The Study of Asian Languages in Two Australian States: Considerations for Language-in-Education Policy and Planning

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation conducts a comprehensive examination of the study of Asian languages in two Australian states, taking into consideration the broad range of people and variables which impact on the language-in-education ecology. These findings are intended to enhance the development of language-in-education policy, planning and implementation in Australia. In order to incorporate a number of perspectives in the language-in-education ecology, interviews were conducted with a range of stakeholders, school administrators, LOTE (Languages Other Than English) coordinators and LOTE teachers, from all three education systems – government, independent and Catholic (31 individuals), across two states – Victoria and New South Wales. Questionnaires were also completed by 464 senior secondary students who were studying an Asian language. Along with the use of supporting data (for example, government reports and newspaper discourse analysis), the interview and questionnaire data was analysed thematically, as well as through the use of descriptive statistics.

This study identifies a number of sociopolitical, structural, funding and attitudinal variables that influence the success of Asian language program implementation. An interesting finding to arise from the student data is the notion of a pan-Asian identity amongst students with an Asian heritage. At a broader level, the analysis identifies different outcomes for the study of Asian languages amongst schools, education and systems as a result of the many factors that are a part of the language-in-education ecology. This thesis also discuss a number of broader issues to arise from the data including tensions within the study of Asian languages due to the lack of recognition granted Asian community languages. This has resulted in an ongoing conflict based on the notion of ‘ownership’ of languages. As an extension of this, the assessment system for senior secondary students of Asian languages is also viewed as problematic. Through the illustration of a complex language-in-education ecology and the exploration of the role of ‘linguistic cultures’ and ‘agency’, this dissertation provides a greater understanding of Asian language study in Australia, and contributes
towards the conceptualisation of language-in-education frameworks for English dominant contexts. Ultimately this dissertation argues for a far greater commitment to all languages on the part of governments and the development of comprehensive language policies.
DECLARATION

This is to certify that

(i) the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD,
(ii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,
(iii) the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.
PREFACE

Sections of Chapter 6 have been published as an article. The relevant sections were reworked, merged with further data and written a different format to that used in this thesis.


Sections of Chapter 4 have been rewritten and published as an article. The relevant sections have been reworked, merged with further data and written in a different format to that used in this thesis.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have found the completion of this PhD extremely challenging. At several points I thought I had finally got through the most difficult part, only to be challenged again and again. This has endured to the final printing stage of the thesis. As I drag myself over the finish line and lay here with my mind blissfully empty, I am drawn back to the importance of acknowledging all the support that enabled me to reach this point.

First I would like to thank Professor Michael Clyne, my primary supervisor, for his unfailing support and undying passion for languages, which has given me buoyancy again and again throughout this project. Thank you also to Dr. Sandra Kipp, my secondary supervisor, for her practical advice which always got me back on track, right where I needed to be. Michael and Sandra, your friendships are greatly valued.

I also wish to thank Cathie Elder for reading parts of this project and for her valuable advice and Sandy Clarke from the University of Melbourne Statistical Consulting Centre for her guidance on statistical analysis in this thesis. Thanks also to Daphne, Yon, Ingrid, Brigitte, Doris, Meredith and Sue, my fellow PhD students, who have provided support and companionship throughout this process.

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A special expression of love and gratitude goes to Steve for his support, comfort and understanding so soon after finishing his own PhD, and to Zara Beth for showing me that there are things far, far cooler in this world than finishing a PhD.

Finally, I could not have completed this thesis without the financial support provided by the scholarship I received, an Australian Postgraduate Award, funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Education, Science and Training.
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<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACER</td>
<td>Australian Council of Educational Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>AEF</td>
<td>Asia Education Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>AISNSW</td>
<td>New South Wales Association of Independent Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AISV</td>
<td>Association of Independent schools Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASAA</td>
<td>Asian Studies Association of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASC</td>
<td>Asian Studies Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOS (NSW)</td>
<td>Board of Studies, NSW, focuses on Year 11 and 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSSSS (QLD)</td>
<td>Board of Senior Secondary School Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAE</td>
<td>Council of Adult Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCAFL</td>
<td>Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Languages</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEC</td>
<td>Catholic Education Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Catholic Education Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG</td>
<td>Council of Australian Governments</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoAsIt</td>
<td>Comitato Assistenza Italiani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE&amp;T (NSW)</td>
<td>Department of Education and Training, NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td>DE&amp;T (Victoria)</td>
<td>Department of Education and Training, Victoria</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEST</td>
<td>Department of Education, Science and Training, Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEST</td>
<td>Department of Education Science and Training (Federal)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DET&amp;YA</td>
<td>Department of Education Training and Youth Affairs (Federal)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFAT</td>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>EB</td>
<td>English speaking background</td>
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<td>HSC (NSW)</td>
<td>High School Certificate, NSW</td>
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<td>LB</td>
<td>LOTE speaking background</td>
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<tr>
<td>MACLOTE</td>
<td>Ministerial Advisory Council on Languages Other Than English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full name</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCEETYA</td>
<td>Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>NALSAS</td>
<td>National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLLIA</td>
<td>National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Special Broadcasting Service (Multilingual television and radio services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSABSA</td>
<td>Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSCL (NSW)</td>
<td>Saturday School of Community Languages, NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td>TER (Victoria)</td>
<td>Tertiary Entrance Rank</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAI (NSW)</td>
<td>University Admissions Index</td>
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<td>VCAA</td>
<td>Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority</td>
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<td>VCAB</td>
<td>Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board (now VCAA)</td>
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<td>VCE</td>
<td>Victorian Certificate of Education</td>
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<td>VSL</td>
<td>Victorian School of Languages</td>
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<td>VTAC</td>
<td>Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre</td>
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Historically in Australia, the study of Asian languages has been about a struggle for recognition. Xenophobia and racism ensured that few Asians were even allowed into Australia for most of the twentieth century and a Eurocentric focus dominated the education curriculum. However, in recent decades, Australia’s realisation of the economic and strategic importance of Asia has dramatically changed its relationship with the region. Within this evolving context, Asian languages and studies have also taken a greater role in the Australian education system. While the traditional focus of second language study was predominantly on European languages as foreign languages, particularly French, German and Latin, Australia produced pioneering policies, from the 1970s, for the integration of community languages into the education system. However, as Asian migration to Australia was prohibited for much of the twentieth century, this integration did not extend to Asian languages. Although Asian migration increased from the 1970s, the Australian public was not convinced of the benefits of studying the languages of their regional neighbours at this time (Kamada, 1994).

Although there was small amount of Asian language study in the school system from the 1920s onwards (Section 2.2.3), the greater incorporation of Asian languages into the education curriculum has, in part, been due to explicit federal policy in support of Asian studies and languages, namely the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australia Schools (NALSAS) program. The program was initiated in 1994, with the impact of this endeavour slowly coming to light. The primary purpose of this thesis is to conduct a comprehensive examination of the study of Asian languages in the Australian education system, specifically in Victoria and NSW, taking into consideration the broad range of people and variables which impact on this specific language-in-education ecology.

The field of language policy and planning has expanded dramatically since the 1960s, with the development of a number of theories and frameworks focusing on some of the many different situations and contexts that involve language and society (Chapter 2). Within the field, language-in-education planning and policy considers the learning of second (or third or fourth) languages within the education system, which includes foreign, regional, indigenous and community languages as well as dialects. Specifically in this thesis, we are examining the study of Asian languages in an English dominant
context. The secondary purpose of this study, therefore, is to consider how the findings in this thesis can enhance the development of language-in-education policy, planning and implementation in Australia.

1.1 Examining Language Study and Language Policy

There are many facets to conducting a comprehensive examination of Asian language study in the Australian language-in-education ecology (Section 2.1.8 for a discussion of the term ‘ecology’ and its use in this thesis). While the focus of this thesis is on Asian languages or on the examination of issues through Asian languages, they are part of a broader language learning context – in 2003, over 140 languages were studied in Australian primary and secondary schools and ethnic schools. While the focus is predominantly on Asian languages, it is necessary at times to also consider their place alongside other languages, within the broader Australian context, particularly in Chapter 7.

This study aims to address the numerous variables, people and policies that impact on the study of Asian languages. These variables include issues outside the education system, such as sociopolitical factors and the influence of historical factors, as well as variables inside the education system, such as language-in-education policies, attitudinal and structural factors and funding of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) programs. The people involved in the language-in-education ecology include members of school communities (students, parents, teachers and school administrators), educational bodies who formulate, interpret and/or implement language-in-education policies and other stakeholders and interested individuals who promote the study of Asian languages. Each participant or group of participants has a different experience to contribute – for example, they study a language, teach a language or implement a language program or policy. The relevant language policies and language-in-education policies themselves are also interpreted and implemented differently by federal and state government bodies, education providers and schools. All of these elements, as well as the interaction between these elements, must be considered when constructing a comprehensive analysis of language study.
It is challenging to develop a methodology that can bring together all relevant information for such an analysis and to then synthesise the data into a cohesive discussion (See Chapter 3 for a full discussion of methodology). An analysis of the study of Asian languages is made more difficult by the political nature of language-in-education processes that underpins the whole context. While well thought-out and detailed frameworks for the development and implementation of language policies and language-in-education policies have been cultivated (See Section 2.1.6), they often do not inform the actual process of developing and implementing policy. This makes it difficult to develop a structure through which to analyse a situation. The challenge lies in identifying all of the elements that facilitate and hinder the successful uptake of languages, in this instance, the study of Asian languages in Australia, and to understand how these factors interact.

1.2 Research Questions

The guiding research questions for this thesis are:

1. Historically, what factors, bodies/organisations and people have been pertinent in shaping outcomes for Asian language study in Australia?
2. Who is studying Asian languages? And why?
3. What factors hinder and facilitate the development of language study in Australia and the promotion of Asian language study within this?
4. What impact have these factors had across education systems and states?
5. How can these findings enhance the development of language-in-education policy, planning and implementation in Australia?

This broad review of Asian language study in Australia is an important and timely endeavour as it has been over ten years since the introduction of the NALSAS policy. The research will provide a greater understanding of:

- The significance of Asian language study for students and the importance of Asian languages in the education system as well as for the broader Australian community;
- The complex interrelationship between factors, both internal and external to the education system, which impact on the success of language-in-education programs;
- The interaction between language policy processes and its constituents, and
- How these findings can better inform language-in-education research and development in English dominant contexts.

1.3 Key Considerations

In establishing an appropriate context for this research, consideration needs to be given to three important factors. The first issue involves the notion of ‘Asian’ languages and the competitive dichotomy that this term is a part of. Historically in Australia, the study of French dominated second language study and a dichotomy of discourse revolved around ‘French’ versus ‘Other’ languages. As community languages became more established in the education system (See Section 2.2) the discourse shifted to ‘Foreign’ versus ‘Community’ languages and more recently, with the greater uptake of Asian languages, the discourse has shifted to ‘Asian’ versus ‘European’ languages. These dichotomies can be benign, but tend to create harmful tensions within language studies. The aim of this thesis is not to perpetuate any of these dichotomies. While the focus is the study of Asian languages, I do not intend to equate ‘success’ with a critical percentage of students studying a certain language and I do not see an inherent value in learning four Asian languages only. In fact, I strongly contend that the specific funding of one group of languages over another hinders the future of language study in Australia (See Section 8.4).

Another problem is the use of the homogenising terms ‘Asia’ and ‘Asian’ which are more often than not used to convey an ideologically determined image of who and what these terms constitute. This issue is discussed more fully in Section 2.4.1.

The second issue is that the success of Asian languages in the education system has been affected by oscillating attitudes towards Asia, Asians in Australia and Asian languages and cultures. These attitudes have been influenced by variables beyond the control of language planning processes, such as world and local events, representations
of these events in the media, as well as changes in government and governmental focus. This thesis takes as many of these factors as is feasible into consideration.

Finally, it must also be kept in mind that, against the backdrop of a push for the greater study of Asian languages, language study in general has declined steeply over the last several decades. For example, the proportion of students Australia-wide graduating at the senior secondary level with a language other than English (LOTE) has decreased from around 40% in 1968 (Holt, 1976) to 13.5% in 2003. While this thesis focuses on Asian languages specifically, any increases and decreases in enrolments for Asian languages need to be considered in light of a more general apathy towards language study.

1.4 Outline of the Thesis

This thesis considers Asian language study and language-in-education policy, planning and implementation from a number of perspectives, taking into account numerous interacting variables. Each chapter addresses a different issue, with data drawn from either one group of relevant participants in the study, such as students, or from a cross-section of participants and explores how they are affected by the issues at the heart of the chapter and what role they have in managing the language programs or as agents of change, or the lack of influence they have in the language planning and policy processes and the ongoing management of language programs.

To provide a context for the arguments and discussions in this thesis, Chapter Two presents a historical analysis of the field of language policy and planning as well as its history in Australia. This includes an outline of key terms and frameworks within the field and also details major criticisms of the field, challenges for future research and some of the latest directions and discussions in the field. The focus then moves to the history of language policy development in Australia, including landmark language and language-in-education policies that have been developed and implemented. This incorporates an outline of language policies and planning for Asian languages within the Australian context. While this thesis focuses on Asian languages, it is important to problematise the terms ‘Asia’ and ‘Asian’, and the chapter examines the ideology that has defined the terms in Australia. This allows for the identification of Asian languages
as community languages in Australia and the consideration of the typology of these languages, as well as a further discussion of terminological issues that affect this thesis.

Chapter Three provides a detailed outline of how the data set was constructed for this thesis, including challenges in the data collection process and in developing representative samples. The chapter contains information about the development, collection and analysis of student, teacher, school administrator and stakeholder questionnaires and interviews.

Chapter Four incorporates a discussion of five of the Asian languages studied in schools in this study: Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese. These languages represent the four languages prioritised by the NALSAS program, as well as Vietnamese, an important community language in Australia. The discussion of each language explores why it was introduced into schools. It also identifies a multitude of factors, some unique to one language, others more generalisable, which have impacted on the direction of the study of each language. These include sociocultural, political and economic factors, the accessibility of cultures, the role of governments and media, the role of prestige and the availability of resources, amongst others.

Chapter Five focuses on students studying Asian languages at the senior secondary level. The first aim is to identify distinguishing features of students based on biographical information such as language background, gender and country of birth, in order to provide an overview of who is studying which Asian languages. The second aim is to examine the student voice, which has been underrepresented in the study of language-in-education policy, planning and implementation to date (Payne, 2006). This section analyses data on important variables that impact on students’ language learning experiences, including exploring the personal significance of learning a language from the students’ perspective. A greater understanding of which languages students are studying and why, will make an important contribution to developing effective and appealing senior secondary language programs.

Chapter Six examines one of the most contentious issues in second language study in Australia - that of ‘background speakers’ in the language classroom, which refers to students who have a home background in the language being studied, and whether
language study is equitable for all language learners. This chapter addresses the issue by examining the current policies or actions that relate to the issue in different jurisdictions and whether they are justifiable in the Australian context. The competing attitudes and opinions of school administrators, educators, teachers, students and parents which influence, or attempt to influence, assessment authorities and the examination system are also addressed, along with the impact of these on the study of certain Asian languages.

Chapter Seven focuses on the attitudinal and structural factors operating within schools and education systems that influence the direction of language programs. These include the degree of agency teachers can exercise within schools, the provision of language programs across all year levels, the benefits of compulsory language study and the impact of differing funding structures utilised across educational systems and states. The chapter also examines the extent to which these factors, including the agency of school administrators, influence language programs across education systems and states, which differ significantly in their success.

Chapter Eight then considers three broader issues that relate to the field of language-in-education policy, planning and implementation. First is the need to present a more realistic understanding of language, language in society, language study and language for careers amongst school communities. The other two issues discussed are ‘linguistic culture’ and ‘agency’ in the language-in-education ecology. At this point of the thesis, we are able to review the numerous factors in the language-in-education ecology that interact with and shape these concepts.

Finally, Chapter 9 revisits the research questions through a discussion of major findings of the thesis.
While language planning and language policy have been used as powerful tools by governments and societies for thousands of years, a greater awareness of the importance of language planning and policy as a field of academic study has only developed since the mid 1960s. In this time, the conceptualisation of language planning and policy activities has transformed from a naïve model of modernisation to an understanding of language planning and policy as a conflicting, complex and influential tool for control, justice and development.

The first section of this chapter reviews the field of language planning and policy and its historical development, including criticisms of the field as well as theoretical advancements. The focus then shifts to the Australian context and the development of language policy and language-in-education policy from the beginning of the twentieth century, addressing important questions, such as, who undertakes language planning and policy activities and why they undertake them. This chapter also outlines a number of other issues relevant to this thesis, including federalism in Australia (and the resultant differences in the provision of education) and the conceptualisation of key terms, including ‘Asia’ and ‘background’ speaker.

2.1 Language Planning and Language Policy

2.1.1 Terminology: Language Policy, Language Planning or LPP?

Before we begin our discussion of language planning and policy, it is important to define the terms ‘language planning’ and language policy’, as well as outlining arguments surrounding the differing uses of terminology in the field. First, language planning involves planned and (or) deliberate attempts to change the use or study of a language by individuals and societies (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997), while language policy is defined as,

bodies of ideas, laws, regulations, rules, and practices intended to achieve some planned language change. Such policy may be realized in very formal or overt ways, through language planning documents and pronouncements (For example,
constitutions, legislation, policy statements), which may have symbolic or substantive intent. Alternatively, policy may be inferred from more informal statements of intent (i.e., in the discourse of language, politics and society), or policy may be left unstated or covert (Baldauf, 2005b:958).

Ideally, both the components of planning and policy should be considered essential and necessary part of changes to languages and their uses. However, as is often noted, each activity can occur without the other. That is, planning can take place without being based on any policy or without any policy eventuating, or policy can be formulated with little or no planning preceding or following this activity (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997:297-299). The disassociation between the development of systematic and informed language planning and policy frameworks from the practices of government and individuals remains one of the greatest challenges for the field.

There is also a division within the academic field in relation to terminology. Pioneering academics such as Haugen (1966) utilised the term ‘language planning’ and it is still widely used in the literature. Other terms introduced have included ‘language management’, ‘language treatment’, ‘language engineering’ and ‘language cultivation’ (Spolsky & Lambert, 1997). These terms reflect different ideological and conceptual approaches to language issues in different contexts. In general, the terms ‘language planning’ and ‘language policy’ are most widely used in the available literature. The combined term ‘language planning and policy’ (LPP) is commonly used to replace the term ‘language planning’. Fettes (1997:14) argues that any conceptualisation of the field must encompass both major components - planning and policy, and because these processes can be unrelated, the field must also incorporate a critical evaluation of both aspects. ‘The former [planning] providing standards of rationality and effectiveness, the latter [policy] testing these ideas against actual practice in order to promote the development of better (more sophisticated, more useful) language planning models.’ Fettes (1997) therefore argues that the best term for the field of study would be ‘LPP’. However, in using this term, we need to be careful not to obscure the specific functions of each activity of planning and policy. At times in this thesis, we will be just referring to language planning endeavours, at other times, to explicit and implicit policies. So while the term LPP will be used in this thesis to refer to the field in general, where appropriate, the individual terms of language planning and language policy will be used.
2.1.2 As Old As (Recorded) Time

The use of language planning and language policies can be found as far back as early recorded history; processes resulting from the actions of individuals, religious institutions, governments, and through the course of exploration and invention. As early as the third century B.C., for example, the words of Indian emperor Ashoka, recorded in stone, reflect his policy of communicating in the various languages and dialects of his empire, rather than in one official language only (Ferguson & Huebner, 1996). The invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century required orthographic standardisation among other changes, while the decision by Spanish missionaries to produce bibles in local languages in the eighteenth century represents an example of religious language planning (Suarez, 1983), a practice that is still continued by the Summer Institute of Linguistics today. As further examples, the expansion and contraction of empires worldwide has resulted in the imposition of differing language policies, with the French preferring to implement French as the language of education, while the British preferred to confine English to an administrative function. In more recent history, the departure of the British from countries they had colonised has led to difficult decisions for post-colonial governments grappling with decisions regarding multiple languages, and pressing issues such as nation building and modernisation, as exemplified in Kenya and Tanzania (see, for example, Abdulaziz, 1991; Crampton, 1986; Harries, 1976).

However, it was within the post-Second World War context with the increasing demise of large-scale colonialism that the field of language planning and policy theory began to evolve. The initial language planning focus was clearly on the developing world (Jernudd, 1993), with the goals of these activities including national unification, modernisation, efficiency and democratisation (Ricento, 2000a).

The academic field of language planning did not clearly emerge until the middle of the twentieth century, with Haugen’s (1966b) influential Language Conflict and Language Planning: The case of modern Norwegian, in which he explored the selection, codification, implementation and elaboration of language within the Norwegian setting. Most writings on language planning around this time focused on corpus planning, an activity which concentrates on the internal linguistic aspects of language, and
is usually understood to mean that some agency, person, or persons are trying to change the shape or the corpus of a language by proposing or prescribing the introduction of new technical terms, changes in spelling, or the adoption of a new script (Kloss, 1969:81).

Status planning, on the other hand, is ‘another dimension of planning where one busies oneself not with the structure and form of language but with its standing alongside other languages or vis-à-vis a national government’ (Kloss, 1969:81). Both the concepts of status and corpus planning have been extensively utilised in language planning and policy theory and practice, and will be discussed further, along with other types of language planning in Section 2.1.5.

2.1.3 The Development of Language Planning
The concept of ‘language planning’ has evolved over a number of decades and has often reflected the stage of development of language planning theory, the ideological propensity of the times and of the writer and the numerous differing contexts where language planning is utilised. Initial definitions focused on the official nature of language planning and viewed the field as one dealing with ‘problems’ surrounding language. In 1971, language planning was defined as,

a political and administrative activity for solving language problems in society. Public planning, that is, orderly decisions-making about language on a national level, is motivated by public effects of some language problems and by the social context (Jernudd & Das Gupta, 1971:211).

Rubin (1971:218) defined language planning as an activity that ‘focuses upon the solutions to language problems through decisions about alternative goals, means, and outcomes to solve these problems,’ while Fishman (1974a:89) wrote that language planning was ‘generally utilized in both fields as a relatively neutral process-term pertaining to the organized means by which certain goals are pursued’.

While many of the beliefs surrounding language planning and language policies during the 1960s, 70s and 80s were to be criticised at a later stage (see Section 2.1.4), numerous language conferences and publications contributed to the development of the field during this period, and while the focus was mainly on corpus planning,
publications also addressed issues such as language rights for immigrant groups, linguistic ecology, social reform, and evaluation of language planning and policy implementation (Cobarrubias, 1983; Das Gupta & Ferguson, 1977; Eastman, 1984; Ferguson, 1979/1996; Fishman, 1974a; Fishman, Ferguson, & Das Gupta, 1968; Haugen, 1972; Jernudd & Das Gupta, 1971; Kloss, 1971; Rubin, 1971). With the field having grown rapidly in the previous decades, Rubin (1979) collated information regarding over one hundred and fifty agencies involved in language planning around the world.

Fishman (1974b:27), editing a series of language planning papers, wrote, ‘…we are beginning to accumulate the data, the theories and the methods necessary in order to slowly but surely make language planning more nearly like the rational and responsible pursuit that its adherents and practitioners have claimed it to be…’ However, there was always an increasing and critical awareness of the possibilities, as well as the limitations of language planning and its theory. As editor of Language Planning: The State of the Art, Cobarrubias (1983:24) wrote that ‘One of the issues surfacing in many of the essays gathered here is the fact that language-planning processes take place in a sociocultural context and respond to ideological consideration and loyalties…’, while Haugen (1983:286-287) wrote, ‘Only further research will increase our understanding of how much influence can be exerted consciously by the manipulation of sources of power and how much linguistic change is due to underlying and uncontrollable social forces’.

In 1977, the international journal Language Problems and Language Planning, originally an Esperanto journal, was established, and language planning broadened its focus to developed countries, expanding the breadth of the field. By the late 1980s, language planning was viewed as inextricably linked with political processes, with linguistics composing only one component of language planning. Language planning now involved a consideration of the religious, social, political, economic, national, psychological and demographic contexts surrounding language use (Baldauf, 1990; LoBianco, 1989). Applied linguistics and sociolinguistics emerged as key components to the framework of language planning and policy (LoBianco, 2000). Ricento (2000a:202) argues that this period was typified by,
a growing awareness of the negative effects – and inherent limitations – of planning theory and models, and a realisation that sociolinguistic constructs such as diglossia, bilingualism, and multilingualism were conceptually complex and ideologically laden and could not easily fit into existing descriptive taxonomies.

2.1.4 Criticisms of Language Planning and Policy

One of the main criticisms of language planning and policy has been of the notion that language planning is a neutral process (Fishman, 1994; Allen, McHoul, & Mey, 1990; Williams, 1992). Allen et al (1990:27) argue that the false belief in neutrality has led to ‘a failure to tackle the hidden agendas – political, social, educational and otherwise – of particular forms of government, economic relations, politics and social organization.’ Consequently, governments have been able to linguistically repress minorities and utilise planning as a form of control. They also argue that ‘plans have tended to reflect the political and economic imperatives of particular social groups, rather than what could be constructed as linguistic or cultural concerns per se (Allen et al., 1990:41).’ Even if language planners wish to behave as neutral actors in the process, it is impossible because ‘those involved in status planning have worked under a range of stated and unstated constraints which reflect political interests of those who have commissioned language plans (Allen et al., 1990:26).’

The argument that language planning has been utilised as an implement of power, and to perpetuate inequality has been supported by other academics, particularly in relation to English in colonial, and post-colonial contexts, as well as the imposition of western culture and conceptualisation through English as a second language teaching (Pennycook, 1994, 1998; Phillipson, 1992; Skutnabb-Kangas, Phillipson, & Rannut, 1994; Tollefson, 1991, 1995). Fishman (1994) highlights however, that not all issues raised surrounding language planning necessarily have solutions; they are simply dilemmas. He argues that the paradox surrounding power is that self-interest can never be escaped, even if power is redistributed.

Can self-interest be escaped in any human pursuit, particularly in any socially organised and societally supported one? Has not recent history convinced us that the pretence of escaping self-interest merely leads to the empowerment of yet another set of authorities who disguise their own rampant self-interest and, in
ideologising their disguise, ultimately merely leave their constituencies apathetic, 
exploited and justifiably resentful? (Fishman, 1994:93)

Fishman (1994) argues that this realisation however, of the inevitable pursuit of self-
interest by minorities, in no way nullifies the far greater injustices perpetuated by the 
self-interest of majorities.

A second major criticism of language planning has been of the ‘technicist-scientific’,
‘rational’, or ‘positivist’ approach to language planning (Allen et al, 1990; Pennycook, 
1989; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). An example of the rational problem/solution 
framework, according to Ricento & Hornberger (1996), is the notion of multilingualism 
as a ‘problem’ that needs to be solved. Positivist definitions of language planning that 
classify it as a process where governments or authorities look for solutions to problems 
by identifying alternative goals, or by utilising cost-benefit analysis are inadequate, 
according to Ricento & Hornberger (1996:406) who state that,

the rational model views complex sociocultural phenomena involving language as 
manageable problems, amenable to study and solution within the parameters of 
normative science. It has become clear over the past 20 years that the rational 
model in and of itself is inadequate to account for how policy is developed and 
why it succeeds or fails.

Lo Bianco (2002b:25) argues that the dependence on descriptivism, technicism and 
scientism that have dominated the practice, and are still utilised, is detrimental to the 
field. This dependence is characterised by ‘diagrams with arrows and boxes in which 
certain kinds of action lead to certain kinds of consequences and relations that hold true 
in all circumstances.’ Lo Bianco (2002b:25) argues that there are not many particulars 
that differentiate language policy planning from other types of planning processes, 
though there are some aspects which are differentiated and,

the challenge is to precisely specify what LPP principles can be transported. What 
I think is relatively portable, at least form my own experience, are what I will call 
processes for the formulation of policy, i.e., collaborative negotiated and discursive 
arrangements for formulating inter-subjective agreements among parties in contest
with each other. Once policy frameworks are agreed, the formulation of policies becomes much easier.

These arguments have been coupled with the criticism of uncritical consideration of power, neutrality and ideology in language planning and policy, leading, among other things, to the reappraisal of ideology and its underlying role in numerous language planning efforts throughout the world. The exploration of ideologies includes linguistic ideologies such as purism and standardisation, and political ideologies such as assimilation, internationalisation, and racism (Cobarrubias, 1983; Lippi-Green, 1997; Ricento, 2000b; Schmidt, 2002; Wallace & Wray, 2002; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994).

Despite the forceful criticism the field has endured, Lo Bianco (2002b) argues that careful reflection can ensure a productive future for the field;

it is the field where scholarly reflection can indeed contribute to bringing about the kinds of goals that language planning typically has: national capability planning for languages, social justice for marginalized communities, revitalization of marginalized and dying languages. In doing these ideologically, I think we are committed to culturally enlivened, pluralistic futures in which multiple human subjectivities are provided social space and not obliterated by singular worldviews, however powerful they may be (Lo Bianco, 2002b:26).

2.1.5 Types of Planning
Contemporary definitions of language planning acknowledge that this activity involves attempts to influence and direct language in society and in education systems, to influence and change its use by individuals and groups as well as to change the structure (grammar, orthography, etc) of a language (Ager, 2001). This implies that an understanding of motivation and agency also plays an important role in the language planning process, as will be discussed in Sections 2.1.7 and 2.1.9.

Within the theoretical development of language planning and policy, three major types of planning have emerged from the field – status and corpus planning, which we have already looked at briefly in Section 2.1.2 and acquisition planning. Kloss’ (1969) early distinction between status and corpus planning has proven be to one of the most
important distinctions in the field and both concepts have been extensively utilised in language planning and policy theory and practice.

While the political nature of status planning has been identified and documented through the development of language planning theory (for example, Cooper, 1989; Fishman, 1974a; Haugen, 1972; Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997; Allen et al, 1990), more recently, Fishman (2000:43) has addressed the question as to whether corpus planning is any ‘less ideologically and politically colored than status planning,’ arguing that it is no less so.

Corpus planning always has conscious or unconscious social engineering in mind. “Modernization” of the language is never just a socially neutral last effort, never a purely aesthetic or rational goal. Acceptance or rejection of corpus planning hinges not only on its linguistic felicity but also on the acceptance or rejection of the overt or covert social engineering with which it is inevitably associated in the minds of the authorities and of the public (Fishman, 2000:50).

While they are often classified as different categories and treated separately theoretically, it is now widely recognised that they are inseparable and that there is, and should be, a close relationship between the two (Clyne, 1997a). ‘Status planning without adequate corpus follow-up results in an inability to put the target language to use. Corpus planning without adequate status implementation becomes an empty, socially meaningless linguistic same (Fishman, 2000:44)’.

No less politically driven is the concept of ‘acquisition planning’, formalised by Cooper (1989), who argued that when planning is concerned with increasing a language’s uses, it is part of status planning but that when it is concerned with increasing the number of language users, a separate category is needed. Acquisition planning can, for example, refer to families planning how to pass on languages to their children, but most often focuses on the place of languages in the education system. This process is most commonly referred to as ‘language-in-education planning’ and is perhaps the most common expression of language planning worldwide (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997). Language-in-education planning and policies affect the teaching of languages within the education system and are often seen as the ‘most potent resource for bringing about language change’ (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997:122). Any decision made at the educational
level can have a significant impact on languages chosen as the medium of education or as part of a curriculum, as well as for those languages excluded from such processes (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997). Deciding which second languages are to be taught in the education system can also have repercussions for local communities, even impacting on global uses of language as the pervasiveness of the English language demonstrates.

In criticism of the term ‘language-in-education’, Payne (2006) argues that it is somewhat problematic in that it does not distinguish between languages as a medium of education or as a second (or third, etc) language studied as a subject in the curriculum, nor does it distinguish between varying functions of language learning such as first language or second language (although these are not discrete categories in themselves). Language-in-education processes can also involve planning at a macro (governmental) level, or at a micro (school and community) level. The broadness of the term, however, is a reflection of the complexity of linguistic ecologies around the world. The ‘seemingly’ dichotomous and incompatible functions of languages study as 1) for the maintenance and development of a first language/s or 2) the learning of a second or ‘foreign’ language is not necessarily a problem with the terminology, but with the misconception amongst many involved in language planning and policy processes that languages can be viewed in this way. In this thesis, the boundaries of the term are defined, to a degree, in Section 2.2, which outlines what is unique to language study in the Australian context.

A fourth distinction in language planning theory is prestige planning. In examining the failure of the Soviet Union in their attempt in the 1920s and 1930s to raise the sociocultural level of many of the Soviet Union’s small languages, Haarmann (1990) argues that a lack of prestige led to the direct failure of the Soviet attempts. The concept of prestige planning has been less developed and utilised than corpus, status and language-in-education planning but has received more consideration recently. For example, see Omar (1998). Ager (2005:1041), in particular, explores the concept of prestige or image planning in language planning and policy processes, arguing that status planning involves influencing the ‘real or concrete aspects of language use’, while prestige planning involves the ‘unreal or social-psychological aspects’.
A developing and important distinction in the field of language planning and policy is that of micro language planning. The primacy of government actions in language planning and policy processes and therefore, the location of agency within governments, have dominated much research in the field. However, as Baldauf (2006) outlines, more recent literature discusses agency at a micro level, amongst different communities, including language communities, schools and businesses. Baldauf (2006) differentiates between ‘macro planning’ where agency is retained at the macro level and implementation is carried out at the local level and ‘micro planning’ where agency and implementation are maintained at the local level (See the special edition of *Current Issues in Language Planning*, Volume 7, 2&3, 2006 for example studies). The importance of agency is noted throughout this thesis and discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

2.1.6 Language Planning Frameworks

While we have reviewed the historical development of LPP, criticisms of the field, and key terminology, it is also important to review the LPP frameworks that have been developed over many decades. These frameworks, as intimated in the criticisms of LPP, have changed from simple frameworks based on the ideas of neutrality and the primacy of linguistic variables, to comprehensive frameworks which recognise the complexity of variables and peoples which exert influence on LPP processes.

In the 1960s, Haugen (1966a) began developing a framework for four aspects of language development, namely ‘selection’, ‘codification’, ‘acceptance’ and ‘elaboration’, eventually incorporating Kloss’ (1969) concepts of status and corpus planning into his language planning framework. In Haugen’s model, selection and codification deal with the form of a language and focus on policy planning. Selection involves the identification of a language problem and the decision to give status to a given language by someone, or some organization, in a position in power. The codification of language typically involves the development of dictionaries and grammars, which tend to take on a prescriptive rather than a descriptive role (Haugen, 1983). Implementation and elaboration focus on the function of language or language cultivation. Implementation involves the promulgation of ideas or policy by those in a position of power, while elaboration involves the sustained development needed for modern languages.
While Haugen’s model incorporates status and corpus planning, it is essentially a corpus planning model. Lo Bianco (2001b:235) argues that the main deficiency in the Haugen model is that ‘it overly stresses the code at the expense of socio-political concerns and issues’ and that the ‘approach is internal to a linguistics/applied linguistics framework and can offer little to the more elusive processes of language politics.’ Kaplan & Baldauf (1997) argue that the language planning process does not necessarily follow Haugen’s model of selection, codification, implementation and elaboration. The language planning process, they argue, can begin at any point and it does not have to necessarily be either corpus or status driven.

Cooper (1984, 1989) took a different approach to developing a language planning model by examining four different frameworks from different disciplines in order to produce an accounting scheme for the study of language planning, proposing a detailed accounting scheme (Cooper, 1989, p. 89). In brief, the scheme asked the important questions of what actors, attempt to influence what behaviours, of which people, for what ends, under what conditions, by what means, through what decision-making process, with what effect. Lo Bianco (2001b:234) highlights that contrary to definitions that see language planning as a problem based exercise, Cooper’s framework views language planning and policies as ‘essentially non-linguistic issues and goals.’

Numerous other frameworks have been proposed based on the differing language planning contexts writers have addressed. Jernudd (1991, 1993) has proposed a different approach to language planning theory altogether, suggesting a language management approach, with a focus on discourse. Jernudd (1993:134) writes that the language management model,

represents a shift of focus from the concern of language planning concerned with finding optimal strategies for government-initiated action, to an interest in explaining how individuals manage language in communication, and uses this as the starting point for community-wide management.

Fishman (for example, 1974a, 1984, 1991, 1993, 1994, 2000, 2001) has also had a prominent presence in the LPP field for a number of decades, focusing on minority languages, language maintenance and shift, and the social contexts that surround these
issues. Drawing on work from other leading originators in the field such as Ferguson (1968) and Neustupný (1970/1974), Fishman (1974a) proposed a language planning model that addressed issues of national development and modernisation in the context of planning. Hornberger (1994) also draws on many of the preceding models to formulate a framework for language planning approaches and types, with an emphasis on literacy. Literacy development, writes Hornberger, faces many challenges in multilingual countries, where many people do not even speak the official language of the country. The challenge is to determine ‘which literacies to develop for what purpose (Hornberger, 1994:75)’.

More recent representations of the steps within the cycle of language planning have been developed by Radovanovic (2000) in specific relation to the Croatian and Serbian languages and Mac Donnacha (2000), whose model focuses on language reinforcement processes. Kaplan & Baldauf (1997:311) have taken a different approach. Rather than focusing on the ideal steps within LPP processes (although they have also developed a number of frameworks and typologies using this approach, see for example, Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997:50 and 124), they have detailed the numerous forces at work in a linguistic eco-system, including languages, the factors that impact on languages and the agencies and organisations that participate in language planning and policy making. An ecological approach to conceptualising the field and an ecological approach when undertaking language planning activities is an important concept which is explored further in Section 2.1.8.

While Cooper (1989) proposed an accounting scheme for the study of language planning, he argues that it is impossible to develop a theory of language planning, for a number of reasons.

It is unattainable, at least at our present level of competence, not only because language planning is such a complex activity, influenced by numerous factors – economic, ideological, political, etc. – and not only because it is directed toward so many different status, corpus, and acquisition goals, but more fundamentally because it is a tool in the service of so many different latent goals such as economic modernization, national integration, national liberation, imperial hegemony, racial, sexual, and economic equality, the maintenance of elites, and their replacement by new elites (Cooper, 1989:182).
At this stage, many of these frameworks propose an *ideal* approach to LPP processes, although there are a number of other important variables that strongly influence actual language planning and policy processes. In particular, the following section will address the question of who undertakes language planning and the development of language policies and their underlying motivations.

## 2.1.7 Who Does Language Planning and Why?

When examining some of the most important influences on LPP processes, it is important to ask the following questions, which all play a part in determining the development, implementation and success of language policies.

- Who undertakes or influences LPP processes?
- What are their motivations for doing so?
- What are the goals of policy?

Those who are involved in LPP processes, or the ‘actors’ as Cooper (1989) classifies them, are placed into four categories by Kaplan & Baldauf (1997:8-13).

1. **Governmental agencies** – government agencies have the ‘broadest scope, since government generally has the power to legislate and the ability to foster incentive structures (and disincentive structures) to enforce planning decisions’ (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997:5).
2. **Education agencies** - wherever official language policy activity has taken place, the education sector has been employed and often heavily depended upon, fulfilling six main functions:

   - To determine which languages are to be taught in the curriculum
   - To define the teacher supply
   - To determine what segment of the student population is to be exposed to language learning
   - To determine what methodologies will be employed in the system
   - To define assessment processes; and
   - To determine how to support all of this fiscally and physically.
3. **Quasi / Non-governmental organizations** – Around the world there are numerous organizations which engage in language planning, towards both multilingual and monolingual goals. This includes organizations that fulfil the functions of promoting, preserving, or modernising language, such as the Japan Foundation, The Alliance Française, the Instituto de Alta Cultura in Portugal, as well as more recently established language academies in countries such as Bangladesh, Egypt and Indonesia. This category also includes pressure groups such as the *U.S. English* organization in the United States; organizations in the religious sector such as the Summer Institute of Linguistics and the Language Teaching Mission of the Church of the Latter-Day saints; language education programs in multinational companies such as the Nippon Electric Company and IBM; and the business community in general including hospitals and local governments and courts.

4. **Other organizations / individuals** – the fourth category of ‘organisations and agencies involved in language policy formulation include those in which language planning is an accidental outcome of the primary function of the body’ (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997:12). These include organizations such as the United States Postal Service and Immigration and Naturalisation Service, and International Olympic Committee.

The actors in LPP processes can have a range of goals which can promote or restrict the use and development of languages. These goals can often be contradictory - supporting some languages while subjugating others. Baldauf (2005b:960) presents a comprehensive, but evolving framework for language planning goals, which outlines the numerous goals that status, corpus, language-in-education and prestige planning may aim to achieve. (See also, Kaplan & Baldauf, 2005). While this framework is comprehensive, it tends to avoid the more subtractive goals of language planning which include the subjugation of languages and peoples through the limitation of language use domains, punishment for the use of particular languages and the promotion of certain languages as superior or as representative of superior peoples. Ager (2001:1) addresses this problem by asking a vital question. ‘Why should communities and governments wish to influence language behaviour?’ Ager (2001) looks at the attitudes of
individuals, communities, and states, as well as multinational interests such as the EU, to explore several issues behind motivation.

Is governmental language policy simply a selfish pursuit of elitist advantage? What exactly are the conscious motives planners and policy-makers have for carrying out language-related actions, where the benefits, if indeed there are any, are likely to be long term? Are the motives for public policy related to the goals that ethnic, religious and linguistic communities adopt for their own language behaviour? Is there similarity between public policies and plans, the deliberate plans groups adopt for language use, and the ways individuals manage their own language behaviour? If so, what is it? (Ager, 2001:1-2)

Ager argues that motives for language planning are not always clear, openly stated or understandable. He explores the seven motives of identity, ideology, image creation, insecurity, inequality, integration with a group, and instrumental motives for advancement. This work represents another essential step in understanding factors and peoples that influence LPP processes and makes a strong contribution to the development of the theoretical field of LPP.

2.1.8 The Ecology of Language

As the conceptualisation of LPP broadens and deepens, the notion of the ‘ecology of language’ is playing an increasingly important role in the field and is a crucial concept for this thesis. The ecology of language is a term that was popularised by Einar Haugen (1972) and it has since diverged into two branches:

1. Ecology as a metaphor: where biological terms and concepts are ‘transferred to languages e.g. environment, conservation, interaction and language world system’ (Fill, 2001:45)

2. Language and environmental problems: where ‘the role of languages in the development and aggravation of environmental (and other societal) problems is investigated; linguistic research is advocated as a factor in their possible solution’ (Fill, 2001:45).

Haugen’s (1972) approach, one that has been widely applied to the language planning field, is the concept of ecology as a metaphor. Haugen argued that descriptions of
languages rarely provided any information about the social status and function of the languages. For Haugen (1972:323), ‘The true environment of a language is the society that uses it as one of its codes’ and therefore, ‘language ecology may be defined as the study of interactions between any given language and its environment’. Haugen’s arguments have found many supporters.

According to Mühlhäusler (1996:209), an ecological approach to language planning views human communication as a ‘complex socio-historical, spatial and interpersonal ecology’, while aiming to strengthen the links between the differing needs of speech groups, as well as the habitat for the languages within and between a community and its languages.

Much language planning and policy has been based on the concept of one state, one language - an impossible concept considering that there are around 190 independent states in the world, while there are over 5,000 ethnic groups, as well as thousands of living languages. Many states refuse to even acknowledge minorities at all (Kymlicka, 1995). Kaplan & Baldauf (1997) also highlight that language planning has tended to be seen as any activity that involves only one language and ‘has largely ignored the interaction of multiple languages in a community and multiple non-linguistic factors – that is, the total ecology of the linguistic environment,’ when in fact it is impossible to limit any planning activity to one language. While aspects of a language or of language planning can be isolated for the purposes of study or discussion, Kaplan & Baldauf (1997) highlight that in reality, the impact of any decision made cannot be seen to be limited to that one aspect, but that because language is always ‘embedded in a larger context...the language plan may cause a ripple effect in proximate communities, nation-states, across a region (or in other smaller or larger entities).’

Kaplan & Baldauf (1997) argue that before we can develop a functional model of language planning we need to develop a fuller understanding of the forces at work in a linguistic ecosystem. Any such plan needs to be responsive to the idea that if ‘any of the forces acting on the system are modified, the whole system is modified’ (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997:318). This paradigm is the standard adopted by the journal Current Issues in Language Planning, established in 1999, of which Kaplan and Baldauf are editors. Kaplan & Baldauf (2000:139) argue that the study of a language ecology should
provide information on ‘the ripple effects of doing anything to any language or set of languages within a given polity.’ They therefore propose a set of questions to act as a guideline to the comprehensive exploration of language ecologies around the world. These questions are set under the headings of language profile, language spread, language policy and planning, and language maintenance and prospects. The journal has published a small number of comprehensive studies to date including an examination of the language situation in Hungary (Medgyes & Miklósy, 2000), South Africa (Kamwangamalu, 2001), Vanuatu (Crowley, 2000), and Côte d’Ivoire (Djité, 2000). Each study, while addressing the main questions within the journal’s suggested outline, ultimately highlight the different complexities within each situation including the role of religion and religious languages, colonial influences, ethnicity, language attitudes, the media, and language planning agencies, within each eco-system.

While we are yet to discuss the Australian language-in-education context (see Section 2.2), the belief in an ecological approach to language planning and language policies represents a central tenet of this thesis – that there are numerous variables at play which need to be accounted for before we can develop a fuller understanding of language-in-education processes. This tenet is reflected in the research methodology outlined in Chapter 3 and throughout the discussion in this thesis of the Australian language-in-education ecology.

2.1.9 Recent Developments in LPP

Finally, in reviewing the field of LPP, it is important to highlight the most recent developments in the field, particularly as interest in language and its uses broadens across disciplines. Languages and language policy are not only of interest to the fields of linguistics, applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, but to broader disciplines such as sociology, education, and increasingly economics and politics as well. New challenges for the field lie in the widening interest in language and its role in matters such as citizenship, immigration, moral theory and political, and minority rights (from a political theory perspective). There can be significant differences between how LPP and its processes are viewed. For example, in a chapter in Language Rights and Political Theory (Kymlicka & Patten, 2003), May (2003) critiques what he sees as misconceptions and misrepresentations of language and society in political theory, arguing for example, that some political theorists take language out of context, ignoring
important socio-cultural and political contexts, or that they sanitise arguments by representing language issues as historically unproblematic. Carens (2000) finds arguments surrounding the inevitability of privileging certain languages and the necessity of a common language for political stability an unfairly absolutist view in a world where numerous countries operate with more than one official language (see also, Kymlicka, 2001; Kymlicka & Patten, 2003).

More positively, Schmidt (2006) outlines the important contribution that political theory can make to the field of language policy, particularly when considering topics such as equality/inequality, multicultural citizenship and identity (involving the notion of nation-state/country rather than identity at an individual level).

Other academics have challenged the conceptualisation of LPP. Schiffman (1996, 2006) for example, argues that greater consideration needs to be given to the notion of language policy as a predominantly social construct – a conceptualisation of language policy that has often been minimised or ignored in policy frameworks. Schiffman (1996:277) contends that ‘language policy is rooted in linguistic culture’, coining the term ‘linguistic culture’. He argues that that language policy,

may consist of various elements of an explicit nature – juridical, judicial, administrative, constitutional and/or legal language may be extant in some jurisdictions, but whether or not a polity has such explicit text, policy as a cultural construct rests primarily on other conceptual elements – belief systems, attitudes, myths – the whole complex that we are referring to as linguistic culture, which is the sum totality of ideas, values, beliefs, attitudes, prejudices, religious structures, and all the other cultural ‘baggage’ that speakers bring to their dealings with language from their background (Schiffman, 1996:277).

Schiffman’s notion of linguistic culture is noted throughout the thesis and discussed in further detail in Chapter 8.

Shohamy (2006), in her examination of the issues at play in linguistic ecologies, as illustrated through the situation in Israel, also argues for a new conceptualisation of LPP that takes into account all mechanisms involved in LPP processes, including social and cultural constructs.
A strong case can be made for the formulation of a new, expanded kind of language policy which would take into account the many and varied mechanisms involved in the creation of language practices. These mechanisms include rules and regulations, language educational policies, language tests, language in the public space as well as ideologies, myths, propaganda and coercion (Shohamy, 2006:56).

As well as a call for the greater recognition of LPP processes as cultural constructs, it is also widely recognised that LPP processes are political and often formed without input from community members or learners of languages. Rather, they tend to reflect the views of an elite few within government (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997:Chps 2 & 7 and Kaplan & Baldauf, 2005 contain details of examples in practice). While the policy process is often top-down in nature, Christ (1997) highlights the importance of understanding the two-way relationship between policy and agency and the role schools, parents and students play in aiding or hindering the implementation of policy, as will be explored in this thesis.

… attention must be paid to the question of whether and to what extent educational policy measures…serve to strengthen or even create attitudes towards language…language attitudes possess their own political dimensions – a fact of which educational policy needs to take productive cognisance (Christ, 1997:9-10).

It is through the continued work of academics and informed actions of agents of language change, that progress can be made to ensure that developments in the field are not simply confined to certain disciplines and that a greater understanding of the complexities involved in successful language planning and policy development permeates and influences all relevant academic fields and agents of LPP processes.

2.2 The Australian Context

Before exploring the Australian LPP context in depth, it is helpful to understand how it differs in general from other LLP contexts around the world, as this impacts greatly upon the LPP issues Australia faces. There are six important distinctions that can be made to help define the Australian context in relation to other LPP contexts.
1. Australia is an immigration country – Settler or New World countries such as Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada are distinguished by their immigration history. While immigration is increasingly becoming a pertinent issue for countries worldwide, Australia has been based on and greatly influenced by immigration. This has implications for the study of languages in the school system, including community languages, as well as for the provision of services in languages other than English.

2. English is the national language and lingua franca of Australia – In many non-English speaking countries, English has a significant influence on second language instruction, which in turn impacts on the study of minority languages. For example, in Japan, it is compulsory to study a ‘foreign’ language for six years in high schools, and almost 100% of students study English. This reduces the space for the study of indigenous Ainu or Ryukyuan languages, community languages such as Korean, Spanish and Portuguese¹, or regional Asian languages (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2003; Oda, 2003). In Australia, where English is the dominant language, there is the question of which language/s to study in the school system, with a large range of languages to choose from. For example, in 2006, students across Australia could choose from nearly 50 languages in the education systems and independent schools.

3. Australia has no de jure official language - In contrast, New Zealand and Canada have two official languages - English and Maori in New Zealand and English and French in Canada. While English is still dominant in both these countries, national through to local language policies, and language-in-education policies are greatly influenced by the second official language (Benton, 1996;

¹ At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Japanese government promoted a migration program for Japanese nationals to move to a number of locations throughout South America, predominantly to Brazil, Argentina and Peru, with the promise of fertile land for agricultural development. In more recent years, the Japanese government have begun a program of repatriation of descendents of these migrants. This has resulted in a new minority group in Japan – Portuguese and Spanish speakers of Japanese ancestry, many of whom do not speak Japanese (For example, according to the Japanese ministry of foreign affairs, in 1998 there were an estimated 222,217 Japanese Brazilians working in Japan).
In Australia, the lack of an official language, arguably, broadens the choice of language/s in the education system.

4. Australia does not have a dominant community language group – By contrast, despite the United States being home to a multitude of languages, Spanish is the dominant community/heritage language, with 10.7% of the population of the US speaking Spanish as the preferred language at home (Shin & Bruno, 2003). In Australia, the largest community language, Italian, represents only around 2% of Australians. There is no one community language that dominates in the curriculum, although with new waves of migration, this could possibly change. Speakers of the Chinese languages – Mandarin and Cantonese, for example, now outnumber speakers of Italian.

It is also important to note the place of indigenous languages in Australia, whose colonial history often makes it appear as if English was the original language of the country. In fact hundreds of indigenous languages were spoken in Australia before colonisation. The domination of English has resulted in the elimination of many indigenous languages and the devaluing of the remaining indigenous languages. Indigenous Australians languages are failing to thrive through limited support for the development and study of the languages and a continual policy focus on English and English literacy in the education system, amongst other variables.

5. In Australia, there are no strong English-only lobby groups. For example, in the United States strong English language lobby groups such as U.S. English and English Only are working for English to be legislated as the official language of the country. Although this has not happened to date, over a third of states have legislated to make English the official state language. These organizations also work towards restricting the rights of Americans from a non-English speaking background to maintain and develop their languages (Jasso-Aguilar, 1999). Australia, on the other hand, has generally had policies that are very supportive of community language groups and their linguistic and cultural rights.

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2 Figures for 2000, from US census data, including Americans aged 5 and over.
3 Figures for 2001, from ABS figures, including Australians from age 0.
6. Australia is a federation. When the six colonies of Australia became a federation in 1901, legislative powers were divided between state and federal governments. Education was the responsibility of state and territory governments until 1974 when the federal government assumed responsibility for tertiary education. Pre-school, primary and secondary education however, remained the responsibility of state and territory governments\(^4\). Although we can split the educational responsibilities of federal and state governments as such, both levels of government are relatively interdependent in regard to policymaking and implementation. At the state level, each state produces their own language-in-education policies and therefore, there are eight different language-in-education policies in Australia. However, the federal government provides a large percentage of the funding for education and can therefore try to strategically influence education policy through monetary means (Mackenzie, 2001:79-80).

This division of power can also be seen in the US, where the federal government has not legislated on the official language of the country. This has led, as noted in point 5, to some states legislating on the issue themselves, declaring English as the official language of the state.

The important factors to note for Australia is that, while there is an implicit national language, there is no official language/s or dominant community language group that strongly influences language study. English is the predominant language across Australia so it does not monopolise second/foreign/community language study. Overall, Australian students have a large degree of choice in relation to language study, although they are not necessarily widely available and certain languages are promoted above others, as will be explored throughout the remainder of Section 2.2.

\(^4\) In actuality, most powers are concurrent. That is, state and territory governments can legislate in regards to education as long as they do not contradict any existing federal legislation. Also, it is important to note that there are six states and two territories in Australia; the differentiation between a state and territory lies in its constitutional standing. The term ‘state’ will be used to refer to both states and territories in this thesis.
2.2.1 The History of LPP in Australia

Australia has long been a multilingual country. By the second half of the nineteenth century, having been established as a colony, and on the verge of becoming a federation, Australian society consisted of a gathering of diverse cultural and linguistic communities - indigenous communities, and settlers and convicts, who came not only from Great Britain, but Africa, Asia, Europe and South America. While colonisation of Australia had resulted in the subjugation of indigenous communities and their languages, by the 1860s, numerous immigrant languages has been brought to Australia, with Irish, German, Chinese, Gaelic, Welsh, French, the Scandinavian languages and Italian comprising the largest community languages at the time. According to the 1861 census, Chinese was the largest community language, with 38,742 speakers, while German was the next largest with 27,599 speakers. Bilingual education was practiced from the 1850s onwards, and while it was aimed at particular ethnic and/or religious groups, some bilingual schools, noted for their high level of education, attracted large numbers of students from English speaking families (Clyne, 1991b:6-11). By the turn of the century, there were over 100 bilingual schools and numerous community language newspapers operating (Clyne, 1991b).

However, the birth of the federation and the worsening situation between Germany and Great Britain leading up to the First World War saw Australia identifying with the strength of the British Empire. Racism against Asians in particular led to ‘Asia’ and ‘Asians’ serving as a negative influence for Australian immigration policy. Asian migration was initially stemmed through prohibitive entry taxes for Asians, with Asian migration eventually barred outright through the Immigration Restriction act of 1901, eventually known as the White Australia policy (Markey, 1982). Increasing xenophobia and British patriotism during the First and Second World Wars, also saw the closure of bilingual schools, or a shift to English only education. In a short period of time, Australia had moved from a period of tolerance to an exclusionary agenda, favouring white settlers and English monolingualism (Clyne, 1991b, 1991c).

Following the Second World War, the Australian government encouraged mass migration of unskilled European migrants to Australia for two reasons - to build up secondary industry in Australia, and to populate Australia as protection against an invasion from Asia. While European migrants were encouraged to come to Australia,
the government also encouraged them to forget their own cultures and languages and assimilate into Australian society as quickly as possible (Clyne, 1991b). However, such a significant population change brought with it major social upheaval and a struggle began for the construction of a new Australia identity. What was the essence of Australian identity? In 1969 Minister for Immigration, Billy Sneddon stated, ‘We must have a single culture. We do not want pluralism’ (Clyne, 1991c:83). However, in the late 1960s and 1970s, Australia started to emerge from its history of assimilation and monolingualism. Lobbying for the development of multicultural policies was influenced by the sheer number of new arrivals, and ‘their hard won accession to positions of some authority in the community and perhaps a realisation that they might be a political constituency’ (Herriman, 1996:41).

