and interpretation of the data is presented thematically in Chapter 6 and finally some conclusions and recommendations are made in Chapter 7.
The Literature

i) ESL policy

Issues relating to ESL policy and its effects on provision and practice have been discussed by Davison, Hammond, Lo Bianco, McKay, Michell and Moore but as times change, new policies emerge and different issues arise, which warrant further research. These writers have examined assessment and benchmarking, broadbanding of funds and educational priorities in various policy contexts in relation to adult and child migrant ESL (see Appendix 1). Programming and pedagogy have also been examined including comparative analyses with ESL in England, the USA and Canada (Mohan, Leung, & Davison, 2001).

Shifts in education policy under the influence of the economic discourse of the ALLP affected ESL provision and practice and are discussed vigorously in the literature. But an underlying and pre-existing intolerance for linguistic pluralism in post-colonial Australia is also manifest in the ALLP and LFA (Cahill, Birchall, Fry, Vine, Black-Gutman, McLaughlin: Cahill et al., 1996; Clyne, 2007; Herriman, 1996; Singh & Gilbert, 1992) and can also be used to explain a continuing ideology that resurfaces in policy. Whilst the NPL and ALLP planned for language and literacy, LFA is focussed solely on literacy and prioritises foundational literacy. Despite larger numbers of migrants and ESL students in the past decade, I aim to show that ESL has been neglected under the influence of ideological stances that view multilingual communities as ‘a minority’, not a priority (Moore, 2005, pp. 88-89). Unlike policy in the era when multiculturalism was fore-grounded, subsequent policy views the needs of multilingual communities as a minority issue that does not need to be addressed inclusively in policy.

ii) The ‘literacy crisis’

In 1997, federal Education Minister David Kemp of the conservative Howard government introduced the administrative requirement of benchmarking which disrupted previously existing notions of literacy learning as a continuum. Kemp’s argument for the introduction of benchmarking was accompanied by the notion that literacy standards were in decline (Doecke, 1997; Freebody, 1997; Hammond, 1999; McKay, 1998, p. 34). In debates aroused by this administrative move, literacy came to be seen as a ‘crisis’ of standards. The idea that there was a ‘literacy crisis’

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5 In 1999, 15% of Australians spoke a language other than English at home and in Melbourne the figure was 27% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1999).

6 I outline the “multicultural era” of the 1970’s and 1980’s in Chapter 3
surfaced in written policy, speeches and interviews\textsuperscript{7}. The ‘literacy crisis’ was the backdrop to education policy during the Howard years. This alleged crisis, which has been questioned by many education experts and described as “thin” (Freebody, 1997) has led to a focus on basic literacy skills at the expense of more complex understandings of literacy \textsuperscript{8}.

In 1998, “Literacy for All” (DEETYA, 1998, p. 7), provided an effective mechanism for the “covert but complete abolition at the national level” of ESL (Michell, 1999, p. 4). Under the policy, ESL competed for funding and attention rather than having a legitimate existence in its own right (Lo Bianco, 1998, pp. 5-7, 2002). Moreover, benchmarking has proven to be problematic in the assessment of ESL students (Davison, 1999, p. 68, 2001a; Lo Bianco, 1998; McKay, 1998). This compounded the difficulties, as standardised testing and benchmarking for mother tongue English speakers bear limited relevance to the complexity of second language acquisition processes.

Responses to the ‘literacy crisis’ of 1997 from the English teaching\textsuperscript{9} and TESOL\textsuperscript{10} professions were vigorous and unified with a firm belief that it eroded social justice, an inclusive curriculum and multiculturalism\textsuperscript{11}. Following 1998, however, there is a gap in research and policy relating to ESL. ESL has been excluded from policy (Lo Bianco, 1998, 2001) and instead there has been: a focus on crises in literacy standards (Freebody, 1997; Snyder, 2008b); administrative subordination of ESL through the broadbarding of programs (Lo Bianco, 1998); the effective removal of ESL teachers (Lo Bianco, 1998); and a sharp increase in accountability measures applied to children through standardised tests that do not cater for a variety of students (Davison, 1999, 2001a; Michell, 1999).

Through the media the community, teachers, academics and politicians have all discussed the perception that poor standards of literacy abound. Experts have questioned the need for testing to verify standards (Snyder, 2008b). Framed by the ‘literacy crisis’, it is argued that falling standards require action and verification through state-regulated, standardised testing (Doecke, 1997; Freebody, 1997), but very little is being articulated about the relationship that language

\textsuperscript{7} For example in Kemp’s “Bert Kelly Lecture” on 21 October 1996 and on Channel Nine’s television program “Sixty minutes” on 14 September 1997 (Kemp, 1996, 1997)

\textsuperscript{8} As outlined in the National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco, 1987) and Australian Literacies: Informing national policy on literacy education (Lo Bianco & Freebody, 2001).

\textsuperscript{9} See “English in Australia” issues 119-120 for responses to the ‘literacy crisis’ from English literacy experts (Doecke, 1997) including objections to the reductive view of literacy in Kemp’s policy and speeches.

\textsuperscript{10} TESOL: Teaching of English as a Second or Other Language.

\textsuperscript{11} See Appendix 1 for relevant articles.
development has to literacy. TESOL professionals and many teachers are keenly aware of the nexus between language and literacy development (McKay, 1998, 2000, 2006) but this discussion is currently subservient to the ‘literacy crisis’ (Lo Bianco, 2002; McKay, 2001; Snyder, 2008a). In essence, this means that at present, when ESL policy is discussed, it must continually make reference to the overarching framework of English literacy, whereas in the past, ESL had been more frequently debated as a component of multilingual and multicultural policy and the social benefits arising from pluralism.

The ‘literacy crisis’ narrowed the scope of literacy as well as collapsing diverse specialised programs under the umbrella of the literacy policy (Lo Bianco, 1998; Michell, 1999). This made it possible for ESL also to be constituted as a ‘problem’. In my experience, for many schools, having a mother tongue that is not English can be perceived to be a ‘deficit’ or a ‘problem’ rather than a significant resource facilitating a child’s learning and academic potential. As a result of a lack of distinction between language and literacy development, ESL tends to be viewed as a literacy ‘problem’ or an overwhelming complication within literacy (Lo Bianco, 2001, pp. 39-42). Compounding this ‘problem’ is a situation where school-based decision-making processes mean that ESL funds are not necessarily allocated to ESL programs. Hence continuing language needs of children are not necessarily addressed and may not be seen as ESL needs in their nature.

iii) Discourse

Discursive shifts relate to change in governments and leaders however discursive formation may continue or discontinue under the same government, but be used to promote a new style of governance. Foucault argues that, unlike history, ruptures in discourses show a lack of continuity (Hall, 2001). Moore outlines discontinuities under Hawke and Keating12 who sought to establish new political alliances (Moore, 1996a). New discourses also emerged when the Kennett and Howard governments13 came into power. In Chapter 3, the socio-political contexts of the policies are outlined to provide a background to the policies’ discourses. Effects of such discursive shifts on ESL shall be explored as part of this research.

Dominant discourses surrounding ESL policy have emerged along with shifts in socio-political contexts over the past 50 years. ESL policy mirrors evolutions in Australian immigration policies such as assimilation, integration, multiculturalism and mainstreaming (Clyne, 2007; Davison,

12 Bob Hawke, Prime Minister 1983-1991; Paul Keating, Prime Minister 1991-6
13 Jeff Kennett, Victorian Premier, 1992-9; John Howard, Prime Minister, 1996-2007
2001b). Critics point out that ESL, once referred to as ‘Migrant English’ in the 1970s, came to be constituted as ‘Migrant Literacy’ in the 2000s and presented as a ‘problem’ for teachers and policy (Lo Bianco, 1998, 2002).

This thesis explores economic discourses in education that have taken root since the early 1990s and their effects on ESL and examines the extent to which ESL issues have not been addressed through policy. It will be shown how neo-conservative discourse has imposed a monolingual and monocultural focus on Australian society (Clyne, 2007). The most characteristic feature of neo-liberalism is how it has enabled a discourse that promotes individual choice across many sectors, including education, and has had the effect of diminishing the professionalism of teachers and their autonomy. Apple explains a feature which has placed education firmly in the logic of the marketplace, which in turn, reproduces inequality (Apple, 2004). Lingard examines a shift between 1983 and 1993, which enabled teachers to be thought of as “competent practitioners” rather than “educated professionals”. This shift was framed within a “broader program for microecomonic reform” (Lingard, 1994).

Neo-liberal discourse in education has made individuals responsible for their own learning (Apple, 2004). In the case of ESL learners, many of whom are at risk of under-performing in school, individual student responsibility coupled with the devolution of responsibility of management to individual schools may be a way of neglecting to provide specialised programs that cater for the linguistic needs of ESL students. This series in the dominant modes of thinking about economics in wider society can be tracked into school decision-making and even into how ESL is conceived of, funded and ranked in importance compared to other fields.
Chapter 2: Methodology and method

**Methodology**

The motivation for this qualitative research was to gain a deeper understanding of the current status of ESL in Victorian schools in light of wider discursive shifts in society. I integrate linguistic analysis and social theory (Blommaert, 2005, p. 24) with a view to making recommendations that may improve ESL provision and practice. I do this by giving “illustrative examples” (Seale, 1999, p. 88) of the journey of ESL discourse in policy from 1970s to the present. Guided by the processes of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), which is described as a generic method - an open-ended, exploratory approach to research (Lofland, 2002, pp. 151-152; Patton, 2002, p. 127) - I immerse myself in “mute evidence” (Hodder, 2000, p. 703) and in the data that can be retrieved from the language used in policy texts. I continually compare the data from relevant eras in order to explore shifts in discourse. Grounded theory is the backdrop to the overall approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

i) Grounded theory

Grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) is an approach to research that allows theories to develop throughout the data collection and analysis processes with each stage of research based on interpretations of preceding stages. The researcher does not begin with a firm hypothesis. Instead, the data collection process is begun with a research question and a set of suppositions, which may or may not be proved redundant once patterns in the data are identified. The researcher is required to use inductive reasoning, be flexible and pursue relevant lines of enquiry as they arise. Hence, assumptions made prior to the commencement of research may be challenged or may influence the focus of analysis. A reflexive journal was maintained during data collection and analysis in order to support this open-ended but focussed approach to research questions and align them to the patterns in the data.

ii) Critical Discourse Analysis

Jan Blommaert (2005) maintains that CDA has its basis in systemic linguistics (Halliday, 1978) but has evolved into a methodology that also examines power relationships and social structures. One branch of CDA has been pivotal in advancing social science research to analyse modern, capitalist societies and globalisation (Fairclough, 1995, p. 1). Because it is oriented towards critique it is viewed by some as a marginal research tradition that “has to be ‘better’ than other research in order to be accepted” (van Dijk, 2001, p. 353). Rigorous CDA focuses on social problems and

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34 The “grounding of theory in data” emphasizes an interdependence between theory and data whilst maintaining that theory be “generated from close examination of the data” (Seale, 1999, p. 88).
political issues through the language in texts (Fairclough, 1995, pp. 4-10) that expresses the relationship between power and society. It tries to explain discourse structures and how they “enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce or challenge relations of power and dominance in society”. CDA is a “critical science of language” with five fundamental principles (Blommaert, 2005, pp. 14-15):

1. “What language means to its users”
2. That “language operates differently in different environments”
3. That analysis involves language and the densely contextualised forms in which language occurs in society
4. That language users have repertoires for communication that “determine what people can do with language”
5. That communication is “ultimately influenced by the structure of the world system”

Language and its uses are complex. Word choice in policy is ultimately political: like actions, words relate to power and identity, and locate individuals and groups of people as belonging to groups that may or may not have power in society. The scope of policy is defined by the choice of words that may include or exclude certain people and ideologies. In other words, people choose words that position them socially or politically rather than as conduits of pre-existing messages. But the motivation for their choice of words is not always apparent.

I view the role of the CDA analyst, as revealing the motives and outcomes of the alignments that people in society make through their use of language. When CDA is applied to government activities, it can reveal undeclared and underlying ideologies that may be culturally or politically motivated. I aim to reveal such underlying ideologies and the motives behind ESL policy by analysing the language of each federal policy and the responses to federal policy from the Victorian government system. I shall then explore the relationships between ideologies and discourses arising from the data.

CDA supports the analysis of ideologies related to the complexity of power through language (Fairclough, 1995, pp. 21-84). It maintains that “discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned” and that “discourse is an instrument of power” (Blommaert, 2005, p. 25). Fairclough describes CDA methodology as a way of analysing processes and changes to hegemony. Rather than making linguistics the only focus, he identifies large-scale hegemonic processes using social theory to “provide a metalanguage on linguistic phenomena” (Blommaert, 2005, pp. 30-31).
According to Fairclough and Wodak, the main tenets of CDA are that (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, pp. 271-280):

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture
4. Discourse does ideological work
5. Discourse is historical
6. The link between text and society is mediated
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
8. Discourse is a form of social action (van Dijk, 2001, p. 353)

The object of critical analysis of discourse in contemporary society is the analysis of voice (Blommaert, 2005, p. 4). Through this research, I aim to give voice to ESL issues and reveal discourses that have created inequity and imbalances in education with a view to making recommendations for positive change.

As I have already stated, CDA has its origins in linguistic analysis specifically in the Hallidayan tradition of systemic functional grammar. Another informing field is critical sociology. This link between language (discourse) and social phenomena (such as educational success for different groups) is important because of the practical outcomes involved. It is important, therefore, to understand forms of inequality both “in and through language” and by looking “inside language as well as outside it” as both aspects of analysis are inseparable (Blommaert, 2005, p. 35). Hence research questions seek to compare discourse between contexts as well as interdiscursivity. Through these comparisons, I aim to offer an explanation of inequity for the reader to inspect. I aim to conduct the research and relate the findings in a manner that allows the data to speak for itself rather than simply confirming my bias or asking for it to be believed (Blommaert, 2005, p. 53).
Research methods

CDA is a transdisciplinary methodology that can be used to connect phenomena within and between disciplines (Fairclough, 2001, pp. 121-122). It is perhaps because of this, that its methods are not a clear set of techniques that can be listed in a handbook (Fairclough, 2001, p. 121). CDA experts describe entire research processes and findings to exemplify models for CDA (see Blommaert, 2005; Fairclough, 1995; Wodak & Meyer, 2001 for examples of CDA methods). I detail methods suitable for my research, whilst acknowledging that each CDA research context is linked to a complex web of discourse and therefore necessitates its own particular criteria and methods. There is neither a “catalogue of context-less propositions and generalisations” nor a “grand theory” to guide research. Instead, theory formation and conceptualisation must be closely married to the specific context being investigated (Wodak, 2001, p. 64).

Fairclough’s early work provided a methodological blueprint for CDA (Fairclough, 1992, 1995). He devised a three-dimensional framework for analysing discourse (Blommaert, 2005, p. 29):

1. Discourse as text
2. Discourse as discursive practice
3. Discourse as social practice

To this framework, Fairclough adds three distinctive methods (Blommaert, 2005, p. 30):

1. Description: an explicit interpretive framework to describe the data using the participants’ categories
2. Interpretation: ideological frames and understanding of discourse by participants
3. Explanation: the researcher draws on social theory to reveal ideological underpinnings.

This represents a move from ‘non-critical’ to ‘critical’ discourse analysis.

The methods used for this research relate to the examination of documents. The absence of ESL in planning and policy from 1997 is apparent but the discourses that enabled this absence need to be located. Working in ways that many qualitative researchers do, I identified patterns in the data and reasoned inductively to create a holistic picture of ESL policy discourse. Using a computer-based word program, policy texts were highlighted to bring attention to key words, phrases, patterns and themes. Comments were recorded on the data alongside the highlighted texts and key themes and discursive features were noted. Interdiscursivity and the characteristics of discourse from each era were identified and recorded. Working across documents, I recorded comparative, contrastive and
incommensurate data on a matrix. Elements that surprised, confirmed or challenged my understanding of the positioning of ESL within the policies were also noted.

An analytical template for each policy was used to identify:

- author and governmental department from which it is generated
- purpose
- remit and scope
- authority and legitimation
- absence/presence of community consultation
- rhetorical manner
- style and layout of document
- social context
- inclusive/exclusive wordings in relation to bilingualism and multiculturalism
- frequency of positive/negative labels for ESL students
- themes and patterns
- fund allocation for proposed programs to enact policy
- the presence/absence of attention to and planning for ESL provision

In consonance with Fairclough’s methodological blueprint, (Fairclough, 1992, 1995), the data is described and then interpreted within ideological frames. Finally, it is explained through social theory to reveal the ideological underpinnings of the policy texts.

Added to CDA methods, I maintained a reflexive journal throughout my research. This was particularly useful since my evidence is “mute” - the data collection involved interaction with documents solely. The journal assisted me to articulate my own thoughts and findings, to locate areas for further thought and investigation and to direct discussions with my supervisor. The data collection documents and reflexive journal are included in the appendices.
Chapter 3: Socio-political context of the language policies

Australia is and always has been a multilingual continent constituted of culturally diverse communities. Since this pluralism is unavoidable a stark choice to either embrace pluralism or subdue it, by planning not to recognize or nurture it, can be identified in policy. With the arrival of English speaking colonists who came to stay from 1788, languages other than English were suppressed. The colonists planned to control indigenous and later also immigrant peoples through the insistence on English cultural norms, English law and the English language. This intolerance for linguistic diversity and pluralism is the backdrop for the development of Australian language policy after federation in 1901. Over the past century, language rights arguments have competed with economic concerns (Herriman, 1996, pp. 36-37).

The Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 was a culmination of unionism and nationalism that in effect constituted Australia’s first formal language policy (Herriman, 1996, p. 37) identifying English as Australia’s lingua franca. With the arrival of large numbers of post World War II immigrants, acceptance for multilingualism increased with a recognition that students required specialized English teaching at school. This eventually resulted in the Child Migrant Education Program (CMEP) in the 1970s. ‘Migrant English’ programs aligned to Australia’s immigration policy appeared (Cahill et al., 1996 Chapter 2). ESL pedagogy and an ESL profession made the varied needs of English language learners visible and altered perceptions towards what it meant to be Australian (Moore, 1995, p. 10).

A multicultural era (1972-90)

The Whitlam, Fraser and Hawke governments (1972-90) promoted multiculturalism and established services for immigrants including ESL programs that created a context in which an ESL profession and pedagogy developed. It culminated in the 1980s with the National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco, 1987) the first published policy on languages in Australia, which asserted language rights in recognition of pluralism and presented multilingualism as a resource (Ruiz, 1984).

The National Policy on Languages (NPL) (Lo Bianco, 1987, 283 pages)

The NPL aimed for comprehensiveness and coherence. The policy is organised into four parts introduced by a philosophical framework and terms of reference – principles and definitions. It represented a coalition of interests and showed collaboration negotiated between professional,
community and national organizations. The principles related to clarity, comprehensiveness, balance, a co-ordinated and national approach, standards and excellence to ensure quality and redress inequalities. These principles were adhered to throughout the document. It recognised that languages had previously been neglected and provided a way for languages to been seen positively:

Australia stands to gain in both practical and less tangible ways by addressing language questions positively. The fullest development of our cultural, intellectual and economic potential can be realised by overcoming the past neglect of Australia’s linguistic resources. (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 18)

All languages, including community languages were recognized equally. Standard Australian English was recognized as a common language in which all citizens should be literate in order to have access to society, employment and a participatory democracy. The complexities of first language development, second language acquisition and the benefits of multilingualism were explained. The benefits of bilingual education and the provision of specialized programs that meet varying needs and examples of programs were detailed. The scope of the policy is wide, and aimed to support all sectors and communities in their respective endeavours. An opening letter from the author states that the document is a “policy” that has “attempted to devise a principled way of reconciling interests and priorities perceived to be national and the interests and priorities of the community generally”. However, the NPL’s status as a policy is unclear. A foreword from Minister Ryan who commissioned the document, identified it as a “report” that provided “opportunities for action”: the author “has illuminated” goals for us that give us “food for thought and opportunities for action” and can be used “to consider what route [we] can best follow”.

**An era of economic reform (1990-1996)**

In 1990, the Keating government sought to distance itself from multiculturalism and introduced economic reform as embraced by the Hawke government (Herriman, 1996; Moore, 1995). Multicultural discourse was ruptured by the policy of federal education minister Dawkins in Australia’s Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (DEET, 1990a, 1991b) who introduced economic priorities to language and educational policy. A human capital focus surfaced in this policy only three years after the NPL and in the same year as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation’s (UNESCO) International Literacy Year (ILY), which advocated literacy as an aspect of human rights. Existing adult ESL programs were reconfigured through privatisation, but child ESL continued to be funded via the Commonwealth immigration program and the Victorian schools system.
Australia’s Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) (DEET, 1991a, 128 pages)

The ALLP was a national policy on language and literacy education emanating from the Department of Employment, Education and Training. The policy claimed to “incorporate[s] the principles of and build[s] upon the [NPL]” (DEET, 1991a, p. 1). The motivation to review the NPL (which is referred to as a “report”) is said to be for economic reform to bring Australia into a global and changing economy. It claimed to represent a wide range of interest groups to improve effective literacy in the workplace and active literacy for the changing needs of a future economy. Priority languages were identified for increased global trade with some recognition of community languages. The ALLP claimed to address individual, community, industry, business, education (including the private sector) and national interests. The policy stated the importance of ESL provision for a multicultural society still receiving immigrants (p. 49). Child ESL provision continued to fall to the Commonwealth to provide new arrival programs and to the states and territories to provide generalist ESL programs. The complexity of factors that influence second language acquisition (p. 51) and the need to teach academic forms of English to citizens who speak a dialect were discussed (p. 52). Policy implementation was supported through increased funding for child ESL and the outsourcing of adult ESL and literacy through work-based training programs.

An era of crises (1996-2007)

The Hawke and Keating government was replaced in 1996 by a conservative Liberal Party government led by John Howard. An era of crises ensued. Alliances and common goals were pushed apart by means of wedge politics (Kalantzis, 1997) as Howard created space for racism and intolerance for linguistic diversity and pluralism in Australia to be voiced. A culture of fear was nurtured and government organized its activities around crises that it claimed to address by delivering restrictive policy and simplistic solutions to complex problems. Such crises gave an overall impression of the government being active about solving various crises to be found across the nation. These actions were juxtaposed against the notion that less conservative governments engage in ‘all talk and no action’, or in ‘talkfests’ and are not serious about fixing “hard-nosed problems” (Lo Bianco, 2001, p. 43). The conservative discourses of fear, crisis and action in response to crisis discredited experts and pushed ideology back to a default conservative position. Kemp actively promoted the crisis through television appearances which presented the state of literacy in Australia “truly frightening….terrifying…… scandalous”15.

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15 On the television program Sixty Minutes “Failing the Test” 14 September 1997, (Kemp, 1997)
Literacy for All: The Challenge for Australian Schools (LFA) (DEETYA, 1998, 48 pages)

LFA was a succinct policy concerning the literacy of all Australian primary school children which referred to a series of measures on literacy, such as testing and benchmarking, that were enacted through a number of policy texts. LFA emanated from the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs and communicated a plan devised by ministers of education to be enacted by the education sector. It replaced but did not seek to build upon the NPL or ALLP. It did not include consultation, figures or diagrams to support its plan but did make reference to some studies and reports. LFA’s major policy objective was “to achieve real improvements” in foundational literacy in the early years of schooling (p. 5) and to improve literacy levels for all children (p. 8). The policy delivered a plan for benchmarking and national testing. Accountability measures aimed to improve the standards of primary aged children whilst, paradoxically, literacy was recognised as a “life long process” and as necessary for changing technologies and work. The special needs of ESL and socio-economically disadvantaged students were mentioned but only in relation to English literacy development. ESL funding was broad-banded under literacy, which enabled its covert abolition (Michell, 1999). Under LFA, literacy levels for all students were to be ensured by all teachers and monitored via accountability measures but without the support of differentiated programs.


Victoria is one of the most populated and multilingual states in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1999). The state witnessed the privatisation of some public services under the Keating government, but was thrown into extreme neo-liberalism under the Kennett government (1992-9). This had immediate and profound effects for state-run services and institutions to which responsibilities were devolved. For education, it meant the introduction of self-managed schools, the marketization of the public school system and the promotion of individual choice (Apple, 2004; Lingard, 1993, 1998). ESL provision is affected by decisions based in neo-liberal principles when they are put into practice across the system.

Documents emanating from Victoria

The Victorian government education system continues to produce a wealth of documents for the implementation of ESL and literacy in government schools (DET, 2006a). The ESL Companion to the English CSFII16 and the ESL Companion to VELS17 detail outcomes-based assessment for ESL.

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16 CSF: Curriculum and Standards framework (Board of Studies, 2000b)
17 VELS: Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VCAA, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2005)
students, which aim to inform ESL programs and ESL pedagogy. They have received attention from the TESOL profession internationally as they reflect specialized ESL practice. They are supported by Course Advice Materials to inform pedagogy (Board of Studies, 1996b) and the ESL Continuum to support ESL reporting (DEECD, 2008b).

The ESL Handbook (DEECD, 2006c) written by the Multicultural Programs Unit focuses on general ESL support in mainstream schools. It provides information on policy and funding, advice on the planning and implementation of effective ESL programs and information on resources. It begins with funding arrangements for generalist ESL in schools and outlines ESL as part of a whole school approach with a “shared community commitment” and “teaching and assessment practices that support ESL learners in all learning areas”. It suggests procedures for whole school program development and staff roles in relation to ESL provision (pp. 9-15). It describes a variety of program options and uses case studies in primary and secondary schools to exemplify programs in government schools.

The executive summary of Literacy Teaching and Learning in Victorian Schools (Paper no. 9, DET, 2006b) details four basic premises for effective literacy teaching which respond to the goals of LFA: planning for time on task; planning to teach phonics; having balance in programs and making connections across areas and in and out of school (p. 2). The review then outlines four principles for effective self-management of schools: building teacher capacity, developing a literacy plan for a school; creating literate school environments and communities and responding to diverse student needs (pp. 2-3). Other general education policy documents include the Principles of Learning and Teaching (DEECD, 2008f), the Blueprint for Government Schools (DEECD, 2003, 2008a) and the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VCAA, 2005c). I use these to inform the policy context of ESL in Victoria. Table 1 brings together the above documents in a matrix describing the features of the policies under the following headings:

- discourse (the language that characterizes the policy)
- remit (the authority claim or legitimacy the policy document is based on)
- scope (the range of coverage the policy addresses)
- content (the fields of activity the policy takes up)
- style (the way in which the policy operates as a decision-making process)
- capital (the symbolic and practical value the policy is based on)
- orientation (the underlying ideology towards multilingualism)
- policy function served (the broader socio-economic function served by the individual language policy)
### Table 1: Field of Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Discourse</th>
<th>Remit</th>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Capital</th>
<th>Orientation towards multilingualism</th>
<th>Policy function served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multicultural Inclusive</td>
<td>Partnership between government and community.</td>
<td>Languages and English valued for many purposes. Multilingual orientation. Community ecologies recognised</td>
<td>Languages, ESL and literacy as rights English as a common language. Multilingual services are planned for.</td>
<td>Collaborative Coalition of interests. 'Bottom-up'.</td>
<td>Intellectual</td>
<td>Universal resource</td>
<td>Intellectual legitimacy 1970-80s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victorian documents 2000s</td>
<td>Neoliberal</td>
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Table 1 summarises the field of analysis of this thesis. In the following chapters I will use methods from CDA to develop a policy sociology of these documents. Chapters 4 and 5 describe the language in each policy document that has been made evident through CDA techniques and Chapter 6 uses the analysis of the discourse which characterises these texts to support a discussion about the implications of the policies for ESL and for multilingual students. The thesis also draws on the approach used by grounded theory scholars to develop the theoretical conclusions about how a series of sequenced changes eventually built up into a discourse about literacy that positioned ESL almost as a problematical afterthought. I use the data to arrive at an explanation of the current status of ESL education in Victoria and make some recommendations for positive change.
Chapter 4: National Policies

In Chapter 4 I address research questions 1 and 2. The essential critical standpoint will be that knowledge of languages is a resource that develops Australia as a pluralist, inclusive and multilingual nation. I use the NPL as a starting point, to exemplify an inclusive ESL policy that is subsequently replaced by broader economic concerns. I aim to draw attention to the ways in which languages can be seen as a resource and in which ESL need not be a policy problem. I will firstly look at the data to demonstrate how the NPL supports this position. Then I will examine the other policies using the inclusive nature of the NPL as a point of reference.

National Policy on Languages

The NPL frames multilingualism as a universal resource and advances intellectual capital arguments for language and literacy. It brings together wide interest groups to develop a coherent approach to languages, ESL and literacy, based on clear underlying principles. It advocates intellectual and cultural enrichment, and respects individual, community and national interests. The NPL provides a philosophical framework in which ESL programs were nourished and developed (Clyne, 1988; Herriman, 1996, p. 49; Moore, 1995, pp. 7-10). Part One, Rationale, details the philosophical framework that underpins the policy (pp. 6-9).

Specific principles will be characterised by:

i. explicitness and clarity (permitting appropriate action by all relevant bodies and enabling review and evaluation over time);

ii. comprehensiveness (enabling all affected groups, bodies and languages to participate);

iii. balance and economy (enabling competing interests and claims to be measured against the general needs of the nation and the effectiveness, cost a feasibility of proposed actions);

iv. a co-ordinated and national approach (this will attempt to ensure the various bodies associated with the enactment of the policy operate as far as possible with the same objectives, that there is no intrusion into the autonomous or particular responsibilities of State and Territory governments, and that as far as possible the roles of all groups are developed as a partnership);

v. the due weight be allocated to the maintenance and enhancement of standards of excellence in language education (ensuring quality) and to overcoming disadvantages, social inequalities and discrimination (redressing inequalities).

The principles should lead to “explicit”, “comprehensive” and “co-ordinated” action. They should allow for “balance”, “economy” and “enhance excellence”. They create space for active participation from various interest groups. The phrases “permitting appropriate action”; “enabling”; “competing interests...against the general needs of the nation”; “no intrusion”; “coherence”, “a co-
ordinated approach” and “redressing inequalities” encourage universal involvement and collaboration to enact the policy in alignment with stated principles. These wordings pay respect to language rights and to all communities and organizations that are given a voice through a policy that respects a grass roots and bottom-up approach to governance and management.

The NPL is optimistic that collaboration between government and civil society will maximise languages as a resource and build on existing linguistic diversity in the community (Clyne, 1988; Herriman, 1996, pp. 49-51 and 60-41). It is framed as a public declaration of “national expectations” that “initiates action” rather than being “prescriptive” (p. 70). Consultation and involvement are shown throughout the text and in the black and white photographs of a range of Australian communities. The collaborative process that led to the NPL is evident in State and Territory Contributions (pp. 204-269) and in its commitment to represent a coalition of interests. The phrases “universal”, “contribution”, “balance”, “participate”, “needs of the nation” and “developed as a partnership” stimulate proactivity and ownership of the policy and the culture and programs that stem from it.

Part Two outlines a policy in which multilingualism is a resource and ESL is a positive and necessary program to support linguistic diversity. It discusses the importance and prevalence of languages, of Englishes and of literacy in Standard Australian English. Four broad strategies underlie the policy. Part 2B “English for All” (pp. 78-93) discusses English for mother tongue and second language learners and its relevance to intellectual development and the “universal aims of schooling” (p. 79). The policy “gives primacy to efforts to enhance mastery of English” (p. 81) and maintains a need for Australia “to educate a linguistically more adaptable population”. It recognizes that many Australians are adding English “to an existing linguistic repertoire” (p. 85). ESL is “a major obligation of the Australian public, particularly educational authorities” to “enable the maximum achievement of social participation, and economic and educational opportunity.” (p. 85). The phrases “positively”, “an existing linguistic resource”, “linguistically more adaptable population” and language “conservation” affirm the policy’s contention that languages are a resource. Tables and figures also support the benefits of languages, ESL and literacy for the development of an educated and multilingual Australia. The phrases “maximum achievement” and “adaptable” focus on intellectual excellence that will see Australia “gain in both practical and less tangible ways” (p. 18).

18 The four strategies are: The conservation of Australia’s linguistic resources; The development and expansion of these resources; The integration of Australian language teaching and language use efforts with national, economic, social and cultural policies; The provision of information and services in languages understood by clients” (p.70).

19 As defined in: The Quality of Education in Australia
ESL is specifically addressed in Part 2B.1(b) pp. 81-96. It is a shared responsibility of all governments, which requires a co-ordinated and concerted effort. Responsibilities for ESL provision for the Commonwealth are connected to immigration and settlement; the states and territories for the general education of bilingual citizens; for universities in the preparation of teachers for the language demands of all curricula; and for schools in ensuring that language learning permeates the whole school (p. 87). The overall purpose of ESL teaching is firstly for students “to obtain full access to English proficiency and, highly desirably, to aim for first language maintenance where possible” (p. 87). Various models for child ESL education are presented and bilingual education is acknowledged as ideal for linguistic and cognitive development as well as contributing to “bolstering the self-esteem, family cohesion and identity of children”. The policy continues to explain a complex relationship between proficiency in English and educational success, by linking it to a “consonance” between home and school values. It advocates for “coherence” between all ESL programs and that “ESL ought properly to be seen as part of English language education” (p. 92).

**Australian Language and Literacy Policy**

The ALLP claims to build upon the principles of the NPL but in fact foregrounds economic reform and lays the discursive ground for its eventual replacement. The underlying principles of the ALLP are based on an unquestioned need for economic reform. It claims to be consultative, yet its economic discourse distances community consultation and participation. Indeed much of the criticism of the ALLP from Clyne, Herriman (Clyne, 1997; Herriman, 1996; Moore, 1995) and others is that the ALLP replaces the NPL’s consultative style with a directive style of decision-making. It prioritises foreign languages that are linked to trade and literacy and ESL for more efficient and safe workplaces. Funding for child ESL is increased but adult ESL is outsourced. The ALLP allows child ESL to expand but undermines multilingualism by devaluing community languages. It also imposes outcomes-based assessment on adult ESL, which has consequences for programs, pedagogy and the ESL profession.

Far from building on the NPL, the ALLP in fact diverges from it and introduces a new economic discourse. This is apparent through word selection, the proportion of text devoted to economic concerns and policy priorities. Although it states that Australia is a “multilingual and pluralistic society” it asserts a wider need for micro-economic and macro-economic reform. It foregrounds human resources arguments for education maintaining:
…..a better appreciation of the possible contribution to national development which may be made through … Australia’s best resource – its people (p. 3)

The choice of the words “afford” and “human resources” highlight the human resource argument:

Australia can no longer afford to be insular and introspective if it wishes to compete successfully in the global economy. For Australia to achieve its goal of becoming a truly ‘clever country’, it cannot ignore the needs and capacities of its human resources (p. 12).

