Asia Education Foundation

WHAT WORKS 1 | Building Demand for Asia Literacy in Australian Schools (Literature Review)

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Contents

1 Overview

This literature review is intended to provide a brief overview of recent published research and reports related to strategies used to build demand for Asian languages, cross curriculum studies of Asia and Asia literacy in general.

Five broad areas are covered, including:

- policy context
- curriculum
- teachers and school leaders
- external partnerships; and
- student beliefs and attitudes.

Asia Literacy is knowledge, skills and understandings of the histories, geographies, literatures and languages of the diverse countries of the Asian region.

Asia Literacy has been defined as knowledge, skills and understandings of the histories, geographies, literatures and languages of the diverse countries of the Asian region in the context of the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (2008) and the Australian Curriculum.

Asia literacy includes both cross curriculum studies of Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia, and Asian languages with a focus on Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean.

Within each of these sections, and where possible, the literature on Asian languages and general Asia literacy is separated. The literature reviewed is intended to give readers a general overview, and so the actual studies cited should be consulted for the full findings and methodologies used.

The review focuses on strategies that have shown to build demand:

- among students, Foundation to Year 12, (especially for Asian languages)
- in the education workforce, including teachers and school leaders, for Asia literacy (including Asian languages and cross curricula studies of Asia); and
- for the general community, including parents/carers, for Asia literacy.

While this literature review is by no means comprehensive, some common themes — and gaps — in the literature can be identified. The common elements for building demand for Asian languages and Asia literacy in general as set out in the literature include the following key points.

- **There is a need for promoting a clear purpose** to students, their parents and the community for learning an Asian language and developing Asia literacy.

- **The business community has a role to play in promoting the importance of Asia literacy to students.** However, it is clear from some studies that this is not achieved by merely pointing out the importance of Asia from an economic and employment perspective. Thus, more creative avenues may need to be explored.

- **Student perceptions regarding language learning impact on levels of demand.** There is a need for further research in this area to determine what is effective at informing student perceptions.

There is no one single solution to building demand for Asian languages or Asia literacy.

- **The most important factor influencing student desire to study a language is the quality of the learning context and the teacher and self-perceived interest.**

- **Demand for Asian languages will flow from an interest in Asia.** In other words, a focus on building an interest in Asia and Asia literacy content will be a key driver for building demand in Asian languages for students, their parents and school educators in general.

- **Ensuring that clear language pathways are in place** for students from primary to secondary, and then on to higher education, is critical to build student demand for Asian languages.

- **There must be pedagogical leaders equipped with the organizational ability to implement Asia literacy at the school level.** Further, these leaders must be supported by the broader community.

- **Access to professional learning for teachers** to build teachers' capacity to teach Asia focused content is critical to developing Asia literacy within schools.

- **Ensuring that adequate Asia–focused content is explicit in the curriculum** is critical to building teacher and student demand for Asia literacy.

While all of these elements form part of the picture, it is important to note that they must be viewed as part of a multifaceted approach to building demand. There is no one single solution to building demand for Asian languages or Asia literacy. What builds demand for primary level students to study an Asian language, for example, will differ dramatically from students in their final year of secondary school.

And, a 'one size fits all' approach to building demand for Asian languages is not viewed as adequate by the research. Tailored responses for each priority Asian language are required as to purpose and incentives.

In so far as gaps in the literature are concerned, there is a clear lack of empirical evidence with regard to the impact that each of these elements has on building demand among students, their parents, the broader community, teachers and school leaders. Studies on the merits of making Asia literacy content, and/or Asian languages, mandatory requires further research.

In addition, while there is a significant body of literature on building demand for Asian languages, the same is not the case for building demand for Asia literacy or, indeed, how teaching Asia related content may influence demand for Asian languages.

In 1994[1] the Australian Government launched the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) program. The program was developed in response to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Working Group on Asian Languages and Cultures report titled *Asian Languages and Australia's Economic Future*.[2] One of the stated objectives of the program was to 'improve participation and proficiency levels in language learning in four targeted Asian languages — Japanese, Modern Standard Chinese, Indonesian and Korean, and to support the studies of Asia across the curriculum'.[3] From the program's inception in 1995 to its cessation in 2002 a total of $208 million was provided by the Federal Government in support of the program.[4]

A number of evaluation reports were carried out identifying the elements of success within the NALSAS program and also areas where the program could be improved.[5] The final report, published in 2002, concluded that NALSAS had been a success and had doubled the number of students studying an Asian language in schools. It also resulted in an increase in the number of schools and teachers including studies of Asia in their curriculum. However, the report notes:

> On the evidence available, about one-quarter of schools do not teach about Asia at all, and at least the same number do so in only superficial ways. The greatest barrier to further implementation is teacher knowledge; not only about Asia itself, but also about the existence of resource material, and about how they can 'fit in' another subject area in what they see as an already crowded curriculum. These teachers see no compelling reason why studies of Asia should be given greater priority, and many see it as not being of relevance to them.[6]

The NALSSP funding identified three key result areas including programs to 'stimulate student demand'.

New funding was introduced by the Federal Government with the introduction of the National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP). With funding of $62.4 million over 2008 to 2011, the program aimed to 'increase opportunities for school students to become familiar with the languages and cultures of Australia's key regional neighbours, namely China, Indonesia, Japan and Korea'.[7] To achieve this end, the NALSSP funding identified three key result areas including programs to 'stimulate student demand'.[8]

A set of reports evaluating the current state of these four priority Asian languages in Australian schools was produced by the Asia Education Foundation in 2010 in order to provide baseline data to inform future initiatives.

Citing a large body of prior research[9], a list of five 'general issues' was identified regarding language education in Australia:

- a shortage of qualified language teachers
- decline in student, school, parental and community value for language learning
- insufficient time allocated to languages learning in schools
- lack of ability to study languages continuously and sequentially; and
- common student perceptions in some languages concerning the difficulty of competing against native speakers and the perceived negative impact of language study on tertiary entrance scores.[10]

Aside from these general issues, the report made several significant findings:

- the content and duration of primary level language education is often insufficient to motivate continued study
- a more tailored approach to programs is required that takes into consideration the background and prior learning of students[11]
- the 'nature and quality' of professional training for teachers requires significant reform[12]; and

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1 For a longer history of policy initiatives see: J. Lo Bianco and Y. Slaughter (2009) *Australian Education Review: Second Languages and Australian Schooling*, Camberwell, Australian Council for Educational Research, pp. 14-23.

2 National Asian Languages & Cultures Working Group (1994) *Asian Languages and Australia's Economic Future*, Brisbane, Queensland Government Printer.