In the late 1970s, Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser commissioned the Galbally report (Galbally, 1978) to address the many post-arrival problems that immigrants faced. The author of the report, Frank Galbally⁵, accentuated the need to ensure that non-fluent speakers of English were not disadvantaged, while emphasising the need to improve English and increase funding for English programmes. The report also highlighted the need to value and preserve the linguistic and cultural rights of minorities in Australia, and urged the government to instigate multicultural policies to ‘…encourage social harmony and enrichment within an ethnically diverse society’ (Djité, 1994:8).

In 1978, nine years after Minister Sneddon’s remarks, Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser imparted a new political philosophy, ‘Australia is at a critical stage in developing a cohesive, united, multicultural nation…(The government) will foster the retention of the cultural heritage of different ethnic groups and promote intercultural understanding’ (Clyne, 1991c:83).

2.2.2 Language-in-Education Policy

As well as fundamentally changing the shape of Australian society, migration also impacted on the Australian education system. In the 1960s, language study in schools and universities revolved around French. In 1964, 75% of language students were studying French, with the next most widely taught languages, German and Latin,

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⁵ Frank Galbally was a barrister who chaired a number of federal government migrant bodies and was famed, among other things, for his advocacy work for migrants.
accounting for 16% and 10% of students respectively (Bonyhady, 1965). With the influx of European languages into the Australian community due to migration, heated arguments developed around who language study in the education system was for and whose needs were to be addressed (Ozolins, 1993). Up until the 1970s, language study in the education system was ‘conceptualized and actualised strictly as “foreign language” teaching’ which limited language study mainly to French and when other languages were taught, care was taken to ensure that they were not taught in schools which contained sizeable communities speaking the language (Clyne, Fernandez, Chen, & Summo-O'Connell, 1997:1).

Tensions developed first between ‘French’ and ‘Other’ languages as the study of French declined. By the end of the 1970s, after persistent lobbying by community groups and language teachers, several European languages gained a more permanent position in the Victorian education system when they were put in place as matriculation subjects. Other states slowly followed suit (Ozolins, 1993:132). This progress however, shifted tensions to a new dichotomy of ‘foreign’ and ‘community’ languages. There was a concerted effort to ensure that students from a non-English speaking background did not have any ‘unfair advantage’ by studying community languages, and up until the mid 1960s, students perceived to have a background in a language were penalised in the oral and written components of the final examinations to ensure standardization between candidates. This unwritten rule was eventually dismissed as discriminatory by the Victorian Universities and Schools Examination Board and abandoned (Clyne et al., 1997). A long-standing division rose between the two competing goals of ‘equality (economic- or citizenship oriented national language instruction) versus identity (culture oriented first language development)’ (Lo Bianco, 2003:287). This dichotomy between equality and identity separates the needs of Australians in terms of 1) cultural enrichment and the development of linguistic skills, and 2) the needs of migrants to maximise their educational possibilities, to develop their English skills, and to develop

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6 These figures total over 100% as students who excelled at French could take up other languages such as Latin or German as well.

7 For example, see Quinn (1989), Gatt-Rutter & Cavallaro (1991), Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (1986), Clyne (1964; 1982), and Smolicz (1980).

8 In Victoria in the 1970s, Modern Greek, Czech, Latvian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Ukrainian, Hungarian and Turkish became available as Year 12 or matriculation subjects (Ozolins, 1993).
their first or home language. In the Australian context, both goals of equality and identity are equally important, and although they are often portrayed as such, not necessarily conflicting.

2.2.3 Asian Language Study in Australia

Asian languages however, enjoyed less recognition and success in the education system. Japanese was introduced to Sydney University as early as 1917 and a number of ‘Oriental studies’ departments were established at universities in Australia looking at the languages, histories and cultures of the region (Milner, 1999). Milner (1999) notes however, that the focus of these departments was largely China and Japan, with other areas such as Indonesia, India and the Middle East left to other sections of the universities. Within the school system, the uptake of Asian languages was minimal and in 1964, when 40% of students were studying a foreign language at matriculation, less than 2% of students were studying an Asian language (Bonyhady, 1965).

Concern grew within diplomatic circles and government about the lack of Asian linguistics skills in the Department of External Affairs in general (Ozolins, 1993:100-103); a concern amplified by the increasing instability in the Asia-pacific region, including the Vietnam War and revolution in Indonesia (Mackenzie, 2001). This in turn, led to the federal government commissioning the Report by the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on the Teaching of Asian Languages and Cultures in Australia (Auchmuty, 1970)⁹. The report expressed concern with the disparity between Asian and European languages, the lack of systematic study of Asia in the education system, and the inadequate supply of Asian language teachers and teaching materials. The report also claimed that a vast majority of Australians were interested in Asian studies becoming part of the educational curriculum.

Kamada (1994) argues the biggest problem with the Auchmuty report was that the assertion that a vast majority of Australians were interested in Asian studies was completely without foundation. Kamada (1994) also argues the report perpetuated views of Asia that did little to advance the cause of Asian languages in Australia. The security of Australia’s future in Asia was taken for granted and the report focused

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⁹ The committee was chaired by J.J. Auchmuty, a historian who became the first Vice Chancellor of the University of Newcastle.
primarily on the contribution Australia could make to Asia, rather than on any influence Asia would have on Australia. Although, as an outcome of the report, the Asian Studies Co-ordination Committee was set up in 1972 within the education department, the committee did little to broaden the interest in Asian languages, or influence policy initiatives or developments mainly because it was only charged with developing teaching materials for Asian languages (Kamada, 1994).

With Asian languages gaining little ground within the education system, the Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA) initiated the next major push in the 1970s. ASAA was and is an association of professionals, predominantly academics, with an interest or speciality in Asia or a region of Asia. This includes the fields of politics, history, linguistics, arts and music, among others. At the time of the push in the 1970s, the aim of ASAA was,

> to join together all Asianists in Australia not only those involved in tertiary studies, but primary, secondary education, government, people in the Arts, people in the media, and to bring an awareness and interest in Asia to the general Australian community (King, 1997:Chp 2:2).

ASAA focused largely on lobbying the government and community on behalf of scholars and teachers in the field of Asian studies. In 1980, Stephen FitzGerald, Australia’s first ambassador to China, chaired an ASAA committee looking at Asia in Australia, and produced the report *Asia in Australian Education* (FitzGerald & Drysdale, 1980). Unlike Auchmuty’s report, the FitzGerald report acknowledged that the Australian public was yet to realise the importance of Asian studies and languages in the curriculum. The report greatly emphasised Asia’s influence on Australian life, and the economic, strategic and political significance of Asia for Australia’s future, recommending the establishment of a council to oversee the promotion of Asian studies and languages in Australia (Kamada, 1994).

ASAA was deeply concerned with what they perceived as a sense of competition between European and Asian languages and lobbied hard to increase the position of Asian studies and languages in the education system, particularly when a Senate committee was set up to investigate the possibility of a national language policy for Australia (King, 1997:Chp 1).
It is important to note here that the term ‘Asia’ is problematic and needs to be deconstructed, particularly within the Australian context. Section 2.4 addresses this issue and discusses the use of the term ‘Asia’ in this thesis.

2.2.4 Inquiries into a National Policy on Languages

The initial push for a national policy on languages came from a coalition of Aboriginal and deaf community groups, academics, and teaching professionals among others, and built on a movement by second generations for the greater acceptance and accommodation of their languages in cultures after years of assimilation-based policies (Clyne, 1991a). Interests were diverse but centred around two divergent arguments that are still in play today – equality for minorities and an opportunity for the mainstream to study second languages and cultures (Djité, 1994).

On 25th May 1982, the Australian government formally acknowledged the need for a language policy and a Senate committee was set up to investigate the viability of a language policy (Herriman, 1996). The committee was bipartisan with an equal number of members from each of the major parties. After 18 months of hearings, the report was tabled in December 1984, containing hearings from 94 witnesses and 241 submissions from a broad cross section of Australian society including government departments, community groups, pressure groups such as PLANLangPOL and universities (Clyne, 1997b).

ASAA’s submission to the Senate inquiry into a national languages policy recommended that a national council be set up to develop Asian language study, but was rejected on the grounds that it would create a bias towards Asian languages (Ozolins, 1984). The Senate Committee’s report criticised the ‘tendency to categorise languages taught in schools into invidious categories - ‘Asian’, ‘migrant’, ‘traditional

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10 PLANLangPOL was established in 1981 and consisted of the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia, the Australian Linguistics Society, the Aboriginal Languages Association, the Australian Federation of Modern Languages Teachers Association, and the Australasian Universities Languages and Literatures Association.

11 Specialist submissions in general received little support in the inquiry (Kipp, Clyne, & Pauwels, 1995:3; Ozolins, 1993:236-9).
foreign languages’, etc. – which in the Committee’s view had obscured rationale debate on language learning’ (Ozolins, 1985:296).

The final Senate report supported no such divisions, but provided four guiding principles for the development of a languages policy:

1. Competence in English
2. Maintenance and development in languages other than English
3. Provision of services in languages other than English
4. Opportunities for learning second languages (Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts, 1984)

ASAA had not been deterred by the Senate committee’s rejection of the idea of a national body for the promotion of Asian languages, eventually succeeding in this endeavour by directly lobbying the federal government (see King, 1997:Chp 1). The Asian Studies Council (ASC), a national council for the promotion of Asian studies and languages in the education system, was established in 1986 (King, 1997), although, after all their lobbying, there was not a representative of ASAA on the Council (King, 1997). The council was chaired by Stephen FitzGerald, who was Australia’s first ambassador to China, with the remaining eight members of the committee incorporating representatives from the business, union, education and government sectors. Among other activities, they produced the National Strategy for the Study of Asia in Australia (ASC, 1988). With the increasing importance of economic rationalism in political debates at the time, the importance of economic and pragmatic reasoning in regard Australia’s future dominated the National Strategy; ‘The proper study of Asia and its languages is about national survival in an intensely competitive world’ (ASC, 1988:2).

While economics dominated the National Strategy, ASAA committee member Elaine McKay comments that the economic emphasis was widely criticised within the ASAA membership, along with ‘the failure of the document to acknowledge the significance of Asians in Australia, the emphasis on languages studies at the expense of Asian studies, the near exclusion of South Asia, and an approach to educational change and development that failed to recognise the time taken to train suitable teachers’ (King, 1997:Chapter 3.4). While ASAA realised that it had promoted Asian Studies and
languages on an economic basis, concern was also expressed about the integrity of Asian studies and the over-emphasis on market reasoning at the expense of other arguments in support of Asian studies and languages (King, 1997). Mackenzie (2001:97) also notes some attempts at intellectual rather than economic argumentation in the National Strategy. However, it was the economic argument that was predominantly pursued in the end.

2.2.5 Developments in National Languages Policies

In 1987, under the auspices of the Department of Education, Joseph Lo Bianco (1987) authored the National Languages Policy (NLP) based on the recommendations of the Senate Committee inquiry into language policy. The NLP acknowledged both the internal and external importance of languages for Australia. The external importance of languages lies in their significance outside Australia, for example, as important languages for trade, or for regional or global communication, while the internal importance of languages lies in their significance as community languages. The NLP reflected the influence of both social and economic interests.

However, Henderson (2003:31) writes that the social focus of the NLP, ‘frustrated the Asian lobby and reinforced the hiatus in the move to prioritise Asian languages and cultures’, as well as highlighting the predominantly economic drive for the study of Asian languages. Even though the White Australia policy had ceased in the early 1970s and Asian immigration was steadily increasing, Asian languages as community languages in Australia were not on the agenda. The focus was clearly on the economic importance of Asia for Australia.

The economic rationalism that was strongly driving the push for Asian languages was also directly impacting on the newly developed NLP. Lo Bianco (1990) writes that by early 1988, government rhetoric was already pointing towards the economic rationalisation of the LPP process and the sophisticated rationale of the NLP, balancing both social and economic issues, changed drastically with the introduction of its successor, Australia’s Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) (Dawkins, 1991). John Dawkins came from an economics background and was a politician with the Labor party. He was Minister for Trade, Minister for Employment, Education and Training
and then became Treasurer in the federal Keating government in 1991, the year the report was released.

The original green paper which preceded the *ALLP* caused an immense concern for many language advocates, particularly due to its title *The language of Australia*. Numerous objections were lodged and while the final policy supported the study of a broad range of languages, Dawkins’ made his intentions clear. At the press conference launch of the new policy, he stated, ‘So I want to emphasise that English language education, English language training, is by far in a way the most important part of this policy document’ (Moore, 1995:13). Dawkins was concerned with illiteracy, Aboriginal literacy in English, and workplace and school literacy. Subsequent to the ALLP, several other language policies have been released at the national level (See Section 2.2.6 for a discussion of the NALSAS policy), although the focus has been almost entirely on English literacy. The *National Collaborative Adult English Language and Literacy Strategy* (Australia. DEETYA, 1996) narrowed adult language issues into a labour market focus (Moore, 2001). The government also released *Survey of Aspects of Literacy* (McLennon, 1997), *Mapping Literacy Achievements* (ACER, Masters, & Forster, 1997), and *Literacy Standards in Australia* (Masters, Forster, & ACER, 1997), all addressing adult and child literacy and leading to an extended focus on English literacy. This, argues Hammond (1998) contributed to the perception that there was a literacy crisis in Australia and set the context for the development of the 1998 Commonwealth policy *Literacy for All: The challenge for Australian schools* (Australia. DEETYA, 1998). While problems and benefits of this focus on literacy have been widely documented (See, for example, Castleton, 2000; Hammond, 1999; Lo Bianco, 1999; Lo Bianco, Bryant, & Baldauf, 1997; Moore, 2001; Wickert, 1997), the focus on English literacy has weakened the policy position for the study of languages other than English within schools.

While there has been a greater focus on English at the national policy level, it must be noted that state governments have been able to develop state-level language-in-

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education policies. Each state has a different policy, some of which are more expansive than others (See Section 3.2).

Returning to the ALLP, Dawkins was also concerned with the lack of regional language competence, having been publicly supportive of a greater focus on Asian languages before the release of the policy (Ozolins, 1993), stating that ‘Australia’s location in the Asia-Pacific region and our patterns of trade should continue to be a factor in this selection of priorities’ (Dawkins, 1991:15).

2.2.6 The NALSAS Policy
The ALLP was followed by the economically driven NALSAS program which developed from a report titled Asian Languages and Australia’s Economic Future (Rudd, 1994). The report was presented to and adopted by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 1992. COAG is the peak intergovernmental body between state/territory and federal leaders, established to facilitate intergovernmental cooperation on issues of national economic significance. The report supported the belief that Australia’s economic success depended on a greater economic interaction with the Asian region but, it was argued in the report, Australia lacked the appropriate export culture, cooperative attitudes, and Asia knowledge necessary to ensure Australia’s economic future. It was therefore determined that a schools based program was most appropriate to instigate the changes necessary for Australia’s future economic success in Asia. The NALSAS program chose four Asian languages for prioritisation in the education system, Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean, based on the prediction by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade that they would be the languages spoken by Australia’s four largest trading partners in 2014 (Rudd, 1994).

Mackenzie’s (2001) analysis of the NALSAS policy included extensive interviews with Kevin Rudd, the author of the report Asian Languages and Australia's Economic Future, along with several other members of the Queensland government who were involved in the development of the policy (among others). At the time the Rudd report was released, Kevin Rudd was Director General of the Office of Cabinet in Queensland. He was arguably the most powerful bureaucrat in the state at the time (Stuart, 2007). He had also worked for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in several overseas postings, including China. He is a fluent speaker of Mandarin and highly supportive of greater
economic and cultural interaction with the Asia-Pacific region. Rudd chose to push the NALSAS program through COAG, an unusual forum for an educational policy, due to the superior political power of the forum. He felt the only way to ensure agreement for a national program such as the NALSAS program, amongst all states and territories, was to utilise COAG rather than the less powerful, but more relevant Ministerial Education Council. Also, Rudd had wanted to avoid any explicit references to multiculturalism, a fundamental motivation of the NLP (Mackenzie, 2004). Rudd believed that,

The only way you would get the Prime Minister, Premiers and Treasurers across the nation to address a new priority program on Asian languages and studies was to articulate the argument in terms of it servicing Australia’s long-term economic performance and not as an expression of a pre-existing policy of multiculturalism (Mackenzie, 2004:374).

Mackenzie (2004:380) writes,

COAG played an influential role in the policy process because of its national economic reform agenda, its sheer political power and thus its capacity to fast-track Rudd’s proposal. It was a powerful policy venue and sympathetic to the economic policy image that Rudd crafted.

From a political perspective, Mackenzie (2001) praises the NALSAS policy as an example of entrepreneurial policy-making. Henderson (2003:23) also praises the policy and writes that the ‘Rudd Report’s ambitious long-term plan, aimed at producing an Asia-literate generation to boost Australia’s international and regional economic performance, was unprecedented.’

From a language learning perspective, the NALSAS policy and its underlying theory of economic rationalism have been widely criticised for a number of reasons, many of which are addressed in this thesis. It distinguished itself from the NLP in that it was a top-down policy based on the beliefs of an elite few; it was concerned only with the teaching of four Asian languages; it was targeted at students from an English speaking
background\textsuperscript{13}, therefore divorcing itself from the sociocultural and sociolinguistic realities of Australian society and it was pursued through an economic policy forum rather than through an educational policy forum. It was also criticised for many other reasons, including,

- Problems with 1) economic rationalism as a basis for policy and 2) the belief that economic benefit will come directly from studying Asia and its languages;
- The lack of support for Asian languages other than the four prioritised as well as all other non-Asian languages;
- The difficulty for teachers to implement the ideas at a school level, as well as a lack of teacher supply;
- The lack of reference to Asian language communities in Australia or to building upon the skills of Asian Australians;
- The belief that foreign and domestic cultural interests can be separated;
- The sidelining of social and cultural arguments, and
- The lack of public consultation behind the policy

(For example, Clyne, 1997b; Hill & Thomas, 1998; Liddicoat, 1996; Lo Bianco, 2000, 2002a; Milner, 1999; Orton, 1995; Reeves, 1992; Williamson-Fien, 1994).

Others have criticised fuzzy concepts such as ‘Asia literacy,’ and ‘Asian studies’, along with what ‘Asia’ actually is, and whose Asia is to be represented (For example, Milner, 1999; Viviani, 1991; Williamson-Fien, 1994). These issues will be discussed further in Section 2.4.

Although the policy was widely criticised within language and education disciplines, the NALSAS program has undoubtedly provided a much-needed financial and image-related boost for Asian languages study. In theory, the extra funding for Asian languages could have resulted in greater support for other languages as well, although this will be discussed further in Section 7.3. Developing a greater understanding of the impact of the NALSAS policy in the school system comprises an important part of this research.

\textsuperscript{13} Stakeholder interview with Prof. Colin Mackerras, (First) Chairman of the NALSAS committee, 14\textsuperscript{th} October, 2004.
2.3 Federalism and Education in Australia

In Section 2.2, we noted the role of federalism in shaping language planning and policy outcomes in Australia. The remainder of the section has clearly demonstrated the interplay between federal and state policy-making. For example, pressure from numerous professional and community groups led to the government establishing a Senate committee to examine the feasibility of a language policy for Australia. Federal action on the recommendations was slow, with some states paving the way with their own language policies. In time, the federal government responded, resulting in the NLP. This federal policy, in turn, served as an impetus for states that had not yet developed language policies. The NALSAS policy serves as another example. It was a top-down policy that gave specific funding for Asian languages. The federal policy forum, COAG, was utilised to garner support from all states and territories for the implementation of the NALSAS program in government education systems.

Currently there is a lack of clear language policy at a federal level, although there is wide agreement that one is required (Dabelstein, 2002; Le Duff, 2002; Lo Bianco, 2002b; Russell, 2003; The Evaluation Team Faculty of Asian Studies The Australian National University, 1998). Lo Bianco (2001a) argues that the Howard Liberal-National Coalition government has an ‘anti-policy’ stance in regard to multicultural and language policies. As a result, most language related policy is currently formulated and implemented at a state level.

2.3.1 Education systems

Education in Australia is provided by three different systems –government, Catholic and independent schools. Each system is governed by its own educational authority. In Victoria, for example, this includes the Department of Education and Training (DE&T)14, the Catholic Education Office (CEO) and the Association of Independent Schools Victoria (AISV). The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) is a body that governs Year 11 and 12 assessments for all education systems. In NSW, the equivalent bodies are the NSW Department of Education and Training (DE&T), the Catholic Education Office (CEO) and the Association of Independent

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14 From December 2006, DE&T was renamed DoE. The term DE&T is used throughout this thesis.
Schools NSW (AISNSW). The Board of Studies (BOS) is the equivalent assessment authority in NSW\textsuperscript{15}.

There are two further differences between Victoria and NSW that need to be mentioned. First, in Victoria, Years 11 and 12 are part of the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). In NSW, Years 11 and 12 are part of the High School Certificate (HSC). I will refer to Years 11 and 12 rather than use the terms VCE and HSC, unless they are included in titles.

Second, students in both states can study a LOTE at government run Saturday schools. In NSW, the school is called the Saturday School of Community Languages (SSCL), while in Victoria it is referred to as the Victorian School of Languages (VSL). There are a number of structural and eligibility differences between the two schools which are discussed in Section 4.5.4.

These are only a few of the abbreviations that are utilised in this thesis. A list of all abbreviations is situated before the Introduction chapter.

\section*{2.4 Asian Languages in Australia}

\subsection*{2.4.1 The Problem with ‘Asia’}

The concept of ‘Asia’ or the ‘orient’ was first problematised by Said in his 1978 publication \textit{Orientalism}. Said (1978) argues that the ‘orient’ was a Western construct controlled by Western dialogue and determined by European views of history, power and tradition - a conceptualisation of Asia he strongly challenges in \textit{Orientalism}. Williamson-Fien (1994:76) argues that discourses surrounding ‘Asia’ today need to be problematised and challenged by asking three important questions:

- What is meant by the term ‘Asia’?
- Which ‘Asia’ should attention be focused on?
- Whose ‘Asia’ is to be explored?

\textsuperscript{15} This situation is similar across all states and territories across Australia. As this thesis is focused on Victoria and NSW, this section only details the education systems in these two states.
As Ang (2001:112) notes, ‘The issue of “Asians in Australia” is historically complex, and continues to be an ideologically loaded and politically and culturally sensitive one.’ In the nineteenth and early twentieth century in Australia, ‘Asia’ as a topos was used to express fears of cheap labour, the social damage which would result from the different cultures of Asia coming to Australia, and the threat to national security posed by the exploding populations of Asia (Milner, 1999). Ang (2001:113) argues that ‘in some historic instances, racist reference to ‘Asians’ is made explicitly to problematize and question the legitimacy and desirability of their status as residents of Australia.’ The term ‘Asia’ transformed into a more positive concept in the 1950s when ‘Asia’ suddenly came to represent Asian markets, Asian international students, and Asian ‘friends and neighbours’. This positive promotion of Asia was supported by both the Hawke and Keating governments, leading to ‘Asia’ coming to represent a vital national priority (Milner, 1999).

Milner writes that while Australians are developing a more discerning view of the region through persistent public education, the tables have been turned, with Asian spokespeople using the concept of ‘Asia’ for their own political purposes. Both Milner (1999) and Williamson-Fien (1994) provide examples of the use of ‘Asia’ by prominent politicians in Asia as a counterpoint to the West or to depict a sense of ‘Asia’ and ‘Others.’ Just as this practice has been criticized in the West, both writers argue that the utilisation of terms such as ‘Asia’, ‘Asian values,’ ‘an Asian mentality’ and ‘East Asia’ by Asian spokespeople can ‘mask political agendas that promote the interests of particular groups in specific Asian nations,’ and need to be challenged in the same way we challenge western concepts of Asia (Milner, 1999; Williamson-Fien, 1994:79). Williamson-Fien (1994:83) argues that consideration also needs to be given to ‘whose Asia’ is being represented in dialogues so that the ‘concerns of less powerful groups in Asia might be explored.’

Within the field of applied linguistics, Pennycook16 (1998) has examined the construction of the ‘Other’, in particular relation to the Chinese, in a broader discussion of the teaching of English as a second/foreign language. He reviews the post-colonial construction of the Chinese in discourse and highlights the ‘cultural fixity’ in constructions of the Chinese and Chinese culture. Pennycook (1998: 188) laments the

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consistent view of Chinese students ‘as belonging to a “traditional” and static culture which defines their thoughts and behaviours’; a view which he believes is ‘endemic to a great deal of TESOL theory’.

Despite descendents of migrants from Asia being long-established in Australian society, many of their experiences remained racialised (Tan, 2005). The indelible nature of Asian-Australian identity ensures that it an identifiable marker for generation after generation of Asian-Australians. This has been termed ‘the tyranny of appearance’ (Yang, 1994), the ‘corporeal malediction of Chineseness’ (Ang, 2001) or ‘facialisation’ – where those with Asian faces are perpetually viewed as ‘foreign’ and ‘unAustralian’ (Nicoll, 2001). In her study of Australians of Chinese ancestry, Tan (2005:66-67) argues that racial appearance and ‘looks’ play a significant role ‘in demarcating the boundaries between those who are unconditionally accepted as ‘real’ Australians, and those who are constituted as ‘foreign’ and forever cast beyond the pale of the Australian nation’.

These important concepts will be examined in reference to language study in Australia and students’ experiences, particularly in Chapters 5 and 6. Other relevant literature addresses the complex issue of Asian-Australian identity through their use of media in Australia. Particularly relevant are the studies on the Chinese (Sinclair, Yue, Hawkins, Pookong, & Fox, 2001) and Vietnamese (Cunningham & Nguyen, 2001) diasporas in Australia, which will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

This thesis refers to the concept of ‘Asia’ in two main ways. The first is in reference to students and identity, particularly in relation to students with a family background in Asia. All references to Asia in this instance refer to the range of countries, cultures and languages represented within the student group. Details are presented in Tables 5.4 and 5.7 and in the Appendixes – Tables D and U.

The second use of the term Asia involves ‘Asian’ languages themselves. While the term ‘Asian languages’ is commonly used in Australia, it gives the misleading impression that these are a group of languages that are related to and similar to each other. When the term ‘European languages’ is used, we are referring to a group of languages that are very much interconnected. Many languages spoken in Europe belong to the Indo-European language family, including for example, Albanian, Greek, Germanic languages, Italic languages (For example, French, Italian, Spanish) and Indo-Iranian
languages (For example, Dari, Farsi, Hindi and Sinhala). Asian languages, in contrast, are far less interrelated, originating from many different language families. For example, Chinese belongs to the Sino-Tibetan language family, Vietnamese to the Austroasiatic, Korean to the Altaic, Japanese to the Japonic, and Indonesian to the Austronesian language family (Hannas, 1997). The typology of these languages is explored further in Section 2.4.3.

In Australia, two definitions of ‘Asian languages’ have been utilised in policy and funding documents. The first refers to Asian languages as defined by the NALSAS document, which stated which Asian languages were considered economically important for Australia and therefore privileged within the Australian education system. The selection of the four ‘Asian’ languages - Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean - is significant not only in the way that it promoted these particular languages, but in the way that it also devalued all other Asian and non-Asian languages at a language planning and policy level. This policy also ignored the sociolinguistic implications of languages being both community languages and internationally significant languages (See for example, Lakha & Stevenson, 2001; Singh, 2001), as will be explored in Chapters 4 and 6.

The second definition of Asian languages considers all languages that come out of the Asian continent as Asian languages. While this potentially includes hundreds of languages, within the Australian context, this represents dozens of community languages. In 2001, there were seven Asian community languages within the top 20 community languages spoken in Australia, as represented in Table 2.2. These languages, along with other Asian languages spoken in Australia, are supported by governmental policy at numerous levels. For example, 45 community languages are accredited for the Year 12 examination in Australia, including Bengali, Chinese (Mandarin), Gujarati, Hindi, Indonesian, Khmer, Korean, Punjabi, Sinhala, Filipino, Tamil and Vietnamese. At the national level, the Department of Social Security offers a multilingual telephone service in 22 languages, with downloadable information pamphlets in 62 languages (including 17 Asian languages) available from their website. The government-run Telephone Interpreter Service provides language support for

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17 Since 2004, examinations in Bengali, Czech, Gujarati, Latvian, Lithuanian and Slovenain have been suspended due to low enrolments. However, Yiddish, Classical Hebrew and Punjabi have been introduced.
professionals including doctors, lawyers, accountants, public servants, police officers, and their clients, while government radio and television stations broadcast in over 60 languages (including 20 Asian languages) (Australia. Centrelink, 2006; Clyne, Grey, & Kipp, 2004b; SBS, 2002; Victoria. DE&T, 2005b).

In this thesis, where appropriate, I will explicitly list the Asian languages I am referring to within each chapter. For example, Chapter 4 examines Chinese, Indonesian Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese. When referring to ‘Asian languages’ in general, I have tried to maintain a distinction between the languages identified under NALSAS by referring to them as the ‘prioritised Asian languages’, and Asian languages in general. Often the context helps maintain this distinction.

Unfortunately it was not possible to include a detailed analysis of NALSAS and its impact on students and speakers of important Asian community languages such as Tagalog/Filipino, Hindi, Khmer, Tamil and Cantonese. However, in the context of the limiting definition of Asian languages by the NALSAS policy, it is important to highlight the significance of Asian community languages in Australia, particularly given that so many of these languages are spoken by students participating in this research and that the inability to access these languages within the mainstream school system is an important factor discussed in this thesis.

2.4.2 Asian Languages as Community Languages

In Australia, Asian language communities represent some of the most sizeable and fastest growing community language groups. As Table 2.1 demonstrates, seven of the top 20 community languages in Australia are Asian languages, namely, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Tagalog, Hindi, Korean and Indonesian.
Table 2.1  Top 20 community languages in Australia, 2001 (Clyne & Kipp, 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number of speakers 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Italian</td>
<td>353,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Greek</td>
<td>263,718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Cantonese</strong></td>
<td>225,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Arabic</td>
<td>209,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Vietnamese</strong></td>
<td>174,236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mandarin</td>
<td>139,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Spanish</td>
<td>93,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <strong>Tagalog (Filipino)</strong></td>
<td>78,879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. German</td>
<td>76,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Macedonian</td>
<td>71,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Croatian</td>
<td>69,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Polish</td>
<td>59,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Turkish</td>
<td>50,692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Serbian</td>
<td>49,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. <strong>Hindi</strong></td>
<td>47,817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Maltese</td>
<td>41,392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Netherlandic</td>
<td>40,187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. French</td>
<td>39,643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Korean</td>
<td>39,528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Indonesian</td>
<td>38,724</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within Australia, Mandarin is one of the fastest growing languages, spoken mainly by migrants from Mainland China and Taiwan, and while the growth in Cantonese has slowed since the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997, it is still more widely spoken than Mandarin. Both languages have sizeable communities in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth
and Brisbane. In Melbourne and Sydney, there is a large concentration of young speakers (0-14 years) of these languages, indicating that their importance will continue to grow (Clyne & Kipp, 2002), although the rapid shift of second generation Australians from Mandarin and Cantonese to English has been noted in Australia (Clyne & Kipp, 1997b).

Vietnamese is the second largest Asian language in Australia and is most evenly spread community language throughout the major cities in Australia. In Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney, Vietnamese represents the largest concentration of young speakers (0 to 14 year olds) of a language other than English (Clyne & Kipp, 2002).

Tagalog/Filipino is one of the top ten community languages in Sydney and Adelaide, while there is a large population of Indonesian speakers in Sydney with smaller concentrations in Melbourne and Perth (Clyne & Kipp, 2002). Hindi speaking communities are concentrated in Sydney, although there have been recent increases of Hindi speakers in Melbourne (Clyne & Kipp, 2002).

Korean is a newer community language and is concentrated in Sydney. Japanese, while not in the top 20 community languages in Australia, also holds a prominent place in the Australian context, playing an important role in Australia’s travel and tourism industry. It is also the most widely studied language within the Australian education system (Clyne & Kipp, 2002; Wyatt, Manefield, Carbines, & Robb, 2002a).

2.4.3 Typology of Asian languages

It is important to briefly outline the typology of some Asian languages as many perceptions and beliefs surrounding Asian language study are based on correct and incorrect understanding of these languages. For example, in Section 4.2.1, we see that Indonesian was introduced into many schools because it is an ‘easy’ language to study. Also, concerns regarding background speakers mainly involve Chinese, Japanese and Korean – three languages with links of varying degrees, to the Chinese writing system. The notion of this providing an unfair advantage is examined in Chapter 6.

Although many ‘Asian languages’ belong to different language families (Section 2.4.1) there are interesting commonalities between many of the languages including in
grammar, tones and the Chinese writing system that dominated the North Asian continent for a number of centuries. Grammatically, Chinese, Vietnamese and Indonesian are predominantly SVO (Subject Verb Object) languages (as is English). The grammatical structure of Japanese and Korean, however, is predominantly SOV (Subject Object Verb) and both languages have a complex system of honorifics (Horvath & Vaughan, 1991).

A number of Asian languages are tonal, including Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese. Standard Mandarin has four tones, while Standard Cantonese has nine tones in six tone contours (variations in pitch over syllables). In Vietnamese, there are six distinct tones, with a further five tone distinctions applied to vowels. There are also regional differences in the use of tones.

The modern writing systems are also diverse, although many systems were originally influenced by or based on the Chinese script. The modern Japanese writing system is based on Chinese characters, although Japanese has two further kana based writing systems to represent aspects of grammar and to allow foreign or ‘loan’ words into the Japanese language. Korean was originally written in the Hanja writing system, based on Chinese characters, but was replaced by the unique Hangul system, widely adopted from the 20th century. While the two systems are rarely mixed now and Hangul is the predominant writing system, Hanja are still used in names and for efficiency in newspapers. Students learn Hangul at primary school and can then chose to learn the 1,800 Hanja at secondary school. An understanding of Hanja is needed to comprehend Korean classics and to enter graduate school.

The Vietnamese writing system was also originally based on Chinese but was gradually replaced by a Vietnamese alphabet based on the Latin alphabet from the 17th century. Vietnamese students do not learn Chinese characters as students do in Korea. The Indonesian writing system also uses a Latin-based alphabet. Overall, at a basic level, Indonesian has a closer relationship to English than the other languages given its similar grammatical structure and use of a Latin-based alphabet.

It is also important to examine the term ‘Chinese’ which represents a number of fang yan or languages and dialects spoken not in only in Mainland China but throughout
Asia. The most prestigious variety is Mandarin, called *Putonghua* in Mainland China, but other *fang yan* spoken by students in this study and their families include Cantonese, Hakka, Hokkien, Langqu, Shanghainese, Fujian and Teochew. Mandarin is also an official language in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan and spoken by significant minorities in Malaysia and Vietnam, amongst other countries. Cantonese is another widely used *fang yan*, spoken in Southern China, Hong Kong and the Southeast Asian mainland. The Chinese languages of Cantonese and Mandarin, two of the top three Asian languages in Australia, are mutually unintelligible when spoken, but the written script is the same and can be mutually understood (Horvath & Vaughan, 1991). In this thesis, the singular ‘Chinese’ is used to refer to Mandarin, while in instances where other Chinese languages are involved, each language is named separately.

2.4.4 ‘Asian’ versus ‘non-Asian’

As the discussion of Asian language communities in Australia demonstrates, there are significant and growing numbers of migrants or descendents of migrants with an Asian background. At the same time, Asian language study has become increasingly popular in mainstream schools resulting in the problematic dichotomy of students with a background in a language studying a the same class as students without a background in the language. Although, there is also the presumption that students who look Asian have an unfair linguistic advantage (See Chapter 6). The contentious dichotomy of background versus non-background speaker is not new in Australia. Jewish intellectualism was stigmatised in Australia following the migration of large numbers of politically active Jews from the 1930s (Ozolins, 1993:8), while in the 1960s, resistance developed towards the introduction of community languages, mainly European, into mainstream schools because children of ‘foreign origin’ should not have an ‘unfair advantage’ (Clyne, 1982:129).

Utilisation of this same argument can be seen in public discourse in relation to students with an Asian background today (See section 6.1), who are seen as having both an unfair cultural and linguistic advantage. The issue involves arguments around the notion of who the language (should) belongs to in the education system and who should benefit from the inclusion of the language in the curriculum. This theme plays a prominent role in the discussion of Chinese language study in particular in this thesis. It must be noted, however, that the use of the terms ‘background’ and non-background’ is
problematic in that it presumes a dichotomous relationship between the two groups, that there are two clear-cut groups of students. This conceptualisation perpetuates negative perceptions of the issue within school communities. As is detailed in Chapter 6, no such relationship exists. Rather a continuum of experiences exists - from students with no exposure to a LOTE at one end, to skilled bilinguals at the other end, but with a majority of students spread across the rest of the continuum. The terms ‘background’ and ‘non-background’ speaker are used in this thesis as a reflection of discourse surrounding the issue, although I aim to present a more complex and realistic conceptualisation of the issue in the process.

Due to the detailed analysis of student groups in this thesis, as well as the presumptions and opinions of participants in this study, it is inevitable that a number of ‘opposite’ or ‘other’ categories arise. In relation to languages, referring to different language groups can be difficult. For example, I often use the term ‘Asian’ languages, but how should we refer to all languages other than Asian ones? The terms ‘European’ versus ‘Asian’ are not sufficient, as they do not include languages such as Turkish, Arabic, Auslan or Koorie languages. Using the expression ‘a language other than an Asian one’ is wordy so where it is necessary to make this distinction, the terms ‘Asian’ and ‘non-Asian’ languages are used.

A dilemma also arises when referring to students who do not have an Asian heritage. In interviews, participants often used words such as ‘Anglo’, ‘White’ or ‘Anglo-Saxon’. These terms, although not used maliciously, are ‘problematic’ in that they leave out students who are from a non-‘Anglo’ background, who are not of Asian heritage either. Interviewees also grouped all students of Asian heritage together when they were only really referring to students with an Asian background who they consider to be problematic, such as those with a Chinese heritage (See Chapter 6). Judgements are also made by participants in this study when categorising students as having an ‘Asian background’ in that the term is used not only homogeneously but with negative connotations. For example, all students with an Asian heritage have an unfair advantage. These issues will be discussed where relevant in this thesis. Again, participants’ terminology will be utilised but where it is necessary to make the distinction, I will use the term ‘Anglo-ethnic’ to refer to students labelled as ‘Anglo’, ‘Anglo-Saxon’ or ‘White’.
2.5 Summary

A review of the development of LPP over the last several decades has demonstrated the substantial advances that have been made in the field and the important role it plays at a societal and educational level. On one hand, it can be used to control, dictate and hinder language use and study as well as the development of personal, regional and national identities (among others). On the other hand, it can be used to promote and support these practices. As the field of LPP has developed, conceptualisation of the field and the development of frameworks have moved from being language-focused to include the consideration of many factors external to language that impact on the use and study of languages in society. These include the religious, social, political, economic, national, psychological and demographic contexts surrounding language use. More recently, scholars such as Schiffman, Shohamy, Baldauf, Kaplan, Christ and Ager have challenged the field to incorporate social, cultural, motivational and attitudinal aspects of language use, language study and the role of language in society into frameworks and LPP concepts. These notions will be referred to at a number of points in this thesis.

The LPP context in Australia has also been reviewed, highlighting some of the many factors at play in policy planning and implementation, including who undertakes language policy planning and the motivations behind their actions. For example, at times in Australia, LPP processes have been both top-down and bottom-up, as exemplified by Australia’s NLP, which addressed broad social and educational issues. At other times, it has been primarily a political tool which reflects the ideology of governments and/or policy makers, lacking any input from policy constituents. The NALSAS policy more closely resembles the latter. Neither of these conceptualisations of LPP processes is exclusive however, with policies often promoting and supporting some languages while suppressing others.

Other issues important to this thesis have also been outlined in this chapter. They include the role of federalism in shaping the provision of education in Australia, with students studying through three different educational providers – government schools, Catholic schools and independent schools. Another major issue concerns the meaning of the term ‘Asia’ and the need to deconstruct the term to understand any ideology or political agenda behind the conceptualisation of the term. In this thesis, any notion of Asia or Asian is defined by the heritage and/or country of origin of participants in this
study. It is also important to remember that Asian languages are important community languages in Australia, some with substantial numbers of speakers, and that this impacts on the study of Asian languages within the school system, as will be addressed throughout this thesis.

In the next chapter, we move onto a detailed description of the methodology utilised in this thesis.
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN

As a descriptive sociolinguistic study, the research questions for this thesis have not come out of the literature review, but are instead set out in Section 1.2. The literature review has provided an overview of the theoretical background and contemporary construction of the field of language planning and policy. It has also explored the historical LPP context in Australia, as well as exploring Asian languages, as community languages and as languages in the education system, in the Australian context. The research questions have grown from an understanding of the material in Section 2 and a desire to develop a greater understanding of the nature of language-in-education policy and planning in the Australian context. This endeavour requires a carefully designed methodological basis given the complex number of persons and variables involved in LPP processes.

This chapter details the methodology and methodological issues in relation to data collection and analysis for this research project. It begins with a description of how this project was visualised, including an outline of the various levels at which data was collected and analysed – from the grassroots level through to a more abstracted level. The chapter then focuses on issues in designing the research project and collecting the data, followed by an outline of the each data set. Finally, it addresses how the data was analysed and used to answer the research questions.

3.1 How to Approach Analysis?

The first major methodological problem when undertaking this project is the complex, multi-levelled nature of LPP processes. When evaluating language study and the impact of any policy, implicit or explicit, the first question to ask is from which level should analysis be undertaken? LPP is a process where input and pressure to implement changes can originate from any level. While the most influential input in the LPP process is often from official or governmental sources, influence is also exerted and outcomes affected by students, parents and/or schools. In order to answer the research questions as outlined in Section 1.2, I have looked at the issue at five levels (see Table 3.1).
1. From the perspective of students who are undertaking language study at the senior secondary level;

2. From the perspective of language teachers and language program coordinators, who are involved in implementing programs and changes in programs as dictated by school policy and government directives;

3. From the perspective of senior administrators in schools who are not involved in the teaching of languages themselves but in the effective and efficient running of whole school curricula;

4. From the perspective of a number of stakeholders involved in the running and promotion of languages within the education system. They include government officers charged with supporting and promoting language programs in different education systems, as well as providing support through funding, administrative, professional development and other structures; Asianists with a personal interest in the promotion of particular languages; presidents of language teacher associations and of ethnic language associations, among others.

5. The fifth level of analysis involves policy documentation or financial and budgetary documents that provide guidance for language planning and policy in the Australian education system.

An analysis of newspaper discourse on Asians in Australia and the study of Asian languages and cultures has also been utilised to help provide contextual information for this thesis, particularly in Chapter 6. The analysis explores a collection of 48 newspaper pieces that discuss Asian languages and studies in Australia. The newspapers, as listed in Table 3.1, represent widely read daily tabloid and broadsheet newspapers both state- and national-based, as well as a daily financial newspaper.

This multi-levelled approach to the data collection process was designed to ensure that different perspectives were represented in the data. That is, the views of advocates of language study, such as teachers and language teacher association representatives; the views of administrators of programs who may be ambivalent or non-supportive towards language programs such as senior school administrators; the views of those with particular interests, such as promoters of community languages and Asianists, and the views of governments.
A number of data collection techniques (see Table 3.1) were used in the acquiring the data necessary for this analysis and these are addressed in different sections of this chapter.

A summary of the data collection process is provided in Table 3.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Collection process</th>
<th>Primary Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior secondary language</td>
<td>Questionnaires, focus groups</td>
<td>Chapter 5 and 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language teachers and LOTE</td>
<td>One to one interviews, telephone interviews, email correspondence</td>
<td>Chapter 4 and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coordinators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior school administrators</td>
<td>One to one interviews, telephone interviews, email correspondence</td>
<td>Chapter 4 and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
<td>One to one interviews, telephone interviews, email correspondence</td>
<td>Chapter 4 and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy and budgetary documents</td>
<td>Published reports and policies</td>
<td>Throughout thesis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 The Challenges of Data Collection

Ideally, any examination of language study in Australia would involve analysis of data from all states and territories. In reality, this is an extremely complex project that would involve time and financial constraints beyond most projects. An Australia-wide analysis of languages is also hindered by the lack of centralised data collection within each
education system, in each state. For example, while some state education departments collect comprehensive data on language study, less centralised systems such as the Catholic or independent systems do not always require any collection of statistics. This is likely to change in the future under the new MCEETYA\textsuperscript{18} guidelines (Australia. MCEETYA, 2005) designed, in part, to move towards a national approach to the teaching of languages.

As a result of these constraints, this thesis focuses on two states in Australia based on their language policies and Asian and European migration histories. First, Victoria was included as a site for data collection because of its comprehensive language planning and policies which have been supportive of many languages, both community-based as well as those not widely spoken in Victorian communities. The Victorian DE&T recommends that language study be undertaken from Prep\textsuperscript{19} to Year 10. Across all education systems in Australia, Victoria has the highest percentage of students studying a language at the Year 12 level, 20.2\% in 2003. NSW was chosen as a second site of data collection as a contrast to Victoria. In NSW, language study is mandated for 100 hours at the Year 7 or 8 level, with only 12.8\% of Year 12 students undertaking language study; a lower percentage than in Victoria, but certainly not the lowest in Australia (see Figure 3.1).

\textsuperscript{18} Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs

\textsuperscript{19} Prep is the first year of primary education.
Second, both Victoria and NSW have been concentration points for migration to Australia since the Second World War. Migration from Asian countries was inhibited by the White Australia policy until the 1970s, but from the 1980s onwards, Asian migrant concentrations have been highest in Sydney, NSW. If we look, for example, at the six largest Asian community languages in Australia, in 1986, 45.3% of migrants from an Asian country moved to Sydney, while 28.7% moved to Melbourne. In 2001, the concentration for the same language groups had increased to 47.6% in Sydney and 26.7% in Melbourne (See Table 3.2). European migration, on the other hand, has been concentrated in Melbourne. In 1986, 43.2% of European migration, for the five largest European community groups, was to Melbourne, with 31.0% moving to Sydney. In 2001, European migration was still greater in Melbourne, 47.3%, than in Sydney, 34%.

The concentration of Asian migration in Sydney over the last couple of decades provides another interesting differentiation between NSW and Victoria. Given the support for the study of community languages in each state, it is interesting to see whether this demographic difference translates to a difference in Asian language study in each state (See Chapter 7).
Table 3.2 Concentration of Asian and European (selected) migration between 1986 and 2001, Melbourne and Sydney (%) (Clyne, 1991b, 2005; Clyne & Kipp, 1997a, 2002; Kipp et al., 1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>Syd</td>
<td>Mel</td>
<td>Syd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino/Tagalog</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonian</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the focus of this thesis is Victoria and NSW, data will be drawn on from all states where possible to provide a broader comparison of language study in Australia.

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20 Chinese languages were not separated in the 1986 census data.
21 In the 1986 and 1991 census, Filipino/Tagalog was referred to as ‘Filipino languages’.
22 Percentage in relation to total number of speakers in Australia.
23 Percentage in relation to total number of speakers in Australia.
3.2.1 Periods of Data Collection
Highlighting the difficult nature of collecting comprehensive and comparable language data in Australia, in this thesis, reference will be made to data collected at several different times. Australian census data, which provides important national figures, is collected every five years. The latest year for which processed data is available is 2001 and in this thesis is utilised directly from the source (ABS) or through a number of relevant publications, including Clyne & Kipp (2002) and Clyne (2005).

As national figures for the study of LOTEs are not available and the latest national Year 12 figures available are for 2000 (Wyatt, Manefield, Carbines, & Robb, 2002b), I collected data from all education systems – Catholic, independent and government, across all states and territories for the Year 12 level for 2003. This was a time intensive exercise and undertaken only once for this project. Therefore, in this study, references to national Year 12 statistics are for 2003.

The timeframe for data collected from schools is discussed in Section 3.2.3.

3.2.2 Structure of School Samples
In cultivating the school sample for this project, all efforts were made to develop a sample that was representative of the education system in each state. In Victoria, state school enrolments represent 65.4% of all secondary and primary students, enrolments in Catholic schools, 21.9% and enrolments in independent schools, 12.6% Nearly all government schools (99%) and independent schools (90%) in Victoria are co-educational, while Catholic schools are evenly divided between single-sex and co-educational schools. A factor for consideration in trying to establish a representative sample of schools and LOTE students at the Year 11 and 12 levels, is the fact that nationally in 2003, there was a 14.4% increase of students at the Year 11 and 12 levels at independent schools, largely moving from the government school sector. (AISV, 2006; Victoria. CEC, 2005; Victoria. DE&T, 2003).

The composition of schools in NSW is similar to Victorian schools with government schools also representing approximately 70% of schools, Catholic schools 19% and independent schools, 10%. NSW government and independent schools are predominantly co-educational (approximately 95% and 90% respectively), while
Catholic schools are predominantly single-sex (89%). However, in NSW in 2004 there were 31 government high schools which were fully or partially selective; that is, entrance to the school is determined largely by academic examinations. In Victoria only two selective schools exist. Furthermore, NSW has over four times as many single-sex government schools than Victoria (AISNSW, 2006; NSW. DE&T, 2006b).

It should also be noted that there are significant differences in both states between the numbers of LOTE students within each school system. For example, in Victoria, independent schools represent a far higher percentage of Year 12 LOTE study than the Catholic sector, with government schools having the smallest percentage of Year 12 LOTE students each year. In 2003, a student at an independent school was more than twice as likely than a student in a government and Catholic school, to be studying a Year 12 LOTE. In NSW, independent school students are more than four times as likely than Catholic school students, while government school students are more than twice as likely than Catholic school students to study a language (See Figure 3.2). (This issue will be discussed further in Chapter 7.)

Figure 3.2 Percentage of Year 12 students undertaking a LOTE by state and system, 2003
With the focus on the Year 11 and 12 student levels, this study aimed to approximate a breakdown of the school system in each state as closely as is reasonably possible. The schools were ultimately chosen to correspond to a representative cross section of schools based upon the following criteria:

- **System:** Catholic, Independent and government schools
- **Location:** Metropolitan and regional
- **Gender:** Co-educational, girls’ and boys’
- **Language:** Each school should teach at least one Asian language

There were two other criteria that were followed in selecting schools for this project. The first criterion was that each school should offer an Asian and a non-Asian language at the senior secondary level, and the second criterion was that all sources of data be collected from each school. That is, student surveys, interviews with language teachers and LOTE coordinators and interviews with senior administrators should be collected. However, several difficulties impacted on these criteria.

### 3.2.3 Issues in Collecting Data from Schools

The first difficulty was the time taken to gain permission to collect data from each relevant education system or branch of each system. Approval to undertake the research had to be gained from the University of Melbourne, the NSW Board of Studies, the Victorian DE&T, and the Catholic Education Office of each diocese whose schools are approached - both in Victoria and NSW.\(^{24}\) It was also then necessary to gain permission from each state and Catholic school principal and staff within the language departments. The independent school system does not have a centralised process for conducting research in schools and each independent school was approached directly to gain permission. While the process began at the start of 2003 it took a considerable amount of time to gain the relevant permissions. As the process moved later into the school year, schools were more and more reluctant to impinge on the study time of Year 11 and 12 students who were preparing for examinations in October and November. As a result, permission had to be sought over two years and data collection was conducted in both 2003 and 2004.

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\(^{24}\) There are 11 diocese in NSW and four diocese in Victoria.
The second difficulty was in soliciting enough schools to participate in the project. For example, over 70 schools were approached in Victoria, resulting in 22 schools participating in the project, while over 100 schools in NSW were approached, with 12 schools participating in the study. The difficulty in NSW lie in finding enough schools that ran an Asian language program on the school campus for senior students. LOTE study in Victoria is recommended from Prep to Year 10, greatly increasing the likelihood that LOTE courses will run at the Year 11 and 12 levels. In NSW, as language study is only compulsory for 100 hours, usually in Year 8, the chances of a school running a language program at the Year 12 level is greatly diminished. Many schools in NSW do not run language courses in the senior years, with students continuing study through distance education, government-run Saturday classes or students simply discontinue language study.

The third difficulty was in finding schools that offered an Asian and a European language, particularly in NSW. Originally, the aim of the data collection process was to only include schools that offered an Asian and a non-Asian language (another language such as French or Arabic) in the senior curriculum so that distinctions could be made between the running of Asian language programs and other LOTE programs. It proved extremely difficult to find a sufficient number of schools which offered two languages, including an Asian language at the senior levels, so three schools in NSW were included that offered only one (Asian) language. These schools were included to help highlight the difficulty in running and supporting more than one language in the curriculum due to various constraints that will be discussed throughout this thesis.

The fourth difficulty was that of not being able to gain complete sets of data from some schools. Due to varying reasons, a further five schools participated in the project, but were not included in the analysis. For example, at one school, all interviews were collected, but by the end of the year, the language staff had not been able to find time to administer the student questionnaires. At another school, student questionnaires were administered and one student used the questionnaire to write a suicide note. This led to my contacting the school administration to deal with the issue and due to this and a number of other unrelated student issues within the school, it became impossible for staff to find the time to participate in interviews and I withdrew the school from the study. As a third example, at one school, interviews were conducted with the school
staff and student surveys collected from the non-Asian language students but in the end, the Chinese language teacher refused to administer surveys to students due to issues with the school administration regarding her workload. While I had been assured that I had the support of all staff in participating in the project, this was an issue that was beyond my control.

3.3 School Samples and Languages Offered

At the end of the data collection process, the Victorian sample of 22 schools includes five independent schools (one boys’, one girls’ and three co-educational), five Catholic schools (two girls’, two boys’ and one co-educational) and 12 government schools (ten co-educational, one girls’ and one boys’). One government school in the sample was selective, and four schools were located in a regional area (see Appendix 1, Table A).

The NSW sample of schools is not as representative of the school system as the Victorian sample and constitutes a smaller sample. The NSW sample of 12 schools includes four independent (one boys’, one girls’ and two co-educational), four Catholic (one girls’, one boys’ and two co-educational) and four government schools (one co-educational, two girls’ and one boys’). One school in the sample was academically selective, while two schools were located in a regional area (see Appendix 1, Table B). As a result of the differences between the NSW and Victorian samples, the Victorian data is the main focus on the thesis, and while the NSW data provides important and substantial information for this thesis, it is not meant for a full comparison with Victoria.

In the Victorian school sample, all schools ran at least one Asian language course, with one school offering four Asian language programs (see Table 3.3). Overall, in the Victorian sample, six Asian languages and eight non-Asian languages were represented at the Year 12 level in the school. In the NSW sample, three Asian languages and seven non-Asian languages were represented at the Year 12 level in the schools (see Table 3.4).

Data was collected from a further two schools in Victoria and NSW to help provide an overview of Korean, a language that failed to become established in the education
system. These two schools were not included in the main analysis, but only in the discussion of Korean in the school system in Section 4.3 in order to achieve a deeper understanding of why the language, little taught throughout Australia, has not succeeded in the education system. Overall, interviews were conducted with senior administrators, LOTE coordinators and teachers in three schools which teach Korean.

In tables and in discussion, schools are referred to by education system: CEO (Catholic), IND (independent) or GOV (government-run); by the gender of the school cohort: Girls (girls only), Boys (boys only) or Co-ed (co-educational population); by location: regional or metropolitan and by state: VIC (Victoria) or NSW (New South Wales). For example, CEO 5 Girls Metro VIC.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.3</th>
<th>Language by school, Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 1 Co-ed Regional VIC</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 2 Boys Metro VIC</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 3 Boys Metro VIC</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 4 Girls Metro VIC</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 5 Girls Metro VIC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 1 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 2 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 3 Co-ed Regional VIC</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 4 Girls Metro VIC</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 5 Boys Metro VIC</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 1 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 2 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 3 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 5 Co-ed Regional VIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOV 6 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOV 7 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOV 8 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 9 Co-ed Regional VIC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 10 Co-ed Regional VIC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOV 12 Girls Metro VIC</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.4  Language by school, NSW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Indonesian</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>German</th>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>Hebrew</th>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEO 1 Co-ed Regional NSW</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CEO 2 Co-ed Metro NSW</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>IND 1 Co-ed Regional NSW</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>IND 2 Co-ed Metro NSW</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOV 2 Girls Metro NSW</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 4 Co-ed Metro NSW</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4 Data Collection Techniques and Data Analysis

3.4.1 Interviews with School Personnel

It was decided that in-person interviews, rather than written questionnaires, were the most effective means of data collection for school personnel and stakeholders for this research project. While it would have been possible to provide personnel with a questionnaire, interviews provide greater flexibility (Monette, Sullivan, & DeJong, 1998), allowing for follow up questions and to address issues that are important to the participant that may not be mentioned in a questionnaire.

