



# Teaching and Learning Languages Other Than English (LOTE) in Victorian Schools

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# 1. Introduction

The *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century* identified learning languages other than English as one of the eight key learning areas to be included in a balanced curriculum (MCCETYA 1999). Since then, learning other languages has experienced fluctuating fortunes in the curricula of various Australian states and territories; its struggle for acceptance as a legitimate area in its own right is ongoing. However, contemporary developments—including mass movements of peoples across the globe, increasingly diverse, multicultural communities, rapid technological change and increasing economic globalisation—have highlighted and reinforced the critical need for knowledge and understanding of other languages and cultures. This was recognised by the former Chief of the Australian Defence Force, General Peter Cosgrove, when he remarked that ‘Language skills and cultural sensitivity will be the new currency of this world order’ (Cosgrove 2002).

This report on *Teaching and Learning Languages Other Than English (LOTE) in Victorian Schools* aims to provide a succinct overview of LOTE as part of students’ essential learning. It will do so from a range of perspectives, beginning with a brief summary of policy developments in language teaching in Victoria and nationally. This background material sets the context for the main body of the report, which looks more broadly at language teaching in its contemporary context, drawing from both local and international research literature to explore the significant contributions of LOTE study to students’ learning in a globalised world, and recent developments in research into the principles and practices of effective LOTE teaching. Links will be drawn with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards Discipline-based Learning strand which includes the LOTE domain, comprising the dimensions of ‘communicating in a language other than English’ and ‘intercultural knowledge and language awareness’.

The structure of the report is as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Background: Languages in Victorian schools: local and national issues and perspectives
3. The benefits of language learning: cognitive, academic, general educational, and intercultural
4. Globalisation and language learning—Australian and international perspectives
5. A review of research literature on effective LOTE teaching and learning.

## 2. Background

Many people express surprise to learn that the household of Victoria's first Governor, Charles La Trobe, was bilingual in French and English, and that almost all business transactions in Melbourne in the mid-late years of the nineteenth century could be carried out in German. Four French-English bilingual schools, as well as several German-English ones, operated in Victoria in the late 1800s; the first ethnic school was established in Mill Park in 1857 (Clyne 2005, pp. 1–2). Lo Bianco (2003c, p. 15), describing this period, notes that 'broad toleration of language pluralism was common'. However, the dawning of the twentieth century and the outbreak of the First World War saw a fundamental shift take place in the role and status of languages in Victoria and across Australia. Laws which banned bilingual education were introduced in most states between 1917 and 1918, and restrictions were placed on the amount of broadcasting permitted in 'foreign' languages (Lo Bianco 2003c, p. 16).

Until the mid-1960s, French was the most widely taught second language in Victorian secondary schools, followed by German. By the early 1970s, lobbying by various groups including teachers, academics and ethnic communities saw the introduction of a broader range of language programs, including Italian, into Victorian schools. At about the same time, Asian languages, especially Indonesian and to a lesser extent Japanese, also gained a place in Victorian schools (Clyne, Fernandez & Grey 2004, p. 5). The expansion of language offerings was enhanced by the advent of the comprehensive *National Policy on Languages* (Lo Bianco 1987) which provided the internal social and cultural and external economic and international rationale for multilingualism and second languages acquisition in Australia. Against this backdrop, primary school language programs were introduced in Victoria in the 1980s.

Successive languages in education policies in Victoria have set relatively robust targets for implementation. The 1985 policy document *The role of languages other than English in Victorian schools* proposed 'a concerted effort' over the ensuing 15 years to make the continuous study of LOTE part of the regular education of all children from Prep to Year 12 by the year 2000 (Clyne 2005, p. 154). This ambitious target has yet to be met; figures from *Languages other than English in government schools 2005* compiled on behalf of the Victorian Department of Education & Training show that there has been a gradual decline in the numbers of students learning LOTE at the lower primary level since 1999, although figures at the upper primary level have remained stable (Department of Education & Training 2005). Comparisons with some other states, however, reveal that the situation for LOTE in Victoria is relatively favourable: in 2001, for example, there were 679,822 students studying LOTE across all sectors in Victorian schools, compared to New South Wales (which has a population 25 per cent larger than Victoria) where the figure was 356,890 (Clyne, Fernandez & Grey 2004, p. 6). The 2003 Victorian figures for Year 12 study of languages are also relatively strong in comparison with the national average of 13.5 per cent: in that year, approximately 20.2 per cent of students completing Year 12 in Victorian schools studied a language. In New South Wales the figure was 12.8 per cent, in Queensland 5.9 per cent according to data compiled by curriculum authorities in these states.

Despite Victoria's favourable performance when compared with other states, problems and difficulties persist for LOTE in securing an equal place alongside the other discipline-based domains in the Victorian

curriculum. The LOTE analysis was established in August 2001 to examine future directions for languages, including greater accountability, increased student choice, continuity of access and equity, and greater flexibility in the delivery of language programs. The final report of the steering committee titled *Languages for Victoria's Future* (Department of Education & Training 2002) records several critical issues confronting LOTE programs in Victorian schools, including issues of 'crowded curriculum', the low status of LOTE in comparison with other key learning areas, and inadequate teacher supply. 'In broad terms, the analysis found that the important economic, social and community benefits gained from learning languages are not widely understood both in schools and the wider community...' (Department of Education & Training 2002, p. iii).

These issues are, of course, not unique to Victoria. They have been highlighted in policy documents from other states, and most recently in the 2003 MCEETYA Review of Languages Education in Australian Schools, which developed the 2005 *National Statement for Languages in Australian Schools* (National Statement) and the *National Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2005-2008* (National Plan). The National Statement notes that 'quality languages education is not yet part of the learning experience of all students' (MCEETYA 2005, p. 4) and the National Plan includes 'Advocacy and Promotion of Languages Learning' as one of six nationally agreed interdependent strategic areas (MCEETYA 2005, p. 11).

In late 2005, the Department of Education, Science and Training approved eight significant national projects which are currently addressing a range of national issues surrounding LOTE teaching and learning, including:

- a review of teacher education for languages teachers
- enhancing the quality of Indigenous languages programs
- an investigation into the state and nature of languages education in Australian schools
- the development of a nationally co-ordinated strategy and materials to promote language learning to parents, students, schools and the wider community.