3 Department of Education Science and Training (2012) 'About NALSAS', DEST website, viewed 7 March 2012, (www1.curriculum.edu.au/nalsas/about.htm).

4 ibid.

5 Erebus Consulting Partners (2002) *Evaluation of the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy*, Canberra, Department of Education Science and Training.

6 Ibid p. xiv.

7 Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (2012) 'National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program – Overview', DEEWR website, viewed 7 March 2012, (www.deewr.gov.au/schooling/NALSSP/Pages/default.aspx).

8 ibid.

9 J. Lo Bianco and Y. Slaughter (2009) *Australian Education Review: Second Languages and Australian Schooling*, Camberwell, Australian Council for Educational Research.

10 Asia Education Foundation (2010) *The Current State of Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean Language Education in Australian Schools*, Carlton South, Education Services Australia, p. 4.

11 ibid.

12 ibid., p. 8.

A one size fits all rationale for Asian languages is not working.

- the rationale for advocating learning each of the priority Asian languages needs to be more clearly articulated: as the report notes, 'a one size fits all rationale for Asian languages is not working'.[13]

Given these key findings the report concludes that: 'Without new and sustained evidence–based efforts specifically tailored for each language, the (NALSSP) target will be difficult to achieve'.[14] Three key strategies were recommended:

- developing a persuasive new vision for language learning in general, and in particular for each Asian language
- the establishment of national bodies to develop and oversee the implementation of strategy plans for each language; and
- an acknowledgement that the 'one–size–fits–all approach' to accelerate Asian languages is untenable.[15]

Indeed the importance of shifting current societal thinking with regard to Asia was identified in the *Australia 2020 Summit — Final Report*, which recommended that Asia literacy be 'mainstreamed into Australian society'.[16]

In the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* it is noted that Australians need to become 'Asia literate' in response to the fact that 'India, China and other Asian nations are growing and their influence on the world is increasing'.[17] The new Australian Curriculum has placed 'Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia' as a cross–curriculum priority.

Similarly, the *National Statement on Asia Literacy in Australian Schools 2011–2012* notes that 'Asian languages and cross-curriculum studies of Asia are both critical to building an Asia literate Australia'.[18] The Statement highlights the importance of taking a multifaceted approach.

Need to have Asia literate teachers supported by parents and communities that are engaged and knowledgeable of the importance of Asia literacy.

Such an approach focuses not just on the 'top-down' drivers such as curriculum, but also classroom and community level drivers. For example, the need to have Asia literate teachers supported by parents and communities that are engaged and knowledgeable of the importance of Asia literacy.[19]

Many state and territory departments of education have policy statements supporting the learning of languages and, in some cases, Asian languages as a priority. For example, in the 2011 budget statement, the Victorian Government committed $16.3 million over four years for 'the first stage of its revival of language education'. According to the Minister, the funding is 'the first step in implementing the Coalition's commitment for every student in government schools to study a foreign language from prep to Year 10, with the first compulsory classes rolling out in 2015'.[20]

However, there are few examples of state policy statements that clearly articulate the need for Asia literacy or studies of Asia.

Summary

Within this policy context, there are four broad areas that can be considered 'drivers' of demand for Asia literacy.

- Curriculum policy and programs that focus on Asia literacy: in particular whether opportunities to focus on Asia content are being adopted.

- There is a need for teachers and leaders within the school (pedagogical leaders) to drive the curriculum and encourage support and demand for both Asian languages and Asian studies from parents and the community.

- There is a role for external partnerships to influence demand, in particular the business community.

- There is a need to address student perceptions and attitudes towards language learning in general and specifically each priority Asian language.

The relevant literature regarding these drivers will be detailed further below.

13 ibid.

14 ibid., p. 9.

15 ibid.

16 Australian Government (2008) *Australia 2020 Summit — Final Report*, Canberra, Australian Government, p. 370.

17 MCEECDYA (2008) 'Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians', MCEECDYA website, viewed 7 March 2012, (www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya/melbourne_declaration,25979.html).

18 Asia Education Foundation (2011) N*ational Statement on Asia Literacy in Australian Schools 2011-2012*, AEF, The University of Melbourne.

19 The Statement highlights six 'interlinked areas': Australian curriculum; Asia literate school leaders; Asia literate teachers; Asia focused classroom resources; Asian language education programs; and increased student, parent and community demand for Asia literacy. ibid.

20 The Hon Martin Dixon (2011) 'Coalition Government funds major increase in language education for Victorian families', Minister for Education, *Media Release*, 3 May.

China has shifted from promoting languages for their instrumental value, towards a 'humanistic approach' that views learning a foreign language as benefiting 'critical thinking ability, information gathering and analysis ability, problem solving ability, and a world vision'.

> 3.1 Asian Languages

A clear theme that emerges in the literature is the need for a 'logic' for promoting language learning. In other words, building demand for languages requires understanding student motivations and providing a consistent rationale for studying a language. In this regard, some parallel lessons can be taken from the development of China's policy for learning English.

A study by Wang and Lam traces the English language curriculum in China and how it evolved from 1949. In the earlier years the logic for studying English was framed around the idea that English was 'an important tool for acquiring cultural and scientific knowledge...'.[21] As the study notes, the development of English language in China would have been 'phenomenal' but for the Cultural Revolution. Nevertheless, in the 1970s and 1980s studies of English were reframed as being important for building closer ties with the West and also with notions of 'modernisation'. In the 1990s the logic shifted again to be more associated with 'international stature'. Indeed as the Ministry of Education notes in a policy document from the year 2000: 'The learning and mastery of a foreign language for international exchange is a basic requirement for a citizen in the 21st century'.[22]

The authors make the point that the logic of language policy in China has shifted from promoting languages for their instrumental value, towards a 'humanistic approach' that views learning a foreign language as benefiting 'critical thinking ability, information gathering and analysis ability, problem solving ability, and a world vision'.[23] The authors conclude that although implementing a 'humanistic' logic to learning languages is laudable, the challenge is with implementation, which will ultimately fall to the teachers.[24]

Similar lessons can be drawn from Australia's language education policy history. Lo Bianco and Slaughter trace the history of Australian languages policy and point out that there was no coherent national policy until the National Policy on Languages in 1987.[25] Further, language policy was shaped by different interest groups with support from academic research.

In order for language programs to be sustainable, there needs to be a 'clear rationale, purpose and clearly defined outcomes' built into language programs.