In regards to school personnel, interviews were based on issues identified as problematic for language programs in previous research (See, for example, Clyne et al., 1997; Cunningham, 1994; Elder, 2000; Nicholas, Moore, Clyne, & Pauwels, 1993; Victoria. DE&T, 2002a; Wyatt et al., 2002b), as well as encompassing more recent concerns such as the influx of international students into schools. While there may be a range of issues that are pertinent for language programs in schools, those most relevant or pressing for various staff (for example, principals, LOTE coordinators, or language teachers) differ. Questions were tailored to the role of the participant (LOTE coordinator/language teacher or senior administrator) and have been listed in Appendix 2. The survey was used as a guide, that is, the interviews were semi-structured, to allow for the capture of points that the interviewee feels are important, without the researcher predetermining all issues and responses to the questions (Patton, 2002).

Another problem with requesting written response to questionnaires is that time constraints may result in participants not taking/having the time to fill them in. Requesting to see participants in person and to record oral replies ensured that data would be collected. As is transpired, time constraints were also a dilemma in the in-person interviews with school personnel. While each interviewee committed to 20 to 40 minutes for the interviews, changes in timetables and other pressures in schools resulted in some interviews only lasting for five minutes, continuing an hour later for another 15 minutes and then concluding over the telephone. At other schools, teachers provided access for a whole day, including visits to language classes. Despite the
difficulties with collecting data at schools located across the two states, in-person interviews enabled the collection of a substantial amount of data.

At least two interviews were conducted at each school in Victoria and NSW involving a senior administrator (SA), the LOTE coordinator (LC) and teachers of Asian languages (T). In some instances, when the LOTE coordinator was an Asian language teacher, only one teacher interview was carried out, although up to five teacher interviews were undertaken in some schools. The senior administrator level interviews involved a single interview with a person in a senior administrative position in each school. These interviews were conducted with the principal / head master, vice-principal or curriculum coordinator, depending on who the principal felt was best able to answer the interview questions. In Victoria, 22 SA interviews and 44 LC and T interviews were undertaken, while in NSW, 12 SA interviews and 18 LC and T interviews were conducted (Tables 3.5 and 3.6).
Table 3.5  Number of interviews conducted per school, Victoria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>LC &amp; T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEO 1 Co-ed Regional VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 2 Boys Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 3 Boys Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 4 Girls Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 5 Girls Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 1 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 2 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 3 Co-ed Regional VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 4 Girls Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 5 Boys Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 1 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 2 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 3 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 4 Boys Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 5 Co-ed Regional VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 6 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 7 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 8 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 9 Co-ed Regional VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 10 Co-ed Regional VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 12 Girls Metro VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.6  Number of interviews conducted per school, NSW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>LC &amp; T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEO 1 Co-ed Regional NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 2 Co-ed Metro NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 3 Boys Metro NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 4 Girls Metro NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 1 Co-ed Regional NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 2 Co-ed Metro NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 3 Girls Metro NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 4 Boys Metro NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 1 Girls Metro NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 2 Girls Metro NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOV 4 Co-ed Metro NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All the interviews in Victoria were conducted in person. Time and financial constraints prevented in-person interviews for most of the schools in NSW, with a majority of interviews conducted over the phone, although a small number of school visits and in-person interviews were conducted in NSW. In two instances, interviews were conducted via email. The ability to conduct interviews in person impacted on the commitment of the school personnel to finishing the project, with four schools in NSW eventually being withdrawn from the study due to incomplete data sets.

It must also be noted that the interviews produced a variety of responses from participants. For some, discussing the pressures of teaching a language or running a language program and the lack of support or sense of futility some teachers felt was an emotional process, sometimes resulting in tears, sometimes in anger. Both teacher and senior administrator interviews revealed a high degree of frustration due to the time and energy invested forcibly or willingly into language programs and a perceived lack of success or support. While I was surprised and sometimes taken back by the depth of emotion expressed about the topic, these interviews have provided valuable insights to this research.

Interviews ranged from fifteen minutes to several hours and were recorded and transcribed. The semi-structured approach to the interviews and the open-ended nature of the questions has made analysis of the interviews challenging. While the same range of issues were addressed in the interviews, responses from participants to open-ended questions are often not ‘systematic nor standardised (Patton, 2002: 21)’. The interview data was thematised to help form the basis of a number of chapters, particularly Chapters 4 and 7, but the data also contributes to a number of other themes discussed throughout the whole thesis. Where possible, data was also quantified to highlight issues that are pertinent for many teachers and schools, along with issues that are more relevant to a small number of schools or specific languages.

### 3.4.2 Student Questionnaires

Questionnaires are ‘ideal for obtaining data representative of populations too large to be dealt with by other methods’ (Monette et al., 1998:156). With schools spread over two states in regional and metropolitan locations and students in numerous classes, questionnaires provided the most appropriate data collection technique. The questions
in the questionnaires were based on previous sociolinguistic research on language study (See for example, Clyne et al., 1997; NLLIA, 1994).

The student questionnaires collected both qualitative and quantitative data (See Appendix 3 for a copy of the student questionnaires). The first section of the questionnaire collected data on the background of students including the school they attend, gender, age, year level, and the use of languages other than English outside of school.

The second section of the questionnaire was designed to explore motivation behind LOTE study, including factors which are demotivating for students. Students were first asked to choose responses from a list of 18 prescribed motivational factors. To narrow the focus of the analysis, students were then asked to identify the most important motivations (up to five, ‘1’ being the most important). Initially this section of the data was analysed using inferential statistics, chi-squared analysis in particular. While this activity took a substantial amount of time, it was determined that this section of the data and the analysis of the data did not constructively contribute to the focus on language planning and policy in the thesis and was not included in the final structure.

The third section of the questionnaire utilised open-ended questions to explore students’ perceptions of the language and culture/s they are studying. This section provided not only a view of the difficulty of language study, but of the significant impact of cultural perceptions and of cultural, identity and sociolinguistic incentives behind language study. The last section also addressed the complicated issue of background speakers in the language classroom.

3.4.2.1 Trialing the Questionnaire
The student questionnaire was available in a paper or on-line format. The web version of the questionnaire was designed to allow for faster completion of the questionnaire

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25 Sandy Clarke from the University of Melbourne Statistical Consulting Centre, through the PhD support scheme, provided support on statistical analysis of data for this project. This included advice on which statistics to utilise, how to set the data up efficiently in spreadsheets and how to correctly interpret results.
by the use of logic equations in developing contingency questions. That is, if a question or part of a question was not relevant to the student, the online questionnaire would recognise this and move the student to the next relevant question. An online questionnaire is more visually appealing than a paper version, and also aids in data entry.

Seventeen students from a Catholic and an independent school, who were not taking part in the project, completed a trial of the questionnaire. Students filled in both the paper and the on-line versions of the questionnaire. Feedback enabled fine tuning of the survey. In relation to the web version this included issues with logic equations where, for example, clicking on ‘next page’ did not take the student to the next page. Students made suggestions regarding wording of questions for both versions of the questionnaire. This included noting that some students studied more than one language at school and the need to differentiate which language a question was referring to when this was the case. Another example was the age category which ranged from 15 to 18 (students were in Year 11 or 12). However, many international students are 19 or 20 so the age category was changed to reflect this. The list of motivational factors listed in the questionnaire was also expanded to accommodate international students. While international students in the group were studying Chinese as a first language, they expressed concern that they could not write on reasons for studying English as a second language. While the study of English is not a focus on this research project, further options such as ‘I am an international student and I need English to pass high school’ and ‘I am an international student and I wish to continue to university study in Australia’ were added to help ensure that international students could express their opinions on the study of first, as well as second and third languages.

3.4.2.2 Collection of Student Questionnaires

Given the difficulty of administering questionnaires in person to students in a variety of language classes on each school campus, in most cases, questionnaires were administered by the classroom teacher to all or a selection of Year 11 and 12 LOTE students. At three schools, I was able to administer the questionnaires to student groups and follow up with discussion of the questions. While the student survey was
available on-line, a majority of schools had limited Internet access for their LOTE classes and filled out the paper version of the questionnaires.

In Victoria, 463 questionnaires were collected from 441 students\textsuperscript{26}, with 71.4% of questionnaires responses from students studying an Asian language and 28.6% of responses from students studying a non-Asian language. In NSW, 174 questionnaires were collected from 169 students, with 74.0% of student responses coming from students who were studying an Asian language and 26.0% from students studying a non-Asian language. Some schools in the Victorian and NSW samples had extremely small LOTE programs, while other schools had close to 100 LOTE students at the Year 11 and 12 levels. The number of surveys collected from each school ranged from one to 53.

3.4.2.3 Analysis of Student Data
Chapters 5 and 6 focus largely on student data and include analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data, with quantitative data from the questionnaires analysed using descriptive statistics. While the qualitative data from students is used extensively throughout this thesis in quotes, it was also quantified, where possible, to add to the depth of analysis.

3.4.3 Stakeholder Interviews
The selection of participants for the stakeholder interviews was based on purposeful sampling. The aim of purposeful sampling is to select individuals because ‘they are information rich and illuminative, that is, they offer useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest. Sampling then is aimed at insight about the phenomenon, not empirical generalizations from a sample to a population (Patton, 2002: 40).’ Again, as mentioned in Section 3.1, this sampling was designed to ensure that different perspectives were represented in the data.

\textsuperscript{26} A number of students in Victoria and NSW were studying two languages. Most of these students completed a survey for each language they were studying or provided responses for each language at different points in the survey.
Data collection involved interviews with 31 stakeholders. A majority of the interviews were conducted in person at a number of locations in Victoria, NSW, ACT and QLD, although a small number of interviews were conducted over the phone or through email communication. Interview participants were from a broad range of fields, including a number of people who have been involved, since the 1960s, in agitating for and implementing an Asian language policy/program; LOTE officers and employees of across education system working on developing language programs in schools; presidents of language teacher associations; academics involved in language teacher training and language program and policy development, academic involved in the promotion and study of Asian languages and Asian studies and participants involved in the teaching and promotion of community language programs.

A full list of interviewees is provided in Table 3.7. A range of questions were utilised in these interviews, depending on the interviewees’ expertise. A sample of the questions utilised in the interview is available in Appendix 4. As questions differed according to the participants’ field of interest, two further sets of interview questions have been included in the appendix. These provide more specific examples of questions tailored to the participants’ field of interest. All interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Data from these interviews was thematised where possible and utilised particularly in Chapter 7. The interviews also provided important contextual information that has been used throughout this thesis, including in Chapter 2, which outlines the history of language policy and the study of Asian languages in Australia.
Table 3.7 Schedule of interviews with stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Interest /Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexander, Phoebe</td>
<td>President of the Chinese Language Education Council, NSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbe, Ghislaine</td>
<td>LOTE officer, Association for Independent Schools, NSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, Heather</td>
<td>President, Victorian Indonesian Language Teachers' Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camberwell Girls’ Grammar Alumni Association</td>
<td>A small number of interviews were conducted with alumni who were recruited through the alumni magazine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornell, Dianne</td>
<td>Manager LOTE unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coveos, Anna</td>
<td>LOTE project officer, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cunningham, Dennis</td>
<td>Deputy Principal of Victorian School of Languages, Secretary of International association (FIPLV).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dellora, Maree</td>
<td>Manager of languages, Curriculum branch, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellesmore, Marjory</td>
<td>Principal, Saturday School of Community Languages, NSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraser, Andrew</td>
<td>LOTE officer, Catholic Education Office, Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gearon, Margaret (Dr)</td>
<td>Academic, LOTE teacher education, Monash University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivanhoe Girls’ Grammar Alumni</td>
<td>A small number of interviews were conducted with alumni who were recruited through the alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Interest /Position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association</td>
<td>magazine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey, Robin (Prof)</td>
<td>Academic, SE Asian specialist, President of ASAA, LaTrobe University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legge, John (Prof)</td>
<td>Academic (Retired), Past President of ASAA and founder of the Monash University Centre for SE Asian Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo Bianco, Joe (Prof)</td>
<td>Academic, former Executive Director of Language Australia, University of Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luetic, Perla</td>
<td>President, The Philippine Language School of Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackerras, Colin (Prof)</td>
<td>Academic, Asian specialist, Past chairman of the NALSAS committee, Griffith University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKay, Elaine</td>
<td>Past Asian business specialist, past academic. Previous President of ASAA. Has worked extensively for DFAT as well as within the university system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris, Wendy</td>
<td>Manager, Languages Unit, Department of Education and Training, Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakes, Judy</td>
<td>LOTE officer, Association for Independent Schools, Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puddu, Pina</td>
<td>LOTE officer, Catholic Education Office, Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajkumar, Saba</td>
<td>President of Eelam Tamil schools, Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rix, Alan (Prof)</td>
<td>Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romaniw, Stefan</td>
<td>President of Community Languages Australia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5 Other Sources of Data

Numerous other sources of data were drawn upon in this thesis to add support to findings and arguments. These include, for example, unpublished data collected from across education systems; published reports on language programs and teacher training (Both federal and state-based), and policy and financial documentation related to language policies in Australia. The newspaper discourse analysis has been utilised in Chapter 6 and the data collection process for this is discussed within the chapter.

3.6 Summary

There are many challenges in constructing and implementing any research project and in ensuring that the methodology makes it possible to adequately address the research questions. This chapter has outlined the data collection process, including why data was collected at different levels, the methods for collecting the data and methodological issues in data collection. It has also outlined details of participants, school structures and languages taught in the schools. The challenge has been to produce a cohesive analysis of relevant issues from a wide variety of data sources.

The following chapter, Chapter 4, draws on data collected at all levels to examine the context surrounding five Asian languages – Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean.
and Vietnamese, and social and cultural factors which have led to their success or lack of success in the Australian education system.
CHAPTER FOUR: INFLUENCES ON ASIAN LANGUAGE STUDY

This chapter details the progress of five Asian languages in the Australian education system, by means of interviews conducted with LOTE teachers, LOTE coordinators, senior administrators at schools and with other key stakeholders. Section 4.1 begins by outlining the five languages discussed in this chapter – Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese – while sections 4.2 to 4.6 analyse each of the five languages, exploring a multiplicity of factors which have impeded or facilitated each language in the curriculum. The respective sections identify why these languages were introduced into schools in this study and, if applicable, why they have been discontinued. The issues explored in this chapter, which are either specific to a particular language, or relate to all or a number of other languages studied within the education system, include the linguistic cultures (See Section 2.1.7) of school communities and their members, along with broader social and political events that need to be taken into consideration when introducing, maintaining and supporting languages in the education system.

4.1 Which Asian Languages?

This chapter will consider both languages that were designated NALSAS languages – Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean - and Vietnamese, an important community language in Australia, which was not supported by the NALSAS policy. The five languages have had varying degrees of success in the education system and all offer different insights into the success of language programs in schools.

Of the five languages, Indonesian has been very successful in establishing itself in the education system. Nationally, for example, enrolments in Indonesian across Australia increased by over 150% between 1994 and 2000 (Wyatt et al., 2002a). However, the study of Indonesian has been in serious decline in recent years due to a number of factors, including political and cultural issues that will be discussed in Section 4.2.

Although designated a NALSAS language, Korean has not been widely taken up in the education system. Factors contributing to this will be examined in Section 4.3. Along with Indonesian, Japanese language programs have been widely implemented
in the education system. Nationally, for example, enrolments in Japanese increased over 100% between 1992 and 2000, while in Victoria in 2005, it was studied by 18.3% of all LOTE students in government schools. In NSW, 19.2% of language students were studying Japanese in 2004 (NSW. DE&T, 2004; Victoria. DE&T, 2006; Wyatt et al., 2002a). Factors contributing to the success of Japanese will be outlined in Section 4.4.

Chinese has had a different trajectory to Indonesian and Japanese. It is not as widely studied at lower secondary levels and is largely confined to the independent and government school sectors. It is popular at the senior secondary level largely due to overseas Chinese students studying the language. Its role as an important community language in Australia is continually increasing, with the language widely studied at weekend schools. Factors impacting on the wider acceptance of Chinese in the education system will be discussed in Section 4.5, as well as Chapter 6.

Vietnamese is an important language in Australia being the most widely spoken community language nationally (Clyne & Kipp, 2002). Vietnamese, while given priority at a national and state policy level prior to the NALSAS document (See for example, Lo Bianco, 1987; Victoria. Directorate of School Education, 1994), was arguably also an obvious choice for NALSAS to prioritise in the education system. Joe Lo Bianco, writer of Australia’s National Policy on Languages (1987), argues that Vietnamese was ignored by the NALSAS committee because ‘a lot of people pushing Asian languages from the diplomatic and economic groups were really quite hostile to those groups (Vietnamese and Cantonese speakers) because they thought that they got in the way of Australian relationships with those countries27,’ and arguably because they were not a strong economic partner at the time. Rather than taking the opportunity to engage with the issues between Vietnamese in Australia and the Hanoi government, the authors of the NALSAS program excluded the language from prioritisation. Section 4.6 on Vietnamese will explore some of the ideological issues that continue to impact on the teaching of Vietnamese in Australia. The following sections explore each language in detail.

27 Stakeholder interview
4.2 Indonesian

The study of Indonesian was well established in the Australian education system when it was prioritised by NALSAS in 1994. It was first introduced into Australia secondary schools in 1966 (Kamada, 1994) and in 1969, when very few schools offered an Asian language, 77 schools in Australia offered Indonesian, while only 29 schools offered Japanese and eight offered Chinese. In 2003, Indonesian was offered in hundreds of schools in all states and territories in Australia, with 1,898 Year 12 students studying Indonesian, 161 of who undertook the Indonesian as a first language examination, representing 7.8% of Year 12 students who were studying a LOTE. In Victoria, it was the most studied language in government primary and secondary schools in 2003 (30.8% of LOTE students) and was the third most studied language in NSW (14.9% of LOTE students in 2004)\(^2\). However, as will be explored throughout this section, Indonesian study has been in decline for a number of years.

In this study, Indonesian was offered in 18 schools, although six schools in NSW and one school in Victoria were in the process of phasing out the language or had already dropped the language from the curriculum. This section explores interview data from 38 teachers of Indonesian and/or LOTE coordinators, senior administrators and stakeholders and examines largely political and cultural factors which have contributed to the decline of the language.

4.2.1 Why Offer Indonesian?

Amongst schools that were able to identify the history of Indonesian in their curricula, multiple rationales for introducing the language were identified. The main rationale, identified by 76.9% of schools, was to increase access to Asian Studies in the school curriculum. Given the importance of Indonesia as a regional neighbour, Indonesian was seen as the appropriate choice. This rhetoric reflects the agenda of Asian lobbyists in Australia, in the 1970s and 1980s who called for the greater inclusion of Indonesian studies due to their location at Australia’s door, as well as for security purposes (ASC, 1988).

\(^2\) In 2004, 19.2% of language students were studying Japanese and 20.5% were studying French in NSW.
30.8% of schools introduced Indonesian as it was considered easier to learn than Japanese, which has a writing system based on characters and *kana* scripts. Indonesian uses a Roman alphabetic script and students, schools believe, can achieve far more in a shorter period of time when compared to learning a script-based language. A further 23.1% of schools had actually wanted to introduce Japanese but could not secure teachers and therefore introduced Indonesian, for which there was a more ready teacher supply. For example, at *GOV 9 Co-ed Regional VIC*, the school could not find a Japanese teacher and only approved the introduction of Indonesian when the teacher agreed to sign a ten year contract.

In a desire to make Asian languages both accessible and challenging for students, Indonesian coexisted or had coexisted with Japanese in 44.4% of the schools offering Indonesian, with Indonesian presented as an easier language for students to learn and Japanese as a language to challenge students.

Two schools, *CEO 2 Co-ed Regional NSW* and *GOV 10 Regional Metro VIC*, offer Indonesian because they are senior secondary colleges and provide the languages offered at feeder schools.

Indonesian was established in around 40% of schools included in this sample during the 1970s and 1980s. The remaining schools introduced Indonesian in the early 1990s in conjunction with the NALSAS push for Asian languages.

### 4.2.2 The Rise and Fall of Indonesian

As indicated in the previous section, Indonesian programs have been discontinued, are being phased out, or are in danger of closure due to low student numbers in a majority of schools in this study. There were a number of reasons identified as to why enrolments and programs in Indonesian are declining in schools. 38.9% of schools in this study had discontinued or intended to phase out their Indonesian programs. Most of these were in NSW. Two schools, *GOV 1 Girls Metro NSW* and *GOV 2 Girls Metro NSW*, dropped the language almost immediately due to only one level of examination being available for both first and second language speakers of Indonesian at the time. Although a two-tier examination system has since been introduced, the schools have not reintroduced Indonesian. Two independent schools, *IND 1 Boys*
Metro NSW and IND 3 Girls Metro NSW, have discontinued or are about to discontinue Indonesian due to the wishes of the school clientele, who no longer see Indonesian as an economically useful language. This will be discussed in Section 4.2.5. At GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW, the Indonesian teacher moved on and they were not able to find a replacement, while GOV 10 Regional Metro VIC was about to discontinue Indonesian because its two feeder schools no longer offered the language. In Victoria, CEO 3 Boys Metro VIC discontinued Indonesian after student numbers became too low to continue with Year 9 classes. Despite great effort from the school, argues SA1, the closure was the consequence of native speaking Indonesian teachers being unable to control their classes, resulting in the language not been taken seriously by the students.

73.3% of schools that still had programs running reported a significant decrease in Indonesian enrolments. For example, LOTE coordinators at GOV 8 Co-ed Metro VIC, GOV 4 Boys Metro VIC, GOV 12 Girls Metro VIC and IND 4 Co-ed Regional NSW all reported drops in enrolments at the Year 7 and 8 levels as well as the Year 11 and 12 levels. LC37 points out that a decline at both the junior and senior levels of schooling makes rebuilding a language program difficult as the ‘success’ of a program is often dependent upon strong senior secondary student numbers or at the very least, potential VCE students through strong junior program enrolments. If both are lacking, the future of a language program may be under threat within a school. LC19 at GOV 10 Co-ed Regional VIC, a senior secondary college, predicts that the school will not offer Indonesian in a couple of years as the numbers of students studying Indonesian in the feeder schools was continuing to drop dramatically.

While seven schools participating in this study have discontinued or were phasing out their Indonesian programs, only one school, IND 3 Co-ed Metro VIC, reported that student enrolments had not suffered a decline over recent years. This will be discussed further in Section 4.2.8.

Looking more broadly at the study of Indonesian in Australia, within government schools in NSW and Victoria, clear decreases can be seen for Indonesian at both the primary and secondary levels. In Victoria, at the primary and secondary levels, student enrolments in Indonesian in government schools decreased by 19.1% between
2000 and 2005, significantly higher than the average decline across all language programs of 6.5%. At the Year 12 level, there was a 7.1% decrease between 2001 and 2005 (across all systems) (VCAA, 2004a, 2005; Victoria. DE&T, 2000a, 2006). In NSW government schools, Year 12 enrolments in Indonesian decreased by 42.9% between 2000 and 2005, although they only decreased by 9.7% across all systems (NSW. BOS, 2001, 2006; NSW. DE&T, 2000, 2006a). At the primary level, student enrolments in government schools plummeted 77.1% between 1999 and 2005 (NSW. DE&T, 1999, 2005). (In NSW, Japanese has also faced a significant decline in enrolments. Between 1999 and 2005 Japanese enrolments decreased 78.0% at the primary level and 10.7% at the secondary level (NSW. DE&T, 1999, 2005)). While these figures are limited to two states in Australia, they are states where Indonesian is well established and provide a strong indication of the struggle to maintain enrolments in Indonesian study.

At the tertiary level, ASAA have succeeded in gaining sustained attention in the media for the plight of Indonesian, highlighting a decline in student enrolments of 15.0% between 2001 and 2005 (See for example, Barton, 2004; Cervini, 2004; de Silva, 2005; Jeffrey, 2005; Morris, 2005a; Morris, 2005b; Russell, 2003; Tarica, 2005; Williams, 2004).

4.2.3 Political Support and Political Events

It could be argued that Indonesian has received a lot of support in the education system through lobbying by ASAA, through governmental rhetoric through the 1980s and early 1990s, and through NALSAS funding. Interview participants suggest that its place within schools in recent years has been dramatically affected by a sequence of political events as well as a change in governmental approach to the Asia-Pacific area. 83.3% of teachers of Indonesian interviewed for this study identified numerous events that they believe had contributed to a negative image of Indonesia over the last few years within the teaching community, the student community and most influentially, the parental community. These include the Asian monetary crisis in 1997, the

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29 While the Asian monetary crisis impacted on numerous South East Asian countries, the Indonesian rupiah suffered the most severe and sustained depreciation against the US dollar (International Monetary Fund, 1999).
violence experienced in East Timor following their decision to secede from Indonesia in 1999; the events of September 11, 2001 and the association of terrorism with Muslims; the Bali bombing in which scores of Australians were killed in 2002, and the Marriott Hotel bombing in Jakarta in 2003. The perception that Indonesia may have been supporting ‘boat people’ or the arrival of illegal immigrants was also an issue discussed within school communities. For example:

- The events in Bali militated against a good perception of Indonesian (T33).
- When was the bombing? 2002, that year in particular it did. Very, very severely. That’s why in Year 9 now our elective numbers are right down (LC37).
- Because of the Muslim factor and because of the Bali bombing (T6).
- Right across the board if you talk to other schools, right across the board you would see and they will tell you that the reason was the Bali Bombing. People get turned off and they think the way to go about it is to ignore the problem (LC18).
- I think it is really to do with the perception of Indonesian in the wider community and the valuing or devaluing of Indonesian (LC21).
- We’re Catholic and we were raising money to send to the East Timorese people that were being massacred by the Indonesians! East Timor is a really Catholic community and the school is a Catholic school raising money for them…And even look, I felt it too personally a bit…but just like ‘Indonesia! What are you doing!? (T6).

Indonesian teachers and LOTE coordinators report mixed reactions to these events from the student population. For example, LC1 comments, ‘Sometimes we worry that that (adverse events) might have an effect, but I think the boys see past that,’ while LC18 argues that,

we need to be literate and knowledgeable so we have acceptance of other people’s cultures and if we are accepting, the chances are there will be more harmony and the chances are there’ll be less trouble. So…students are making that connection and students are actually great. They’re quite excited.
On the other hand, LC37 who works at IND 4 Co-ed Regional NSW, reports that the events have impacted on student numbers because ‘It makes them frightened.’ LC37 reports that student enrolments dropped after the violence in East Timor following independence from Indonesia, but had begun to rise again, only to drop after the Bali bombing. This was followed by the Jakarta bombing, with LC37 arguing that the sequence of events had lead to poor enrolments for a number of years, now impacting on enrolments at all year levels. The school must build the Indonesian program up from Year 7 again. At CEO 1 Co-ed Regional VIC, which is located within a predominantly Anglo-ethnic population, T6 argues that recent events in Indonesia, ‘makes it really hard because I think kids struggle enough with languages and this Anglo Saxon background that they come from and then for them to be thrown all these other obstacles as well…’ Negative reactions to the events are evident in both regional and metropolitan schools.

While this study did not involve interviews with parents, 72.7% of teachers of Indonesian have expressed concern at the negative influence emanating from segments of the parental community. While 37.5% of teachers who discussed this issue believed there was a general devaluing of Indonesian study within the parental community, 62.5% of teachers relayed specific comments parents had directed to them. For example,

I’ve been teaching Indonesian since 1997. So since the East Timor massacre, the Bali Bombing…I had really, really bad responses, mainly from parents actually, and the kids sort of go along with their parents because the kids themselves have no idea. They don’t see the connection at all. But I still had parents who insisted on their children being taken out of the (Indonesian) class (LC21).

I have a lot of kids who want to do Indonesian but I have parents who come to me and say there is no way that my child will be doing Indonesian. Because, not so much that it’s even a language, but that it’s Indonesian…for the first time, parents saying, “I don’t want my child to do it. I don’t want my child learning the language of terrorists” (LC30).

I think there’s still a lot of negativity out there amongst the community, the parents and the staff, about languages and about Asian languages in particular.
And particularly Indonesian because of the Muslim factor and because of the Bali bombing… I’ve had parents say to me, “Oh, I don’t want them learning anything about a Muslim culture.” Or really racist stuff like that (T6).

Even when students choose to continue with the study of Indonesian, they can still experience intense pressure from home. When counselling a student who was studying Indonesian, LC19 reports that while the student enjoyed studying Indonesian, she revealed ‘to me one day, about her father - HATES Indonesians and HATES the fact that I’m studying Indonesian;’ an attitude LC19 believes weighs heavily on the student and impacts negatively on her language learning experience.

The manager of the Languages Unit at DE&T also reported that parents had been in direct contact with her demanding that their children’s schools withdraw Indonesian from the curriculum, a decision, the manager points out, that can only be made at a school level.

At GOV 10 Co-ed Regional VIC, LC19 witnessed the fear apparent amongst parts of the parental community when organising for a group of students from Indonesia to make a homestay trip to the school. After organising for the visiting students to stay with local students, LC19 found that ‘now with the group of Indonesians coming, some strong Christian families were saying, “Yes, I’ll host but only if they’re Christian”. They’re all Muslims! They’re from a really Muslim area.’ A number of families chose to withdraw their offer to host a student. Alternative families within the school community have offered to host the students, but LC19 was surprised at the lack of tolerance of some parents despite having organised numerous information evenings to alleviate concerns of families and to inform them of Islam and Muslim culture.

The detrimental impact of political events on cultural perceptions is not unique to Indonesia and Indonesian. For example, French citizens and French products in Australia were the subject of a serious backlash during the testing of nuclear weapons in the Pacific in the 1990s (See for example, Daley, Graham, & Tippet, 1995; Lynch, 1996). The French language, however, did not suffer a sustained decline as a result of
the events. Two LOTE coordinators who participated in this study were also French teachers and confirmed that the testing in the Pacific created ‘a huge issue’ in the school and put them under great pressure to respond to the situation, it did not impact significantly on student numbers. LC16 believes that a deeper valuing of France, the French culture and the French lifestyle limited the impact. ‘I mean with French, yes people had a few words about the French blowing up the South Pacific but it’s so beautiful (France) and there is France and Impressionists and cooking and it has the whole cultural thing that people know.’

However, this deeper valuing of a language and culture has not been apparent for Indonesian and the continuing decline in enrolments represents an extreme example of political events impacting on language study. The events of the last few years in Indonesia have led to an increase of fear within school communities, both within the parental and the student population. There are two clear beliefs that underlie the concerns of parents quoted in this section. First, there is the belief that all Indonesians are Muslims and second, that all Muslims are terrorists and to be feared. For these parents, Indonesia is viewed as having a single language, culture, religion and national ethos, all of which are viewed negatively. It is this fear and hatred that is derailing one of the main aims of language learning within these schools, that is, the development of cultural knowledge and understanding. The very intolerance that the study of other languages and cultures is trying to eradicate is preventing many students from benefiting from the valuable skills language and cultural study can provide.

### 4.2.4 The Role of Government in Creating Cultural Perceptions

While most teachers discussed the impact of political events on Indonesian study, 36.7% of teachers of Indonesian argued that it is also the impact of federal government policies which is contributing to the demise of the language, that is, how the government interacts with Asia, Indonesia and the issue of terror. They argue that

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30 Between 1995 and 1997, enrolments in French at the primary and secondary level in Victoria government schools increased by 10.1%. While at the national Year 12 level, there was a decrease of 586 student numbers between 1995 and 1997, they began to increase again in 1998 and were stable between 1998 and 2003.
broader governmental policies are perpetuating the negative perceptions of Indonesian amongst school communities. For example, T33 contends that the study of Indonesian has been devalued by changing governmental interaction with the area.

The messages that have been sent out by our participation in Timor, our handling of sensitive issues around East Timor and our current handling of the Timor Gap treaty is symptomatic of a growing arrogance on the part of Australia to the area...Now I think the Howard government’s emphasis on foreign relations centres on the North Atlantic more...and [gives] the perception that the cultural divide between Australia and Indonesian is widening if anything because of perceptions that Indonesia’s religious differences with Australia are going to deepen rather than anything else.

Why aren’t we as a nation encouraging cultural understanding? But I think what has happened politically, what our government is doing, the alliance with the US, this [local] community can’t value Asia given its white roots and history and given that no one ever really says we should value and understand other cultures, particularly Asian cultures. They are very different to us. I think there is a chance that I won’t be able to teach Indonesian in a few years here…(LC19)

I just think – look at the way we behaved in Timor. We were robbing them blind...that’s just the way the government is at the moment, so terribly narrow-minded. I think that it’s Howard’s fault…I used to travel all over Asia and be proud to be an Australian. Now I’m not. I just think the way our government is behaving is shocking. So hopefully things will change. (T25)

While these comments by teachers include personal political opinions, they also show a clear understanding of the importance and significance of federal support for the valuing or devaluing of language study in the curriculum. While the de facto policy may have been in support of Asian languages in the curriculum through NALSAS funding, the loss of this funding and the perceived devaluing of Australia’s relationship with Indonesia and the Asian region have also impacted directly on programs. The unpredictable directions of government policies, as well as the impact of world events on cultural perceptions, leave the implementation of language programs vulnerable to these arbitrary influences.
4.2.5 The Bind of Economic Arguments

While the main rationale identified by schools for introducing Indonesian into the curriculum was to increase access to Asian Studies and also because of the importance of Indonesia as a regional neighbour, staff at two schools in NSW, IND4 Boys Metro NSW and IND 3 Girls Metro NSW, explicitly identified the economic argument as the most important factor in getting Indonesian into the curriculum. LOTE coordinators and teachers at these schools talked of LOTE programs being responsive to the needs of the ‘clientele.’ At IND 4 Boys Metro NSW, the school community embraced Indonesian because a number of families in the school had business interests in South East Asia and many of the boys went to Bali on school surfing holidays. It is now these same factors that are contributing to the withdrawal of the program. T33 believes that a number of families with business interests in South East Asia have faced some difficulties since the Asian monetary crisis in 1997. Some parents have now been calling for Chinese (Mandarin) to be introduced instead of Indonesian as China has greater economic potential.

The federal government has placed restrictions on travel by students to Indonesia, restrictions which have been in place for several years now. The lack of economic imperative within the school to study Indonesian, along with the travel restrictions placed on trips by students to Indonesia both militate against the continuation of Indonesian within the school. T33 argues that with no further rationale identified for the introduction and continuation of the language, the lack of support for Indonesian beyond an economic imperative, both at the school level and the governmental level, becomes apparent and is the reason, T33 believes, the language is being phased out at the school.

At IND 3 Girls Metro NSW, LC31 argues that it is the perception within the wealthy school community that Indonesia is a ‘third world country’ that has led to Indonesian being replaced by Italian in the junior school. SA34, principal at the school, explained that originally there was a lot of opposition to the introduction of Indonesian, but that she used the economic argument to get the language introduced. However, it is now this argument, and the belief that Indonesia is an economically weak country, which has contributed to the decline of the language. SA34 believes that the rationale for
learning languages must be broadened beyond the economic argument in order for languages to be sustainable.

Over time people saw it [Indonesian] as pretty useless [economically]. So I think that’s where it plays into parents’ minds…it’s very nice of them to think about that [the economic factor] but we need to show them that there are a variety of reasons, other than that one, why the study of languages in the secondary school is important and promote the understanding with them…

For these two schools, once the economic argument is no longer convincing, the lack of depth in understanding and valuing of Indonesia and Indonesian culture has led to some school communities rapidly shunning the language. This argument, illustrated through Indonesian, is particularly relevant to Korean as well, as will be discussed in Section 4.3.3.

It must also be pointed out that the economic argument concerns not only Australia’s economic relationship with Asia, but also the availability of funds within the education system. LC21 at GOV 12 Girls Metro VIC argues that the decline of Indonesian in her school is a result, in part, of the loss of NALSAS funding. She argues that the NALSAS funding gave added value to languages and languages were seen as a financially viable thing to do and I suspect that that’s part of the reasoning behind our curriculum changes. It’s that it’s no longer a cash cow and I think that’s happening in a lot of schools; I think Asian languages in particular. It means that Asian languages have to stand or fall on how valuable they are seen to be in other ways. Chinese is doing OK because it’s seen as really valuable economically, whereas Indonesian is no longer seen as an economically viable language.

LC21’s views are supported by the manager of the languages unit at the Victorian DE&T who argues that the availability of extra funding created greater prestige for languages within government schools.

…the things like LOTE grants and the opportunity to do the training program, to go overseas in the last year of your language course, all of those things helped to
raise the profile of LOTE in the schools significantly and the fact that schools could apply for $500 worth of resources and almost always got it...was a real feather in the cap in language departments in schools and gave them some standing and prestige in the school community. I feel those...are quite significant loses.

The loss of NALSAS funding is an issue that has impacted on all language programs, not just Indonesian. Any sense of prestige resulting from a connection between NALSAS financial support and Asian languages has now dissipated, resulting in some schools viewing certain Asian languages as less valuable or less economically viable. The data presented in this section so far indicates that Indonesian has been particularly hard hit due to the combination of the loss of economic prestige, both in terms of the loss of NALSAS funding, and a weakened Indonesian economy, strengthening the perception of Indonesia as a ‘third world country’.

4.2.6 Inaccessibility

The negative impact of travel restrictions was identified as a significant factor contributing to the decline of the language by 86.7% of schools offering Indonesian. While funding is no longer available to assist students in homestay trips across all languages, government travel restrictions prevent students from making any trips specifically to Indonesia at all. This in turn has had a negative impact on programs in a number of schools. For example, LC14 states that,

not being able to go has taken away from one of our motivating factors. We found that kids would go to Indonesia, meet their sister school, have a wonderful time and that would filter back to the school. And now that has been taken away from us.

Although there are travel restrictions in place, Indonesian teachers at 33.3% of Victorian schools reported significant pressure from the parental communities to allow the trips to Indonesia go ahead because students were so disappointed. No school in this study, however, will run schools trips while government travel restrictions are in place.
Compounding this lack of physical access is the severance of relations Australian schools have experienced from the Indonesian side. Only 26.7% of schools in this study had managed to develop a sister school relationship with an Indonesian school, with all Australian schools losing contact with their sister schools over recent years. The fear, racial stereotyping and intolerance that are evident in small parts of school communities in Australia are also apparent from the Indonesian perspective. For example, the Indonesian sister school of GOV 9 Co-ed Regional VIC cut ties because it believed that the school trips were designed to spread Christianity amongst its Muslim school population. At GOV 8 Co-ed Metro VIC, LC18 reports that their Islamic sister school in Indonesia argued it was bound to cut relations with them by the Indonesian government. At IND 3 Girls Metro NSW, SA37 spoke of the declining number of international Indonesian students attending the school ‘now that we’re not friendly with them and our change in foreign policy,’ reflecting a sense of distrust. While two of the schools have managed to re-establish relationships with new schools (one Catholic, one Muslim), the travel restrictions have limited the development of these relationships.

4.2.7 Why Do Students Study Indonesian?

Interviews conducted with teachers and school administrators have revealed a series of events involving Indonesia that they feel have negatively impacted on the uptake of language study. This negative reaction was reported from the school community as well as the wider communities within which schools are situated. It is also interesting to note the opinions of students who are studying the language at a senior secondary level as a contrast to parental opinions. In the student questionnaires that will be examined in detail in Chapter 5, students were asked to discuss positive and negative cultural perceptions that they have of the language and cultures they are studying. Arguably, students who have strong negative impressions of a language and culture are unlikely to have continued with Indonesian study. However, questionnaires filled out by 137 Year 11 and 12 students of Indonesian in Victoria and NSW demonstrate that those that continue with Indonesian study are well aware of some negative features of Indonesian society, although this has not deterred them from continuing with their studies.
In terms of negative cultural perceptions of Indonesia, 49.6% of students discussed violence. This encompassed violence associated with terrorism as well as with religion. Students expressed a fear of violence and the danger of travelling to Indonesia, as well as a fear of terrorism, although many students distinguished between the acts of an extreme few and Indonesians in general. For example,

- With all the violence that is happening it puts you off going there because are we safe? S405
- There tends to be a lot of violence in the country. Especially with the Bali bombings several years ago. S406
- Not a safe place for Westerners to visit. S50
- Indonesia is an unstable country and so traveling [sic] there poses a risk. S46
- Also the recent Bali bombings have left a negative impact on my view of Indonesia. S537
- Terrorist groups that operate within the culture. S137
- Bali bombings - but obviously it's a minority. S49
- No. Besides a few extremists like members of Al-Qaeda. S224

The Muslim religion itself was not a negative issue for students, with one student objecting to the perception that all Muslims are terrorists. However, violence associated with religious conflict was an issue for students. For example,

- People seem to stereotype all Indonesians as Muslims and therefore terrorists. S529
- The country as a whole is very religious in both a good and a bad way. Just like other traditionalist religions there can be a lot of violence. S475
- Yes the bombing, the army and religious conflicts. S324
- Religious conflict… S325
- …Aech province insurgencies... S428
- Also the political and religious strife in provinces such as Aech and the East Timor conflict. S328
- Violence in Aech and the Bali bombings. S568
Only two students wrote overtly racist comments about the issue of terrorism and Islam.

### 4.2.8 Success in Indonesian

While we have highlighted a number of negative trends in Indonesian study, it must also be pointed out that one school, *IND 2 Co-ed Metro VIC*, reported that student enrolments had not suffered a decline over recent years. T25, the Indonesian coordinator at the school for 24 years, was however, at a loss to explain why this was the case. The only reason that T25 can think of is that the school has enjoyed a significant success at the Year 12 level for many years and that this may provide the motivation for students to continue with the language, while a more open-minded parental community may have contribute to the continuing success of the language as well.

Interestingly, there has not been a serious decline in Indonesian enrolments within the Victorian independent school sector in general. Between 2000 and 2005, overall enrolments in Indonesian in Victorian independent schools have only decreased 2.9% (Japanese enrolments have decreased 1.3%), with the number of schools offering the language increasing from 47 in 2000 to 54 in 2003 (AISV, 2001; Unpublished data: AISV). It may very well be the case that an open-minded parental population has contributed to the ongoing success of the Indonesian programs in these schools, although serious consideration needs to be given to the role of funding structures for LOTE programs in the different education systems as will be discussed in Section 7.6.

### 4.3 Korean

While one of the prioritised Asian languages under NALSAS, Korean was notably unsuccessful in establishing itself within the Australian education system. The majority of Korean programs in 2003 were offered in Victoria and NSW, with 16 primary and secondary schools in these two states offering the language. Throughout Australia in 2003, 259 students studied Korean at the Year 12 level, 81.6% of who speak Korean as their first language. Students of Korean represented 0.8% of Year 12 LOTE students.
Data from three schools where Korean is taught is included in this section. As indicated in Section 3.3, two of these schools are not included in the main component of the study, as they did not match all the criteria sought in this study. They have been included in this section only to assist in developing an understanding of why Korean has not been successful in the education system. Eight interviews were conducted in the three schools with teachers of Korean, LOTE coordinators and senior administrators. The schools offering Korean are referred to as GOV 3 Co-ed Metro VIC, KVIC, an independent girls school in metropolitan Victoria and KNSW, a co-educational government school in regional NSW.

4.3.1 Why Offer Korean?

SA16, principal at GOV 3 Co-ed Metro VIC, began considering the introduction of an Asian language into the curriculum in the late 1980s. Although surveys completed by parents indicated that the school community was interested in Japanese, SA16 chose to introduce Korean because it was not offered in any other schools in the area and substantial funding was available to set up Korean programs.

At KVIC, extensive consultation with the parental community, businesses and government groups helped identify a number of important and convincing reasons for the school to introduce Korean. First, South Korea was one of Australia’s largest trading partners in the late 1980s and the school saw many opportunities for students to gain employment in trade and business related ventures. Second, universities were interested, at the time, in students studying Korean at the tertiary level, providing important continuity for secondary school students. Third, the government was strongly promoting South Korea, indicating that it was a high priority for Australia’s economic future. Finally, consultation with the business community also indicated that South Korea was an important country in relation to trade and commerce with Australia.

31 A further two schools included in the main component of this study previously had Korean programs. At State 4 Co-ed Metro NSW, the program ended when the Korean teacher was transferred to another school and no replacement teacher could be found. At IND 3 Girls Metro NSW, the language was phased out after student numbers became too low. The language was originally introduced in the school due to its perceived economic importance. When this perception changed, argues SA34, students chose not to study the language.
At KNSW, Korean was introduced largely on the basis of the original two-year funding that was available to help set up Korean programs and to help train language teachers.

All three schools found that the funding helped provide a strong basis for the language programs. The schools spent resources on retraining teachers already employed at the school in Korean, for in-country teacher training trips, to buy resources and to employ ethnic teacher aides. In 1992, the Australian government set up the Australian-Korean Foundation, a bilateral council of the Australian government, solely to promote exchange and understanding between the two countries. The schools were able to access extensive support and funding through the Australian-Korean Foundation, as well as the Korean consulate in Sydney, the Korean embassy in Canberra, the Association of Korean Teachers of Victoria, the NSW Board of Studies and, until its closure in 2002, the Korean consultant in the languages unit at the Victorian DE&T.

4.3.2 Success for Korean?
Staff at both Victorian schools insist that their Korean programs did perform well initially, yet at both schools, after 12 years, Korean is being phased out of the curriculum due to student choice. At GOV 3 Co-ed Metro VIC, SA12 stated that ‘We will offer it once more but I don’t hold out much hope. And I’m guessing we’ll follow Korean through the school till the kids finish and drop it – by community choice, not by us, by students not choosing it.’ At KVIC, LC16 remarked that ‘A lot of parents seem to ask about an Asian language. What language does the school offer when they are making choices, but Korean doesn’t ever seem to be the one they want.’ At KNSW, the school administration is happy with the progress of the language, which is largely run for Year 7 students. There is no expectation at the school that Korean classes will be offered on-campus at higher year levels in the future.

The question remains as to why Korean has not been successful in establishing itself in the education system. The interviews elicited a number of clear factors which teachers believe resulted in the decline of Korean in their schools.
4.3.3 The Importance of Cultural and Economic Prestige

As with Indonesian, the impact of sociopolitical events was seen as a significant factor in the decline of Korean. While South Korea was touted by the federal government as an important and rising economic power in the early 1990s, staff at both Victorian schools argue that negative media presentations in the years since has had a detrimental effect on the image of South Korea within the school. Teachers at both schools cited the disruptive political situation on the Korean peninsula, including the continued division of the country and the US military presence as problematic, along with the building up of a nuclear power in North Korea. They also highlighted that images of violence and militant unionism have received prominent press in Australia (See, for example, AAP, 1991; Cheesman, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c; Ensor, 1986; Fussell, 1994; Hills, 1993; Lee, 2003).

In Section 4.2.3, we discussed the problem of an economic rationale for the promotion of language learning and the absence of deeper valuing of the language and culture. The effect of political events in Indonesia and the impact of the Asian economic crisis, for example, contributed to the demise of Indonesian in two NSW independent schools. In discussing the demise of Korean in the school, LC16, a French teacher at KVJC, argues that a lack of knowledge of Korean culture, or of a valuing of Korean culture, as opposed to French and European cultures, has led to negative media presentations having a greater impact on Korean in the school.

What do you know about Korea? Well there was a war there and there was a TV series about the war – MASH. And there’s a Korean car and that’s about it. It isn’t even a thing that tends to receive positive news stories… and you look at the Getaway programs. How often do they go to Korea? Where as you’ll see the France special or the Italy special - the pretty country, the nice people and nice food…I don’t know that the language is appealing to our clientele. It’s not a language that they find interesting, a culture that they find appealing. You look at French and…parents all think it’s wonderful because it sounds pretty. In a school like ours too…prestige counts…and I don’t think Korean carries that prestige as far as our clientele is concerned.
Along with the importance of cultural prestige, the perception of economic strength, or lack of it, also impacted heavily on the popularity of Korean, particularly after the Asian economic downtown in 1997. SA12 argues that the ‘downgrading’ of Australia’s relationship with South Korea has had a negative impact on the perceived importance of South Korea for Australia and on the school’s ability to cultivate relationships with the country.

…when we introduced Korean, Korea was our third largest trading partner and there was a big push to have a lot of interaction. We used to have a lot of Korean visitors and so on. But then an economic downturn hit Korea and the rest of Asia and that interaction dried up (SA12).

While Korea did experience an economic downturn in the late 1990s, in 2001, Korea was Australia’s third largest export market, representing 5.9% of Australia’s total trade (ASAA, 2002). However, the perception of Korea as an inconsequential economic partner remains within school communities.

As LC21 argues in Section 4.2.5, with the loss of financial incentives, Asian languages will ‘stand or fall on how valuable they are seen to be in other ways.’ The examination of Korean and Indonesian in this study has shown that for a number of schools the introduction of these two languages was closely associated with an economic imperative, both in terms of trade and commerce and in terms of the money available within the education system, and that a lack of valuing beyond this is causing both languages ‘to fall’.

4.3.4 Asia Still Equals Economic Power

The issue, however, is further complicated by the shifting perception of economic power within Asia. LC16 argues that one of the major forces impacting on the Korean program is the ‘enormous interest in Chinese’ and the belief that China will have a vital economic relationship with Australia in the future. While KVIC does not offer Mandarin or Japanese, they already run cultural trips to China and Japan and have a sister school in both countries. They do not offer trips to Korea even though they offer Korean in the curriculum. Chinese (Mandarin), and to a lesser extent Japanese, have already been situated in the school as more important and prestigious than Korean.
At KGSN in NSW, LC38 also argues that it is the prestige of Japanese which dominates the community’s view of Asia. Even though Korean is taught in the school, LC38 argues that the school community still remains largely ignorant of Korea.

There’s really not much knowledge of Korea. It’s a fairly obscure country, particularly for people up here. They have more contact with Japanese on the coast…there are a lot of Koreans on the coast but they all think they’re Japanese. And they [students] say ‘Look at all the Japanese writing.’ and I say, ‘Well as a matter of fact that’s Korean.’ And they say ‘Oh, is it?’ The perception is that everyone is Japanese so Japanese has the higher profile in their heads.

This issue involves not just a sense of economic prestige and dominance within Asia, but within the school communities. This is apparent at KVIC in the promotion of Chinese within the school, and at KNSW through the lack of a broader promotion of Korean beyond the Year 7 language classes where, LC38 argues, Japanese dominates students’ images of Asia.

4.3.5 Broken Promises

There are a number of other contributory factors teachers identified, which are important to highlight in regard to Korean. The first factor is the two level examination system. While this will be discussed more fully in Section 6.3, we will briefly discuss the examination situation in relation to Korean. Korean was introduced into the Victorian curriculum in 1992 with only one level of examination. SA13 stated that the need for multi-levelled examinations was an issue greatly emphasised to curriculum and examination committees when Korean was introduced and that schools were given assurances by the examination committee that a multi-level examination would be put in place immediately so second language learners of Korean would not be disadvantaged in examinations. While these discussions took place in the early 1990s, the introduction of a two level examination system for first and second language speakers of Korean did not eventuate until 2001. Teachers at both Victorian schools see the extended delay in the examination development as one of the most significant factors in the decline of their Korean courses. LC9 and T9 both argue that by the time the two levels were developed most second language learners
were convinced that it was a disadvantage to study the language. Overall, at the national level, Korean is predominantly taken by first language speakers (81.3%).

Second, the image of Korean in the school, argues LC9 and T9, was damaged by the restrictions placed on student visits from South Korea. While the promotion of Korean by the government was seen to place the development of Korean-Australian relations at a high priority level, government restrictions on student visas for visiting Korean students caused significant problems in the early years of the exchange program. This required, according to LC9 and T9, time-consuming communications with the Australian embassy in Korea before successfully gaining visas for students.

Third, the lack of resources and unwillingness of different curriculum groups and companies to develop resources for Korean also impacted negatively on the development of the language. This issue is not just relevant to Korean, but to a number of smaller languages for which sourcing resources is particularly difficult. As part of the funding start-up money, schools were expected to write their own materials, with the intention that materials would be developed for schools over time. However, LC16 argues that this has never happened and that teachers of Korean are still writing all of their own curriculum materials. With only a few schools offering Korean, as with many small candidature languages, the incentive for private companies to develop textbooks and materials is low. While the Asia Education Foundation have produced some good CD and multimedia materials, T10 argues that they have focused on other languages with larger student numbers such as Chinese (Mandarin), Vietnamese, Indonesian and Japanese. Materials provided from South Korea itself, argue LC9 and T9, are not appropriate for the Australian context, having been written largely for second generation Koreans living in America, who already have some knowledge of Korean. Within Australia, help from the Korean embassy for writing materials also tends to be targeted at ‘background speakers who are living here or children of immigrants or Korean kids born here (T9).’ For T20, the textbooks used in the classroom, which have not been updated in nine years, are a source of ongoing embarrassment for her. ‘One of my girls said, “This textbook is stupid, stupid!” And it hurts me but I just ignore it, pretend that is doesn’t go to my heart. “It’s stupid!”’
The fourth and final issue is the availability of Korean at the university level. This is another issue that is relevant to a number of smaller languages (See for example, Baldauf, 1995), and will be illustrated again in regard to Vietnamese. In relation to Korean, KVIC explicitly mentioned the importance of universities being interested in promoting and maintaining Korean programs when they decided to introduce the language. However, in Victoria, Korean provision at the university level has shrunk to a minimal level. While four universities originally grouped together in the 1990s to form the National Centre for Korean Studies in Melbourne, the group ceased to exist in 2001, with only Monash University continuing with their Korean program (ASAA, 2002). Teachers at both Victorian schools argue that the virtual loss of Korean at a tertiary level and with this, the ability for a greater number of teachers of Korean to graduate, has also led to a loss of prestige for Korean.

4.3.6 Student Perceptions of Korea
Students of Korean did not write of any negative impressions of South Korea or Korean culture. However, 28.6% of students of Korean wrote of the negative impact of North Korea and the dangers associated with nuclear weapons the North Korean government may be developing.

4.4 Japanese
Japanese was first offered in secondary schools in Australia in 1967 (Kamada, 1994). While it was not as well established as Indonesian in the 1980s, it quickly became extremely popular throughout Australia and was the most studied language at the Year 12 level across Australia for a number of years. It was replaced by Chinese in 2003, but still has far more enrolments than Chinese throughout the primary and secondary levels in Australia.

In this study, Japanese was offered in 20 schools, with a further three schools having previously offered the language. The following sections explore interview data from 33 teachers of Japanese and/or LOTE coordinators and senior administrators. The overwhelming impression that was gained from the interviews in relation to Japanese was a sense of the language being well established in the education system, with no particular impression of negativity. This is in stark contrast to the dialogue we have
witnessed around Indonesian and Korean, which both appear to be in decline to varying degrees within the education system. This section will examine a number of interesting features of the dialogue surrounding Japanese, including motivation and the cultural relevance of Japan and Japanese for students in Australia.

4.4.1 Why Offer Japanese?

Of the schools that could identify why Japanese was originally introduced, 66.7% focused on Australia’s trade relationship with Japan, the business and economic opportunities that were seen to be available and the potential career benefits for students as important. As with Indonesian, this rhetoric reflects the argumentation of both Asian lobby groups and the government, as identified by LC3, ‘It was encouraged by the state and federal government – it’s a big industrial neighbour, trading partner.’

The desire to introduce an Asian language to provide a balance to European languages already available in the school was identified as an important motivation by 26.7% of schools. CEO 3 Boys Metro VIC chose Japanese because they wanted an alternative Asian language to Indonesian to challenge more academically oriented students. GOV 5 Co-ed Regional VIC introduced Japanese because the school is situated in a regional location and, given the difficulty in attracting LOTE teachers to regional areas, wanted to work with the local communities to develop a common LOTE across primary and secondary sectors.

Three schools have discontinued their Japanese programs. CEO 4 Girls Metro NSW discontinued Japanese due to low student numbers. The school was offering five languages in the curriculum at the time and LC29 argues it was seen as the most difficult of the languages (the other languages on offer were French, German, Indonesian and Italian) because of the character and kana based writing systems. GOV 9 Co-ed Metro VIC had wanted to introduce Japanese for many years as it was offered at the local feeder primary school. However, as the school is located in a regional area, they had found it difficult to attract a Japanese teacher. When a Japanese teacher was found, the program was introduced for one year, but discontinued when the teacher left at the end of that year. GOV 1 Girls Metro NSW also discontinued Japanese due to teacher supply issues. Although there were still
strong enrolments in Japanese, LC34 discontinued Japanese after employing nine different teachers in 10 years. The teachers left for better paid positions at independent schools and in the banking industry. LC34 declared that, ‘It drove me nuts…we just ended up in despair!’ and now refuses to run on-campus classes in Japanese even though this forces 22 students at the Year 11 and 12 levels to study the language through Open High32.