The heading “The Context: Priorities and Initiatives” (pp. 12-31), suggests the possibility of addressing universal intellectual, cultural and educational aims for language and literacy. Instead, it is a 20-page section devoted to economic reform and devolved responsibility of government under five headings:

- Opportunities, access and responsibilities for Australia’s human resources
- Economic security and productivity for individuals, enterprises and the nation
- Trading with the World
- The shared role of governments, the private sector, business and industry, the broader community and individuals in language and literacy
- Broad funding responsibilities for language and literacy

The ALLP does not state a philosophical framework drawn from the principles of language and literacy education but frames these as skills needed for Australia’s economic development in an “increasingly internationalist world” and a “global economy”.

An Australian language and literacy policy must be seen as part of a broader process of national social policy development. The ALLP is relevant to other current employment, education and training issues. It must be informed and must itself inform the broader contemporary environment of education, social and economic policy. It must be firmly anchored in policies addressing the nature of Australia as a multilingual and pluralistic society within an increasingly internationalist world, and policies addressing the needs for both micro-economic and macro-economic reform. (p. 12)

The ALLP lists 351 submissions from individuals and organizations internationally which may represent either consultation or protestation. The controversy arising from the Green Paper (DEET, 1990a) preceding the ALLP White Paper however, attests to the wide and effective community consultation of the NPL. In contrast to the collaboration in NPL, the ALLP talks of “shared roles” and “responsibilities”. The meaning of ‘responsibility’ and ‘consultation’ are distorted when
government is devolving responsibility and demoting consultation with the subjects of the policy (Clyne, 1991).

The ALLP envisages a “shared role of governments, the private sector, business and industry, the broader community and individuals in language and literacy” (p. 26, section 2.4). It devolves responsibility for literacy education to individuals and others by stating that “attitudes and cultural values” towards the “written word” need to shift. Skills can be “bought” from the “expanding” post-compulsory education sector, which is “integrating [its] efforts more effectively with the national interest.” This devolution of responsibility marks the introduction of a neo-liberal discourse that will subsequently flourish.

With the title “Australia’s Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy” it is noticeable that “language” is in the singular and it is clear that the language concerned is English. English is declared to be Australia’s official rather than common language. The ALLP frames language and literacy as developing human resources and emphasises the value of English for employment, and of particular languages for trade (Herriman, 1996). These foci undermine and de-prioritise Australia’s language ecologies and ESL. They suppress “overcoming the past neglect of Australia’s linguistic resources” (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 18) and use trade as the main rationale for language learning. The ALLP recites the NPL’s reasons for learning languages (p. 62) but adds that languages can “improve employability”. Using economic arguments to bolster the rationale for language learning, employers are urged to “reward” language knowledge which “need not be an additional cost” if funded through the schools system. Moreover, the “users of the products of education” (employers) should be involved in policy making as “there is little advantage to the nation” in spending money acquiring language skills “if employers have no plan to seek out, take advantage of and reward the skills available to them” (p. 29-30). The ALLP supports social cohesion arguments to promote “greater tolerance” and “greater confidence” inter-generationally, but confirms its serious doubt that languages are a resource, particularly when it implies that they may be “a nuisance” (p. 62). Bilingual programs that would support existing linguistic resources in communities are described as “effective” but “expensive” (p. 52).

The ALLP alleges an ‘economic crisis’ rather than a ‘literacy crisis’ but lays the groundwork for Kemp’s alleged ‘literacy crisis’. Literacy in English (p. 34) is defined as “effective” and “active” literacy. High-level skills are needed for a nation at an “economic crossroad” (p. 19). ESL is part of English literacy and is funded due to groundwork by the ESL profession to ensure continued provision for ESL in schools. On the one hand, the ALLP’s understanding of second language acquisition (pp. 49-56) and English literacy learning (pp. 33-38) appears to be complex and
informed by educational goals. On the other, intellectual development goals pale in the face of an entire section devoted to economic development and the role of human capital in the economy. Amusingly, but again in support of economic reform, the policy is also committed to “Plain English” since “awful” and “imprecise English costs millions of dollars each year”.

The policy states the importance of ESL provision for a multicultural society that receives immigrants (p. 49). The National Agenda for Multicultural Australia re-confirms a human resource discourse with one of its three dimensions being economic efficiency\(^2^0\). Whilst it outsources and regulates adult ESL, child ESL provision is under review (p. 50). Child ESL provision remains largely unchanged but includes “The linking of ESL and literacy” (Section 3.5), which paves the way for dismantling programs and making them more “efficient” (p. 57). ESL in the adult sector is eroded through program cuts and competency-based approaches to assessment (Moore, 1995, 1996b).

**Literacy For All**

LFA is a plan to support a response to an alleged crisis in literacy standards that must be addressed through accountability measures. The ‘literacy crisis’ was promoted under the Howard government to reform education through ‘top down’ policy and therefore without consultation. It was accompanied by scepticism about the value of the work of teachers, enabled by the media focussing on poor literacy standards in schools. Without consultation or discussion about approaches to improving literacy, LFA set a “challenge” for schools that was driven by Minister Kemp through the policy and various public appearances.

Dr Kemp’s Bert Kelly lecture entitled “Schools and the Democratic Challenge”, was a famous moment marking a strong discursive shift to promote the neo-liberal principles of choice, accountability and state regulation through standardised testing and benchmarking (Kemp, 1996). The lecture marks an era of turmoil for literacy teachers and the distancing of professional opinion in the name of “accountability”. Kemp spoke of a “cult of secrecy” around literacy achievements that “must be addressed as a national priority”. Kemp’s lecture outlined “reductive claims about literacy and society” and left significant “gaps” in issues relating to multilingual Australians (Doecke, 1997) as well as creating space to further marginalize those who are already marginalised (Freebody, 1997, pp. 11-12)\(^2^1\). Responses to Kemp’s speech and interviews (Kemp, 1997) objected to a focus on foundational literacy and assessment whilst also refuting the figures Kemp

\(^{20}\) The other two dimensions are: cultural identity and social justice.

\(^{21}\) Freebody refers to ‘outsiding’ and a ‘condescension strategy’ (Bourdieu, 1991) in relation to those underachieving in literacy, which are detrimental to both society and the marginalised.
used as a basis for “back to basics” literacy programs (Freebody, 1997, p. 6). Any understanding of the complexities involved in language and literacy learning were markedly absent in Kemp’s presentations. He focused on the need for professionals and policy makers to be “accountable” and mentioned “literacy problems” and “illiteracy” that must be measured, since he claimed that:

“Clearly education policy and practice has failed to improve the literacy standards of a significant proportion of young people.” (Kemp, 1996)

LFA comprises a set of goals agreed to by ministers of education that aim to ensure “real improvement” (p. 5) in literacy standards of primary school children through state-regulated testing. It identifies ESL students as a “heterogenous group” whose needs “require[s] consideration” for the “improvement of literacy outcomes of all children” (p. 33) since ESL and disadvantaged students are both identified as underachieving in literacy. Despite this, literacy is a “challenge” but ESL students only “require consideration”. LFA does not include a philosophical framework or discussion of Australia’s linguistic resources and the nexus between language and literacy. Indeed its focus on the crisis in standards works to restrict the scope of English literacy as well as the linguistic resources that can enhance students’ skills.

The title “Literacy for All: The Challenge for Australian Schools” excludes languages, second language development and adult education by omission. It announces that foundational literacy in English is crucial for further study, training and work (p. 7). Its definition of literacy is described as comprehensive but is a one-sentence quote taken from the ALLP that omits “active literacy”:

Effective literacy is intrinsically purposeful, flexible and dynamic and involves the integration of speaking, listening and critical thinking with reading and writing (DEET, 1991a, p. 5 quoted on p. 7 of LFA).

This definition is left undiscussed and is qualified by a focus on acquiring effective literacy in early primary schooling:

Purposeful, flexible and dynamic literacy developed in the early years of schooling provides the foundation for continued development throughout an individual’s lifetime (p. 7).

Accountability is fore-grounded via directive statements without an accompanying context, framework, rationale or philosophical statement. The goals and sub goal agreed to by ministers in March 1997 claim to be “inclusive of all children”:
That every child leaving primary school should be numerate, and be able to read, write and spell at an appropriate level
That every child commencing school from 1998 will achieve a minimum acceptable literacy and numeracy standard within four years (p. 9)

These narrow goals do not relate to community desires for multilingualism or to complex notions of literacy for a world that is experiencing significant, ongoing technological change. They relate to a narrow and monolingual concept of literacy, the setting of standards, state-regulated assessment and a philosophical framework that omits bilingualism. Educators, communities and other subjects of the policy, are not invited to participate through contribution, implementation or review processes, which are determined by state and federal ministers alone. Instead, accountability measures will be used to ensure that standards improve. The rationale for accountability and directives in the policy are to be found in the language of urgency and in the context of the alleged ‘literacy crisis’ that pre-empted the policy’s release. It asserts a directive authority over teachers through headings about what teachers and schools “will” do (pp. 5-6):

Better educational accountability through improved assessment and reporting
Parents will be fully informed about their children’s education
Schools will focus on the needs of students
Students and their parents will have a choice of schools
Schools will focus on outcomes which prepare individuals for work and for longer term learning
All students will be given and equal opportunity to learn
Schools will have less regulation and greater autonomy
Schools will support quality teaching

Despite stating that: “Educational accountability should be undertaken co-operatively, not from above” the LFA has a ‘top-down’, authoritative tone, no community presence and is not the product of community consultation. Unlike LFA’s predecessors, teachers and educationalists are not presented as partners in educational and policy-making processes but are distanced – they are framed as people who cannot be trusted and must be held accountable. LFA casts doubt that teachers are willing to be accountable perhaps because they do not aim for high standards – it de-professionalises teachers by seeding the idea that they don’t work hard enough or aim for high standards (Apple, 2004, p. 30).

By developing high standards teachers can demonstrate their willingness to be accountable……as well as making their work more transparent to the public.
Parental involvement, is encouraged through the idea that parents are not sufficiently informed by schools (“Parents will be fully informed about their children’s education”) and will be provided with clear information to “strengthen the capacity of parents to support the teaching at the school” (p.5). It maintains that there need to be “new ways” of encouraging teachers to develop “high standards” and “demonstrate their willingness to be accountable” (p.6). These statements suggest that teachers have not been accountable. They distance teachers. They lead to intensification and diminished control in schools (Apple, 2004, p. 25) to strengthen neo-liberal principles where the “market” dictates and the state regulates.

In Kemp’s public appearances, mention of ESL students is notably absent. References to ESL students in LFA are limited and are dispersed throughout the text referring to ESL students with a variety of labels that are not defined. Section 5, “Aspects of Literacy” discusses the diverse needs of children “including those who speak English as a second language, bilingual students and indigenous students” (p. 31). The policy maintains that ESL students have “on average, lower English literacy levels than students from English-speaking backgrounds” (p. 33 cites the Australian Council for Educational Research report of 1997, p. 20) and that they therefore need to be considered but offers no further insights into this other than the use of the ESL Scales or ESL Companion as useful support for early years educators. It alludes to some “possible advantages” of bilingual education taken from a study by Penny McKay but neglects to state its own position on bilingual education. It mentions the benefits of ESL professional development for teachers, but again, neglects to state its own position. While it does not include any photographs, charts, graphs or figures that may be a symbolic representation of its vision for Australian schools, it refers to some studies and reports, the values of which are not articulated. We are left with the message that literacy is a “challenge” but ESL merely “requires consideration” (p. 33).

In stark contrast to the directives of pages 5-8, the direction for ESL teaching is expressed by mentioning some interesting documents and studies but these do not constitute a plan. Instead, ESL programs were broadbanded under the umbrella of literacy programs. The Commonwealth continued to provide ESL for newly arrived immigrant children but generalist ESL funding that had been provided through the states and territories was abandoned by collapsing funds into literacy. With broadbanding, it was left to the states and territories to decide how they would spend funds across a broad range of literacy-related programs.
**Addressing research questions 1 and 2**

The analysis shows the ways in which orientations towards multilingualism frame ESL as a right, a resource or a problem. I have identified these orientations and the underlying philosophies through the words and discourses that are chosen to express each policy. I have also examined the origins of each policy as a way of ascertaining community consultation and the enactment of each policy and how it iterates with what the policy claims to do. I have shown how the NPL presents languages as a resource and ESL as a necessary program that supports a multilingual nation. LFA presents ESL as a problem which is compounded by an alleged ‘literacy crisis’. A pattern of restriction in policy gradually silences ESL. The data I have presented, allows us to address research questions 1 and 2:

1. How has the discourse of ESL policy changed from the 1980s to the present, and particularly since the alleged ‘literacy crisis’ of 1997?

2. How and when does ESL become addressed as a ‘policy problem’?

The discourse of ESL policy has changed from a language rights focus, where community needs are addressed through consultation and planned for collaboratively (NPL, 1987), to an economic discourse where intellectual and cultural development are subservient to economic reform and the development of trade (ALLP, 1991) and finally to a discourse of crisis in standards where schools and individuals are responsible for achievement in literacy and are accountable to the government who has devolved responsibility (LFA, 1998). LFA represents an alliance of neo-liberal and neo-conservative agendas. Neo-liberalism is characterised by the devolution of responsibility and imposition of accountability measures. Neo-conservativism is manifest in an imagined monolingual English-speaking Australia, identifiable as “romantic possibilitarian rhetoric” (Apple, 2004). This discourse omits ESL and bilingualism. It turns ESL into a policy problem as it denies space for multilingualism in language and literacy policy.

The discourse of crisis began with an alleged economic crisis in 1990 and the ongoing assertion of a ‘literacy crisis’ from 1997 to 2007. Both of these crises turn ESL into a ‘policy problem’ as governments become unable to integrate linguistic diversity into actions that address the crises. The crises make it possible to ignore language rights addressed in the NPL. The ‘literacy crisis’ effectively ensures that literacy outcomes are not “for all” despite its claims, since the language needs of an increasing minority are not addressed. The focus on standards aimed at mother
tongue English speakers inhibits the success of bilingual students and the possibility of their “reaching” (VCAA, 2007c) the desired “outcomes” in literacy.

In Kemp’s address we can see that not only is literacy treated reductively but also ESL is not featured. The ‘literacy crisis’ has had the effect, whether intentional or incidental, of silencing the special and unique claims of ESL. ESL learners have special needs in spoken language, cultural adaptation and special resources as well as needs in literacy. They comprise a very large minority of the total student population and in many geographic areas are the majority of learners. To totally subsume all the distinctive ESL needs under the category of literacy has had the effect of silencing it, reductively treating it as a subsidiary element of a wider entity called literacy.

In this chapter, I have examined federal policy using a method of analysis influenced by the techniques of CDA. In the following chapter I move on to examine the application of these policies in Victoria.
Chapter 5: Application of policies in Victoria

Having described the context and content of policy in Chapter 3 and 4 as well as addressing research questions 1 and 2, I now turn to research question 3: “To what extent has ESL in Victoria been affected by the ‘literacy crisis’ and subsequent policy?” and examine it through readings of Victorian policy documents from 1996-2008 in the light of the underlying principle that languages should be seen as a resource to develop a pluralist, inclusive and multilingual Australia.

Victorian curriculum documents for ESL are used to support assessment and programs, as well as outlining ESL provision in a system that has embraced neo-liberal principles and devolved managerial responsibility to a ‘system’ of self-managed schools. Within ESL curriculum documents, multilingualism can be seen as a resource, which is supported by funds for generalist ESL to eligible schools. Within over-arching DEECD policy and programs, ESL is less evident. ESL is backgrounded, and ESL documents are made available as an ‘afterthought’ to general curriculum documents. Multiculturalism and multilingualism are also backgrounded. Orientations to language planning may be identified as a resource model, but the system requires each school to determine its own priorities, dependent upon its context and markets. Notably, policy and social context are not focussed on multilingualism as a resource. The ‘literacy crisis’ and ongoing battles in the media about standards ensure that literacy standards are the key focus of educational policy.

ESL Companion to the CSF

Background

I begin by examining the ESL Companion to the CSFI (1996) and later the CSFII, (Board of Studies, 2000b, 152 pages) written before the ‘literacy crisis’. Victoria’s ESL Companion was pre-empted by the ESL Scales (Curriculum Corporation, 1994) and the ESL Bandscales (National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia, NLLIA, 1993) which were developed nationally and were a site of great contention. Each represented a different approach to assessment. Moore has examined these two approaches to assessment closely to question the ways in which language and learning activities in classrooms are altered. She argues that criterion-based assessment results in a “collapse between learning and assessment” and “creates a new problematic for teachers and students in actually making space for learning” as the dialogue of learning is altered (Moore, 1996b, pp. 196-197). The application of assessment’s “rationalising science” to classroom practice actually destroys practice “by threatening ‘natural language’ and ‘experience,’ its two essential ingredients” (Moore, 1996b, p. 195 cites Pusey 1983, Lingard, 1990).
The battle over ESL assessment resulted in the development of outcomes-based assessment. The ESL Bandscales (that were developed consultatively with ESL professionals and practitioners with the philosophical underpinnings of the NPL), were not favoured by the government. The ESL Scales were branded as the official national ESL assessment document. The ESL Scales consisted of lists of indicators arranged according to language level in strands (Oral Interaction, Reading and Responding and Writing) but ignoring age difference, so as to be applicable to children learning in primary and secondary contexts. In contrast, the ESL Bandscales differentiated learners according to age and sought to inform curriculum, planning and pedagogy as well as describing learner achievement. These two documents are a backdrop to the development of the ESL Companion in Victoria.