The five 'decisive reports' noted by Lo Bianco and Slaughter are as follows:

1. Report on Post–Arrival Programs and Services for Migrants (Galbally, 1978).
2. National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco, 1987).
3. Australian Language and Literacy Policy (DEET, 1991).
4. National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (COAG, 1994).
5. Commonwealth Literacy Policy (embodied in various reports, media statements and funding programs since 1997).

According to the authors, the policies 'differ from each other in remit, scope and style, but through formal adoption and implementation they received government endorsement, disbursing public finances and shaping action'.[26] These different policy initiatives have been driven by a diverse range of interest groups, including: language professionals; immigrant community organizations; Indigenous community organisations; and diplomatic, trade and security representatives. As Lo Bianco and Slaughter argue, these groups 'constitute the agitation around the national language decisions which in recent decades have debated, argued, disagreed and occasionally collaborated'.[27]

Another study by Martin on the history of Australian languages policy reviews the major developments in language teaching in Australian universities since the 19th century. The study argues that the following four factors have contributed to 'the relative scarcity of language teaching in Australian universities today':

- decisions made in the 1970s, when language entrance requirements for universities were waived
- curriculum reforms in the secondary schools that resulted in reduced language provision
- the predominance of economic rationalist policies in government since the early 1990s; and
- a lack of community value for the use of languages other than English in Australia.[28]

These findings are consistent with earlier reports which argued that in order for language programs to be sustainable, there needs to be a 'clear rationale, purpose and clearly defined outcomes' built into language programs.[29]

21 W. Wang and A.S.L. Lam (2009) 'The English Language Curriculum for Senior Secondary School in China: Its Evolution from 1949', *RELC Journal*, vol. 40, no. 65, p. 67.

22 ibid., pp. 69-70.

23 ibid., pp. 72-73.

24 ibid., p. 74.

25 J. Lo Bianco and Y. Slaughter (2009) Australian Education Review: Second Languages and Australian Schooling, Camberwell, Australian Council for Educational Research, p. 22.

26 Ibid.

27 ibid., p. 24.

28 M. D. Martin (2005) 'Permanent Crisis, Tenuous Persistence: Foreign languages in Australian universities', *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 53-75.

29 Department of Education Training and Youth Affairs (1998) *Factors Influencing the Uptake of Modern Standard Chinese, Korean, Modern Greek and German at Primary and Secondary Level in Australian Schools*, Perth, Education Department of Western Australia, p. 1.

The overriding logic promoted for studying languages relates to employment and economic issues. However, almost ninety percent of students choose not to study a language in years 11 and 12.

Creating an environment that is conducive to the early uptake of languages has been demonstrated to be critical for ensuring that students continue learning languages beyond primary school. As Lo Bianco and Slaughter note, the 'modest requirements' in Australian curriculum for language study often result in low rates of participation and high rates of attrition beyond Year 8.[30] Further, the diversity among programs had resulted in a distinct lack of a clearly articulated fundamental purpose of studying languages.[31]

Lo Bianco and Slaughter also note that the lack of purpose creates further systemic problems with the transition from primary to secondary school, which in turn 'damages children's motivation, parent's interest and the general community's tolerance'.[32] Importantly, however, the report points out that there is a lack of research tracking the efficacy of providing a seamless transition or 'joined up thinking' from primary to secondary school.[33]

At the secondary school level, the report points out that the overriding logic promoted for studying languages relates to employment and economic issues. However, almost ninety percent of students choose not to study a language in years 11 and 12.[34] A number of reports have pointed out that the perception of being unable to achieve adequate tertiary entrance scores in a language class is a significant factor.[35] This has proved to be a significant issue in a number of studies despite senior language courses attracting incentives with regard to tertiary scores.[36] When this perception issue is coupled with 'complicated pathways' it proves to be a 'hurdle too great at a time of considerable pressure and anxiety for many students'.[37]

Principals, school staff, parents and community members need support to better appreciate the task of learning Chinese, its value for the individual and the country, and be aware of how they may assist its success.

The *Four Languages, Four Stories* [38] summary report also raised concern about the content of school programs. For example, the report noted that a Chinese program in primary school, in some instances, often amounted to little more than a superficial understanding of the culture. Further, there was insufficient demand to tailor courses to suit both students that were absolute beginners and those that have a background in the language. The report recommended that: 'Principals, school staff, parents and community members need support to better appreciate the task of learning Chinese, its value for the individual and the country, and be aware of how they may assist its success'.[39]

The same report notes that increasing the uptake of language learning in Australia will be difficult 'without new and sustained evidence–based efforts specifically tailored for each language'.[40] For example, the report notes several issues specific to Indonesian that have a major impact on the level of demand, in particular the lack of a coordinated advocacy group. The report notes that the 'complexities of Australia's overarching relationship with Indonesia, events that take place in Indonesia, community attitudes towards Indonesia and popular media coverage of Indonesia are impacting significantly on Indonesian language learning in schools'.[41] (For more on this issue, see Section 6: Student Beliefs and Attitudes to Language Learning.)

A study conducted in the UK reviewed a joint program designed to assess the higher education sector's ability to 'influence and support linguists and post-16 establishments in enhancing progression to studying languages at university'. The report found that although support from the higher education sector motivated students in their final years of high school, there was merit in targeting students 'much further down the supply chain' through 'tailored linguistic and motivational support strategies'.[42]

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30 J. Lo Bianco and Y. Slaughter (2009) *Australian Education Review: Second Languages and Australian Schooling*, Camberwell, Australian Council for Educational Research, p. 41.

31 ibid., p. 46.

32 ibid., p. 48.

33 ibid.

34 ibid., p. 49.

35 See eg: A. J. Liddicoat et al (2007) *Investigation of the State and Nature of Languages in Australian Schools*, Canberra, Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations; J. Lo Bianco and Y. Slaughter (2009) *Australian Education Review: Second Languages and Australian Schooling*, Camberwell, Australian Council for Educational Research, p. 50.

36 J. Orton (2008) *Chinese Language Education in Australian Schools*, Melbourne, The University of Melbourne; J. Lo Bianco and Y. Slaughter (2009) *Australian Education Review: Second Languages and Australian Schooling*, Camberwell, Australian Council for Educational Research, p. 50.

37 ibid.

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38 Asia Education Foundation (2010) *The Current State of Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean Language Education in Australian Schools*, Carlton South, Education Services Australia.

39 ibid., p. 12.

40 ibid., p. 9.

41 ibid., p. 14.

42 H. Harnisch et al (2011) 'Lost in transition: Languages transition from post–16 schooling to higher education', *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 159-160.