Complementing these projects is a national professional learning program, the Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning in Practice (ILTLP) Project, which aims to develop languages teachers' knowledge and understanding of intercultural language teaching and learning. This newly emerging perspective is reflected in its inclusion as one of the two dimensions of the LOTE domain in the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (the Standards).

### 3. The benefits of language learning

Teachers of mathematics and science in Australian schools rarely if ever find themselves in the position of having to justify the place of their discipline in students' education; for teachers of LOTE, however, there appears to be an ongoing need to advocate for the importance and benefits of languages study to the overall education of students. In this regard there are many parallels with other countries in which English is the principal language, including the USA and the UK, both of which continue to produce reviews and reports lamenting the lack of recognition for the benefits of language learning, the low status of language study, the poor uptake amongst secondary and tertiary students and the lack of recognition of the importance of language skills amongst business leaders. These studies include the Nuffield Languages Inquiry (1998–2000) in the UK (The Nuffield Foundation 2000) and *Looking Beyond Borders: the importance of foreign area and language studies* 2005 in the USA (National Association of State Boards of Education 2005). Writing in the US context about languages in the elementary (primary) school, Curtain and Dahlberg (2004, p. 395) note:

Every skill and outcome that is important to society is introduced through the elementary school curriculum. The lists of curriculum requirements in almost every state attest to the importance of reading, math, social studies, science, music, art and physical education. The introduction of computers into nearly every elementary school program clearly reflects the values of our electronic, information age. Not until world languages become a secure part of the elementary school curriculum will language learning begin to meet the needs and challenges of the twenty-first century.

In Europe, however, languages have long been a fundamental and accepted part of educational programs. With the continued expansion of the European Union, European language policies are moving towards the teaching of 'at least two foreign languages from a very early age', a component of the curriculum considered 'basic skills' (Euridyce 2005). In Finland, all students in Year 12 study English and Swedish in addition to Finnish, with more than 40 per cent also taking German; in the Netherlands, 99 per cent of students take English in addition to Dutch at Year 12 level, and 41 per cent also take German and 21 per cent French (Clyne 2005, p. 24). Amongst the countries where English is the majority language, there appears to be a pervasive complacency that 'English is enough', combined with a lack of real awareness of and appreciation for the insights and understandings accruing from language learning. According to Clyne (2005, p. xi), these are manifestations of what can be regarded as 'a monolingual mindset' which views English monolingualism as the norm, despite the fact that there are many more bilinguals and multilinguals in the world than there are monolinguals—particularly English monolinguals as according to a report by the National Centre for Languages in the UK, only six per cent of the world's population are native English speakers; 75 per cent speak no English at all (CiLT 2005, p. 4).

The contrast is indeed very stark between the European perspective on multiple languages as 'basic skills', and the view in many English-speaking countries of LOTE as an optional, dispensable item in a 'crowded curriculum'. As Liddicoat (2002a, p. 30) points out, language study once occupied a higher place in the curriculum of English-speaking countries, valued for its role in 'training the mind'. He argues that, as that perception changed, so too did the view of the intrinsic importance of language study in its

own right. Languages instead came to be seen as a ‘useful support’ for other curriculum areas—for the improved cognitive flexibility and other academic benefits, for supporting and enhancing literacy in English, and for supporting trade and productivity. Liddicoat maintains that, while these supportive functions of languages are in fact accurate, they are not the main reason for including LOTE in the curriculum:

We in the English-speaking world seem to have lost sight of languages as educationally important. We have replaced this idea with the view that languages are educationally useful and we have seen this view increasingly undermined by the argument that ‘everyone speaks English’ (2002a, p.30)

He goes on to note that the latter view is naïve and simplistic, but that the emergence of English as a lingua franca cannot be denied. He makes the point that the European policies towards three languages—mother tongue, plus (usually) English, plus another language—‘don’t so much reflect a view that languages are *useful*, but rather a view that learning languages is *important*’ (Liddicoat 2002a, p. 30 [emphasis added]).

Liddicoat goes on to enumerate the important educational outcomes of learning languages, all of which are central to the needs of students who will be required to participate in an increasingly interconnected world:

- knowledge of the language and the ability to use it in communication with other people
- understanding of the culture of another group
- understanding one’s own language and culture through comparison with another language and culture
- knowing how to communicate in contexts where shared language resources between participants are limited
- knowing how to communicate across cultural boundaries (Liddicoat 2002a, p. 30).

The focus on culture in Liddicoat’s list is a relatively recent direction for language education, in accordance with the shift towards *intercultural* language teaching which will be introduced in the latter part of this section, and discussed at greater length in section 5.

The MCEETYA *National Statement* sets out the following rationale:

Learning languages

- enriches our learners intellectually, educationally and culturally
- enables our learners to communicate across cultures
- contributes to social cohesiveness through better communication and understanding
- further develops the existing linguistic and cultural resources in our community
- contributes to our strategic, economic and international development
- enhances employment and career prospects for the individual (MCEETYA 2005, p. 2)

The following overview and discussion will focus chiefly on the first two aspects of the first point in this list—the intellectual and educational enrichment which flow from language study; the latter section focuses



on social and cultural enrichment. Much of the research cited in the following section has taken place in the past three decades and several of the studies quoted are considered 'classic' studies in the field.

## General cognitive development and the development of literacy

For many years it has been acknowledged that learning another language enhances the learner's understanding of and insights into their own language. Writing in the 1930s, Lev Vygotsky, whose ideas have had a significant impact on current educational theorising, commented on the heightened understanding of one's own language gained by studying another:

It has been shown that a child's understanding of his (sic) native language is enhanced by learning a foreign one. The child becomes more conscious and deliberate in using words as tools of his thought and expressive means for his ideas...The child's approach to language becomes more abstract and generalized...The acquisition of foreign language—in its own peculiar way—liberates him from the dependence on concrete linguistic forms and expressions (Vygotsky 1986, p. 160).

A number of studies from the 1970s onwards have provided empirical evidence for this phenomenon from a range of educational contexts, beginning to identify and 'unpack' the component skills which are enhanced through the language learning process. Studies have shown, for example, that children need certain preparatory skills in order to learn to read. These include *metalinguistic awareness*, which, loosely defined, includes the ability to think about and reflect upon language, its nature and functions, and to use knowledge *about* language as distinct from the capacity to use the language itself. Learning a second language has been shown to enhance children's metalinguistic awareness, and thereby their reading readiness. A study by Yelland, Pollard and Mercuri (1993), which took place in two primary schools in Melbourne, found that children who participated in a one hour per week Italian program demonstrated higher levels of 'word awareness', a metalinguistic skill linked to reading readiness, than those who did not participate in a LOTE program. Similarly, a number of studies in the USA have reported that students who study a LOTE or learn through the medium of another language in an immersion program tend to outperform their peers who have not had exposure to language learning (for a brief overview, see Curtain & Dahlberg 2004, p. 397; Webb n.d.).

