



Asia Education Foundation



WHAT WORKS 1

Building Demand for Asia
Literacy: What Works
(Report)

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Not enough has been done to drive change through building demand... This report clearly identifies that studies of Asia will support Asian language learning and Asian language learning will encourage and build demand for studies of Asia.

The Melbourne Declaration indicates that 'Australians need to become Asia literate, engaging and building strong relationships with Asia'. Accordingly, the new Australian Curriculum includes the cross curriculum priority of 'Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia' and the general capability of intercultural understanding.

Twenty years of work to advance Asia literacy through various policies has yielded mixed results. The major gains which occurred under National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) policy, especially related to Asian language learning are in decline. The available evidence also suggests that studies of Asia has limited penetration in content taught in Australian schools.

This report proposes that **not enough has been done to drive change through building demand**. Its focus is on ways to build demand among students, their parents and school leaders; illustrating strategies which have proved to be effective for studies of Asia and learning Asian languages, both separately and interactively. This report clearly identifies that studies of Asia will support Asian language learning and Asian language learning will encourage and build demand for studies of Asia.

> Building demand for studies of Asia

At present there are no particular structural impediments to including cross curriculum studies of Asia in school at any level. *The specific task related to studies of Asia is to build demand among practitioners to change some of the conventions of their practice.*

There are three elements common to activities with proven success in this regard. Effective programs contain all three. They include:

- **A persuasive personal encounter:** The media for these encounters may include visits/study tours, active sister school relationships, and exposure to inspirational speakers with relevant experience. Unmediated face-to-face experience (eg home stays and hosting) is an important component of these encounters.
- **A clear course of action:** This course of action needs to be sanctioned and encouraged by an appropriate body or policy (via, for example, the policy of an education agency or, pertinently at present, the requirements of the Australian Curriculum). It should be relevant to the needs of the participant and his or her context, feasible, challenging, and productive of concrete results. This means including requirements and plans for action in all programs. Access to, or information about, models of good practice is productive in terms of positive outcomes.
- **Collegial influence and support:** All change in schools relies on internal collaboration. Cross-school peer collaboration, especially among school leaders, can also exert a powerful influence.

> Building demand for the study of Asian languages

There are issues specific to the teaching of Asian languages, several of which apply to language learning in general, that hinder their provision in Australian schools. As well as cultural issues, there are structural impediments. Nonetheless, Asian language learning grew dramatically during the NALSAS years (1995–2002), which suggests that demand could grow again. Current examples of action to respond to and ameliorate those structural impediments are noted. It is clear, however, that for enduring success, government and other support must be substantial and sustained over a long period of time.

The specific target groups with relation to building demand for learning Asian languages are students, and the parents of intending or actual students. Evidence points to parents as exerting a very powerful impact on both the choice to study, and on students' subsequent persistence with language learning.

Demand for language learning is linked to self-perceived interest and the needs of the target group, especially when it is explained in ways that make sense to them. Student motivation to learn an additional language is a complex topic, but there are substantial recurrent themes which are likely to build demand. Motives for learning a language are likely to change according to stage and circumstances of life. However, important focal points are:

- The prospect of making new friends;
- Satisfying natural or awakened curiosity about other countries and their inhabitants;
- The prospect of travel;
- As students get older, instrumental reasons related to life and work futures.

For students to persist with language learning, the nature of their classroom experience and attention to the range and variety of their needs and interests is crucial.

Effective motivational strategies in the language classroom differ little from those of effective teaching in general. The most effective considerations with relation to motivation are:

- Promoting learner autonomy;
- Increasing learners' goal-orientedness and providing short-term as well as longer-term goals;
- Familiarising learners with the target culture.

Recommendations

To achieve the intention of the Australian Curriculum it is recommended that:

1. A major program be implemented urgently to build demand for the inclusion of studies of Asia in the school curriculum and to increase enrolment in the study of Asian languages and that:
 - This program be sustained over a substantial period of time;
 - Funding be commensurate with the scale and difficulty of the task.
2. The element of the program devoted to building demand for the inclusion of studies of Asia in the curriculum should consistently and systematically include:
 - The targeting of school personnel, with particular attention to the inclusion of school leaders;
 - Experiences (as described in this report) which provide personal encounters designed to persuade participants of the importance of the inclusion of studies of Asia in a school's program;
 - A clear, and required, course of action following the provision of such experiences;
 - Attention to the value of collegial influence and support.
3. Professional learning related to the National Professional Standard for Principals should include a focus on building demand for Asia literacy.
4. The element of the program concerned with building demand for the study of Asian languages target students primarily but also the parents of students who are beginning the study of a language, who are at the point where a choice to continue study is to be made, and during the periods of schooling where the attrition rates from language learning are the highest (generally speaking, Years 8–11).
5. The primary concern of the component of the program targeting parents should be informing them about:
 - What their children might value about learning a language, and how they might reinforce this;
 - The nature of the support they could offer at home which might encourage persistence with language learning.
6. Programs designed to build demand among students include:
 - Opportunities for cross-national peer to peer contact, both actual and virtual. These should include improved chances for travel to target language countries and to host visitors from target language countries;
 - Regular opportunities for exposure to background speakers of the language being learnt, in and out of the classroom. The employment of suitable young adult background speakers for language assistance should be included in these options;
 - An expanded Asia Literacy Ambassadors Program providing opportunities for students to listen to professionals who work in or connect with the Region.
7. Create and upload online learning materials that focus on student motivation in language classes for undergraduate trainees and newly graduated teachers. Such materials should include practical ideas about goal setting in the classroom. Assistance in the preparation and publicising of these materials should be sought from relevant professional associations and tertiary teacher educators.
8. Conduct an investigation of effective uses of ICTs (information and communication technologies) for language learning. The results, including the range of possibilities and what appears to work and what doesn't, should be widely circulated. The pedagogical knowledge of experienced teachers should be included as one source of this information.
9. The new program referred to in the first of these recommendations include a research component through which some or all of the questions noted in the final section of this report will be investigated.

The *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*¹ states that 'Australians need to become Asia literate, engaging and building strong relationships with Asia'. The *Declaration* recognises that Australian education needs to be responsive to the rapid global integration and international mobility which is occurring and the fact that 'India, China and other Asian nations are growing and their influence on the world is increasing'.²

Accordingly, the new Australian Curriculum includes the cross curriculum priority of 'Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia' along with the general capability of intercultural understanding. Six Asian languages are identified in the Languages learning area, with Vietnamese and Hindi added to the four national target languages — Chinese (Mandarin), Indonesian, Japanese and Korean.

Asia literacy has been a national priority since 1994 when the Council of Australian Governments endorsed its Working Group's report, *Asian Languages and Australia's Economic Future*. Two significant national programs, the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy (NALSAS, 1995–2002) and the National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP, 2008–2012) have been mounted in response. State and Territory governments have also conducted their own initiatives in this area.

1 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (2008) Melbourne: author. p.4

2 *ibid.*

Simply making content or focus on Asia available as an option in courses does not appear to be stimulating the study of Asia.

Asia literacy is the knowledge, skills and understandings of the histories, geographies, literatures, arts, cultures and languages of the diverse countries of the Asian region. It includes both cross curriculum studies of Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia, and learning Asian languages with a focus on Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean.

Despite substantial policy change and investment via funding over a period of 20 years, the limited information to hand suggests limited progress towards **the inclusion of Asia in cross curriculum or subject-based studies**. The best available evidence³ comes from an Australian Council for Educational Research study completed for the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) in 2009.

These are its summary findings.