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

The study highlights that there are a broad range of reasons why students decide not to continue with a language in university, such as lack of preparation, insufficient study skills, or expectations not being met.[43] Students gave the following reasons for wanting to continue with studying a language at university: enjoyment, career prospects, and wanting to live or work abroad.[44] When asked what would make the transition easier, students made the following observations: the study of literature, extra grammar, listening activities and support. The key suggestion, the report notes, was to ensure that the pathways from high school to university were linked up.[45]

> 3.2 Cross–curricula studies of Asia

Liddicoat and Scarino highlight the importance of an intercultural orientation to language learning, which is intended to give salience to: 'the fundamental integration of language, culture and learning in learning and using any language, and the reality of at least two languages being constantly at play in learning an additional language'.[46] This approach is designed to give students an understanding of 'their own "situatedness" in their own language and culture, and the recognition of the same in others'.[47] Students that take part in intercultural language learning also develop the ability to reflect on the 'variable ways in which language and culture exist in the world'.[48]

Studies of Asia embedded as core content across all learning areas, not only languages, are essential if Asia literacy is to be achieved for all young Australians through their schooling.[49] As highlighted by ACARA, 'India, China and other Asian nations are growing and their influence on the world is increasing. Australians need to become "Asia literate" by building strong relationships with Asia'.[50]

Data available indicates that across Australia it is only a small minority of students who undertake studies with content or focus on Asia.

A study released by the AEF reviewed the extent to which students completed subjects that had a focus or content on Asia. The study was focused on Year 12 tertiary entrance subjects across English, History, Geography, International Studies, Politics and Art. A key message from this report was that:

> Data available indicates that across Australia it is only a small minority of students who undertake studies with content or focus on Asia.[51]

Several key findings in the report support this conclusion. First, many of the subjects allow for Asia specific content to be included, but students and teachers are not acting on this opportunity. The report specifically points out that teachers 'are not likely to select material with which they themselves are unfamiliar or may have never studied'.[52]

Further, only rarely is content focused on Asia a 'mandatory' part of the curriculum. For example, there is no 'mandatory content focused on Asia in geography' and national politics does not have any specific Asia focused content, despite foreign policy forming part of the course.[53]

Secondly, most of the material that does have content focused on Asia is delivered from an Australian or Western perspective. The report draws the conclusion that there is a 'strong disposition for the inclusion of content on Europe rather than content on Asia...'.[54] As the report notes, these key points suggest that: 'Simply making content or focus on Asia available as an option in courses does not appear to be stimulating the study of Asia'.[55]

Owen et al raised a similar conclusion regarding the importance of influencing the curriculum and programs.[56] The study suggests a model to 'encourage greater uptake of studies of Asia and Australia in schools' and notes a causal connection between what happens in good practice schools and external factors that affect that practice.[57]

43 ibid.

44 ibid., p. 166.

45 Ibid., p. 167.

46 A. Scarino and A. J. Liddeicoat (2009) 'Teaching and Learning Languages', DEEWR website, viewed 16 April 2012, p. 33. (www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/Programs/Documents/Guide.pdf).

47 ibid.

48 ibid.

49 For example, see ACARA (2010) 'The Shape of the Australian Curriculum', ACARA website, viewed 16 April 2012, (www.acara.edu.au/publications.html).

50 ibid. p. 5.

51 J. Wilkinson and G. Milgate (2009) *Studies of Asia in Year 12*, Melbourne, ACER, p. ii.

52 Ibid., p. iii.

53 Ibid.

54 ibid., p. iii.

55 Ibid., p. ii.

56 J. Owen et al (2006) *The Future of Studies of Asia and Australia in Australian Schools: An Evaluative Investigation*, Canberra, DEST.

57 ibid., p. 3.

The report made some significant findings regarding management of programs. Three key elements, or drivers, were identified:

- curriculum policies and frameworks
- assessment of students and exams; and
- support for schools through resources and professional learning.[58]

In terms of implementing change and building demand Owen et al emphasise the importance of professional learning for teachers, and having leaders capable of influencing and implementing Asia focused programs.[59] Thus, having the right curriculum is necessary but it is equally important to have capable teachers and school leaders to initiate, drive and facilitate implementation.

Summary

With regard to curriculum the following three themes emerge from the literature.

- A clear logic is required to build student, community and school demand for Asian languages.
- Better pathways for language study need to be established to ensure students continue to study languages at year 12 and beyond.
- Simply making Asia focused content available in curriculum documentation does not drive student or teacher demand. This demand needs to be built through teacher professional learning, curriculum resources support and general community understanding.

58   ibid., p. 7.

59   ibid. pp. 10-11.

The pre-service training teachers receive was highlighted as seriously lacking and in need of 'urgent reform' in order to 'attract and keep quality students'.

> ## 4.1 Asian Languages

In the *Four Languages, Four Stories* report, it was noted that 'First Language' (L1) teachers in the target languages 'often struggle to adapt to Australian school "culture" and to contemporary Australian approaches to teaching'.[60] Concern was also raised with regard to the 'linguistic proficiency' of 'Second language' (L2) teachers in the taught language, with a significant need for professional learning in this area. In addition, the pre-service training teachers receive was highlighted as seriously lacking and in need of 'urgent reform' in order to 'attract and keep quality students…'.[61]

In order to address these concerns, different approaches have been used across the different languages, and also across the different states. The Victorian Department of Education, for example, currently lists 20 projects being implemented under the auspices of the NALSSP.[62] For example, the Leadership Learning for Asian Languages School Leaders program is targeted at improving the capacity of schools leaders to implement NALSSP programs. A further example is the Chinese Teacher Training Centre, which was awarded funding for a project that streamed video of actual Chinese lessons with Year 9 students followed by a briefing with other teachers involved in the professional learning program. Teachers were then encouraged to make changes to their own lessons based on the discussion.[63]

Despite these initiatives to improve the quality of teachers of Chinese, the report notes the following factors as significant reasons for the high student attrition rate in Chinese language programs:

• the anecdotal presence of strong numbers of first language speakers, locally born or otherwise, who share their classes with L2 learners and have an advantage in assessments

• the lack of success of L2 learners in developing proficiency, which is due to the intrinsic difficulties of Chinese for an English–speaking learner, combined with insufficient teaching of certain aspects, and an inadequate provision of time needed for the task; and

One of the most common themes to emerge from the literature is the critical role that teachers and school leaders play in initiating and managing Asian studies programs.

• often L2 learners attempt to learn the language in an environment at school, in their family, and in the community, that is less than optimum.[64]

While not all of these problems can be directly addressed by teachers and school leaders, clearly the way programs are developed and managed at the school level can have a significant impact on these variables.