In Canada, immersion programs were introduced in the mid-1960s as a response to the hitherto poor outcomes of traditional French second language programs. In 'total immersion' programs, children who have no background in French receive 100 per cent of their instruction through the medium of French from their first day at school, with English-medium instruction introduced initially for only an hour per week, increasing to 50 per cent of the curriculum by Grade 6 (Swain & Johnson 1997, p. 2). A study by Swain and Lapkin (1991) found that students who had completed the first six years of their schooling in French, and only began their formal exposure to English late in primary school, subsequently outperformed their peers who had attended English-medium schools for the same period. The researchers suggest that these findings offer support for the hypothesis that 'the advantages in English demonstrated by early immersion students in the middle and upper elementary grades may in part be due to their knowledge of two language systems, a knowledge which permits them to contrast French and English, thus leading to a heightened overall awareness' (Swain & Lapkin 1991, p. 205). Liddicoat (2001)

offers the following explanation: a child who learns that meaning can be represented in more than just one way—that is, through exposure to another language, and thus another collection of sounds to represent the same objects—‘has learnt something important about the nature of language’ and develops ‘additional insights into the nature of language that are not available to the monolingual learner’ (Liddicoat 2001, pp. 14, 15).

Much of the research on cognitive aspects of second language learning has focused on creative and divergent thinking, and many studies indicate a bilingual advantage in these areas (e.g. Bialystok 2001; Bialystok et al. 2005). Bilingual children appear to develop a more analytical orientation to language due to their experience in organising their two language systems and keeping them separate while they perform particular tasks. This experience appears to give them an advantage over monolinguals when performing tasks involving control of processing (Bialystok 2001). In a classic study, Lanco-Worrell (1972) investigated groups of monolingual and bilingual children and compared their performance on a number of tasks. She found that bilingual children demonstrated an ability to separate the sound of a word from its meaning significantly earlier than monolingual children could, and also found greater awareness on the part of bilingual children that the relationship between a word and its meaning is arbitrary rather than fixed. Bialystok (2001) notes that bilinguals do not have a uniform or ‘across the board’ metalinguistic or cognitive advantage over monolinguals; however, she suggests that the early acquisition and regular use of two languages has been shown to enhance the ability of children to solve problems which require them to selectively attend to information, for instance where they are required to ignore or inhibit misleading information. She refers to this as ‘control of linguistic processing’ or ‘cognitive control’, and details studies which have shown this advantage for bilinguals over monolinguals across several domains of thought, including concepts of quantity, spatial concepts and problem solving (Bialystok 2001, especially chapter 5; Bialystok et al. 2005, p. 40).

While Bialystok’s and Lanco-Worrell’s research relates to children who have grown up with two languages, there are many studies of students in situations of ‘additive bilingualism’—where a second language is learned at no danger or cost to the first language—which indicate metalinguistic and cognitive benefits of language study. Examples are the studies outlined above by Yelland, Pollard and Mercuri (1993) and Swain and Lapkin (1991); others include Armstrong and Rogers (1997), Bruck, Lambert and Tucker (1974), Bamford and Mizokawa (1991) and Eckstein (1986).

In a study carried out in several Melbourne primary schools in the early 1980s, Eckstein (1986) investigated the interrelationships between cognitive and linguistic development in both the first and second language for children learning part of the curriculum (Science) through the medium of a second language (German) in a partial immersion program. She compared the children in the program with matched monolingual children from a neighbouring primary school. She found that the children who had learned scientific concepts through the medium of German readily transferred both cognitive and linguistic skills from the second language to the first, and demonstrated evidence of heightened cognitive flexibility and more divergent thinking.

A bilingual’s ability to transfer concepts and skills between their languages was first postulated by Cummins in the 1970s (Cummins 1979). From that time, a growing body of research has overturned what Baker (2006) calls ‘the naïve theory of bilingualism’, in which it was previously believed that the human

brain had a finite capacity for storing languages, and that learning a second language somehow resulted in a reduced capacity for language or a language deficit. It was believed that languages were stored as two separate systems in the brain, and operated without transfer. Research over the past three decades has shown this to be a complete fallacy. 'The evidence suggests the opposite—that language attributes are not separated in the cognitive system, but transfer readily and are interactive' (Baker 2006, p. 168). Therefore, when a child learns lessons at school through the medium of a second language, concepts transfer readily from one language to the other. 'Teaching a child to multiply numbers in Spanish or use a dictionary in English easily transfers to multiplication or dictionary use in the other language' (Baker 2006, p. 169).

In a similar vein, academic and cognitive skills transfer readily between languages. While there may be differences in the vocabulary, grammar and writing systems of languages, all languages with writing systems have in common that the reader must learn to make meaning from the text. Concepts and strategies involved in this transfer easily from one language to another, for example, 'scanning, skimming, contextual guessing of words, skipping unknown words, tolerating ambiguity, reading for meaning, making inferences, monitoring, recognizing the structure of text, using previous learning, using background knowledge about the text' (Baker 2006, p. 330) are strategies used by readers whether the text is in English, German, French or Spanish. Therefore, while the sounds of letters and decoding of words have a separation in learning to read in each language, 'the higher cognitive abilities and strategies required in making meaning from text are common...Overall, reading competence in two languages does not operate separately' (Baker 2006, p. 330).

Research such as that summarised by Baker offers strong support for the development of primary school LOTE programs. The 'literacy debate' which has led to the demise of many primary school LOTE programs in the early years is predicated on the view that only time spent directly on English literacy will lead to improved literacy outcomes. As noted by Liddicoat (2001), Lo Bianco (2001) and McKay (2000) this is an extremely narrow view of literacy. The conclusions of sustained international research on second language acquisition, bilingualism and bilingual education demonstrate that far from detracting from the development of literacy, learning a second language actually enhances and enriches children's language experience, and offers them unique insights and opportunities for the development of cognitive skills which are unavailable to the monolingual learner.