- Many of the subjects and units reviewed allow for the possibility of content or focus on Asia. In other words, teachers or students could choose to include this content or focus. However, there is little or no evidence that this is happening. In some cases specific content or focus on Asia is offered as an option. Only rarely is content or focus on Asia mandatory;
- Much of the material that does have content or focus on Asia has an Australian or Western focus;
- Across Australia, there is generally a strong disposition for the inclusion of content on Europe rather than content on Asia [or elsewhere in the world];
- Where it does occur, content or focus on Asia generally covers a limited range of countries within the region.⁴

One observation from this report is especially salient: 'Simply making content or focus on Asia available as an option in courses does not appear to be stimulating the study of Asia.' More direct and compelling means are required to build demand.

Considerably more is known about the **study of Asian languages**. In 2010, at the behest of the Australian Government, the AEF produced three detailed reports on the current situation regarding Indonesian, Japanese and Korean in Australian schools to accompany a report on Chinese, which was published the previous year. A Summary Report was also produced. It notes:

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- 3 There is very limited information available about what is actually taught in Australian classrooms. The virtue of this study is that it deals with defined syllabi with content that students must study or choose from. Also, because of the public nature of this process, it is fair to expect that policy is more likely to be honoured in these subjects than in less clearly defined teaching practice. Thus this is likely to be a best case scenario.
- 4 Wilkinson, J. & Milgate, G. (2009) *Research Report: Studies of Asia in Year 12*. Melbourne, ACER p. ii

Many successful programs have had their impact limited by being small in scale and short in duration, and marginal to the thinking and core work.

*'[W]hile at a broad strategic level the four languages have similar (but not the same) issues and requirements, their situations are very different. History, scale of operation, support base, nature of the student group, rationale, teacher profile — these are fundamentals in which there are many marked differences across the four languages.'*⁵

However, each of the four languages shares one or more confronting problems. Total student numbers studying Japanese and Indonesian are in marked decline⁶; enrolment in Korean is very small and static; senior secondary levels of Chinese are almost exclusively the province of background speakers; and in each of the three bigger languages there is a dramatic drop off in enrolment during the secondary years⁷. These are serious, and well-aired, problems.

Facts like this suggest that efforts to date to progress Asia literacy and the teaching and learning of Asian languages have failed. Yet, if the benchmark is taken from 1994, that isn't true. Major advances have been made in many areas. But it remains the case that many successful programs have had their impact limited by being small in scale and short in duration, and marginal to the thinking and core work of education systems, sectors and schools. Stop/start funding has been particularly inimical to effective progress; and there has been no sustained attack on the major structural impediments — workforce capability, the establishment of continuous and contiguous pathways for study, adequate time allocation for effective teaching and learning, and the removal of disincentives to study languages at senior secondary level.

While much remains to be done in terms of issues of supply, especially with relation to the study of Asian languages, not nearly enough has been done to drive change by building demand among students and their parents who, as noted below, are key players not just in young people's decisions to study a language but also in their levels of achievement. In terms of school personnel, it is necessary to consider the crucial affective complement to the acquisition of a new teacher perhaps, or a new program. That is, the interest and will to make the inclusion of studies of Asia and the teaching and learning of Asian languages core, standard educational business, treated with as much care and attention as, for example, Mathematics.

5 *The Current State of Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean Language Education in Australian Schools: Four Languages, Four Stories* (2010) Melbourne, AEF. p. 2

6 From 2000 the number of students of Japanese in NSW, for example, has nearly halved; across the country it is down by 16%. Since 2005 Indonesian has been losing approx. 10,000 students on average per year nationally.

7 99% of students studying Indonesian stop doing so at some point before Year 12. For reasons which are likely to differ, 94% of L2 Chinese learners do the same.

In a recent research report, a principal described his problem with the school's Chinese program:

*"We've had Chinese here for quite a while. [Sixteen years in fact.] For the amount of time and energy and even money that we invest in Chinese education within the school, I think our outcomes are diabolical. ... The big thing with languages is it's not a sexy thing. It's not a thing that sells. It's not Maths, English, Science. It's not like you can get the Chinese kids out at an RSL function in their uniform doing the national anthem with the band. Or they're not bringing a trophy home for sport. Or they're not hanging a beautiful picture or anything, like in Art. So it's a really hard one for this school."*⁸

Broadly speaking, that is the situation to be confronted, and reformed. There is a range of sources to turn to for ideas about ways to build demand. A literature review⁹ was conducted for this project. One point it makes is the lack of helpful and directive research on some of the specifics of this topic. It is, however, possible to turn to the many programs that are operating or have recently operated in this country to see what can be learnt. For this report a selection has been made of proven or promising examples. Some of these have been the subject of detailed and careful evaluation; others are in early stages of delivery but provide cause for attentive notice.

They are dealt with in sections on building demand for studies of Asia and, separately, Asian languages, even if, as will become obvious, they are difficult to isolate in this way. As the *National Statement on Asia Literacy in Australian Schools 2011–2012* notes: 'Asian languages and cross curriculum studies of Asia are both critical to building an Asia literate Australia.' The evidence from these programs suggests that a strong studies of Asia program can drive demand for Asian language provision and support new enrolment in flagging language programs.¹⁰ There is also evidence from these and other sources that a rich language program will include a strong focus on culture, which may well infect other aspects of school life through festivals, cultural events and cross curriculum teaching. Nonetheless, there are issues specific to the teaching of languages that apply and a much larger body of research literature dealing with student motivation for the formal learning of an additional language to be drawn on.

⁸ Orton, J., Tee, J., Gong, J., McCulloch, J., Zhao, Y. & McRae, D. (2012) *Profiles of Chinese Language Programs in Victorian Schools*. Melbourne: CTTC and The University of Melbourne p. 47

⁹ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/buildingdemand

¹⁰ See the BRIDGE and Asia Literacy Ambassadors Programs for example: www.asiaeducation.edu.au

Recommendation

1. It is recommended that:

- A major program be implemented immediately to build demand for the inclusion of studies of Asia in the school curriculum and to increase enrolment in the study of Asian languages;
- This program be sustained over a substantial period of time;
- Funding be commensurate with the scale and difficulty of the task.

The specific task related to studies of Asia is to 'build demand' among practitioners to change some of the conventions of their practice.

The new Australian Curriculum includes the cross curriculum priority of 'Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia' along with the general capability of intercultural understanding. However, the research tells us that if Asia is not explicit in curriculum content it is unlikely to be included. Lack of explicitness in curriculum documents is a very real structural impediment and it is essential that the new Australian Curriculum contains adequate explicit referencing of the Asia priority if studies of Asia are to be realised for all young Australians.

At school level there are no other particular structural impediments to including studies of Asia in school curriculum at any level. There is no obvious resistance from students or their parents. In fact, in so far as this has been canvassed at all, the evidence suggests a modestly positive response, mediated by the idea that the content of a particular course is very largely the responsibility of the school or the relevant agency. Policy and guidelines related to course content support the inclusion of relevant studies of Asia content as an important idea. There is a range of subject areas, including some that all or most students study, for which the inclusion of Asia-focused content is suitable. The specific task related to studies of Asia is to 'build demand' among practitioners to change some of the conventions of their practice.

A schema for this purpose emerges quite readily from examples of programs which have succeeded in building demand. The schema has three elements. As will emerge from the descriptions below, effective programs contain all three.

> A persuasive personal encounter

Some school personnel have quite frequent contact with people with an Asian background — whether students, teachers, language assistants or parents. But it seems that something out of the ordinary is required to shift the focus of their professional thinking and habits. For many years the AEF has conducted teacher study programs to various Asian countries. Halse's study¹¹ of the impact of these programs suggests that a different and more powerful sort of learning is involved. The participants in her study were quite sure before they left that they would learn through data acquisition, research and making connections; whereas what appears to have happened was learning through experience, and affective and inductive processes — what Halse calls 'excitement'. The persuasive personal encounters discussed here often have this element of excitement, along with a capacity to catch and hold the attention of participants.