The ESL Companion
The ESL Companion describes “what students know and should be able to do”. I recall there was agitation from ESL professionals and in response it was decided that, unlike the ESL Scales, the ESL Companion would differentiate skills according to age and be organised to inform the ESL curriculum with a selection of indicators illustrating typical student outcomes.

In the preface, Susan Pascoe, (Chair, CSF Advisory Committee) explains the CSF as outcomes-based assessment that clarifies the expectations of education standards for a society that is thinking globally:

A curriculum embodies the aspirations a community holds for the next generation of learners. When these aspirations are specified as expected outcomes the education standards are transparent for learners, teachers and parents. Victoria’s curriculum and standards framework makes it clear what students should know and be able to do. CSF II has been benchmarked nationally and internationally to ensure its standards are challenging and comparable with expectations in like countries. (p. iv)

Pascoe’s and Kwong Lee Dow’s introductory pages acknowledge the “tireless” consultative work of the creators of the CSF. The language used in Pascoe’s preface reflects consultative decision-making processes that aim for significant, informed change. She expresses this, with words such as: “clarifies expectations… creates space…. embeds… integrates… explicit …equips ….participate … robust basis for program planning….“ This rhetoric continues in neo-liberal Victoria. But consultation is not so prevalent in documents after the CSFII and the rhetoric loses credibility in a neo-liberal context of “thin” rather than “thick” morality (Apple, 2004, pp. 29-31).
The phrases “should know and be able to do” and “expectations in like countries” signal that the state expects Australia to compare well against developed nations. The trends in Victorian curriculum documents are in consonance with global trends towards neo-liberal accountability via state-regulated tests and outcomes-based teacher assessment.

The ESL Companion provides a framework “for the many students in Victorian schools who are learning ESL” and provides an overview of stages of language development; a set of outcomes for ESL students if they are “given optimum learning conditions” and an “outline of the major components of ESL curriculum” (Board of Studies, 2000b, pp. 5-6)

ESL students are described as “diverse” and “different” in age, language background and stage of learning. The ESL Companion supports ESL provision by stating that: “ESL students need targeted English language teaching and extra time, support and exposure to English”. Effective teaching contexts and the need for explicit language teaching are asserted. A range of ESL learners are described through reference to their knowledge of English as:

- beginning school with minimal or no exposure to English, whether born overseas or in Australia to parents from language backgrounds other than English
- entering school in Australia with little or no exposure to English, but with schooling equivalent to that received by their chronological peers in English
- beginning school with little or no exposure to English and no previous formal schooling in any country, or with severely interrupted education
- with some exposure to English entering school in Australia
- with varying exposure to English, who have had disrupted education in one or more countries, and who are returning to schooling in Australia (Board of Studies, 2000b, p. 5)

Notably, ESL students are described in dot point form, as a list teachers may determine they either “fall into” or “don’t fall into” in relation to their lack of knowledge of English. The use of a list marries well with the conventions of accountability and compliance measures that have infiltrated teaching practice through outcomes-based assessment, standardized tests and benchmarking. In my experience, checklists are prevalent in Victorian schools and reflect a loss of complexity since they demand black or white decisions to be made and diminish the use of teacher judgement. This contrasts with the ESL Bandscales where learners are both described in their learning contexts as well as being defined as having knowledge through any language:

22 Similar to checklists currently used in schools are “Need to know” versus “Nice to know” charts, which reduce the complexity of understandings and information for teachers to consider. Teachers are required to focus their attention on “Need to know” information that is determined by management and discard other information as unnecessary or lacking in purpose. This is problematic for teachers who think in more complex and inter-related ways. I make further reference to “Need to ….nice to ….” in Chapter 7.
ESL learners bring to their learning a range of experiences, skills, knowledge and understandings in their [first language]; these together with experiences, skills, knowledge and understandings gained through English are important considerations in teaching and learning.” (NLLIA, 1993, p. A2)

The relationship the ESL Companion has to the English CSFII is explained and supported by a ‘rainbow’ diagram indicating student language development and pathways (pp. 6-8). A set time frame for moving through the ESL stages within lower primary, middle/upper primary and secondary learners is not desirable. Instead, “Criteria used to differentiate outcomes” (p. 11) articulate ways in which teachers can ascertain beginning to more developed student performance within a level and readiness for the student to no longer be assessed as an ESL student, but assessed against the mainstream English profile.

According to the ESL Companion, the goals of ESL programs include: proficiency in social and academic English alongside conceptual development and understanding of the “learning styles and expectations of the Australian schooling system” (p. 8). The curriculum aims to develop students’ competence in acquiring English and in communicating in English in a variety of contexts (p.8). The document details learning outcomes for all ages of school students (pp. 17-127). Indicators are provided as examples to “assist teachers in interpreting and assessing student performance” under three strands: speaking and listening; reading and writing. The document concludes with annotated work samples of student writing (pp.130-152).

**ESL Companion to VELS**

In this section I discuss the ESL Companion to the English VELS (VCAA, 2005a), a 42 page document, which re-articulates the ESL Companion to the CSF with limited changes to the presentation and the order of information. There is no reference to consultation in the development of this ESL Companion. VCAA, however, claims “extensive consultation and collaboration with education sectors and the broader community” (VCAA, 2006) for the VELS as a whole and lists the involvement of 138 individuals (rather than interest groups) as contributors and 75 individuals connected to “supporting projects”. This may suggest a further fragmentation of power and de-professionalisation of teachers since more formal and organised consultation is not evident. Once again, neo-liberal practices confirm a commitment to individualism rather than collective voice.
ESL students are described in much the same way as the CSF with an added emphasis on students who may have had little or no schooling in their mother tongue:

..... a diverse group, of different ages, at different stages of learning English, from differing first-language backgrounds and with varying amounts of education in their first language. (p. 3)

Indicators are replaced by paragraphs to describe stages of language learning. Since October 2008, teachers’ use of this document can be supported by the ESL Continuum for years Prep–10, which “provides evidence based indicators of progress, linked to practical teaching strategies, to support the assessment of ESL students” (DEECD, 2008b). The aim is to develop language to support all learning and to assess ESL students against the English Standards. English and literacy in VELS “are about the appropriate and effective use of English” including “English as a means of learning in all domains and the development of knowledge about language”, especially English:

The goals for students learning English as a second language are the same, but their learning pathway to these goals is different. They need explicit English language teaching and extra, time, support and exposure to English before the English Standards are appropriate. (VCAA, 2005b, p. 3)

ESL students knowledge of literacy in another language is not mentioned but they require specialist instruction until they “reach” the English Standards (VCAA, 2007c). The English Standards provide a link to the ESL Companion accompanied by a description of ESL learners, but make scant reference to the linguistic resources of students. The English Standards merely identify the diversity of children thus (VCAA, 2007b):

The diversity of [their] social, cultural and linguistic experiences means that they arrive at school with different starting points.

Unfortunately, in my experience, the tendency is for mainstream teachers to continue to assess ESL students against the English Standards, because school and computer-based reporting formats are usually designed for reports against the English Standards and because they are unfamiliar with the ESL Companion. Added to this, the majority of students require a mainstream English report, so the teacher’s starting point is the English report. I cannot see that the English Standards provide enough direction about language learners or ensure the use of the ESL

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23 This emphasis may have arisen out of the influx of immigrant students from war-torn areas who had limited or no schooling.

24 Prep: The preparatory year of school for 5 year olds is the first year of formal schooling in Victoria.
Companion. This makes it possible for students to be assessed as “low” in literacy rather than as English language learners.

The introduction of criteria for outcomes-based assessment has resulted in prevalent use of indicators, checklists and comment banks (as was foreseen by Moore, 1996b) that were viewed undesirably in the ESL Bandscales (National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia, 1993, p. A33). These practices are reinforced in practitioner responses to the VELS and in computer software for reporting on student achievement. The impact of such assessment practices on ESL teaching and learning in schools warrants further research.

**The ESL Handbook**

The ESL Handbook is a set of guidelines, partially derived from the Course Advice (Board of Studies, 1996b) to advise schools on ESL policy, funding, provision and program development. It begins with funding arrangements for generalist ESL in mainstream schools, which are based on an “integrated weighted index” using information collected by schools via an “annual Language Background Other Than English census” and a “weighting for Student Family Occupation density”. It maintains that there is a “high correlation between student learning and family occupation” that is addressed via this weighting (p. 5). The language used attests to an economic discourse and neoliberal principles where responsibility for provision is placed in the hands of school communities.

“ESL funding is given to schools to staff ESL programs” but “it is up to schools to decide which ESL students need a targeted specialist program and which can be satisfactorily catered for in ESL-informed mainstream classrooms” (p.6). These decisions require “a good understanding of each student and their learning background” and “the full cohort of ESL students in the school” as well as a degree of flexibility in program planning. Programs are accountable annually via the ESL Survey and the MEA Survey and reporting “should be done against the ESL Standards, where appropriate” (p. 6).

The ESL Handbook outlines ESL as part of a whole school approach with a “shared community commitment” and a community that has “input into the school’s ESL policy”. It is “likely to include elements in the school Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan” as well as “targeted ESL program components” and “teaching and assessment practices that support ESL learners in all learning areas”. The ESL Handbook follows on with a thorough and thoughtful outline of ways in

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25 The ESL Handbook: Advice to schools on programs for supporting students learning English as a second language (ESL Handbook) (DEECD, 2006c, 31 pages)
which ESL programs can be developed in the context of self-managed schools. Despite a description on the DEECD website which suggests that ESL is concerned only with immigrant students\(^{26}\), the ESL Handbook identifies ESL students including Australian-born students. It also provides details to be included in school planning documents, considerations for the needs of students, suggested procedures for whole school program development and staff roles in relation to ESL provision (pp. 9-15). Recommended practices are presented in dot point form. The ESL Handbook concludes with a variety of program options and uses case studies in primary and secondary schools to exemplify programs.

Responsibility for all aspects of programs and provision falls to schools and is shared out across the school’s staff. It is noticeable, however, that responsibilities to ensure appropriate ESL provision are not all detailed in the roles and responsibilities section (pp. 13-15). The staff is responsible for programs. The school is responsible for policy and provision. But policy and provision are not ensured through the role descriptions, school accountability measures or the Department.

The ESL Handbook aims to support ESL in self-managing schools within a neo-liberal framework of accountability measures. It responds to policy drawn up in a context of competitive market economies and in which the ideology of ‘user pays’ has been adopted by both sides of politics. All this assumes that ‘consumers’ make free choices of various goods they need, and that an ESL-informed context already exists and is respected in schools that have ESL students. In my opinion, this cannot be taken for granted. ESL provision depends largely upon the values and priorities of school leaders and the school council. Since ESL populations are often transient and economically vulnerable, they may not be well represented in school decision-making processes. Responsibility for ESL provision ultimately falls to the principal who can take advice from the school council and the staff’s consultative committee as well as working within departmental policy and guidelines, which for ESL provision are minimal.

At this point in time, accountability measures are in place for many aspects of school activity, but there is no mechanism to ensure the accountability of schools in their use of ESL funds. The MEA

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"The learning needs of ESL students will vary according to factors such as their pre-migration experiences. Variable factors in a student’s pre-migration experiences include level of formal education in their home country, age, the stage of English language development at which they enter the Victorian school system, and their access to ESL support. The ESL handbook is a valuable resource in determining and addressing the learning needs of ESL students. The purpose of The ESL handbook is to provide schools with information on:

* Policy and funding for ESL programs
* Advice on planning and implementing effective programs for a school’s ESL student cohort
* Links to resources and services”.
and ESL Surveys (DEECD, 2006a) inform the department of the use of funds but this information is not used to ensure that ESL funds are spent on ESL programs. In stark contrast to the directives and assurances required of teachers to raise standards, the language used is ‘gentle’: It is “up to schools to decide”; decisions require “a good understanding of each student” and the ESL Standards for reporting are to be used “where appropriate”; (p. 6) policy is “likely” to be a part of whole school planning. In short, many decisions are left to the discretion of the school, which ultimately means to the principal.

Whilst accountability may be discussed, and the ESL Survey is able to track the use of ESL funds in individual schools, there are no consequences for the misdirection of funds to other programs or for non-compliance. It is “up to schools to decide” who needs targeted programs. ESL staffing is open to interpretation and may therefore include teachers and aides who are not trained in TESOL or indeed in teaching. Practices depend upon “a good understanding” (p. 5) and a “shared school community commitment” (p. 8). But we are left to wonder where such “a good understanding” and a “shared school community commitment” come from and who ensures them.

Measures of ESL provision are not linked to the responsibilities of staff roles or accountability (pp. 13-15) or in the Student Resource Package (DEECD, 2002). Principals and Australian Education Union representatives alike, remind us that all teachers teach literacy and numeracy but that those programs are not delivered through targeted funding. They maintain that specialist knowledge is not required to meet the needs of ESL students and that funds may be allocated as the principal sees fit. Consequently many schools favour reducing class sizes across the school or allocating funds to other programs over providing specialist language teaching and programs by using TESOL qualified or ESL-informed staff to support ESL programs.

In conclusion, the ESL Handbook aims to inform schools of funding, provision and programs within a context where the state has no responsibility for ensuring that ESL provision translates into specialised ESL instruction for students in schools. It hands responsibility for provision and programs to schools. Given the target audience of the ESL Handbook (presumably being teachers who are primarily responsible for ESL programs) one can assume that individual ESL teachers are to ensure this “good understanding” across the school and ultimately across the government school ‘system’.

**ESL in the Victorian curriculum and policy context**
The evidence shows that within the context of LFA and over-arching departmental policy, ESL is marginalised and eroded. This is not the case in all schools, but ESL-informed programs and practices largely depend on individual school interest and on the ability of ESL teachers to infiltrate school culture with ‘ESL-ness’. I explore the context of the documents initially by browsing the department’s and VCAA’s websites in the areas of literacy and VELS. I did not conduct a ‘search’ on ESL, but browsed more generally to ascertain the extent to which ESL is fore-grounded in general curriculum and assessment documents.

We know that ESL assessment documents are a “companion” or “adjunct” to English for mother tongue speakers. This is sometimes stated on the departmental website but is not stated on the VCAA Overview to VELS (VCAA, 2007c). A table explaining VELS on the VCAA website, lists sixteen “domains” organised under three “strands” of Learning: Physical, Personal and Social; Discipline-based and Inter-disciplinary. Each domain has dimensions. The two dimensions of Languages Other than English value language and intercultural knowledge with “Communicating in a language other than English” and “Intercultural knowledge and language awareness”. ESL, however, is not listed in the table or as an adjunct to English. Instead, it is addressed in the second half of the web page under the heading “Learners of English as a second language” preceding a section on “Students with disabilities”. It makes teachers responsible for ESL teaching and assessment within the English domain:

Many students in Victorian schools learn English as a second language (ESL). They are of all ages and at all stages of learning English, and have varying educational backgrounds in their first languages. While the broad objectives of English programs will ultimately be the same for all students, those learning English as a second language need time, support and exposure to English before being expected to reach the learning standards described in the English domain and will come to this achievement via a range of pathways. Teachers need to devise appropriate teaching and assessment practices for these students.

The web-page then directs teachers to the ESL Companion that “will assist in assessing such development.” A section on Cross-curricular perspectives leads to a page on Multiculturalism in the VELS (VCAA, 2007a) that shows how multiculturalism “Links to the VELS”. The links to language are strongest in the Languages Other Than English (LOTE) domain and in other areas of the personal learning and content-based curriculum but there is no reference to second language development or bilingualism.

27 ‘ESL-ness’ is a term used in the ESL Bandscales (National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia, 1993, p. A12)
Given that literacy is a primary focus for mainstream teachers and that ESL is an “adjunct” to English, I next turn to the Overview of Literacy (DEECD, 2007) which makes no reference to departmental ESL documents or second language acquisition. It refers to the Principles of Learning and Teaching (PoLT) (DEECD, 2008f) which underpin all classroom activity. The PoLT are “unpacked” in great detail, using numerous statements as indicators for successful or unsuccessful teaching and learning. The PoLT make scant reference to cultural diversity and language learning through LOTE (PoLT 5.5). The PoLT refer to students’ “cultural background”, “ethnicity” and religious differences (PoLT 6.2) but make no reference to the bilingualism of students or multilingual interactions in the community. The PoLT present some indicators of multicultural education for mainstream English-speaking classrooms, which border on being “touristic” or “tokenistic” and omit any reference to multilingualism or ways in which mainstream teachers can support language learning and bilingualism. The Overview of Literacy also refers to Paper no. 9 on literacy education in Victoria, which I described in Chapter 3 and discuss below.

**Literacy Teaching and Learning in Victorian Schools**

Paper no. 9 confirms most dramatically that second language acquisition and ESL needs are not a serious consideration in literacy policy in Victoria. This is influenced by LFA’s framing of functional literacy as a priority in the early years of schooling. There is only one reference to pluralism when it refers to “diverse abilities, cultural backgrounds and life circumstances” (DEECD, 2006b, p. 4) to support the idea that there is no single approach to literacy teaching because of the nature of diverse classrooms. This singular reference does not identify linguistic pluralism or second language acquisition as relevant or worthy of consideration for literacy education. Paper no. 9 has a chronology of milestones for literacy education in Victoria. It refers to some developments in ESL between 1980-1998 but its list of references (pp.17-22) does not include any ESL reports, reviews or documents.