4.4.2 The Hype Around Japanese
Although there was a ‘lot of hype’ amongst the parental community when Japanese was first introduced into schools, T11 argues that ‘this is slowly going down… now it has dropped...’ This hype has been replaced by a concerted effort by schools to develop a deeper relationship with Japan. The development of interaction between the schools and Japan, allowing for a deeper understanding of Japan and Japanese culture, providing opportunities to utilise the language as well as for exchange, was highlighted as an important aim by 90% of the schools offering Japanese. For example,

Twelve to thirteen years ago, the impulse for the government was to push for Asian languages. It was carefully researched and planned by the school. Hand in hand with that went a sort of detailed plan to have a cultural exchange with a Japanese school, which has probably been the significant element in the fact that the language continues. (SA1)

Then about 4 years later we decided to introduce Japanese as it was a significant trading partner and we felt that our students would benefit from that. Now we have exchange programs and sister schools. Many have now gone to Japan, come back to school, finished Japanese and then go onto uni to do a double degree and work using Japanese now. (SA36)

At CEO 3 Boys Metro NSW, LC27 stated that an important influence in setting up the Japanese program in the school was the strong relationship that had already been established between the local council and a sister city in Japan. The relationship

32 In fact, the number of students is so high that Open High sends a teacher to the school rather than have all the students attend the Open High campus for their once a month face-to-face classes.
involves a reciprocal exchange program, with the local council paying for Australian students to attend each year. On average, five to six students at the school successfully apply each year.

Not all schools could afford, or allowed, exchange trips to Japan, but all schools did host homestay students from Japan. For example, at *CEO 4 Girls Metro VIC*, the school social justice policy prohibited overseas trips as some students may be excluded due to financial reasons, while at *IND 1 Co-ed Metro VIC*, school trips to Japan were prohibited due to the difficulty in accommodating a kosher diet while students were in the country. Both schools however, accommodated homestay students from Japan each year.

While cultural exchange was seen as extremely important for all schools, the possibility of students developing careers from language study prompted varying reactions within schools. In Victoria, three LOTE coordinators and teachers argued that there was a growing realisation among students and parents that Asian languages with character and *kana* based writing systems were difficult to achieve proficiency in within the school system and therefore difficult to develop into a career advantage. For example,

> When Japan was in the boom times I used to get parents coming to parent teacher interviews saying, ‘I want little Mary to continue on with Japanese because she’ll be able to make a lot of money if she knows Japanese.’…But they’ve stopped saying that now. In fact, now I get some parents saying, ‘What’s the point in doing Japanese?’ (T31)

> Many years ago, about 1990…parents were in favour of Japanese because they though there were going to be these millions of jobs with Japanese, but I hear absolutely nothing of that and no child mentions that anymore and I think people have probably learnt that there aren’t these jobs with Japanese and it’s not such a glamour job to be a tour guide in the Victorian market and that in fact the Japanese don’t want someone with lousy Japanese anyhow. (LC13)
And I also think there’s been a change in attitudes of people towards Asian languages. I think people have realised that Asian languages are difficult and therefore when the child is choosing a language, to go outside French or German which have been established in the community for a long time, it’s a major decision. And at the end of the day, you’ve got to ask why would I learn Korean or Japanese (SA12).

On the other hand, at **IND 1 Co-ed Metro VIC** and **IND 1 Co-ed Regional NSW** career opportunities were still an important motivation for students. At both schools, the language departments ensure that past students of Japanese who have worked in Japan, completed Japanese majors at university or who are employed in a Japan related field, return to the school as role models for current students of Japanese. For example, at **IND 1 Co-ed Metro VIC**, where 34.2% of Year 12 students study a language (11.9% of Year 12 students study Japanese), past students who have returned from time in Japan are often employed by the school as assistant language teachers for short periods of time. These past students must only talk in Japanese to students and spend time interacting with students outside as well as inside the classroom. This approach is also utilised for the other languages in the school, and SA20 argues that having past students speaking their LOTE mingling in the school makes ‘an incredible difference…so if you ask me what’s the most effective thing we do, that’s it.’

At **CEO 3 Boys Metro VIC** and **CEO 3 Boys Metro NSW** it is the difficulty of the language which motivates both students to take the language and the school to continue to offer the language. For example, SA1 at **CEO 3 Boys Metro VIC** argues that it is the ‘kudos’ of studying Japanese that attracts and retains the more gifted students in the school. SA 28 at **CEO 3 Boys Metro NSW** also argues that the language is important for retaining gifted students in the school.

The reality is that those students who take Japanese at HSC are usually very bright students, gifted. And if we didn’t offer it they would probably leave and go to another school that did offer it. And we don’t want to lose them so we have to cater to their needs so to speak.
4.4.3 A Cultural Gateway

While homestay exchanges provide students with motivation to continue with Japanese study, T21 highlights the ubiquity of Japanese culture in Australia, arguing that there is ample influence from Japan in Australia that is accessible to students all the time. This includes Japanese cars, TV programs including cartoons and the *Iron Chef*, computer games and Nintendo, and t-shirts with Japanese characters written on them.

While Japanese study provides greater opportunities to interact with Japanese culture, two teachers also highlighted the significance of Japanese culture as a representation of Asian culture and as an access point to a shared identity based on pan-Asian interests amongst students. For example, T13 argues that some students at *CEO 3 Boys Metro VIC* are attracted to Japanese study because components of Japanese culture are popular in other Asian countries, such as *manga* (cartoon books), *anime* (animation films), J-POP (Japanese pop music) and J-league (the Japanese soccer league). He argues that this attracts students with a non-Asian background but particularly students with an Asian background. At *IND 5 Boys Metro VIC*, LC31 also agrees that students with an Asian background are attracted to Japanese study because of common interests linked to students’ Asian heritage.

They have a Japanese club where they can access magazines and *manga* and it alternates between *anime* and cultural stuff – *kanji* writing, how to read *manga*, Japanese food. The boys want to call it the Asian club because only the Asian boys go but it’s called the Japanese club. LC31

The appeal of Japanese as an Asian language is not just to Australian students but also to international students from China and Korea. At *GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW*, LC39 stated that most senior students taking Japanese at his school were Korean international students who were interested in Japan culturally and because it will benefit their careers upon returning to Korea. The principal of SSCL in NSW also agreed that there was a ‘lot of interest on the part of Chinese and Korean students to take Japanese beginners at HSC level’.
This issue of a pan-Asian identity from the students’ perspective will be explored further in Section 5.4.2 and Chapter 8.

4.4.4 Japanese and Gender

LC27 at CEO Boys 3 Metro NSW argues that an important part of the success of the program at her school has been the ability to shape language learning into a particularly ‘manly’ language to study. LC27 does not believe this would be as successful with other languages because Japanese culture lends itself towards such promotion.

With regards to languages, I think for us, Japanese is the easier choice for us to convince boys to do because we really do focus our program because it’s just boys. In Year 8 we really focus on sumo wrestling and martial arts and samurai and ninja and all those sorts of things that they’re interested in, so we do target it as being a very masculine language. I think with the boys, there’s a lot of ideas out there, e.g., that if you study French, that it’s a bit girly. So I think in those terms boys do see it as a real boys choice to do a language.

Conversely, T11 at CEO 4 Girls Metro VIC believes that the Japanese program at their school is particularly successful because they tailor it to the interests of girls. This includes cooking lessons, *kimino* days, cake making of iconic images of Japan, as well as appreciating sumo, and karate demonstrations. However, within the school, LC10 argues that these activities contribute to the success of the other languages as well. While Japanese culture has distinctively feminine and masculine cultural features which these schools have exploited for motivational purposes, the ability to cater any language program to the interests of students within these single gender schools has contributed significantly to the success of their programs.

4.4.5 Student Perceptions of Japan

The interviews with school staff regarding Japanese revealed very little negativity towards the language, culture or language programs and students wrote overwhelmingly of positive aspects of studying Japanese. However, 17% of students of Japanese did write negatively about Japan’s role in the Second World War.
Interestingly, a majority of replies, 72.2%, came from students with an Asian background. For example,

- World War 2…and I’m Chinese. S207 (Born in China, speaker of Mandarin)
- Japan massacred China. S485 (Born in China, speaker of Mandarin)
- Japanese did bad things to Chinese people and played a part in causing WWII. S495 (Born in Taiwan, speaker of Mandarin)
- As a Korean, who has been invaded by Japan, I do not particularly like the government of Japan or war heros. S668 (Born in South Korea, speaker of Korean)
- The Japanese occupied Malaysia during WWII and there are still some of the elder generation who holds great resentment towards the Japanese. S38 (Born in Malaysia, speaker of Mandarin and Malay)
- Negative approach to Koreans, Japanese world history indicates cruelty, e.g. invasion of Nanjing, South Korea, many Pacific islands. S575 (Born in South Korea, speaker of Korean)
- Colonising Korea, Harsh treatment of Koreans. S576 (Parents born in South Korea, speaker of Korean)

The issue of Japan’s role in the Second World War; the continuing visits of Japanese Prime Ministers to the Yasukuni war shrine in Tokyo to pay respects to Japanese ‘war heros’ including those convicted as war criminals; the interpretation of Japan’s role in the war in Japanese high school history books, and the lack of compensation for many Asian women forced into prostitution by the Japanese during the Second World War are some of the unresolved issues that feature prominently in heated discourse across the Asia-Pacific region each year (See for example: Cornell, 2001; Green, 2003; McDonald & Cameron, 2005; Millett, 2000; Schauble, 2000; Shangwu, 2004). While for many Australian-born students this history in the Asia-Pacific area is not a concern, it is still at the forefront of the minds for some students with an Asian heritage.

A further 11.1% of replies on the negative aspects of Japanese war history came from students attending a Jewish school in Melbourne. For example, ‘WW2. Mistreatment of POWs. (S166).’ The remaining 16.7% of comments came from students living in
regional NSW. In focus groups these students also mentioned visiting the Cowra prisoner of war camps\textsuperscript{33} as part of a school excursion and therefore had had greater personal interaction with the issue. For all these students of Japanese, a personal awareness of Asia-Pacific history and of pain and suffering inflicted during the Second World War still resonates.

4.5 Chinese

The study of Chinese in Australia has had a slower trajectory than Indonesian and Japanese, but interest in the language has increased dramatically in recent years. The pattern of language study, however, is very different to other languages. In 2003, Chinese was the most studied language in Australia at the Year 12 level, although it is not widely studied throughout the primary and early secondary years. In Victoria, for example, only 3.2\% of LOTE students study Chinese at the Year 7 level, but by Year 12, this has increased to 14.6\% of LOTE students\textsuperscript{34}. The domination of Chinese at the Year 12 level is a result, in part, of the considerable increase in Chinese international students completing their senior secondary schooling in Australia.

In this study, Chinese was offered at nine schools, eight in Victoria and one in NSW. This section explores interview data from 28 teachers of Chinese and/or LOTE coordinators, senior administrators and stakeholders and offers interesting insights into the level of acceptance of Chinese in the mainstream education system as well as ideological issues with the written format of the language.

\textsuperscript{33} During the Second World War, 28 internment camps were set up around Australia to house prisoners of war, internees and political prisoners. The camp at Cowra housed over 1100 Japanese prisoners of war who attempted a mass breakout in 1944, with many Japanese and a small number of Australian soldiers dying.

\textsuperscript{34} This is the only language where such an increase occurs. Usually the proportion of students taking a language remains at similar levels between Year 7 and Year 12, such as for French, Japanese, German and Greek, or the proportion of LOTE students decreases as it does for Italian (from 20.3\% of LOTE students at the Year 7 level to 9.6\% of LOTE students at the Year 12 level) (DE&T, 2007).
4.5.1 Why Offer Chinese?
Seven of the nine schools which offer Chinese had introduced the language at the request of community groups within the schools. In five of the schools, Chinese programs are supported by a large number of Chinese international students who are able to take up the language at the senior secondary level. One school, GOV 10 Co-ed Regional VIC, a senior secondary college, has no feeder schools which offer Chinese and therefore caters solely to Chinese international students in the school. The remaining school, CEO 1 Co-ed Regional VIC, a school with a predominantly Anglo-ethnic population and no international students, offers Chinese as a stand-alone subject at the Year 9 level. Language is compulsory at the school until Year 9 and only Indonesian is available at the junior secondary level. Chinese is offered as an alternative to students who do not plan to continue with a language past Year 9 and who want an alternative to continuing with Indonesian.

At two further schools with a predominantly Anglo-ethnic school population, INDI Boys Metro NSW and GOV 6 Co-ed Metro VIC, Chinese was introduced to challenge students in accelerated or gifted student streams. However, at both schools, the students considered the language too difficult and through pressure from parents and students, it was withdrawn from the curricula.

4.5.2 Accessibility and Chinese
One issue, which needs to be mentioned here briefly, is the study of Chinese and the presence of background speakers of the language. The high proportion of overseas Chinese students and students with a Chinese heritage taking the language in the school system has led to strong and continuing arguments that these students prevent or discourage students without a Chinese heritage from studying the language. This issue is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

4.5.3 Acceptance of Chinese within the Mainstream
A striking difference between the Victoria and NSW interviews is the acceptance and promotion of Chinese within the school system. While eight schools in the Victorian sample offer Chinese, which will be explored shortly, only one school in NSW runs on-campus classes. In NSW, a further three schools have large Chinese-speaking populations within the school, but deliberately choose not to run classes on campus.
At IND 3 Girls Metro NSW, the principal has long resisted running Chinese classes precisely because there is a very large Chinese-speaking population within the school.

One of the languages that parents would have liked us to adopt was Mandarin because we have people who would culturally have connections with that, in the school, in fairly large numbers. However, I think that in itself is a reason not to be offering it right through the school but rather to be offering a language that is not so well represented in the backgrounds of parents as part of offering the foreign language is to develop empathy with cultures that they don’t really have strong contact with (SA34).

This is indeed an important aim of language learning and 23.1% of students studying Japanese at the school speak Mandarin and/or Cantonese outside of the school, indicating a willingness of these students to explore other languages and cultures. However, SA34 also stated that she has avoided offering Chinese because it is well catered for by the SSCL and many students attend the Chinese course on the weekends. In fact, SA34 believes that any language that is well catered for at the SSCL does not need to be offered in the curriculum. This opinion is problematic in that the belief that the study of community languages belongs outside of mainstream schools devalues the study of these languages. It also undermines LOTE programs in Australians schools in that a large percentage of students who speak a LOTE at home study a LOTE in the school system. They are motivated intrinsically to study a language and are more likely to continue language study through to the Year 12 level (See Chapter 5). By denying students the opportunity to study a community language, SA34 is potentially weakening the LOTE program within her school.

However, with the introduction of the IB program into the school, where students are required to study a second language at the Year 12 level, SA34 has been forced to increase the number of languages in the curriculum and as a result, students can take IB Chinese at the Year 11 and 12 levels. Still, SA34 is reluctant to offer a community language in the mainstream curriculum and has only allowed Chinese to be taught by

35 Figures were not provided for students studying the European languages in the school so it is not possible to determine what percentage of students taking Latin, French and German have a Chinese heritage. Students of Indonesian all come from an English-only speaking background.
an outside tutor, rather than incorporating the language formally into the curriculum. It is still on the periphery of the school. The LOTE coordinator at the school, LC31, argues that with so many students of a Chinese heritage in the school, she constantly receives requests from parents that students at all year levels be able to access Chinese in the curriculum. Despite repeated requests from the parental community and the LOTE coordinator, most students cannot access Chinese classes on campus.

At **GOV 1 Girls Metro NSW**, SA37 simply refuses to try to run a Chinese program. Although there are 26 students (8.7% of all students in Year 11 and 12) taking Chinese at the SSCL, SA37 believes that it would be too difficult to find a teacher of Chinese based on her experience with teachers of Japanese. As mentioned in Section 4.4.1, after employing nine different teachers of Japanese in ten years, SA37 shut the Japanese program in exasperation with the teacher supply issue, which has forced 22 Year 11 and 12 students of Japanese to study the language through distance education. She refuses to run any Asian language courses on campus because she believes they are all too difficult to staff. Again, the LOTE coordinator, LC34, reports that she receives many requests from the parental community that Chinese be introduced into the curriculum, but to no avail.

At **GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW**, 31 students (11.1% of all Year 11 and 12 students) study Chinese through an outside tutor or through the SSCL. The school has only employed the outside tutor for a year as an interim measure for international students who do not have enough subjects to take in the curriculum and who physically cannot attend the SSCL on Saturday mornings. SA42, principal at the school, has conflicting attitudes to the running of on-campus classes. First, SA42 argues that the school has not been able to find a native speaking teacher of Chinese who would be best suited to teach the largely native speaker students of Chinese. A teacher was employed previously but was a second language learner of Chinese and did not have sufficient language skills for the position. SA42 argued that with the difficulties he had experienced in employing teachers of Chinese, it was much easier to send students to the SSCL. Second, when the school did try to run on campus classes recently, SA42 argues that his efforts were hindered by the preference of some students to study through the SSCL even when Chinese was a subject in the school curriculum. SA42 believes these
students prefer to study ‘higher order’ subjects at school, such as physics, chemistry and maths, and to take Chinese as an extra subject on the weekend.

While SA42 would like to see Chinese classes run on campus, he also admits to personally believing that community languages should not be offered at the SSCL nor in school curricula. ‘There needs to be some sort of cost benefit analysis of running these community languages. I know it’s politically sensitive. But that’s just my hobbyhorse. It’s just a waste of money.’ SA42 believes that a small number of languages should be offered throughout the whole of Australia to make sure that the running of language programs is ‘cost efficient.’

These three examples of Chinese programs highlight the importance of examining the motivation behind the refusal or the inability of schools of offer Chinese as a part of the mainstream curriculum. The handling of the programs in these three schools highlights three important points. First, the availability of Chinese through the SSCL provides,

- A motive to cancel programs in schools,
- A welcomed alternative when resources are not available, and
- An alternative avenue for some students who prefer to study other subjects during normal school hours.

The principal of the SSCL believes that many schools see the Saturday program as an easy way out of offering languages in their curriculum. Recognising some of the difficulties in offering languages, when the number of students attending the SSCL from one school reaches a certain level, the principal of the SSCL starts applying pressure on the school to set up an on-campus language program. The SSCL offers to help secure the services of a teacher and provide any assistance required with curriculum development in order to promote language program within schools. The principal admits, however, that this usually does not result in the schools offering their own programs.
There is clearly an undertone in the NSW interviews that the place for community languages and in particular, for Chinese, is outside of the school. While some schools struggle to find staff for programs, other schools simply refuse to run on-campus classes. The lack of validation for Chinese language programs perpetuates the notion that the language has no legitimate place in the curriculum. What is important to consider is how this impacts on the students’ experiences, on their willingness to continue with language study when it is not offered in the mainstream and how their sense of self, their cultural identity and their linguistic identity are affected. While some students clearly prefer to study Chinese at Saturday classes, the treatment of certain languages as peripheral to mainstream schooling is a continuing concern, as highlighted by SA5 at *GOV 4 Boys Metro VIC*. Each year in Victoria, Year 12 students undertake a general achievement test (GAT), which is used by the VCAA to ensure that assessments made within each school are accurate, as well as providing an indication of how well students should perform in their final examinations. *GOV 4 Boys Metro VIC* analyses all Year 11 and 12 results, including subjects taken by distance education or at the VSL and was surprised to see that students who take languages through Saturday school, ‘seem to under perform on the outside languages quite a lot’ (SA5). SA5 suggests that this may be due to the perception that the school does not take Chinese seriously because it is not offered in the curriculum, which in turn effects how seriously the students take the subject. A second possibility SA5 identifies is the difficulty of studying a language once a week as opposed to having daily access to languages through the school system. Either way, SA5 argues that the school must ‘seriously consider’ offering the language in the curriculum in order to provide greater validity to the subject and to address the lower performance levels in Chinese language examination results.

In the Victorian samples, schools are far more willing to offer Chinese precisely because it was important to the school community. In 2003, twice as many students undertook Chinese at the Year 12 level in Victoria than in NSW - 2,464 students in Victoria as opposed to 1,281 students in NSW. This is despite the fact that there are nearly twice as many speakers of Mandarin in Sydney (63,716 speakers) than in Melbourne (37,994 speakers), including in the school age 0 to 14 year old age group for which there are 11,320 speakers in Sydney and 6,540 speakers in Melbourne (Clyne & Kipp, 2002). It is also important to note that there are over five times as
many ‘second language’ learners of Chinese in Victoria than in NSW, indicating that the difference in student numbers is not simply a result of a higher number of Chinese overseas students in Victoria.

4.5.4 Outside the Mainstream
While in this study, Victorian schools are more willing to run Chinese programs on campus because of their significance to the community, more broadly in Victoria, a large percentage of students actually study Chinese outside of mainstream schools (See Table 4.1), although there are a number of reasons for this.

| Table 4.1 Percentage of students studying Year 12 Chinese by education provider |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                             | Victoria  | NSW             |
| • Mainstream schools        | 53.7%     | 62.4%           |
| • VSL / SSCL (Government    | 9.3%      | 35.8%           |
|   run Saturday schools)     |           |                 |
| • Community language        | 37.0%     | 0.0%            |
|   schools                   |           |                 |
| • Private tutors            | n/a       | 1.8%            |

The main difference between the provision of Chinese in each state is due to differences in educational structures. In NSW, community language schools and other privately run schools are not able to receive accreditation to teach students to the Year 12 level. If a student does want to continue a language to the Year 12 level through any of these schools, a private tutor must teach them. Few students choose to do this, only 2.2% of language students, and they are largely students of Persian and Hindi, languages that are not available elsewhere in the education system. Therefore, in NSW, students who complete Chinese studies at the Year 12 level predominantly access Chinese through their school or through the SSCL.
In Victoria, there are three groups of providers – mainstream schools, the VSL and community language schools. Unlike in NSW, community language schools receive extensive funding support from DE&T and are accredited to teach languages through to the Year 12 level with 37.0% of students choosing to study Chinese at a community language school. Only 9.3% of students of Chinese study the language at the VSL. It must also be noted that there were more than twice as many students studying Year 12 Chinese in Victoria (2,464 students studying Year 12 Chinese in 2003 in Victoria, compared to 1,312 students studying Year 12 Chinese in NSW).

While this study has not included research into community language schools, it was raised as an issue in several interviews. For example, T26, who teaches Chinese at IND3 Co-ed Regional VIC, as well as having taught at the VSL and in community language schools at various points, has questioned students on why they prefer to study Chinese outside of school hours, particularly at community language schools. T26 notes that students attend the schools because they are competitive and produce high marks amongst the student groups. Some students find the courses run in their mainstream schools too easy, which makes them too complacent. With only around ten students in their class, they find it difficult to accurately evaluate their standard of Chinese. By attending weekend schools with their peers, they are able to judge their level of Chinese competency more accurately and enjoy the sense of competition that developed in the larger classes. T26 also stated that students prefer the greater flexibility offered through the weekend classes.

There are a number of issues that require further investigation to develop a better understanding of the study of Chinese in Victoria and NSW. For example,

- Why do students of Chinese prefer studying at community language schools rather than the VSL (in Victoria)?
- Is the popularity of community language schools impacting on the ability of schools to offer on-campus Chinese language courses?
- Are students who attend community language schools predominantly international students?
Do students prefer to study Chinese at community language schools due to ideological differences? For example, are enrolments and schools divided along the lines of country of origin/ancestry, language background (Cantonese, Mandarin), or period of residence in Australia - second or subsequent generations of Chinese-Australians as opposed to international students?

A future investigation of these issues will help illuminate the position of Chinese in the education system.

4.5.5 Ideological Issues

One ideological issue articulated in the interviews concerning the teaching of Chinese is the use of simplified script, as used in China and Singapore, or the use of traditional or full-form script as used in Taiwan and other Chinese communities worldwide. In Victoria and NSW, examinations set for second language learners of Chinese are written using simplified script and students are taught simplified script. For first language or background speaker examinations in both NSW and Victoria, both simplified and traditional script are accepted. This is an important issue because it requires an understanding of the pluricentric nature of Mandarin and the importance of officially recognising these differences.

In NSW, the issue of simplified and traditional scripts has been an ongoing concern for the Chinese speaking community. According to the President of the Chinese Language Education Council (CLEC), an organisation representing Chinese community language schools in NSW, students who attend the schools have a wide range of Chinese backgrounds, including first, second and subsequent generations of migrants from China, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Vietnam. Students who study Chinese in government schools are taught simplified script, but when they attend the Chinese schools on the weekends, many are taught traditional script. The president of CLEC argues that it is vital to teach traditional script for a number of reasons including cultural identity, the fact that a number of major Chinese language newspapers in Australia use traditional script as do newspapers in the home countries of most students who attend the Chinese schools. If students wish to study any of the Chinese classics, they must know traditional script. There are also
ideological considerations with the president of CLEC arguing that simplified characters represent communism and Mao, which is unacceptable or upsetting for many overseas Chinese.

In recent years, the NSW BOS has stated that they were going to change the background speaker examination so that only simplified script is used in the examination and by students. CLEC strongly argues that such a move would discriminate against students who were not from China as they would not be able to fully understand or be able to competently write simplified script. Without consulting with the community, the NSW BOS still changed to the use of simplified script only for the background speaker examinations in 1997. After extensive lobbying by community groups the BOS was forced to recognise both forms of the script, although they only agreed to until 2005. At this point the NSW BOS again changed the examination to simplified script without consulting the community. For a second time, vigorous lobbying by community groups forced the NSW BOS to change the examination so that it utilised both scripts. However, the BOS has only agreed to do so until; 2007 when they have stated that they will review the issue again. The repeated refusal of the BOS or their unwillingness to acknowledge the pluricentric nature of the Chinese language and of Chinese culture continues to cause considerable angst for the Chinese speaking community in NSW (See also, Section 8.1).

In Victoria the use of traditional and simplified script has not been an issue, argues a LOTE project officer at the VCAA, because any decision regarding the script has involved extensive public consultation. Through consultation, the VCAA have recognised the importance of acknowledging both forms of the script. As a result, the Chinese as a first language study design and examination makes use of both traditional and simplified script and students can write their examinations in either script.

### 4.5.6 Perceptions of Students Towards Chinese

50% of students of Chinese wrote of negative aspects of learning Chinese. A vast majority of these replies, 74.2%, concerned the linguistic difficulties in learning Chinese - in remembering all of the characters and of mastering the tones of the language. A small number of students wrote negatively of aspects of Chinese culture
including the role of communism and of historical customs. 96.8% wrote of positive aspects of learning Chinese.

4.6 Vietnamese

In comparison to Japanese and Indonesian, Vietnamese is a more recent addition to the education system. It was first introduced to Victorian secondary schools in 1986 following the migration of large numbers of Vietnamese refugees to Australia from the mid-1970s (Huong, 1999). Provision has focused in the areas where refugees largely settled, with courses offered in Victoria, NSW, Queensland and South Australia in 2003 and for a number of years, Vietnamese has been one of the top ten most studied languages nationally at the Year 12 level.

Vietnamese was offered at two Victorian schools in this study. One further school had previously offered Vietnamese, but had recently withdrawn it from the curriculum due to low student enrolments, with many students preferring to study Vietnamese on the weekend at the VSL or a community language school. This section explores interview data from,

- Six Vietnamese language teachers, LOTE coordinators and senior administrators from the two schools offering Vietnamese,
- A deputy principal of the VSL;
- The manager of an outer eastern VSL centre where there is a large concentration of Vietnamese speakers, and
- A senior committee member of the Vietnamese Teachers' Association of Victoria (VTAV rep.).

Two of the participants played multiple roles within the Vietnamese community. T14 teaches at a secondary school, at the VSL and at a privately run Vietnamese language school, while VTAV rep. currently teaches Vietnamese at the primary school level, at the VSL and at the Council for Adult Education (CAE). Students in the CAE Vietnamese course include social workers, police officers, doctors and other adults.
4.6.1 Why Offer Vietnamese?

Vietnamese was introduced into both schools in this study, GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC and GOV 7 Co-ed Metro VIC, in response to lobbying from the Australian Vietnamese communities within each school. While both schools were extremely committed to maintaining the language in their schools when the interviews were conducted in 2004, senior administrators at both schools were concerned about their ability to maintain the programs due to low student enrolments. Subsequently, in 2005, GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC did not offer Vietnamese at all, while GOV 7 Co-ed Metro VIC only ran a combined Year 8 and 9 class.

4.6.2 Ideology

Vietnamese in the Australian education system provides a unique example of the impact of political ideology on the teaching of a language. Two schools of thought were clearly displayed in the interviews with relation to the current Vietnamese government. One group of participants are antagonistic towards the current Vietnamese government, while for the second group language teaching transcends these issues and provides an opportunity to focus on promoting and maintaining the Vietnamese language and culture in Australia.

The division stems from civil conflict in Vietnam, with many Vietnamese arriving in Australia from the mid 1970s arriving as refugees. These Vietnamese ‘boat people’ fled persecution when South Vietnam came under the control of the northern communist regime in 1975. By the mid-1990s, these refugees represented around 30% of Vietnamese migrants in Australia. Subsequent waves of migration have largely included migrants coming to Australia under the family reunion category, although there is an increasing number of Vietnamese migrants migrating under the skilled worker category and student visa category coming to Australia (Australia. DIMIA, 2006; S. Cunningham & T. Nguyen, 2001). There are continuing tensions between the Vietnamese Australian community, dominated by political refugees, and the Hanoi government. For example, in 2003 SBS-TV began to transmit a regular news program from Vietnam. SBS was forced to withdraw the program after intense pressure from members of the Australian Vietnamese community via the phone, the Internet and in-person protests at SBS offices around Australia. The Australian Vietnamese protesting the broadcasting of the program claimed that the news was communist
propaganda which caused distress for many political refugees who had been tortured following the takeover of the south. It must be noted that not all Australian Vietnamese were opposed to the introduction of the news service (Forbes, 2003; Kremmer & Ketchell, 2003).

This opposition to the current Vietnamese government by some members of the Vietnamese community in Australia manifests itself on many levels in regard to Vietnamese language learning. For example, the VTAV rep. argues that it is important teachers who are employed to teach Vietnamese use the vocabulary and accent of ‘southern Vietnamese’, that is, the language used in southern Vietnam prior to 1975. Contemporary language use in Vietnam, according to the VTAV rep., utilises numerous vocabulary items from Northern Vietnam and is representative of the current communist regime. The VTAV rep. argues that if a teacher uses modern Vietnamese (or Vietnamese used in Vietnam since 1975), parents will insist on taking their children out of the class, a position T23, who teaches at GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC, also agrees with (See also Clyne, 1991b:164) which outlines the same issue amongst Eastern European refugees in Australia. Many of these refugees resisted lexical and semantic changes in the language in their home country, which they argued reflected ‘a conceptual transformation to a socialist political and socioeconomic system’.

When this issue was discussed with the vice principal of the government-run VSL, he commented that, while it is important to realise that there is a political past underpinning these issues, VSL classes are focused on language learning, not politics. His only concern is that any differences in southern and northern accents or language use do not result in discrimination against any student. After consulting with the VCAA on the issue, he feels assured that this is not a concern. T14, a teacher of Vietnamese at GOV 7 Co-ed Metro VIC, also argued that it does not matter where a teacher comes from or what their accent is. The most important issue is their ability as a language teacher.

The issue of accent, however, was significant for students of Vietnamese. In this study, 78.6% of students studying Vietnamese were born in Vietnam, mainly arriving between the late 1990s and 2002. There were two students who were born in Australia
who listed their languages as English and Vietnamese. Both these students commented on the differences between their own accent and of the accent of others in their classes, all of who were recent migrants from Vietnam.

- Coming from my background I speak a different accent towards a lot of people. I only speak to people who speak my accent in Vietnamese, though if somebody Vietnamese I know speak [sic] a different accent, I prefer them to speak in English instead. S503
- I find it difficult with my accent to understand and speak to other Vietnamese background students and so I ask them to speak in English. S498

There are a number of dialects spoken in Vietnam, although the predominant difference is between northern and southern varieties. The educated Hanoi dialect is generally considered the standard variety of Vietnamese, with the main differences between the two varieties involving the ‘system and arrangement of consonants, vowels and tones’ from those suggested by the written form and the northern variety of Vietnamese (Pham, 2004:23). While the main distinction is between the northern and southern dialects, there is a form of the northern dialect that is spoken by many southern Vietnamese who moved to the south of Vietnamese during the Vietnam War due to political events.

Given the complexity of the situation, it is not clear whether the preference of these two students to speak in English to Vietnamese speakers with a ‘different’ accent is due to ideological differences or differences in identity, differences in linguistic skills or whether they are just uncomfortable that their accent is different. It is simply clear that accent is very much an issue. Further research would be needed to better understand the relevance of the issue for student.

4.6.2.1 Continuing Clashes

The arrival of more recent migrants from Vietnam - 28,121 between 1994 and 2005 (Australia. DIMIA, 2006), as well as an increase in international students from Vietnam at the secondary and tertiary level, have also caused a degree of conflict within some parts of the Vietnamese community. According to the VTAV rep. these
recent arrivals represent a ‘moneyed class’ of Vietnamese who could only have thrived through corruption and complicity with the current government and through the subjugation of opponents to the communist regime. VTAV rep. argues that the Vietnamese community watch the situation closely, in particular for the use of the current Vietnamese flag. When, for example, a Technical and Further Education college (TAFE) displayed flags representing the nationalities of all internationals students within the TAFE for multicultural week. This included the flag for the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Parts of the Vietnamese-Australian community in Melbourne rallied, protesting to the TAFE as well as the government, resulting in the TAFE taking down the flag. No flag was hung to represent Vietnam.

LC20 argues that the main issue in maintaining Vietnamese in many schools is not a teacher supply issue, but ‘their ideology and politics in terms of themselves.’ Even though there are students at GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC who have recently migrated from Vietnam, the Vietnamese teacher at the school insists on the use of the South Vietnamese flag during LOTE week. LC20 argues that ‘It’s difficult…the flag is a problem.’ While the South Vietnamese flag is important for some members of the Vietnamese-Australian teachers and students, its use discriminates against the international students. It is clear that teachers of Vietnamese are keen for the language to be taught to students, but that for some teachers, the cultural aspects, as well as certain linguistic aspects, must reflect an ideology representative of South Vietnam prior to 1975.

4.6.3 Ideology and Resources
Ideology also impacts on the provision of resources for Vietnamese programs. Both T23 and the VTAV rep. insist that materials produced in Vietnam cannot be used in classrooms because they believe they are designed to indoctrinate students.

And now the Vietnamese community here, they don’t accept the way that the Vietnamese government tries to indoctrinate the kids. I don’t want to mention politics, really, but they indoctrinate them. For example, some books for maths, they have some things like, ‘If three American soldiers come to my village and we shoot one, how many are left?’ How can we use this material? (T23)
T14 however, tries to find materials to use in the class from whatever sources are available, including collecting materials in Vietnamese through the Internet. The problem with most materials, argues T14, is not ideological, but that that they do not utilise methodology that is appropriate for teaching in Australia. While other ethnic groups can source materials from their home governments or receive support for the development of appropriate materials, the antagonistic relationship between the Vietnamese Australian community and the Hanoi government precludes this sharing and development of resources.

4.6.4 Tertiary Representation

For Vietnamese, the issue of textbook and material development is directly linked to the availability of Vietnamese at the tertiary level. T23 explains that the development of materials in Australia has been very dependent on collaborative efforts with universities. Since 1997, the number of universities in Australia offering Vietnamese has decreased, from eight universities in 1997 to three universities in 2005 (ASAA, 2002; Jeffrey, 2005). In Victoria, where T23 works, Vietnamese was offered in four universities in the 1990s, but only one university offered the language in 2005 - the Victoria University of Technology. With only one Vietnamese specialist left at the university, T23 argues that there are no longer opportunities to collaborate in the development of resources and is instead trying to focus on international collaborative efforts, particularly with teachers of Vietnamese in the United States, to develop materials. As noted in Section 4.3, this lack of availability at the tertiary level is also an issue for Korean.

As well as inhibiting the development of textbooks and curriculum materials for Vietnamese, the loss of tertiary level provision, as we have discussed in Section 4.3.5 on Korean, can diminish the value of a language in the primary and secondary education system. T23 argues that students and parents see the decline of Vietnamese at the tertiary level as an indication that the Australian government does not wish to support the language anymore and has put this into effect through funding cuts. While the funding of languages at the tertiary level is a complex issue based on federal directions in tertiary funding and on decision making at the university level (See for example, ASAA, 2002:32; Baldauf, 1995), T23 associates the loss of Vietnamese at the tertiary level with the devaluing of the language by the Australian government and
the increasing preference for students not to study the language in mainstream schools. This movement of students out of the mainstream will be discussed further in Section 4.6.6.

4.6.5 The Examination System
A number of participants in this study see the examination system as directly contributing to the decline of Vietnamese study. This was also noted in regard to Korean in Section 4.3.5. This issue will be discussed fully in Chapter 6 which focuses on issues surrounding background speakers and examinations. Vietnamese is specifically addressed in Section 6.2.2.

4.6.6 Movement Away From the School System
Two types of movement are contributing to the decline of Vietnamese in the education system. The first is population movement. For example, T23 at GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC notes that as many Vietnamese-Australian families (as well as other ethnic groups) gain financial stability, they move out of the area, contributing to the decline of Vietnamese in the school. Significant population movement of community language speakers throughout Australia makes it very difficult for mainstream schools to maintain language programs as they do not possess the flexibility to change language programs frequently.

This leads to the second issue which involves students moving to weekend classes, either at the VSL or at community language schools, to continue with Vietnamese study. Focusing on Victoria, which has the largest group of learners of Vietnamese, the percentage of students studying the language at community language schools has increased from 47.8% in 2002 to 59.1% in 2005 (Figure 4.1). It should also be noted that this has been accompanied by a 12.6% increase in the number of students studying the language at the Year 12 level, so the language is still very important to the community. As discussed in Section 4.5.4, the greater flexibility of provision outside of schools is what attracts many students. With students and their families moving away from schools offering the language, community language schools offer continuity in language study which mainstream schools may not be able to offer.
Changes in enrolments at the VSL also support this idea. In recent years, explains one of the deputy principals of the VSL, enrolments in a number of languages, including Vietnamese, have been decreasing or stagnant at particular suburban locations. After consultation with members of the language communities, they closed two centres and set up new centres in different locations, according to where the community believed new communities of Vietnamese-Australians had formed. As a result, primary school enrolments in Vietnamese at the VSL have increased by 92.9% between 2003 and 2005. At the secondary level, enrolments have increased by 86.8% at the Year 7 to 10

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36 This study did not look at LOTE provision at community language schools but we can surmise from the percentage of students who are studying in mainstream schools and the VSL, what percentage of students are studying Year 12 Vietnamese through community language schools. Community language schools are the only other certified providers of the subject so any students not accounted for by the mainstream system and the VSL will be studying through a community language school.
levels, although enrolments at the Year 11 and 12 levels have decreased by 18.5% over the same time period (VCAA, 2004c; Victoria. DE&T, 2006).

This study does not specifically explore why students chose to study a language at community language schools, rather than at their daytime school, but it is an important phenomenon that warrants further examination in the future. It will also be interesting to observe whether the relocation of the VSL Vietnamese classes results in an increase in Year 11 and 12 enrolments at the VSL over the next few years. Either way, this movement highlights the increased flexibility the VSL and community language schools have to provide classes in new locations according to movements of communities, a flexibility that mainstream schools do not possess.

4.6.7 Student Perceptions of Vietnam
Opinions of students of Vietnamese in regard to positive and negative perceptions of the language and culture did not shed any light on why there has been a movement towards ethnic schools or on any ideological issues. Only 14.3% of students wrote of negative impressions of Vietnam, with one comment related to the negative perceptions of Vietnamese Australians - ‘In Australia many assumptions have been made about the Vietnamese people. For example, “They are all druggies.” (S501)’ While the teachers of Vietnamese were very focused on the ongoing conflict with the Hanoi government, with most students only recently coming from Vietnam, this sentiment was not reflected within the student group. 78.6% of students stated that they looked forward to visiting or returning to the country in the future.

4.7 Considerations for the Planning and Implementation of Language-in-Education Policy
4.7.1 World Events, Economic Rationalism and the Study of Languages
This research has shown that the attitudes of some school communities have been deeply affected by events that happen in other countries or happen between Australia and other countries. The study of Indonesian and Korean respectively provide examples of this, although for different reasons. The recent rise and decline of Indonesian study demonstrates that personal reactions to sociopolitical events, as well
as racial stereotyping, a genuine fear of terrorism and terror-related violence and the actions of governments, can dramatically change cultural perceptions, and in turn the value placed on a language by schools, students and parents. This has impacted on the accessibility of Indonesian, both culturally and physically. Korean, on the other hand, has never achieved a significant degree of success in the Australian education system due to a pre-existing and ongoing negative perception of Korean by the Australian public - an attitude arguably perpetuated by the portrayal of Korea in the Australian media. The downgrading of Australia’s diplomatic relationship with Korea has also contributed to this negative perception.

Another salient factor to arise from the data has been the impact of the narrow economic rationale behind the NALSAS strategy and its effect on the study of the four prioritised Asian languages. Indonesia’s and Korea’s perceived lack of economic success has led to a number of schools closing their programs due to (market) student and parent choices.

These findings demonstrate two clear points. First, careful consideration needs to be given to the prominent use of a singular rationale such as the economic motivation for studying Asian languages. This is not to say that other argumentation for Asian language study has not been successfully disseminated, rather that the original rationale of the NALSAS strategy, which focused on economic interaction with Asia, provided a narrow lens through which Asian languages and a deeper understanding of Asian cultures and languages could develop. This narrow focus has in turn impacted negatively on the belief that Australia is genuinely interested in engagement with the region. Due to the overriding emphasis of the NALSAS policy on the importance of economic engagement, the inherent value of learning Indonesian and Korean for cultural reasons was never established in many school communities, and when the perceived economic success of these countries faltered, so did interest in the study of languages. This argument has been noted more broadly regarding Asian studies in Australia. For example, Lakha and Stevenson (2001:259) have highlighted scepticism towards a sincere interest in the study of Asian languages and cultures within some Asian-Australian communities.
One person claimed that Australians only showed interest in those Asian countries that were economically successful such as Japan. A friend once confided that he found the hype about Asia and Asian Studies in Australia offensive because it was not accompanied by a genuine interest in the culture of Asian countries.

Language programs are clearly vulnerable to the variability of government policies, as well as the capricious nature and impact of world events. Establishing a broader rationale and valuing of language and culture is essential to the long-term development of languages in the education system and the creation of a level of resistance to changes in government directions and the social and cultural impact of world and local events.

### 4.7.2 Sociopolitical Realities and Language Policy

The interviews in relation to Vietnamese have demonstrated the impact of politics on the study of a language. They have highlighted that language learning is not just about the acquisition of a code, but can also be about ideology, territory, diaspora and culture. One of the main difficulties in promoting Vietnamese nationally has been the community-based ideology driving the teaching and maintenance of the language in Australia. The most vocal component of the Australian-Vietnamese community is interested in linguistic and cultural maintenance, but still considers Vietnam a hostile state. Lo Bianco argues that ‘a lot of people pushing Asian languages from the diplomatic and economic groups were really quite hostile’ towards groups such as the Australian-Vietnamese as their ideology ‘got in the way of Australian relationships with those countries’. He adds, ‘That’s a dilemma but we are a multicultural society and these things always need to be negotiated.’ Unfortunately, the path of the NALSAS strategy through a policy forum (COAG) that focused mainly on issues of national economic importance avoided the multicultural reality of contemporary Australia.

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Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:309) argue that ‘...it is difficult at best to assess the outcomes of plan implementation because one simply does not know what would have happened if there had been no plan or if some other plan had been introduced.’ There have been both negative and positive indications for Vietnamese since the introduction of the NALSAS strategy. Despite not being prioritised by the NALSAS document, the language has continued to thrive in the primary and secondary education system. This has been due to its continuing importance as a community language in Australia, particularly for 0 to 14 year old speakers. Negative indications include the decreased availability of the language at the tertiary level as well as the continued stranglehold of ideological issues on the teaching and learning of the language. These negative indications are both the result of the NALSAS document as well as ongoing ideological issues within the Vietnamese-Australian community.

It is difficult to determine what may have happened if the language had been prioritised, but recognition at the national level through a policy such as NALSAS could arguably have had a significant impact on the study of Vietnamese in Australia and on relations between the two countries at various levels. For example, national prioritisation could have provided an opportunity for the development of a unified model for the teaching of Vietnamese without creating or increasing conflict between ideologies. It could also have led to greater interaction between the two countries at the student exchange level, and provided greater protection or educational rights to Vietnamese international students studying at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels in Australia. It is uncertain whether prioritising Vietnamese would have had any great impact on the internal politics of the community. However, as discussed in Section 4.6.2, Pham’s (2004) study of the negotiation of Vietnamese-Australian identity in Melbourne and movement between varieties of Vietnamese (Northern and Southern varieties among others) indicates that some degree of convergence is present both socially and linguistically within the diaspora. Furthermore, in this study, some teachers also stated that their teaching was non-ideological and that they encouraged a similar attitude amongst their students. While policy at the state level, particularly in Victoria, has prioritised community languages such as Vietnamese in the past, recognition at a national level could provide a level of motivation and prestige for the language that would make convergence and a more peaceful co-existence achievable.
By engaging with difficult and complex issues, language policy could positively impact on difficulties such as those experienced within the Vietnamese community.

4.8 Summary
In Chapter 2 we discussed many of the variables that need to be considered when developing language policy and when evaluating different language related contexts. In this chapter, we have discussed a number of issues that impact on the successful implementation of Asian language-in-education programs in the Australian context. On the one hand, top-down policy can be influenced by politics, economics and the linguistic cultures of policy-makers (among other variables). On the other hand, the implementation of these policies and their ongoing management can be influenced by variables such as community need, the linguistic cultures of school communities and practical considerations such as teacher supply (The significance of ‘linguistic culture’ is also discussed further in Section 8.1).

The ‘linguistic culture’ of school communities includes attitudes, beliefs, etc, that members bring with them, but also encompasses changes to these beliefs over time, sometimes due to cataclysmic events. One major group of factors that affect attitudes within school communities is politics and world events, while media representations of these issues and events also influence attitudes towards languages. These events, and the effect of these events, cannot be planned for, but they clearly impact on the perceived accessibility of languages and cultures and their importance.

Other factors which can determine the direction of language programs involve economic and cultural prestige. For example, when school communities are convinced of the economic value of studying a language the success of language programs can grow considerably. However, programs can become susceptible to (perceived) changes in economies or in a culture’s or country’s worth. If other aspects of the language and culture are not supported a loss of economic prestige can result in the substantial weakening of language programs. Other factors affecting the sense of prestige associated with a language include its availability at the tertiary level, the availability of multiple levels of examination or the availability of extra funding from the government. The loss or lack of these factors can also decrease prestige.
Developing a sense of prestige for certain languages can also lead to competition for access to a language, as will be discussed in relation to Chinese in Chapter 6.

The linguistic culture of school communities can also include beliefs around the ‘suitability’ and accessibility of different Asian languages. Some languages are viewed as languages for community speakers (and refugees), while others are perceived as more accessible to students without an Asian heritage or those who do not speak the language at home. Further evidence for this is discussed in the following chapter. The language that is perceived as most accessible by schools is Indonesian, although, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, the language that is studied by the broadest cross-section of students is Japanese. While there is a considerable sense of prestige associated with the study of Chinese, particularly in independent schools, as is explored in Chapter 6, conflict arises when accessibility appears to favour certain students over others.

Chapter 5 continues with the exploration of variables that impact on the success of language programs, in particular, from the perspective of senior secondary students of Asian languages.
CHAPTER FIVE: STUDENTS AND ASIAN LANGUAGE STUDY

One of the major goals of language-in-education planning and policy is to highlight the importance of language study in the curriculum and encourage student participation. In the previous chapter we have seen many of the factors and organisations/persons that can impact on the range of languages offered to students, as well as on the success of language programs in schools. This chapter focuses on students who have continued with the study of an Asian language, including Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean and Vietnamese, through to the senior secondary level and the role they play in the study of Asian languages. Utilising quantitative and qualitative data from the student questionnaires, this chapter identifies which students are studying Asian languages (Section 5.1) and explores issues which have hindered and supported students’ language learning endeavours (Section 5.2). Section 5.3 presents qualitative data which reveals the personal relevance of languages study, particularly the pan-Asian interests prevalent within the student communities. Section 5.4 involves a discussion of groupings of student that emerge from the data and a number of variables that clearly influence these outcomes.

5.1 Who Studies Asian Languages?

5.1.1 Victorian Questionnaire Responses

In the Victorian sample, 441 Year 11 and 12 students filled in questionnaires. These students were studying either an Asian language, a European language or two languages (this included two Asian, two European or an Asian and a European language). As a result, a total of 463 questionnaires were received. Three hundred and thirty three (333) questionnaires were received from students studying an Asian language. The majority of questionnaire responses came from government school students, correlating with the number of schools included in this study from each education system (Table 5.1). A majority of the students were in Year 11 and 16 to 17 years of age.

38 See Appendix 5, Table C for full details.
A further 130 questionnaires were received from students who were studying a European language. While the majority of analysis in this chapter focuses on Asian languages, it is sometimes necessary to situate language study more broadly in order to gain a clearer understanding of the relevance of an issue. Where relevant, the data from the students studying European languages is utilised.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of schools</th>
<th>Asian language</th>
<th>European language</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.1.1 Gender

The questionnaires were administered at 14 co-educational, four boys only and four girls only schools. Questionnaires from male students constituted 49.2% of replies, which is proportionally higher than the average number of males who undertake a language at the Year 12 level in Victoria (37.6%)<sup>39</sup>. Across all languages in Victoria, the gender imbalance is greater for languages that are not widely used in the Australian community. For example, at the Year 12 level in Victoria in 2003, male enrolments for languages widely spoken in the community averaged 43.7%, while for German, French, or the second language examinations for Indonesian, Japanese and Korean, males represented only 28.9% of enrolments<sup>40</sup>. The predominance of replies from males in this study is due to many of the schools having strong male enrolments in Japanese programs. A large number of responses, in

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<sup>39</sup> Percentage derived from VCE statistics, 2003 (VCAA, 2004c).

<sup>40</sup> Only five out of 46 languages had higher male enrolments than female - Indonesian first language, Japanese first language, Latin, Persian and Sinhala.
particular, was received from GOV 4 Boys Metro VIC, an academically selective
government-run boys only school but this was not balanced out by the inclusion of an
academically selective girls’ only school. While a government-run girls only school
was included in this study, GOV 12 Girls Metro VIC, it is not academically selective
and did not have a large cohort of students studying languages as at GOV 4 Boys
Metro VIC.

Table 5.2 Number of questionnaire replies by gender and Asian language, Victoria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khmer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>169</strong></td>
<td><strong>164</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.1.2 Country of Birth and First Language

The proportion of overseas born students in this study, 26.9%, is comparable to the
Australian average of 23.4% (ABS, 2005). Overseas-born students came from 23
different countries, with China, Vietnam, Malaysia and Hong Kong the most frequent
countries of origin. Overall, 81.8% of overseas born students were from the Asia
Pacific region. \(^{42}\) 6.3% of questionnaire respondents are international students
completing their final years of their secondary schooling in Australia.

\(^{41}\) Note that students studying more than one language are counted twice.

\(^{42}\) See Appendix 5, Table D, for full details of country of birthplace by student
74.7% of all students listed English as their first language, while 25.3% listed a LOTE as their first language (Table 5.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>English as 1st language</th>
<th>LOTE as 1st language</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overseas born</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian born</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>228</strong></td>
<td><strong>105</strong></td>
<td><strong>333</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of parents of students completing the questionnaire, 70.9% of fathers and 63.6% of mothers were born overseas, coming from a total of 46 countries, far higher than the Australian average of 23.4%. Furthermore, in 2001, 55.9% of migrants to Australia came from English speaking countries with the remaining 44.1% of migrants coming from non-English speaking countries (ABS, 2004). Within this questionnaire, 90.8% of parents who migrated to Australia were from non-English-speaking countries, with only 9.2% coming from English-speaking countries. These figures clearly indicate that the migration histories, as well as the ethnic origins of parents, have a positive and strong influence on students’ decisions to continue with LOTE study, with a non-English speaking background in particular playing an influential role in students’ choices.

5.1.1.3 LOTE Use at Home

The 2001 Australian census showed that 16.0% of the Australian population speak a LOTE at home, although this increases dramatically in metropolitan centres. For example, in Melbourne, 26.9% of Australian residents speak a LOTE at home, while only 4.9% of Australian residents in the ‘rest of Victoria’ speak a LOTE at home (Clyne & Kipp, 2002). Of the students undertaking an Asian language in this study, 43 See Appendix 5, Table D, for full details of birthplaces for both mothers and fathers

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43 See Appendix 5, Table D, for full details of birthplaces for both mothers and fathers
55.5% speak a LOTE at home (these students will be referred to as LOTE background students or LB students), indicating that, as well as the influence of parental birthplace, students who use a LOTE outside of school and at home are more likely to study a LOTE at school. It should be noted again that the language these students speak at home and the language they study at school at not necessarily the same. When these figures were divided into students in regional and metropolitan areas, the figures are still considerably higher than the Australian and Victorian averages. LB students in schools in metropolitan areas are twice as likely to study a LOTE as students with an English speaking background (These students will be referred to as English background students or EB students), while LB students in schools in regional areas are seven times more likely than EB students to study a LOTE.

LB students speak 33 languages other than English outside of school (Table 5.4), mainly to their family (88.3%). The most commonly spoken languages are Mandarin (23.6%), Cantonese (17.4%) and Vietnamese (16.1%). 14.6% of Mandarin speakers are international students. If these students are not included in the analysis, Mandarin is still the most widely spoken language outside school amongst students. These figures closely follow findings from the 2001 Australian census, which show that Vietnamese, Cantonese and Mandarin are the three most widely spoken Asian community languages in Australia and in Melbourne overall, as well as within the 0 to 14 year old population of community language speakers in Melbourne (Clyne & Kipp, 2002).
Table 5.4  LOTE spoken at home by Student number, Victoria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number of speakers</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number of speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hakka</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hokkien</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langqu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanghainese</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fujian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teochew</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Laotian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Chinese</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>Macedonian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Maltese</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Telegu</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tetum</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khmer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Yiddish</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unclear(^{45})</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the students who completed the questionnaires, 31 or 9.8% indicated that they speak two or three LOTEs outside of school. For example, at home

\(^{44}\) Note that some students speak more than one LOTE at home.

\(^{45}\) ‘Eskimo dialect Malaysia
- 32.3% of multilingual students speak Mandarin and one or two other Chinese fang yan at home (See Section 2.4.3 for a definition of fang yan);
- 22.6% speak Vietnamese and another language - Cantonese, Mandarin, Laotian or Hokkien;
- 12.9% speak Khmer and either Mandarin or Teochew, and
- 6.5% speak Hebrew and a European language.

Of the 31 students who speak two or more LOTEs at home, only two students indicated that they have two first languages other than English, although a higher number could have reasonably been expected. This may be due to the notion of first language not being made clear in the questionnaire as well as students not having the option of listing more than one first language. The responses to the question of first language are therefore only marginally reliable in terms of identifying the number of speakers with more than one first language.

5.1.1.4 Access to LOTEs Spoken at Home

At their schools, 41.2% of LB students were studying the LOTE they speak at home. Overall, when their language was available in their schools, 86.5% of LB students chose to study the language. In this study, this percentage varied according to language, with Vietnamese (94.1%) and Chinese (89.7%) speakers slightly less likely to choose their language from the school curriculum (See Table 5.5).
Table 5.5  Percentage of students who chose to study a home LOTE when available, by language, Victoria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language spoken at home/ studied at school</th>
<th>% of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese (Mandarin)</td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khmer</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These findings clearly show that LB students rarely chose to study another language through to the Year 12 level when their home language is available in the school system. This highlights the considerable importance of providing students with access to community languages, both to present opportunities for community language speakers to maintain and develop their language skills, as well as to help maintain and strengthen the vitality of LOTE programs at the senior secondary level.

While 41.2% of LB students were studying the LOTE they speak at home, the languages of a further 51.7% of LB students are not offered in mainstream schools in Australia. Several of these languages are available through the government-run Saturday school, the VSL, and community languages schools, but this study has focused only on the study of LOTEs within the mainstream system. It is therefore not possible to determine how many of these students access their language outside of school. However, students unable to access their LOTE at school were asked if they would choose to study the language within the school system if it were available. Of the students that replied, 65.2% said that they would choose to do so, again highlighting the importance of promoting and supporting community language provision within the mainstream school system.

While a majority of LB students (58.8%) did not or were not able to study their language in schools, there was one other major group of students whose preferences...
are worth noting. Cantonese is a major community language in Australia but is not accessible in the education system and rarely offered outside of mainstream schools\textsuperscript{46}. Many speakers of Cantonese prefer to study Mandarin as the prestige variety of Chinese (Clyne, Grey, & Kipp, 2004a). In fact, 100\% of Cantonese speakers who had access to Mandarin at school choose to study the language. The remaining speakers of Cantonese who did not have access to Mandarin chose to study Japanese.