11 Halse, C. (1999) *Encountering Cultures: The impact of study tours to Asia on Australian teachers and teaching practice* Melbourne: AEF, downloaded from www.asiaeducation.edu.au/verve/_resources/encounteringcultures.pdf

Visits/study programs

This type of 'personal encounter' is a direct, face-to-face contact with the experience of another culture. The most obvious medium for this to occur is a visit to, or study program within, an Asian country.

In its drive to encourage global educational relationships, the Victorian Department of Education has supported a program, *inter alia*, to provide a range of overseas study programs to countries of Asia for Victorian government school educators. One of these is the 'Internationalising Education China Program' conducted by the Eastern Metropolitan Region¹². As a good example of 'excited' learning, one of the participants is quoted in the evaluation as saying: *'It was an amazing experience which I am very lucky to have had the opportunity to be involved in. There is just so much to be gained from this study tour.'* This sort of response is recorded consistently. This program has been carefully evaluated over time. Two of the findings indicate that:

- The program is building the capacity of participant schools to ensure that Asia literacy and global perspectives become sustained elements of student learning outcomes;
- 96% of principals reported a significant or moderate impact on Mandarin [Chinese] programs... In addition to benefits arising from the initial visit to China, informal contact with other project schools which offer Mandarin has supported two schools in their decision to introduce the language in 2012.

The NALSSP-funded 'Indonesian Language Teacher Immersion'¹³ (ILTI) program provides teachers (whether of Indonesian language or not) with an opportunity to experience three weeks of linguistic and cultural immersion in Yogyakarta (Indonesia). Its purpose is to refresh the Indonesian skills and teaching of current teachers, but it is also designed to increase the pool of teachers with cross cultural knowledge and skills. The impact is well substantiated in participant evaluations.¹⁴

Supporting travel might be rejected as an expensive, difficult or selective process. There are other versions of these personal encounters which appear to have an impact.

12 www.asiaeducation.edu.au/buildingdemand_soa It is noteworthy that the principal and two teachers from the same school participate.

13 www.asiaeducation.edu.au/buildingdemand_soa This is run by the Australian Consortium for 'In-Country' Indonesian Studies (ACICIS), a non-profit international consortium of 25 universities based at Murdoch University in Western Australia.

14 For example: *'If you want a truly unique experience with study and culture, the ILTI short course is your best bet.'*
'A hands-on, intense and fulfilling course that will make me a more competent LOTE teacher.'
'This has been one of the best PD I have ever done as it has given both my teaching and my language skills a welcome boost.'
'What a difference three weeks can make to your language skills and understanding of Indonesian culture! Priceless.'

Intercultural understanding' was the most commonly reported general benefit of sister school relationships.

Sister school relationships

The evaluation of the 'Internationalising Education China Program' also reported that 'the project is resulting in the achievement of purposeful sister school relationships.' The development of **sister school relationships** and consequent mutual visiting programs of students and staff is a long-standing feature of Australian school education. An emerging feature of this process, however, is the engagement of the whole school rather than locating the primary interest and responsibility with teachers of Languages.

The Victorian Department of Education has investigated this process in that state, suggesting the nature of the impact and outlining conditions for success. This evaluation found that 'intercultural understanding' was the most commonly reported general benefit of sister school relationships, followed by a range of personal development and awareness benefits. It also notes that, in two-thirds of cases, along with more general support for language learning, student-related benefits include:

- Increased understanding of the importance of learning languages;
- Increased motivation/enthusiasm to learn a language.

The BRIDGE program¹⁵ also provides many examples of the impact of bringing teachers, school administrators and students from schools in Asia to their partner schools in Australia.

Exposure to inspirational speakers with relevant experience

The value of having a 'champion' for this sort of activity within the school is well attested. The most productive target for this process is school leaders. These are the people within schools who have the capacity to influence local policy and practice and to provide effective support for initiatives to change practice.¹⁶ The 'Leading 21st Century Schools: Engage with Asia Professional Learning Program'¹⁷ **engages school leaders** for this purpose. More than 700 school leaders have taken part in this program. Participants are asked to reflect on and learn about the features of an Asia literate school, but they also have the opportunity to listen to persuasive speakers¹⁸ who can talk effectively about the significance of links with Asia and Asia-related studies. This is another program which has been carefully evaluated. The majority of principals in the Victorian program have reported significant project outcomes in their schools, for example:

- 94% report a significant increase in support for studies of Asia in their schools;
- 90% report a dramatic increase in teacher expertise in studies of Asia.

This evaluation also reports that this program has resulted in a significant increase in the inclusion of Asia studies across the curriculum.

'Leading 21st Century Schools' is a focused program for school leaders with input from inspiring speakers, but in the context of describing types of personal encounters which have an apparent impact, it is worth mentioning the strategy underpinning the Asia Literacy Ambassadors Program.¹⁹ Its target group was students, but of course teaching personnel are involved. A volunteer 'Ambassador' from the business world, with experience of working in or with Asia or the Asian Australian community, is partnered with a school. The most common activity is simply talking to students about their working lives. The confirmed results from this program were extremely good.

This suggests the possibilities implicit in various surrogates for travel — spending time with visitors from overseas, establishment and maintenance of contact via digital means or even having suitably experienced and skilled locals talking about the issues — but which are face-to-face experiences, not from a document or report, and personally engaging.

> A clear course of action

One of the common reflections on sponsored travel experiences is that while they might have high impact on individual participants, in some instances the impact stops there. As a result, such experiences may have a less than expected pay-off for institutions. This is why a clear course of action is required for, and of, participants.

This course of action doesn't just need to be clear. It needs to be sanctioned and encouraged by an appropriate body or directive (via, for example, the policy of an education agency or, pertinently at present, the requirements of the Australian Curriculum). It needs to be relevant to the needs of the participant and his or her context. It needs to be feasible, challenging perhaps, but within reach. And, for continuing momentum, it needs to produce concrete results.

¹⁵ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for_asian_languages_students.html

¹⁶ In 'Asia-focused' schools it is common to find school administrators who have had travel experience in Asia, however sponsored.

¹⁷ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/buildingdemand_soa

¹⁸ Often drawn from the Asia Literacy Ambassadors Program.

¹⁹ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for_asian_languages_students.html

Inclusion of plans and requirements to act

This is a feature of most of the programs referred to above. For example, 'Leading 21st Century Schools' uses a 'sandwich model' of professional learning — a one-day workshop, followed by a period of implementation of specific school-based plans and a final half-day workshop to share, reflect and report on outcomes. The 'Internationalising Education China Program' has clear and purposeful local objectives and direction for participants.

There are other good examples of 'courses of action' in practice. For the program 'Building Asia literacy across Tasmania'²⁰, educators from each of the three Tasmanian education sectors spent two weeks in Fujian (China).²¹ Their tasks included developing the capacity to introduce Chinese language programs in their schools and exploring the establishment of sister school relationships, along with developing their own ability to teach the Australian Curriculum's cross curriculum priority of 'Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia'. Three months after the program, two-thirds of the participants had maintained links with education organisations or schools in Fujian. All have been, and will be, facilitating professional learning for their colleagues as per the agreement made prior to the in-country experience. This is being facilitated by the establishment of a network as provided for in the initial program plans.