The report also points out that the availability of qualified teachers is a 'primary concern' of principals considering starting a Chinese language program.[65]

However, it should also be borne in mind that other languages do not have the same set of problems as Chinese. For example, the proportion of L1 teachers in Indonesian is relatively small compared to Chinese or Japanese.[66] The issue is different again for teachers of Korean, with many not having 'highly developed competency in English'.[67]

In order to address these problems the report makes recommendations that include establishing national leadership groups for each language, and supporting teachers through working groups and professional learning. However, each language requires a slightly different approach. Thus, the key message to come out of these reports is that building demand will require addressing the specific problems associated with teaching and leadership within in each language: whether it is national leadership and advocacy or some form of tailored professional learning.

> ## 4.2 Asia literacy and cross curricula studies of Asia

One of the most common themes to emerge from the literature is the critical role that teachers and school leaders play in initiating and managing Asian studies programs. As Wilkinson and Milgate argue: 'Simply making content or focus on Asia available as an option in courses does not appear to be stimulating the study of Asia'.[68] What has been demonstrated to be central in stimulating demand is the presence of a 'pedagogical leader'.[69] Further, the report notes that: 'What teachers know and teach about will of course reflect to some extent the content of their own tertiary education, including teacher training'.[70]

60   Asia Education Foundation (2010) *The Current State of Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean Language Education in Australian Schools*, Carlton South, Education Services Australia, p. 8.

61   ibid.

62   See DEECD (2012) 'National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program', DEECD website, viewed 16 April 2012.

63   Chinese Teacher Training Centre (2012) 'NALSSP Strategic Partnership Grant', Melbourne Graduate School of Education website, viewed 16 April 2012, (http://education.unimelb. edu.au/cttc).

64   Ibid., p. 11.

65   Ibid., p. 12.

66   Ibid., p. 15.

67   Ibid., p. 21.

68   J. Wilkinson and G. Milgate (2009) *Studies of Asia in Year 12*, Melbourne, ACER, p. ii.

69   C. Halse (1999) *Encountering Cultures: The Impact of Study Tours to Asia on Australian Teachers and Teaching Practice*, Melbourne, AEF, p. 32; See also D. McRae (2011) *Asia Literacy Ambassadors: Partnering Businesses & Schools*, Melbourne, AEF, p. 21.

70   ibid p iii.

Similar findings were made in the *Four Languages Four Stories* reports.[71] However, a language teacher alone rarely fulfills this role, rather a wider support base is required. As McRae argues in his evaluation of the Asia Literacy Business Ambassadors in Schools program:

> *...the inclusion of a large group of school administrators acting as key school contacts (for the program)...has been important. That is the locus of power in schools.[72]*

4.2.1 School leaders

In this context, the Leading 21st Century Schools Victoria (L21CSV) program has been instrumental.[73] Based on the findings of the study conducted by Owens et al[74] that highlighted the importance of a pedagogical leader to drive Asia literacy in schools, the L21CSV program was designed to 'support principals in leading the inclusion of studies of Asia across the curriculum in order to build students' level of Asia literacy'.[75] In terms of school leadership and change, the Owens et al study notes that the quality of in–school professional learning is central to facilitating implementation, and recommended the following steps for implementation:

- engage school leaders
- invoke principal self interest
- use influential state level curriculum officers
- have committed principals and other leaders
- liaise with existing associations; and
- ensure strategies are suitable within that particular State.[76]

The in–country study programs should be viewed as a *starting point* rather than an *end point* for participants' professional development.

In the assessment report for the L21CSV program, several key recommendations were made, including that professional learning programs be maintained and enhanced.[77] The AEF notes that the broader Leading 21st Century Schools program 'supports principals and school leaders to implement the Australian Curriculum's *Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia cross curriculum priority*, and the general capacity of intercultural understanding'.[78] A series of case studies are available on the AEF website demonstrating how the program has been implemented in different schools.[79]

Recommendations for professional learning programs build on a study in 1999, which reviewed the impact of study tours to Asia on Australian teachers.[80] In that report, Halse found that study tours offered a unique way of engaging teachers with multiple aspects of a culture, which had 'different degrees of relevance' to the written school curricula.[81] The teachers in these programs reported an increase in the 'quality and depth of their knowledge' in addition to an awareness of their gaps in understanding.[82]

In general terms, the report concluded that teachers became passionate advocates of studies of Asia in their schools as a result of participating in study tour programs in Asia. However, Halse argues in conclusion that the in-country study programs should be viewed as "a *starting point* rather than an *end point* for participants' professional development".[83]

A more recent report in 2011 evaluated the impact of a study tour program conducted by Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) and the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD).[84]

71 Asia Education Foundation (2010) *The Current State of Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean Language Education in Australian Schools*, Carlton South, Education Services Australia.

72 D. McRae (2011) *Asia Literacy Ambassadors: Partnering Businesses & Schools*, Melbourne, AEF, p. 21.

73 See Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2012) *Leading 21st Century Schools Victoria — Engage with Asia Project*, Melbourne, DEECD.

74 J. Owen et al (2006) *The Future of Studies of Asia and Australia in Australian Schools: An Evaluative Investigation*, Canberra, DEST.

75 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2012) *Leading 21st Century Schools Victoria — Engage with Asia Project*, Melbourne, DEECD, p. 14.

76 J. Owen et al (2006) *The Future of Studies of Asia and Australia in Australian Schools: An Evaluative Investigation*, Canberra, DEST, pp. 15–17.

77 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2012) *Leading 21st Century Schools Victoria — Engage with Asia Project*, Melbourne, DEECD, p. 52.

78 AEF (2012) 'Leading 21st Century Schools', AEF website, viewed 16 April 2012, (www.asiaeducation.edu.au/l21cs).

79 AEF (2012) 'School Stories: leading Asia literacy', AEF website, viewed 16 April 2012, (www.asiaeducation.edu.au/for_school_leaders/school_change/c21_school_case_studies/c21_school_case_studies_landing.html).

80 C. Halse (1999) *Encountering Cultures: The Impact of Study Tours to Asia on Australian Teachers and Teaching Practice*, Melbourne, AEF.

81 ibid., p. 9.

82 Ibid., pp. 13-15.

83 ibid., p. 14.

84 David Kay Training and Development (2011) *Evaluation of the Eastern Metropolitan Region China Study Tour Program*, Melbourne, David Kay Training and Development. (unpublished).

Professional learning for teachers is critical to developing Asia literacy within schools.

