



# *Research and development in community languages programs: language as rights, identity and pluralism*

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Paper 2: Jing Qi and Kerry Mullan (Vic)

Paper 3: Lindy Norris (WA)

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*Community languages learning - doing  
justice to diverse communities through  
partnered research and development*


Paper 1: Angela Scarino and Michelle Kohler  
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# Reconceptualising provision

- A *differentiated approach* as a fundamental principle for justice
- Differences impact on program orientation and goals, nature, scope and level/s of language learning that can be expected - continuing undifferentiated provision is not feasible because *program development expectations* would remain the same for *established* and *newly established* programs
- A developmental agenda for all, tailored to history of the program of particular languages, recognising different learners and needs
- Need to shift from 'having a place' towards a differentiated, developmental approach that is relevant to specific languages, their communities and their learners. A fundamental shift that impacts all aspects of development of the program
- Justice in both access and nature of learning, recognising differentiation in all aspects of provision, a development agenda for all, respect for individual languages and their history in SA context.

# What have we done?



Project	Instantiation
Whole of program review	Extensive interviews and focus group discussions and generative conferences with diverse stakeholders (students, teachers, leaders, parents, ESA Board)
Curriculum framework	Working alongside 8 case study teachers, different languages and levels, to build a sustainable process to travel to 'home' school and across schools; curriculum framework based on collective learnings from the process
Suite of professional learning courses (Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced, Leadership)	Interviews/consultation with current facilitators/stocktake; co-design and consultation; trialling and responsive changes
Senior Secondary Pathways and case studies	Extensive interviews with teachers/providers and documentation of 4 case studies



# How have we done it?

A conceptual base across the work that respects the need to orient learning to the lifeworlds of learners, and recognises language learning as:

- multilingual and intercultural in orientation
- personalised - foregrounding the reality of learners' lived experiences
- experiential - bringing in community experiences
- realised through expanded goals - permits variation and making it 'real'/meaningful/memorable for the learner

These features give coherence and do justice to both language development and identity formation.

Justice through:

- Being participatory; all development work has involved participation of various kinds by teachers and communities
- Research-informed development
- Honouring teacher, parent and student voices



## What next?

- Discussion and emerging issues
- Priority on capturing and maintaining student and teacher voice
- Questions of implementation, especially in fragile area of curriculum
- Need for a planned process for implementation and further development
- Supports for implementation

### Justice through:

- Inclusive processes and structures
- Adequate resourcing
- Taking a non-deficit view of teachers, programs and possibilities for development



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*Teaching community languages in Victoria:  
A funds of knowledge model*

Paper 2: Jing Qi and Kerry Mullan  
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# Theoretical lens: Teacher Funds of Knowledge

(González et al., 2005; Hearn, 2016; Hedges, 2012, Marshall & Toohey, 2010; Qi, 2015)



**Findings:  
Teacher funds  
of knowledge:  
Domains,  
categories and  
transferability**


DOMAINS OF FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE	CATEGORIES	TRANSFERABILITY (MANNER AND READINESS)
Personal, interpersonal and community	Deep community knowledge	General/specific
	Organisation skills	General
	Communication and listening skills	General
	Personal experience, e.g. travelling and handicraft skills	General/specific
Intercultural understanding	Educational cultures and approaches across countries	General/specific
	Culturally effective communication approaches	General/specific
Inter-schooling understanding	Mainstream school practice to inform community language schools	General/specific
Understanding about learning	Ways of effective, ethical and moral learning	General/specific
Disciplinary, professional and occupational knowledge	Teaching and Education	Specific
	Language and culture studies	Specific
	Other professional and occupational areas	General/specific – least transferrable but valuable for creative language teaching



How have you used your funds of knowledge in your teaching practices in community language schools?