Modelling good practice

There are many options for the content of this 'course of action'. It is useful, however, to have a practical and authentic idea of the goal — in other words, what an 'Asia-focused' school might be like. To this end, it is useful to know about the character and experiences of schools like this one, which in its application to the Asia Literacy Ambassadors Program stated: 'Our school has been a national leader in the Access Asia and Asia Education Program. ... We are very committed to teaching Asian languages, as well as embedding Asian culture throughout our wider curriculum.'

A school committed in this way is described in a recent study of Chinese language programs in Victorian schools.²² A P-12 school, all students learn Chinese in its primary classes. Students must study one Asian and one European language in Year 7, and the study of one language is compulsory in Years 8-10. Chinese is offered through all these year levels and to Year 12.

²⁰ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/buildingdemand_soa

²¹ And of course this experience has also had a personal impact. One of the participants notes: 'Before this [study program] opportunity I had no first hand knowledge of China. Now everything in my teaching and learning program about China has a context and I find myself relating to in-country experiences and providing clarity for students.'

²² Orton et al (2012), op cit.

The language program is supported by school-wide, cross-disciplinary 'Chinese literacy', which impacts the design and teaching of most elements of the curriculum. The school conducts regular tours to China and has an active and productive sister-school relationship. According to the principal, many of the school's teachers, including 'a very strong core', have had 'a powerful experience of China and Chinese'. He said, in summary, 'Chinese puts up a flag for this school's reputation'.

There are not just a few schools like this. There are certainly dozens and probably scores. One example included in the material associated with this report is The Southport School.²³ This describes the wide range of activity which has occurred at the school since 2008 to build Asia literacy and cement the position of the teaching and learning of Asian languages. This work, supported through funds from Becoming Asia Literate Grants to Schools (BALGS), is both inventive and comprehensive. Illawarra Sports High School²⁴ provides another example of a school taking a systematic approach to curriculum change in relation to studies of Asia, with a particular focus on the introduction of Indonesian language. Networks are being developed with the University of Wollongong and community Indonesian organisations. A sister-school partnership is planned. A clear course of action requires such examples to help school administrators and teaching staff to understand what high quality implementation might mean and to get ideas for application in their own environments. In an environment saturated with competing demands, cases like these also help to validate this choice of direction and build confidence in the potential of what can be achieved.

Collegial influence and support

The impact of a clear course of action will be enhanced by collegial influence and support. All change in schools relies on internal collaboration. External collaboration (for example, with peers in other schools, in relevant professional organisations, with tertiary institutions, with business and industry, with language-based or cultural organisations) can also exert a powerful influence.

Collegial influence and support is a component of each of the successful examples cited above. Study tour groups are encouraged to maintain relationships after the initial experience. The school leaders participating in 'Leading 21st Century Schools' work with and share ideas with other principals. Participants in ILTI are part of a group.

²³ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/buildingdemand_soa

²⁴ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/buildingdemand_soa

A piecemeal, fragmentary approach which focuses on just one or other of the issues above — and this is well-evidenced in these programs — will not yield, and in fact has not yielded, a satisfactory return on investment.

The purpose of the Tasmanian program noted above was to establish a network for action. There are many other examples of improvement driven by peer and school collaboration. Schools in the Lanyon area of the ACT²⁵ have developed a strong network of primary and secondary teachers of Japanese and studies of Asia, designed to improve the quality of studies of Asia and the consistency and the strength of the Japanese programs operating at the schools.

To this end eight 'exemplary' units of work have been produced²⁶ and a carefully planned, cumulative language program has been constructed and implemented.

In another example, Mount Lawley State High School²⁷ in Perth, a 'language hub' school, has worked with its partner primary schools to:

- Implement professional learning for all staff involved, especially to assist with an audit of curriculum;
- Improve language curriculum design at the primary level;
- Deliver online learning;
- Establish technologically innovative links between the schools;
- Create opportunities for primary school students to join in 'cultural' activities (such as festivals and performances) at the high school.

The Brighton Cluster in South Australia²⁸ consists of a secondary school working with a local primary school to promote Asian language learning in both schools by providing taster programs of the secondary program on site for primary students. Only limited progress can be expected in the expansion of studies of Asia, or Asian languages, via isolated converts. Committed individuals will always have a role to play but, in school education, serious momentum for change will be driven by collegial influence and support. The comprehensive listing of NALSSP programs and projects which have been funded under NALSSP suggests that many or most of them are related to these three issues. However, to be properly effective, these efforts must include and systematically integrate all three of the matters above. That is the very strong message from initiatives where there is good evidence of their effectiveness.

A piecemeal, fragmentary approach which focuses on just one or other of the issues above — and this is well-evidenced in these programs — will not yield, and in fact has not yielded, a satisfactory return on investment.

²⁵ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/buildingdemand_soa

²⁶ Interestingly enough for use in Art, Woodwork, Food Technology, English/literacy, History, Geography and Japanese.

²⁷ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for__asian_languages_impediments.html

²⁸ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for__asian_languages_impediments.html

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that the element of the program devoted to building demand for the inclusion of studies of Asia in the curriculum should consistently and systematically include:
 - The targeting of school personnel, with particular attention to the inclusion of school leaders;
 - Experiences (as described in this report) which provide personal encounters designed to persuade participants of the importance of the inclusion of studies of Asia in a school's program;
 - A clear, and required, course of action following the provision of such experiences;
 - Attention to the value of collegial influence and support.
3. It is recommended that professional learning related to the National Professional Standard for Principals should include a focus on building demand for Asia literacy.

Public life and discourse in this country is resolutely monolingual.

'The learning and mastery of a foreign language for international exchange is a basic requirement for a citizen in the 21st century.'

*China's Education Policy (2000)*²⁹

> A special case

Earlier in this report it was mentioned that there are issues specific to the teaching of Asian languages that apply to this discussion. Several of these apply to language learning in general.

One is the nature of the Australian community. Sixteen percent of the Australian population speaks a language other than English at home³⁰, making this group, like the considerable majority of the world's population, bi or multi-lingual. But public life and discourse in this country is resolutely monolingual. This, of course, means that there are limited opportunities for exposure to other languages in use so important for developing interest, familiarity, and competence. But it also provides sustenance to members of the community who believe that learning a language other than English is unnecessary and a waste of valuable learning time.³¹

Learning an additional language at school in Australia remains, and in fact is increasingly, a minority activity, and pursuing it to senior level requires a high level of perseverance, single-mindedness and, to some degree, luck. (See the brief discussion of structural impediments below.)

Additional languages have a reputation for being 'hard' to learn, and Asian languages especially so. Learning Chinese, Japanese or Korean includes the challenge of learning new writing systems, and Chinese phonology is distinctive and unfamiliar because of its reliance on tones. Learning these languages is a challenge, and this should be openly acknowledged and arrangements for learning made accordingly. But non-background speakers do learn them; it is not a task out of range.

As a further consideration, unlike some school subjects, learning a language is not just a matter of acquiring a set of new skills — in this case a new communication coding system.

For enduring success, government and other support must be substantial and sustained over a long period of time.

A language comes with attachments. As described in ACARA's paper on Languages³² and in many other places, a language shapes and is shaped by culture, and comes embedded within it. It is also a crucial component of the construction of personal and social identity. This is what makes language study so rich and fruitful, such a critical component of cultural and intercultural understanding, and also such a challenge to accommodate effectively in a couple of periods a week for young Australians in the throes of adolescence.