Given the dominance of literacy in all schools, the omission of discussion about ESL and second language acquisition within literacy contributes to the silencing of ESL and does not signal the relationship between language and literacy and the need for ESL teaching as part of language, literacy and cognitive development. In consonance with the times, Paper no. 9 resembles the ESL Handbook’s neo-liberal approach in detailing measures and features that can be used to indicate the “effectiveness” and “accountability” of a school’s practices without measures to ensure that ESL education is provided across the system.

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28 Literacy Teaching and Learning in Victorian Schools Paper no. 9 part A, August 2006, hereon referred to as “Paper no. 9” (DET, 2006a, 2006b)
Addressing research question 3

Informed by the data retrieved from the Victorian documents, I shall now address research question 3:

To what extent has ESL in Victoria been influenced by policy that responds to an alleged ‘literacy crisis’?

ESL and multicultural education documents from Victoria broadly frame multilingualism as a resource. This frame is not however integrated into general curriculum and policy documents. Broader policy documents do not show signs of integration or acceptance of a “languages as a resource” orientation, since they omit foundational ESL principles when discussing provision, programs, curriculum and assessment. ESL policy does not describe ESL or multilingualism as a deficit, but ESL is gradually eroded through marginalisation and omission. Policy documents and curriculum do not orient teachers towards ESL resources as readily as they could or should. According to the Department, ESL students account for 15 to 25 per cent of learners in government schools, but the department does not include ESL and multilingualism into the philosophic underpinnings of the general curriculum, PoLT and literacy. Government Blueprints indicate that the department is intent upon improving literacy standards (DEECD, 2003, 2008a) and we know from the LFA that it is incumbent upon the states to improve literacy standards. The difficulty is that literacy is not presented as ESL-informed and literacy is increasingly restricted by accountability measures, which are imposed in the name of improving standards and which neglect ESL. Literacy is a site of contention and contestation about simplistic and complex notions of literacy. ESL is a site of contention about orientations towards cultural and linguistic pluralism. There is little space made for the rights of linguistically diverse students within this context and for educational equity across the system.

In this chapter I have presented an analysis of Victorian documents from the late 1990s to the present, relating to ESL and its iteration with literacy policy. In the following chapter I use the data retrieved from the policies and move on to grapple with the theoretical consequences of these developments informed by the general approach of grounded theory specialists to explain patterns and themes in the policies.
Chapter 6: Reflection and interpretation of the data

The general approach of grounded theory and CDA research methods made it possible for me to locate changes in discourse, which are connected to Australian history and politics. During the research process "the link between text and society was mediated" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) in order for an interpretative and explanatory analysis to be made about factors influencing the education of multilingual students. The methods used made it possible to identify inequitable practices for ESL students by analysing the language used in each text and linking it to the gradual restriction of the parameters of language and literacy education. The data derived from Victorian curriculum documents confirms that national policy restricted the scope of curriculum documents, of school assessment and potentially of teaching and learning practices. Supported by the data, it was possible to track the origins of and theorize about inter-relations between policy texts, curriculum and ESL provision.

Themes from the data indicate that ESL in the 2000s has been marginalised and has been constituted as a policy problem. Agitation about an alleged 'literacy crisis' and the devolution of control are both important aspects of neo-liberal policy tactics. As a result of an alleged 'literacy crisis' we now have a context where literacy is the primary focus for “improvement in student outcomes” to which schools and teachers must commit in order to be accountable. Assessment is the tool that drives accountability and literacy standards. Literacy is explained in both simplistic and complex terms, but state-regulated testing restricts the focus of literacy in classrooms to foundational literacy. Moreover, the preferred style of assessment shapes learning activities in ways that are detrimental to learning and to language acquisition.

I have worked broadly in keeping with principles promoted by grounded theory scholars who recommend that researchers build theory progressively, beginning with the small units of data relevant to a particular research field, then grouping these into larger sets of like concepts and then drawing out the theoretical implications. Having presented the data I now move on to discuss the concepts and to build theory following this inductive pattern. Themes arising from the data are discussed under the following headings:

- Policy style and discourse
- Five restrictions: the gradual restriction of languages, literacy, assessment practices, voice and participation
Policy style and discourse

The policy documents differ from each other in style, intention and implementation. I have examined them through the word selection, goals and philosophical underpinnings of each policy. I will now discuss the styles and discourses of each policy.

The NPL is a consultative and inclusive policy document that frames multilingualism as a resource and English literacy as necessary for citizens in a modern, participatory democracy. Its discourse is based in the everyday experience of Australian citizens. The written style of the ALLP broadly echoes the NPL but there is a significant shift in its discourse and style. Its decision-making style is directive. The discourse claims an authority that is not open to participation. At the time of its release many critics complained about this aspect of the ALLP (Clyne, 1991; Herriman, 1996; Moore, 1995; Ozolins, 1991). Economic reform allows it to neglect concerns arising from consultation with educators and multilingual communities. It prioritises English for the workplace and specific foreign languages for business and trade. It claims the authority of economic trends and demands, however fanciful they may actually be. LFA differs in style – it is more an imposed plan than a policy. It is not consultative. It delivers directives from the ministers of education that aim to ensure accountability and improved standards. It is not concerned with languages, whether they are community languages or foreign languages for trade. It is concerned with addressing an alleged crisis in literacy standards in an imagined monolingual English-speaking Australia using the language of accountability. The logic of this approach is not questioned. Citizens are to acquire foundational literacy skills in primary school, ensured by state-regulated tests. The language of accountability is by definition a ‘top-down’ discourse.

i) A collaborative style and inclusive multicultural discourse

Multiculturalism supported linguistic and cultural pluralism and allowed the growth and development of ESL pedagogy and provision. The discourse of the NPL, the first national policy on languages, is inclusive. This is evident in the identification of a multilingual population; its recognition of the importance of all languages and their relationship to identity and social cohesion; the planning and provision for ESL and languages; and its profound understanding of language development and ecologies that need to be supported for the benefit of individuals, government and society. The NPL is the result of collaboration between various interest groups and is a policy that aims to support the nation in many endeavours. The prominence of languages as a universal resource had far-reaching and positive impacts upon ESL. The NPL’s unifying discourse provided space for ESL and language education. It reflected the diverse nature of Australian communities as opposed to the default position of an imagined monolingual English-only Australia in LFA (Clyne, 1988, 1991, 2005, 2007).
ii) A directive style and discourse of economic reform

The ALLP declared a “need to strengthen Australia’s drive for innovative employment, education and training practices and to reorient our thinking more internationally” (pp. 4-6). But it was also aware of the consultation that interest groups had been accustomed to. The policy’s style suggests consultative processes but simultaneously asserts the need for the prioritisation of business and industry in voice, funding and programs (DEET, 1991a, pp. 29-30). It doubted the success of collaboration, indicating it was not one of its goals and that parties to consultation and priorities in education were changing:

Because of the numbers of partners, it is perhaps inevitable that not all members of the partnership will agree with all elements of the policy or program response. (DEET, 1991a, p. 2)

By announcing a new set of priorities to respond to emerging needs, it made space for change in state management and assessment practices that address ‘relevant’ (economic reform) needs that are ‘efficient’ (p.57). In doing this, it activated an economic discourse to which interest groups, sensing a discursive shift, reacted. The ALLP, asserted that there had been “a significant gap … between educational policy… and practice and society’s needs…” (Moore, 1996b, p. 190) and referred to an unquestioned need to support the economy through education.

Relevant factors in the environment include workplace reform, in particular award restructuring, and education and training reform in the areas of setting standards, assessing and recording competencies, accreditation of providers and courses, certification, course articulation and credit transfer. (p. 4)

Moreover, it asserted the obligation of education to provide citizens who develop the economy.

The ALLP maintained that a “change in name does not signal the demise of the principles of the NPL” and that the “goals of the ALLP closely resemble the principles of the NPL” (p.7). But the “Rationale for Review” of the policy discussed a need for consistency within the “broader social environment” and an economic framework, that do impact on the philosophical principles at work in the policy29. The shift to an economic discourse manipulated the philosophical framework of the NPL and set new priorities, goals and measures to meet the needs of economic reform. Unified

29 “Relevant factors in the environment include workplace reform, in particular award restructuring, and education and training reform in the areas of setting standards, assessing and recording competencies, accreditation of providers and courses, certification, course articulation and credit transfer.” (DEET, 1991a, p. 4)
objection from the ESL profession, documented in 351 objections to the Green Paper (DEET, 1990a) and in journal articles was largely disregarded.

The dominance of an economic discourse impacted on ESL negatively, because multilingualism was historically marginalised and multiculturalism was not fully integrated into mainstream Australian values. New alliances promoting economic priorities (Herriman, 1996; Kalantzis, 1997; Moore, 1995), marginalised ESL and undermined the foundational principles of multiculturalism on which ESL programs had been built.

iii) An imposing style and discourse of crisis

If the ALLP is directive, LFA is even more so, adopting a ‘top-down’, accountability focussed policy delivered in an imposing style. It reflects centralised control that is alleged to be necessary because consultation and distributed control have been unsuccessful and led to a ‘crisis’. With a discourse of crisis, significant change is imminent, even immediate. Australia witnessed a pattern of crises between 1996-2007, which enabled significant change to discourse, policy and culture. Education was one of the early sites for a discourse of crisis under the Howard government.

The ‘literacy crisis’ of 1997 (P. Freebody & Welch, 1993; Hammond, 1999; Lo Bianco, 1998) presented a discursive shift building on the discourse of economic reform in the ALLP. The discourse of crisis instigated a range of new policies based in neo-liberal and neo-conservative reform that reverberated with a global pattern of crisis and reform directing attention away from the needs of minority groups in response to economic change and calling for ‘excellence’ and improved standards (Apple, 1993; Lingard, 1993). Apple discusses how economic crises since the 1990s have questioned focus of schooling and accused systems of producing citizens who are not prepared for the demands of global and competitive markets. Economic discourses created conditions where the need for ‘improved standards’ and ‘excellence’ could be introduced (Apple, 1993, p. 5; Lingard, 1993; Moore, 1996b, p. 190).

The urgency and authority of the language used in LFA and Kemp’s public appearances supports the assertion that there is a crisis in literacy standards. Schools are said to be “failing our youngsters” and are set a “challenge” (Kemp, 1996, 1997). Literacy is framed as a “challenge”. Meeting “standards” requires “rigorous state-based procedures...as soon as possible” (p. 10). Every child “will achieve a minimum acceptable literacy and numeracy standard within four years” (p. 9). “Intervention strategies” are to be implemented “as early as possible” with “[E]fforts to lift literacy skills” in the early years of schooling (p. 10). Plans are expressed as processes and

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30 See Appendix 1 and articles in Language Planning and Language Policy in Australia (edited by Liddicoat, 1991)
measures in an authoritative, urgent tone and accompanied by directives about what teachers and schools “will” and “should” do. But literacy is defined narrowly and in ways that will not prepare Australia for a knowledge-based workforce (Lo Bianco & Freebody, 2001, pp. 1-12). National literacy benchmarks promise to “create a means of monitoring, through state-based assessment procedures”. Furthermore, it argues that “this will help provide a clear picture” (LFA pp. 39-40) and make teachers accountable. These measures not only suggest inadequacies in the current system, they maintain that the state will correct inadequacies by imposing national testing. The logic of a strategy for improving teacher efficacy by imposing “state-based assessment procedures” is not argued. It is a questionable logic of the neo-liberal state that raises issues relating to power and the beneficiaries of state regulation (Faulks, 1999).

In contrast the LFA’s predecessor, the ALLP flagged no such crisis in literacy standards. The ALLP did not identify or refer to a literacy crisis. While the ALLP admitted that there was no reason for complacency in child literacy, adult literacy and life-long learning were a priority. Section 3.3.3, “Extent of literacy”, stated that the “issue is not one of falling standards but of rising expectations.” The framing of literacy standards in the ALLP, despite a dominant economic discourse, did not have the urgency, authoritative style and imposed assessment procedures of LFA.

The focus on a ‘literacy crisis’ in LFA and a restricted view of literacy is confirmed by a chronology published by federal parliament (Harrington, 1999), which highlighted crises and standards whilst omitting other literacy-related issues, such as ESL.

iv) A neo-liberal discourse focussed on competition and the individual

Neo-liberal discourse surfaced from 1990s in both national and Victorian policy. Neo-liberalism devolves responsibility and regulates through imposed accountability measures. It shows a lack of understanding of the complex relationships between power, empowerment and social structures (Faulks, 1999, p. 79) that impact on educational success (as discussed in the NPL, Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 92). Teacher and individual responsibility for education is promoted. In Victoria, the possibility of schools directing generalist ESL funds to other programs, is a manifestation of neo-liberalism that allows market forces and “thin” morality (Apple, 2004) to determine inconsistent educational provision for bilingual students.

For ESL, the ‘literacy crisis’ and LFA meant that all provision and resources were diverted to literacy. Victoria continued to fund generalist ESL, but federally, ESL was broadbanded and subsumed under the umbrella of literacy (Lo Bianco, 1998; Michell, 1999). ESL’s co-existence with literacy under LFA is problematic due to three phenomena that can be characterised as neo-
conservative: a reductive definition of literacy, state-regulated testing and an imagined monolingual English-speaking Australia (Lo Bianco, 2000, 2001). Manifestations of neo-liberal change are: the concentration of funds to early years literacy at the expense of other programs; a proliferation of discussion about falling standards in the media that contributes to the de-professionalisation of teachers (Snyder, 2008b); a school focus on foundational literacy at the expense of more complex literacy skills; a systemic focus on “improving literacy outcomes” through standardised testing which bore limited relevance to ESL students (Davison, 1999; McKay, 1998, 2001); the demotion of ESL pedagogy within literacy (Davison, 2001c) and the continuation of inconsistent identification of the ESL population resulting in obfuscation of ESL issues and insufficient data about the performance of ESL students (Davison, 2001d; Moore, 2005).

In 1998, when LFA was introduced, materials emanating from Victoria such as the ESL Companion reflected a distinct ESL pedagogy and recognition of ESL programs and support for teachers. This is in contrast to subsequent marginalisation evident in materials such as the Blueprints, PoLT and the ESL Handbook (DEECD, 2003, 2006a, 2006c, 2008a, 2008f). The ESL Handbook can be viewed as an “ESL survival guide” since it carefully explains ESL funding processes perhaps in the hope that by informing practitioners sufficiently, teachers will ensure that funds are directed towards ESL programs and that community involvement in school policy will nurture respect for the needs of ESL students and therefore ESL programs and indeed provision.

31 Relevant documents include (Board of Studies, 1996a, 2000b; Department of Education Victoria, 1998)
**Five restrictions**

Having identified policy style and discourse I draw these together in the concept and theory level recommended by the grounded theory approach and bolstered by the data retrieved through CDA to describe a pattern of restriction. The pattern of restriction applies to five themes in the policies: the restriction of languages, literacy, assessment, voice and participation gradually occurs across the policies. The restrictions are described below to highlight significant change: the point at which a change is pivotal and leads to a shift in discourse, policy priorities and potentially in school and wider cultural values.

i) **Restriction of languages**

A pattern of restriction is evident through planning for languages other than English. Orientations to multilingualism in national policy move from being a ‘resource’ to being a ‘problem’ (Ruiz, 1984). This restriction surfaces in the ALLP and characterizes LFA, which sits in stark contrast to the NPL where all languages have a place in society and are to be nurtured through education in the interests of the language rights and promoting a linguistically adaptable nation. The ALLP, on the other hand, declares English as Australia’s official language and plans for a select few languages, which are useful to the economy, to be taught in schools. LFA has no stated plan for languages. In fact by omitting language(s) planning from policy, its covert aim is to ignore language education and allow dominant social and market forces to control their destiny. Since this restriction begins with the ALLP, I now examine it more closely.

In contrast to the NPL that sought to develop a “linguistically more adaptable population” (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 81) the ALLP shifts the focus of education to address economic and human capital agendas. In reference to languages, it argues that they are only a useful resource if applicable in the workplace:

> The role of business and industry in education and training has been relatively neglected. There is little advantage to the nation in governments and individuals allocating public and private resources to the acquisition of advanced language skills if employers have no plan to seek out, take advantage of and reward the skills available to them. (DEET, 1991a, p. 30)

Multilingualism is de-prioritised by economic reform that asks Australians to focus on the needs of the workplace, trade and business. Ten languages are selected as more suitable to be taught in schools (where it need not be an additional cost) to “improve employability” (DEET, 1991a, p. 62). Education is also promoted as a service that turns international students into revenue (section 2.3). Business, industry and unions are invited to contribute to the development of language and literacy
policy so that their needs can be addressed via education since “users of the products of education and training systems, business and industry should be involved in policy development.” (DEET, 1991a, pp. 29-30) Languages for trade are the priority. Existing languages within the community are not a priority. In effect, the NPL combined language maintenance and additional literacy learning with a separate section for indigenous languages. It is telling that all Aboriginal languages in the ALLP are reduced to one language in its priority list called “Aboriginal Language”.

ii) Restriction of literacy

The restriction of the scope of literacy education is most pronounced in LFA but has its beginnings in the ALLP. LFA actively promotes foundational literacy for school children at the expense of lifelong learning and of acquiring more complex literacy skills. Again, by omission, a policy consequence of LFA is to ignore adult literacy, which had been identified in the ALLP in 1991 as a national concern and by the OECD in 1992 as integral to economic performance (Lo Bianco & Freebody, 2001, p. 2). Another consequence of LFA is to restrict literacy to foundational literacy through the imposition of state-regulated tests and benchmarks which must be met by all students (Lo Bianco & Freebody, 2001, pp. 8-12) and by launching serious attacks through the media on the benefits of teaching more complex literacy skills and on teaching methods and standards in general (Cross & Gale, 2007; Donnelly, 2004; Snyder, 2008b). LFA restricts literacy (Doecke, 1997) and concentrates funds into early years schooling for mother tongue English speakers.