The program involved 30 principals and teachers from 10 EMR schools, with a 12 day visit to China. A stated objective of the program was to build leadership skills and confidence 'to teach about Asia and integrate global perspectives into the curriculum'.[85] With regard to this objective, the report found that around 80 per cent of the participants had noted a discernable impact on the curriculum and leadership in implementing this change.[86]

The report makes several significant findings, including the following. First, of the seven schools involved in the program that offered Mandarin, six of them had noted 'improvements or strengthening of their Chinese Language program as a result of the project'.[87] Secondly, all of the respondents reported an improved ability to teach about Asia and global perspectives.[88] Finally, and perhaps most significantly, just over half felt that involvement in the program had an impact on their students' learning outcomes. As the report notes, it is expected that more significant shifts will occur as programs are implemented and teacher capacity develops further.[89] The report concludes that professional learning for teachers is critical to developing Asia literacy within schools, and study tours have a significant role to play in this regard.

4.2.2 Teachers

A recent Grattan Institute study[90] of high performing education systems in East Asia provides some general points that may be transferable to driving success in Asia literacy. Citing several international research papers, the report argues that there is 'growing global agreement on what works in schools'. East Asian systems:

- pay attention to what works and what doesn't work. They attend to best practice internationally, give close attention to measuring success, and understand the state and needs of their system

- value teachers and understand their profession to be complex. They attract high quality candidates, turn them into effective instructors and build a career structure that rewards good teaching; and

- focus on learning and on building teacher capacity to provide it. Teachers are educated to diagnose the style and progress of a child's learning. Mentoring, classroom observation and constructive feedback create more professional, collaborative teachers.

With regard to the systems studied in East Asia, the report notes that their success is due in part to implementing one or several of the following reforms. They:

- provide high quality initial teacher education;

- provide teacher mentoring that continually improves learning and teaching;

- view teachers as researchers;

- use classroom observation; and

- promote effective teachers and give them more responsibility.

In conclusion the report notes that in Australia there is 'a disconnect between policy and classrooms'. In particular the report noted that: mentoring and induction programs are poor; teacher development is often not suited to teachers' needs; effective teaching is not recognised; feedback to improve teaching is poor; and finally, initial teacher education often fails to prepare effective teachers.[91]

While the issues pointed out in the report are more general in their scope, further research may be needed to understand how they systemically impact on down–stream programs such as Asia literacy and Asian language programs.

Summary

This section highlighted the importance of teachers and leaders in building demand for Asian languages and Asia literacy. One of the key issues highlighted in the literature is that building demand will require addressing the specific problems associated with teaching and leadership within each language. These tailored programs may range from national leadership and advocacy to teacher specific professional learning. The key, however, is to address the specific problems and obstacles to building demand that are identified within each language, rather than implementing a 'one–size–fits–all' approach.

The key message to come out of the literature is that teachers and leaders play a critical role in developing and implementing programs, such as the Leading 21st Century Schools program.

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85 ibid., p. 5.

86 ibid., p. 12.

87 Ibid., p. 16.

88 Ibid., p. 21.

89 ibid., p. 26.

90 B. Jensen (2012) 'Catching up: Learning from the best school systems in East Asia, Grattan Institute, viewed 10 March 2012, (http://grattan.edu.au/publications/reports/post/catching-up-learning-from-the-best-school-systems-in-east-asia/).

91 http://grattan.edu.au/static/files/assets/69a59c9a/129_report_learning_from_the_best_main.pdf

> ## 5.1 Parents

In addition to having pedagogical leaders to implement changes to the curriculum, some reports have pointed out the importance of having broader support from parents.

A study conducted in China assessing parental involvement in the process of a student learning English demonstrates the important role that parents play in the learning process.[92] The report shows how parents are involved indirectly as advocates, facilitators and collaborators with the language teacher. Further, parents are directly involved as advisors to the students, 'coercers' and nurturers. Gao argues that teachers need to be more proactive in establishing a 'school-family/teacher-parent partnership in learner development programs'.[93] Understanding how these findings translate to the Australian context, and how engaging parents can be used to build demand for languages, requires further research.

In 2006 the AEF, the Australian Council of State Schools Organizations (ACSSO) and the Australian Parents Council (APC) conducted a study in order to 'gain an understanding of the attitude of parents in government and non-government schools towards the place of studies of Asia as a cross-curriculum initiative in Australian schools'.[94]

The report found that parents strongly support policies and programs designed to engage Australia with Asia.[95] However, despite acknowledging the importance of these initiatives, particularly with regard to school programs, 'a significant proportion of parents had difficulty in assessing how studies of Asia could be incorporated into the curriculum'.[96] For example, 58 per cent stated that they would have difficulty in assigning a priority to it and around 45 per cent viewed studies of Asia as being 'optional'.[97]

The report concluded that 'for parents to be in a position to provide their strong support for the work of the AEF, they need to have a clear understanding of the nature of studies of Asia'.[98]

Ten strategies were suggested in the report to achieve this end:

- establish an implementation group
- develop an information/communication strategy
- commission targeted research
- collaboratively develop curriculum;
- involve Asian parents
- conferences and workshops
- involve parents in AEF activities
- publications
- play an advocacy role; and
- develop policy.

The NALSSP parent advocacy initiative, Parents Understanding Asia Literacy (PUAL)[99] is an interesting development in this regard. The PUAL program states that it will focus on the four NALSSP target countries (China, Korea, Indonesia and Japan) to:

- build an engaged, informed and supported network of parents focused on Asian languages and studies for their children and communities
- support parents to effectively and positively engage with their school and community to deepen understanding of the personal and social implications of Asian engagement for their children; and
- develop parental understanding of what is possible and achievable through highlighting existing examples of good practice in relation to Asian languages and studies programs in schools, and provision of peer examples of parents supporting Asian languages and studies.[100]

> ## 5.2 Business

Given the growing importance of Asia to Australia's economy,[101] business and industry groups have been calling for schools and education systems to develop Asian language and Asia literacy skills among Australian students. For example, the *Business Alliance for Asia Literacy* made the following statement:

> *'We, as representatives of leading Australian businesses and industry organisations, call on our schools, on school communities, on education systems and on our Governments to ensure that:*

92 X. Gao (2006) 'Strategies Used by Chinese Parents to Support English Language Learning', *RELC Journal*, vol. 37, no. 3, p. 285.

93 ibid.

94 Asia Education Foundation (2006) *Views of Members of the Executive of the Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO) and Australian Parents Council (APC) on Studies of Asia in Australian Schools*, Melbourne, AEF.

95 ibid., p. 5.

96 ibid.

97 ibid., p. 6.

98 ibid., p. 7.

99 Parents Understanding Asia Literacy (2012) 'Building demand for Asian Languages and Studies', PUAL website, viewed 20 March 2012, (http://pual.org.au/).