These are special qualifications with which to approach ideas about building demand for Asian language learning, and it is wise to bear them in mind. But there are no surprises here. Decades of Australian reports have commented on these issues. For the purposes of this discussion, it is more important to focus on the facts that during the NALSAS years, nation-wide enrolment in Japanese more than doubled to 410,000, Indonesian grew from 90,000 to 260,000, Chinese from 40,000 to 75,000. Even Korean enrolment doubled. One in four Australian students was studying a target language in 2000, nearly half of all Year 7 students, and more than 750,000 altogether.³³

The first message from this experience is that it can be done. The second is, for enduring success, government and other support must be substantial and sustained over a long period of time. Only then will language provision in this country outgrow its cultural constraints.

> Structural impediments: supply issues

This paper is focused on issues of demand rather than supply. However, some reference to the state of provision is unavoidable. It is not just a question of young Australians being willing to study an Asian language, they also must be able to do so; and there are still significant structural impediments which they may encounter.

The first is at their primary school which may or may not teach a language.³⁴ If a language is offered, the school will almost certainly have had to make a choice between an Asian and a European language.

29 Cited in Wang, W. & Lam, A. (2009) 'The English Language Curriculum for Senior Secondary School in China: Its Evolution from 1949', *RELC Journal*, vol. 40, no. 65, p. 69-70

30 400 of them. ABS (2009) *Yearbook 1301.0* sourced from www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/1301.0Feature+Article7012009-10

31 A telling riposte is recorded in Orton et al's work (op cit.) to a student asking the question: 'Why do I have to learn Chinese when I am never going to go there?' The reply: 'You don't have to go to China. China will come to you.'

32 ACARA (2011) *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum* Sydney: author

33 Erebus Consulting (2002) *Evaluation of the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy* p. x. Accessed from www1.curriculum.edu.au/nalsas/pdf/evaluation.pdf

34 In Victoria, where languages teaching is comparatively highly developed, the proportion of government primary schools offering any language dropped from 97% in 1999 to 69% in 2010. [Source: *The Victorian Government's Vision for Languages Education* (2012) p. 4. Accessed from www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/commrel/about/languageseducation.pdf]

There is about a one-in-four chance that the language on offer will be one of the four Asian target languages.³⁵ It is likely that the program will approximate one or two 30-minute lessons or one 50-minute lesson a week or even a fortnight. The language lesson material will probably be taught by a specialist teacher with whom the classroom teacher may or may not work to integrate and reinforce the content of the language lessons.

At secondary level the language/s offered may or may not be the language encountered in the primary years. It is most unlikely that there will be differentiated courses tailored for students with developed skills in the language/s on offer and raw beginners. Students may be involved in another 'taster' program doing a term or semester of several languages before making a choice to pursue one or the other at Year 9, or — the most common choice — not to study a language at all.

At this point, language learning is very likely to be in competition with other attractive electives. In the senior years a dominant consideration is whether or not your language score will advantage or damage your ATAR.³⁶ If you want to persist with Chinese you may find yourself competing with students with home background in the language.

Acting responding to structural issues

These issues are well known, and there has been some response, both by agencies and through local initiative. In the materials associated with this report we provide examples of local action to redress some of these problems.

Six early childhood settings in South Australia were funded through NALSSP to introduce Asian language learning experiences for pre school children³⁷, thereby directly increasing enrolments in Asian languages by increasing the number of sites teaching languages. A range of positive outcomes was identified, including cognitive and social benefits and greater confidence of children continuing language study in primary school.

There are some outstanding examples of primary language programs. Huntingdale Primary School³⁸ in Victoria runs a Japanese immersion program.

³⁵ In 2008 there were 7,689 Australian schools teaching primary students: 1071 taught Japanese, about 600 taught Indonesian, less than 200 taught Chinese and 21 taught Korean. [Source: AEF Four Languages Reports, accessed from www.asiaeducation.edu.au/policy_and_research/research_reports_pr/languages_reports.html]

³⁶ 'Australian Tertiary Admission Rank', which has a major impact on students' choice of futures.

³⁷ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for__asian_languages_impediments.html

³⁸ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for__asian_languages_impediments.html

All students learn for seven and a half hours per week in and through Japanese language: two and a half hours for Japanese literacy, one hour each in Humanities, Science, Art, PE and Music. Each class group within the school has both an English-speaking teacher and a Japanese-speaking teacher. By the time they graduate from Year 6, most Huntingdale students are operating at mid-secondary level of competence. Students' Japanese and English literacy levels have substantially improved and students now 'see it as the most natural thing in the world to learn in two languages'.³⁹

Campsie Public School⁴⁰ in Sydney's south-west teaches 10 different community languages and is in the third year of an English/Korean bilingual program. Parents, community and students have responded enthusiastically and local demand for the program is strong. Campsie's principal believes:

*'It seems to me that you can **maintain** a language in two hours per week, but for students who don't hear that language at home, it's not enough to make real progress. For that you need the bilingual approach, and six hours per week in the target language.'*

A number of successful initiatives supporting improved transitional pathways between the primary and secondary years are referred to above.

To encourage the study of Indonesian, the 'Headstart to Indonesian'⁴¹ program operating on the Sunshine Coast of Queensland links language study with university entrance. In 2011, 60 scholarships were offered to Years 11 and 12 students (and ten to teachers) to allow them to study two Indonesian courses over two semesters at the University of the Sunshine Coast. On successful completion of the course (which has a very flexible model of delivery), students will be guaranteed entry to most USC courses and receive two course credits towards their degree. This program only began this year but is a fine example of the inventive possibilities generated from local initiative.

³⁹ The principal also notes: 'The teaching of language cannot be separated from the teaching of culture and our children develop an international perspective where they see cultural similarities before they see difference.'

⁴⁰ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for__asian_languages_impediments.html

⁴¹ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for_asian_languages_students.html

The elements of an effective school program

These are examples of the many ways in which supply-side issues might be tackled. Reference could be made to the examples above (p. 7) for the characteristics of a school where language provision is well established and effective.⁴² The requirements are not simple nor, for true effectiveness, can they be only partially satisfied. A successful language program has all of these elements.

An established and respected place in the life of the institution, meaning:

- Well supported by the school leadership in authentic and effective ways;
- Acceptance and support from staff who don't teach language;
- Acceptance and support from influential members of parent and advisory groups;
- Growing or stable enrolment.

A substantial and attractive program, meaning:

- Attention to balance of the four language macro skills;
- diverse activities; tailoring to skill level;
- Ample timetabled time for learning;
- Regular exposure to the language in use;
- Maintenance of overseas contacts (face-to-face or via ICTs);
- Regular cultural activities involving the whole school.

Good teachers, meaning:

- Having a good command of both the target language and English; knowledge about learning processes; pedagogical craft knowledge; and, above all, with a confident belief that the language can be taught and a commitment to doing so;
- Having ample opportunities for their own professional learning and growth.

Well resourced, meaning:

- Dedicated teaching space/s;
- Up-to-date, high quality teaching materials;
- Good and consistent access to reliable ICT infrastructure.
- Good results.

⁴² Another version of this list can be found on page 6 of the ACARA paper, *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum*.

The target group for the building of demand for Asian languages should be students and their parents — and not parents in general but parents of students who are considering learning a language or who need support to persist with it.

> The target groups

In the previous discussion of building demand for studies of Asia, the target group was very explicitly defined as school administrators and teachers. It is possible to be equally explicit about building demand for the study of Asian languages.

Scattershot generalised publicity campaigns will not have the effect of persuading young Australians or their parents that learning an Asian language is good idea. The target is not the community at large. If desired, that is the task for another program. With the proviso that matters of provision need to be attended to by education agencies and schools, the target group for the building of demand for Asian languages should be students and their parents — and not parents in general but parents of students who are considering learning a language or who need support to persist with it.