Of all students who undertook the questionnaire, 99.2\% of those who speak an Asian language at home, were studying an Asian language at school, although not necessarily their own language. Only 67.6\% of students who speak a European language at home were studying a European language at school. This may be explained in part by the migration history of students. Research in Australia has clearly shown that language shift increases significantly from first to second and third generation of migration (For example, Clyne, 1991b; Clyne & Kipp, 1996). 67.4\% of students in this study who speak an Asian language at home were overseas-born, while only 10.3\% of students of who speak a European language at home were overseas-born. The more recent migration of students of Asian languages may explain their preference to maintain their language or to maintain or explore an interest in the Asia-Pacific region.

Overall, 55.5\% of students studying an Asian language speak a LOTE outside of school (Asian and European), with the remaining 44.5\% coming from an English speaking background. Arguably, such figures indicate the success of a language policy that promotes access to community languages, as well as promoting opportunities for students with an English speaking background to gain competency in another language.

5.1.1.5 Language Study at School
When we compare the language backgrounds of students studying different Asian languages, there is a clear distinction between languages studied by \textit{EB} students and \textit{LB} students (Table 5.6). In Victoria, \textit{EB} students prefer Indonesian, Korean, and to a lesser extent, Japanese. Chinese, Khmer and Vietnamese, on the other hand, are

\textsuperscript{46} From 2006, the VSL is offering a Cantonese course to primary school students.
clearly studied by LB students. Indonesian, Korean and Japanese all have only a few students with a background in the actual language being studied, although there is a high percentage of students studying Japanese who have a background in another language.

Table 5.6  Student language background by language studied

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>% of students with LOTE background (any language)</th>
<th>% with background in LOTE studied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>58.8 (Mandarin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80.4 (any fang yan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khmer</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.2  NSW Questionnaire responses

In the NSW sample, 169 students completed questionnaires, with six students studying both an Asian and a European language. One hundred and thirty one (131) questionnaires were collected from Year 11 and 12 students studying an Asian language, incorporating 13 schools across all education systems, in both regional and metropolitan locations. Forty four (44) questionnaires were received from students who were studying a European language. The majority of questionnaire responses
came from independent schools (Table 5.7) and a majority of the students were in Year 11 and 16 to 17 years of age\(^47\).

Table 5.7  Number of questionnaire responses by school system and language grouping, NSW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. of schools</th>
<th>Asian language</th>
<th>European language</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.2.1  Gender

The questionnaires were collected from seven co-educational schools, three boys only and four girls only schools. The percentage of replies from females in this study, 78.5\%, is higher than the average number of female students undertaking a LOTE at Year 12 in NSW in 2003, 67.0\%. This can be explained in part by the high number of responses from one all girls academically selective government school, while it was not possible to find an equivalent all boys academically selective government school to participate in this study.

\(^{47}\) See Appendix 6, Table S for full details.
Table 5.8 Number of questionnaire replies by gender and language, NSW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.2.2 Country of Birth and First Language

Amongst the NSW students, 70.2% of students of Asian languages were born in Australia, with 29.8% of respondents born overseas. An equivalent percentage of students in NSW listed a LOTE as their first language (27.4%) in comparison to the Victorian students (25.3%). Overall, international students represent 4.8% of questionnaire respondents studying an Asian language in the NSW cohort. Overseas-born students came from 11 countries, with China, Hong Kong and Korea, the most frequent countries of origin. Overall, 86.5% of overseas-born students were from the Asia Pacific region.

Table 5.9 Number of responses by birthplace and first language, NSW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English as 1st language</th>
<th>LOTE as 1st language</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overseas born</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian born</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

48 Note that students studying more than one language were counted twice.
49 See Appendix 6, Table T for full details of country of birthplace by student
50.0% of students’ fathers and 48.4% of mothers were overseas-born, coming from a total of 24 countries\textsuperscript{50}, higher than the Australian average of 23.4%. Also considerably higher than the Australian average (44.1%), 82.7% of parents came from a non-English speaking country. As in the Victorian data, these figures clearly indicate that the migration history of parents has a positive and strong influence on students’ decisions to continue with LOTE study, with a non-English speaking background in particular playing an influential role in students’ choices.

5.1.2.3 LOTE Use at Home
According to the 2001 Australian census, in Sydney, 29.2% of Australian residents speak a LOTE at home, while this decreases to 4.7% of Australian residents in the ‘rest of NSW’ (Clyne & Kipp, 2002). Of the students studying an Asian language in NSW, 47.5% speak one or more LOTEs at home, indicating, as in the Victorian data, that LB students are more likely to study a LOTE at school. This holds particularly true in regional areas in NSW, where LB students are eight times more likely than EB students to study a LOTE.

Between them, students speak 17 LOTEs outside of school (Table 5.16), the most commonly spoken being Mandarin (28.0%), Korean (14.7%) and Cantonese (12.0%). These figures only partly mirror the most commonly spoken Asian community languages in Sydney for the 0 to 14 year old population group, which are Cantonese, Vietnamese and Mandarin (Clyne & Kipp, 2002). The lack of Vietnamese speakers in the NSW section of this study is due to the difficulty in finding schools in Sydney which offer Vietnamese to participate in the study (Only 58 students studied Vietnamese at the Year 12 level through a government school in 2003. No students studied Vietnamese through an independent or Catholic school.) In fact, although there are an equivalent number of speakers of Vietnamese in the 0 to 14 year old age group, 15,242 in Sydney and 15,395 in Melbourne (Clyne & Kipp, 2002), only 130 students undertook Vietnamese at the Year 12 level in NSW in 2003. In Victoria, 350 Year 12 students undertook the language. Arguably, this may be due to the access Victorian students have to Vietnamese community language schools, which can offer Vietnamese language study through to the Year 12 level. In 2005, approximately 95%

\textsuperscript{50} See Appendix 6, Table T for full details of birthplaces for both mothers and fathers
of Year 12 Vietnamese students studied the language outside of the mainstream school system - around 35% studied through the VSL and approximately 59% through community language schools. As mentioned in Sections 4.5.2 and 4.6.6, community language schools are not accredited for Year 11 and 12 studies in NSW.

While Korean is not one of the most commonly spoken languages for the 0 to 14 year old age group, Sydney has the highest concentration of Korean speakers in Australia, around 80%. The high number of Korean speakers in the NSW student group for this study is a result of both the number of international students attending an exclusive independent school in NSW, and Australian-born children of Korean parents who had won places at a top academically selective public school in the state.

Of the students who completed the questionnaires, 16 indicated that they speak two LOTEs outside of school. The most common language combinations included

- 56.3% of students who speak Mandarin and another Chinese fang yan at home, and
- 18.8% of students speak Korean and Japanese at home.

Although 10.5% of students stated that they speak two LOTEs at home, no students indicated that they have two first languages. As was explained in Section 5.1.1.3, ambiguity in the questionnaire regarding first languages has resulted in this data being only marginally reliable in terms of identifying the number of speakers with more than one first language.
### Table 5.10 Number of students by LOTE spoken at home, NSW\textsuperscript{51}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number of speakers</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number of speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Croatian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hokkien</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanghainese</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wenzhounese</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Chinese</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afrikaans</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Visaya</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.2.4 Access to LOTE Spoken at Home

Of the students who speak a LOTE at home, 42.4% of these students are studying the same language at school. Overall, when their languages are available in their schools, 100.0% of students chose to study the language. A further 54.2% of students couldn’t access their language and chose to study Japanese, while the remaining 3.4% of students chose to study Indonesian. Of the students who did not have access to their language at school, 74.6% stated that they would choose to study it if it were available. Along with the Victorian data, this propensity for studying a home language when it is available at school clearly shows that when their languages are available, LOTE speakers rarely chose to study another language through to the Year 12 level. It

\textsuperscript{51} Note that some students speak more than one LOTE.
is essential that support be provided for the provision of community languages in the education system.

5.1.2.5 Language Study at School
Overall, 47.5% of students studying an Asian language speak a LOTE outside of school, with the remaining 52.5% coming from an English speaking background. When we compare the language backgrounds of students studying different Asian languages, there is again a clear distinction between languages accessed by EB students and LB students. In NSW, Indonesian is preferred by students without a LOTE background, while Chinese and to a lesser extent Japanese, are preferred by students with a LOTE background. Again, Chinese is clearly studied as an important community language. This issue will be discussed further in Chapter 6. With only one student of Korean in the NSW cohort, it is not possible to draw any conclusions regarding the language.

Table 5.11 Student language background by language studied

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>% students with LOTE background (any language)</th>
<th>% students with LOTE background in language studied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>88.2 (Mandarin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0 (any fang yan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0\textsuperscript{52}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Why Study Asian Languages?
The student questionnaires enabled the collection of qualitative and quantitative data in relation to why students study an Asian language, what they find most challenging

\textsuperscript{52} There was only one student of Korean in the NSW student group.
about continuing with language study to the senior secondary level, what facilitates their endeavours to continue and, as will be explored in Section 5.3, the relevance of language study (particularly for students in Victoria).

5.2.1 Victoria

In the questionnaires, students were asked to read a list of reasons as to why they were studying a language and to choose the most important reason. These results are represented, as a percentage of all students studying an Asian language, in Table 5.12. The most frequently chosen reason is an enjoyment in learning about other cultures and societies (this will be explored in further detail, based on qualitative data, in Section 5.3.1), followed by the belief that the study of a language could enhance career opportunities. Closely following this was an intrinsic enjoyment in the study of languages. But, as a perusal of Table 5.12 demonstrates, students study Asian languages for a broad range of reasons including family background, the TER bonus or being ‘forced’ to study a language for the IB (International Baccalaureate).
Table 5.12  Most important reason for studying an Asian language, Victoria\textsuperscript{53}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like studying about the culture and society of the country(s) where the language is spoken</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel the language will help my career prospects. I have definite plans to work in an area of employment where the language is used</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really like languages and studying languages</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have got good marks in the past</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to travel or live in a country that speaks the language</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic origin and / or religion. Contact with an ethnic community in Australia which speaks the language</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 10% TER bonus for language students</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been advised to continue by my family</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other contact with the country where the language is spoken (past travel, friends, parents’ work, etc)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or more of my friends are taking the subject</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I particularly like the teacher</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am an international student and it is my first language</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been advised to continue by my teacher</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I must study the language for the International Baccalaureate (self-reported under ‘Other reason’)</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{53} 8.1% of students did not answer this question.
5.2.1.1 The Struggle to Continue, Victoria
The study of any language through to the senior secondary level is a challenging undertaking. In 2003, while 97.3% of Year 7 students studied a LOTE, only 12.4% of Year 12 students were still studying a LOTE (Victoria. DE&T, 2005a). Within the student questionnaires, 43.7% of students stated that they had seriously considered giving up LOTE study at some point. The percentage of students considering giving up language study differed according to language, with students of Indonesian, Korean and Khmer the most likely to consider giving up LOTE study (see Figure 5.1).

Students identified four major reasons why they had wanted to give up LOTE study, many of which were interrelated.

1. The first reason is the difficulty of LOTE study itself. 56.4% of students who had considered giving up LOTE study commented on the difficulty of language learning, although what was perceived as difficult differed for each language and was often in line with the linguistic distance between English
and the language they were studying. For example, students of Japanese commented on the difficulty of the grammar, which has a SOV structure, while English has a SVO structure. The majority of students of Chinese highlighted difficulties with pronunciation of tones that do not exist in English and with reading and writing Chinese characters. They did not comment on the difficulty of learning Chinese grammar, which, like English, has a SVO structure. Students of Indonesian commented most about the difficulty of listening activities and oral practice, stating a lack of exposure to the language, or the opportunity to practice. A number of teachers at schools offering Japanese highlighted the importance of Japanese language assistants to help senior students with oral practice. Unfortunately, there is no equivalent program for Indonesian programs, resulting in fewer opportunities to hear and practise speaking the language. For students of Khmer, it was the difficulty of the writing system, based on the southern Indian Brahmi script that students found most challenging.

2. The second reason is a general lack of interest students developed towards their language study. 21.8% of students stated that this was an issue at some point, although there were often underlying reasons which contributed to this issue, such as the teacher and a perceived lack of relevance. For example,

- It can sometimes be boring and tedious especially when the relevance of studying the language comes into question. Language can be very difficult to understand and mistakes must be constantly corrected and avoided. S219
- I've been doing it for ages, bored, lost interest since year 7 (bad teacher). S258
- Didn't enjoy it any more. I was no longer interested or enthusiastic about the subject. S147
- Because it bored me. I didn’t try hard enough so I fell behind and I started doing badly. There was no real point because I had no love of the language...I just didn’t like it. S285
- I don’t really need it in my future profession so I think giving up Japanese would be ok. S634
• Well I can't say I have an interest in going there (Indo) and don't see myself ever using it again - I often wonder if the extra 10% is worth worrying about. S142 [brackets student’s own]
• Because when I decided what I wanted to do at uni I felt like I was wasting my time learning Indonesian. S427
• Because it is a lot of work and I don’t feel totally motivated to study it because I can’t see it being of any use to me in the future for my career or at uni. S132

3. The third reason, highlighted by 15.4% of students who had considered giving up LOTE study, is the time requirements of language study, both in terms of cutting out opportunities to study other subjects in the school curriculum and the number of hours language study requires. For example,

• Because there were other subjects I would have liked to do but couldn’t because I didn't have enough time on my timetable... S403
• The reason being, languages are hard and there are also many other subjects I may also enjoy and have a more direct association with my chosen career. S401
• Another factor also being that the work requirements are ridiculously high, involving constant revision. S133
• Sometimes it can be very time consuming and unmotivating. S131

The difficulty and/or work requirements of LOTE study are indeed challenging, with scaling designed, in part, to reflect the increased demands of the subject to some extent (VTAC, 2005). However, students are still demotivated by the difficulty and work requirements. T31 at CEO 5 Girls Metro VIC argues that the only factor that has made a difference to the retention rates of students studying Japanese at her school has been a reduction in the workload.

The interesting thing was that with all the money we got from the NALSAS program, we got people in, we did all sorts of dances, we turned cartwheels – it made no difference at all to our numbers. But

54 Languages of smaller candidature such as Khmer, are not automatically scaled (up or down). Separate calculations are performed on these smaller subjects by VTAC each year.
when we started to change the assessment...because I suspect that the other languages were quite light on their assessment, where as we were properly assessing reading, writing, speaking and listening for every unit. But since we’ve eased up on that and haven’t done every skill for every unit, it’s made a small difference, not a huge difference, but that’s the thing that’s made the difference to our retention rates (T31).

4. The fourth reason students identified is the demotivating effect of low marks (14.7%) particularly when students felt they could achieve better marks in a non-language subject. For example,

- Difficult and I am always concerned that I am not good enough at it. Therefore my marks may be low and I may feel like a failure. S638
- Because of the prospects and possibility that I can get better marks in another non-language subject had I taken it. S224
- Worried that I'm not going to get good marks. S500
- I wanted to stop studying Japanese at several stages in the past when I found it extremely difficult and at times when I was not happy with the marks I was receiving. S146

5.2.1.2 Persevering with LOTE Studies, Victoria
While a few students had discontinued studying a particular LOTE, usually a second LOTE, all students in this study have continued on to study at least one LOTE at the senior secondary level. 93.0% of students wrote qualitative replies in the questionnaire on the reasons they were continuing with LOTE study at the senior secondary level (Some students stated more than one reason) (Table 5.13).
Table 5.13 Reasons for continuing LOTE study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for continuing</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment of language, of being bilingual</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 10% TER bonus</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from family</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from friends</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced career prospects</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel opportunities</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marks</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self motivation</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific cultural interests</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage reasons</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highest percentage of replies, 29.9%, highlighted the importance of the LOTE teacher. This finding is interesting in that the teacher was not a significant factor for the students in Section 5.2.1, even though, as Baldauf (2005a:140) highlights, a number of studies have shown that teachers can be the most important element in educational programs. This difference may be due to the way the question was asked in the questionnaire. Students were asked if they continued LOTE study because they ‘liked the teacher’ and if they continued with LOTE study on the ‘advice’ of the teacher, whereas the student replies in the qualitative section focused more on the importance of teachers and teachers’ aides in providing encouragement and extra support when students were struggling. For example,

- Teachers have motivated me because they believe that I have talent in the area. S414
• The Japanese student teacher's aides are incredibly helpful. S52
• My teacher has motivated me to continue with language study. S400
• My teacher has helped with many problems and encouraged me to continue. S423

A majority of students, 68.7%, who highlighted the importance of the teacher in this section of the questionnaire, are also students who have never considered discontinuing LOTE study. This arguably indicates the significance of the teacher as motivating factor in maintaining a positive attitude towards LOTE study.

The second most important factor is the enjoyment of LOTE study and of being bilingual (25.8%). While in the quantitative analysis of reasons for studying a LOTE (Section 5.2.1.1), the intrinsic enjoyment of learning another language was identified as an important reason for students, replies in this section provided a more detailed understanding of the role of LOTE study in the development of personal skills, interests and for the sharing of languages between friends. Shortly, Section 5.3 explores the pan-Asian interests of many students, predominantly those with an Asian heritage. Comments by students in Section 5.3 are largely connected to the personal experiences and connections that they have with aspects of ‘Asia’, through a family heritage as well as through hobbies and personal interests. Here, it is important to note the intrinsic interest many students with an English only background have in learning a language and culture, along with the desire to share and engage with the linguistic abilities of friends. For example,

• Just the fascination with the idea of conversing in a foreign language. Learning Indonesian has been both fun and extremely rewarding. Some of my closest friends speak foreign languages. My best friend speaks Indonesian, English and Chinese fluently. I am inspired by him and want to be a part of it. S313
• The eagerness to be able to be fluent in that language, to understand other Japanese people talk Japanese, understand Japanese media. S210
• One day I would love to speak fluent Indonesian and this has motivated me to continue. S425
• I am motivated to study language because I enjoy it and it makes me feel good. S474
5.2.2 NSW

Quantitative responses from students in NSW, as to why they were studying an Asian language, revealed a wide range of reasons for doing so, although there was an emphasis on enjoying learning about the culture and societies where the languages were spoken (38.2%), and the intrinsic enjoyment in studying languages (25.2%). As in Victoria, there was not a strong belief in the notion that the study of languages may enhance career prospects (8.4%).

Table 5.14 Most important reason for studying an Asian language, NSW\textsuperscript{55}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like studying about the culture and society of the country(s) where the language is spoken</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really like languages and studying languages</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to travel or live in a country that speaks the language</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel the language will help my career prospects.</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have definite plans to work in an area of employment where the language is used</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have got good marks in the past</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other contact with the country where the language is spoken (past travel, friends, parents’ work, etc)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic origin and / or religion. Contact with an ethnic community in Australia which speaks the language</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I particularly like the teacher</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been advised to continue by my family</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am an international student and it is my first language</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I must study the language for the International Baccalaureate</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{55} 2.3% of students did not answer this question.
5.2.2.1 The Struggle to Continue, NSW

In NSW, 37.9% of students indicated that they had wanted to give up LOTE study (Figure 5.2), although this figure was similar across all languages, unlike in Victoria (Figure 5.1) where a far higher percentage of students of Indonesian indicated that they had seriously considered discontinuing language studies. This may be explained, in part, by the fact that between 1999 and 2003, enrolments in Year 12 Indonesian in NSW declined 29.7%, arguably indicating that Indonesian studies had already experienced a decrease in popularity in the state.

Those students that wanted to give up were predominantly concerned with the difficulty of language study (68.6%), but also the demotivating effect of low marks (13.7%), particularly when students felt they could achieve better marks in a non-language subject. For example,

- Because it is extremely difficult and time consuming which I would be putting towards other subjects. Also, I am worried that my UAI will be brought down if I don’t do very well - which will be challenging. S26
- The work put into it and the marks received don’t match up; other subjects are more ‘mark-efficient’. S32
• Other subjects have more people studying i.e. better chance of a Band 656. S598
• The language is hard and my class works fast and I couldn’t keep up. S584
• I don’t do very well at it. It’s very demanding more so than other subjects, to be really good at it I would need to spend a lot of time just focusing on Japanese and that would affect my other subjects too much. S31

5.2.2.2 Persevering with LOTE Study, NSW
96.2% of the students studying an Asian language in NSW wrote qualitative replies in the questionnaire on the reasons they were continuing with LOTE study at the senior secondary level (some students stated more than one reason) (Table 5.15).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for continuing</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment of language, of being bilingual</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marks</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced career prospects</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel opportunities</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage reasons</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from family</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific cultural interests</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from friends</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self motivation</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bonus points</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

56 Band 6 is the highest band of marks students can receive for their final score in the NSW Year 12 system.
An enjoyment of language learning and of being bilingual was by far the most important reason for continuing with LOTE studies (40.5%). For example,

- The Indonesian language is a really interesting language to learn, it may not have many career options but I am not learning it for a career option. Indonesian is my subject that I do just because I enjoy it. S461
- Due to my bilingual background I have had a deep interest in languages from an early age. S547
- I love learning a language as many of my friends are bilingual and I love how they can suddenly switch languages when talking. I would like to be able to do that. S555
- After seeing the possibilities knowing a second language has, motivation comes easy and learning the language becomes a fun experience. S279
- Going to Japan for 2 months really encouraged me. The thrill of being able to communicate as well as the fantastic experience helped me to continue with my studies. My host families and friends have been fantastic in writing to me to help me improve and keep learning. S266
- I have just enjoyed the learning experience. I really enjoy knowing and learning another language. I would like to learn other languages but for the time being the resources and time are not available to me. S459
- It is a very interesting language, country and culture. I love learning about it, it’s very different to anything Australians experience. Languages are also a fantastic break from all my other subjects. S457
- It will give me an opportunity to be included in another culture S585
- The advantages of learning a second language go well beyond the simple usefulness of having another language. To see and think to a limited degree, through a completely different point of view and mannerisms aids greatly in the understanding of the world around me. That and an excellent dedicated teacher. S546

Again, as in the Victorian data, teachers (23.8%) play an important role for students in NSW, while receiving good marks (23.0%) is also important. This emphasis on marks in NSW replaces the emphasis in Victoria on the TER bonus that students receive on their university entrance scores. This university bonus is not available in NSW, although languages are scaled, predominantly upwards.
• I enjoy the language and the culture, my teachers is wonderful and I don't want to disappoint her when she's so supportive, her motivation helps me with my problems. S31
• Enjoyment of learning a language, classmates, teacher. S537
• Having a change of teacher has also encouraged me to continue because of her stories and commitment. Going to Japan was probably the biggest motivation because I really wanted to go back & experience that different environment again. S26
• Fascination with foreign languages in general and a career in languages, my Indonesian teacher. S466
• Good marks, teachers. S529

5.3 The Relevance of Language Learning

While the student questionnaire did not contain a specific question regarding the personal relevance of language study, through discussion of positive and negative aspects of language study and open-ended replies regarding reason for continuing with language study, a substantial amount of information emerged on this topic. This section identifies relationships and connections students (around 50%) have with the language they are either currently studying, would like to study or speak at home. This connection may be between the language and personal hobbies and interests; between the language and the students’ heritages; between the language and friendship groups, or between languages students are interested in/ currently speak. These relationships were extensive within the Victorian data, while students in NSW provided a lesser amount of elaboration on most points. Sections 5.3.1. to 5.3.4, therefore, focus on data from the Victorian students, while replies from students in NSW are explored briefly in Section 5.3.5.

In line with the focus on Asian languages in the school system, the data involved in Section 5.3.1 to 5.3.4 revolve around Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian, revealing the complex knowledge and relationships students develop with broader Asian interests.
5.3.1 Speakers and Students of Vietnamese

In examining the role of media and identity in the lives of the Vietnamese diaspora in Australia, Cunningham & Nguyen (2001) argue that many Vietnamese-Australians have strong connections to Hong Kong media and Hong Kong due to the common use of Cantonese in both cultures, as well as comparisons they draw between the political situations in the two countries. South Vietnam was annexed by North Vietnam in the 1970s, while more recently Hong Kong has been reannexed by the People’s Republic of China – a situation that resonates with many Vietnamese-Australians and one which is also acted out in some Hong Kong produced television dramas.

Cunningham & Nguyen (2001:105) also highlight the difference between the viewing habits and sense of identity of older and younger Vietnamese-Australians. They argue that ‘While the official culture of the diaspora continues to remain strongly anti-communist and anti-homeland government, growing numbers, particularly of the young, are forging “Asian-Australian” identities which owe less to the past and more to a globalising present.’

Within this study, support for this view can be seen in the variety of languages Vietnamese speakers wish to learn or identify with in some way. These students identified five Asian languages they would like to study – Korean, Chinese (Mandarin), Cantonese, Japanese and for a number of students who could not access their language in the school system, Vietnamese. Students were interested in these languages because of personal interests such as watching movies and listening to music (not just from Hong Kong, but from across Asia), sharing languages with friends, developing a language they use outside of school, and/or developing a language for work purposes. (All students listed below speak Vietnamese at home and unless indicated, were born in Vietnam). For example:

- Japanese and Korean. I'd love to try study [sic] either of these languages because I always listen to music sung in these languages and watch many series (that are voiced over and dubbed into Cantonese)57 so I

57 Brackets student's own.
would like to one day be able to understand everything I hear and watch. S615 (Born in Australia)

- Yes, it is Korean because I like Korean music and movies. I want to understand it. S305
- Korean I want to have a Korean girlfriend and visit Korea one day. S307
- Korean. It’s kind of similar to Japanese. S398 (Born in Australia)
- Yes, I am interested in studying Chinese because it's a very nice language also there are a large population of Chinese people in Australia and I would like to visit China one day. It will help me a lot if I learn them. S309
- Yes. Cantonese because I could improve more. S306
- Cantonese because I have some Cantonese friends as well. I also like it too. S311
- Yes I'm interested in studying Cantonese because it's helpful for my job, waiter. S312
- I want to learn Japanese and Chinese because their culture interests me. S307
- It's my mother language. S305 (Speaker of Vietnamese)
- So I could keep my mother tongue and it's good to communicate with mother people in Vietnam when I go there for a visit. S309 (Speaker of Vietnamese)

5.3.2 Speakers and Students of Chinese

A speaker of Chinese in Australia may come from or have an ethnic background that originates from numerous locations across Asia. Each student in this study identifies with the notion of Chinese differently as well, from those who ‘are Chinese’ to those who are a ‘bit Chinese’ to those who have an ‘Asian cultural background.’ Responses to the questions of why students are studying or would like to study Chinese can be grouped into three main categories. The first category involves those who consider themselves to ‘be Chinese’ (None of these students are Chinese overseas students). For example,

- I am Chinese therefore I must learn it. Also China is becoming powerful ☺ S493 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 4)
• Chinese is an ancient language and with the increase of Chinese being spoken, I feel as my duty to speak it and learn it as I am Chinese. S682 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 7)
• [I would like to study] Chinese, as I am Chinese. S679 (Born in Australia, parents born in Australia)
• I am Chinese. I born [sic] in China so I like to learn Chinese and I love this language. S11 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 3)

The second and largest group of students refer to the Chinese language as their ‘native’ language, even though it is not always the LOTE spoken at home. For example,

• Chinese because this is my country language [sic]. S13 (Born in Taiwan, international student)
• Chinese is my mother tongue so I would like to continue with the language. S491 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 7)
• I am studying Chinese because that is my mother language. S24 (Born in China, international student)
• Chinese's my first language. S10 (Born in China, international student)
• Chinese [Mandarin]. One day I should learn my native language. S212 (Born in New Zealand, speaker of Cantonese, parents born in Hong Kong and Vietnam.)
• Chinese because it is my native language. S195 (Born in Malaysia, moved to Australia aged 4)

The third group of students refer to having a Chinese or Asian ‘background’ rather than to ‘being Chinese’. These students were born in Australia as well as in Chinese speaking countries other than China. For example,

• I have a Chinese background so I think it is important to know Chinese. S618 (Born in Australia, parents born in Timor Leste, first language is Hakka.)
• Chinese - it’s part of my background and I would like to be able to communicate to my non-English speaking relatives. S198. (Born in Australia, parents born in Malaysia and Timor Leste)
• Chinese (Mandarin). My parents are Chinese and it would be good to be able to speak to some of my relatives overseas who speak Chinese. S219 (Born in Australia, parents born in Malaysia)

• My parents are of Chinese heritage so I would love to study Chinese and Cantonese because I was never able to learn it as a child. S189 (Born in Australia, parents from Malaysia)

• Chinese because I want to learn more about my heritage. S190 (Born in Hong Kong, moved to Australia aged 7)

• My parents really want me to continue as I am a bit Chinese myself. S302 (Born in Thailand, speaker of Mandarin and Teochew, parents born in Cambodia, moved to Australia aged 2)

• I learn a language because…I feel the need to know the language of my RACE you know what I mean?…I just learn cos…I kinda HAVE to learn it. I don’t know why but I have to. S285 (Born in Australia, parents born in Singapore)

• Motivation such as…my cultural background in Asia. S292 (Born in Australia, parents born in Singapore and Taiwan)

As we can see from the quotes in this section, students relate to Chinese (language and identity) at many different levels, depending on their birthplace, their parents birthplace and the use of LOTEs outside of school.

Speakers and students of Chinese also listed other languages they are interested in studying, namely, Japanese, Khmer, Cantonese, Korean and Malay, because they are languages spoken by their families, they have a personal interest in the language, or they wish to share languages with friends. For example,

• Japanese because it’s a good language to learn and it ties in with some of my hobbies/interests. S294 (Born in Australia, speaker of Cantonese and Mandarin)

• Japanese and Korean because I love [sic] country of Japan and Korea. S9 (Born in China, international student)

• Malaysian, so I could use it when I was home. S487 (Born in Malaysia, moved to Australia aged 11)
• I would like to study Khmer because I was born there and have some Cambodian background. S304 (Born in Cambodia, Speaker of Mandarin and Khmer, moved to Australia aged 7)

• Yeah Japanese =D cos its so cool and I love the language (sounds great) and I watch some anime so I’m influenced by how great it is there. S285 (Born in Australia, parents from Singapore)

• I would have liked the opportunity to learn Japanese at school. This is because of the link between China and Japan and the closeness of the 2 countries. It is also because I find the Japanese language very interesting and it is similar to Chinese. I also like the music. S292 (Born in Australia, parents born in Singapore and Taiwan)

• Korean then I could talk to my Korean friend in Korean. S202 (Born in Hong Kong, moved to Australia aged 4)

5.3.3 Speakers and Students of Japanese

Students of Japanese identified several other languages they would like to study including Korean, Cantonese, Vietnamese and Chinese, as well as writing about the importance of studying Japanese itself. Again students identified the importance of access to heritage languages, the sharing of languages with friends, and personal connections with language and culture. For example,

• Yes. Korean because I like the music and the characters look mad! S55 (Born in China, speaker of Cantonese and Mandarin, moved to Australia aged 8)

• Yes Korean or Chinese. Korean because their culture is similar to that of Chinese and Japanese so I want to compare their similarities and differences. S190 (Born in Hong Kong, moved to Australia aged 7)

• Korean as it has similar grammatical patterns as Japanese and I have learnt the Hangul characters already it’s just that I can't string words together as I don't know what the sounds mean! S208 (Born in Hong Kong, moved to Australia aged 4)

• I would like to study Korean as my mother is Korean and I like the language. It is similar in some aspects to Japanese such as pronunciation. S185 (Mother born in Korea)

• Cantonese, I'd like to learn it because I want to learn how to speak my language more. I also have a family background in the language and I'd
like to understand what my parents and relatives are saying to me. S66 (Born in Australia, father from Hong Kong)

- My parents are of Chinese heritage so I would love to study Chinese and Cantonese because I was never able to learn it as a child. S219 (Parents born in Malaysia)
- Chinese then I could talk to many of my Chinese friends in Chinese. S205 (Born in Korea, moved to Australia aged, 12)
- Japanese is a popular subject within the school. I also run a Japanese animation club which also serves to fuel my interest in the Japanese culture and language. S189 (Born in Australia, Parents born in Malaysia)
- Sinhalese because it’s the language my parents speak and many of my cousins and family speak it as well so I would like to be able to understand and if I wanted to travel or live in Sri Lanka, I need to know the language. S90 (Born in Australia, parents born in Sri Lanka)
- Telegu, I can speak it well and I can understand well. I can’t read or write it. Whenever I go to India I need to use it and we go to India every year to see our grandparents. I will have to learn Telegu when I grow up anyway because I plan to retire in India. S650 (Born in India, speaker of Telegu, moved to Australia aged 5)

While there were five students who were born in Japan or whose parents are from Japan, none of these students talked about learning Japanese as their native language or of their Japanese heritage (One student studied the language on the weekend).

### 5.3.4 Speakers and Students of Indonesian

Finally, for students of Indonesian, who have the lowest number of LB students studying the language (11.4%), 69.9% identified another language they would like to study, although a majority stated a European language. This will be discussed shortly. 30.0% of the students identified an Asian language they would like to study, highlighting the importance of cultural connections and sharing languages with friends. For example,

- I would love to study Japanese because I have an interest in Japanese culture. S418 (Born in Australia, speaker of German, father born in Germany)
• Japanese. I have always loved studying Asian countries especially Japan and I learned all about the traditions and their history and I really wanted to learn the language. S328 (Born in Australia, English speaking background)

• Chinese is a language I would LOVE to learn next. Indonesian has been a wonderful start and opened up so many opportunities for me. Chinese is highly regarded, historically rich, widely used and so very beautiful. Many of my Indonesian friends are Chinese, Indonesian and they inspire me all the more. S313 (Born in Australia, English speaking background)

5.3.5 The Relevance of Language Learning, NSW

In NSW, 29.0% of students wrote about connections between the language they are studying and personal hobbies and interests; between the language and the students’ heritages; between the language and friendship groups, or between languages students are interested in/ currently speak. In general, while many students did comment on pan-Asian cultural interest, there was less of a focus in comparison to Victoria. More students in NSW wrote on the broader (non-Asian focused) relevance of language study.

As in the Victorian data, students of Japanese who contributed to this section wrote of the relationships between cultures and languages, often between their own cultural and/or linguistic heritage and the Japanese language and culture. For example,

• Due to my bilingual background I have had a deep interest in languages from an early age. S547 (Born in Australian, first language Wenzhounese)

• Both Japanese and Korean are Asian... I love Japan! Their trendy fashion and hair style are such wonderful. I have always imagined to travel to [sic] Japan using Japanese. S554 (Born in South Korean, moved to Australian aged 16)

• I love learning a language as many of my friends re bilingual and I love it how they can suddenly switch languages when talking. I would like to be able to do that. S555 (Born in New Zealand, moved to Australian aged 7)
• Japanese is a hobby that I share with my girlfriend who has also been there. It's a fun subject to do and an excellent country to visit. S275

• Japanese is interesting. I find it easy in most ways and therefore I have plenty of fun. I like trying to out kanji master my friends and my brother. I will be visiting Japan many times in the future for my judo as the trend is that Japan has the best judo. S282

• The Japanese culture is very old and rich and also has close links to my Chinese heritage so it is naturally interesting. S511 (Mother from Taiwan, father from China)

• Japanese seems easier to me than other subjects since it is a little bit similar to Korean, my first language. S560 (Born in South Korea, international student)

• The Japanese culture is really wide [sic] and intriguing to me. From watching dubbed Japanese dramas, I find life in Japan very exciting and fun. S585 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 10)

For students of Chinese, there was less of a focus on the notion of ‘Chineseness’ as there was in the Victorian data and more of a focus on having a Chinese ‘background’. For example,

• Just not to lose the traditions and culture that a language creates. I would like to pass these values down to my children. S605 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 7)

• This is a background course. The purpose for me to study this course is to further improve my Chinese skills and the language may become handy sooner or later. S694 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 13)

• I want to be aware of my heritage and keep in contact with my Chinese background rather than fully assimilate into the Australian way of life. S606 (Mother from Hong Kong, father from China, first language Cantonese)

• My Chinese background, but lack of knowledge. S598 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 2)

• Able to communicate and watch and listen to Chinese songs and movies S599 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 1)

• Also to identify with my culture of origin. S602 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 4)
• The fact that I was born in China motivates me as well. Problems can be resolved with parents as well. S604 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 4)
• My main motivation is when I go back to China I’ll be able to communicate properly. I also want to read history books in Chinese. [I also want to study] Japanese because I not only like Chinese culture but most Asian culture. Besides Japanese culture was derived from Chinese culture. S607 (Born in China, moved to Australia aged 2)
• I think that being able to read and write at least some of your language is very important and when I can read a whole sentence of Chinese I feel very satisfied which in turn makes me want to continue. S611 (Born in Hong Kong, moved to Australia aged 3, first language Cantonese)

For students of Indonesian, who are predominantly Australian-born with an English speaking background, discourse was focused on Australia’s relationship with Indonesia rather than on the personal relevance of the language.

5.4 Student Choices

The student data in this chapter presents three very clear groups of students who are studying Asian languages. To begin with, enrolments in Asian languages are fairly evenly split between LB (53.0% across both states) and EB students (47.0%). A further distinction can be made amongst LB students – those who can and cannot study their home language at school. Overall, the three groups of students are:

1. LB students who study their home language/s within the school system (22.0% across the two states),
2. LB students who do not have access to their home language/s or who chose to study a different language in the school system (31%), and
3. EB students (47.0%)\(^\text{58}\).

\(^\text{58}\) All three groups contain students who are studying more than one LOTE at school. 37.8% of students studying two LOTEs at school are EB students, 32.4% speak one or more LOTE/s at home and study two further languages at school, while 29.7% speak one or more LOTE/s at home and study at least one of these LOTEs at school, along with another LOTE.
These student groups are determined by language-in-education policies at the school, state and federal levels, although students do have some agency in their language study choices. For example, 22% of students use a LOTE at home and are able to study the same language at school, while some of these students also study the language at the weekends (Figure 5.4). 31% of students cannot study the language they speak at home, but chose to study a different language at school.

The inability to access a particular language in the mainstream school system indicates a number of things. It may, for example, point to the level of respect or disrespect accorded a language by Australian society. The NALSAS policy made clear distinctions in this regard, with only four Asian languages prioritised. Also, the size of a language community, the perceived usefulness of a language and the pressure (or lack of pressure) exerted by the language community all impact on language provision. For example, a language such as Hindi is an important and widely used regional language, but has a small language community in Australia. On the other hand, a lack of pressure from the language community arguably impacts on the study of Filipino, which is the eighth largest community language group in Australia. The inability to access a language may also be due to the level of codification of a language. Alternatively, some students speak a vernacular that is not generally written, such as Teochew, or speak a less prestigious dialect, such as Cantonese. However, a wide range of languages are accessible through weekend schools, with around a fifth of students who cannot study their language at a mainstream school studying the language they speak at home on the weekends59.

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59 This is not so much the case for Cantonese, although it is has been offered at the VSL for primary aged students since 2006.
Figure 5.3 Language study patterns of students of Asian languages, Victoria and NSW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>53% speak a LOTE at home</th>
<th>47% are monolingual English speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22% study the LOTE they speak at home within the school curriculum</td>
<td>31% study a LOTE other than the one they speak at home within the school curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2% also study the LOTE they speak at home outside of school</td>
<td>24.8% do not study the LOTE they speak at home outside of school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As noted in Section 5.1.1.4 and 5.1.2.4, students who can study the language/s they use at home within the school systems almost always chose to do so and while a

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60 As this research is school focused, students who are not studying a language at school were not included in this study. This figure therefore, does not contain percentages for students who only study their home LOTE outside of school.

61 6.4% of these students study two languages at school.

62 4.3% of these students study two languages at school.
majority of LB students cannot access their language within the school system, 68.1% of these students who responded to the question⁶³, ‘If your school offered this language/s [the student’s home language/s], would you choose it as a subject?’ state that they would. Arguably, the greater validity provided to a language through its inclusion in mainstream curricula provides it with a status and purpose outside of the home and can increase the importance of or centrality of language in identity. It also provides access to literacy and a wider range of registers. While it is important to acknowledge that the role of language cannot be considered in isolation in relation to ethnic identity, with the centrality of language differing for ethnic groups and individuals, (For example, May, 2001; Smolicz, 1979; Smolicz, 1980), the high uptake of languages when they are available in mainstream schools demonstrates that for many students, language can be an important part of identity (Whether it be due to pressure from parents or self-interest).

While some students, who cannot study their home language at school, choose to do so on the weekend, most do not, or wish not to, but there are disadvantages to this, particularly in relation to literacy. While many of these students continue to speak a LOTE at home, literacy provides access to registers used outside of the home, as well as many aspects of culture. Although 31% of students are studying a third or fourth language at school, (but not their home language), studies on trilingualism show that literacy in home languages has a positive effect on third language learning (Swain, Lapkin, Rowen, & Hart, 1991) and that amongst trilinguals, students who use a home language in more language domains perform better in their third language (Sagasta Errasti, 2003).

There are, however, many advantages to learning a third language at school regardless of the level of literacy in the home language. Cenoz (2003) argues that trilingualism research has broadly shown that third language acquisition provides more general advantages in proficiency in comparison to second language learners, while Clyne, Rossi Hunt & Isaakidis’s (2004) study of LB students in Melbourne learning a third language at school demonstrates that trilingualism can strengthen home language maintenance, help students develop a more general interest in languages and facilitate

⁶³ 69.2% of eligible students answered to the question.
‘crossing’, that is, facilitate wider engagement with the cultures and languages of peers (See also Swain et al., 1991). This crossing between multiple cultural and linguistic boarders is what Maher (2005:90) has called ‘metroethnicity’ or ‘the movement towards Cool’, where individuals study or use languages not through an ethnolinguistic duty, but due to a ‘desire to reframe cultural affiliation and orthodoxy.’

The research in this thesis clearly demonstrates the increased engagement in ‘crossing’ amongst many LB students studying a third or fourth language, particularly among students of Japanese. Many students studying their home language, such as Vietnamese and Chinese, at school, also discuss accessing broader cultural and linguistic interests through their own languages. Language study enables these students to transfer connections between their Australian identity and their Asian heritage to another language. For students for whom this relationship is not necessarily clear, it provides them with an opportunity to use another Asian language to reframe their access to and understanding of their own Asia-Australia relationship/identity. While many of these students cannot study the language they speak at home, they are active in the development or reframing of their identity in a broader context.

5.4.1 Other Influences on Student Choices

It is also important to keep in mind that along with the availability of languages in mainstream schools, the language a student chooses to study is strongly determined by the language background of students. In this study, for example, Vietnamese and Chinese are predominantly studied by students with a Vietnamese or Chinese background. It is important to clarify ‘Chinese background’ within this context. Of the students studying Chinese in both states,

- 63.8% speak Mandarin at home;
- 16.2% speak a fang yan other than Mandarin at home (Cantonese, Hakka, Hokkien, Shanghainese, Teochew or Wenzhounese);

64 With 25.5% of these students speaking another fang yan or other Asian language at home as well.
- 13.8% speak another Asian language (Malay, Thai and Vietnamese) or were born in or have parents born in an Asian country with a strong Chinese culture (Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and Thailand),
- 6.2% of students come from an English speaking background

So it is not just those who speak Mandarin at home who are studying Chinese, but also students with an affiliation to Chinese culture. This issue will be discussed further in the following chapter on background speakers in the language classroom.

Students of Japanese are fairly evenly divided between LB students who cannot study their home language at school, and EB students. Korean and Indonesian are predominantly studied by EB students\(^\text{65}\). It is important to acknowledge these groupings, and to understand why this occurs, in order to encourage a full range of students to study these languages. Focusing on students in these groupings can also help identify what motivates particular groups and how this could be taken in consideration when trying to encourage students to study different languages.

For example, in the Victorian data, students of Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese are more motivated to continue studying languages and far less likely to want to give up. One of the most important reasons for language study is the personal connection they have with the language and culture and sharing these experiences with peers. Most of the students studying Chinese, Vietnamese, and to a lesser extent, Japanese\(^\text{66}\), have an ‘Asian family background\(^\text{67}\) and are studying a language that provides a gateway to a shared cultural interest or hobby, or are studying a language they speak at home. For many of these students, this enables them to develop their language skills amongst those with a shared cultural background (for example, Chinese), and/or, for some, to

\(^{65}\) Note that all students of Korean and Indonesian in this study were studying the second language streams, not the first language streams. In the Victoria sample, which represented 43.8% of Year 12 Korean second language students in Victoria in 2003, there were no students who spoke Korean at home or who had parents born in Korea.

\(^{66}\) Of the students of Japanese who had seriously considered giving up Japanese study, 62.2% were from a monolingual English speaking background, while 37.8% spoke a LOTE at home.

\(^{67}\) In this instance, the term ‘Asian family background is used for students who were born in an Asian country, (may) speak an Asian language at home, and/or who have parents born in an Asian country.
explore alternative aspects of Asian identity through friendships and shared hobbies. Conversely, students of Indonesian and Korean are studied largely by EB student, who did not, on the whole, discuss the importance of sharing languages with peers, or of accessing pan-Asian cultural interests. This was not a paradigm that they necessarily have access to. Instead, these students relied upon the support of their teachers to continue with language study. Acknowledging and supplementing, or accommodating for, the support mechanisms that students do or do not have access to could play an important role in supporting the broader study of Asian languages.

5.4.2 Identity and Language Study

Regardless of the students’ linguistic or cultural backgrounds, student data in this study has highlighted the considerable opportunities for identity development that the study of Asian languages and culture provides. Liddicoat (2005:202-3) argues that,

Language is also more than a communicative tool...Language learners use language to express ideas and they construct and present their own identities regardless of proficiency. Language learning is therefore an engagement with new modes of (self)expression not simply the acquisition of a code and attention needs to be given to the nature of this expression.

It is apparent from the student data that second language learning provides an important mediating space for identity. An examination of all three groups of students mentioned in Section 5.4 shows that students relate to their language learning experiences in different ways and to different degrees. Some students experience a greater connection with their family background and with their families through language study. Some students discover new forms of identities and self-expression as explored through friendships, common interests and the opportunities available within their learning environments. These include sharing broader interests in pan-Asian languages and cultures. Students who are only interested in the one language and culture they are studying develop a more direct relationship between themselves and the language and cultures they are learning about. This is most apparent in EB

68 The notion of sharing languages with friends was not entirely absent amongst EB students. For example, S313, a student of Indonesian writes, ‘My best friend speaks Indonesian, English and Chinese fluently. I am inspired by him and want to be a part of it’. 183
students learning Korean and Indonesian, although these groupings are not exclusive. For example, some LB students only wish to study the language/s and culture/s of their background, while the sharing of many languages and cultures with friends motivates some EB students\textsuperscript{69}.

The opportunities for developing pan-Asian interests and hobbies through language study, as expressed by many students in Section 5.3, provides an exciting example of the kind of ‘Asia knowledge’ that the NALSAS program was seeking to promote. It is also important to develop an understanding of any impediments that may prevent students without an Asian heritage from developing a broader understanding and connection to this concept. We have seen, for example, that there is a very negative perception of Indonesian amongst elements of the parental community, along with restrictions on travel to the region. Many schools have experienced difficulties in establishing cultural exchanges with Indonesian schools, and the many teachers who have recently been trained to teach Indonesian have not been to the country to experience the language and culture first hand (See Section 7.3). Issues such as terrorism and the Islamic religion are presented, by some media and politicians, as being at odds with Australia and Australia’s values and lifestyle, as well as being in opposition to the economic imperatives that are driving ‘success’ in other Asian countries. All these variables may create a sense of isolation for students of the language. Policy and teaching practices need to recognise that capricious events and community attitudes can have a significant effect on language programs and help students develop a greater understanding and positive perception of different countries, religions or communities within Asia.

\textbf{5.5 Summary}

This chapter has identified a range of important indicators in relation to who is studying Asian languages, why they are studying them and what factors support their

\textsuperscript{69} Not all experiences, however, are additive, with a small number of students taking little, other than a greater sense of ‘us’ and ‘them’, from the language learning experience. Arguably, there are an even larger number of students who had similar experiences and opinions that did not continue with language study at all.
language learning endeavours. Student data in both states has clearly shown that students who speak a LOTE at home and who have parents from a non-English speaking background are highly motivated to study languages, particularly in regional areas. When students have access to their home language, they almost always take up the opportunity to study it, although not being able to access a home language does not undermine students’ language learning experiences, with many students developing a broadened interest in Asian languages and cultures through their home language or another Asian language (particularly for students of Japanese). There is however, a broad cross-section of EB and LB students studying Asian languages.

There is no doubt that acquiring a second (or third) language is a difficult undertaking and the sheer workload and intellectual challenge of learning another language was the biggest concern of students in both states. The most important reasons in each state for undertaking language study is the enjoyment of study about other cultures and societies and of studying languages, however challenging this may be. It is this enjoyment that motivates students to continue with language study, along with the support of their language teachers.

We have also seen that this enjoyment of learning about other cultures, societies and languages is closely connected to the personal experiences of students. In Victoria, the personal significance of the study of Asian languages was illustrated most clearly for students with an Asian heritage. Language study allows these students to access a broader knowledge and understanding of (aspects of) Asia through hobbies and interests that are shared across Asia. This linguistic and cultural knowledge developed through students’ interests are shared within peer groups in schools. This relationship is not exclusively confined to students with an Asian heritage, with most students from Victoria writing of the positive personal experience in studying a language. This was also expressed, to a lesser extent, by students in NSW.

Within the students in this research project, we have also seen quite specific groupings of students and we will explore one of the underlying reasons for these groupings – the background speaker issue, in the following chapter.
CHAPTER SIX – IS ASIAN LANGUAGE STUDY EQUITABLE?

Students in Australia are able to study a broad range of languages through the education system. However, as shown in Chapter 5, just who studies which languages is often influenced by a student’s language background. This chapter argues further that the choice to study or not to study certain languages is also strongly influenced by the perception that some students have an unfair advantage due to their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. A fundamental issue for students and for school communities, and the central focus of this chapter, is whether Asian language study is equitable for both background speakers and non-background speakers. The question of whether some students have an ‘unfair’ advantage over beginner students, however, is only one part of the quandary. Other important issues include whether multi-levelled examinations are discriminatory; who perceives them as discriminatory; the indelible nature of looking ‘Asian’, and the differences between the cultural and linguistic advantages students bring with them to the language learning classroom. This chapter explores these issues from the perspective of students, schools and stakeholders.

Section 6.1 begins with an analysis of newspaper excerpts surrounding Asians and Asian language study in Australia. The excerpts contribute both directly and indirectly to the discussion of the background speaker issue, proving contextual information around the importance of the relationship between Asia and Australia and the place of Asian-Australians in the education system, as well as discussing material explicitly relating to background speakers and the learning of Asian languages. Section 6.2 then examines the current policies or actions that relate to the issue in different jurisdictions and whether they are justifiable in the Australian context, drawing on interviews with teachers, school administrators and stakeholders as well as relevant policy and educational documentation. This section also examines competing attitudes and opinions which influence or attempt to influence assessment authorities and the examination system and the impact of this on the study of certain Asian languages. Section 6.3 then explores the situation from the perspective of students studying Asian languages at the senior secondary level.
6.1 The Australian Context

In recent years in Australia, there has been a heightened awareness of the importance of Australia’s relationship with the Asia-Pacific region and of the importance of the NALSAS program in developing Australia’s knowledge of the region (See, for example, Forwood, 2002; Freesmith, 2002; Langlois, 2002; Milligan, 2002). The newspaper materials examined in this section provide an important snapshot of public discourse surrounding Asian-Australians and the study of Asian languages in Australia, at a point when the NALSAS program had been running for around eight years, and the federal government (Howard-led) announced that funding to the NALSAS program would be discontinued. The newspaper materials consist of 48 newspaper pieces written between April 2002 and June 2003 (See Section 3.5 for further details). The pieces consist of feature articles, editorials, letters to the editors and letters from the opinion section of The Age education supplement and were written by journalists, students, the general public, academics and professionals (as is indicated in each quote). The pieces highlight presumptions, opinions and beliefs that surround Asian-Australians and the study of Asian languages in Australia. Statistical data from other sources is utilized to counter inaccurate opinions, which suggest discrimination, found amongst the pieces.

6.1.1 The Fear of ‘Asian Intellectualism’

There were two major themes that emerged from the newspaper analysis. The first involves the perception of an unfair cultural and/or linguistic advantage amongst students with an Asian background. The perceived threat of an unfair cultural advantage is not a new discourse in Australia. Jewish intellectualism was stigmatised in Australia following the migration of large numbers of politically active Jews from the 1930s (Ozolins, 1993:8). Today utilisation of this same argument is seen in relation to the academic success of Asian background students in selective government schools70. Numerous articles (e.g. Bolt, 2002: journalist; Dornan, 2002: ex-Sydney Boys high school student; Einfeld, 2002: member of general public; Hewett, 2002: journalist; Noonan, 2002: journalist; Whitfield, 2002: teacher at Sydney high school; Yaman, 2002: journalist) were based around an incident at 70 In 2003, there were 31 partially or fully selective schools in NSW, while there were only two in Victoria. Admission to selective state schools is based largely on academic testing and is extremely competitive.
Sydney Boys High School and changes in the school’s demographics. Graeme King, a Sydney Boys High School ‘Old Boy’ (past student of the school) wrote in the school newsletter that he, among other Old Boys, objected to the intellectualism of students with an ‘Asian’ background. King suggested that the academic success of Asians had resulted in 90% of Year 7 students coming from an Asian background and that this was ‘weakening the school,’ particularly in relation to traditional sports such as rugby and rowing. King also suggested that parents of these children lacked the necessary ethos that was part of the school history. A committee of Old Boys increased the furor by then suggesting that descendents of Old Boys be allowed to bypass the academic requirements and automatically be given entry into the school in order to improve the ‘weaknesses’ in the school system (Noonan, 2002:1).

King’s comments are inaccurate and problematic in a number of ways. The ESL teacher at the school clarified that 90% of the Year 7 students are not of an Asian background, but that 78% of students come from a non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB), speaking between 30 to 40 different languages (Whitfield, 2002: ESL teacher at Sydney Boys high school). King placed not only all Asian background students into the one basket, but all non-English speaking background students into the ‘Asian’ category. King also failed to acknowledge the diversity of skills that this group of students bring to the school. As one ex-student wrote, the Old Boys’ comments were,

> clearly driven by racial and cultural intolerance: the older generation obsessed with poor results in rowing and rugby likewise ignore the schools’ outstanding academic results. By the way, while rugby and rowing continue performing badly, volleyball and soccer are doing well (Dornan, 2002:12, Ex-student at Sydney Boys High School).

The view of ‘white Australia’ being threatened by Asian intellectualism is one that is seen again and again in public discourse in Australia. In the late 1990s, Pauline Hanson caused great controversy in Australian public life with her views of ‘Asians swamping Australia’, while in 2005, a Macquarie University Law professor, Andrew Fraser, created a stir by claiming that Australia would end up being ruled by a class of Asian migrants because they are too intelligent. He is quoted as saying,
Look at the annual HSC results - the consequence of which is that Oz is creating a new heavily Asian managerial-professional, ruling class that will feel no hesitation … in promoting the narrow interests of their co-ethnics at the expense of white Australians (Dick, 2005).

The concern that some students have an unfair linguistic advantage is also not a new discourse in Australia; the emphasis has simply moved from European to Asian languages (See Section 2.2.2). The notion of an unfair advantage is based on the presumption that students who ‘look Asian’ speak an Asian language fluent, although this presumption largely relates to the study of Chinese. Just as King categorised all NESB students at Sydney Boys High School as Asian, this racialised grouping of students misrepresents the diversity of language skills that any student brings to the language classroom. These skills can vary enormously as is clearly demonstrated by Clyne (2005:128-9) in his taxonomy of language learners, which divides exposure to a LOTE into 12 levels:

1. Students with an active home background and substantial overseas experience of formal education through the language as a medium of instruction.
2. Students with an active home background in the languages and some formal instruction (primary and/or ethnic school) in Australia.
3. Students with an active home background in the language and no formal instruction prior to secondary school.
4. Students with an active home background in a variety of the language but not in the standard language, in which classes are conducted, with or without formal instruction in the language here or elsewhere. (Examples are Cantonese, Hakka and Hokkien; Sicilian, Calabrian and Venetian dialects of Italian; Bavarian, Swabian and Swiss dialects of German; the various national varieties of Spoken Arabic, such as Lebanese, Egyptian, Iraqi and Palestinian).
5. Students with no home background in the language but who have lived and attended school in a country where the language is spoken.
6. Students with a passive background in the community language.
7. Students with no home background in the language but formal instruction in the language at primary school.
8. Third language learners

9. Students with a limited active family background (which may come from both parents or from only one parent and grandparent/s) and no formal instruction in the language prior to secondary school.

10. Students with a passive family background (usually one parent or grandparent/s) and no formal instruction in the language prior to secondary school.

11. Students with a passive family background in a variety of the language and no formal instruction in the standard language prior to secondary school.

12. Students with no home background and no prior knowledge of the language. Some of them may have a heritage interest in the language because of family origins.

This complexity was demonstrated to some extent in Chapter 5.4.2.2, which looked at the varying degrees in which students engaged and identified with their Chinese ancestry.