Unlike LFA, the ALLP reflects an understanding of the complexity of literacy learning and the variables in individual, social and educational contexts. It is closer in time to UNESCO’s ILY that influenced how literacy was perceived and defined, in which a strong human rights perspective was present; whereas by the time of the LFA the OECD had replaced UNESCO as the main influence on international literacy and took a human capital and economics-based understanding of literacy as paramount. The ALLP defines literacy as “effective literacy”, which it uses as a term for “functional” or “basic” literacy and, “active literacy” that is used to think, create and question” (DEET, 1991a, p. 34). “Causes of literacy difficulties”, (section 3.3.4, p. 38) acknowledges that not all children acquire literacy even with the best educational systems. There are many factors that affect literacy acquisition including the amount of reading material in the home; “NESB” literacy in English which is lower especially for those who are illiterate in their first language; and adult literacy programs which progress skills and assist family literacy.

The ALLP recommends early intervention in years Prep to 2, stating that there is no reason for “complacency” when it comes to child literacy and that adult literacy is “poor” (DEET, 1991a, p. 37).

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32 OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
It therefore also commits funds to adult literacy education but subjects it to outcomes-based assessment and relates literacy to the workplace. “Literacy in Australia is both a means and a goal” and includes cultural enrichment and personal development. It is needed for civic participation, education and training and both aspects require national attention. The ALLP blends a mix of human resource and human development arguments for literacy, but its’ leaning towards human resources for economic reform outweighs literacy for intellectual development. The ALLP restricts literacy to economic capital arguments as opposed to the intellectual capital arguments of the NPL. This restriction is taken to a further extreme in LFA.

**iii) Restriction of assessment**

LFA restricts literacy, languages and assessment in ways that may not have been imaginable when the NPL was written. In the educational revolution of the 1970s, assessment had been overhauled and teachers had rejected state-regulated testing in favour of more meaningful assessment that was connected to learning, since assessment necessarily affects classroom activities:

> “Assessment practices necessarily reflect and affect curriculum, school organisation, and routines, and what students and teachers do in and beyond the classroom”. (Moore, 1996b, p. 191)

Under LFA, assessment is restricted through state-regulated assessment procedures. These are deemed to be necessary to improve standards and to make teachers accountable. Prior to LFA, assessment practices were restricted by the ALLP with its preference for outcomes-based assessment practices.

Moore criticized outcomes-based assessment practices referring to Foucault’s “panopticism” where continual observation shapes students’ behaviour. “[I]nevitable processes of domination” can divert attention away from processes that are “crucial in the struggle over access to symbolic and material benefits as experienced, for example, by speakers of nondominant languages” (Moore, 1996b, p. 191). She described outcomes-based assessment practices (that we are au fait with in 2000s) as detrimental to teaching and learning:

> “Further, grid profiles and comment banks-devised to provide reports with some structure and commonality, and to solve the problem of teacher time - fit students to descriptions, rather than the other way round.”
> (Moore, 1996b, p. 194)

But the neo-liberal system welcomes “school-based, criterion-referenced assessment” as it is “especially effective in meeting outside demands” (Lingard, 1990). Outcomes-based assessment was embraced in curriculum and profile documents in Victoria during the 1990s and to it, was
added state-regulated testing, introduced by the Kennett government. They were both introduced amidst controversy and at the expense of consultation and contextualized assessment that was connected to classroom activities and provided better opportunities for students to succeed.

Current state-regulated tests\textsuperscript{33} are de-contextualized from classroom learning and severely disadvantage English language learners (Hammond, 1999; McKay, 1998, 2001, 2006)\textsuperscript{34}. They are generally more useful for bureaucracies than they are for learners and they are used to make teachers accountable. They are not useful for ESL learners as their language and educational needs differ from those of mother tongue English speakers for whom the tests are predominantly designed\textsuperscript{35}. State-regulated tests assume equal starting points for all learners and rely on the performance of learners at one point in time. Most teachers know that tests do not provide a holistic picture of student ability and that this is even more pronounced with ESL learners.

Despite teachers’ strong misgivings about standardized tests, accountability is entrenched in the system and linked to tests. Teachers are asked to use “student achievement data” (derived from de-contextualized tests) to inform them in their professional endeavours. The system requires teachers to “effectively analyse and use data to improve student literacy outcomes”\textsuperscript{36}. Teachers are required to talk about student “data” derived from standardized tests seriously, respond to it, and to use it to devise a plan to improve the outcomes of all students. It is argued that “data” in the form of figures comparing student achievement, empowers teachers to act responsibly and be transparent. But are teachers asked to question the validity of the “data” sources or whether the “data” is useful? In my experience, in school, regional and statewide contexts, the answer is a clear no. We are to understand that we have “data”, we are to assume it is valid and we are to use it to plan for improved literacy outcomes. In other words, wider social impacts (the educational success of ESL students) are not a concern for reform (through standardised testing) based on narrow economic criteria (Faulks, 1999, p. 78).

\textsuperscript{33} Recent state regulated tests are the AIM (Achievement Improvement Monitor) test, a Victorian standardised test that has been replaced by the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

\textsuperscript{34} This view was also widely held at The National Symposium on Assessing English as an Additional Language/Dialect in the Australian Context held at the University of New South Wales on 20-21 February 2009 and attended by over 100 language experts from across the nation. Research presentations made at the Symposium confirmed that current standardised tests are targeted at mother tongue English speakers and may disadvantage English language learners.

\textsuperscript{35} See papers to be posted at http://education.arts.unsw.edu.au/news/nationalsymposium/index.html for numerous critiques of NAPLAN testing for English language learners.

\textsuperscript{36} This quote is taken from a job description for a Literacy Coach and is currently used widely.
iv) Restriction of voice

The phrase “for all” has variable meanings across the policy texts as it depends upon how Australian students are described. “For all” is used in each of the policies. Consistent with the pattern of restriction, the population referred to as “all” is reduced. In the NPL, “English for All” can be taken to mean English language and literacy as the official language for the intellectual development and participation of all citizens living in a multilingual society. In the ALLP, “English for All” refers to English language and literacy relating to citizens as a human resource so that they constitute a productive workforce and support business. LFA’s “Literacy For All” aims to improve foundational literacy for primary students of an imagined monolingual English-speaking community. It is in denial about the linguistic resources of primary aged students and indeed of Australia.

In LFA, the word “all” is manipulated. It is used falsely, to the exclusion of an increasing minority of Australians, particularly those who are bilingual and born in Australia. The phrase “for all” can be mistaken as being inclusive but in fact it is used to exclude, marginalise and ultimately deny voice for a multilingual population.

The ALLP claimed that the time had come to turn from the needs of special groups, such as “the disadvantaged,” to the needs of all (Moore, 1996b, p. 190). Hence the ALLP’s use of “all” also excluded minority groups and encouraged assimilation as market forces steered “all” towards the mainstream.

v) Restriction of participation

The word “responsibility” has different connotations across the policies. The discourse of the NPL is inclusive and unifying. With a commitment to clarity and inclusion it invites interaction with and participation in the use of the policy across sectors and communities. ESL is framed as a “shared responsibility” set in a policy context to develop individuals, communities and the nation. Responsibilities are outlined in ways that are not punitive but that define the roles of relevant government sectors and schools (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 87). In contrast, the ALLP manipulates a “shared responsibility” to make workplaces and the private sector responsible for funding programs and for adults to pay to improve their own literacy. Hence the ALLP devolves state responsibility. LFA devolves responsibility further. It insists upon state-regulated testing, the benchmarking of students and accountability measures to ensure teachers are meeting professional standards. LFA promises choice, less regulation, greater autonomy and flexibility (DEETYA, 1998, p. 6). But what it requests in return amounts to state regulation via assessment and accountability. This represents an anomaly of neo-liberalism, where accountability measures are used to control a less regulated environment (Faulks, 1999, Chapter 4). Moreover, assessment and accountability measures shape
classroom activities and take the focus away from learning activities. This disempowers teachers and learning communities.

“Accountability” becomes a major focus in the neo-liberal Victorian school system. It is a part of the Effective Schools Model (DEECD, 2003) and has its own section in the DEECD. It is woven into performance and development culture, all leadership and teacher roles, assessment, reporting and school compliance. Accountability exists to inform parents (DEETYA, 1998) and give them choices but these choices are not really available to all interest groups and individuals (Apple, 2004). Choice is available to those who are privileged enough to shape their own futures. The accountability of teachers and schools also leads to intensification (Apple, 2004, p. 23) and decreased job satisfaction due to increased workload. The ESL Handbook details responsibilities and accountabilities that do not carry weight since there are no consequences for re-directing ESL funds to provide for other programs. Responsibility for ESL provision is devolved to school communities. The ESL Survey merely informs the Department of the use and misuse of funds. This makes ESL provision unaccounted for. A compliance measure to ensure proper use of ESL funds could eradicate this problem and ensure more comprehensive ESL provision by placing more TESOL-trained teachers in schools.

ESL policy in the 2000s and the neglect of consultation with ESL professionals confirm that professional advice is not as weighty as accountability. Accountability silences teachers and ensures compliance and improvement only where it is wanted – in measurable outcomes. More complex, qualitative measures do not carry such weight. Having to take seriously, accountability measures devised for and by management, leads to “thin” rather than “thick” morality (Apple, 2004). Accountability, teachers are told, is meant to empower us by informing us and others of learning outcomes. But is the information complete enough to really inform us? Is it holistic? I believe the rhetoric surrounding accountability is not empowering. It prevails in Victorian neo-liberalism, but whether it empowers teachers to participate at all is doubtful. The voice of teachers in consultation, if there is any, is weak. Supporting actions such as the processes, uses and outcomes of consultation, suggest that empowerment via accountability is not authentic.

Through the analysis of policy, we can identify that consultation and empowerment are diminished. More specifically, in the Victorian documents the demands of accountability via assessment dismantle consultation and impose measures and regulations that shape what teachers must do and are often in conflict with their professional judgement about what students actually need.
Summary

CDA and grounded theory helped to develop the broad theory positions by linking micro elements of the language of policy identified in Chapters 4 and 5 to wider concepts and notions such as policy style, discourse and the five restrictions I have explained in Chapter 6. The style and discourse of policy and the pattern of restriction may respond to context in different ways. In Victoria the impact of the 'literacy crisis' on ESL, is compounded by the forces of neo-liberalism. Self-managed schools are heavily influenced by the 'literacy crisis' since they are accustomed to responding to market forces and attuned to competition between schools. This makes schools responsive, and in the spirit of business, they respond to dominant (mainstream) rather than minority (ESL) discourses and groups (Apple, 2004). The pattern of restriction of LFA is integrated into a neo-liberal Victoria where market forces result in restricted practices to respond to mainstream interests and priorities and to reflect dominant power positions. The imposing style and discourse of LFA are also easily integrated since teacher voice is limited and a self-managed school 'system' perpetuates the dispersal of alliances and voice for minority groups. In Chapter 7 conclusions and recommendations are made to suggest more inclusive policy that would better support multilingual Australians in their education.
Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

Current policy is imposing in style and directs teachers to focus on state-regulated testing and foundational literacy skills. LFA (DEETYA, 1998) is neo-conservative in its outlook and embraces restrictive notions of literacy for an imagined monolingual English-speaking community. It also embraces restrictive assessment practices and makes them super-ordinate to more holistic and inclusive forms of assessment. This in turn restricts participation and commitment to the practices imposed by policy in schools.

Victorian policy is characterised by an overarching neo-liberal understanding of education and society that makes it possible for market forces to determine the extent of ESL provision in schools. These forces tend to opt for the default conservative position that is espoused by omission in the LFA: that multilingualism and complex literacy are not necessary: they are “nice to have” not “need to have” commodities.

Multilingualism

In discussing multilingualism I want to make reference to the ways in which it has been seen as either a learning resource or a hindrance to meeting outcomes in English literacy. The American socio-linguist Richard Ruiz identified three orientations to multilingualism and minority language rights in language policies: languages as a resource, as a right, or as a problem (Ruiz, 1984). Applied to Australia, these orientations highlight the degree of tolerance or intolerance there is for multilingualism and influence the extent of ESL provision for students in schools. Tolerance for multilingualism is a good indicator for ‘ESL-ness’ in school culture and practices.

After the ‘literacy crisis’ bilingualism is not seen as a learning resource. Bilingualism and ‘ESL-ness’ do not feature in Victorian general curriculum documents, but do exist in ESL curriculum documents. ESL-informed practitioners and schools draw on ESL curriculum and support materials to operate ESL-friendly schools. This makes it possible for the Department to claim that ESL provision and programs are healthy. But standardised testing to “improve the literacy outcomes of all students” and benchmarking do not make space for ESL-informed teaching and learning and for more positive and constructive forms of assessment for ESL students (Davison, 1999; McKay, 1998, 2000, 2001). The focus on literacy skills and on data derived from standardised tests steer schools away from focussing on the specific language needs of bilingual students. Furthermore, despite the ESL Companion, there is no assurance that ESL students across the system are assessed as such. Also, despite schools receiving generalist ESL funding, there is similarly no assurance that they are spent on ESL programs or on TESOL-trained teachers. Therefore,
students are expected to achieve English literacy outcomes without necessarily receiving language teaching to support their English literacy development. In the school context, ESL students can therefore be a problem – a hindrance to meeting the outcomes in English literacy that the school has committed to reach in its Triennial Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan.

The outcome of the ‘literacy crisis’ is a focus on a simplistic notion of literacy and testing in order for schools to be accountable. A default post-colonial position of an imagined monolingual English-speaking population is re-embraced and community languages and ESL provision disappear through an amalgamation of funds and re-prioritisation (Lo Bianco, 1998, 2001; Michell, 1999, 2009). As a consequence, schools no longer provide ESL as a matter of course. Students and families my then be more likely to neglect or abandon knowledge of their first languages, which could be used as a basis for their literacy. Individuals do this in an effort to succeed. Success currently involves meeting the benchmarks for literacy in English and succeeding in state-regulated tests. The desire for individuals to assimilate with policy priorities and school expectations paves the way for the neglect of community languages and linguistic adaptability. This is created and reinforced through national and Victorian policy and contributes towards the erosion of ESL.

How might education work more productively to strike a better balance between assessment and quality classroom practices that are informed by the needs of students? Fullan argues that governments have available three main instruments for effecting change in education. These are: accountability, incentives (both positive ‘rewards’ and negative ‘pressure’) and capacity building (Fullan, 2001). While he points out that it is rare for the three to be combined, it would be most productive. The single most effective means is capacity building but it is also currently the least pursued. Instead, governments pursue accountability measures, imposing on schools the most draconian and ultimately least effective means for educational change and innovation. As I have shown here, this is unfortunately the dominant pattern in current policy, planning and provision for ESL. Victorian policy states a desire to build teacher capacity (for example in Paper no. 9), which sits in conflict with a focus on state-regulated tests and accountability measures based in data that are frequently philosophically opposed to sound teaching practices. Victoria places emphasis on state-regulated tests and accountability measures (the English literacy outcomes of each student which we “need to know”), which far outweigh other concerns (the linguistic resources of each student which is “nice to know”).

**The impact of the ‘literacy crisis’**

I now turn to the effects impact of the literacy crisis and its relationship with neo-liberalism on ESL in Victoria and specifically the discourse of crisis. As ESL is not the primary concern of LFA, but is
inextricably linked to the literacy development of ESL learners, it is its absence that is noticeable. It is absent in the philosophical framework, provision and planning for literacy improvement. Its minimal presence suggests that it is being addressed. But the overarching framework and the absence of detail for ESL, allow it to be hidden within policy, as a problem within the problem. Coupled with the ‘literacy crisis’, (which calls for drastic and immediate action with a concerted effort on literacy improvement), ESL is hidden. ESL is framed as a problem (lack of English) within a problem (lack of literacy). Since literacy is in crisis, ESL is a deficit inhibiting teachers from addressing that crisis. The deficit of having “no English” compounds the deficit of having “poor literacy skills”. This is what turns ESL into a problem for teachers. Moreover, since it is assumed that the language needs of ESL can be addressed by literacy teachers who are not trained in TESOL or any ESL method or approach in many cases responsibility for ESL education is left to teachers. This effectively implies that ESL is not a specialist professional domain that ESL learners’ needs are not a distinctive area of intellectual interest and that policy for this field can be relegated to the private efforts of individuals and immigrant communities.