Students

It is the individual student who will make the decision to be interested, or not, in learning a language. The reasons why or why not they may do so are discussed below. This decision may be tacit or vary from time to time, but it will be the learner's decision.

Parents of language learners, intending and actual

There are many influences on that decision — peers, teachers and the quality of the program for example, but the evidence points to the fact that the dominant influence during the school years will be parents.

It may be through modelling. For example, Holt's study⁴³ of New Zealand students choosing to continue their study of language from Year 10 into Years 11–13 found that a very substantial proportion of those who did so had one or more parents who spoke an additional language (generally not the language being learnt by the student) — the only common salient background variable. Or it may be through generalised support and encouragement. Foard's detailed study⁴⁴ of language students at a Melbourne school indicated that one of most common attributes of successful, interested learners was strong parental support and encouragement. The language in that case was Italian. This finding was replicated in Prescott and Orton's study of successful Chinese learners.

⁴³ Holt, R. (2006) 'Persistence Factors in Secondary School Additional Language Study' *Journal of Language and Learning* 5 (1) 86-97

⁴⁴ Foard, T. (2000) 'The Good Language Learner: Students of Italian in an Australian secondary school'. Melbourne; unpublished thesis

'The one common characteristic of all the students is that ... their families are keen for them to learn Chinese, and they encourage them in their learning tasks.'⁴⁵ The difference in context was that none of the parents in this study had any familiarity with Chinese. These are examples from a much larger body of evidence on the impact of parents' linguistic background and support of language learning on student interest and persistence. Parents of language learners, intending and actual, should be included in the target group.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that:

- The element of the program concerned with building demand for the study of Asian languages target students primarily, but also the parents of students who are beginning the study of a language, who are at the point where a choice to continue study is to be made, and during the periods of schooling where the attrition rates from language learning are the highest (generally speaking, Years 8–11).

Focusing on parents

The materials associated with this report contain three examples which could be categorised as parent 'contact' or information provision. One is an addition to the *My Future website*⁴⁶ which offers 20 video vignettes of articulate, interesting Australians who have worked in Asian countries or who do business with Asian clients, along with a series of short articles such as: 'Learning about Asian countries', 'Working in Asian countries', 'Culture in Asian countries' and 'Speaking an Asian language'. It is known that the videos have been highly successful in engaging students when used directly in presentations and conference-style activities. 'Parents Understanding Asia literacy'⁴⁷ is a project funded through NALSSP which is an interesting contribution to efforts to promote Asia literacy. The example most closely related to building demand for Asian languages is 'Parental Polyglots'.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Prescott, C. and J. Orton (2012) *Good Learners of Chinese: Profiles of students in secondary school*. Melbourne: Chinese Teacher Training Centre and the University of Melbourne. p. 4

⁴⁶ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for__asian_languages_parents.html

⁴⁷ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for__asian_languages_parents.html

⁴⁸ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for__asian_languages_parents.html

It offers beginners Asian language courses to parents, taught by qualified teachers, with the aim of increasing parental support for the teaching of those languages. It is early in this program's life, but two reported outcomes are that parents are pleasantly surprised by new modes of teaching and learning a language (challenging their own school experiences), and the second is that they feel more able to help with homework.

It is suggested that there are two clear tasks to be undertaken with parents.

- One should be focused at points where there is a choice whether or not to pursue language learning (often the early primary years, the early secondary years, at Year 9 and Year 11). The task is to provide persuasive reasons for their child continuing (the videos on the *My Future website* are an example of material fit for this purpose), and possibly to outline what their expectations (of the school and of the experience) should be.
- The other is to make it clear, through whatever means available (and 'Parental Polyglots' represents one of these), how to support their child in his or her language learning and encourage persistence with it. Care should be taken not to over-complicate this task. Relevant, feasible and productive of results are the chief criteria.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that:

The primary concern of the component of the program targeting parents should be informing them about:

- What their children might value about learning a language, and how they might reinforce this;
- The nature of the support they could offer at home which might encourage persistence with language learning.

The most important target group, however, is students themselves.

> Motivating students to learn an additional language

It was noted earlier in the report that there is a substantial body of research literature concerned with the nature of motivation to learn another language.⁴⁹

Discussion about motivation to learn languages was dominated for many years by the idea that it followed two broad impulses⁵⁰: the first, **integrativeness**, meant in its initial definition having a positive disposition towards members of the target language group and a desire to interact and integrate with its members; the second, **instrumentality**, meant being able to get something out of learning another language like better employment opportunities, better chances for professional development, more income and/or better chances for career advancement.⁵¹ These are common sense ideas and their impact remains evident in campaigns to develop interest in Asian languages. Over time, this simple picture has been made more complex. More and different ideas, mainly in terms of detail, were added to 'integrativeness' — such as the significance of a generalised interest in increasing one's knowledge of the world and its peoples, a desire to establish friendships across language boundaries, and an orientation towards travel. Other work suggested that the boundaries between integrativeness and instrumentality were not nearly as distinct as originally proposed, and that in fact they might represent ends of a continuum which had a substantial and complex range of attitudes in its middle varying according to the socio-cultural circumstances, and maturity, of the potential learner.

A new interest emerged in the impact of the classroom experience on learners' motivation, especially factors which might encourage them to persist with language learning.⁵² This was coupled with an interest in the influence of more expansive ideas about the relevant learning characteristics of individual learners.

If demand for language learning is to be built, it must be accessible according to the self-perceived interests and needs of the target group, and also delivered with communication media that they commonly use.

Dornyei, for whom this subject has been a career-long interest, advanced a model which integrated these and other factors.⁵³ Some of his ideas, especially his 'Ten commandments for motivating language learners' are discussed below.

Several relevant matters can be drawn from this.

- Motivation is a complex topic, but there are substantial recurrent themes which are likely to be productive points of focus;
- Motive reasons are likely to change according to stage and circumstances of life.

The structure of the discussion below is somewhat artificial. There are likely to be reasons which differ for beginning language study and persisting with it. However, many of the initial reasons may sustain interest and involvement for many years or, indeed, never lose their power. Classroom experiences are not contained. They are part of a larger organic and interactive set of responses to language learning. The separation into two sections has been made for the purpose of convenience and clarity. But it does also suggest the different focal points of marketing on the one hand and educational experience on the other. This is an important distinction.

One other comment that should be made here is that while high flown rationales⁵⁴ for learning an additional language may be authentic, they are likely to have very limited impact on the target audience as construed here. If demand for language learning is to be built, it must be accessible according to the self-perceived interests and needs of the target group, and also delivered with communication media that they commonly use.

> Motivating students to commence language learning: personal reasons

It should be noted that much of the commentary under the heading of 'A persuasive personal encounter' (p. 7) could be repeated here with the proviso that different reasons are likely to appeal to students at differing stages of maturation and schooling.

Exposure to language learning in the primary years is generally an occasion for curiosity, interest and, in the best cases, excitement. There is little questioning of mandatory study. It can be anticipated that students will be pleased with the idea of making new friends and being able to talk to them, in however limited fashion, in their own language.

⁴⁹ This is a matter of international interest, and in countries like Canada, for example, it has a clear relationship with public policy.

⁵⁰ Gardner, G. & Lambert, W. (1972) *Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning* Rowley Ma.: Newbury House was highly influential in this regard.

⁵¹ These are in fact, in order, the four top reasons expatriate Australians working in Asia give for doing so. The fifth was an interesting life style. (Evidence from a survey quoted in The Senate: Legal and Constitutional References Committee (2005). *They still call Australia home: Inquiry into Australian expatriates*. Department of the Senate, Parliament House, Canberra.)