The newspaper discourse surrounding background speakers and an unfair advantage is particularly focused on the study of Chinese in Australia and demonstrates a continuing lack of understanding of varying degrees of exposure that students may have experienced. The first excerpt involves assumptions based on cultural features - the surnames of students. Carolan, a student writing in the opinion section of *The Age Education supplement*, objects to students who arrive in Australia before the age of six, taking the same examination as those who begin Chinese study at the Year 7 level. The first group of students have an unfair advantage and absolute beginners have no chance of competing, argues Carolan (2002:9).

Witness the domination of Chinese surnames in the study scores over 40. Congratulations to the three wonderful scholars (without Chinese background) who achieved the virtually impossible in 2002.

Carolan’s viewpoint overlooks a number of important points. First, he presumes that anyone with a Chinese surname is a recently arrived migrant, ignoring Australian students of an Asian heritage who have ‘rights of birth and citizenship, generational
longevity and strong national and cultural identities grounded in Australia (Tan, 2005:66).’ The ‘assumption of foreignness’, in this case associated with a Chinese surname, is a feature of oral history interviews with Asian-Australians conducted by Tan (2005). Even though one of her informants, Robyn,

can trace her Australian heritage back four generations to when her great-great-grandparents arrived in Australia in the late 1800s, her claims to ‘Australianness’ are not readily accepted by white Australians who insist she must be from ‘another place’. Robyn describes the sense of frustration she experiences as a result of her ‘Australianness’ continually being called into question by others, particularly when she recognises the probability that their families are likely to have migrated to Australia more recently than her own (Tan, 2005:68-9).

Carolan does not give any consideration either, to the possibility that these students may have had no exposure to Mandarin or that they may speak different a fang yan, which is the case for 16.3% of students studying Chinese in this study. This point was also made by another student in the newspaper.

I am of Shanghainese background and grew up speaking Shanghainese at home (not Mandarin). I completed my VCE Chinese second language last year and found it extremely difficult learning a different language than that of my native tongue, just like anyone else would with or without a Chinese background. (Shao, 2003).

From another perspective, Qian (2002), also a student, points out that students like herself, who arrive in Australia at a young age with no English, are given no concessions for the vast majority of subjects that must be taken in English. Clyne (2005) also highlights that there is never any suggestion of categorising students based on different educational experiences for other subjects. For example, there is never any suggestion that students with extensive exposure to music, art, drama or computers through their parents’ occupations and interests should be examined differently than those without the same level of exposure. This will be examined further in Section 6.2.1.2.
One final point that needs to be considered is Carolan’s (2002:9) view that ‘the very ones who should be learning Chinese, are being put off by the inequality.’ In this case, Carolan is referring to $EB$ students starting Chinese in Year 7. One of the problems with the NALSAS policy, as demonstrated through Carolan’s comments, is the assumption that ‘it is possible to separate foreign cultural interests of the nation from domestic cultural interests’ (Lo Bianco, 2002a:1). While it is vitally important to encourage $EB$ students to study Chinese, by ignoring local realities, the NALSAS policy created an ongoing problem for Asian language study, particularly through encouraging the perception that local and foreign interests can be separated and through promoting the study of Chinese as prestigious. This has led to some believing that Chinese should therefore be most accessible to students in prestigious schools, as will be examined further in Section 6.2.1.2.

6.1.2 Asian Languages as Community Languages

The second theme that emerged from the newspaper discourse involves the status of Asian languages as community languages in Australia. As we have noted, the push for Asian languages was based on their status as important foreign languages. Attitudes towards the acceptance and promotion of Asian languages as important community languages lag behind the importance of Asian languages as ‘foreign’ languages. For example, Gunn (2002:10) wrote in *The Australian*,

> Far from widening our linguistic capacity, the narrow focus on Asian languages is causing us to rapidly become a nation of monolinguists [sic]. I work in multiple languages all the time and our failure to use and develop our own linguistic resources disturbs me deeply.

The view that studying Asian languages will cause monolinguism is not only contradictory, but also representative of an extremely negative view of Asia and Asian languages. Furthermore, the idea that Australia is failing to develop its community languages by concentrating on Asian languages is simply inaccurate given that seven of the top 20 community languages in Australia are Asian languages (See Table 2.1).
To reiterate what was said in the previous section, the role of Asian languages in Australian society has not been fully recognized. When the Asian Studies Council was formed in 1986 to promote Asian languages, the only reference in their agenda to Asian language communities was to background speakers in a section titled ‘Particular Problems,’ where it was noted that ‘native-speakers’ were a problem in language classrooms and for exam situations. The NALSAS program also largely ignored Asian community languages in its implementation.

ASAA’s 2002 report *Maximising Australia's Asia Knowledge: Repositioning and Renewal of a National Asset*, begins to recognise the importance of Asian-Australians.

This street runs both ways. Australians of Asian backgrounds can influence the repositioning of Australia’s Asia knowledge; and they can benefit from a more pervasive understanding among all Australians of the histories and cultures of Asian countries.

In summary, the discourse that has appeared in prominent Australian newspapers paints a slightly uneasy picture of Asian culture and languages in Australian society. There is still a level of discomfort with Asian intellectualism, with the place of Asian languages as important community languages and the place and role of Asian-Australian identity in Australia. While policy rhetoric in Australia is focused on the importance of Asian languages for their international importance, government education systems must implement a foreign focused language policy while dealing with the reality of classrooms with first and second language learners of Asian languages, including second language learners with and without a background in the language. The following section outlines the examination systems in Victoria and NSW and problematic issues raised by participants in this study.

6.2 Examination Levels

6.2.1 Where are the Lines Drawn?

First, it must be acknowledged that regardless of where lines are drawn in the argument and in a multi-levelled examination system, there will always be some
students on the borders who are advantaged or disadvantaged. This is unavoidable. The greater issue is whether these distinctions should be made at all.

With the increasing popularity of Asian languages in the late 1980s in Australia, equitable access to these languages within the education system was always an issue of concern. Even before the implementation of the NALSAS program, the development of two tiered examination systems was a priority, particularly in NSW, to ensure that secondary students beginning a language were not in competition with students recently arrived from another country. However, the implementation of the two level examination system was dependent on a number of factors including the language involved, the different demographics of each state, and time delays, resulting in significant differences between Victoria and NSW.

In Victoria, to deal with the issue of unfair advantage and with first and second language learners, examinations for Japanese, Indonesian and Korean have been divided into first and second language streams. The split in the examination levels was introduced in 1997 for Indonesian and in 2001 for Korean and Japanese. For these three languages, any student who has had up to seven years of education in a school where the language is the medium of instruction is eligible to take the second language stream. If a student has more than seven years of schooling in the target language, they must take the first language stream.

For Chinese, a split into two levels was introduced in 1995, with a third level introduced in 2004. The examination levels for Chinese are ‘first language’, ‘second language advanced’ and ‘second language’ streams. To qualify for Chinese as a second language, students must not have had more than one year of formal education or to have lived for more than three years in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao. This ruling does not apply to students who have lived or been educated in Singapore, Vietnam or Cambodia. Students who have had up to seven years of education, no higher than the Australian equivalent of Year 7, can take the Chinese as a second

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71 The third level for Chinese was originally offered in 2003, but withdrawn due to the short notice provided to schools to implement the changes. It was introduced formally in 2004. (Languages manager, curriculum branch, VCAA.)
language advanced stream, while any student who has had more than seven years schooling in one of the listed countries or who has been educated beyond Year 7 in these countries, must take the Chinese as a first language stream.

In NSW, the introduction of background speaker examinations has been applied to Chinese (1991), Japanese (1991), Indonesian (1994) and Korean (1994)\textsuperscript{72}. There are up to four streams for each of these languages: Continuers; Extension; Beginners and Background speaker levels.

1. The Continuers stream is for students who begin a language in Year 7 and continue to the senior secondary level.
2. The Extension course is available for students who have completed the Continuers stream in order to further develop their language skills.
3. The Beginner stream is for students starting language study at Year 11. The stream is for two years and students must not have studied the language formerly for more than 100 hours at the secondary level.
4. The final level is the Background speaker level, which was developed for students who have had a year or more of formal education in a country where the language is the medium of instruction.

We can see already that there are clear differences between how each state deals with the issue. In Victoria, students are called ‘first’ or ‘second language learners’, while in NSW the term ‘background speaker’ is used. In Victoria, a student can have studied in a school where the language is the medium of instruction for up to seven years for Japanese, Korean and Indonesian before they are considered a first language learner, while in NSW, students are classified as background speakers after just one year schooling in the language. There were also significant differences in the timelines. NSW was far quicker in implementing multi-levelled examinations for most languages than Victoria. This delay in implementing to tiered examination system was clearly identified by teachers in Chapter 4.3.5, as one of the major reasons for the lack

\textsuperscript{72} Background speaker examinations are also available for Malay (1994), Russian (2002) and Persian (2002). However, these languages are not available for students other than background speakers to study. That is, there is only one level of examination available, the background speaker examination.
of success for Korean in Victoria, with the multi-levelled examination promised in 1994, not implemented until 2001.\textsuperscript{73}

While the discussion will focus on the examination systems in VIC and NSW, an overview of the examination systems in Australia is included for a broader picture. Table 6.1 outlines the different approaches that are taken across states in Australia with regard to examinations for languages and the inconsistencies that therefore exist across states.

\textsuperscript{73} However, this has not resulted in differences in the study of Korean at the Year 12 level by second language learners in both states. In fact, in Victoria, 33\% (32 students) of Year 12 students of Korean in 2003 were second language learners, while only 11.1\% (16 students) of learners in NSW were second language learners. This may be accounted for in part by the concentration of Korean migrants in the Sydney area. In 2001, 74.7\% of Korean speakers lived in the Sydney area, with only 8\% living in Melbourne. In general, the lack of uptake of Korean by second language learners suggests a wider disinterest in the language, as suggested in Chapter 4.3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Territory</th>
<th>Differences in examination levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>Students who have had more than <em>one</em> year of education where the LOTE was the medium of instruction must take the background speakers examination for Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All other languages have one level of examination, including the Persian and Russian background speakers’ examination (that is, you can only study Persian and Russian in NSW if you have had more than one year of education where the LOTE was the medium of instruction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT and SA</td>
<td>Students who have had more than <em>one</em> year of education where the LOTE was the medium of instruction must take the background speakers examination for Chinese, Korean, Russian and Vietnamese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 12 languages have two levels of examination available based on when students commenced LOTE study (primary or secondary level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Languages with only one level of examination include – Khmer, Persian (background speaker only) and Portuguese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>Students who have had more than <em>one</em> year of education where the LOTE was the medium of instruction must take the background speakers examination for Chinese, Indonesian, and Japanese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Four levels of examination, based on the number of coursework hours, are available for Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian and Japanese. (This is in addition to the background speaker examinations for Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All other languages have one level of examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State/Territory</td>
<td>Differences in examination levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| WA
\(^{74}\) | Students who have had more than *one* year of education where the LOTE was the medium of instruction must take the background speakers examination for Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian.  
• All other languages have one level of examination |
| ACT | Only one examination level is available for all languages. |
| QLD | There are no background speakers’ examinations but there are extension courses available for French, German and Indonesian (2006). Students can take these courses concurrently with their Year 12 studies or once they have finished the Year 12 language courses. These courses are designed to extend students with a background in the language and those who have studied the language in immersion programs\(^{75}\). |
| VIC | Students who have had more than *seven* years of education where the LOTE was the medium of instruction must take the first language examination for Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean.  
Students of Chinese with *more than six months* but less than *seven* years of education where the LOTE was the medium of instruction must take the Chinese as a Second Language Advanced Examination.  
• All other languages have one level of examination |

\(^{74}\) In WA, the criteria for deciding which examination level a student must take is more complex and based on an interpretation of the ‘critical age hypothesis’ which argues that after a certain stage, mastery of a language is difficult if not impossible. See the Treloar report (2003) for full details. There are a number of problems with the premise behind the policy. See Clyne (2005: 118-36 ).

\(^{75}\) In 2006, immersion programs were offered in eight schools in QLD, where students in Years 8 to 10 received 50-60% of the curriculum in the target language. Programs were offered in Chinese, French, Japanese, Indonesian, and Italian.
At this stage, the major distinctions in multiple examination levels made by assessment authorities are based on overseas educational experiences. These distinctions are also only applied to Asian languages. It is imperative to ask what legitimate and illegitimate differences within an education system are and then, how this applies to the LOTE examination system in Australia. Carens (2000:88), for example, asks, ‘To what degree does the liberal commitment to equal opportunity require that people have the same cultural framework and the same cultural resources for their choices?’ He argues that egalitarianism does not require minority groups to conform to the dominant culture. Rather some differences and/or inequalities can be seen as legitimate once consideration has been given to how power has shaped these differences.

There is no such thing as a neutral social structure. We have to decide whether and to what extent and in what ways certain forms of achievement will receive external rewards (Carens, 2000:105).

There are a number of issues and objections from different parties that need to be pursued in examining this question – what forms of achievements will be rewarded in the Australian education system or perhaps, whose achievements will be rewarded. To answer this question, we need to look at the competing attitudes and opinions which continue to influence or attempt to influence assessment authorities, and the impact of this on the study of certain Asian languages. First, in Section 6.2.1.1, we explore what is acceptable discrimination in language study in Australia. We also look at two major objections to the current examination system. Second, in Section 6.2.1.2, we explore the argument that LB students are unfairly competing against EB students, while third, in Section 6.2.1.3 we examine the argument that the application of the tiered examination system to four languages only is unfair for all students.

6.2.1.1 Overseas Schooling
At this stage, the distinction between students for the differing examination levels is based on years of schooling outside of Australia. The distinction is based on the belief that it would be unfair and a deterrent for second language learners to be in the same classroom as students with some level of educational experience in the language/s. The notion that those with more than a year’s schooling should be provided with a
different course of study that builds on their first language skills also contributes to the development of different courses and examinations.

By basing the distinction on schooling outside of Australia and not on the actual skill levels of students, the assessment authorities make the presumption that there is a clear difference in skill between students educated overseas and students educated in Australia. There are limitations to this presumption. Undoubtedly, there is a clear distinction between second language learners in Australia and students who have had substantial education outside of Australia, in a LOTE. There is, arguably, less of a distinction between those students who have only had minimal education overseas and those who have been raised bilingually in Australia (including students who were born in Australia or those who arrived prior to primary school age). Some children brought up in bilingual households in Australia have extensive opportunities to utilise a LOTE with their family, other children and adults in their community. They may have this opportunity for both English and a LOTE. Their language skills may not differ so greatly from students who only receive up to six months to one year of schooling in a LOTE before moving to Australia.

For both groups of students, those raised bilingually in Australia and those with limited educational experience in a LOTE, there are numerous permutations as to the opportunities they may have for language development. At one end of the scale, some students may shift rapidly to English, while others may have rich opportunities to develop their language (LOTE) skills. There is at least a potential overlap between the skills of the two groups of students. The important point to highlight is that regardless of any parity in language skills, students raised bilingually in Australia are not forced to take a different examination, while those with overseas educational experience are. Placement within secondary level language courses based on actual linguistic skill would arguably provide a fairer and more educationally fulfilling chance to develop linguistically. However, at this stage, it remains acceptable in Australia to discriminate based on schooling outside of Australia, but not acceptable to discriminate based on learning experiences in Australia.
While the assessment authorities make the decisions regarding the examination system, there are two major and ongoing objections amongst schools communities as is explored in the following two sections.

6.2.1.2 Objections to a Perceived Unfair Advantage

The first major objection is that of non-native speakers of Chinese in particular ‘competing against’ native speakers. The first problem, however, is that those who hold this view make the presumption that anyone with a Chinese heritage is linguistically competent in Mandarin. This argument is typified by arguments such as those presented by Carolan (a student at an elite private school - See Section 6.1.3) but is more strikingly illustrated by the Chinese language policy at *IND 4 Boys Metro VIC*, where students cannot take the Chinese as a second language examination unless they can prove that they have a Chinese heritage. That is, they have to prove that their parents are of Chinese origin. The senior administration at the school believes that ‘because of the structure of the VCE, only children of a Chinese background could do any good. The idea was that you would have to prove that your parents are of Chinese background (LC17)’76.’ A senior administrator at the school, SA22, argues that a part of the reason for the school’s decision is because, ‘I know that a couple of the major girls schools, a couple of years ago, did all sorts of things to try and get a review of that process because they were unhappy with their results that their non-Chinese background students were getting.’ This comment demonstrates that the focus of the school is not on the provision of Chinese for background speakers to develop and maintain language skills they may have, nor is it focused on providing an opportunity for non-background speakers to learn a new language. The concern of the school is that students without a Chinese heritage should be able to access the language but more importantly, that they must be able to achieve within the highest score band. If this is not possible, the school does not consider it worthwhile to engage with the subject at all.

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76 The interview did not indicate whether this meant the use of Chinese at home or a Chinese ancestry in general. However, this comment was based on the presumption on the part of senior administrators that students have a Chinese ancestry, they must have Chinese language skills.
along with other private schools and teachers have been lobbying the VCAA for a new level of examination that excludes students with a Chinese heritage. In 2006, the VCAA consulted with schools, parents, students and other educators about modifying the Chinese as a second language curriculum. A reference group was originally set up to examine the possibility of introducing a new VCE stream focusing on the study of Chinese language and culture as an alternative to the current courses. These changes were in reaction to ‘a perceived need by teachers to improve provision for students who have no background in Chinese’\(^77\). It was decided that this was not a feasible option, although no documentation is available as to the reasons why this decision was made. Instead, changes have gone ahead to the design of the VCE Chinese second language/Chinese second language advanced curricula. Arguably, this will not satisfy those who are pushing for the introduction of a new level of examination, as the proposed changes to the curriculum will not alter the cohort of students who take the examination, and those ‘with a Chinese surname’ are likely to continue to ‘dominate’ the top results. Until changes are seen at this level, schools such as \textit{IND 4 Boys Metro VIC} are unlikely to encourage any students without a Chinese heritage to study the language.

One of the major problems with this position is that in a pluralist society like Australia, where different ethnic, cultural and religious groups coexist, some students carry advantages into their studies based on cultural differences. These cultural differences include different language backgrounds as well as different values and attitudes towards education, religion and identity, among other issues. The capitalist nature of Australia society also means that some students will carry advantages into their education based on socio-economic differences. These differences are very real. In relation to language study, for example, a recent study by Sung, Padilla and Silva (2006) in the US examines language learning in high schools and highlights a number of significant relationships between language learning and the variables of socio-economic status and academic performance. Overall, the study clearly showed that students at schools with a higher socio-economic status were more likely to be studying a LOTE, have greater access to resources that significantly impacted on their study scores and were taught by more qualified teachers than those in schools with a

\(^77\) Source: VCAA memorandum to schools: 78/2006
lower socio-economic status. While these differences have a significant impact on student opportunities and the uptake of language study, these differences are considered morally legitimate in a capitalist society (to the extent that different examination levels are not enforced).

This is the same in Australia. It is not considered unfair that some students have regular after school or weekend sessions with private tutors and that students from private schools dominate the top Year 12 scores for many subjects across the curriculum. Just as advantages stemming from economic differences are acceptable, so are those resulting from cultural differences between families and communities. The top students in IT subjects may come from families who work in the IT industry and have encouraged their children’s interest in the field from an early age. Such a cultural difference cannot be penalised, and likewise, it cannot be considered unfair that some students value educational success more highly than others or that some students choose to attend weekend language classes to maintain and/or develop a LOTE. While there is ‘no such thing as a neutral social structure’ (Carens, 2000:105), assessment instruments are based on the assumption that all students have equitable access to educational resources and opportunities, otherwise these instruments would have to take into account all differences resulting from economic and cultural differences with student populations – an impossible and undesirable task.

Another major problem with attitudes such as those seen at IND 4 Boys Metro VIC, as was discussed briefly in Section 6.1.2, is the belief that those with a Chinese background should not be studying the language. This argument draws a direct line between cultural or physical features and an unfair advantage. Such a belief runs contrary to the evidence from this study and other research (See for example, Clyne et al., 1997; Elder, 1996; Elder, 1997) which shows that these families may have been in Australia for several generations, that any maintenance of language may well have been hard fought and involved years of dedicated study, or that students may only speak a fang yan other than Mandarin at home (16.5% of students of Chinese in this study). On the other hand, Chiang’s (2004) study shows that many Chinese-American youth see language maintenance, predominantly accessed through ethnic language schools in the US, as an extra burden and as a result, worked to gain control of the Chinese language classroom and ultimately negotiated the classroom learning down.
Furthermore, as clearly outlined in Clyne’s (2005:128-9) taxonomy of language learners (Section 6.1.1), students bring a whole range of skill levels to the language classroom. Some may have no Chinese language skills at all, but only a vague sense of cultural affiliation that is driving their language study.

Actions and opinions such as those addressed above, question the validity of Asian-Australian identity and this in itself may perpetuate the discrepancy between the number of students with and without an Asian heritage taking certain languages. Tan (2005:78) argues that the ongoing challenges to the identity of Chinese-Australians, regardless of how many generations they have been in Australia, often causes them to try to rediscover their ‘Chinese roots’. Ang (2001:113) argues that ‘‘Asians’ are regularly and often unthinkingly, taken for-grantedly [sic], talked about en masse as if they were a single, homogeneous group.’ While this in itself is not necessarily harmful, it becomes harmful when the term becomes associated with a range of negative meanings (Ang, 2001). If the notion that Asian-Australian students have an unfair advantage is perpetuated through challenges to the examination system in the belief that ‘real L2’ learners are being disadvantaged, will this drive students with a non-Asian heritage away from Asian language study, particularly the study of Chinese? Will it result in students with an Asian heritage shunning Asian language study or will it, as Tan suggests, result in more students of a Chinese heritage taking up the language?

As we can see from this discussion, language study and the structure of the examination system can increase and decrease tolerance, intercultural understanding, racism and xenophobia. In particular, it can cause ‘disempathy’ for a community because of a fear of competition.

While this has presented a rather negative view of the situation, there are many students who enjoy the challenge of Asian language study and who are not deterred by issues such as the background speaker issue. The views of students, of the positive and negative aspects of being in classrooms with background speakers, are examined in Section 6.3.
6.2.1.3 The ‘Asian’ Distinction

While the provision of multi-levelled examination systems for certain languages greatly benefits students by aiding in the development of first language skills as well as encouraging second language learners to take up a new language, the second major argument against the current examination system is that the lack of this distinction is seen as discriminatory for other languages. The Director of the Springvale VSL centre, LC20, T23 and T14 all argue that the lack of tiered examinations for other languages, in particular for Vietnamese and Khmer, has led to the exclusion of second language learners from these languages. T23 and LC20, teachers of Khmer and Vietnamese respectively, argue that the continuing arrival of migrants from Cambodia and Vietnam discourages second generation Cambodian- and Vietnamese-Australians from studying either language because they cannot achieve ‘the sophisticated vocabulary and sentence structures (LC20)’ that first language speakers display.

The teachers report that second generation students do start the languages within their school, GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC, but discontinue either straight after the first year or before the senior secondary level. T14 at GOV 7 Co-ed Metro VIC confirms this trend in Vietnamese at her school. All the teachers argue that complete beginners and recently arrived first language speakers are placed in the same class and that second language learners are quickly ‘frightened away.’ Of the students who participated in this study, 100.0% of those taking Khmer were first generation Australians (12 and 17 years old on arrival), while 80.0% of students of Vietnamese were first generation Australians or international students. These students arrived in Australia between the ages of 5 and 17 years of age, with a third of students arriving during secondary schooling.

While the director of the Springvale VSL centre, LC20, and T23 have all lobbied the VCAA for a number of years for two levels of examinations, they have had no success. The manager of languages for the curriculum branch of the VCAA explains that the development and limitation of multiple levels of examination in Victoria is based on two arguments. The first is that financial constraints and student numbers impact on the assessment authority’s ability to develop too many levels of examination for too many languages. This is an understandable argument, although there have long been more students learning Vietnamese at the Year 12 level in
Australia than there are learners of Korean. For example, in 2003, 570 Year 12 students learnt Vietnamese, while only 259 Year 12 students learnt Korean. More surprisingly, two levels of examination for Vietnamese already exist in South Australia - Vietnamese as a second language and Vietnamese for background speaker examinations. The VCAA would not have to develop the curricula and examinations from scratch as the program could be based on the curriculum developed by the South Australian assessment authority. Assessment could be completed through the Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Languages (CCAFL) scheme where assessments instrument for languages with a small candidature are shared by all states participating in the scheme (NSW, NT, SA, TAS, VIC and WA).

The second argument by the VCAA is that VCE results are analysed and when two distinct groups of student results can be found, based on years of education overseas, then a new level of examination is offered as has happened with Chinese. However, this use of statistics only works if all types of students, those with varying degrees of background and those with no background in the language, continue through to the Year 12 level. If a particular group of students discontinues language study because they feel they are unfairly competing against another group of students, the use of statistics to determine whether multiple examination levels are needed would be invalid, as these students are not represented in the data. The manager of languages at the VCAA argues that even if this was the case, the communities could still lobby the VCAA for the introduction of two levels. This has not been reflected to date in the efforts of those who have been lobbying for the introduction of multi-levelled examinations for Khmer and Vietnamese.

Another concern is the impact of the multi-levelled examinations on attitudes for languages such as Vietnamese. By providing extra funding for Korean but not Vietnamese through NALSAS and offering two levels of examination for Korean but not for Vietnamese (in Victoria), there is the danger of again perpetuating a perceived difference between groups or of perpetuating the notion that certain languages should only be studied by certain students: Korean is worth studying and promoting because of its economic potential but not Vietnamese, a language for refugees and migrants, even though it is studied by far more students.
The manager of the Springvale VSL centre is not the only person who is concerned with the fact that only the four Asian languages are subjected to this division (in Victoria). This issue was also raised by SA38 and by Qian (2003:3), a student of Chinese who asks in The Age newspaper, why only the four Asian languages are split into streams of exams - why aren’t Italian and French split ‘awkwardly into three categories’. A student can attend, for example, a bilingual French primary school, complete a year of study in France, continue French through secondary school and still sit the same exam as someone who starts French in Year 7. Arguably, Qian’s point is not about which exam system is more appropriate, but why it is only the four Asian languages that have this distinction. The perception that students with an Asian background have an unfair linguistic advantage is perpetuated by the exam distinctions.

The manager of the Springvale VSL centre believes that it is inevitable that this issue will be taken to an equal opportunities commission at some point and that is what happened in 2006 in NSW. The mother of a student who came to Australia when he was eight, took her son’s case to the Administrative Decisions Tribunal (ADT) arguing that the background speaker examination system in NSW discriminated against ‘students from an ethnic background, especially those from Asia (Jacobsen, 2006:4).’ She was concerned that her son had to take the background speakers examination, where he would be competing against recently arrived 16 and 17 year old students from China. The NSW Board of Studies argued that ‘the ruling would apply to an Anglo-Australian student who had grown up in China as an expatriate. Therefore the decision was not made on race, but on exposure to the language (2002).’ The ADT ruled in favour of the NSW Board of Studies. A clear problem lies in the discrepancies between states where the student must sit the background speaker examination in NSW (competing with students who arrive from China in Year 11 and 12), but would sit the second language advanced examination is Victoria (competing with students who have been one to seven years exposure to a Chinese medium education).

78 Further arguments could be made about the limited time some students receive in language programs, as well as differences in the linguistic abilities of teachers.
6.2.2 Cross-cultural and Cross-linguistic Advantages

The perception of certain students having an unfair advantage does not end simply with examinations in the languages they speak at home. The perception of an unfair advantage extends to other languages as well. A small number of teachers, students and stakeholders raised the issue of students speaking various Asian languages having an unfair advantage because their knowledge can be applied cross-linguistically. We have seen in Section 2.4.3 that although many Asian languages are from different language families, there are number of similarities, particularly in the writing systems. Comments from participants pointed to a perceived advantage that speakers of Chinese and Korean had in studying Japanese. For example,

- There are no Japanese students in our class, but students of Chinese background have a large advantage due to their knowledge of Chinese characters. S185
- No Japanese natives but feel slight disadvantage as Chinese friends know large amount of kanji. S196
- [On speakers of Korean] And that’s why they do [Japanese] beginners. They can crib an advantage on the characters and the understanding and their close cultures. SA37

If we look at the student data for evidence of this perceived advantage, overall, 7% of students of Japanese were born in China, arriving in Australia between one and 18 years of age. The average age of arrival was 8.1 years old, with around 50% of students arriving before primary school age. From this point of view, only a minority of students would have developed writing skills that may provide them with an advantage, bearing in mind that the similarity is in the writing of the characters, not necessarily in meaning and rarely in terms of how to word is phonologically expressed. Any advantage would be limited to one part of language learning.

Of the students studying Japanese, 4.2% were speakers of Korean, arriving in Australia between the ages of one and 16. The average age of arrival was 12.4 years of age. Given that Korean students do not formally study the Chinese-based Hanja until secondary school, it is only the few most recently arrived who could possibly have an advantage in learning the Japanese writing system. Another group of students,
which cannot be distinguished from the student data in this study, are students who were born in Australia, who have a Chinese heritage and who have studied Mandarin at the VSL or at Chinese ethnic schools. These students may develop a familiarity with writing characters which may aid in the study of Japanese. Given that only 8.0% of students of Japanese speak Chinese at home and only 0.9% of students stated that they have high-level writing skills in Chinese, this would apply to very few students. In reality, only around 3.3% of students of Japanese would have developed their writing skills in their home country to the extent that it may aid them in writing Japanese.

6.3 Student Reactions to the Background Speaker Issue

While we have looked at the comments of teachers, senior administrators, stakeholders and discourse in newspaper articles, this section will examine student responses regarding the background speaker issue in their questionnaires. 32% of students indicated that they were a background speaker or that they were in a class with a background speaker/s, with the issue more prominent in Victoria than in NSW - of the 193 students who commented on the issue, 86.5% were from Victoria, with 13.5% of replies from NSW students. It is also important to note that replies were from students studying Asian, as well as from students studying European languages. The replies involve ten languages in Victoria and five languages in NSW. The highest numbers of replies are from students of Italian, Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian, as outlined in Table 6.2. This section will concentrate on replies of students of Asian languages.

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79 Students were asked to state (self report) whether their skills were at a low, medium or high level.

80 It must be noted that this only presents one perspective – that of students who have continued with language study. Analysis of the opinion of students who discontinue language study is needed to develop a fuller understanding of the impact of the background speaker issue on language learning.
Table 6.2 Percentage of student replies for background speaker question by language and state

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Victoria</th>
<th>NSW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3.1 What is a ‘Background’?

In Section 5.4.2.2, Section 6.1.2 and Section 6.2.1.3 we have looked at the issue of the ‘tyranny of appearance’ and the different ways in which some students relate to their Asian heritage. When writing responses to the questions on background speakers, students again raised the issue; in this case, by highlighting the difference between any cultural knowledge or advantage they may have, from any linguistic knowledge or advantage they may have. These students acknowledge that they physically appear Asian, but wish to qualify what it means in the classroom in light of the background speaker issue. For example, S285 writes,

Yes there are ppl [people] without and WITH background in our class. But...yeah Mr *** accommodates them so the standard is a bit higher than necessary sometimes. Sometimes it gets a bit hard but that’s bearable I guess.... >,< See I’m a background student in that I’m azn but I don’t speak mandarin at all so I’m like a non-background student. S285

Here, S285 differentiates between her ancestry and her linguistic heritage. Her physical appearance is Asian and her parents come from Malaysia, but she also points out that this has not translated to any linguistic advantage.

S598, who was born in China, arrived in Australia at age two and communicates in Shanghainese with her parents, also distinguishes between her ancestry and her
linguistic skills. She writes that she is motivated to continue with Mandarin because of ‘My Chinese background, but lack of knowledge.’ However, in regard to background speakers in her class, she writes that the situation is ‘Bad, non-background people feel awkward’, clearly placing herself in the non-background speakers category.

Australian-born student S294, who communicates in Cantonese and Mandarin with her parents, differentiates between feeling competent in her small class at school, as opposed to ‘Chinese school because at times it’s awkward with actual native Chinese speakers in the class.’ As a final example, there are students, who like Shao (2003) (See Section 6.1.2), wish to highlight the difference between what they speak at home and the language they are learning. S609 writes, ‘I speak Cantonese at home which is different to Mandarin I'm learning at school. It doesn't make much of a difference in the speaking but I understand the culture and customs more.’ Here again, the student highlights the cultural advantages but the lack of linguistic advantage.

6.3.2 Background Speakers in the Classroom

Amongst background speakers, 65.1% commented on positive aspects of their experiences. Most important to these students was the ability to share their cultural experiences with other speakers and to develop stronger relationships with family (61.3%). For example,

- I realise that in class I get better chance [sic] to learn more about my country and culture. At home I learn the way to speak through my parents and family. S311 (Student of Vietnamese)
- It makes it easier for me to study at school. A lot of values at home are learnt in class and this heightens the understanding. S605 (Student of Chinese, born in China, arrived in Australia aged 7)
- All participants have a background so I can make friends. S695 (Student of Chinese)
The other major advantage students perceived was the high standard of work that resulted from other students having background skills (16.1%). For example,

- Good. Yes, because I have to be more competitive. S296 (Student of Chinese, born in China, arrived in Australia aged 4)
- The marks are generally very high. S608 (Student of Chinese, born in China, arrived in Australia aged 7)

34.9% of students commented on negative aspects of being a background speaker with 40% of replies from students of Asian languages who felt understimulated or neglected within the language classroom. For example,

- My experiences have been quite good. However, sometimes I feel sense of neglect due to the fact that I am able to receive some assistance from my family. S192. (Student of Japanese, born in Korea, mother from Japan)
- More formal than at home, pronunciation isn’t as authentic. S465 (Student of Indonesian, mother born in Indonesia, father born in Malaysia)
- Very basic Chinese in comparison. Cannot learn a lot. Waste of time. S691 (Student of Chinese; father, mother and student all born in Australia, studies Chinese at Saturday school)

6.3.3 In the Classroom with Background Speakers

*EB* students who have continued with language study have largely managed to view the relationship between non-background and background speakers as positive (71.8%). 41.2% of students wrote of the advantages of having background speakers help with class work, while 20.6% wrote of the advantages of sharing culture and knowledge. For example,

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81 50% of these students were students of Italian who had difficulty differentiating the dialect they speak at home and the language studied at school.
It has been interesting and enjoyable because they are able to help you and have many stories to tell about past experiences. S63 (Student of Japanese)

- The experiences have mostly been positive. We do have a student with a background and he has motivated me to improve myself in the language. S200 (Student of Japanese)

- I have five other girls in my class and about three of them have some background. It helps greatly in oral skills and generally increases the standard of the work and classes. S284 (Student of Chinese)

- Other students with a background in the language in my class have been helpful as they are able to help the other students in the class that are struggling. S286 (Student of Chinese)

28.2% of non-background speakers commented on negative aspects of sharing the class with background speakers, with 64.3% feeling intimidated or threatened by the advanced skills background speakers have. For example,

- Can be frustrating when the other person is perfect at everything! S92 (Student of Japanese)

- Sometimes it’s quite intimidating especially with vocab because students with background seem more familiar with the language. S630 (Student of Japanese)

- I do have people in my class with Chinese background and it can be very daunting because they have a far greater level of understanding than I do! S284 (Student of Chinese)

### 6.4 Challenges for the Language Learning Classroom

This chapter has highlighted the complex issue of background speakers of languages in second language learning classes in Australia. It is essential that policy and language learning mechanisms continue to encourage all students to learn languages, and this involves understanding the wide-ranging impact of a (selective) multi-levelled examination system. While states have implemented multi-levelled examination systems to separate students who have spent varying periods of time being educated through the medium of a LOTE from students who study a language
as a subject in the Australian school curriculum, this has only partly dealt with the issue, while creating other concerns.

The application of this system to only four Asian languages in Victoria and NSW has resulted for some in the perception that this practice is discriminatory towards other Asian languages that do not have access to multi-levelled examinations. The provision of one examination only for languages such as Vietnamese and Khmer does not recognise the ongoing challenges to learners of Asian languages not prioritised under NALSAS (or indeed languages such as Arabic). These students are often second generation Australians learning a heritage language as a second language learner. Being placed in competition with recently arrived first language speakers is a disincentive for some students. The immediate application of a multi-levelled examination system to all of the languages, or none of the languages, would be an important first step and could resolve some of the tensions.

There is also continuing discontent expressed by students and schools who feel that Australian-born students who speak a LOTE at home have an unfair advantage. From a positive point of view, the current lack of distinction based on students’ language learning experiences in Australia supports the idea that any efforts to maintain a language in Australia or to be educated through a bilingual school creates a morally legitimate advantage. The argument that these students should be penalised, at its worst, involves the racialised grouping of all students with an Asian heritage into one ‘advantaged’ group. This represents an assumption based on physical features or cultural attributes that does not reflect the diversity amongst the Asian-Australian community. Rather than creating empathy and understanding towards the languages and cultures that are being studied, this chapter has shown that fear of competition surrounding language examination can cause ‘disempathy’ for that community.

These continuing arguments of ‘unfair advantage’ can stigmatise students with an Asian heritage who do take the languages and/or it may discourage those with an Asian heritage from taking a language for fear of having a perceived unfair advantage. Examples in this chapter highlighted how students with an Asian heritage feel the need to separate their physical appearance from any linguistic or cultural knowledge they may or may not have. They feel the need to justify their place in the second
language classes. Unfortunately, the notion of ‘unfair advantage’ also prevents many $EB$ students from continuing with language study for fear of only being able to achieve average marks. At one school we have seen the argument that $EB$ students should not consider taking Chinese as a second language until the system is set up so that they are able to dominate the examination system.

There are no easy solutions to this issue. In a pluralistic, capitalist society such as Australia it is inevitable that different students will bring different advantages into their educational experiences and it would be unfair and unacceptable to penalise students in any way based on these differences. The question remains as to how all students can be encouraged to study particular languages such as Chinese. Any focus on the number of ‘Asian’ surnames/ faces in language classes is misguided given the range of skills students may or may not have. The greater dissemination of information about the nature of language learning and the diversity of skills students bring to a classroom may help the situation. Greater attention could be focused on the benefits of having students of mixed abilities in the same classroom, as was highlighted by students in Section 6.3, particularly the sharing of cultural knowledge and assistance with linguistic skills (see Clyne et al, 2004).
CHAPTER SEVEN – THE ROLE OF ATTITUDINAL AND STRUCTURAL FACTORS ACROSS EDUCATION SYSTEMS AND STATES

The current research has so far identified and examined numerous factors which facilitate or hinder the development of Asian languages programs, including political events, prestige and image, the importance of Asian languages as community languages, the importance of Asian language study for the development of identity amongst students, and the sharing of languages and interests with peers. This chapter focuses on factors, both attitudinal and structural, operating within schools and school education systems that influence the direction of language programs. It also examines the extent to which these factors influence the differing success of language programs across education systems and states. This analysis incorporates interview data from participants in both states, including stakeholders, senior administrators and LOTE teaching staff.

Section 7.1 explores interview data with LOTE teachers, coordinators and senior administrators to determine the actions and attitudes of administrators that either support or impede language programs in schools, along with establishing the importance of negotiation between administration and staff. Section 7.2 looks at structural issues at play in school environments, including staffing, the structure of LOTE programs in schools and coordination between primary and secondary LOTE programs. Section 7.3 considers the impact of funding and funding structures on the strength of language programs, while Section 7.4 reviews the different degrees of success for Asian language programs across education systems and states and discusses some of the variables that have contributed to the current situation.

Many of the issues in this chapter involve an overall consideration of language programs in schools. This involves both Asian and European language programs. As a result, there is less of a focus on Asian languages in Sections 7.1 and 7.2, while Sections 7.3 and 7.4, which consider the impact of the NALSAS funding, have a greater focus on Asian languages. While this chapter considers factors affecting language programs as a whole, it examines these issues through the study of Asian languages where possible.
7.1 The Influence of School Administrations

The support of the school administration was one of the most important factors highlighted by teachers of languages and throughout this section we explore some of the attitudes and features of supportive and non-supportive administrations. It is not always clear-cut whether a school administration is supportive of language programs or not. For example, a senior administrator may claim that languages are very important and that they do all they can to assist LOTE programs, but on the other hand, the LOTE coordinators and LOTE teachers may argue that the actions of the school administration suggest otherwise – that they are not supportive of LOTE programs (GOV 6 Co-ed Metro VIC). Another example involves a school principal who vehemently opposes the compulsory teaching of languages at a personal level and has made this know to all LOTE staff, but as principal of the school, is willing to provide languages with ‘all the support they need’ (GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW). Given such contradictions, it is difficult to draw up a list of features of ‘supportive’ and ‘non-supportive’ school administrations. Rather, whether or not a school administration is supportive of a language program has been determined through a consideration of interview data from all three groups – administrators, coordinators and teachers. Examples and quotes will be provided in the following sub-sections to illustrate the types of supportive and non-supportive actions.

The following sections consider how a number of issues impact differently in the three education systems and across states. It is important to keep in mind that the strength of language programs, in relation to Year 12 retention rates differs across systems and states. In Figure 7.1 we can see that the independent sector is the strongest provider of languages in each state, but that language provision and retention is stronger overall in Victoria than in NSW. It is also important to note that determining the percentage of Year 12 students who study a LOTE is extremely difficult as innovations in the curriculum now allow students to complete Year 12 language study at earlier year levels. For instance, in Victoria in 2005, there were 7,401 students enrolled in Year 12 who successfully completed the final unit of a language course. However, there were 10,224 students overall who successfully completed the final unit of a language course. This means that 2,823 students completed a Year 12 language at an earlier year level. It is important to include these
students in figures. Technically, it is not possible to divide the figure of 10,224 into
the number of Year 12 students to determine the percentage of students who complete
a language at the Year 12 level. However, given that these students are not counted at
all if we only use statistics of those enrolled at the Year 12 level they are included in
the Year 12 cohort. The Year 12 figures used for Victoria and NSW therefore, are not
an exact representation of the number of Year 12 students who have completed a final
language unit by the time they leave school, although the figures can be seen as a very
close indication of the situation. These comments are in particular reference to
Figures 7.1, 7.8, 7.9, 7.10 and Table 7.3.

Figure 7.1      Year 12 participation rates (%) for language studies, all
systems, Victoria and NSW, 2003

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82 Percentages for the Victorian state system include all enrolments at the VSL and through Distance
Education. Percentages for the NSW state system include all enrolments at the SSCL, Open High and at
TAFE colleges in NSW.

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7.1.1 Support for Language Programs in Government Schools

Of the twelve Victorian government schools in this study, seven schools are very supportive of LOTE programs, both in regard to community languages and languages not spoken widely in local communities. The school administration and LOTE staff work together to try to develop and maintain these programs. Three schools in particular, work closely with and responded to the needs of community language groups, working to do anything needed to make sure LOTE courses are viable once a need is identified. Two further schools cater to senior schools students only and base their language choices on the languages that a majority of students study prior to entering the school. The remaining two schools that are supportive of LOTE study decided which languages to introduce based on consultation with parents, feeder primary schools, the LOTE staff and the school curriculum committee or school council.

LOTE staff at the five remaining government schools, including two regional schools, argue that LOTE is valued neither by the school administration, nor the school community. For example, at GOV 9 Co-ed Regional VIC, the parental and staff community were adamant that languages should not be taught at all in the curriculum. The principal eventually introduced Indonesian after being approached by a teacher of Indonesian who promised to work for the school for ten years.

There was enormous competition to introducing any language at all, to the degree that the head of the curriculum committee had a week off after it was introduced, she had a week off due to stress. My first day here they vice-principal called me into his office and said don’t take this personally, but you’ve got most of the staff, most of the students and most of the parents in opposition to you coming to teach a language (LC14).

Opposition to language study still remains strong in the school.

At two further Victorian schools, school management made major decisions regarding the LOTE programs without any consultation with the LOTE department. For example, at GOV 6 Co-ed Metro VIC, which is located on the outer metropolitan fringe of Melbourne in a largely Anglo-ethnic community, LC13 reports that language
study is seen as too difficult even for students in the accelerated or ‘gifted’ stream within the school. The school does not have a strong academic focus but excels in sports. To cater for academically gifted students in the school, an accelerated stream has been introduced, where students complete the first four years of schooling in three years. Initially, Chinese was compulsory for all years of the program, but was withdrawn after one semester due to students and parents complaining that it was too difficult for students to learn. Students then had the option of studying French or Indonesian, an easier Asian language, for the three years of the program, but again, after complaints from students and parents about the difficulty of learning a language, it is now only compulsory to study a language for the first two years of the program.

The curriculum committee made all the changes within the LOTE program, from Chinese to French or Indonesian, and then from three to two years of the program, without consulting with the LOTE department. LC12 states that she had tried on numerous occasions to join the curriculum committee or to be informed of meetings where parents could make submissions regarding school issues, but was told that there is no room for her on the committee. The issue of representation and negotiation is discussed further in Section 7.1.4.

As another example, at GOV 12 Girls Metro VIC, a curriculum reform committee was established in the school to review the entire school curriculum, including LOTE study. No member of the LOTE faculty was on the committee or consulted about the issue, even though significant decisions were made regarding the LOTE program. Previously LOTE study was compulsory for all students from Years 7 to 10 but the curriculum committee decided that LOTE was not valued by the school, student and parental community and that it should be compulsory at Year 8 only. An outside consultancy firm was then employed to review the curriculum and implement changes but again, the LOTE department was not consulted during this process.

In NSW, only one government school LOTE coordinator feels that their LOTE program is well supported. GOV 2 Girls Metro NSW is an academically selective school and the current principal was a LOTE teacher at the school for a number of years. A 2002 independent report commissioned by the school to review each department in the school found that the LOTE department added the most ‘value points’ to the school based on the number of high scores achieved by Year 12
students, the contribution the department makes to the school community and to the profile of the school in the wider community. As a result, languages are held in high esteem within the school. The school is also supportive of community languages, offering Hebrew and Chinese in response to community pressure.

In the three other government schools in NSW, there is limited support for language programs. For example, at GOV 1 Girls Metro NSW, recent curriculum changes have relegated LOTE study from being compulsory in Year 7 and 8 to Year 8 only, with students now having no choice in which language they study. LC34 also reported that the principal has made a number of negative comments regarding languages to the school community, recalling that at a recent school information evening, the principal explained to the parents that the school offers German, but ‘why would anyone do German?’ On another occasion, the principal has publicly stated that she dislikes Asian languages. LC34 argues, ‘I don’t think she is confident in promoting and recommending something that she is not an expert in.’

At GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW, the principal, SA42 believes that language study involves ‘a real snobbery’ and that ‘students who take languages think they’re a cut above everybody else.’ Interestingly, GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW is a non-selective government school with a large population of LB students. Around 11% of the whole school population have an Indonesian background, with smaller percentages of students from other Asian countries. 20% of Year 11 and 12 students study a LOTE, but only 7.5% are able to do so on the school campus. The remaining 12.5% of students study seven languages through the SSCL, mainly Chinese. SA42 also stated,

Do you want my honest opinion? I have not, for a long time, seen the philosophy for compulsory LOTE. I just do not know what possesses people to force children to do it. I’ve heard that it builds cultural understanding and it trains the mind …but English promotes cultural understanding, history and geography promote cultural understanding. I just cannot see the rationale behind it.

It is interesting to note that students in the school’s accelerated learning program are not required to study a language at any year level. SA42’s negative attitude seems to mainly apply to LB students who are trying to maintain their first languages.
7.1.2 Support for Language Programs in Catholic Schools

Support for language programs is high in the four metropolitan Victorian Catholic schools in this study. Decisions about which languages to introduce were undertaken after extensive consultation in each school, with the LOTE department, the school community, feeder primary schools and extensive research into crucial issues such as teacher supply and the availability of resources. At all of the metropolitan schools, the curriculum committee, along with the principal, made the final decision about recently introduced languages.

All four schools introduced Italian in the 1970s as a result of pressure from the Italian speaking community. Each school still had a high number of students with an Italian heritage taking the language and saw the importance of teaching community languages. However, the introduction of other community languages beyond Italian is a difficult proposition for these Catholic schools. While SA1 identified Arabic, Vietnamese and Filipino speakers as other groups at CEO 3 Boys Metro VIC who would like to see their languages introduced into the school, he argued that, ‘because each group is small and fairly even it would be hard to make a choice.’ Within the four metropolitan Catholic schools, the SAs reported varying opinions about the importance of LOTE within the parental community, but highlighted the ongoing support of the school administration for the teaching of languages.

The Victorian regional Catholic school does not enjoy wide support for LOTE study. At CEO 1 Co-ed Regional VIC, the student body, the parental community and school administration largely held negative views of languages in the curriculum. The LOTE department argued that the regional location and largely Anglo-ethnic community contribute to the negative attitudes towards LOTEs.

…that’s what we have to combat everyday in the classroom.
Students say “Why do we have to learn that?...We’re not going to their country. When are we going to use that?”
(Teacher) “There’re foreign people living in our country.”
(Students) “Yes, but we don’t choose to interact…”
(Teacher) You know, that racist sort of thing (LC5).
Language study also has a negative image in the school due to an antagonistic relationship that developed between the French teachers and other staff in the school. After extended disagreements with other teachers and the school administration, the French staff all eventually left and the school has had a limited ability to consistently offer French since. The school has only been able to employ one new French teacher, with French classes running from Year 9 to 12 only. As a result, students must study Indonesian in Year 7 and 8. SA2 states that one of the biggest complaints he gets from parents is that the school only offers one LOTE at Year 7 and 8. While he feels that the students would be receptive to the reintroduction of French from Year 7, he is concerned about lingering negativity towards the language in the school, the idea that French teachers are arrogant and argumentative, and with the difficulty in attracting French teachers to a regional area.

In NSW, all four Catholic schools enjoy good relations between the languages department and the school administration. **CEO 1 Co-ed Regional NSW** and **CEO 3 Boys Metro NSW** are only able to offer one language, Japanese, with the school administration committed to making the programs sustainable. **CEO 2 Co-ed Metro NSW** is a senior secondary school and offered the languages of the feeder schools. At **CEO 4 Girls Metro NSW**, an independent Catholic school that has high annual school fees, the languages department has always received strong support from the school, particularly due to a previous principal being a language teacher. During her time, eight languages were available in the curriculum. While the school has not been able to maintain this, with four languages now available, the new principal is strongly supportive of languages and would like to be the first Catholic school in NSW to introduce the IB program at the Year 11 and 12 levels under which language study is compulsory.

### 7.1.3 Support for Language Programs in Independent Schools

The valuing of languages and support for language programs from school administrations is high at all the independent schools in Victoria, particularly at the schools that offer the IB at the Year 11 and 12 levels. For example, **LC22 at IND 9 Girls Metro Vic** states that the school views languages as playing a vital role in the
educational development of students, with 50% of Year 12 students studying a language.

…a school of our calibre, our background, it’s an elite private school which has kids who have a very privileged socio-economic background. They are going to be role players in the community and part of that is going to involve them dealing with Chinese, French and Spanish and to be a well-educated person you need a language (LC22).

The decision to introduce languages in independent schools involved consultation with the school community, the business community, the LOTE departments and curriculum committees, along with investigation of other factors such as teacher supply and the availability of resources. At the independent schools, responding to the needs of the ‘clientele’ is seen as most important. Community language study is encouraged at the independent schools through their inclusion in the curriculum, through private tutors conducting lessons at schools or through study at the VSL.

Religious identity is also an important factor in language choices for independent schools. At IND 2 Co-ed Metro VIC, SA20 states that Hebrew is an essential part of Jewish identity and is supported in the school through a bilingual primary curriculum and the opportunity to continue with a partial bilingual approach at the secondary level. The study of Hebrew is compulsory for all students to Year 10. This example does not represent a unique case, with seven independent schools in Victoria requiring Hebrew studies, while other ethno-religious languages taught in a number of independent schools include Arabic and Greek.

In NSW, three of the four independent schools have supportive school administrations. For example, at IND 3 Girls Metro NSW, the school made the decision in 2004 to make language study compulsory from Years 7 to 10, instead of Years 7 and 8. This move was implemented to support the majority of students required to study a language at Year 11 and 12 through the IB program.

Only IND 4 Boys Metro NSW does not have a supportive school administration. With Indonesian being phased out of the curriculum, only 10% of Year 12 students were
studying a language in 2003, below the NSW independent school average of 17.8%, but close to the state average (12.8%). SA27, a new principal at the school, believes that smaller candidature subjects should not be protected and is adamant that the number of languages available in the curriculum will be reduced further from three to two languages.

I think there are cultures that are formed in certain departments and faculties that languages and music should be protected in school for years and years because you need culture with a capital K. You have language and music and you never have to compete for numbers to survive so maybe if they did they might have a slightly broader policy…at some point we will look at it and quite sadly say sorry that is it and we can’t sustain this any longer…the question we have to decide is sooner or later (SA27).

Unless the number of students studying a language at Year 12 increases, SA27 will withdraw languages from the curriculum beyond the Year 8 level.

7.1.4 Negotiation and Representation

As we have touched on in the previous sections, the most important factor identified by LOTE staff across all systems in gaining support for LOTE programs in schools is the ability to negotiate with the school administration or to gain representation on curriculum committees within the school. A problem arises for many schools when LOTE student numbers are not high enough to allow for languages department to have a department Head and representation on many of the school committees. This introduces a vicious cycle where LOTE staff cannot address concerns and avenues for strengthening LOTE programs through the committees because they do not have high enough student numbers to allow them onto the committees. This is a frustrating endeavour as languages are often not given recognition or are represented by other departments who may not be interested in representing the concerns of LOTE departments. For example, at GOV 10 Co-ed regional VIC, where the subject area ‘Studies of Society and Environment’ (SOSE) represents the LOTE department, LC19 argues,
It would be good if the staff actually recognised that this is a huge area for us. There are so many staff in the languages faculty...And we could have our own voice and it would be great. They call my department SOSE and I'm always saying, "Could you change that to SOSE and languages, please? Could you change that to SOSE and languages, please?" Everywhere I go it's, "AND languages!" and no one cares. No one thinks it's important (LC19).

At GOV 1 Girls Metro NSW, LC34 argues that the deputies who are supposed to represent languages, ‘have actively told me that they are not interested in doing it and not interested in language…The most effective way to promote us would be to give us a voice on the executive because when the big decisions are made, we are not there.’

Conversely, at IND 2 Co-ed Metro NSW, LC30 argues,

My ability to negotiate increased when I became a faculty head. When I first came to the school, languages was part of the history faculty so the head of history didn’t have any expertise in the area and it was very much the poor cousin because languages weren’t represented at the curriculum coordinating meetings. There was really no voice for languages and so I think it’s very important that languages be represented with some sort of LOTE coordinator or a faculty head to them represent the issues at a higher level.

In order to strengthen the position of LOTE, a number of LOTE departments have taken strong pro-active stances to promote languages in the school. In Victoria, at CEO 4 Girls Metro VIC, T11 argues that, 'we have to promote ourselves a bit more as a team. I suggested we have this annual meeting with the principal to talk about how we are going and stuff…and they welcomed that.' At IND5 Boys Metro VIC, LC17 argued that, 'you have to be out there' promoting languages. LC17 sits on as many committees as she can and 'she'll tell you everything she doesn't like about what's going on in LOTE, but she really drives things and gets things going (SA22).’ This includes making sure LOTE teachers interact with parents at as many events as possible, whether it be a sporting or musical event, so that parents know the LOTE teachers by name and feel they can call them at any time. LC17 argued that LOTE is a subject that most parents know nothing about and feel they can't help their children with their studies and that interaction with parents helps reassure them. In 2005, LC17
planned to run a Japanese program for parents of primary school children so that they can then go home and encourage their children as well as feel more a part of the experience. For LC17, the ability to gain representation for languages lies in both the school administration and the parental community.

In NSW, LOTE staff at GOV 2 Girls Metro NSW and CEO 3 Boys Metro NSW have found that increasing the profile of languages through the school newsletter, the local community, local newspapers and educational authorities has greatly increased the profile of languages in the school community. For example, LC27 argues,

> They [the school] are very supportive and I think one of the reasons why we have received so much support is that our principal is very PR orientated as I guess a lot of principals are, and I’ve really gone out of my way to make sure our school, anytime we have anything, we have it in the newspaper, I’ve organised through the Manly council a Japanese speech contest with other schools in the local area so we have that in the local newspaper. In the school newsletter, I’m always putting things there, if we have a bento day or something. The Catholic Schools Office is very aware of what we’re doing as well so we do have a fair bit of support from the CSO as well.