## Cultural and intercultural benefits of language learning

The traditional focus of language teaching has been on the four macro-skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in the target language. From the preceding overview, it is clear that language learning has been shown to enrich students' cognitive development and their overall development of literacy skills in a number of important ways. In traditional approaches, however, the tendency has overwhelmingly been to separate language from its cultural context. It is this separation which is now being questioned and subjected to fundamental revision, and the potential for language learning to develop knowledge and understandings of culture and 'other ways of being' represents a major paradigm shift for language teaching and learning.

As Kohler (2005) notes, in traditional language teaching programs, aspects of the target language culture have generally been introduced through the study of the geography, history, famous people or works of art of the country or countries in which the target language is spoken. As learners acquired proficiency in the language, they were gradually introduced to aspects of 'high' culture such as poetry and literature. In such programs, teaching culture has been seen as teaching lists of facts, information and things, which Liddicoat (2002b, p. 7) describes as a 'static view of culture'.

Recently, however, understandings about the role of culture in language and therefore in language teaching have undergone a fundamental shift in direction and emphasis involving significant reconceptualisation. At the core of this reconceptualisation is the notion that 'language cannot be separated from its social and cultural contexts of use' (Liddicoat et al. 2003, p. 1) and that every attempt to communicate with the speaker of another language is a cultural act (Crozet & Liddicoat 2000, p. 2, quoting Kramsch). The basis of what has come to be called *intercultural language teaching and learning* involves recognition of the importance and centrality of culture: 'Culture shapes what we say, when we say it, and how we say it from the simplest language we use to the most complex. It is fundamental to the way we speak, write, listen, and read' (Liddicoat 2002b, p. 5). In contrast to the *static* view which treats culture as facts or artefacts to be learned, intercultural language teaching involves a *dynamic* view of culture:

The dynamic approach to culture involves seeing culture as a set of practices in which people engage in order to live their lives. The practices are variable. Not everyone within a culture does everything in exactly the same way. Instead, the practices represent a framework which people use to structure and understand their social world and communicate with other people. As such, culture is not about information and things, it is about actions and understandings...Cultural knowledge is not therefore a case of knowing information about the culture; it is about knowing how to engage with the culture. (Liddicoat 2002b, p. 7)

Critical to developing intercultural competence is learning about one's own culture, and being able to compare it with that of the target language culture. However, it is not assumed that students will have detailed knowledge of their own cultural perspective, as 'our cultural practices are largely invisible to us, we do not usually see them as cultural and constructed' (Liddicoat et al. 2003, p. 24); therefore, students need to be encouraged to 'distance themselves from their native language/culture environment to see it for the first time as what it really is, as just one possible world view and not the *only* world view' (Crozet & Liddicoat 1999, p. 115). Coleman (1997, p. 7) explains:

The development of language awareness...is argued to be central to education because it allows learners, uniquely, to adopt the perspective of the other, to look at their own culture from outside, to become aware that culture as a social construct is relative and not absolute.

These invaluable insights can only be deeply explored and developed through integrating such perspectives with the study of another language.

Intercultural knowledge and understanding has now been incorporated into curriculum documents in Australia and in many other OECD countries, reflecting an increasingly globalising perspective on education and the need to develop students with intercultural competence who are thus well equipped to participate in an increasingly multilingual and multicultural world. Byram (2000, p. 10) conceptualises a person who has 'some degree of intercultural competence' as one who can see relationships among

different cultures and can interpret or 'mediate' them in terms of each other. He summarises five key elements of intercultural competence:

- Attitudes: curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own
- Knowledge: of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction
- Skills of interpreting and relating: ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one's own
- Skills of discovery and interaction: ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to impart knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction
- Critical cultural awareness/political education: an ability to evaluate critically, and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and product in ones own and other cultures and countries.

Liddicoat et al. (2003, p. 46) describe two levels of goals for intercultural language learning, the global and the individual:

At a global level the goals of intercultural language learning are as follows:

- a. understanding and valuing all languages and cultures
- b. understanding and valuing one's own language(s) and culture(s)
- c. understanding and valuing one's target language(s) and culture(s)
- d. understanding and valuing how to mediate among languages and cultures
- e. developing intercultural sensitivity as an ongoing goal.

At an individual level the objective in intercultural language learning is developing the learner as a person who knows and communicates in two or more languages, and whose communicative needs and resources may differ from those of a monolingual user of those languages. Such a learner communicates in an intercultural manner by using multiple perspectives to understand and create meaning. A person who can do this is not simply a language user, but also an intercultural language user.

In the Victorian Essential Learning Standards, 'intercultural knowledge and language awareness' is one of the two dimensions of the LOTE domain, along with 'communicating in a language other than English.' These two dimensions are to be understood as intertwined and fundamentally interconnected parts of the one domain, LOTE. The rationale for LOTE as part of the Standards specifically aims to develop in students an intercultural stance, acknowledging the need for learners to engage in self-reflection because 'effective communication in a new language requires the learner to move outside the norms, practices and acquired behaviours of their first language'. The introduction to the LOTE domain states:

In learning a language, students develop communication skills and knowledge and come to understand social, historical, familial relationships and other aspects of the specific language and culture of the speakers of the language they are studying. Learners are also provided with the tools, through comparison and reflection, to understand language, culture and humanity in a broad sense. In this way, language learning contributes to the development of interculturally aware citizens, of increasing

importance at a time of rapid and deep globalisation. (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2007)

Section 5 of this report will explore aspects of the implementation of an intercultural approach in the language classroom, as part of an examination of the research literature on current practices in second language teaching and learning. The next section looks more closely at the issue of globalisation and the role and importance of language skills and intercultural knowledge.

## 4. Globalisation and language and intercultural skills

As Block and Cameron (2002, p. 1) point out, the term *globalisation* now features prominently in contemporary political discussions and is also widely used in both popular and academic discourse in economics, society, technology and culture; the word exists in cognate form in languages as diverse as Spanish and Japanese. They quote Giddens' definition of the term as: 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa' (Giddens 1990, quoted in Block & Cameron 2002, p. 1).