⁵² See, for example, Crookes, G. & Schmidt, R. (1991) 'Motivation: Re-opening the research agenda' *Language Learning* 41 469-512, and Oxford, R. & Shearin, J. (1994) 'Language Learning Motivation: Expanding the theoretical framework' *Modern Language Journal* 78, 12-28.

⁵³ In Dornyei, Z. (1994) 'Motivation and motivating in the foreign language classroom' *The Modern Language Journal* 78, 273-84.

⁵⁴ See, for example, Lo Bianco, as quoted in the ACARA Languages paper. (op cit.) p. 6

The evidence suggests that language learning will be encouraged by students establishing contacts with their peers in the country of the target language.

In the early and middle secondary years the same sorts of issues of student engagement which apply generally in schooling become evident. The nature and quality of the classroom experience discussed below becomes increasingly important.

While it is well established that instrumental reasons for learning a language generally have little appeal for school students until they are in the mid-secondary years or above, it is equally well established that there are students who will be highly responsive to authentic insights into the value of language learning for these purposes.

Making new friends

The evidence suggests that language learning will be encouraged by students establishing contacts with their peers in the country of the target language.

BRIDGE⁵⁵ is a program which partners Australian schools at present with schools in Indonesia, China and South Korea; 120 of these partnerships exist with more in train of development. Many BRIDGE schools report substantially increased interest in language learning as a result of student-to-student contact and two at least have begun offering the partner school's language on the basis of participation in the program. A number of BRIDGE schools have established visiting exchange programs, which work powerfully to foster an interest in both studies of Asia and language learning. Evaluative work on this program suggests that, while electronic communication can be used effectively to maintain contact, effective partnerships begin with face-to-face meetings.

The active sister school programs⁵⁶ which have been referred to above have the same sort of impact: making the experience and value of language learning real and immediate, establishing cross-cultural contacts and friendships.

Some language programs have language assistants.⁵⁷ Programs described in Orton et al (2012) have benefited significantly from having young adult background speakers working in this role. There are a range of reported benefits including exposure to the language in use of a background speaker, but they are also living, proximate examples of bi or multi-lingual language users who in the best cases are in tune with the interests of young people.

55 www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for_asian_languages_students.html

56 www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/building_demand_for_studies_of_asia/bd_for_soa.html

57 www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for_asian_languages_students.html

Satisfying natural or awakened curiosity about other countries and their inhabitants

This is an obvious theme of many of the examples which are included with this report and will apply to students of all ages. Opening up the world beyond students' own immediate experience is a convention of primary curriculum, for example. This convention can easily be put to use, and enriched, by locating language learning in that context. This is a task associated with making subject-based and cross curriculum studies of Asia far more widespread.

The prospect of travel

The Victorian Department of Education instituted a program through which Years 9 and 10 students who have never travelled overseas before have been provided with the opportunity to spend some weeks living with a family and studying locally in China, India or Malaysia.⁵⁸ This program has been the subject of a longitudinal study which indicates that two years after the experience 50% of the participants indicated that they intended to seek work overseas and 25% said they intended to seek work which involved speaking a second language.

Instrumental reasons

The evidence suggests that these reasons begin to have an impact at the point when students are beginning to think seriously about possible work and life futures.

The most obvious example of harnessing this moment is the Asia Literacy Ambassadors program referred to above. This was set up to establish and support partnerships between businesses and school communities in order to stimulate and increase student and school community demand for Asia literacy by demonstrating the practical application of Asia-related skills, knowledge and understanding. Participants were sought from businesses and enterprises with experience of working in Asian countries, working for Asian companies based in Australia or working with Asian-Australian communities. More than 300 volunteered their time. About the same number of schools participated. In its short life⁵⁹, in excess of 13,000 students were involved.

58 www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for_asian_languages_students.html

59 It was actively operational for about 16 months and reached the end of full funding as it was nearing peak effectiveness. Regrettably, this is a good example of short-term interest and support by funding agencies.

Various activities were offered through the program including work placements, university partnership activities and conference activities but the primary activity is best described as 'someone different' simply talking to students about their working and life experiences. Nearly 70 percent of participant schools reported increased interest in Asian languages and cultures among their students as a result; half reported increased enrolment in Asian language study. A quarter of the nearly 400 students involved in one set of activities said they had 'become more aware of opportunities in the workforce and life generally'; about the same proportion commented on their new appreciation of the range of work for people with Asia skills, and being able to see new career pathways. These are quite striking results. The evaluation suggests that, from a schools' point of view, the program worked by having a new face with real and recent Asian experience who is interesting and engaging with a powerful story to tell.

The 'Leading in Languages Youth Summit'⁶⁰ held in Perth in 2011 was, as its name suggests, focused on the promotion of language learning as well as Asia literacy more generally. The 192 students who attended from all over WA were encouraged to take ideas for action and projects to complete back to their schools. This is in train at present. The response from participants was extremely positive.

The 'Headstart' program (p. 14) can again be cited. By attaching the prospect of tertiary entrance to participation in an Indonesian program, this program provides a powerful incentive to begin and succeed at language learning.

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that programs designed to build demand among students include:
 - Opportunities for cross-national peer-to-peer contact, both actual and virtual. These should include improved chances for travel to target language countries and to host visitors from target language countries;
 - Regular opportunities for exposure to background speakers of the language being learnt, in and out of the classroom. The employment of suitable young adult background speakers for language assistant work should be included in these options;
 - For middle and upper secondary students, elements closely modeled on the Asia Literacy Ambassadors Program.

⁶⁰ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for_asian_languages_students.html

There are strong messages here about what might keep learners learning in the set-up and surrounds of classroom life.

> Motivating students to continue language learning: classroom experience

Attention to the range and variety of learners' needs and interests

Crookes and Schmidt⁶¹ produced a framework for thinking about motivation to learn an additional language which is focused on classroom experience. This framework has four broad components: interest, relevance, expectancy and satisfaction. Each provides helpful leads for thinking about continued student motivation.

They talk about **interest** as inherent curiosity and the desire to know more. Such matters are dealt with to some degree above. **Relevance** refers to learners' perceptions of the way in which their learning experience is meeting personal needs, values and goals. The long-term checkpoints are life and work goals; those in the shorter-term are about how well their classroom experiences are attuned to and successful in meeting these goals. **Expectancy** is about the perceived likelihood of success and self-confidence to do so, perceptions about task difficulty and the amount of effort required, the amount of available assistance and guidance to generate success, and, more proximately, familiarity with learning task type, and suitability of the way it is presented. Finally, **satisfaction** is drawn from the immediate types of encouraging response that students might encounter — praise and good marks, but also enjoyment and pride in increasing levels of mastery.

There are strong messages here about what might keep learners learning in the set-up and surrounds of classroom life.

Motivational strategies in the classroom

Dornyei's research (1994) referred to above provides a list of 29 practical ideas which might help to motivate learners of an additional language. Four years later he returned to the topic by surveying over 600 teachers of language about what they thought their most successful 'motivational macro-strategies' were.⁶² The results were published as 'Ten commandments for motivating language learners'.⁶³

⁶¹ op cit.

⁶² This process may not be deemed to have the rigour of formal research but it is identical to that used by Harold Bloom and his colleagues to produce the highly influential *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The classification of educational goals* in 1956.

⁶³ Dornyei, Z. & Csizer, K. (1998). Ten commandments for motivating language learners: Results of an empirical study. *Language Teaching Research*, 3, 203-29

They are a long distance from the filling in of comprehension work sheets or copying characters, which are activities that can be found in many classrooms.