100 ibid.

101 R. Thomson and A. Leahy (2011) *PwC Melbourne Institute Asialink Index*, Melbourne, PwC.

- *Asia skills and Asian languages are a core part of Australian curriculum delivery of this is adequately funded*
- *senior students are given incentives to take up Asia studies and Asian languages; and*
- *teachers are equipped and available to teach Asia skills.*[102]

The need for this development is well argued in a major Australian Industry Group /Asialink survey highlighting the need for a greater level of Asia literacy in business. That report found that over half of the businesses surveyed that are currently operating in Asia had 'little board and senior management experience of Asia and/or Asia skills or languages'.[103]

Programs such as the *Asia Literacy Ambassadors* project have been developed to bridge the skills gap through building demand for Asian languages and Asia literacy in schools. The program was designed to 'promote and stimulate and increase student interest in Asia literacy in Australian secondary schools'.[104] A review was conducted in order to 'understand the impact of the project's school–business interactions on demand for Asia literacy among students and school communities'.[105]

In the report, McRae argues that the program was 'highly suitable' for building demand for Asia literacy. Very high levels of satisfaction are evident among all groups of participants. From a schools point of view it worked by a having a new face with real and recent Asian experience who is interesting and engaging with a good story to tell.[106]

McRae points out that the term Asia literacy remains an issue. This seems to be a recurrent theme throughout the literature. McRae sums up this point as follows:

> *The way it [Asia literacy] is described tends to suggest that Asian languages differ from studies of Asia for example and it is not entirely clear how both relate to the project's overarching objective: 'to promote Asia literacy in schools, and stimulate and increase student interest in Asia literacy'.*[107]

While many studies point out the important role that individual elements play in building demand, there are few studies that empirically test these ideas.

Indeed this point seems to be the direction that the existing literature has been heading towards. The separation of Asian languages from the broader concept of Asia literacy is confusing to strategies that aim to build demand for Asia literacy. Significant gaps in the literature begin to emerge at this point. While many studies point out the important role that individual elements — such as pedagogical leaders — play in building demand, there are few studies that empirically test these ideas. Further, the possible causal relationship that McRae eludes to between building interest in Asia and Asia focused content and the consequent demand for languages has not been investigated in depth.

Summary

This section reviewed the literature that highlights the role of external partnerships in building demand for Asian languages and Asia literacy. The role of parents in supporting schools programs was noted, with the PUAL program being a recent example of current initiatives in this area. In addition, the role of business groups was also reviewed. The role of industry engagement through programs such as the Asia Literacy Ambassadors project is an essential part of the multifaceted approach required to build demand for Asian languages and Asia literacy.

102 Business Alliance for Asia Literacy (2012) *Statement of the Business Alliance for Asia Literacy*, Melbourne, Asialink.

103 AIG and Asialink (2011) *Engaging Asia: Getting it right for Australian Business*, Melbourne, The University of Melbourne.

104 D. McRae (2011) Asia Literacy Ambassadors: Partnering Businesses & Schools, Melbourne, AEF, p. 8.

105 ibid.

106 ibid., p. 6.

107 ibid., p. 21.

At the core of driving demand for Asia literacy is the need to influence more students to be interested in learning about Asian cultures and languages. Several studies have shown that 'belief systems, social cognitions and metacognitions are a driving force for intellectual performance, including acquisition of foreign languages'.[108]

Perceptions about language learning can have a direct impact on a student's ability to learn a language.[109] A student may hold strong perceptions regarding the difficulty of learning the language and the process of acquisition, in addition to their own ability to successfully acquire language skills.[110] Indeed Bernat and Gvozdenko argue that:

Identification of these beliefs and reflection on their potential impact on language learning and teaching in general, as well as in more specific areas such as the learners' expectations and strategies used, can inform future syllabus design and teacher practice in the course.[111]

Further to this point, there is a broad body of literature supporting the argument that having realistic expectations about learning a language is critical to learning outcomes.[112] It follows that building demand for languages, or at least sustaining it, requires addressing this key concern.

A number of studies have demonstrated that understanding learner perceptions is essential to ensure the success of language programs.[113] Further, properly addressing student misconceptions can assist in resolving a number of obstacles to learning a language.[114]

More research is needed to determine what strategies can have a positive impact on student beliefs and attitude towards language learning.

However, there is a broader socio–cultural issue that needs to be addressed. Mohebi and Khodadady refer to a study by Diab[115] of students of English and French in Lebanon, which found that:

…different cultural backgrounds, background variables within group and variation in a particular group's belief about learning different target languages are influential factors on learner belief. Findings indicated that learning a foreign language seemed to be related to the political and socio–cultural context.[116]

These findings are reinforced by studies on Australian and American students.[117] However, more research is needed to determine what strategies can have a positive impact on student beliefs and attitude towards language learning.[118]

These concerns relate to the notion of 'foreign language anxiety', which has been the subject of some significant research.[119] A study by Bailey et al demonstrated that students with the highest levels of anxiety had lower expectations regarding their achievement in foreign language courses and low perceptions regarding their global self worth, scholastic competence, intellectual ability, and job competence. Notably, these students usually had not undertaken a foreign language course in high school.[120] Clearly there is a need to address these perceptions and the issue of 'foreign language anxiety' at an early stage in student's involvement with foreign language learning. Although, as Bailey et al note, there is a need for further research in this area.

Some studies look at what motivates children to learn a foreign language. Nikolov conducted a study on students aged between 6 and 14 to assess 'why they think they study a foreign language, how they relate to school subjects and what classroom activities they like and dislike'.[121]

108 M. Siew–Lian Wong (2010) 'Beliefs about Language Learning: A Study of Malaysian Pre–Service Teachers', *RELC Journal*, vol. 41, no. 2, p. 124; AH Shoenfeld (1983) 'Beyond the purely cognitive: belief systems, social cognitions, and metacognitions as driving forces for intellectual performance', *Cognitive Science*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 329–363.

109 M. Siew–Lian Wong (2010) 'Beliefs about Language Learning: A Study of Malaysian Pre–Service Teachers', *RELC Journal*, vol. 41, no. 2, p. 124.

110 E. Bernat and I. Gvozdenko (2005) 'Beliefs about Language Learning: Current Knowledge, Pedagogical Implications, and New Research Directions', *TESL-EJ*, vol. 9, no. 1, p. 1.

111 ibid.

112 See M. Siew–Lian Wong (2010) 'Beliefs about Language Learning: A Study of Malaysian Pre-Service Teachers', *RELC Journal*, vol. 41, no. 2, p. 124; K. Tanaka and R. Ellis (2003) Study abroad, language proficiency and learner beliefs about language learning, *JALT Journal*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 63–85.