The rapid technological changes which have taken place in the latter part of the twentieth century and the early twenty-first century have been central to the process of globalisation. Radio, television and telephone are standard devices in many homes around the world. Fibre-optic and satellite telecommunications facilitate the relaying of information across the globe in a matter of seconds; video-conferencing and teleconferencing, the advent of the internet and new software technologies, and business and tourism travel all bring into contact on a daily basis people from a diverse range of languages and cultures. New technologies have enabled businesses in developing countries such as India to compete directly with those in the more developed Western economies: 'With the aid of inexpensive computers and internet access, consumers and producers have almost unlimited data and markets at their fingertips' (Committee for Economic Development 2006, p. 5).

These developments have also been accompanied by movements in populations unprecedented in world history. Between 1960 and 2000, for example, the total number of international migrants doubled to 175 million (Graddol 2006, p. 28), as people relocated for social, political and economic reasons. This movement of populations is significantly altering the social and linguistic mix of the destination countries, which are becoming increasingly multilingual and multicultural.

Thus in local, national and international contexts, the trend towards globalisation is making new demands on the nature of interactions taking place, and therefore the kinds of skills required to effectively participate in increasingly complex and varied interactions. Language is central to this process because it is through language that people interact and construct meaning. Pauwels (2000, pp. 20–21) points to the increasing number of interactions between people of various cultural and linguistic backgrounds, but also highlights the fact that many such encounters involve a lingua franca (often English), and often take place in a cultural setting which has no immediate link to the language which is the medium of communication. She cites the example of a business interaction taking place in English between an Arabic speaker from Egypt and a Japanese speaker in a hotel conference room in Indonesia.

Regardless of whether or not the language of communication is the native language of one of the speakers, interlingual and cross cultural encounters require a fundamental understanding of the relationship between language and culture. This includes an awareness of one's own cultural conditioning, and the need to bring such skills to bear even when interacting in one's own first language

with a speaker from another background. This is the basis of developing an intercultural stance and skills as an 'intercultural language learner' which have been recognised and incorporated as part of students' essential learning in the Victorian Essential Learning Standards.

## Languages and intercultural competence as an economic imperative

The phenomenon of globalisation has led to the dramatic rise of English as 'the global language'. It is well known that many millions of people in countries all over the world are learning the language. In China alone, it is estimated that in 2005, over 176 million Chinese were learning English through formal education (Graddol 2006, p. 95). What is less well known or understood, however, is that many of the developing economies are also embracing the learning of other languages, as English more and more comes to be seen as a 'universal basic skill'. In his comprehensive report for the British Council, Graddol surveys complex social, technological, economic and cultural trends taking place around the globe, and warns against complacency amongst native speakers of the language that 'English is enough': 'We are now nearing the end of the period where native speakers can bask in their privileged knowledge of the global lingua franca' (Graddol 2006, p. 118). He predicts the 'doom of monolingualism' as monolingual English speakers face a 'bleak economic future' competing for positions in the global marketplace against multilinguals who speak English and one or more other world languages. 'The reality is that there are much wider and more complex changes in the world language system now taking place. English is not the only "big" language in the world, and its position as a global language is now in the care of multilingual speakers' (Graddol 2006, p. 57).

Similar sentiments are echoed in a number of other key reports. A report commissioned by the Directorate of General Education and Cultures of the European Commission (ELAN 2006) surveyed nearly 2000 exporting small-medium enterprises across 29 European states and collected data on approaches to the use of language skills, intercultural competence, future exporting plans and projected requirements for further language skills. Many of the respondents to this survey indicated that, while English was useful as a lingua franca, 'the picture is far more complex than the much-quoted view that English is the world language', and also suggested that 'longer term business partnerships depended upon relationship-building and relationship management and, to achieve this, cultural and linguistic knowledge of the target country were essential' (ELAN 2006, p. 6).

The British Chamber of Commerce conducted a survey of 1000 companies and found a strong correlation between the utilisation of language skills in conducting business and increased turnover (CiLT, The National Centre for Languages 2005, p. 5).

Graddol (2006) foreshadows the rise of other languages including Mandarin, Russian and Spanish, and predicts that, with the end of the economic dominance of the US and the European superpowers, there will be enormous changes in perceptions of the relative importance of world languages. He notes the rush in Indian universities to learn Spanish (Graddol 2006, p. 118); India's *Financial Express* (19 March 2003) reported on the increase in the study of French and German amongst employees of software companies doing business with countries where those languages are spoken. An article in the *International Herald Tribune* (22 July 2007) reports on the launch of a new campaign by the Kremlin to promote the learning of



Russian as a language of business, including the establishment of an international cultural foundation comparable with Germany's Goethe Institute and France's Alliance Française. India's *Financial Express* (2 July 2007) published a similar article on the promotion of Russian, quoting Anton Derlyatka, a partner with executive search consultants Ward Howell International, who said:

In the mid-90s we could put up with people not speaking Russian, because they had other experience and expertise. Now, Russians are catching up... The complexities of the Russian market have increased so much that you can't work without understanding the mentality of the people and the Russian context. In order to do that, you have to speak Russian.

In 1987 the Chinese Government established the China National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (NOCFL). China has now established the Confucius Institute to spread knowledge and understanding of Chinese culture and the learning of Mandarin, and to date it has signed contracts with 40 universities in 25 countries to establish Confucius Institutes including the University of Melbourne (The Office of Chinese Language Council International n.d.). *The Independent (UK)* reported (5 July 2007) that HanBan—China's equivalent of the British Council—has funded five state schools in the UK to promote the study of Chinese language and culture, including the funding of student study tours to China.

It is apparent that countries with strong multilingual histories need no convincing of the benefits of language study. This report has previously noted the complacent attitudes to language learning in English-speaking countries, reflected in low levels of uptake of language study in the post-compulsory years of schooling. In the business sector this results in very low levels of language skills and little appreciation for the importance of developing such skills for improving international trade. In an international survey of 75 chief executive officers from 28 countries conducted in 2000, Australian executives averaged proficiency in fewer languages than those of any of the other countries in the sample (Clyne 2005, p. 21). A report by the National Centre for Languages in the UK (CiLT 2005, p. 3) notes that 80 per cent of export managers in British companies lacked even basic proficiency in another language, and a survey of language competence across 28 European countries ranked the UK as lowest in terms of proficiency in other languages. The Committee for Economic Development's report (2006, p. 6) estimates that American companies lose approximately \$2 billion a year 'due to inadequate cross-cultural guidance for their employees in multicultural situations'. The CiLT report lists a number of factors that lead to loss of business because of poor communication skills, including:

- difficulties with agents and distributors
- inability to make effective contacts at trade fairs and exhibitions
- poor translation causing hilarity or confusion
- inability to capitalise on opportunities
- lack of cultural affinity
- lack of confidence
- phone and switchboard enquiries not followed up
- customer unable to access information needed about the product or service (CiLT 2005, p. 5).