ESL was subsumed by literacy policy through broadbanding and through the prioritising of foundational literacy in the early years. The overall thrust of LFA is that English literacy achievement is in ‘crisis’ and that literacy teaching to meet desired standards is a “challenge”. Within this context, ESL is a policy problem: a further complication relating to a “significant and extremely heterogenous group” that has lower English literacy levels and “requires consideration” (LFA, p. 33). Paradoxically, the policy recognises lower achievement amongst ESL learners but fails to address this at a philosophical, strategic or planning level through the policy, leaving the onus for the success of ESL students on teachers and families. Furthermore, the assessment and accountability measures it introduces are tests that are linguistically insensitive and disadvantage ESL students. Unlike literacy, there are no directives or plans for ESL students in the policy and this has the effect of obliterating ESL, veiling the needs of ESL students and hence disadvantaging them further than is already recognised in the policy. Indeed ESL is conflated with English and literacy teaching (LFA, p. 39) as it is the principal responsibility of teachers for students to be literate in English but there is no discussion of first and second language development despite an early years focus where there is a large proportion of ESL students. Moreover, if all teachers share the responsibility for literacy, which by omission includes responsibility for ESL, there is arguably no need for TESOL-trained teachers.
So does LFA really reflect "literacy for all"? From my perspective, as a teacher in a school with 30% of students enrolling with little or no English, the answer is a clear no. The evidence as shown in my study documents the absence of: a philosophical framework; discussion of ESL and its provision; the pluralistic and multilingual nature of Australia’s people and inconsistent and negative labels of the ESL population make the policy one that excludes. It steers those who implement the policy to focus on English literacy, standards, testing and all procedures that accompany accountability and compliance. The presence of directives for an imagined homogenous native English-speaking community, a narrow definition of literacy and a manufactured ‘literacy crisis’ expressed with authority and urgency all work towards limiting the teaching profession to delivering services that are regulated through testing. This scenario suits a neo-liberal state, which concentrates power in the state through accountability measures whilst devolving responsibility to civil society. This paradox of neo-liberalism has been questioned. Whilst it accepts the need for a state, it fails to identify who the state should serve and embraces inequality by allowing those who hold power (being those who benefit from the neo-liberal state) to determine this (Faulks, 1999, p. 84). The assessment measures themselves – tests imposed on students and delivered by teachers at school - become pivotal in shaping classroom activity as “they begin to displace practice by blocking off the very thing that gives it breath, substance and stability, namely, unconstrained reference in ordinary speech to lived experience” (Moore, 1996b, p. 196 cited from Lingard, 1990, p. 181). But teachers are not involved in determining the content and style of tests. This decreases the potential for assessment that is relevant to student learning and contributes to the de-professionalisation of teachers.

A change of focus in ESL and other documents emanating from the Victorian government between 1998-2008, show the gradual erosion of ESL as a priority relating to social equity and connected to the linguistic and personal development of some 25% of Victorian school children (DEECD, 2006c). A self-managed school ‘system’ in Victoria enabled a neo-liberal discourse to assert market forces at the expense of equity and of sharing resources and power (Apple, 2004; Faulks, 1999, p. 84). This has left ESL advocates as the sole voice to fight for the allocation of funds to employ TESOL-trained teachers. Self-governing schools rely on decisions made by the principal and school council which may not be in the interests of those who have limited power or a limited voice, often leaving advocacy on behalf of bilingual families principally to the ESL teacher. Other members of the school community who are sympathetic to ESL programs may be co-opted but may also have their own programs and interests to protect in an environment where each program competes for funding within a limited budget. This scenario is a typical criticism of neo-liberalism as lacking an

37 Russell Cross also articulates this view and explores new directions for ESL in the current context (Cross, in press)
understanding of power relations (Faulks, 1999, Chapter 4). Neo-liberalism encourages competition at the expense of social cohesion and in an economic environment that is not necessarily as flourishing as was promised (Faulks, 1999, pp. 78-79).

In Victoria in the 2000s, where ESL was mainstreamed, many ESL specialists have been unable to assert their specific expertise as one that is necessary and integral to literacy development. Despite the existence of ESL-specific curriculum and assessment materials developed from the 1990s and a growing population of ESL students38, ESL has not been successfully asserted as a program in many schools due to the dominance of literacy policy, competing programs and the marketisation of schools.

The ESL Handbook advises ESL teachers on how to influence the school community, penetrate school planning and argue for the use of ESL funds on TESOL teachers and MEAs39. This is significant for ESL teachers in schools. Principals and communities do need to be convinced to use ESL funds on ESL students by employing qualified TESOL teachers. This needs to be done annually as the funds change annually depending on the numbers of ESL students and their School Family Occupation category, which is used to index funding. Through the ESL Handbook, we see a reductive understanding of power that is inherent to neo-liberalism (Faulks, 1999, Chapter 4). The ESL teacher and ESL community typically have a small voice in school communities, due to their settlement and transience. Moreover, ESL teachers may often work part time, on contracts or in other subject areas. Added to this, the dominant discourse of choice and an ongoing policy focus on literacy (generated by the ‘literacy crisis’), are difficult forces to combat. The ESL Handbook confirms, however, that individual schools are to ensure ‘ESL-ness’ across the system. Until recently, it has also been incumbent upon individual teachers or schools’ Assessment and Reporting teams to source an ESL report format that works within the school’s reporting system, to ensure that teachers are familiar with the ESL Companion, to identify students accurately across the school and then to deliver an ESL report for ESL students. These are complex processes that have not been addressed systemically and have led to a wide variety of practices across schools, depending on the commitment and energies of ESL and generalist teachers, school management and administration.

In conclusion, the ESL profession in schools has had to combat the dominance of:

- an inaccurate view that Australia is predominantly a monolingual English-speaking nation

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38 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1999; DEECD, 2006c) ABS has LBOTE population at 25%; ESL Handbook maintains 15% of Victorian government school students are ESL.
39 MEA: Multicultural Education Aide
• a manufactured ‘literacy crisis’ facilitated by the media and general community, supported by policy that gives priority to foundational literacy
• literacy programs that respond to the crisis and do not reflect ‘ESL-ness’
• standardised testing that shows an over-representation of ESL students at lower achievement levels
• reporting systems that do not integrate ESL
• reductive views of what literacy is and the effects of this on reductive views of ESL learner as having literacy problems rather than language needs
• a decreasing understanding of second language acquisition and ESL pedagogy due to the imposition of literacy as a foremost priority
• a neo-liberal system of self-managed schools that supports choice and program options to the detriment of educational equity

These priorities have been in combat with the interests of ESL students in a context where all educational programs compete against each other at a local level. The priority of ESL over other programs depends on the values and ethics of the principal who may (or may not) be ESL-informed or hold equity as a priority.

Working within the current system, using current practices, it would be possible to add some compliance and accountability measures that ensure ESL provision and increase support for ESL students in schools.

**Righting wrongs and writing rights**

The NPL addressed language rights that were eroded in ALLP and obliterated by LFA. The NPL aimed to right the wrongs of “past neglect” by writing language rights into policy. Echoes and parts of all of these documents are to be found in policy and in practice today. On the one hand, policy is inhibiting mainstream teachers from becoming ESL-informed, but on the other, ESL-informed practice exists, partly because many teachers, teacher trainers, curriculum writers and others have experienced different ways to respond to ESL learner needs. Reductive neo-liberal positions might have been imposed via bureaucratic power but they haven’t totally prevailed. Consequently, both policy and practice are fragmented and there is a lack of coherence across the system.

From my perspective, the future of ESL provision and programs in schools could take several paths by:

• continuing with the ‘gentle’ language of choice (neo-liberalism) that does not apply accountability measures to ESL provision and that allows ESL to be silenced
• continuing with neo-liberalism but building linguistic pluralism into the PoLT and ESL into the accountability measures and school compliance schedules that look for indicators of ESL success and improved student performance amongst ESL learners

• nourishing a new culture and policy in order to activate a shift towards an inclusive discourse that supports equity and the interests of ESL students alongside other student populations

In a time where teachers and communities have limited voice, these options depend upon the policies and dominant discourse of prevailing governments. It is difficult to know which discourse will be favoured by the Victorian and federal governments in the near future. Although both seem firmly entrenched in neo-liberal governance, pluralism and acceptance of multilingualism is apparent. Whether this will translate into ongoing funding that supports bilingual students adequately, or to the levels they were supported in the 1980s, is hard to know (Michell, 2009).

Positive planning for ESL requires cultural and systemic change founded in inclusive principles for an educated multilingual nation. This involves bilingual communities having voice. It involves the wider educational milieu acknowledging that pluralism and multilingualism are a permanent feature of Australian life rather than a transient phase. It involves the recognition of indigenous and immigrant groups. It involves an end to denigration of diversity that can extend to racial abuse. It involves the recognition of language rights and acknowledgement that multilingualism is a resource for learning rather than a problem to be eradicated. It involves the recognition of ESL provision to support communities and diversity.

Educators are in a prime position to influence deep cultural change. They have done so in the past and continue to do so daily in small and large ways. But the discourse of policy and provision for inclusive change need to meld with school communities. We need to re-articulate the wrongs of the past and the rights of the future. We need to accept a gradual but meaningful shift in thought, practice and culture to move from tolerance to acceptance and ultimately to adaptability. We need coherence across the system that aims for linguistic and cultural adaptability and uses discourses that actively nurture these qualities because they are beneficial for individual citizens, communities and the nation. We need to right language wrongs and write language rights to build true respect for all members of our society by truly valuing and unquestionably accepting diversity.
Appendices

**Appendix 1: Literature on policy and assessment relating to ESL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse analysis and policy focus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telling the history of the 1991 Australian language and literacy policy. TESOL in Context (Moore, 1995)</td>
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<td>ESL ... is it migrant literacy?... is it history? In R. Bell (Ed.), ACTA Background Papers No.2 (Lo Bianco, 1998)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literacy crises and ESL education. The Australian Journal of Language and Literacy, 22 (2) (Hammond, 1999)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESL and literacy education: revisiting the relationship. Prospect, 14 (2) (Hammond &amp; Derewianka, 1999)</td>
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<td>‘Wither’ ESL? Post-literacy prospects for English as a Second Language programs in Australian schools. Prospect, 14 (2) (Michell, 1999)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australian literacies: Informing national policy on literacy education. (Lo Bianco &amp; Freebody, 2001)</td>
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<tr>
<td>From policy to anti-policy: How fear of language rights took policy-making out of community hands In J. Lo Bianco &amp; R. Wickert (Eds.) (Lo Bianco, 2001)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESL in a time of literacy: A challenge for policy and for teaching. TESOL in Context, 12(1) (Lo Bianco, 2002)</td>
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<tr>
<td>From Broadbanding to Disbanding. In M. Singh (Ed.), Worlds of Learning: Globalisation and Multicultural Education (Cahill, 2002)</td>
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<th>ESL curriculum and programs focus</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment and the effects of benchmarking</td>
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<tr>
<td>The literacy benchmarks and ESL. In R. Bell (Ed.), ACTA Background Papers no.2 (McKay, 1998)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing the mark: the problem with the benchmarking of ESL students in Australian schools. (Davison, 1999)</td>
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<tr>
<td>On ESL standards for school-age learners. Language Testing, 17(2) (McKay, 2000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>National literacy benchmarks and the outstreaming of ESL learners. In Lo Bianco and Wickert (Eds) (McKay, 2001)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESL in Australian Schools: from the margins to the mainstream (Davison, 2001c, pp. 11-29)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current policies, programs and practices in Australian schools (Davison, 2001b, pp. 30-50)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identity and ideology: the problem of defining and defending ‘ESL-ness’ (Davison, 2001d, pp. 71-90)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counting and dis-counting learner group variation: English language and literacy standards in Australia (Davison &amp; McKay, 2002)</td>
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### Appendix 2: Reports, reviews and policies examined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade/Year</th>
<th>Reports and reviews</th>
<th>Policies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>The progress and Assimilation of Migrant children in Australia, Department of Immigration Canberra (Dovey, 1960)</td>
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<td>Migrant Services and Programs: report of the review of the Post-arrival Programs and Services for Migrants (Galbally, 1978)</td>
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<td>Education for a Multicultural Society Commonwealth Schools Commission (McNamara, 1979)</td>
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<td>Review of the Commonwealth Multicultural Education Program (Cahill, 1984)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The English as a second language (ESL) factors and index study. (Campbell &amp; McMeniman, 1985)</td>
<td>National Policy on Languages (NPL) (Lo Bianco, 1987)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Quality and Equality: Commonwealth Specific Purpose Programs for Australian Schools (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1985)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>Immigration and schooling in the 1990s. (Cahill et al., 1996)</td>
<td>Australia’s Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP)</td>
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<td>“Green Paper” (DEET, 1990b) and “White Paper” (DEET, 1991a)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Literacy Standards in Australia (Masters &amp; Forster, 1997)</td>
<td>Literacy for All: The challenge for Australian schools (DEETYA, 1998)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000s</td>
<td>Nil: absence of reports and commentary on ESL</td>
<td>2009 National curriculum policy pending</td>
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## Appendix 3: Victorian Education Department Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The annual ESL report</td>
<td>1997-8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2002-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Advice Materials (Board of Studies, 1996b)</td>
<td>1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESL Companion to the CSF 1 and CSF 2 (Board of Studies, 1996a, 2000b)</td>
<td>1996</td>
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<td>2000</td>
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<td>ESL Students Assessment and Reporting support materials (Department of Education Victoria, 1998)</td>
<td>1998</td>
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<td>School Global Budget (DEECD, 2002)</td>
<td>2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Principles of Learning and Teaching (DEECD, 2008f)</td>
<td>2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Blueprint for Government Schools (DEECD, 2003)</td>
<td>2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VCAA, 2005c)</td>
<td>2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>The ESL Companion (VCAA, 2005b)</td>
<td>2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>The ESL Handbook (DEECD, 2006c)</td>
<td>2006</td>
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<td>The ESL Continuum</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td>ESL in schools (DEECD, 2006a, 2008c)</td>
<td>2006</td>
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<td>2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chronological Review of literacy policy and programs (DET, 2006a, 2006b)</td>
<td>2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overview of Literacy (DEECD, 2007)</td>
<td>2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESL reports (DEECD, 2008c)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student report card (DEECD, 2008e)</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthening Outcomes: Refugee Students in Government Schools (DEECD, 2008d)</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>The ESL Continuum (DEECD, 2008b)</td>
<td>2008</td>
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Appendix 4: Data collection from policy documents

Example of data collection from the NPL

TEXT SUMMARY and QUOTES for CDA of NPL

Part 2A: National Policy on Languages

Text:

"The four broad strategies which underlie this policy are:

1. explicitness and clarity (permitting appropriate action by all relevant bodies and enabling review and evaluation over time);
2. comprehensiveness (enabling all affected groups, bodies and languages to participate);
3. balance and economy (enabling competing interests and claims to be measured against the general needs of the nation and the effectiveness, cost a feasibility of proposed actions);
4. a co-ordinated and national approach (this will attempt to ensure the various bodies associated with the enactment of the policy operate as far as possible with the same objectives, that there is no intrusion into the autonomous or particular responsibilities of State and Territory governments, and that as far as possible the roles of all groups are developed as a partnership);
5. the due weight be allocated to the maintenance and enhancement of standards of excellence in language education (ensuring quality) and to overcoming disadvantages, social inequalities and discrimination (redressing inequalities)."

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

Clear and explicit: principles articulated.

(No such framework, principle, philosophy articulated in Literacy for All)

These words aim for clarity; participation; collaboration; meeting needs of all, the nation; respecting autonomy and responsibilities; aim for standards and excellence but overcoming disadvantage; maintenance and change – review; co-ordination

Identifies that values come into play here

Identifies the many ways in which we can benefit, culturally, symbolically, as part of national and identity development, not simply economic development and workforce arguments. Embraces all forms of development and acknowledges a priority to address past neglect/underdevelopment

Not prescriptive: (unlike Literacy for All’s use of future “will” with time limits attached “literacy...strategies will be achieved”....“should be numerate....acceptable level”....“will achieve a minimum acceptable …standard within four years”)

Refers again to principles of policy (democratic, nurturing ecologies)

Declares national expectations on language publicly: gives scope and expectation without declaring a level that can be tested

Conservation: respectful of languages within communities/ecologies
devlopment and expansion: provides for growth of languages integration: allows languages to be used and legitimised across sectors

Information and services in languages understood: legitimises all languages in use

NB Languages

- multi-lingual nature of Australia
- identifies English as lingua franca and of law
- English identified as necessary for Australian citizenship for 18-50 year olds
- English as a cohesive element of society
Example of data collection from ALLP

TEXT SUMMARY and QUOTES for CDA of ALLP

1.1 page 3 Rationale for Review
Outlines achievement of past 15 years. However, many of the language and literacy needs identified in the NPL in the mid 1980s have changed relatively little in 1991, although their context may have changed and our understanding of their implications has increased, including education and training is now developed. The need is now widely acknowledged. High attainment in Australian English and increased proficiency in a range of LOTEs are widely understood to be essential within Australia's national and international developments and are not capable of being addressed solely by short-term projects.

Reconsideration of policy needed because:

*i. literacy level
what we learnt from NPL and ILY
planning and policy for ESL, LOTE and Literacy
*an increased understanding by governments not only of the language and literacy needs of Australia's population but also a better appreciation of the possible contribution to national development which may be made through the language and literacy skills in English and other languages of Australia's best resource – its people;
*fragility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and implications of neglect

- "the need, consistent with the broader social environment, to develop and refine language and literacy policies and programs. Relevant factors in the environment include macro-economic reform, in particular fiscal reform, and education and training reform in the areas of future standards, assessing and recognizing competencies, accreditation of providers and courses, certification, course articulation and credit transfer."

The pace of technological change
Need to increase understanding of benefits of lifelong learning

*In the current economic circumstances the need to strengthen Australia’s drive for innovative employment, education and training practices and to reorient our thinking more internationally; to co-ordinate programs

2. The Context: Priorities and Initiatives

*An ALLP must be seen as part of a broader process of national social and policy development. The ALLP is relevant to other current employment, education and training issues. It must be informed and must itself inform the broader contemporary environment of education, social and economic policy. It must be firmly anchored in policies addressing the nature of Aust as a multilingual and pluralistic society within an increasingly internationalist world, and policies addressing the needs for both macro-economic and macro-economic reform Australia can no longer afford to be insular and introspective if it wishes to compete successfully in the global economy. For Australia to achieve its goal of becoming a truly clever country, it cannot ignore the needs and capacities of its human resources.