They are:

1. Set a personal example with your own behaviour.
2. Develop a good relationship with the learners.
3. Increase the learners' linguistic self-confidence.
4. Make the language classes interesting.
5. Promote learner autonomy.
6. Personalise the learning process.
7. Increase the learners' goal-orientedness, and provide proximal goals (specific, hard, but achievable).
8. Familiarise learners with the target culture.
9. Create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom.
10. Present the tasks properly.

These are not unusual propositions about effective teaching, but they are a long distance from the filling in of comprehension work sheets or copying characters, which are activities that can be found in many classrooms — and perhaps especially early secondary classrooms, where the task is most difficult and the best forms of motivation are needed.

There are three ideas to which attention is drawn for further consideration.

Promoting learner autonomy might be thought to be the last thing to focus on in classrooms. Yet it recurs consistently in the studies of good language learners referred to above. There is simply not enough classroom time in most of our schools' language programs. Encouraging autonomous action in and out of the classroom to improve levels of proficiency is an essential requirement.

There is a great deal of discussion about learner autonomy in education at present, particularly with relation to individual or small group learning using ICTs as a tool. Three examples are provided in the materials associated with this report of learner autonomy in action.

'Web 2.0 Technologies in Asian LOTE classrooms'⁶⁴, a Victorian NALSSP project, set out to increase the ICT proficiency of teachers of Asian languages and expand their use of Web 2.0 technologies. An evaluation of the project found benefits in terms of improved student learning outcomes, but also found evidence of improved student attitudes towards Asian language learning and improved motivation to study Asian languages.

⁶⁴ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for_asian_languages_students.html

According to the evaluation of this program:

'The major change from teacher-centred to student-centred learning, resulted in Languages Other Than English classes where students were more motivated, engaged and demonstrated greater effort and independence in their learning. They were taking responsibility for how they learnt, working more collaboratively with their peers, and self assessing. ... They recognised the changes they had made in their learning and achievement and were now keen to continue learning LOTE in the future.'

In recent years, the New South Wales Department of Education and Training has been responsible for a number of initiatives used to bring Asian languages to students who would otherwise find access difficult.⁶⁵ Several different models and new pathways for students have been developed. One of the primary purposes was to provide access to language learning but, even inadvertently, learner autonomy is encouraged.

One of the challenges at Taranganba State School, and its partner Emu Park State School, at Yepoon (QLD) was that Japanese was being taught to students with a wide range of abilities in the language.⁶⁶ Some work at the expected level for their age group but there are also students of Japanese background, special needs students, advanced and gifted students, ESL learners and students who enrol mid-year without Japanese experience. The school's solution was to use BALGS funds to create a sophisticated language laboratory. The use of iPads allows students to access the virtual classroom for learning and assessment tasks, and to communicate easily with a Japanese partner school or previous Japanese visitors to Taranganba. Students are also able to access the virtual classroom outside class hours. Learning outcomes have improved, along with student motivation and the degree of engagement with the Japanese language.

Increase the learners' goal-orientedness, and provide short-term as well as longer-term goals. Language learners often comment on the experience of beginning their learning excited and interested and developing something like sub-conversational competence relatively quickly, but then encountering a plateau in their performance which is dispiriting and de-motivating.

⁶⁵ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for_asian_languages_students.html

⁶⁶ www.asiaeducation.edu.au/leading_schools/building_demand/bd_for_asian_languages_students.html

This is speculative and in need of confirmation, but it is suggested that there may be very little attention to the establishment and explanation of proximal goals in conventional language classroom practice in Australian schools: what students, both collectively and individually, might expect to achieve and be able to do, in a fortnight, next month, at the end of the term: and it might be added, how they might help each other achieve those goals, which, as Dornyei and Csizer note should be realistic and challenging— specific, hard, but achievable. If, for example, a plateau is to be encountered — how is it to be traversed? When? By doing what? This suggests the desirability of supporting language teachers to develop the level of alertness to the nature and structure of language learning which this requires, along with strategies to implement this process in their classrooms.

Finally, **familiarize learners with the target culture**. This idea brings the narrative of this report full circle. Studies of Asia will support Asian language learning; Asian language learning will encourage and build demand for studies of Asia. Most of the examples provided throughout this report are about familiarising young people with the target culture/s in one way or another. The task is to build this into an anticipated, consistent and commonplace experience for young Australians. It will be then that the task of building demand is replaced as a focal point for action by other issues.

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that:
 - Online learning materials that focus on student motivation in language classes for undergraduate trainees and newly graduated teachers are created and uploaded. Such materials should include practical ideas about goal setting in the classroom. Assistance in the preparation and publicising of these materials should be sought from relevant professional associations and tertiary teacher educators.
8. It is recommended that there is an investigation of effective uses of ICTs (information and communication technologies) for language learning. The results, including the range of possibilities and what appears to work and what doesn't, should be widely circulated. The pedagogical knowledge of experienced teachers should be included as one source of this information.

Additional research, conducted locally and grounded in local experience, would be valuable for any of the issues raised in this paper.

There is a vast body of literature investigating and commenting on some topics relevant to this discussion: school change, for example, and the importance of school leadership in this regard; the acquisition of an additional language and student motivation for doing so; the nature of current geopolitical shifts and the rise of a number Asian countries; and Australia's enduring and new trade and business relations with Asian countries.

It is important to recognise just how ground-breaking in their particulars the tasks referred to here are. It is not any language under consideration; it is a specific set of Asian languages in the Australian context. The frame of reference for the teaching of many Australian teachers (along with their cultural and educational backgrounds) is Europe, not Asia. This lends the task some very distinctive characteristics, as well as challenges, and significantly diminishes the research and recorded experience which can be drawn on. This is why this report is like it is: heavily dependent on 20 years of experience of working with those issues in the context we face today.

The evaluation of NALSAS undertaken by Erebus Consulting⁶⁷ is directly relevant and, even if 10 years have passed, still rich in helpful observations and ideas. The review of NALSSP, not publicly released, by rights ought to be equally so. The AEF's Four Languages studies are full of useful data as well as providing telling descriptions of the current situation of those languages. They are not especially directive, however, for ways to change the problems those languages face. Several, but not most, of the examples cited in this report are accompanied with thorough, reliable and detailed evaluations with a clear focus on actual outcomes rather than individual responses. These are important additions to the stock of relevant knowledge (and have been drawn on extensively for the preparation of this paper).

Nonetheless, these observations suggest that additional research, conducted locally and grounded in local experience, would be valuable for any of the issues raised in this paper. Being more specific about new information to be gathered is limiting to this observation.

However these might be considered matters of priority:

- What do school personnel mean when they describe their institution as an 'Asia-focused' (or similar) school? How much commonality is there in these characteristics? From what sources have they been derived? What was the process of instigation and development of the process of change, and what were the major influences guiding and driving it?
- How do we identify the attributes of an Asia literate school leader and teacher?
- In schools which fall into this category, what is the interaction between the offering of Asian language/s and studies of Asia? In less 'developed' locations, what is the nature of that relationship?
- Why do Australian students choose not to study languages, and Asian languages in particular? Do these reasons change over maturational stages? What is happening at the peak periods of departure from language learning?
- What are the most effective ways to tap into the awareness of the parents of intending and actual language learners? What is the most helpful information and support they could be offered?
- What are the characteristics of language programs which hold the attention and interest of students during adolescence? How can these be implemented more widely?
- What is the impact of current incentives offered to senior students to keep them studying an Asian language (for example, HECS waivers, study score bonuses)? Are there other incentives, which might be more effective?
- How might the disincentives encountered by non-background students in cohorts where there is a substantial body of background students be most effectively countered?

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that:

- Further research focused on the priorities as outlined above is essential to inform future action.

⁶⁷ op cit.



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