The report also provides data which demonstrates the reliance of British companies on doing business with countries where English is widely spoken, and the relative lack of success in accessing potentially

lucrative markets where other languages are required. For example, trade with Denmark (population five million), where English is widely spoken, accounts for 1.2 per cent of total UK trade. However, trade with Central and South America represents the same portion of overall UK trade. The population of these countries is 390 million (CiLT 2005, p. 6). Greater access to these markets would require well-developed skills in local languages including Spanish and Portuguese, skills which the majority of UK companies do not possess. A similar observation has been made about Australian trade. The Group of Eight *Languages in Crisis Discussion Paper* (Go8 2007) quotes research which suggests significant unrealised potential for Australian wine exporters due to lack of skills in German. Germany is the world's largest importer of wines; however, Australia's top four wine export markets are English-speaking countries. As stated by Professor Peter Høj, former chief executive officer of the Australian Research Council, 'We're not particularly good at forming linkages with people that do not speak our mother tongue' (Go8 2007, p. 6).

## 5. A review of literature on LOTE teaching and learning

This part of the report begins with a brief look back at the development of communicative language teaching over the past 30 years, in order to provide a context for understanding current perspectives on best practice. This is followed by a review of the literature from the past five to seven years which investigates contemporary approaches and practices, with particular focus on the emerging pedagogy of intercultural language teaching.

Since its beginnings in the mid-1970s, communicative language teaching (CLT) has come to be adopted as the key approach to language teaching in most parts of the globe.

However, as we shall see below, CLT defies neat definition; there is no one text or single set of characteristics which can be identified as definitive, and no single set of prescribed techniques. CLT is not a method, but rather an approach which is interpreted differently depending on a multitude of factors including context, learners and teachers.

### Background to the (re-)emergence of communicative language teaching

In her review of the history of 'traditional approaches' to the teaching of second languages, Fotos (2005) makes the observation that there has been a continual process of recycling of ideas and procedures over the centuries, and that many 'new' methods or approaches have been in and out of fashion previously. She quotes Kelly who pointed out that 'the total corpus of ideas accessible to language teachers has not changed basically in 2,000 years' (Fotos 2005, p. 653), and observes that the term 'traditional approaches' to second language teaching not only refers to grammar-based instruction, but also to content-based instruction using the second language, and to communicative approaches, all of which have been used 'since antiquity' (Fotos 2005, p. 665).

The current (re)emergence of support for communicative approaches to language teaching has its origins in developments in linguistic theory and language learning curriculum design both in Europe and North America during the 1960s and 1970s. Integral to these developments was the recognition of the failure of grammar-based approaches: the traditional grammar-translation method focused chiefly on the analysis and practice of grammatical rules, translation, and the memorisation of vocabulary. This produced students who could construct grammatically correct sentences and perform well on discrete point grammar exercises, but who lacked even basic verbal communication skills.

The Audiolingual Method emerged in the 1950s and 1960s as a reaction to this approach. Drawing from behaviourist psychology and structural linguistics, this method involved learners performing pattern drills and dialogues designed to promote accurate spoken language through repetition and habit formation, and

to minimise the possibility of learner error. However, this method too fell far short of expectations: not only did many students find lessons boring and monotonous, they also experienced enormous difficulties in transferring their rote-learned skills to real communicative situations outside the classroom. Fundamental changes in linguistic theorising during this period led to the rejection of audiolingualism and the behaviourist model on which it was based (Richards & Rodgers 2001; Hinkel & Fotos 2002).

Under the influence of linguists such as Hymes in the USA and Halliday in the UK, a gradual shift took place in the way in which language came to be viewed. The focus began to shift from a view of language as 'a linguistic system to be conveyed to the student' (Baker 2006, p. 119) to reflect an emerging perspective of *language as an instrument of communication, situated in a social context*. Language learning began increasingly to reflect this perspective – learners were encouraged to take risks with the language to make their own meaning to communicate with other learners, and to speak in other than memorised patterns. Concurrent developments in both the USA and Europe reinforced the need for new approaches to language teaching as a response to large groups of immigrants and guest workers who needed to acquire survival language skills in a relatively short time. While there is insufficient scope here to document these developments in detail, the interested reader is referred to Kumaravadivelu (2006) for a detailed review, and Savignon (2005) for a useful overview of key research and seminal studies which were instrumental in the movement towards the 'communicative revolution' in the 1970s. Savignon notes that:

CLT can...be seen to derive from a multidisciplinary perspective that includes, at least, linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and educational research. The focus has been on elaboration and implementation of programs and methodologies that promote the development of functional ability through learner participation in communicative events (Savignon 2005, p. 637).

Concurrent with these moves towards more communicatively oriented language teaching, the linguist Stephen Krashen developed a model of language learning which was to have a significant impact on the theory and practices underpinning early CLT pedagogy. In the 1980s Krashen developed his 'Monitor Model' (Krashen 1981, 1982, 1985) consisting of five interrelated hypotheses, the best known of which is the 'input hypothesis'. He proposed that learners acquire language best when they understand meaningful messages in that language—what he termed 'comprehensible input'. Drawing for support on child first language acquisition, Krashen argued that when language contains structures which are a bit beyond the learner's current level of competence, and the language is made comprehensible through factors such as context, body language and gestures, then this input is itself sufficient for language learning to take place. According to this view, then, second language acquisition processes mirror those of first language acquisition, and thus exposure to the language in natural communication, where the focus is on meaning, is a favourable condition for promoting second language acquisition.

For many language teachers, the implementation of programs based on Krashen's notions of appropriate pedagogy led to a wholesale abandonment of grammar teaching, and the reliance on exposure to naturalistic input alone. However, extensive research during the 1980s and 1990s exposed the inadequacy of CLT based solely on the provision of comprehensible input, as had been recommended in Krashen's model (e.g. Swain 1985, 1996; Lyster 1987; Harley et al. 1990). Much of this research was carried out in the above mentioned immersion programs in Canada—where students received extensive exposure to 'comprehensible input' in meaning focused instruction, but little focus on formal grammar. The broad conclusions of these studies were that students rapidly developed comprehension skills, but

that their spoken language tended to develop many ungrammatical features which often failed to improve, despite many thousands of hours of exposure to 'comprehensible input'. For many linguistic and educational theorists, the pendulum had swung too far; since the 1990s there has been broad acceptance that grammar has an important role in CLT.