2.3 Trading with the world
Selling value-added products is dependent …on the careful articulation of the product’s benefits……also depends on the formation of effective networks. We have ‘got by’ in the past with English but……this is no longer adequate in bilateral trading negotiations. Advanced secondary and tertiary economies are characterised by a greater preparedness to invest in human resources, including training the workforce in the major trading languages."

Quotes 1985 German trade Minister "If you wish to buy form us, there is no need to speak German. But if you wish to sell to us……" 2.3.1 Australian export trends

Three paragraphs re international trade.

‘Australia’s balance of payments is not purely commodity driven. Trade is services, including educational services. To overseas students and inbound tourism, earn income for Aust and are both growing very rapidly. This trade in services has significant language implications’

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

Inadequacy of NPL and short term projects a focus as states relatively little has changed.

However and understanding of their implications suggests the government has understood what is involved in multilingualism and doesn’t support it. There has been no time for substantive change.

Long term seems to be related to national and international developments = trade= the national (economic) interest.

Development is connected to economics, not human or intellectual or community development.

Acknowledges that govt can see the need for a literate population. Seems a revelation though: a shift from manual labour to knowledge based workforce.

Literate = national development.

Humans are a resource! best resource = its people = classic human capital argument: What humans can offer the economy.

Broader social environment flagged as changing, of ignored previously, but we can see it is being set up for change to include economic agenda:

- workplace reform;
- education and training reform flagged as inadequate, needing a shake up;

These notions all begin a train of accountability; nice to know / need to know; process of competence based to take over needs based; privatisation via accreditation and compliance measures.

Economic argument and inevitability of globalisation.

Section 2: These headings clearly show an economic agenda. Suggests previous neglect of “broader” context of education policy. Education is now part of economic and national development.

Suggests economic=realist and assumes overall goal of ‘clever country’ and being global is common to us all.

*firmly anchored = sounds like “in good hands” sound leadership;

*macro-economic and macro-economic reform= new discourse

*clever country , vs lucky country…….this has a history, a way of talking up who we are and why we are here (not about countries we came from). Human resources argument clear.

Move away from raw products Trading rationale for LOTE’s. Assumes LOTE=trade but isn’t intercultural sensitivity more critical to this and aren’t some cultures better at and more attune to successful trade?

2.3.1 Trends =strengths via growth = Asia=opportunity, includes Table of who trades. Interesting to talk of balance of payments and trade in services in a language and literacy policy!
Example of data collection from LFA

**TEXT SUMMARY and QUOTES for CDA of LFA**

**Literacy for All: the Challenge for Australian Schools** 1998, 48 pages

**Contents:**
1. Introduction pp. 5-8
2. The National Literacy and Numeracy Plan for Schools pp. 9-10
3. Commonwealth Funding Strategies to support the National Plan pp. 11-14
5. Aspects of Literacy pp. 31-42
6. Conclusion pp. 43-44
7. References pp. 45-48

**2.3 p. 10**
- Assessment of all students by their teachers as early as possible in the first year of schooling
- Early intervention strategies for those students identified as having difficulties
- The development of agreed benchmarks for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 against which all children’s achievement in these years can be measured
- The measurement of students’ progress against these benchmarks using rigorous state-based procedures, with all year 3 students being assessed against the benchmark from 1998 onwards and against the Year 5 benchmark as soon as possible
- Progress towards building national reporting on student achievement against the benchmarks, with reporting commencing in 1999 within the framework of the annual National report on Schooling in Australia
- Professional development for teachers to support key elements of the Plan

**Efforts to lift literacy skills in the early years of schooling are already a priority in every State and Territory. The Plan recognizes the range of valid approaches to raising literacy and numeracy standards across the country, this diversity reflecting:**
- The differences in student populations across States, Territories and systems
- The diverse nature of schools and their communities
- The different needs of individual students, and
- The range of teaching and learning styles that are necessary to serve a *heterogenous* community

**5 ASPECTS OF LITERACY p. 31**

“The high expectation of success in achieving literacy competence means that consideration must be given to the diverse needs of different groups of children including those who speak English as their second language, bilingual students and indigenous students.”

5.1 Approaches to Literacy Teaching in the Early Years p. 31-33

**COMMENT AND ANALYSIS**

**Title and Contents**

*Literacy:* No languages for all: echoes NPL’s Part 2.B.1 English for All and part 2.3 A Language other than English for all but re-configures the title to emphasise English literacy.

*Challenge:* battleground/de-professionalisation: as if what teachers are doing is not enough

Limited definitions of key concepts/terms: very brief and embedded in text

Presentation Style: 1990s desktop published govt dept style;

Style: essay-like; lack of headings and sub-headings, concise.

Early corporate look/ some colour/computerised lay out; no photographs/graphs/charts/facts and figures

3-colour front cover (blue, yellow, green) with teacher and 2 primary aged children

No community consultation

No community presence

Capitalisation of word “Plan and “National Plan” give it a top down authority (throughout document)

Tends to cite/quote refer to studies and reports but not describe or indicate their value. Some quotes jump out/ seem out of place.

All focused on literacy and numeracy and early years.

As early as possible: sense of urgency

**Measurement/ measured:** idea that learning can be quantified/ students as data.

Benchmarks: validity of these?/ who set them/exclude second language development

*Rigorous state-based procedures: sounds scientific/accountable*

progress national reporting on student achievement: accountability/measurable

Suggests literacy crisis

Appears to recognise “diversity” but not specific about definitions and identifying cohorts of learners. BUT

No mention of languages/second language/mother tongue.

Seems to imagine Australia is an English speaking community

Lack of depth/complexity = simplistic interpretations and focus on what is really committed to: benchmarks, early assessment; first 4 years of schooling; rigorous state-based procedures

Hetero=othering

Dictionary meaning (sounds scientific): 

heterogenous | het rä j n s |

adjective Medicine 

originating outside the organism : present in the urine are heterogenous proteins.

Diverse needs of different groups: othering?

These groups seem “foreign”

No mention of second language development

5.1 NO reference to ESL
Example of data collection from the ESL Handbook

TEXT SUMMARY and QUOTES CDA of ESL Handbook

Taken from webpage where ESL handbook can be found

"In Victorian government schools, almost 25 per cent of the population is from language backgrounds other than English. The provision of appropriate educational support, particularly English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, is essential.

A range of services is provided to mainstream schools to support students from language backgrounds other than English. This includes funding for ESL programs.

Topics on this page include:
* Who is an ESL student?
* Language Background Other Than English Census
* ESL index funding
* Multicultural Education Aides (MEAs)
* ESL Survey
* Support and advice

Who is an ESL student?

A student is defined as being from a language background other than English if either the student, their mother or father speaks a language other than English at home.

Funding is allocated to schools to provide ESL programs for students from language backgrounds other than English who:
* speak a language other than English at home as their main language
* have been enrolled in an Australian school for less than five years
* attract SRP (Student Resource Package) funding.*

Page 4 Foreword

Blueprint 'is based on the belief that learning outcomes for all students can only be achieved if we acknowledge the diversity of student needs in the development of local and system-wide responses'.

"Funding is provided to 450 schools each year."

"The purpose of this handbook is to provide school with information on:
* Policy and funding
* Advice on planning and implementing effective programs for a school's ESL student cohort
* Links to resources and services"

Page 5 Funding for ESL programs and support

Funding:
Outlines new arrivals programs and "ESL Index funding in schools" SFO "is applied to target funding to those school with the greatest needs"

Page 6

"ESL funding is given to schools to staff ESL programs."
"It is up to schools to decide which ESL students" need "targeted specialist ESL programs" and which need "ESL-informed mainstream" program.

Funding for MEAs 24.56% of ESL budget and details MEA role.

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

Prevalence of dot points throughout document

This was published in 2006, the same year as "literacy review and chronology" which has NO indication that 25% of students are language learners and NO recognition that language, second language acquisition and literacy are connected (even though science, numeracy, visual and multi-literacies are given great importance, as is "communication" which is a dimension of its own)

Why/how did this happen?

NB Definition of students;
Dot point form

Outcomes assumed as needing to be achieved
Business language: Blueprint, development of local and system-wide responses: responses and indicators are what business/markets use
Funding is provided - but is it spent on ESL?

Purpose is very clear and may respond to Dept concerns at misuse of funds and decline of ESL-informed school practices; ......

Compared this to CSF Course Advice of1996: more emphasis here on school self governance and reference to Annual Implementation Plan and School Strategic Plan, the need for ESL policy in each school and clear roles of all staff.

Military term: cohort

Business /accountancy language: ESL Index funding, ESL Index funding line, integrated weight index, target funding: high correlation, weighting for School Family Occupation density; NB greatest needs: not students lacking outcomes

NB that Student Family occupation (SFO) is not about occupation but about educational background. The occupations of immigrants do not reflect their education and their qualifications are rarely recognised in Australia, as they are seen to be untrustworthy or inadequate. Their knowledge of English, literacy and schooling system seem more relevant to ability to provide support to children.

Is this being written because Dept knows $ may not be spent on ESL staff?
Schools decide programs - self governed to meet demand= schools responsible
Appendix 5: Reflexive journal
A selection of excerpts from the reflexive journal I kept during the research process for my own benefit based on relevance to the analysis as I proceeded.

9 August 2008
Data collection from NPL and Literacy for All
The task of making a matrix to analyse the policies made me feel somewhat remote from the policies themselves, so I turned to typing up and highlighting key wordings from each policy. Though this is time-consuming for me because I am not a good typist, it proved to be a great way of sinking my teeth into the policy. Identifying the discourse of each policy at the grass roots/word level now seems an easy task. I thought it would be hard and finicky. I wonder how I will feel when I commence to connect/analyse texts in terms of context and wider society?

Literacy for All policy: Headings and sections are not clear or adhered to. The NPL is academic on its layout and format; it is very clear, readable and inclusive. This contrast was more apparent to me than I had ever thought it would be. Foundational literacy as a priority in LFA is very manifest.

7 September
Data collection: ALLP, Green Paper and White Paper
I didn’t expect the human capital, economic arguments to be stated so clearly. I thought I would have to “dig them out” with the type of reading Joe calls “mining”. But they are obvious and even more emphatic in the White Paper. This made a neat removal of languages for literacy through the absence of discussion on bilingual matters and the simple but powerful shift to “English Language and Literacy”, page 4 followed by “Children’s Literacy” page 5. Notably, children’s literacy moves to “the world of work” in the first sentence!

Companion volume to policy paper, which is directed towards “everyone with special interest in language and literacy policy issues” (Foreword, page iii), suggests that not everyone is interested.

The ILY 1990 is mentioned (Foreword, page iii), and section 2
Section 2, “The Context: Priorities and Initiatives” (the beginning of the document proper) launches into many economic and training issues (pp. 12-31) including Award restructuring, Newstart, Trading with the world, and the need for private sector to take responsibility.

What is the Plain English campaign? (See Dawkins, foreword to Green paper “plain language”). What discourse is this? Where did it end up? Was the intention behind the Macquarie Dictionary to confirm English as official language?

Having done some “mining” and data collection, re-confirms that CDA is not just a tool for “left wing thinkers” to “hide behind” as sceptics may suggest. Evidence of discursive shifts and therefore mainstream ideology is amply manifest in language itself. Language interacts with many spheres and disciplines and, I guess, approaches to methodology. At present, I can see no other way to study the power of thought and ideology than through the analysis of language and therefore through CDA.

October 6 2008
Data collection from ESL Scales; ESL Companion to CSF; these have a clearer educational focus than the ALLP.

The CSF begins what I shall call the language of the neo-liberal era; it responds to the notion that you have choice and can get what you want out of life if you take control of your situation. This is easy for those who feel powerful, of course, and ultimately works to destroy or eat away at those who don’t, through feelings of inadequacy and lack of empowerment.

I also wondered about the words arising from construction, business and design (textile) industries (Used in the 1990s-2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>framework</th>
<th>tool</th>
<th>to scaffold</th>
<th>blueprint</th>
<th>dimension</th>
<th>domain</th>
<th>curriculum design</th>
<th>strand</th>
<th>embed</th>
<th>interwoven</th>
<th>pathway</th>
<th>SFO density</th>
<th>organiser</th>
<th>indicator</th>
<th>competence</th>
<th>systematically</th>
<th>time fame</th>
<th>take into account</th>
<th>responses</th>
<th>outcome</th>
<th>accountability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
October 8th 2008
“The ESL Handbook”, 2006 details ESL operations in self-governing schools and a neo-liberal context. The words commitment and cohort jump out at me.
“Commitment” (pages 7-8) because I know that many schools are not generally committed to spending ESL $ on ESL programs/staff but the word crops up in reference to classroom teachers – ie the Principal, Professional Development and Curriculum co-ordinators need to be committed to this; shared community commitment relates to school council and $, I think, but is couched in terms of community having input into policy (the logic being that ownership of the policy would see funds directed to ESL). I doubt that input into policy amounts to monetary input into ESL in a systematic way.
“Cohort” is a Roman military term….are there any other military terms in educational discourse?

ESL handbook p.8 “As with any group of students, ….” aims to differentiate ESL students less. Is this to make teachers feel more comfortable about planning for students who are not too different? Is it to combat the idea that ESL students are getting more resources than "Aussies" and that they shouldn’t? I feel I have had to do a fair share (actually too much) of prefacing my statements with comments and ideas that are good for all students rather than advocating for the unique claims of ESL students.

The language from business, design and construction is interesting. I imagine writers think these terms invigorate the text, make it sound active and modern for an economically successful society. The language has a “web-feel” to it; it incorporates texture and 3D-ness of terms - a layered effect; is this part of a visual world permeating text? Is the 3D (VELS triple helix, strands, dimensions, density, interwoven, embedded, framework) better thought of as a flat screen 3D or layered (as portrayed by Windows) and therefore the weaving language is used as woven material – it’s flat but has layers. It’s ironic that weaving is an ancient and almost lost art now.

October 14 2008
Just did data collection from “Literacy Teaching and Learning in Victorian schools” There is NO mention of the fact that 20-30% of learners in our schools may have another language, are ESL, speak or read another language. Only once mentioned “cultural diversity”. Even if you want to ignore ESL in a school it is hard. But the overall effect here is that teachers are not asked to think about languages, so they don’t. Therefore the ESL teacher battles to convey its importance. There is not even a reference to Victorian and federal ESL Assessment, Frameworks etc.

There is reference to numeracy, science, IT engagement, English (as a discipline), communication (as a VELS Strand) and visual literacy. No mention of bilingualism, bi-literacy, second language acquisition, the value of reading to children in the mother tongue…..multicultural/bilingual resources, cultural relevance, engaging students from non-literate families; family literacy; NOTHING!

Not even the idea that one could refer to ESL documents if interested in ESL students!!
Laugh or cry?

October 15 2008
Following a path to see what the average teacher could find out about ESL on the web.

DEEWR, Dept of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations has info on new arrivals and how schools/visas get funds
It has information for school teachers on rewarding quality schooling, civics education, year 12 curriculum and standards, quality teaching, national bilby day; success for boys, resilience, drugs, democracy, Asia education foundation, digital education, history grants. NOTHING on ESL or languages.

DEECD
Teachers page: need to find P-10 resources, which sends to DEECD resources and domains including English; click on English domain which lists English VELS and then ESL Companion (followed by benchmarks and assessment, English Continuum, professional learning etc)

An “ESL” search within the DEECD website brings up 20 or more entries including, VELS, ESL reports, ESL in schools, LMER

VCAA does not list ESL on its opening page.
16 October 2008
Thinking about some titles and quotes for writing:

“Righting wrongs and writing rights” (has anyone used this?)

“You can be sure that any word with the word “count” in it when applied to people, will not be socially just or equitable” 2005, Brigidine Nun, ex maths teacher and principal.

Quote Thurgood Marshall
“There’s nothing so unequal as the equal treatment of unequals”.

Quote L Wittgenstein
“The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.”

Quote Martin Heidegger
"Man acts as though he were the shaper and master of language, while in fact language remains the master of man."

“Need to know/nice to know”
An approach I have experienced to prioritising and making learning “explicit,” goal based and assessment driven. This works to narrow concepts and approaches and de-prioritises issues that may need attention. It tends to narrow the scope of learning to fundamentals. When asked to prioritise tasks and planning for learning in this way, it ensures that dominant discourse will be prioritised. Assessment and literacy benchmarks will be the priority. This activity is as if management is asking teachers to focus on their needs (“What's in my head?”)

17 October 2008:
Worked on policy documents matrix today, as it needed much refinement. Have started to try to select themes for chapters 4-5 and organise the data. Requires a lot of thought.

22 October 2008:
Key Ideas behind thesis
Underlying intolerance to pluralism and linguistic diversity in post-colonial Australia, means that the basis of ESL policy has been reconfigured by the socio-political contexts and accompanying discourses in which it seeks to exist:

Dominant discourses
• Multi-cultural, inclusive (NPL)
• Economic (ALLP onward)
• Restrictive and divisive (Howard onward) see Kalantzis on wedge politics
• Neo-liberal (Kennett onward)

These are in a global and political context and have led to a paradigm shift - use data as evidence of the discourses; relate to politics and paradigm shift globally.

Human capital superordinate in IALS, LFA, ALLP
Human rights superordinate in ILY, NPL, Bandscales
References


Donnelly, K. (2004). *Why are our schools failing?*


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