## **Tapped: Transferrable skills**

- *I provided training to corporate staff and have developed a keen sense of observation and good organisational skills. These are useful in teaching.*
- *I am a salesperson, and the job of sales enhances my communication and listening skills. Sometimes listening to students is also very helpful to your own work.*
- *I worked in the sales business previously and am very sensitive to the needs of students.*
- *I have worked in my community for about 10 years as a community worker. I worked with different community groups and people. I understand the importance of language and communication.*
- *The main requirement to work in customer service is to be a good listener. You need to listen to customers' complaints, you need to understand their needs for you to deliver the problem-solving. So in my class, I always listen. I like challenging my students to talk, I like them to talk, you know, even they couldn't understand each Tamil word. Even though it takes time, it's very difficult for them to come up with ideas, I always guide them to talk.*




## Untapped: Low transferability of some domains of funds of knowledge

- A separated view of language teaching from teachers' weekday jobs.
- Less flexible curricular and pedagogical environments in some schools which are more prescriptive, textbook and test-based, which leaves “less space to be creative”;
- Teacher PD needs for meaningful and relevant approaches to increase the transferability of disciplinary and professional knowledges.
- Teacher PD needs for reconceptualizing the role and nature of community language schools.



# A funds of knowledge approach to PD



In-class discussion of the role and nature of community languages schools

Teacher sharing and discussion of the potential and challenges of using their funds of knowledge

Provision and discussion of strategies to create instructional conditions to support desirable and realistic forms of knowledge and skills transfer.

Encouraging the use of teachers' funds of knowledge to address challenges/professional learning needs in teaching community languages.

Deep learning through linking teacher microteaching to concepts and theories from education psychology

Case studies to illustrate Pointers/Evidence for the Elements of the selected 4/8 Dimensions of Quality Assurance Framework

Teaching research skills and provision of mentoring through individual action research (where possible)



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*The current orientation of community languages  
and their schools in Western Australia*

Paper 3: Lindy Norris  
Murdoch University (WA)



# A legitimate form of languages education provision

For 5 years (up to end of 2020) community languages and their CLS in WA had access to support that enhanced, and highlighted the legitimacy (and quality) of CL:

- PIP (Pathways to Improvement – 4 stage development program – from basic registration to offering yr 12 programs)
- PLP (Professional Learning Program) – complementary and comprehensive PL program
- Shared discourse across all areas of the programs reflective of contemporary SLA and SLT
- Managed by, and delivered at AIM WA – very professional and teachers felt very professional and respected, and CL and CLS were very visible
- Membership of MLTAWA now comprises a significant number of CLS teachers



## Identity and pluralism

- 2 of the 8 standards within the PIP are specifically focused on issues / areas associated with these concepts
- There is a strong focus on activities within schools supporting students' identity formation – being able to operate within the community language and culture and English and the Australian culture.
- CLS teachers and leaders connecting across their cultures and languages
- Strong connections are being built with Councils and their broader communities





## Rights

- Community language teachers became just another group of people / ‘professionals’ who were turning up for PL courses at AIM.
- Community languages and CLS became normalised not marginalised

*“Language can be thought of as culture’s temporal link, carrying the past into the present and forging the future from the here and now.” (Lo Bianco, 2017, p.43)*



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## *Community language schools as bridges?*

Paper 4: Elke Stracke, University of Canberra  
Mandy Scott, Australian National University  
Meredith Box, University of Canberra  
(ACT)



## Our perspective today

- Community schools as bridges? As separate entities?
- *Independent Review of Investment in Community Language Schools* (commissioned by the ACT government in 2020)



## Bridges – with whom and to where?

- Round table discussion, *Community Language School Day*, May 2021
  - PD funded by Community Languages Multicultural Grants (Dept Home Affairs), University of Canberra (Semester 1 2021)
- > Links to identity, rights and pluralism



## Bridges – with whom and to where? cont.

### Canberra Languages Network

- chaired by the ACT Education Directorate
- established in 2009 “so that various groups involved in promoting language maintenance and learning could meet on a regular basis, to share information and encourage and facilitate cooperation across sectors” ([Terms of reference](#))
- workplan ongoing



# Building bridges

## PhD research: development of student values

- students build on mainstream values at CL school
  - respect and cooperation (Tamil CLS)
- students value what affirms their identity
  - enjoyment, safety, achievement (Tamil, Japanese, Polish)
- students support diversity and pluralism
  - foundation to their personal wellbeing (Tamil, Japanese, Polish)



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