## Communicative language teaching—current trends

CLT remains the preferred approach to second language teaching in most parts of the world; however, it must be emphasised that CLT is a broad *approach*, rather than a monolithic *method*. As noted above, there is no one definitive text which enumerates a list of classroom procedures and techniques and detailed specification of content which teachers then follow precisely. Rather, CLT consists of a set of beliefs or principles which guide individual teachers' decisions about language teaching. As such, the implementation of CLT is highly context-specific, influenced by the sociopolitical and sociocultural setting in which it takes place. An enormous number of variables influence and shape these settings and responses to them at the local level: individual teacher's beliefs and experiences, attitudes and aptitudes of individual learners, individual and system-wide goals and expectations. In her description of the current global status of CLT, Savignon (2005, p. 648) comments on research which documents local educators' responses to local issues in implementing CLT: 'Viewed in kaleidoscopic fashion, [these responses] appear as brilliant multi-layered bits of glass, tumbling about to form different yet always intriguing configurations'.

As a broad set of principles or core tenets, the essence of CLT involves the learner's engagement in meaning-focused, interactive communicative activities. Language is seen as a tool for purposeful communication. Core principles have been identified in a number of studies, from the basic to the more elaborated. Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 172), for example, list the following key principles.

- Learners learn a language through using it to communicate.
- Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities.
- Fluency is an important dimension of communication.
- Communication involves the integration of different language skills.
- Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error.

Mangubhai et al. (2007) note that CLT involves extensive interaction in the second language between students and teachers and among students, and rests on a number of assumptions:

- Learning a second language can be facilitated through using the language for communication purposes.
- Communication of this kind should be both authentic and meaningful.
- A greater emphasis should be placed on language use rather than language knowledge.
- Learner autonomy in language use and learner risk-taking should be encouraged.
- Fluency and appropriacy in the use of the second language should take precedence over structural correctness.

Activities which encourage learners to engage in meaningful, communicative language use are many and varied: group work and pair work; role play or simulation; information-exchange tasks and other types of tasks which involve learners in, for example, guessing, searching, matching, sorting, contrasting and sharing; puzzles and problem solving tasks; games and dialogues.

## The role of grammar in communicative language teaching

Since the early 1990s, the vast majority of publications in the literature on applied linguistics and language teaching pedagogy support the idea that ‘some kind of focus on form is useful to some extent, for some students, at some point in the learning process’ (DeKeyser 1998, p. 42). In order to redress the limitations of purely communicative methodology, it is now widely accepted that formal grammatical features must be made explicit; however, this must be integrated with communicative activities in order to avoid a return to grammar based approaches which focused predominantly on decontextualised structures. Debate and discussion surrounding how this integration and balance is to be optimally achieved has itself generated a vast literature (e.g. the studies in Doughty & Williams 1998; Ellis 2002; see Williams 2005 for an overview).

Ellis (2002) provides a comprehensive review of the place of grammar instruction in the second/foreign language curriculum, presenting the case for grammar teaching from the perspectives of acquisition theory, the learner and language pedagogy. Ellis outlines an approach which focuses the learner’s attention on *awareness* of grammatical structures rather than *performance* (Ellis 2002, p. 29), acknowledging the highly complex learner processes of intake and gradual restructuring of the developing language system. He provides the following summary of the case for teaching grammar in CLT:

It is NOT being proposed that:

- We revert back completely to a structural syllabus.
- We teach beginners grammar.
- We attempt to teach learners to use grammatical features accurately and fluently through intensive practice exercises.
- We teach grammar communicatively (e.g. by embedding a grammar focus into communicative tasks).

It is being proposed that:

- We include a grammar component in the language curriculum, to be used alongside a communicative task-based component.
- We teach grammar only to learners who have already developed a substantial lexical base and are able to engage in message-focused tasks, albeit with language that is grammatically inaccurate.
- We teach grammar separately, making no attempt to integrate it with the task-based component (except, perhaps methodologically, through feedback).
- We focus on areas of grammar known to cause problems to learners.
- We aim to teach grammar as awareness, focusing on helping learners to develop explicit knowledge (Ellis 2002, pp. 31-32).

As noted by both Ellis (2002) and Williams (2005), there are a number of theories of second language acquisition, and the list by Ellis represents one of a number of possible approaches to the teaching of grammar within CLT, which will, as he points out, continue to be subjected to much debate.

## LOTE in the Victorian Essential Learning Standards

'Communicating in a language other than English' is the first of the two dimensions of the LOTE domain in the Standards. In keeping with the aims and approaches of CLT, the Standards provide broad guidelines upon which teachers can draw to develop communicatively oriented teaching and learning activities which are relevant to their particular students' context and needs. This dimension emphasises the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and the use of body language, visual cues and signs. However, the Standards specifically connect this dimension with that of 'Intercultural knowledge and language awareness', reflecting the intimate links between the two: '*Communicating in a language other than English* allows learners to reflect on language as a system and gain cultural insight. In turn, *intercultural knowledge and language awareness* can provide cultural guidelines for effective communication' (VCAA 2007). As noted previously, the acknowledgement of the important role of culture reflects a fundamental shift in contemporary curriculum design which will be elaborated briefly below.

## Intercultural language teaching and learning: an emerging pedagogy

In his summary of the key principles of CLT, Kumaravadivelu (2006, p. 118) provides the following list:

- Language is a system for expressing meaning.
- The linguistic structures of language reflect its functional as well as communicative import.
- Basic units of language are not merely grammatical and structural, but also notional and functional.
- The central purpose of language is communication.
- Communication is based on sociocultural norms of interpretation shared by a speech community.

The inclusion of sociocultural norms in the list is a reflection of the growing shift in emphasis taking place in CLT. Section 3 introduced the rationale for the integration of culture into language teaching, highlighting the inadequacies of traditional CLT approaches in which the teaching of culture was separated from the teaching of language. Incorporating the integral links between language and culture into curriculum design and language teaching represents a major shift in educational focus, moving 'communicative language teaching towards a serious consideration of the discorsal and sociocultural features of language use' (Kumaravadivelu 2006, p. 119). This movement is being reflected in curriculum design for language teaching in many countries including Australia, the USA and across Europe.