A number of LOTE departments which found that they are unable to develop an adequate level of representation with the school administration, discovered the effectiveness of parents as a lobby group, both for community languages such as Greek and Vietnamese and second languages such as French. For example, at GOV 6 Co-ed Metro VIC, the LOTE department was unable to convince the school administration to run Year 11 and 12 French classes due to low student numbers. After encouraging parents to write to the administration, the LOTE department found them playing a vital role in securing the French classes. At IND 1 Co-ed Regional NSW, parents protested when the senior French program was discontinued due to only one student continuing with the language. The school then conducted a survey within the parent and student community and discovered that the community would rather have the school run a class for one French student at the senior secondary level than have no class at all; a choice the school respected. While the one student had reduced face-to-face time with the teacher, the school have resolved to run senior language
classes, based on the request of parents, regardless of the number of students. Finally, at three other Victorian government schools, parents lobbied local governments over the closure of LOTE programs resulting in the schools agreeing to run the LOTE programs in question.

Gaining some kind of access or learning to interact and negotiate with the school administration is clearly an essential skill for the development of LOTE programs, but it is not something that all LOTE teachers are capable of or interested in pursuing, as is highlighted by the Springvale VSL manager, who is also a LOTE teacher.

The problem is that LOTE teachers are not naturally political people. They are creative and harmonious, friendly, very nice people. Not to say that political is bad, but it takes a certain amount of intelligence in another way to be political and we’re not like that. We’d like to be given the money and use it creatively and promote the language. But I refuse to be political…It’s not that I’m unintelligent, it’s simply I’m not that way made and I don’t intend to change and I think a lot of LOTE teachers are similar to me.

The final point for this section involves native speaker teachers of LOTE for whom learning to negotiate with school administrations can be particularly difficult, depending on their level of unfamiliarity with the Australian education system. The LOTE officer for AISVIC runs workshops for native-speaker teachers to help familiarise them with the Australian educational setting and to on interacting with general school staff. While she sees a huge need for such workshops, she was surprised when she initially received a low response rate for the advertised workshops. Upon calling specific teachers she knew would benefit from the program, she ironically found that they even lacked the ability to interact with the school administration to ask for the time off to attend the workshop. She then acted as a mediator for these teachers to ensure that they could attend the workshops.

7.2 Structural Factors and LOTE Programs

While the previous section explores the impact of attitudinal factors on language programs, there are a number of structural issues that also have a significant impact
on the success of programs. Sections 7.2 and 7.3 explore some of the complex structural issues that influence the success of language programs across all education systems, including staffing, compulsory LOTE study, LOTE pathways, primary to secondary transition and the funding of schools and programs.

7.2.1 Staffing
Staffing has been an ongoing issue for language programs in Australia for a number of decades. The lack of a strong teacher supply for LOTE has been addressed in numerous reports (Australia. National Board of Employment Education and Training. & Australian Language and Literacy Council., 1996; Lo Bianco, 1987; Nicholas et al., 1993; Wyatt et al., 2002b) and continues to be a source of consternation for many schools. SA11 argues that,

You can have the best programs in the world. The best ideas, the best thoughts, the most desire to do something and it will fall in a heap. You can’t run language programs propping them up by doing cultural studies. It’s got to be about language. But if you can’t find teachers…and that’s the big issue across the board – the absence of teachers…The big driver for language choice at the moment is whether or not we will have it at all because it’s so hard to find staff.

In Victoria, the issue of teacher supply is most acute in regional areas, particularly for government and Catholic schools. For example, GOV 10 Co-ed Regional VIC consistently has problems attracting new language teachers to the region. The current French teacher is beyond retirement age but has agreed to stay while the school continues to search for a new teacher. LC19 has worked closely with the teacher-training program at Monash University in Melbourne and tried to convince LOTE student-teachers to complete their teaching rounds in a regional area, but with no success. Students cannot afford to pay for temporary accommodation and often have part-time work in Melbourne that they cannot afford to relinquish. At CEO 1 Co-ed Regional VIC, the inability to secure new LOTE staff and an escalating personality conflict between Year 9 French students and the only French teacher, has led to her handing over the class to a non-LOTE qualified teacher in order for the class to continue.
In NSW, staffing is an acute issue for government schools. The teacher employment system in government schools in NSW is centrally administered so schools are not able to appoint staff independently. A central register of teachers exists and when a language teacher is required, the next person on the list is offered to the school. This has led to incompatible situations where language programs have been unable to continue because the teacher provided does not teach the required language. For example, LC40 was trained as a German and Japanese teacher but in her first position was employed as a French and English teacher. At GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW, the Indonesian program had to be closed when the Indonesian teacher left and the school could not secure a replacement. At GOV 4 Co-ed Metro NSW, the Korean program was closed when the Korean teacher left and she was replaced with a teacher of German. The school then had to introduce a German program because the new teacher was a ‘mobile’ teacher – that is, a teacher employed by the government, but for whom there is no position available in the state. They are therefore appointed to a school as an extra teacher and must be able to teach 50% of their load in their qualified area. Hence, the school had to replace Korean with German.

In NSW, Catholic and independent schools can employ their own LOTE teachers. While high fee paying schools do not have a problem attracting new staff, the remaining schools have had significant problems finding teachers in the languages the school had or wanted to introduce. For example, IND 3 Girls Metro NSW had wanted to introduce Japanese since the early 1990s but it was not introduced until 2001 because of the inability to find a suitably qualified teacher of Japanese. IND 4 Boys Metro NSW has wanted to introduce Spanish and Latin for a number of years, but again, have been unable to find any qualified teachers to employ.

Another of the underlying issues for teachers and language programs is the difficulty of providing a full-time position. Where a full-time load is not available for language study, should LOTE teachers be able to teach other subjects or should they teach part-time? This is particularly relevant in the NSW government education system where teachers are allocated centrally by DE&T and language programs are often not strong enough to provide a full-time teaching load. A part time position is unsatisfactory for teachers developing a career in language teaching as well as for the language programs. On the other hand, schools may also choose not to employ a LOTE teacher.
at all if they cannot guarantee a full-time position or implement pedagogically unsound options such as having teachers teach more than one language, even if they are not qualified to teach them all (See also Section 7.2.3.1).

A number of participants argue that the specialist nature of language teaching inhibits the success of programs and that an important advancement would be the ability of LOTE teachers to teach in other areas. LC17 believes that the most important change that needs to be made to strengthen LOTE programs, in secondary schools in particular is the ability of LOTE teachers to teach beyond LOTE.

We can’t teach anything else and we should be able to. I think if we are going to be teachers it’s really important that we are really good in another stream as well. What happens is that then we get stuck in the one area and I think in some ways it would be better if we were teaching slightly, even one class in something else, I think it would be good for the profile of LOTE. That we can teach something else, not just, “You know the LOTE teachers, they can’t teach anything but their language”.

At GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW, LC39 states that they are still looking for an Indonesian teacher so they can restart the program which was closed when the previous teacher left but that, ‘my dream would be an Indonesian / Chinese/ ESL teacher!’

LC20 argues that the ability to teach beyond LOTE is the main reason why GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC is able to teach seven languages. Most of the LOTE teachers teach in another subject area. For example, the Arabic teacher teaches science and maths (in Arabic), the Chinese teacher teaches technology (in Chinese) and the French and Italian teachers also teach English as a Second Language (ESL) and English. The only teacher who is employed part time is the Japanese teacher, who is not qualified to teach another subject. While the success of this approach can be attributed in part to the flexibility of the LOTE staff, such programs also require an ongoing commitment to languages from the school to support the running of so many language programs.

However, in schools where there are only one or two languages on offer, the notion of LOTE teachers as specialised teachers hinders and often isolates teachers and
programs. Being able to teach beyond LOTE could ensure the teacher is able to secure full time employment regardless of fluctuations in student numbers, leaving time to build up programs without the added pressure of the school supporting teaching loads that are not maximally utilised. There is the danger that this approach could further reduce the strength of language programs in schools and it would need to take into consideration the time and effort required by teachers to maintain and develop their language skills. However, the increased flexibility of LOTE teachers and their ability to develop and strengthen language programs over time could also help reduce the occurrence of reductive LOTE pathways, which involve classes combined at various year levels, often with students at different year and course levels, as well as students studying different languages.

7.2.2 Compulsory LOTE study
The issue of whether language study should be compulsory in secondary schooling is a contentious issue in NSW but more broadly accepted in Victoria. While the Victorian DE&T recommends that LOTE be compulsory from Prep to Year 10, it is rarely the case that schools make language study compulsory for Years 7 to 10. In this study, LOTE was only compulsory to Year 10 in two Victorian schools, to Year 9 in a further five schools and in Years 7 and 8 in the remaining fourteen schools (see Table 7.1). In fact, only 14.8% of government secondary schools in 2003 required LOTE study from Year 7 to Year 10, with 86.1% of schools requiring a LOTE in Year 7 and 8 only (Victoria. DE&T, 2005a). In NSW, it is only mandatory to study a language for 100 hours at either the Year 7 or 8 levels. Of the 12 schools sampled in NSW, language study was compulsory at both the Year 7 and 8 levels in nine schools, at two schools it was only compulsory at either the Year 7 or 8 levels, and at one school it was compulsory to study a language from Year 7 to Year 10 (see Table 7.2).

83 Note that this does not include independent and Catholic school figures.
There is clearly a significant relationship between the compulsory nature of language study and student retention rates to Year 12. In Victoria, at schools where it is compulsory to study a language beyond Year 8, or the school offered the IB program at the Year 11 and 12 levels, Year 12 retention rates averaged 25.5%, while at schools where it was only compulsory to study a language in Year 7 and 8, the Year 12 retention rate averaged 10.4%. Even if schools offering the IB at the Year 11 and 12 levels are excluded, the average retention rate at schools where it is compulsory to study a language up to Year 9 or Year 10 is 19.7%.

A comparison between Year 12 retention rates across schools where LOTE is compulsory at Year 7 and/or 8 with schools where LOTE study is compulsory beyond Year 8 has not been completed as there is only one school in the NSW sample where LOTE study is compulsory beyond Year 8.

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84 There is a 15.1% difference between retention rates for schools that require students to study a language beyond Year 8 and schools that do not have this requirement. To test the statistical validity and generalisability of this difference, the confidence interval statistic is used to demonstrate the generalisability of a percentage/s. That is, it provides an indication of whether the finding for this group of students is likely to be representative of the wider population. The confidence interval demonstrates that there is a higher than 95% chance that the true difference between these two groups within the broader school population is between (15.7%, 20.5%).
Table 7.1  Outline of LOTE programs at schools, Victoria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School name</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
<th>Year 10</th>
<th>Year 11</th>
<th>Year 12</th>
<th>% studying LOTE Year 12</th>
<th>Languages offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEO 1 Co-ed Regional VIC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>Chinese, French, Indonesian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 2 Boys Metro VIC</td>
<td>Taster</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>French, Indonesian, Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>French, Italian, Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 4 Girls Metro VIC</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>French, Italian, Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO 5 Girls Metro VIC</td>
<td>Taster</td>
<td>Taster</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>German, Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 1 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>IB</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IND 4 Girls Metro VIC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>Chinese, French, Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND 5 Boys Metro VIC</td>
<td>1/2&lt;sup&gt;85&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>Chinese, French, Japanese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>85</sup> The number of languages students must study in Year 7 and 8 is dependent on primary LOTE study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School name</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
<th>Year 10</th>
<th>Year 11</th>
<th>Year 12</th>
<th>% studying 12</th>
<th>Languages offered</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>12.1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>German, Japanese</td>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>French, Indonesian</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>5.0</td>
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<td>GOV 8 Co-ed Metro VIC</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>n/a</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>Chinese, French, Indonesian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School name</td>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td>% studying LOTE Year 12</td>
<td>Languages offered</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEO 1 Co-ed Regional NSW</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>N/a</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOV 4 Co-ed Metro NSW</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>French, German, Japanese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

° Depending on the stream that students are placed in, they study either one language at both Years 7 and 8 or two languages simultaneously at Years 7 and 8.
The number of languages students are required to study at the Year 7 and 8 levels also varies across schools and across states, with three different systems in place. The first approach is the ‘taster’ program, where students study all languages offered at the school consecutively within the one year. For example, if two languages are offered, students spend 20 weeks studying each language. The second type of program requires students to study one language throughout Years 7 and 8, while the third type of program requires students to undertake two languages simultaneously. There is no significant relationship between the type of program offered in Years 7 and 8 and the retention rate for language students at the senior secondary level.

It is generally accepted within education circles that in Victoria, the first type of program, tasters programs, originated from an approach to language study called *Linguo*. *Linguo* was introduced by Angela de Fazio in 1971 and involved two years of ‘preparatory’ study. During this time, the curriculum covered an introduction to linguistics and the history of languages, the heritage of the English language, and a comparative look at some languages other than English. In the case of Angela de Fazio’s course at Lake Bolac High school, the curriculum covered 12 languages other than English (De Fazio, 1974)\(^{87}\). This approach to LOTE study was quickly criticised for its stereotypical and superficial approach to the study of languages, communication and cultural understanding (See for example, Neustupný & O'Dea, 1975). ‘Taster’ programs are also problematic as they negate any chance of continuity between primary and secondary LOTE programs.

Despite this opposition, taster programs have persisted in schools for many years. While they are gradually being replaced by language-focused courses, in this study they could be found in Catholic schools in Victoria, and in all systems in NSW. In the schools that did offer taster programs, even though many teachers agreed that this approach was educationally unsound, the strength of the LOTE program overall is considered more important. Teachers at these schools argued that taster courses provide greater support for the whole LOTE program in the school as students can

\(^{87}\) *Linguo* programs, taster programs and language and cultural awareness such as these are very different from the kind of language awareness programs offered in Europe, cf. Candelier (2004) and Hawkins (1984).
make a more informed choice in regard to which language to continue. This approach was often brought in to counteract lopsided enrolments at the Year 7 level, where a majority of students are taking one language and a small minority taking the other language/s. The taster courses often helped rebalance student enrolments within languages, without having to take the ‘heavy-handed’ approach of placing students into language classes without choice.

At IND 1 Co-ed Regional NSW, LC 37 argues that since the reintroduction of taster courses,

it’s changed the shift a lot. A lot of students were choosing French for example because that was the language they may have done at their old primary school or that their parents may have done, without having any knowledge of Japanese or Indonesian – the Asian languages. So we’re finding it is working better. They’re more informed now with the taster courses. Even though I’m not sure I totally like them, it seems to be working.

For LC13 at CEO 5 Girls Metro VIC, the use of taster programs was a result of the curriculum committee reducing the time available for languages and her desire for students to be exposed to both a European and an Asian language. LC13 argued that while the approach is educationally unsound, the students

…will remember the more cultural side, the tolerant side, the fact that it is difficult to learn another language which is a good thing for children to know for immigrants and those things. So I think philosophically…letting all children do an Asian language and a European language is a very good thing.

The requirement that students study two languages simultaneously rather than consecutively is utilised predominantly by independent schools. Schools employ this approach in the belief that students benefit from the continuation of language study rather than studying a language for 20 weeks, stopping and then recommencing the following year if they choose to continue with the language. These schools are willing to provide the students with extra time for studying two LOTEs consecutively, averaging 213 minutes study time per week for both languages. In comparison,
schools requiring one LOTE, either in a taster program or as a single language studied for the whole year, averaged 105.4 minutes study time per week. While there is no significant correlation between requiring two languages to be studied and continuation to the Year 12 level, time allotment allowing students to study two languages provides an overt statement from the school administration of their support for languages.

The fundamental problem is that education systems and states are not willing to change policy and expand the compulsory nature of language study. However, without addressing any of the recurrent structural and attitudinal issues identified throughout this chapter, expansive LOTE policies are unlikely to have a positive outcome. Unless educators and school communities are convinced that necessary changes are being made and also persuaded that there is great benefit in language study, a more expansive policy is likely simply to increase resentment and negativity towards language programs.

7.2.3 LOTE Pathways

While LOTE study is compulsory in all schools for at least one year, not all schools provide a LOTE pathway through to Year 12 due to low student numbers. Once there is no clearly defined pathway to the end of Year 12, teachers and school administrations report that students are disinclined to continue with language study. Even when students are in Year 7 and can see that they cannot continue with the language through to the Year 12 level, many decide not to continue with the language beyond Year 7 or 8, perpetuating the negative cycle of low student numbers. At GOV 6 Co-ed Metro VIC, for example, teachers often find themselves in the position where they cannot confirm if classes will go ahead the following year, to detrimental effect.

We've had some students who are interested in doing VCE and they say "Will there be classes?" and I've got to say, "Well, if there are enough students there will be but I can't guarantee it and it will probably be distance education." and that actually puts a lot of students off. So I think we actually lose a lot of students at the end of Year 8 because they don't see that they have that progression through to Year 12 (T15).
7.2.3.1 Alternatives to No Classes

While all schools have at least one language continuing to the Year 12 level, many schools have truncated pathways involving classes with combined year levels, combined languages, combined courses (beginners and continuers) or reduced contact time with the teacher. For example, 18 schools in this study run combined Year 11 and 12 classes due to class size and financial constraints where the teacher must work from two different curricula and develop two sets of materials to use in the one class. While teachers were generally willing to run combined classes, a truncated pathway is also seen as a strong disincentive for students. LC7 states that,

> We had a really high drop out rate this year from students wanting to do Year 11 and 12 Japanese to the numbers that are actually doing it now. And I believe that's because combined class is really hard. It's hard on the Year 11s who are always being dragged to do Year 12 stuff and it's hard on the Year 12s who may have already known something or are demotivated because things have to be gone over that they already understand. And it's hard on the teacher who has to plan two sets of curriculum.

In three schools, combined classes are run at other year levels as well. At CEO 1 Co-ed Regional NSW, the school offers only one language and runs combined Year 9 and 10 classes due to small student numbers. At GOV 7 Co-ed Metro VIC, Year 9 and 10 language classes are combined, while at GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC, classes for six of the seven languages taught at the school have combined Year 7 and 8, and Year 9 and 10 classes, as well as Year 11 and 12 classes. At both schools the problem arises from the large number of LOTEs offered in the curriculum, five LOTEs at GOV 7 Co-ed Metro VIC and seven at GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC. GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC is committed to multilingualism even though it has proven difficult to run seven languages in the curriculum. The school has run up to ten different languages at a time, many in response to community need, and continues to support the ethos that it is vital for students to be able to access community languages in the school curriculum. While the school and staff are strongly committed to all languages in the curriculum, teaching combined classes is a difficult task for most teachers. For example, LC20 teaches a combined Year 7 and 8 Khmer class. The class contains 23 students which includes several categories of students: those who have just arrived
from Cambodia; students who were born in Australia and who have studied Khmer through the VSL; Australian-born students who come from a Cambodian background but who have not previously studied Khmer, and students with no background in Khmer, both at the Year 7 and 8 levels. LC20 explains that it is very difficult to find activities that all students can do together, particularly with absolute beginners and native speakers in the one class.

You can use different kinds of methodology and use the advanced students to look after the less advanced one. But how often do you do that? And if you use them too often, the advanced one feels like they take advantage of me, what am I learning here?

At five schools, language teaching is even more difficult, as the teachers run classes with combined year levels and different languages as well. For example, at GOV 4 Co-ed Metro NSW, Year 11 and 12 classes are run with all four languages in the same classroom. The Korean teacher would take one class and students of other languages would study on their own. For the next class, the German teacher would take the class and again students of other languages would study on their own. This pattern of rotation revolved around the language teachers for the four languages. At GOV 6 Co-ed Metro VIC, one teacher has had to teach a combined Year 9 and 10 French and Indonesian class.

It was the pits. It was ridiculous. You just could not do it…Your choice is if you don’t take it, languages won’t run. So you're between a rock and a hard place because you want to do the best for the kids and something is better than nothing and you hope they get enough out of it to want to go on (T16).

Staff in LOTE departments at these schools argue that the school administration lack a clear understanding and appreciation of the requirements of language study.

At four schools, the language programs at the senior secondary level are able to continue with low student numbers as contact time with the language teacher is reduced accordingly. Lower student numbers results in contact time being reduced by
between 30 minutes to an hour, with students studying by themselves during the remaining time periods.

7.2.3.2 Schools with No Combined Language Classes
There are 16 schools in total that run all language programs separately, including six Catholic, six independent and four government schools. There are a number of reasons why these schools are able to run separate language classes at all year levels. First, the independent schools have the financial resources and willingness to run classes regardless of their size. Second, programs at five of the Catholic schools are strong enough that low student numbers at the senior secondary level are not a concern. At one Catholic school, classes are run in French regardless of size, as it was the language of the founding brothers of the school and part of school policy that it therefore be available. Third, two of the four government schools are amongst the top academically selective schools in the state, with extremely high percentages of students taking a language. The other two government schools have a high concentration of community language speakers taking their language through to the senior secondary level.

7.2.3.3 Balancing Support for School Based and Non-School Based Programs
As a final point in regard to the structure of language programs in schools, a further difficulty is the growing preference by some students to study at either the SSCL or the VSL or a community language school on the weekend so that they can fit other subjects into the curriculum (As was discussed in relation to Chinese and Vietnamese in Section 4.5.4 and 4.6.6). At GOV 7 Co-ed Metro VIC, GOV 11 Co-ed Metro VIC and GOV 12 Girls Metro VIC, Vietnamese programs had closed or were closing in 2005 due to a lack of student interest in the school, with most students preferring to study on the weekend. GOV 2 Co-ed Metro VIC closed an Arabic program and is about to close a Greek program for the same reason. SA7 explained that the school 'got a little bit upset when some of them higher up the school go to the Saturday schools so they can squeeze in more subjects' particularly when community groups initiated the push for the inclusion of their languages in the school. However, SA7 admits part of the reason why students wanted to squeeze more into their curriculum, a reason widely agreed to by many schools, was the 'new Year 10 brilliant scheme of all these fancy subjects.' The ‘broadened’ middle school curriculum decreases the
potential for ‘successful’ LOTE programs, as language study is time intensive, reducing the number of optional ‘fancy’ subjects students can take.

One major difference between the VSL in Victoria and the SSCL in Sydney is that students can attend VSL classes or study through Distance Education even if their school already offers the language they are interested in. In NSW, students can only access the SSCL if their school does not offer the language in the curriculum and they have a background in the language. If a student does not have a background in the language, they must study through Open High School (distance education). There are no fees involved for students to attend the SSCL, but there are for students attending Open High School. The director of the SSCL is concerned that no fees are charged for attending the SSCL as she reports that a number of schools are closing viable programs because it is cheaper to send students to the SSCL. To counter this, the director carefully monitors student enrolments and if any certain school has a substantial number of students attending the SSCL, she encourages them to run classes on campus.

She argues that this practice is of particular concern when schools with fee-paying international students enrol them in the SSCL rather than run on-campus classes. She states that some independent schools even charge the international students fees for ‘arranging’ the enrolment at the SSCL when in fact no costs are involved. The director argues that it is vital that the use of the SSCL not result in the weakening of language classes within schools.

However, while this is a genuine concern, there is still the issue of some students preferring to study on the weekends. At GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW, the LOTE department has offered Chinese in the school curriculum a number of times as there are more than 20 Years 11 and 12 students studying the language through the SSCL. Each time they have offered the language, they have not been able to gain high enough student enrolments to run the classes. SA42 argues,

The Chinese kids were more attuned to improving their English skills and to their physics, chemistry and higher order maths. That’s where they concluded,
rightly or wrongly, where they would score their marks. So the Chinese tended not to be all that popular so we just had to abandon it.

It remains a delicate balance in both states to support language programs within schools, as well as those run outside of schools.

### 7.2.4 Primary to Secondary Transition

The issue of primary to secondary transition between LOTE programs has a different significance in Victoria and NSW. In Victoria, LOTE study is recommended from Prep to Year 10 with most students likely to have already studied a language by the time they enter secondary school. This situation is examined in Section 7.3.2. In NSW, LOTE study is only mandated for 100 hours at the Year 7 or 8 level and far fewer students study a language at the primary level.

#### 7.2.4.1 Transition Issues in NSW

Prior to the NALSAS program, language study at the primary level was not well established in NSW. Substantial amounts of the NALSAS funding was used by the government-run Languages Unit to encourage the study of languages at the senior primary level, along with developing continuity for language study between Years 5 and 8. However, with the cessation of NALSAS funding, the acting manager of the Languages Unit at the NSW BOS explains that many primary schools can no longer afford to continue the language programs and are discontinuing them. Staff at the languages unit argue that the valuable work of the Transition program has not endured simply because the basis of the programs and teachers’ salaries was a temporary funding pool that has not been replaced.

While the Languages Unit does not have funding to support the widespread study of languages at the primary level, it continues to support community language programs, where students are usually withdrawn from their normal classes to study their language. However, there is little continuity at the secondary level, with most students continuing language study through the SSCL.

Within the Catholic system in NSW, the LOTE officer argues that many primary schools applied for grants to run language programs through the NALSAS funding,
but again, the funding was used to pay teacher salaries and with funding no longer available, schools are dropping their programs. Alternatively, some schools are continuing only with the cultural aspects of the programs, implemented by generalist teachers. Any funding for LOTE programs now largely comes from CoAsIt run Italian classes in around 20 Catholic primary schools across NSW.

Two P to 12 independent schools in NSW in this study did offer continuity between primary and secondary LOTE classes where Indonesian study is compulsory at the primary level. Students who have completed the primary Indonesian programs at IND 2 Co-ed Metro NSW and IND 3 Girls Metro NSW are streamed at the Year 7 level and if they continue to the senior secondary level with the language, complete the equivalent of Year 12 Indonesian in Year 11.

Overall, however, transition is not such an issue in NSW simply because primary school LOTE programs are not well supported and, according to interviewees, have reduced drastically since the cessation of NALSAS funding. The issue is far more contentious in Victoria, where a majority of teachers hold strong views, both positive and negative, about LOTE teaching in primary school, as will be explored in the following section.

7.2.4.2 Schools Offering Continuity in Victoria
Of the 22 schools in the study, seven schools did not offer any form of continuity between primary and secondary programs. All students, regardless of their experience, were placed in beginner classes. Five of these schools, four government schools and one Catholic school, offer taster courses, which automatically excludes any chance of continuity as students undertake a number of languages at Year 7. Two schools only offered one LOTE at the Year 7 level, but were unable to stream students. At GOV 9 Co-ed Regional VIC, the school offered Indonesian, while the

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88 CoAsIt or Comitato Assistenza Italiani is an Australian based organisation set up for Italians and Australians of Italian descent. They provide Italian teachers and classes for numerous primary and secondary schools throughout Australia and are funded by grants from, amongst others, the Italian government, the Australian federal government, the Victorian state government and the Catholic Education Office.
feeder primary school opposite the school offered Japanese. While the two schools had worked together to provide the same language, the secondary school was unable to find Japanese teachers to employ, while the primary school was unable to find Indonesian teachers. As a result, the mismatch in languages remains in place. At CEO 1 Co-ed Regional VIC, although all students undertake Indonesian in Year 7 and 8, and a number of feeder schools teach Indonesian, no streaming is available. LC5 argued that this is largely due to a lack of collaboration with primary school teachers.

While some teachers argued that the problem with transition was the difference between the teaching styles employed at the primary and secondary levels, the most significant problems appear to be the time provided for language programs and the content of classes at the primary level. Primary schools LOTE programs can be divided into three major types:

1. Language programs, where the focus of the class is the target language;
2. Language and cultural awareness programs, where the main focus is cultural with a small amount of vocabulary introduced, and
3. Content based teaching, where the curriculum is taught in the target language.

While it is not possible to ascertain what percentage of Catholic and independent schools conduct which type of program, in Victorian government schools in 2003, 48% of programs were language and cultural awareness programs, and only 51.7% were language programs. Furthermore, while the recommended time for LOTE study is 150 minutes per week, 69.9% of programs ran for only 30 to 60 minutes per week, with only 4.1% running for the recommended 150 minutes per week (Victoria. DE&T, 2005a). As a result, while some students ‘study’ a language for six years in primary school, they may have been exposed to very little language learning. For example, both LC5 and T6 argued that even though some Year 7 students have been ‘doing’ Indonesian for six years, many do not have a strong base as their primary LOTE program ran for half an hour a week and are taken by generalist primary teachers not trained in LOTE. However, T6 acknowledged, as in many of the schools in this sample, that there is no collaboration between primary and secondary LOTE staff to establish what students did cover at the primary level, providing no opportunity for recognition of skills the students may have developed.
T6 also stated that both parents and students expressed frustration when students reached Year 8 and had little competency in Indonesian after eight years of LOTE study. T6 argued that this is due in part to parents and students having an unrealistic and unclear expectation of what can be achieved within the limits of the LOTE programs offered, which unfortunately, resulted in undermining not only their belief in LOTE in primary schools, but in secondary schools LOTE programs as well.

The inability or unwillingness of schools and some LOTE teachers to recognise prior learning in LOTE is more clearly apparent at GOV 1 Co-ed Metro VIC and GOV 12 Girls Metro VIC. At GOV 1 Co-ed Metro VIC, Greek and Japanese are offered in Year 7 and students are offered three levels of streaming for Greek in Year 7. No streaming is offered in Japanese, even though a number of students come from a local feeder school which provides a Japanese / English bilingual program throughout the primary school. The Japanese teacher, T21, must work hard to accommodate the beginner and continuing students in the same class, although most materials address the beginners’ needs. T21 has been lobbying the school administration to offer streaming or to provide greater flexibility in timetabling so students coming from the bilingual school can join classes in Japanese at higher year levels. The school administration has been unwilling to provide these concessions to date.

At GOV 12 Girls Metro VIC, a small number of students who enter Year 7 come from a French / English bilingual primary school, where they receive 40 to 48% of the primary curriculum in French, usually over a seven year period. However, these students are placed in the beginner Year 7 French class when they attend the school. LC21 suggests that these students ‘…are often not really at that much of a higher standard than the other kids. That’s what the French teacher tells me.’ This lack of recognition is undoubtedly frustrating for students and represents unwillingness on the school’s behalf to recognise and address the educational needs and potential of these students.

Many government schools argued that with so many feeder schools, it was impossible to provide streaming in a LOTE in Year 7 and that this was unlikely to change. For example, SA11 at GOV 8 Co-ed Metro VIC had tried to work in conjunction with
local primary schools to streamline the LOTE program, but explained that primary
schools are unwilling to take risks with their LOTE programs.

One no wants to give up where they’re at. Every school has invested an
emotional and resource based fortune to develop their languages, the whole
school language approach. No one wants to give that away. The other point is
that schools are worried too that if we stop doing this and we move to a different
language, will we ever get the teachers we need. Can we be guaranteed that we
will actually have a program if we lose this teacher can we continue on? (SA11)

In 2003, DE&T worked with schools and language associations across the state to
develop language networks and network plans. The purpose of the networks is to
coordinate resources and support for language study within defined geographical
areas. One of the aims includes greater facilitation of primary to secondary transition.
As the network plans were not included in interviews with participants in this study,
further research could provide study the effectiveness of the networks and network
plans in increasing coordination and support for language study in Victoria.

7.2.4.3 School Offering Continuity in Victoria
All five independent schools offered streaming in Year 7, continuing on from the
primary LOTE program, although there were still a number of issues relating to
continuity. At IND2 Co-ed Metro VIC, it is compulsory to study Japanese from Prep
to Year 6. In Year 7, students can continue with Japanese or choose another language.
Students beginning Japanese in Year 7 study the LOTE for double the normal time
allotment, with the aim of the continuing and beginner students combining classes in
Year 9. Unfortunately, the school has found that a majority of students who undertake
Japanese at the primary section of the school, do not continue with the language at the
secondary level. In fact, LC15 believes that Japanese in the primary school strongly
supports Indonesian in the secondary school as many students swap languages in Year
7.

LC15 suggests that because the Japanese primary program is a strong, language
focused program, students are further along in their LOTE learning skills and prefer to
change to a new language in Year 7, where quick progress is more visible at the
beginner level, particularly as all the other languages at the school have Latin-based alphabets. This preference continues through to the Year 12 level, where Indonesian study is extremely strong, while French and German classes were at least twice as large as the Japanese program in 2003. While there is much consternation in schools regarding continuity between language programs at the primary and secondary level, Kipp (1996) has also identified benefits in switching from one language to another between the primary and secondary level. In a small study in a Melbourne P to 12 school, Kipp (1996) found that although students who study a language at the primary level carry linguistic advantages into secondary level study, these differences in skill levels largely dissipate by the middle secondary years. However, those who had studied a LOTE at the primary level were more likely to continue with a language to the senior secondary level and studied a wider range of languages. Many of these students were also able to articulate the benefits they felt they received from studying a language at the primary level such as already being aware of language learning techniques and what is involved in learning a language. While staff at IND2 Co-ed Metro VIC are disappointed that more students do not continue with Japanese after the primary level, arguably, the success of Indonesian, as well as the French and German programs, could be viewed as an alternative indicator of the success of the primary program.

At IND5 Boys Metro VIC, students are streamed into beginner and continuing classes for Japanese and French, both of which are offered at the primary school. While LC17 argues that collaboration between primary and secondary teachers is the key to the success of transition, even within IND5 Boys Metro VIC, a multi-campus Prep to Year 12 school, the issue is problematic. While LC17 has worked hard to develop a collaborative relationship between the primary and secondary sections of the school, some LOTE staff are still insisting that differences in primary and secondary curriculum and teaching style are too problematic. LC17 is so determined to address this issue that she co-authored a series of textbooks, in French and Japanese, where students can start Level 1 in the series in Grade 5 and can start Level 1 or 3 in Year 7, depending on whether they are beginner or continuing students. The textbook allows continuity and takes out the problem of repetition. The primary Japanese program started with the textbook in 2005, but LC17 was not able to convince the French primary and secondary teachers of the value of this approach. The French department
decided to trial the textbook with half the Grade 5 students in 2005, to determine the viability of this approach.

Overall, 16.9% of teachers and senior administrators interviewed felt strongly that LOTE at the primary level was ‘killing’ (LC19) LOTE at the secondary level with students coming to secondary schools ‘totally cheesed off’ (LC14) with LOTE, and that it is causing students ‘huge distress’ (SA17). Issues that impacted on this situation were reported to be,

- The lacked of trained teachers taking LOTE at the primary level,
- The lack of integration and reinforcement of LOTE within the broader curriculum, and
- The limited time given to LOTE.

7.3 Financial Support

One of the most important and influential factors for the success of language programs is the provision and distribution of funding. Both federal and state government funding support LOTE education in Australia and evaluating the impact of funding on LOTE programs requires an understanding of the complex path funding follows from its original sources down to LOTE departments in schools. This section looks at federal funding (the LOTE Element), state level funding and the NALSAS funding, and their distribution throughout the governmental and non-governmental education systems. The differing approaches each system takes in distributing LOTE funding are highlighted, along with specific funding issues within schools themselves.

In Victoria and NSW, the differences between how LOTE funding is spent (and NALSAS funding was spent) are influenced by the extent to which each system is centralised or decentralised. The most centralised system in each state is the government education system, which represents the largest number of students, around 65% of primary and secondary school enrolments in each state. The Catholic education system is less centralised, but provides policy direction and guidance for Catholic schools within the four dioceses in Victoria and the 11 dioceses in NSW.
The independent system is the least centralised, with the overarching bodies, the AISV and the AISNSW, providing support and services to independent schools, although schools can determine their own policy and direction.

7.3.1 Funding in Victorian Government Schools

The government school system is the most centralised school system in Australia, with funding distributed through the education departments at state level. The Victorian and NSW education departments both utilise the federal funding for languages for different purposes. In Victoria, the Languages Unit is based in the DE&T and consists of a LOTE manager, (DE&T LOTE Officer) and two general project officers. Nine LOTE officers who work in each educational region in the state provide the most direct support for language programs in schools.

The federal LOTE Element is not passed directly onto government schools by DE&T, but is largely used to support alternative language providers in Victoria such as,

- The VSL, run by the state government, which operates on Saturday mornings.
- Community language schools which operate after school hours to provide cultural and linguistic training for students. These schools cater predominantly to primary age students, and teach community languages generally not available in the mainstream school system.
- Language teachers associations for the provision of professional development (PD) for language teachers and the maintenance of language specific websites;
- The Asia Education Foundation for the development of intercultural learning materials and professional development, and
- CoAsIt, which provide a number of LOTE officers to promote and support the teaching of Italian across Victoria.

Direct funding for language programs in government schools is provided by the state government as a per student funding allocation called the ‘Student Research Package’\(^89\) (SRP). The SRP is a global allocation of money to the school, but within this package, a formula allocates a certain amount per student for each subject and for

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\(^{89}\) Previously known as the Global School Budget (GSB).

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other school needs. Around $50 million was provided for government school LOTE programs in 2005.

Prior to 2005, schools were given a global budget, but funding for language programs was listed as a discreet budget item separate from the global budget. This was originally designed to provide visibility for languages and to support the smaller classes that are often run for languages at the senior secondary level. However, the purpose of this funding and its position as a separate line in the SRP was poorly understood amongst principals and with limited accountability for how the funds are spent, some principals felt little obligation to spend the money on language programs. For example, SA15 at GOV 1 Co-ed Metro VIC stated, ‘No-one can present a case why LOTE appears as a discreet item on the global budget…When it came to the school as a discreet item it was almost implied that it had to be spent in that area.’ SA15 saw no reason why LOTE funding should be spent on language programs.

Many teachers interviewed were often unaware that their school was allocated LOTE funding or that it appeared as a separate line on the budget. For example, At GOV 9 Co-ed Regional VIC, the LOTE coordinator was unaware of the separated line of funding for LOTE until it was pointed out by a colleague at a conference and when she insisted that the principal actually direct the money to the LOTE program, he replied, ‘I hope you feel guilty about using this money (LC14).’ As another example, LC19 stated that while she knew the money was there, the principal would argue that all school funding and resources are shared, such as the use of the computer labs for LOTE classes.

From 2005, the LOTE funding is no longer listed as a separate line in the SRP, with one global sum provided to schools. Schools can access the formula to determine how much funding has been allocated to each subject, however, there is the danger that the disappearance of the separate line of funding for LOTE will lead principals to believe that LOTE funding no longer exists. At the least, it further reduces the chance in some schools that the funding for LOTE will actually be spent on LOTE programs.

In government schools, the additional funding provided through the NALSAS program was passed onto schools as grants for innovative projects, for resource
development, and to subsidise student and teacher trips overseas. Funding for some of these projects was sourced from both the LOTE Element and the NALSAS funding so that the funds could be made available to more languages, rather than to just the four Asian languages supported by the NALSAS funding. A large part of the NALSAS funding was spent by DE&T on teacher retraining, particularly in training new teachers of Indonesian. Now that the NALSAS funding has ended, the teacher retraining program has ended, although state funding has been made available to allow those that are in their last year of a language program or undertaking the year of LOTE methodology training to finish their training.

In general, LOTE departments in government schools reported being ‘well-stocked’ as a result of the NALSAS grants as they were able to buy resources for teaching, equipment for classroom use and software for developing the use of computers in language programs.

In many schools in this study, the NALSAS funding was used to support native speaker programs, where native speakers visit schools to assist Year 11 and 12 students with oral communication skills. With the end of NALSAS funding and a discontinuation of nearly all grants previously supplied by DE&T, an increasing number of government schools in this study could no longer fund their native speaker programs. At **GOV 8 Co-ed Metro VIC**, LOTE students will be asked to pay separately for access to native speakers, a move that LC18 believes will discourage students from continuing with LOTE study.

The French and Indonesian books are very, very, expensive and if you put another $100 on top, the kids might be wondering whether they will take that subject or not…And although the relationship is not all that clear, there are other factors…the minute the resources go down, the numbers start dropping.

Grants are no longer available for government schools for overseas trips for students and teachers or for buying new resources, which, argues the DE&T LOTE manager, has resulted in a significant loss for the standing of LOTEs in government schools. At **GOV 12 Girls Metro VIC**, LC21 argued that the decrease in funding since the ending of NALSAS was an influential factor in the decision to decrease the LOTE program.
in the school from being compulsory in Year 7 to 10, to being compulsory in Year 8 only.

The reason why it is not going to be compulsory in Year 9 [and 7] is due to some kids struggling. But essentially what I think it comes down to is that LOTE is no longer a priority in the department [DE&T]. It’s not where the money is. It’s not where the grants are and it's not priority anymore.

The end of NALSAS funding also coincided with the drastic reduction of the DE&T Languages Unit from around eighty personnel to the current three personnel, which the department manager argues was due to both a reduction in funding, particularly the NALSAS funding, and a decentralisation of responsibility within DE&T in general. LOTE officers in each education region have now taken up more responsibility in dealing directly with schools, while the Languages Unit deals more with administrative and policy related issues.

While it is difficult to establish any casual relationship between the many factors that impact on language programs and any decrease in LOTE enrolment figures, stakeholders across all systems talked anecdotally of decreases in enrolments in languages as well as for Asian studies since NALSAS funding ended. It is valuable to examine these claims based on actual enrolment figures and to compare them to enrolments prior to NALSAS ending. Due to a lack of data collection by different systems to date, this comparison is only possible in some instances, with differences in the years of data collection. This issue is discussed further in Section 7.5.4.

In government schools in Victoria, enrolments in Korean, Chinese and Japanese have fluctuated, although not significantly, since the end of NALSAS funding (Overall, across all languages there has been a decline in student enrolments of 4.1% at the primary level and 9.9% at the secondary level between 1999 and 2005 (Victoria. DE&T, 2000b, 2006)). Indonesian has experienced the most significant, continual decline, with enrolments decreasing 17.6% at the primary level and 16.3% at the secondary level between 1999 and 2005 (Figures 7.2 & 7.3).
Figure 7.2  Enrolments in Victorian government primary schools offering four Asian languages, 1999, 2002 and 2005
(Victoria. DE&T, 2000b, 2002b, 2006)

Figure 7.3  Enrolments in Victorian government secondary schools offering four Asian languages, 1999, 2002 and 2005
(Victoria. DE&T, 2000b, 2002b, 2006)
7.3.2 Funding in NSW Government Schools

In NSW, the LOTE element is spent largely on maintaining the Languages Unit, which employs numerous personnel to provide language specific support for teachers, and to help develop resources for the classroom. (This is the model that the Victoria DE&T had before the drastic reduction of staff in 2003.) The NSW Languages Unit is able to maintain its current structure as it does not fund the range of alternative language providers that the Victorian Languages Unit funds. The NSW Languages Unit provides some support for the SSCL and Open High (the equivalent to VSL), however it does not support community language providers. Unlike in Victoria, community language providers in NSW are not accredited to provide language study through to the Year 12 level and are not provided with any funding from the DE&T. Generally students must attend the SSCL to be able to take the Year 12 language examinations.

The teaching of languages at the primary level is more limited in NSW than in Victoria and as discussed in Section 7.3.1, the NALSAS funding was used to encourage the uptake of languages at the senior primary level and on transition from the primary to the secondary level. The Languages Unit personnel argue that the program was extremely successful. However, with NALSAS funding no longer available, many schools are now shutting their primary language programs because they have no funds to continue to employ language teachers or to support the language programs. The use of the NALSAS funds for the employment of teachers in particular was a short-term solution to developing primary language programs, but with no alternative funding sources available, there was little chance for the programs to continue.

In terms of enrolments in the NALSAS languages, as can be seen in Figures 7.4 & 7.5, enrolments in Japanese (-78.0%) and Indonesian (-77.1%) have plummeted at the primary level in NSW between 1999 and 2005. (Overall, LOTE enrolments at the primary level in government schools have decreased 44.4%, with Indonesian and

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90 Technically a community language provider can school a student up to Year 12 but the student is represented by the teacher as a personal tutor rather than by the school. Few students choose to take this avenue.
Japanese accounting for a majority of the decrease in enrolments.) Conversely, enrolments in Chinese (+20.0%) and Korean (+50.0%) have increased, albeit from a smaller base. At the secondary level, decreases in government school enrolments have been less severe, -10.7% for Japanese and –16.1% for Indonesian. This is higher than the overall decline of 2.1% in LOTE study between 1999 and 2005 in NSW government secondary schools.

Figure 7.4  Enrolments in NSW government primary schools, NALSAS languages, 2001 – 2005 (NSW. DE&T, 1999, 2005)
7.3.3 Funding in Victorian Catholic Schools

The Catholic system is less centralised than the government system, with each diocese maintaining a degree of autonomy. There is only one LOTE Education Officer, based on Melbourne, who works ‘towards assisting schools to do the best they can to run effective and sustainable LOTE programs’. The CEO directs the federal LOTE funding towards supportive structures than directly to schools. The funding is utilised for supporting regional networks of LOTE teachers; to support new teachers in the study of LOTE, and on centralised professional development.

The NALSAS funding was provided to schools as grants to support innovative ideas and research, to support both students and LOTE staff on in-country trips and to build up resources. The NALSAS funding also allowed for the employment of more staff at the central office for both languages and Asian Studies in the curriculum. The LOTE Education Officer argued that the NALSAS program had a strong impact in Catholic schools, although more for the promotion of Asia and Asian studies than languages.

I think it had such a dramatic impact, not just in relation to LOTE or the studies of Asia, an impact in the ways schools and students see Asia. And I think a change of the mindset on Asia and our place in Asia. I think that impact was
enormous. Even in country schools, not just in Melbourne. It was of great benefit.

As in the government system, teachers in the Catholic system reported being well resourced as a result of the NALSAS program.

The LOTE Education Officer explained that the number of students studying a language in Catholic schools in Victoria has not increase greatly, but rather, there had been a shift from European to Asian languages. She argues that Asian language study was also seen as important for a number of schools as it provided an avenue for the integration of Asian studies into the curriculum. While the focus of this study is not Asian studies or the degree of successful uptake of Asian studies, it is important to note that for some schools, particularly Catholic schools, Asian language study and Asian studies were closely linked during the NALSAS funding period. Since the cessation of the NALSAS funding, the LOTE Officer argues that both the studies of Asian languages and Asian studies has decreased in Catholic schools. While it was not possible to obtain comparative figures for student enrolments as in the government sectors, it was possible to obtain figures for the number of schools offering Asian languages.

As we can see from Figure 7.6, between 1999 and 2005, the number of Victorian Catholic schools offering Chinese has decreased 20%, Indonesian 15.5% and Japanese 10.9%. No Catholic schools offer Korean.
7.3.4 Funding in NSW Catholic Schools

In NSW, LOTE funding is mainly directed towards primary schools, in particular, community language programs for specific students at the primary level. Funding is also provided to CoAsIt to run insertion classes in Italian at the primary school level, while support or secondary LOTE programs is largely confined to providing a contribution towards senior secondary students who continue language study through Open High. Although entry to Open High is free for government school students, it attracts an $800 fee for non-government school students. As many families cannot afford these fees, the CEO puts aside money to help pay for enrolments for these students.

The NALSAS grants were accessible to all Catholic schools in NSW, but emphasis was placed on increasing the study of languages at the primary level. With the end of this funding many primary schools are discontinuing their Asian language programs due to the lack of funding for teachers. The LOTE officer argues that the CEO is
working with the schools to help them at least be able to continue the Asian Studies component of their programs.

But as I say a lot of our schools are passionate about continuing that but they don’t have the finances to be able to follow through with the languages programs. And many of the lower economic schools have continued with their programs and we want to support them more and we don’t want them to lose the gains that they made under the NALSAS program.

In the NSW Catholic education system, there was no system wide collection of statistics up until 2004. As a result it is not possible to make any comparison between student enrolments between 1999 and 2005.

7.3.5 Funding in Victorian Independent Schools
Independent schools are the least centralised of the three main education systems in Australia. In Victoria, the LOTE educational officer administers federal LOTE funds to independent schools, with most federal LOTE funding passed directly onto schools. Approximately 85% of funds are provided to LOTE departments in schools through grants, 10% is spent on professional development programs for LOTE teachers and schools and 5% spent on administration costs.

While there has always been a strong tradition of language study in independent schools in Victoria, the AISV LOTE educational officer argues that the NALSAS funding provided strong support for the four prioritised Asian languages in schools. ‘We really got momentum when that NALSAS funding came. Our schools picked it up and ran with it… I think a lot of schools hadn’t even thought about teaching an Asian language and NALSAS changed that.’ While the teaching of Chinese has always been strong in independent schools, the NALSAS funding helped build up Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese programs, although the prestige and funding provided through explicit federal support through the NALSAS program did not help Korean to the same extent.

Since NALSAS funding has ended, the AISV is no longer able to provide grants to assist students to travel overseas, although grants are still available for in-country trips
for teachers, a vital service, argued the LOTE administration officer, when many teachers, including recently retrained teachers, have never been to a country where the language they are teaching is spoken. Funds are still available to write materials for languages, and in 2005 the focus was on developing materials for IB courses for Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian. According to the LOTE administration officer, most schools have retained their Asian language programs since the end of NALSAS funding. The largest impact, she argues, has been on Asian Studies, which was funded as part of the NALSAS project, but struggled to establish itself successfully in independent school curricula.

Within independent schools, all LOTE departments had noticed a decrease in the number of grants that were available since the end of the NALSAS program. The biggest impact was the loss of funding for overseas trips for students, with LOTE departments finding that they had to ‘compete’ with other activities on offer in the schools, rather than having access to supernumerary funding. At IND5 Boys Metro VIC, LC17 argues that funding provided through AISV has always been ample and the school received around $14,000 a year before the NALSAS funding ended. While the LOTE department has only received $4,000 in 2004, they have also applied for and received an extra $3,000 for an intern, $3,000 for a consultant to come to the school and to review the structure of the LOTE program and $5,000 for developing innovative programs which will focus on Year 9 to 10 transition and VCE immersion camps; a total of $15,000. While the NALSAS funding has ended, language study is still a priority within the AISV, which makes available substantial amounts of funding by directing federal funds straight to schools rather than to administrative structures.

Although the LOTE administration officer argued that most independent schools are in a good position with regard to languages, she emphasised that smaller independent schools have always struggled to finance LOTE programs and while NALSAS funding was available for these schools as well, the funding was designed to supplement programs, not to provide salaries for teachers. Smaller schools have trouble finding funding to employ a LOTE teacher, and often cannot even run a LOTE program, so ultimately the NALSAS funding provided limited support for these schools.
Figures 7.7 shows the changes in enrolments in three Asian languages in independent schools in Victoria between 1990 and 2005. As opposed to changes in other systems, there has been no significant decrease in enrolments for any languages since the end of NALSAS funding, with Chinese continuing to grow within the independent sector.

![Figure 7.7 Enrolments in Victorian independent primary and secondary schools offering three Asian languages, 1990 – 2005](AISV, 2001; Unpublished data, AISV, 2006)

### 7.3.6 Funding in NSW Independent Schools

THE AISNSW distribute federal LOTE funding in a similar manner to their Victorian counterparts, with approximately 85% of funds provided directly to schools. However, unlike in Victoria, no extra funds are available to schools now that the NALSAS funding has ended. There are no grants available for teachers to gain in-country experience, nor are there any funds for the further development of language teaching resources. The LOTE officer in the AISNSW is new to the position and

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91 Figures were not available for Korean across all years.
concentrates on providing PD for LOTE teachers and on inducting new language teachers into the NSW education system. The new LOTE officer was unable to provide information on the use of NALSAS funding in independent schools. No comparison of language student numbers was available.

7.4 Differences Across Schools, Systems and States

7.4.1 The Current Situation Across Systems and States

As has been outlined in Section 7.1, support for language programs across education systems is mixed, as are retention rates at the Year 12 level (See Point 3 below). This section discusses differences in the uptake of Asian languages across systems, and across VIC and NSW, and suggests explanations to account for these variations. Given the complex interplay of facts and figures in this study, there are four main points that need to be kept in mind when accounting for differences across systems.

1. The average percentage of Year 12 students in Australia studying a language increased slightly over the 1992 – 2003 time period. In 1992, the Australian average was 12.6% of Year 12 students, peaking at 14.5% in 1996 and then declining to 13.5% in 2003. *This indicates that there has been a shift within language study towards Asian languages rather than any significant and consistent increase in the number of Year 12 students studying languages (from less than 4% of all Year 12 students in 1992 to 6.6% in 2003).*

2. At the state level, developments in NSW mirror those at the national level. That is, there has been a shift towards Asian language study at the Year 12 level (See Figure 7.8), with a modest increase in Year 12 language student numbers, from 11.6% in 1992 to 12.8% in 2003. In Victoria, however, there has been both a shift towards Asian languages (See Figure 7.9) and most importantly, *also a notable overall increase in the number of students studying a language at the Year 12 level, from 12.4% in 1992 to 20.2% in 2003.*
Figure 7.8 Percentage of Year 12 LOTE students studying ‘groups’ of languages, NSW, 1992 and 2003 (NSW. BOS, 2003; NSW. BOS, Unpublished data, 2003).

Figure 7.9 Percentage of Year 12 LOTE students studying ‘groups’ of languages, VIC, 1992 and 2003 (VCAA, 2004c; VCAB, 1993)
3. In both states, overall Year 12 LOTE enrolments are highest in the independent sector (31.0% in VIC, 16.5% in NSW), followed by the government education system (10.8%, 15.1%) and the Catholic system (4.5%, 12.2%) (See Figure 7.1).

4. The percentage of Year 12 students studying an Asian language differs significantly across states, with enrolments highest in Victoria (10.4%) and lowest in QLD (3.3%) (See Table 7.3). The uptake of Asian languages has also differed across education systems (See Figure 7.10). Enrolments in Asian languages in Catholic schools are notably lower in both states in comparison to enrolments in government and independent schools.

Table 7.3 Year 12 study of Asian languages, 2003 (all Asian languages available in the education system)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>% of all Year 12 students studying an Asian LOTE</th>
<th>% of Year 12 LOTE students studying an Asian LOTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.4.2 Why has Asian Language Study been More Successful in Some Educational Systems than in Others?

First, it is important to note that any analysis of the distribution of Asian and European language study in no way suggests that enrolments in one group of languages should dominate over the other or that enrolments should be roughly equal in both language groups across all states in Australia. Indeed Table 7.3 indicates that there are significant differences between states. For example, 83.3% of Year 12 LOTE students in the NT are studying an Asian LOTE, while only 42.5% are in NSW.\(^9\)

\(^9\) There are numerous reasons, for example, historical, geographical, demographical, that may contribute to these differences across all states in Australia, although they are not addressed in this thesis.
One of the most notable differences in both Victoria and NSW is the lower percentage of students studying an Asian language in the Catholic education system in comparison to the other systems. One explanation for this difference involves the curriculum history of each system. Interviews with stakeholders from the Catholic education system suggest that the Asia-focused content of Catholic school curricula was very low prior to the introduction of the NALSAS program, largely due to the historical influence of the study of Italian language and culture. Overall, a greater focus was placed on incorporating Asian Studies, rather than the study of Asian languages, into school programs. According to the LOTE officer for Catholic primary schools in NSW, now that NALSAS funding has ended, the maintenance of these Asian studies programs is the predominant focus in Catholic primary schools in NSW, rather than the continuation of language programs.

The Italian language continues to dominate in the Catholic education system. In 2003 in Victoria for example, 56.9% of all Year 12 students of Italian attended Catholic schools. In Victoria, the preference for European language study in general amongst Catholic school students extends to the VSL as well. In 2003, 62.5% of Catholic school students were studying a European\textsuperscript{93} language at the VSL (predominantly Croatian, Greek, Polish and Spanish, with only a few students studying Italian), with the remaining students studying Asian\textsuperscript{94} and other languages (but predominantly Chinese and Vietnamese)\textsuperscript{95}.

The study of Asian languages was arguably more established in the government and independent systems in Victoria when the NALSAS program was introduced. For example, Asian language study has been well-established in a number of independent schools since the 1960s and by 1990, Chinese, Indonesian and Japanese were three of the five most widely taught languages in independent schools in Victoria (AISV, 2001). In Victorian government schools, five Asian languages were available within

\textsuperscript{93} Albanian, Croatian, Czech, French, German, Greek (Modern and Ancient), Italian, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Slovenian and Spanish.

\textsuperscript{94} Chinese, Filipino, Indonesian, Japanese, Khmer, Sinhala and Vietnamese.

\textsuperscript{95} It was not possible to obtain the same information for NSW Catholic school students attending the SSCL.
mainstream schools in 1991, with a further three Asian languages available through the VSL\textsuperscript{96}. However, it is not possible to obtain comparable figures for language enrolments in Catholic schools around this time to confirm any such discrepancies. Unfortunately, comparable data is not available for NSW.

A second possible explanation rests on the extent to which languages are valued within each education system. This is in particular reference to the Catholic system in NSW, where only 4.5\% of Year 12 students study a language. This apparent lack of commitment to language study became apparent when I had to contact dozens of Catholic schools in NSW before I could find a handful that offered a language to the Year 12 level, with even fewer offering an Asian language. Of the four Catholic schools that participated, only one school, an elite, high-fee Catholic school, had a strong languages program.