113 See S. G. Mohebi and E. Khodadady (2011) 'Investigating University Students' Beliefs about Language Learning', *RELC Journal*, vol. 42, no. 3, pp. 291–304.

114 ibid.

115 R.L. Diab (2006) University students' beliefs about learning English and French in Lebanon, *System*, vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 80–96.

116 ibid., p. 293.

117 E. Bernat (2006) 'Assessing EAP learners' beliefs about language learning in the Australian context', *Asian EFL Journal*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 291–304; cited in S. G. Mohebi and E. Khodadady (2011) 'Investigating University Students' Beliefs about Language Learning', *RELC Journal*, vol. 42, no. 3, p. 294.

118 E. Bernat and I. Gvozdenko (2005) 'Beliefs about Language Learning: Current Knowledge, Pedagogical Implications, and New Research Directions', *TESL–EJ*, vol. 9, no. 1, p. 13.

119 See eg P. Bailey et al (2000) 'Correlates of Anxiety at Three Stages of the Foreign Language Learning Process', *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 474–490.

120 ibid.

121 M. Nikolov (1999) 'Why do you learn English? Because the teacher is short: A study of Hungarian children's foreign language learning motivation', *Language Teaching Research*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 33-56.

There is no single approach to driving demand for languages given the shifting motivations of students depending on their age and existing level of learning

The study makes reference to existing literature[122] in this area, most of which is now quite dated, draws some conclusions that are still relevant for current purposes. Nikolov argues that the most important factor influencing the desire to study a language is the learning context and the teacher. Further, students are more likely to be motivated by 'classroom practice than integrative or instrumental reasons'.[123] Perhaps the most interesting conclusion from this study is that instrumental motives only emerged at around the age of 11 or 12, but remained 'vague and general'. Nikolov suggests the following implications stem from the study:

> …on the one hand, children are motivated in FLL [foreign language learning] if they find classroom activities, tasks and material interesting and the teacher supportive. On the other hand, although the importance of instrumental motivation increases with age, engagement and persistence in learning activities are not directly influenced by this factor…[124]

The findings in this study reinforce the message that there is no single approach to driving demand for languages given the shifting motivations of students depending on their age and existing level of learning. Indeed, there is a significant body of literature that supports the argument that the younger a student is, the easier it is for them to acquire new language skills. The 'standard view is that neurobiological developments on a strict maturational timetable create limits on language learning capacity'.[125]

A number of studies have been conducted to assess the extent to which the context in which a foreign language is learned can influence the 'strategic competence' of students. Le Pichon et al conducted a study assessing 'children's reactions to situations of communication where they could not understand the language'.[126]

Building demand for languages in high–school and university, requires developing skills and interest at the primary level.

The point of the study was to assess whether children that had language learning experience demonstrated a higher level of strategic competence[127] compared to those that did not. It was found that children that had been exposed to learning a language demonstrated a higher level of strategic competence. What this suggests is that exposing a child to learning a language at an early age will assist not only with language adoption in later formal education, but will also have a beneficial impact on other learning outcomes.

However, as Tochon argues, if the question is 'What age is the best age to learn another language?' then the answer is 'as early as possible'.[128] It follows, therefore, that building demand for languages in high–school and university, requires developing skills and interest at the primary level, and adjusting the message and approach as the student progresses through high school and university.

Tochon refers to a study[129] which reviewed 84 years of data published in *The Modern Language Journal*. That study found four 'goals for the study of languages'.

- Humanistic goals such as reading literature to further understand another culture.
- Practical and utilitarian goals such as finding a job or taking advantage of business opportunities.
- Personal intellectual and linguistic development goals.
- The enjoyment of from travelling to another country and learning about another culture.[130]

Similarly, Trimnell[131] identifies several 'social, economic, professional, and personal reasons why people should learn a language'.[132] It could be argued that building demand for languages requires targeting these underlying motivations.

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122 See ibid., p. 34.

123 ibid., p. 53.

124 p. 53.

125 M.S. Seidenberg and J.D. Zevin (2006) 'Connectionist models in developmental cognitive neuroscience: Critical periods and the paradox of success', in Y. Munakata and M. Johnson (Eds.) *Attention and performance*: Processes of change in brain and cognitive development, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 585-612; cited in F. V. Tochon (2009) 'The Key to Global Understanding: World Languages Education – Why Schools Need to Adapt', *Review of Educational Research*, vol. 70, no. 2, p. 650.

126 E. Le Pichon et al (2010) 'Influence of the context of learning a language on the strategic competence of children', *International Journal of Bilingualism*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp 447-465.

127 Strategic competence is defined as 'the totality of efforts (and the perceived successes and failures of those efforts) of the individual to make sense of the world and his or her place in it'. ibid p. 458.

128 ibid, p. 653.

129 See J. P. Lantlof and G. Sunderman (2001) 'The struggle for a place in the sun: Rationalising foreign language study in the twentieth century', *Modern Language Journal*, vol. 85, no. 1, pp. 5-25.

130 p. 655.

131 E. Trimnell (2005) *Why you need a foreign language and how to learn one*, New York, Beechmont Crest; cited in F. V. Tochon (2009) 'The Key to Global Understanding: World Languages Education – Why Schools Need to Adapt', *Review of Educational Research*, vol. 70, no. 2, p. 656.

132 p. 656.

In summary, there is no single approach to building an interest in the study of languages, rather there needs to be a multifaceted approach that targets students at different stages of their academic development.

However, further research is needed to justify these claims. What is clear from the literature is that the underlying message regarding why studying a language is important needs to change. Tochon makes the point as follows:

> We need to change the language ideologies, as well as the assumptions about languages and their speakers that are enacted in schools, and so articulate new, balanced power relations. The language–as–problem orientation must become…a language–as–resource orientation.[133]

Summary

This section reviewed the role of student attitudes and beliefs in driving demand for Asian languages and Asia literacy. The literature suggests that at the core of these issues is the need to influence more students to be interested in learning about Asian cultures and languages. Perceptions about learning a language, and in particular foreign language anxiety, were noted as key issues to be considered. In addition the benefits of learning a language were also highlighted. The notion of strategic competence was described in the literature, including the importance of encouraging foreign language uptake from an early age.

With regard to the broader issue of the deeper social, economic, professional, and personal reasons why people should learn a language it was noted that addressing these issues may assist with building demand.

In summary, there is no single approach to building an interest in the study of languages, rather there needs to be a multifaceted approach that targets students at different stages of their academic development.

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133 p. 666.

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