Recent interpretations of the learning objectives of CLT incorporate an intercultural perspective, underscoring the fundamental relationship between language and culture. In the US context, Savignon (2002, pp. 114–115) considers the five goal areas agreed upon as National Standards for Foreign

Language Learning as representing a holistic approach to CLT and learning. These are known as 'the Five Cs': communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities:

- The *communication* goal area addresses the learner's ability to use the target language to communicate thoughts, feelings and opinions in a variety of settings.
- The *cultures* goal area addresses the learner's understanding of how the products and practices of culture are reflected in the language.
- The *connections* goal area addresses the necessity for learners to learn to use the language as a tool to access and process information in a diversity of contexts beyond the classroom.
- The *comparisons* goal area is designed to foster learner insight and understanding of the nature of language and culture with the languages and cultures already familiar to them.
- The *communities* goal area describes learners' lifelong use of the language, in communities and contexts both within and beyond the school setting itself.

Writing from the Australian perspective, Crozet and Liddicoat (2000, p. 15) suggest that 'the paradigm shift which language teaching currently faces promises to be as wide-ranging as was the shift to communicative language teaching'. Liddicoat et al. (2003) point out that existing pedagogies are inadequate to achieve the sorts of learning advocated through an intercultural approach, and that new approaches are emerging in response. As noted in the Background section, the Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning in Practice (ILTLP) Project currently underway seeks to promote teacher understanding and engagement with the key ideas and elements of intercultural language teaching and learning, as well as providing them with opportunities to plan and investigate aspects of this approach for themselves. Liddicoat et al. (2003, p. 23) summarise the common features of several models which have been developed by researchers and theorists for teaching intercultural within languages education, which they propose can be seen as the basis for a methodology known as 'intercultural language teaching'. These common features are:

- exploration by the learners of the target language and culture and of their own language and culture
- discovery of the relationship between language and culture
- developing conceptual and analytic tools for comparing and understanding cultures
- developing a reflective capacity to deal with cultural difference and to modify behaviour where needed.

The authors elaborate a set of five overarching principles for teaching culture within language, which provide a basis for teachers of languages to use in making choices and decisions in planning programs for student learning within an intercultural approach (Liddicoat et al. 2003, pp. 47–51). These five core principles are summarised below:

- Active construction: 'teachers do not transmit information about the culture directly, but provide opportunities for students to see the culture through meaningful language in context. Learners construct knowledge for themselves by engaging with language' (International Language Teaching and Learning in Practice (ILTLP) 2007, Module 2, p. 38).
- Making connections: 'it is important to create links between existing knowledge and new knowledge; there is a role for, and need to focus on, both the learners' own culture(s) and the culture(s) being



learnt; learning is not learning about others, but learning about oneself in relation to others' (ILTLP 2007, Module 2, p. 40).

- Social interaction: 'interacting with others is an important part of learning; learning involves knowing how to express ideas and interpretations and how to understand and respond to those of others; interaction allows opportunities for learners to act on and think about their learning in communication with others' (ILTLP 2007, Module 2, p 42).
- Reflection: 'intercultural learning is personal—it involves a need to work out one's own perspectives, ideas and responses; learning is not simply knowing—it involves analysing, thinking and interpreting' (ILTLP 2007, Module 2, p. 44).
- Responsibility: 'taking responsibility for one's own actions, attitudes, and responses; recognising one's own role in communication and the importance and effect that one's own language and behaviour have and acting accordingly; recognising the validity of other perspectives and acting accordingly' (ILTLP 2007, Module 2, p. 46).

Since the distribution of the *Report on Intercultural Language Learning* (Department of Education, Science and Training 2003), a substantial body of literature has been developed as part of the ILTLP project to further elaborate the rationale for this approach, and to explore and develop applications for the classroom. A series of modules has been prepared as part of the ILTLP Professional Learning Program, which contextualise and elaborate upon the processes and procedures involved in intercultural language learning (*Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning in Practice* 2007). The Victorian Essential Learning Standards curriculum reflects contemporary educational approaches which prioritise dynamic, integrated program design, and respond to new understandings about the nature of learning. Shortcomings of previous curriculum models included an emphasis on content, with little or no attention given to applications of learning beyond the classroom, and a failure to foster in learners the ability to recognise patterns and links in the learned information. As a recent educational initiative, the Standards recognise the rapidly changing economic and social milieu, and the increasingly interconnected nature of global relationships. These bring about a new set of skill requirements for students: 'skills and behaviours which will prepare them for success in a world which is complex, rapidly changing, rich in information and communications technology, demanding high-order knowledge and understanding and increasingly global in its outlook and expectations' (VCAA 2005, p. 4).

- The domain of LOTE is uniquely placed to offer learners enormous insights and skills which are an essential part of their learning for a globalised world: the ability to negotiate meaning across languages and cultures, to recognise and acknowledge a range of world views, and to interact with others in culturally sensitive ways. As such, it can be seen that there are fundamental synergies between the domain of LOTE and the Standards strands of Physical, Personal and Social Learning and Interdisciplinary Learning. Learning to communicate in a language other than English and developing intercultural knowledge and awareness *fundamentally entails* developing capacities identified in the Standards dimensions of Interpersonal Development, Personal Learning and Civics and Citizenship:
- 'building and managing positive social relationships with a diverse range of people in a range of contexts' (Interpersonal Development: building social relationships)

- 'explor(ing) the ways in which personal values affect learning...and recognising and respecting individual differences...' (Personal Learning: the individual learner)
- 'think(ing) critically about their own values, rights and responsibilities... and to explore the diversity in society' (Civics and Citizenship: community engagement).

In a similar vein, the skills developed through the LOTE domain naturally complement those identified within the strand of Interdisciplinary Learning: in learning another language, students are encouraged to process information, enquire, reflect upon and evaluate otherness and other ways of being in the world (Thinking Processes). As noted in the Standards: 'Communication helps to construct all learning': communication is at the core of LOTE and intercultural knowledge and language awareness. The unique contribution of LOTE is encapsulated by Scarino and Crichton (2007, p. 1):

In such a globalised world, the bilingual/bicultural person is the norm. This need has implications for the way we live our lives and interact with others, for education in general, and for languages education in particular. Languages have a central role in this context because they mediate the interpretation and construction of meaning among people.

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