7.4.3 The Impact of Funding Structures

It is also important to consider the impact of funding and policy on program outcomes. While different funding models reflect structural differences between the administrations of education systems, the centralised or decentralised nature of these administrations allows for different valuing of languages. As noted in Section 7.4, funding in government and Catholic schools is directed mainly towards administrative and support structures, while around 85\% of LOTE funding in the independent system is passed directly onto schools. Under the NALSAS program, Victorian government schools could apply for $500 directly for the purchase of resources. In comparison, at IND 5 Boys Metro VIC, LC17 explains that the LOTE department regularly received around $14,000 directly each year for language programs (although this would have differed from school to school). While substantial NALSAS funds were spent on LOTE programs in other ways in Victoria, such as teacher training, grants for in-country travel for teachers and students and support for LOTE specific personnel employed within DE&T, the explicit funding of programs in independent schools greatly increases the prestige associated with language study, as well as providing far greater freedom and room for innovation in supporting and developing language programs.

\textsuperscript{96} Chinese, Filipino, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Khmer, Sinhala and Vietnamese.
Now that the NALSAS funding has ceased, all systems, except the independent system in Victoria and to a lesser extent the independent system in NSW, are unable to provide many of the services and grants accessible previously. The AISV, on the other hand, still provides substantial financial support for language programs. Although the financial resources of many independent schools are far higher than for other systems, the fact that the AISV still allocates extra funding for language study suggests that they place greater value on the study of languages. This would account, to some degree, for the significantly higher Year 12 retention rates in independent schools.

### 7.4.4 Differences Across States

Regardless of the distribution of funding and the impact of other structural and attitudinal issues on language study, the most important determinant influencing the trajectory of languages study in VIC and NSW since the introduction of the NALSAS strategy (and in the absence of a national languages policy) has been the language policy of each state, along with appropriate support structures that are designed to implement and support policy. If the support structures (policy, structural, financial) are not already established or available to underpin the long-term development of programs, the effectiveness of short-term funding is likely to be limited. Funding such as the NALSAS funding can only build on what is already firmly established in each state and system.

In NSW, the mandate of 100 hours of LOTE study at the Year 7 or 8 levels, supported by all three education systems, translates into a lack of structural and psychological support for languages at the primary level and beyond Year 8. If there is no policy change at the state level, and no commitment to the long term funding for the expansion of language programs beyond Year 7 and 8 from the state itself, the effectiveness of funding such as the NALSAS funding, which aimed to expand the study of languages, will be temporary and any measures introduced will also be

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97 The LOTE officer at AISV stated that in 2004 funding was still put aside to offer in-country trips for teachers and a number of other grants to help develop language programs.
temporary. Once funding ceases and many of the advances are reversed, negative perceptions of language study remain and increase.

In contrast, the recommendation of language study in Victoria from Prep to Year 10, along with the long-established availability of funding for primary language programs, has resulted in the broad implementation of language programs. The Catholic and independent sectors have also supported this recommendation with differing degrees of success, arguably greater in the independent system than in the Catholic system. When the NALSAS funding was introduced, the study of languages at the primary level was well entrenched, as was the provision of language study through to the Year 12 level. Rather than having to drive, or to depend on, a change in attitudes towards the study of languages (although this is an ongoing challenge in every state), the funding was able to build on structures that were already in place for language study. It was used to supplement rather than create programs and employ teachers. These factors all contributed to Year 12 LOTE enrolments increasing 62.9% from 1992 to 2003 in Victoria.

The loss of NALSAS funding has impacted on all states and on both European and Asian language programs, although it has arguably impacted more significantly on NSW than Victoria. The funding was not intended primarily to staff language programs$, but to provide support for the teaching of languages and the training of more language teachers. However, funding for teachers’ salaries at the primary level were provided through the NALSAS funding and the loss of the funding has led to the closure of many primary level language programs and significant decreases in enrolments in Japanese and Indonesian in NSW. One must bear in mind that the decreases in enrolments in Indonesian in both NSW and Victoria can also be explained in part by the sociopolitical issues discussed in Section 4.2. Anecdotally, enrolments in Catholic schools in NSW have also decreased sharply.

$ Teacher supply for implementation of the NALSAS program was based on the assumptions that 60% of teachers required could be funded through replacing existing teachers with Asian language specialists. (See Rudd, 1994:159-60).
7.5 Summary

This chapter has explored a number of structural issues pertinent to the effective running of language programs in schools across systems and states. The first issue involves the role of school administrations in the success of language programs and both supportive and non-supportive administrations were identified across education systems and states. Broadly summarising the discussion on this issue, in support is high in most independent schools, particularly those that run IB diplomas for which language study is compulsory. In general, LOTE teachers and coordinators argued that they are well supported by their schools, although this does not equate to high retention rates overall, and arguably, languages are not highly valued across the system. This was the case for independent and Catholic schools in both Victoria and NSW. Victorian Government schools with a strong presence of community language speakers are often better supported than those without, while all selective schools view languages as integral to the education process. Outside of selective schools, LOTE programs in NSW government schools were poorly supported.

The level of support for language programs is effected in part by the ability of language departments to interact with and influence the decision making process in the schools. At some schools, language departments find themselves shut off from the process and unable to affect positive changes for programs. At other schools, language teachers find their proactive efforts with the school administration and parents rewarded. Other teachers lack the interest in the political negotiations required with school communities or the skills to interact effectively with the school administration. This was similar across Victoria and NSW.

A number of important structural issues impacting on language programs were also identified in this chapter. The issue of teacher supply is most acute in the NSW government education system, where teachers are allocated centrally, and government schools have great difficulty in acquiring suitably qualified teachers in the necessary languages. Other structural issues such, as the compulsory study of LOTE and the provision of full pathways to Year 12 play an important role in the success of programs in this study. There is clearly a statistically higher retention rate when LOTE is compulsory beyond the Year 8 level in Victoria, although this analysis was
not possible in NSW. The reductive nature of LOTE pathways in a number of schools highlights the difficulty of running classes for small groups of students. While many independent schools were financially able and willing to support smaller classes, a number of government schools did not have this option. This has resulted in a cycle of reduction in a number of schools, with students discouraged from continuing language study beyond a junior level as there is no visible pathway through to the Year 12 level. Language teachers are willing to take on a number of difficult, and sometimes extreme, approaches to language teaching to ensure that students can continue with language study, although these approaches, such as the combining of languages and year levels in the one class, demonstrate an almost total lack of understanding of the language learning process on the part of school administrations.

Funding has had a different impact across all education systems. Language programs in independent schools, which receive most federal funding directly through the AIS, are well supported, while the NALSAS funding led to the further expansion and continuation of Asian language programs throughout independent schools. In Catholic and government schools, federal funding is used to maintain centralised structural and administrative support for language programs, rather than as direct funds to schools. The extra funding that was provided to schools though NALSAS grants led generally to a greater awareness of Asian languages and Asian studies in Victorian Catholic schools, and while it was used to encourage primary school language study in NSW Catholic schools, programs have rapidly diminished now that funding is no longer available. This has also been an issue in NSW government primary schools. In Victoria, the ability of government schools to directly apply for NALSAS grants has added greatly to the prestige of language programs, as well as ensuring that many schools are well resourced. The loss of this funding, however, is seen by some interviewees as contributing to the decline in the status and positioning of language programs in government schools.

Finally, this chapter has identified variation in the success of Asian language programs across states and education systems, both in terms of retention rates and in the uptake of Asian languages in general. The Eurocentric nature of some curricula, the historical significance of Italian in Catholic schools, differences in state level policies and the compulsory/optional nature of language study, as well as differences...
in the distribution of funding are some of the factors which have impacted on the direction of language programs in Victoria and NSW.
This thesis has set out to comprehensively examine the study of Asian languages in two Australian states, with each chapter discussing a discrete set of issues arising from the data. This chapter discusses three broad, but interrelated issues that relate to the study of languages more generally in Australia.

Section 8.1 discusses a number of misconceptions and misrepresentations that hinder the development of language study in Australia. This section explores the importance of engaging with these limiting views of language and language study in order to strengthen the value of language study. Specifically, it looks at the concept of language and language study, the relationship between language study and career development and the troublesome nature of funding specific to Asian languages. Sections 8.2 and 8.3 discuss the issues of agency and linguistic culture respectively. Understanding these two issues and how they manifest in the Australian context is essential for affecting change in the valuing of languages, the successful implementation of language programs and the increased study of languages through to the senior secondary level.

8.1 Misconceptions, Misrepresentations and Language Learning

There are a number of misconceptions and misrepresentations that perpetuate a negative view of language learning and the limited continuation with language study to the senior secondary level in Australia.

1. The first problem involves the interpretation of language learning as the simple ‘learning of a code’ that can be neatly assessed as part of high stakes tests. This is often accompanied by a view of ‘language’ as one isolated within a particular context and country – a view which ignores the realities of local and global multilingualism and the pluricentric nature of languages and cultures. Within this research, this problematic view has manifested in a number of instances. For example, the continual refusal of the NSW BOS to
recognise the pluricentric nature of the Chinese language and the legitimacy of both traditional and simplified forms of the script (Section 4.5.5) indicates a lack of understanding of the nature of language and culture. The repeated refusal of the BOS to accept both written forms of the language, in the face of strong opposition by the local community and the undeniable reality of pluricentric languages, suggests an underlying agenda that requires further investigation. The ongoing ideological issues impacting on the study of Vietnamese (Section 4.6) provides an example of the unavoidable interaction between domestic and international contexts. The study of Vietnamese in Australia has been hindered by community ideology as well as the lack of recognition, at a policy level, of the importance of Vietnamese as a community language of Asian origin.

The idea that languages can be taught and assessed in isolation from these realities also creates challenges for assessment of languages. This can be seen particularly in relation to the study of Chinese and ongoing conflicts based around the perception of an unfair advantage (Sections 6.2 & 6.4). It is also seen in relation to the study of other Asian languages, where a multileveled examination system is not available (Sections 4.3.5, 4.6.5 & 6.2). The dissemination of a more sophisticated understanding of the nature of languages and language learning, by policy makers, education systems and LOTE advocates, is needed to improve the potential for language study in Australia.

2. The second problem lies in the promotion of language study for the economic future of Australia and the career opportunities language study affords students. Along with the idea that languages can be neatly assessed as part of high stakes tests, there is often a simplistic understanding of the relationship between the benefits of studying a language and career potential – you learn a language and then move directly into a career using the language. In actuality, interpreting and teaching are probably the only careers where this may happen, although students would not be able to reach the required level of competency in languages skills within the school system. As soon as the flaws in this simplistic view are exposed, parents and students see no point in continuing
with a language, or with languages in general, or may push for other languages with ‘better’ opportunities to be introduced into schools (See Section 4.4.2).

While there has been a significant push for languages for career purposes, there has also been a purposeful and well-researched movement demonstrating that intercultural language teaching exposes students to alternate ways of viewing the world and helps develop empathy for those associated with the languages and cultures students are learning about. It has also been argued for decades and more recently highlighted by Liddicoat (2005), that language learning involves not only the acquisition of a code and an understanding of others, but also an exciting opportunity for new modes of (self)expression, regardless of a students’ level of proficiency or language background. Students’ comments in this study have demonstrated that language learning presents an opportunity for them to understand themselves better, as well as to better understand their peers and those within their own societies. For some students, shared interests and hobbies also extend their knowledge broadly across Pan-Asian interests, creating the kind of ‘Asia knowledge’ that the government and businesses claim is essential to Australia’s future (Sections 5.4.1 & 5.7.2).

While the most important component and focus of any language learning program is the solid teaching and learning of linguistic skills, it is not just an understanding of a language code and an understanding of other cultures that will provide students with a career. It is a development of personal interests based on a greater understanding of other cultures and peoples, the development of a better understanding of their own society, as well as other societies, and the learning of a language code, that will equip students with the understanding needed to work effectively in a cross-cultural context. It is from this point that students can harness this multitude of skills and seek opportunities in multilingual and multicultural environments. While there is significant pressure to demonstrate the direct benefits of language learning, particularly when students may feel pressured to consider career choices when choosing subjects throughout secondary schooling, developing a better representation of what students can acquire personally and academically
through ‘language learning’ could help promote a more positive concept of language learning in English dominant contexts.

3. As the third point for this section, I argue that the continued use of ‘Asian’ languages versus ‘European’ languages in funding discussions is divisive and problematic. There have been many positive aspects to NALSAS funding for Asian languages. It has allowed for the widespread introduction of certain Asian languages and Asian studies across all education systems in Australia and raised the profile of Asian languages and studies. It has also ensured that resources have been developed and made widely available for Asian language programs. However, it is important to identify and understand the negative impact of such an approach. The study of languages other than the four prioritised ones has predominantly declined in schools across Victoria and NSW. This is due, in part, to the prestige provided to Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean, the development of resources and examination systems for these languages and the lack of these things for other languages. Further research could determine the extent to which this has had a lead-on effect at the tertiary level.

It is also possible that the funding and policy focus on Asian languages has damaged the success of language study in some more specific circumstances. For example, the focus on Asian languages could have led to a devaluing of language study in general in the Catholic education system. The focus in the Catholic education system has historically and is still predominantly focused on the study of European languages. Where does it leave European language study if prestige is afforded Asian languages, but Catholic schools are not interested in taking up Asian languages (Section 7.4)? This arguably leaves very little support for the study of any languages, as European languages lack prestige and Asian language study is largely eschewed. However, further research is needed to develop a better understanding of this issue.
8.2 Agency in Language-in-Education Policy, Planning and Implementation

The greater emphasis in recent years on language policy and planning at different levels, from macro to meso to micro levels, has led to an increased focus on the notion of agency. More recently, the development of studies of micro-language planning has raised the question of ‘who has the power to influence change in these micro language policy and planning situations’ (Baldauf, 2006:147). In discussing agency and how it is defined in the Australian context, the most important feature to highlight is that Australia is an English dominant country, and as is the case in most English dominant contexts around the world, the study of languages other than English is largely optional. In most non-English dominant contexts around the world, the study of a second (and third and fourth) language is predominantly compulsory at the secondary level and often at the primary level as well.

In Australia, language study is compulsory mainly at the Year 7 and/or Year 8 levels, although this differs across states. This is even the case in Victoria where it is recommended that languages be studied from Prep to Year 10. In 2006, the majority of language study took place at the Year 7 (94.6% of students) and Year 8 (87.2%) levels, but by Year 10, LOTE study was compulsory in only 7.1% of government schools, with only 21.9% of government secondary school students studying a language (Victoria. DoE, 2007).

Another factor that affects agency in the Australian context is the decentralised nature of the education system. In Japan, for example, curriculum development is highly centralised, with the national ministry of education retaining a high degree of agency. In Australia, the federated nature of governance, the provision of education through three different educational providers, differing language-in-education policies across states and systems and differing degrees of autonomy regarding decision-making in schools all impact on agency. Recently there have been efforts to create a more national approach to the learning of languages through the federal educational body MCEETYA. To date, their endeavours have included a National Statement and Plan on Languages Education in Australian Schools, along with the commissioning of research into the study of languages.
of language learning and the federated nature of governance in Australia is that it dramatically changes or perhaps broadens where agency lies. The implications for language-in-education policy, planning and implementation are that any effort to understand where agency lies and how to affect change in relation language study and policies needs to take into consideration the structure of the education system/s, the parameters of policy making mechanisms and how these affect agency at different levels, from the top down to the grassroots level. This section discusses where agency lies in Australia and the different actors that (can) exercise agency.

Research has shown that agency in language-in-education planning predominantly lies with the most powerful institutions, usually governments and education ministries (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997: See Chapter 7). Arguably, in Australia, the highest level of agency lies with state governments. The policies that are developed and implemented by the state determine,

- The scope and potential of second language study;
- At what levels language study is compulsory;
- Which languages are accessible in mainstream schools;
- Whether language study, particularly of community languages, is to be supported outside of mainstream schools - at government schools of languages and/or community language schools, and
- The level of funding and support provided for the implementation and development of language programs.

All of these parameters affect the degree of agency that education systems, school administrations, teachers, students and parents have in relation to language programs.

It is somewhat counterintuitive to suggest that agency primarily lies with state governments rather than with the federal government. Technically, in Australia, power in relation to education is concurrent between the state and federal levels. State and territory governments can legislate in relation to education as long as they do not contradict any existing federal legislation (Section 2.3). The federal government, however, rarely legislates in the area of language-in-education; the NLP in 1987 was
the last instance, although there have been other language related policies that have impacted on language study in schools. (The NALSAS document was not legislated policy but a national initiative with funding attached.)

While agency in developing policy lies predominantly with the state and federal governments, greater agency is exercised by other actors in the implementation of language-in-education policy, particularly given the largely optional nature of language study. This influence is not insignificant and can determine the success or complete failure of language policies and programs. Outside of state language-in-education policies, the next level of agency lies with the different education systems in Australia. The Catholic and independent school systems are guided by, but not bound by state government policies, while each system has its own educational ethos. This has lead to different trends in language study. We have seen that language study is least successful in the Catholic education system, particularly in NSW (4.5% of Year 12 students in NSW Catholic schools study a language, while 12.2% of Year 12 students study a language in Victorian Catholic schools), but that language programs are more supported and valued in the independent school system (Sections 7.1 & 7.4). Other differences include a greater focus on European language study in the Catholic system than in other systems, while the government system in Victoria widely supports community language study (Section 7.4). The relatively high degree of autonomy across systems is reflected in the outcomes for language programs, although these outcomes are also affected by different linguistic cultures as will be discussed in section 8.3.

Schools also have a high degree of agency in the implementation of language-in-education policies, although this is strongly influenced by the scope of state language-in-education policy, including the limited nature of compulsory/recommended language study. As determined by state level language-in-education policies and federal initiatives, schools can introduce a limited or broader range of languages, although this ability is also impacted on by issues such as teacher supply and the availability of resources. The school administration retains the highest degree of agency within the school with both the attitudes of the senior administration and their willingness to share agency with school communities impacting on the
implementation of language programs (Section 7.1). This will also be discussed further in Section 8.3.

If a school administration/administrator is not supportive of language programs, they can limit language programs to the Year 7 and 8 levels only. If they are not supportive of small classes at the senior secondary levels, they can run combined classes in one language, or even insist that teachers teach more than one language in a class, as has been seen in five schools in this study (Section 7.1). They can present their negative views on languages to the parental community, either explicitly as we have seen in this thesis or through non-supportive practices for language programs such as those mentioned above. They can also limit the agency of LOTE coordinators, teachers, students and parents into language related decisions (Section 7.1).

In some instances where senior administrations have not allowed school communities agency, LOTE coordinators and teachers have found alternatives means to exert influence by recruiting parents as pressure groups or some parents have created agency by recruiting members of government to support their case. Other parents have used a degree of agency to exert negative influences on language programs by insisting on the languages being offered changing, particularly in relation to the teaching of Indonesian or as seen in independent schools where languages are changed according to the wishes of the ‘clientele’ (Chapter 4). In other cases, parents have influenced the compulsory nature of language learning (Section 7.1.1).

On the other hand, supportive senior administrators can have an incredible impact on the success of language programs and provide a greater degree of agency for whole school communities. This includes responding to requests from community language speakers and other members of school communities. This sharing of agency was seen in many schools in Section 7.1.

Students too have agency, although the notion of student voice and agency is somewhat difficult to conceptualise. The predominantly optimal nature of language learning in English dominant contexts has arguably influenced the degree of consideration given to the issue to date. Participants in this study argue that most students choose to opt out of languages study as it is too hard, that there are far too
many other interesting choices available in the curriculum and that it is not seen as relevant for students’ careers. However, it is essential that student voice be considered in that they ultimately have the highest degree of agency in language-in-education contexts where language study is predominantly non-compulsory – they can simply choose not to study a language. At the same time, consideration also needs to be given to the many factors that have influenced the shape and scope of language policy and programs by the time they are implemented at the school level, as all these factors can strongly direct students’ decisions. For example, the limitations placed on which languages can be studied in the education system or at which year levels language study is required. Given the high degree of agency students have in these contexts, incorporating student voice into language-in-education research and practice, particularly of students who continue with language study, could provide better insights into the significance of language learning for students, where they perceive the value to lie in language learning, and how this information can be utilised in promoting languages and developing curricula and resources.

8.3 Linguistic Culture

A central tenet of this thesis is that language-in-education policy processes need to take into account the whole ecology surrounding the study of Asian languages (and languages in general), including the social, cultural and political variables at play in the language learning ecology. Schiffman (2006:121) argues that LPP needs a theory that ‘can handle as many variables as in fact seem to be involved in language-policy formation,’ proffering the notion of linguistic culture to account for specific variables in relation to language in society. To reiterate (see section 2.1.7), Schiffman (1996:277) argues that language policy is,

primarily a social construct...[and that] policy as a cultural construct rests primarily on other conceptual elements – belief systems, attitudes, myths – the whole complex that we are referring to as linguistic culture, which is the sum totality of ideas, values, beliefs, attitudes, prejudices, religious structures, and all the other cultural ‘baggage’ that speakers bring to their dealings with language from their background.
In analysing the variables at play in the language learning ecology in Australia, the concept of linguistic culture provides a mechanism through which we can account for the many ‘conceptual elements’ that actors in the language learning ecology bring with them. It is imperative that the linguistic cultures of those involved in language-in-education processes be further researched so that we can develop a better understanding of how policy creates, interacts with and perpetuates these linguistic cultures and how they in turn interact with and influence the planning, development and implementation of language programs. It must also be recognised that linguistic cultures vary in nature and in impact according to the person/s or bodies involved. Many different linguistic cultures have emerged throughout this thesis, including the linguistic cultures of those involved in the development of the NALSAS programs, of state governments, of education systems, of senior administrators in schools, of teachers, students, parents, community groups and other educational stakeholders.

Along with an understanding of the nature of agency in the language learning ecology in Australia, understanding the role of different linguistic cultures could help focus endeavours to influence and enhance the implementation of language programs and increase the uptake of language study. Also, linguistic culture is a dynamic and reactive concept. World events, personal experiences and broader educational experiences are among the factors that can influence linguistic cultures. While linguistic culture could serve as a mechanism to account for the affect of variables on the language-in-education processes, it can also be influenced or changed, for example, by promotional or informational campaigns conducted by governments or other bodies. This is particularly important to highlight in Australia, and many English speaking countries, where there is an urgent need to challenge negative perceptions and misconceptions amongst the wider population in relation to language study, as well as negative perceptions of particular languages and cultures.

8.4 Summary

One of the most pressing problems for the study of languages in Australia is its negative image in school communities. This chapter has suggested a number of reasons as to why this problem is perpetuated, including a stagnant view of language learning and a narrow understanding of language and its role in society. This is
particularly the case in relation to Asian languages as community languages in Australia. I believe that greater efforts need to made to present a more realistic understanding of language, language in society, language study and language for careers. This could include the rhetoric of those involved in policy planning, in the development of policy, and by those implementing language programs. (Potentially, such activities could be addressed through a national promotional campaign which has been commissioned by MCEETYA for 2007).

The understanding of agency that has been developed throughout this thesis and in Section 8.2 in particular, contributes to a greater understanding of how agency is determined in the language learning ecology. This also requires an understanding of the effect of policy, educational structures and funding mechanisms and potentially provides a map of the best avenues to pursue in order to effect change in relation to language learning and policy.

The concept of linguistic culture arguably provides a mechanisms through which to account for the affect of the many and varied opinions, beliefs, etc, that interact with the language learning ecology. The dynamic nature of these linguistic cultures leaves us with hope that an effective promotional campaign could improve the status of language study in Australia (although with changes to structural inhibitors. See Section 9.3).
CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

This study has examined the place of Asian languages in the Australian education system and is based on the principle that an effective analysis requires consideration of the many variables that interact with the language-in-education ecology. Although the focus of this thesis is on Asian languages, they are a part of LOTE studies and are affected by factors that impact on the status of languages in general. Conversely, the role of Asian languages in the education system, particularly over the last 15 years, has also affected the overall position of LOTE studies. To separate the analysis of Asian languages entirely from the broader context would only create a partial understanding of the language-in-education ecology. While the majority of the thesis has focused on Asian languages or on illustrating issues through specific Asian languages, some of the discussion on structural issues, particularly in Chapter 7, considers LOTE programs as a whole and the broader Australian context.

In considering the position of Asian languages within the broader language-in-education ecology, this research project has encompassed the perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders, administrators, language teachers and students of Asian languages. It has also considered the numerous, predominantly non-linguistic, variables that interact with the language-in-education ecology and support or hinder the successful implementation of Asian language programs.

Much of this thesis has taken NALSAS as a starting point and has focused specifically on the teaching and learning of Asian languages leading on from the introduction of the NALSAS program, as well as the abolition of the program. However, the design of the project has enabled us to perceive issues that have developed at a macro level, which impact on the success of language programs and the future of language-in-education planning, policy and implementation in Australia.

This study of Asian languages in the Australian education system has been guided by five research questions,

1. Historically, what factors have been pertinent in shaping outcomes for Asian language study in Australia?
2. Who is studying Asian languages? And why?
3. What factors hinder and facilitate the development of language study in Australia and the promotion of Asian language study within this?
4. What impact have these factors had across education systems and states?
5. How can these findings enhance the development of language-in-education policy, planning and implementation in Australia?

The collection and analysis of the data has demonstrated that the many variables involved in the language-in-education ecology, as addressed through the research questions, are interrelated and interactive. The following sections address the guiding research questions through a discussion of the major findings of this thesis.

9.1 Historical Influences

The study of Asian languages has been shaped by a number of historical variables including the White Australia policy, Australia’s migration history, Australia’s economic relationship with the Asia-Pacific region and the development of broader language policy. Asian migration was effectively prohibited from the federation of Australia in 1901 until the 1970s due to the White Australia policy. While Australia embraced a massive surge of migration following World War Two, this was focused on European migration. After many years of assimilation policies, these first and second generation migrants were instrumental in pushing for the wider acceptance of their languages and cultures in Australia society and its education system (Section 2.2.1). Building on a growing acceptance of multiculturalism, a coalition of language advocates led the drive for the development of the National Languages Policy (NLP) (Section 2.2.4). The NLP was distinguished by its comprehensive public consultation and its guiding principles, which addressed the needs of Australians and migrants of English and non-English speaking background, including indigenous Australians. The NLP provided support for the development and maintenance of LOTEs, as well as providing greater support for LOTE speakers in Australian society.

Since the development of the NLP, there has been a significant change in Australian politics and policy making, which has impacted on the study of languages in the education system, particularly for Asian languages. There has been a significant
movement away from comprehensive language policy motivated by multiculturalism and social justice, to a policy focus on specific interests and ideologies. First, there was a narrowing of federal language policies, to workplace and literacy skills in English (Moore, 1991, 1995, 2000), which has contributed to the weak position of LOTE study in Australian schools and society. Second, there has been the development of specific national language-in-education policy, driven by short-term economic goals (Lo Bianco, 2001). This is exemplified by the NALSAS program.

9.2 The NALSAS program

The NALSAS program was based on a purely economic rationale and the importance of engaging with the Asia-Pacific region for Australia’s economic development. The program received over $200 million dollars for the support of language study in schools, but particularly for the development of Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean programs. As a result of the NALSAS funding, the position of Asian languages and Asian studies has been greatly enhanced in schools. Schools in this study reported being well-resourced as a result of the funding, with many students and teachers benefiting from the opportunity to gain in-country experiences, as well as other innovative opportunities to engage with the learning of the Asian languages prioritised through NALSAS.

There have, however, been a number of drawbacks to the NALSAS program. One of the most significant problems was that the policy did not take into account Australia’s demographics and the changing nature of its demographics. As has been illustrated throughout this thesis (see also Clyne (1991) and Clyne & Kipp (1996; 1997; 2002; 2006)), a number of Asian languages were important community languages at the time the NALSAS program was instigated and have continued to grow as important community languages in Australia. By conceptualising Asian languages as ‘foreign’, the NALSAS program has created tensions around the ‘ownership’ of certain languages. A heightened conflict now exists, particularly in relation to Chinese, between those to whom a language belongs as part of their heritage, and those who believe it should belong to them due to the educational and economic benefits it could afford them (as promoted through the NALSAS program). This tension is highly demotivating for both groups of students and has even resulted in some schools
discouraging their students from taking up certain languages (see, for example, Section 6.2.1.2).

The issue of background speaker examinations predates the introduction of the NALSAS program (see Section 6.2) but the conceptualisation of the NALSAS languages as ‘foreign’ has exacerbated the issue. While there is arguably a clear cut argument for different examination levels for a) those who have received several years of schooling where the LOTE concerned is the medium of education and b) beginner students, the application of the multileveled examination to four Asian languages only and the perception of the great value in studying the NALSAS languages (although this differs for each language) has contributed to a wider dissatisfaction within school communities. This has manifested in the perception that the multilingualism and multiculturalism present within Australia society is problematic and represents an unfair advantage that needs to be neutralised. As a result, some school communities engage with negative and damaging discourse which effectively inhibits the study of some Asian languages. As has been discussed in Chapter 6, this is a very complex issue, with no easy solutions. The advantage some students are perceived to have is often misunderstood and when an advantage does exist, it is a result of support for educational equity within Australia’s pluralist society (Section 6.2.1.2). However, these broad social issues are often of little interest or relevance to students who are focused on scoring well in order to gain entry to the university system.

Another negative outcome of the NALSAS program has been the vacillating support for the NALSAS languages due to the economic ideology underpinning their introduction. This ideology has had a particularly negative effect for the study of Indonesian and Korean and shown that it is imperative that language programs are supported by a broad argumentation based on the intrinsic and instrumental importance for language and cultural studies. Indonesia’s perception amongst school communities as economically weak or a ‘third world country’ has contributed to a decline in the study of the language. Along with the economic imperative not being viable, acts of terrorism and the inability of students to physically access the country have also impacted on its decline. For Korean, the downgrading of Australia’s relationship with the country and its perceived economic downfall have resulted in
minimal engagement with the language across Australia. Without a greater valuing of these languages and cultures beyond an economic imperative, and without any genuine attempt to engage with these countries beyond acquiring economic advantages, any prestige afforded these languages through the NALSAS program quickly dissipates.

Within this context, Chinese has fared better than Indonesian and Korean and is seen as extremely important for Australia’s economic future. Unfortunately, its expansion is fettered by the tensions around students with a Chinese linguistic and/or cultural background as well as the differing examination levels. Japanese is the one NALSAS language that has maintained a strong presence in the education system. This is due to its continued economic strength, but also its cultural accessibility, which underpins the continuity of many of the Japanese language programs. It also plays an important role as a conduit for pan-Asian identity, as will be discussed in the following section.

9.3 Who is Studying Asian Languages and Why?

While the previous section has outlined the fate of the NALSAS languages, this thesis has also discussed important findings in relation to student uptake of Asian languages. The student data is comprised of quantitative and qualitative data, with a focus on motivation and was collected through a detailed questionnaire (see Chapter 5). This data shows that Asian languages are studied by a broad cross section of students in Australia. Far from representing a homogeneous group, this data has revealed a great deal of variation between groups and sub-groups of students based on their linguistic and family backgrounds, the language/s they are studying and the education system and state within which they attend school. The student perspectives represented in this thesis are important as they identify differing strengths and weaknesses in the promotion and support of language programs across languages, education systems and states, as will be discussed in Section 9.4.1.

An extremely interesting finding arising from the Victorian student data is the notion of a pan-Asian identity. Most of this informative discourse comes from students with
an Asian heritage\textsuperscript{100} who have developed a significant relationship with and knowledge of (aspects of) Asia. While this has included students with a background in the languages being studied (around 20% of all students), around a third of all students in this study speak an Asian language other than Indonesian, Japanese, Korean and Mandarin at home. These students are particularly concentrated in Japanese studies and share common Japan- and Asia-related interests and hobbies. Japanese pop culture is widely accessible and is representative of shared cultural interests across Asia (manga, anime, pop music, TV dramas, etc). This extension of students’ knowledge about their home languages and cultures, as well as the exploration of other languages and cultures, especially of peers, represents a vibrant source of ‘Asia-knowledge’ that the NALSAS program so highly valued. Unfortunately, it appears that such a connection has not developed within the audience the NALSAS program envisaged – students with a non-Asian heritage. This finding needs to inform further policy making and program implementation.

This can be done by acknowledging the role of Asian languages as community languages in Australia, by valuing this multilingualism and multiculturalism and harnessing it as a resource for language teaching (see Clyne et al, 2004). Peer support plays an important role in student motivation, along with the sharing of languages and cultures. As stated in Section 6.4, greater attention should be focused on the benefits of having students of mixed abilities in the same classroom, particularly the sharing of cultural knowledge and assistance with linguistic skills, with the aim of increasing the Asia-knowledge of students from a non-Asian background.

It is also important to focus on the needs and potential of students with an Asian heritage. Section 5.7 has highlighted the importance of supporting literacy development in bi- and trilingual students so that they can benefit fully from the skills they may already have acquired. This can assist these students in attaining the high level of competency that is required for work in multilingual and multicultural settings, a level of competency that the school system is unlikely, in itself, to provide.

\textsuperscript{100} See Tables 5.4, 5.6, D and T for a list of countries and languages which define the boundaries of ‘Asian heritage’ in the context of this study.
9.4 Factors Interacting with the Language Learning Ecology

This study of Asian languages in Australia has stressed the large number of variables that interact with the language learning ecology, some of which we have discussed in the previous sections. There are numerous other variables that impact on the study of languages, including socio-political, structural and funding issues which need to be emphasised. This section also considers the different impact these factors have across education systems and states.

While it is essential that language policies and programs acknowledge the domestic importance of Asian languages in Australia, it is also crucial that the pluricentric nature of languages and cultures is recognised, along with the historical development of these divergences. In Chapter 4, we have seen how historical tensions can impinge on the development of Asian languages in the Australia context. An example of this is the continuing tension between (a vocal component of) the Vietnamese-Australian community and the Hanoi based Vietnamese government. The tensions between the two groups have, in part, militated against the prioritising of the language in the NALSAS program (see Section 4.7.2). At present, the uptake of the language by students and the teaching and resourcing of the language are all influenced by the reaction of some Vietnamese-Australians to the notion of any compromise with their former homeland. For Chinese, the unwillingness of the NSW BOS to recognise the historical tensions behind the development of the two Chinese scripts, traditional and simplified, has impacted on the study and examination of Chinese for a number of years. This potentially undermines the study of the language for students studying traditional script for cultural, linguistic and political reasons.

There are also numerous structural issues which support or impede the implementation of Asian language programs (see Chapter 7 in particular). These issues are relevant for all states and education systems, although to differing degrees and with differing outcomes, as will be discussed shortly. These structural issues include,

- The truncated LOTE pathways offered within schools which discourage students from continuing with LOTE study (across all systems);
• The lack of qualified teachers to run effective language programs (particularly in the government and Catholic systems);
• The requirement, within some schools, that teachers run language classes with combined languages (particularly in government schools). While it is challenging and undesirable that many schools run classes with combined year levels, this is far less of an issue than classes with combined years levels and languages;
• The lack of belief in primary language teaching and the lack of support for primary to secondary transition (across all systems), and
• The minimal requirements of language-in-education policies at the state level and the lack of accountability for the (lack of) implementation of these policies in schools (particularly in NSW, in comparison to Victoria).

Funding is another factor that plays a significant role in the success of language programs. Independent schools, which are treated as separate schools with no overarching structure, benefit most directly from the distribution of funding. This, in turn, creates a greater sense of prestige for language study within these schools, although there is a long history of support for language study within the system (particularly in Victoria). The funding of language programs in Catholic and government schools is less direct due to their overarching educational bodies, arguably decreasing the perceived value of language study (in comparison to language study in independent schools).

The decreased support for and funding of language programs at the university level (based on internal funding decisions within universities) also impacts on the perceived value of languages and language study, particularly for Korean and Vietnamese in the context of this study (but also for numerous languages of smaller candidature (Baldauf, 1995)). The decreased provision of language programs at the tertiary level arguably contributes to a decline in the value of language study at the secondary level. This feeds into a negative cycle where students choose not to continue with language study (diminishing a school’s ability to provide full LOTE pathways), while at the tertiary level, the system has a reduced capacity to supply qualified teachers. Both factors contribute to the decline of Korean and Vietnamese in the school system.
9.4.1 Differing Outcomes across Systems and States

While this thesis has identified numerous variables at play in the language learning ecology, one of the most important features has been the ability to view the language-in-education ecology across education systems and states. While standardized language policy is set at a national level, the federated nature of Australian governance allows for a relatively high degree of agency in interpreting and implementing policy by education systems. The impact that a number of variables have had across systems and the differing outcomes has been discussed in detail in Chapter 7 (and briefly in Section 9.4).

There are three important outcomes to be emphasised in relation to language study and language-in-education policy and planning in Australia. First, there is still a greater focus on European languages than Asian languages within the Catholic education system in Victoria and NSW, in comparison to other educational systems. Funding initiatives must support this prerogative within the Catholic education system or the study of languages could continue to be undermined in the system. Second, there are significant differences in student motivation across education systems and states. These differences reflect the ethos of each educational provider, the valuing of languages education in the system and interpretation of languages-in-education policy. We have seen, for example, that students in NSW are intrinsically motivated, having less confidence in the relationship between language study and career development. Students in Victoria are far more motivated by vocational prospects, which could be a reflection of a stronger LOTE policy and the ability for education systems in Victoria to utilise the NALSAS funding to build on established structures and attitudes that are lacking to varying degrees in other states. Third, the different level of structural, funding and policy support for language study in Victoria and NSW, among other factors, has created a disparity between the numbers of students studying languages in the education system and within this, the numbers of students studying Asian languages. Acknowledging and accommodating these strengths and weaknesses when planning and implementing language programs and policies, providing funding or developing promotional campaigns could enable a more positive and lasting expansion of language study across Australia.
9.5 Linguistic Culture and Agency

One feature that has become apparent throughout this thesis is the many and varied attitudes towards language study. The concept of linguistic culture incorporates these differing attitudes, as well as the beliefs, ideologies, myths and misconceptions that underpin them. The effect of linguistic culture can be quite significant for language programs. As we have noted, there are differing ethos and attitudes towards languages across education system and we can see notable differences in attitudes in the approach to language policy at the federal and state level. Sometimes it is an individual who can have a determining affect on the success or lack of success for a language program. Many schools are lucky enough to have school administrators who view language study as a valuable component of the school curriculum. For other administrators, as well as for some parents, language study is viewed through their own childhood experiences, which are almost invariably negative. They view language study as too difficult and of little value for students.

These negative attitudes towards language study are partly a result of a ‘monolingual mindset’ (Clyne, 2005) but are also shaped by other events and circumstances that interact with the language learning ecology. These include, for example, the inadequate teacher supply, the short-term nature of some LOTE funding, political and economic events that influence the fate of language programs (for example, terrorism in Indonesia and the financial crisis in Korea) and changeable attitudes within school communities. It is vital that policy and planning initiatives engage with these negative attitudes and the problematic monolingual mindset, but any efforts to do so must also be accompanied by significant changes to the structural problems undermining effective language program implementation. Otherwise, these negative attitudes are unlikely to be changed.

One final factor that it is important to highlight is the role of agency in the Australian language learning ecology. Agency is a complex concept which requires consideration of governance, funding and educational structures, federally and across states. While federal language-related policies have changed to a top-down activity only, state level policies, such as those in Victoria and NSW, are more receptive to the needs of their communities. Community members have the ability to interact with
language and assessment policies, although not always successfully. Schools also have the ability to interact with their more immediate school communities in relation to language programs, although the extent to which this is promoted by school administrations differs across schools, states and education systems. Nonetheless, the stronger language programs are usually based on shared agency between the administration, teachers, and the broader school community. Knowledge of where the power to make change lies enables language activists, teachers, parents, and community groups to more directly influence the direction of language programs. (This comment is based on the hope that these endeavours are additive rather than subtractive.)

9.6 Contributing to Language-in-Education Policy and Planning in Australia

As is outlined in Chapter 2, the field of LPP has expanded dramatically over the last few decades, with theories and frameworks focusing on some of the many different situations and contexts that involve language and society. In regard to the study of languages in the education system, many of these studies have looked at the complex language situations in non-English speaking countries, where English has been imposed by a colonial power or where English is viewed as an avenue to modernisation and development and is the preferred second language studied in the school system.

Overall less consideration has been given to the learning of LOTEs in English dominant countries, particularly in the theoretical or conceptual development of language-in-education planning, policy and implementation (Payne, 2006). The study of LOTEs by students from an English speaking background, in particular, has been given less attention, although there are arguably a number of myths and strong opinions that have perpetuated the lack of research in the field. For example, there is the prominent belief in many English-speaking countries that there is no need to and no value in learning a LOTE because English is the dominant world language; anyone with common sense and purpose would be trying to learn English. This research has demonstrated that there is also some lack of belief in the value of maintaining
community languages in Australia, arguably because being Australian translates to speaking English (see also Clyne, 2005). In the context of this sometimes very palpable disdain for second language study, research and the field of LPP has focused more on the rights of the linguistic minorities, on language maintenance, language shift and language revitalisation in English dominant countries.

This study has endeavoured to illustrate a complex language learning ecology, specially focusing on the study of Asian languages in Australia and has identified a number of important findings which could potentially inform the development of language-in-education frameworks for English dominant contexts, as well as provide guidance for those interested in effecting change within the language-in-education ecology. Most significantly, this thesis has provided a greater understanding of differences in language program support, implementation and outcomes across states and education systems in Australia.

There are a small number of specific changes that could contribute to the greater success of Asian language study in Australia. Some of these have been made in previous reports but in light of continuing inaction in relation to these points, it is necessary to (continue to) reiterate them. These include,

- An adequate teacher supply and the availability of appropriate training. This includes the provision of language courses at the tertiary level for languages of smaller candidature.
- A national promotional campaign, which acknowledges important differences across states and education systems, aimed at changing attitudes within school administrations and parental communities.
- The development of teaching materials and learning endeavours that encourages greater peer-to-peer sharing of languages and learning experiences.
- A change in assessment policies so that all languages are provided with the option of multiple levels of examination.
- Greater accountable for the expenditure of LOTE funding and the provision of full LOTE pathways in schools.
• More controversially, I would argue for an expansion of formal requirements for language study across all states, although this would need to be preceded by changes to structural impediments

9.7 Final remarks

There are many positives to come out of this study. After many years of neglect, Asian languages have become firmly established in the Australia education system and are studied by a broad range of students across education systems and states. Unfortunately, over the same time period and despite great endeavours by many schools, there has not been an increase in the study of languages at the senior secondary level. Language study has been plagued by many of the ongoing structural, policy and funding issues, as discussed throughout this thesis; issues which were not adequately addressed by the NALSAS program. Over the last 15 years, rather than seeing a strengthening of language study at the senior secondary level, we have seen a shift from the study of European languages to Asian languages. At other levels, there have been mercurial rises and falls for some Asian languages.

The abandonment of broad consultation in policy making in relation to language study, the fragmentation of language interest groups, and the lack of recognition provided to speakers of certain Asian languages in Australia have all contributed to the weakened position of language policy study in Australia. While the NALSAS program has strengthened the study of Asian languages, a continued funding focus on Asian languages will most probably continue to increase the study of Asian languages at the expense of other language enrolments. This will simply maintain the status quo in relation to language study in general Australia. The general apathy towards language study cannot be fixed by focusing on Asian languages.

The study of (all) languages is now poised between potentially moving forward and falling over. The expansion and greater valuing of language study in Australia can only occur if there is a united push for the study of languages, a greater acceptance of multilingualism, a far greater commitment to languages on the part of governments and the development of comprehensive language policies for all languages. These changes are clearly needed in order to benefit from the resources Australia already
has, to build upon them and to create long-term stability in the face of short-term political and economic conditions.
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**APPENDIX 1: COMPOSITION OF SCHOOL SAMPLES**

Table A Victorain school sample by system, gender, selection criteria and location

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Co-ed</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Selective</th>
<th>Non-selective</th>
<th>Metropolitan</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<th>Non-selective</th>
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<th>Regional</th>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>CEO 4 Girls Metro NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td>IND 4 Boys Metro NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOV 3 Boys Metro NSW</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>
APPENDIX 2:  INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS,
LOTE COORDINATORS AND SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS

Interview quesitons for LOTE co-ordinators / teachers

1. Which language(s) are you taught at your school? Approximately how long has this language been taught at your school?
2. At which year levels is a LOTE compulsory? Are two languages studied consecutively/concurrently? How many periods / minutes of LOTE does each year level (7 to 12) receive a week?
3. Why were Chinese, German, French, and Japanese chosen to be taught at your school? Whose input was taken into consideration? What other factors impacted on the choice of language study?
4. Is it possible to get figures for Year 11 and 12 for each language?
5. Do you feel languages are in a strong position in your school? Why or why not?
6. What factors impede or support the teaching of languages? I’m asking in your role as a LOTE coordinator and as a teacher. There are several factors that can be considered:
   - Structural or political
   - Funding factors
   - Student factors
   - Parent and community factors
   - Curriculum / material concern
   - Teachers – native/non-native, methodological issues
   - Hours for LOTE study
   - Policy
7. As a teacher, what are the difficulties in teaching languages? What would help improve this situation?
8. Often in language classes, there are students with a background in the language or culture being studied and students with an English only background. What are some positive and negative points about this?

9. Do you have any other relationships, international or local, with schools, students or communities that assist in the teaching of Asian languages in your school?

10. National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy (NALSAS) program ran between 1994 and 2002 and provided substantial funding for Asian languages in particular. As a LOTE coordinator, did you have access to funds for Asian languages perhaps to buy resources or for cultural events? The education department may have obscured the funding source. Have you noticed any drop in funding in the last year or two?

11. How has the loss of NALSAS funding impacted on the running of language programs in your school?

12. Are there any other languages you feel would be more appropriate to be taught at your school? Why?

13. What impact has the IB program had on languages in the school?

14. Are there any changes (in policy or funding, etc) that you think could be made to improve the position of languages in schools?

15. Any other comments?
Interview questions for senior administrator

1. How many students are currently studying Year 11 and 12 at your school?
2. What factors were taken into consideration when deciding which languages to introduce to the school? Whose input was considered?
3. Why were (the school languages) in particular chosen for the curriculum?
4. Did funding play an important role in the development or choice of LOTEs?
5. Did the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy (NALSAS) provide greater support for Asian languages within your school?
6. Are there any implications for your school now that NALSAS funding has ceased?
7. What factors do you feel impede or support the teaching of Asian languages in your school?
   - Structural or political
   - Funding factors
   - Student factors
   - Parent and community factors
   - Curriculum / material concern
   - Teachers – native/non-native, methodological issues
   - Hours for LOTE study
   - Policy
   - Teaching boys
8. Are there any other languages you feel would be more appropriate to study in your school? If yes, why and what factors inhibit making this choice?
9. What has been the impact of the IB program on languages?
10. What changes could be made to improve the situation for languages within the school?
APPENDIX 3: STUDENT SURVEYS FOR VICTORIA AND NSW

Language Study Questionnaire for Students

1. Name of school: _____________________________

2. State: [ ] Victoria  [ ] NSW

3. Type of school: [ ] State
   [ ] Catholic
   [ ] Independent

Part A: Student Profile

4. Gender: [ ] Female  [ ] Male

5. Age: ______

6. Year Level [ ] Year 11  [ ] Year 12

7a. Were you born in Australia? [ ] Yes (go to Question 8)  [ ] No (continue with Question 7)

7b. Where were you born? __________________

7c. At what age did you come to Australia? ______________

7d. Are you an international student? [ ] Yes  [ ] No

8. Is English your first language? [ ] Yes  [ ] No
   If no, what is your first language? _____________________________

9. Was your mother born in Australia? [ ] Yes  [ ] No
   If No, where was she born? ______________
10. Was your father born in Australia?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
If No, where was he born? ______________

11a. Do you ever use a language/s other than English outside of school, with friends or with relatives? (Including the language you are studying at school) [ ] Yes [ ] No

11b. If yes, which languages do you use with whom? For example, ‘My mother speaks to me in Mandarin, but I always reply in English.

11c. Do you study this language/s outside school? (At a community school or Saturday school)? [ ] Yes [ ] No

11d. If your school offered this language/s, would you choose it as a subject? [ ] Yes [ ] No

11e. If you use a language other than English outside of school, how would you rate your skills in that language?
Language: _____________
Speaking [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Listening [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Reading [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Writing [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high

Language: _____________
Speaking [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Listening [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Reading [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Writing [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high

**Part B: Language Study**
12a. Which language/s do you study during the daytime at school? (If appropriate, please indicate the type of course, e.g. first language, background speaker, second language, beginner or continuing course)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language/s studying</th>
<th>How long have you been studying each language?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><em>If you are studying two languages, please fill in two questionnaires.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13a. Are you studying by distance? If yes, why did you decide to continue studying by distance?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No

13b. What is difficult about studying by distance? What helps you in this situation?

14. Why have you chosen to study Language 1 at Year 11 and / or Year 12?

- Please tick all relevant answers in the left hand box.
- In the right hand box, please number your most important reasons, with ‘1’ being the most important reason. Choose up to five top reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons [✓]</th>
<th>Top 5 reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. I like studying about the culture and society of the country(s) where the language is spoken</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. I have got good marks in the past</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. I really like languages and studying languages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. I particularly like the teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. I feel the language will help my career prospects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. I have definite plans to work in an area of employment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>where the language is used</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. I want to travel or live in a country that speaks the language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Ethnic origin and / or religion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Contact with an ethnic community in Australia which speaks the language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Other contact with the country where the language is spoken (past travel, friends, parents’ work, etc)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. I have been advised to continue by my family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. I have been advised to continue by my teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. One or more of my friends are taking the subject</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. I am an international student and it is my first language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O. I am an international student and I need English to pass high school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. I am an international student and I wish to continue to university study in Australia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. The 10% TER bonus for language students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Other – please explain:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

15. What chances have you had to use Language 1 outside the school?

16. What are some good images you have about the language and culture you are studying? For example, French sounds beautiful! I have never been to France but I have always imagined it to be a beautiful, traditional European country where I would love to travel.

17. Do you have any negative images of the language/s and culture/s you are studying?

18. Have you ever felt like giving up language study at school?
   [ ] No     [ ] Yes     If yes, why?
19. What has motivated you to continue with language study? What has helped you with problems you have encountered?

20. What other languages are offered at your school?

21. If you had the time, would you be interested in studying any of the languages above? Why or why not

22. Is there another language not offered at your school that you would like to study? If yes, why would you like to study this language?

23. If you have a family background in the language (and culture) you are studying, what have your experiences in language classrooms (where there are both background and non-background speakers) been like?

24. If you do not have a family background in the language (and culture) you are studying, what have your experiences in language classrooms (where there are both background and non-background speakers) been like?

25. Do you have any other comments you wish to make about language study?

Thank you very much for your participation in this study.
Language Study Questionnaire for Students (NSW)

1. Name of school: _____________________________

2. State:   
[ ] Victoria  
[ ] NSW

3. Type of school: 
[ ] State  
[ ] Catholic  
[ ] Independent

Part A: Student Profile

4. Sex    
[ ] Female  
[ ] Male

5. Age: ______

6. Year Level  
[ ] Year 11  
[ ] Year 12

7a. Were you born in Australia?    
[ ] Yes  
[ ] No

7b. If not, where were you born? ___________________

7c. If not, at what age did you come to Australia? ______________

7d. Are you an International student?    
[ ] Yes  
[ ] No

8. Is English your first language?    
[ ] Yes  
[ ] No

If no, what is your first language? _____________________

9. Was your mother born in Australia?    
[ ] Yes  
[ ] No

If No, Where was she born? ______________

10. Was your father born in Australia?    
[ ] Yes  
[ ] No
If No, Where was he born? ________________

11a. Do you ever use a language/s other than English outside of school, with friends or with relatives? (Including the language you are studying at school) [ ]
Yes [ ] No

11b. If yes, which languages do you use with whom? For example, ‘My mother speaks to me in Mandarin, but I always reply in English.

11c. Do you study this language/s outside school? (At a community school or Saturday school)?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

11d. If your school offered this language/s, would you choose it as a subject?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

11e. If you use a language other than English outside of school, how would you rate your skills in that language?
Language: __________
Speaking [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Listening [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Reading [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Writing [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high

Language: __________
Speaking [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Listening [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Reading [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high
Writing [ ] low [ ] intermediate [ ] high

Part B: Language Study
12a. Which language/s do you study during the daytime at school? (If appropriate, please indicate the type of course, e.g. first language, background speaker, second language, beginner or continuing course)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language/s studying</th>
<th>How long have you been studying each language?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are studying two languages, please fill in two questionnaires.

12b. If you are taking a beginner level course, why did you decide to start studying this language at Year 11 and 12?

13a. Are you studying by distance? If yes, why did you decide to continue studying by distance?

[ ] Yes       [ ] No

13b. What is difficult about studying by distance? What helps you in this situation?

14. Why have you chosen to study Language 1 listed above at Year 11 and / or Year 12? Please tick all relevant answers in the left hand box.

In the right hand box, please number your most important reasons, with ‘1’ being the most important reason. Choose up to five top reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons [✓]</th>
<th>Top 5 reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>I like studying about the culture and society of the country(s) where the language is spoken</td>
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<td>B.</td>
<td>I have got good marks in the past</td>
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<td>I really like languages and studying languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>I particularly like the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>I feel the language will help my career prospects</td>
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</table>
15. What chances have you had to use Language 1 outside the school?

16. What are some good images you have about the language and culture you are studying? For example, French sounds beautiful! I have never been to France but I have always imagined it to be a beautiful, traditional European country where I would love to travel.

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18. Have you ever felt like giving up language study at school?
[ ] No [ ] Yes If yes, why?
19. What has motivated you to continue with language study? What has helped you with problems you have encountered?

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21. If you had the time, would you be interested in studying any of the languages above? Why or why not

22. Is there another language not offered at your school that you would like to study? If yes, why would you like to study this language?

23. If you have a family background in the language (and culture) you are studying, what have your experiences in language classrooms (where there are both background and non-background speakers) been like?
24. If you do not have a family background in the language (and culture) you are studying, what have your experiences in language classrooms (where there are both background and non-background speakers) been like?

25. Do you have any other comments you wish to make about language study?

Thank you very much for your participation in this study.
APPENDIX 4: SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

Questions for semi-structured interviews

The questions that will be asked of each interviewee will vary according to their position or experience with Asian languages. For example, past students at three Melbourne schools will be asked about their experiences studying Chinese in the 1960s, while politicians will be asked questions about policy and education. Below is a list of questions which will be used to guide interviews. Not all questions will be asked of each person, rather a selection of relevant questions.

a) How effective has the NALSAS policy been in promoting Asian languages in the Australian education system?
b) What directions do you think policy needs to take in regard to Asian language study?
c) Please describe your experiences of trying to promote Asian languages in Australia. What factors have impeded or supported the teaching of Asian languages?
d) Who has NALSAS benefited the most?
e) Is the need for Asian languages being met?
f) Is there a perceived need within the business population for Asian language skills?
g) What is the aim of Asian language studies?
h) Who are Asian languages for?
i) Who should be studying Asian languages?
j) What is the importance of Asian language study for the Australian/Victorian/NSW government?
k) Do you think there is a place for Asian languages such as Hindi and Filipino in the school system?
l) Why do you think Korean was not successful within the mainstream school system?
m) Why do you think Korean has been popular in NSW?
n) Please describe your experiences studying an Asian language in the 1960/70s.
o) Please describe your experiences teaching an Asian language in the 1960/70s.
p) Have you noticed changing trends in preferences for languages over recent years?
q) Do you think anything needs to change in regard to Asian language teaching?
r) Do you think anything needs to change in regard to Asian language policy?
s) Should certain languages be promoted above others? Which ones? Why? How should this decision be made? Who should make this decision?
t) What roles should federal and state government play in relation to language policy?
u) Do you think Asian language communities have sufficient resources to maintain and develop their languages? Does policy need to change in this regard?
## APPENDIX 5: TABLES FOR STUDENT AND PARENT INFORMATION, VICTORIA

### Table C  Number of responses by year level and age, Victoria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Year 11</th>
<th>Year 12</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
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<td><strong>178</strong></td>
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### Table D  Birthplaces of students and parents born outside of Australia, Victoria

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<th>Number of fathers</th>
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<td>Austria</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of students</td>
<td>Number of mothers</td>
<td>Number of fathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Country</td>
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<td>Number of mothers</td>
<td>Number of fathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>--------------------</td>
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<td>South Korea</td>
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<td>Taiwan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unspecified (Africa)</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>224</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX 6: TABLE FOR STUDENT AND PARENT INFORMATION, NSW

**Table S**  
Number of responses by year level and age, NSW

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<th>Year 11</th>
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<td>28</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>75</strong></td>
<td><strong>124</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Table T**  
Birthplaces of students and parents born outside of Australia, NSW

<table>
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<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Number of mothers</th>
<th>Number of fathers</th>
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<td>Cambodia</td>
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<td>China</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>England</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tr>
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<td>India</td>
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</table>

346
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
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Author/s:
SLAUGHTER, YVETTE

Title:
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Date:
2007

Citation:

Publication Status:
Unpublished

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File Description:
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