




A COUNTRY IN FOCUS

Review of selected research in applied linguistics published in Australia (2015–2022)

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Abstract

This article provides a review of research in applied linguistics published in Australia in the period 2015–2022. Primarily, it is based on articles from Australian publications as material from other sources is more widely available to an international audience. The research has been published in such journals as the *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics (ARAL)*, *BABEL*, *English in Australia*, *Papers in Language Testing and Assessment* and *TESOL in Context*. Five key areas of research are discussed: First Nations peoples and their multilingualism, language and migration, language testing and assessment, language curricula and pedagogy, and teacher development, and their identity and pedagogical beliefs.

1. Introduction

This article provides a synthesis of research in applied linguistics published in Australia in the period 2015–2022 and is primarily based on studies published in Australian journals such as the *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics (ARAL)*, *BABEL*, *English in Australia*, *Papers in Language Testing and Assessment* and *TESOL in Context*. We have done this to provide an overview of research undertaken in Australia that is less accessible outside this country and have not included materials from other sources such as key journals in the field (e.g., *Applied Linguistics*, *Language and Education*, *Language Learning*, *TESOL Quarterly*, etc.) as they are widely available to an international audience.

To achieve this synthesis, we reviewed all relevant Australian journals and professional publications produced during the period of review using key words such as applied linguistics, language, language learning/teaching/teachers, TESOL, English and literacy to focus our search. We then categorised all those publications relevant to the field of applied linguistics according to the emerging key content areas and within these according to areas of focus. As a result, five key areas of research were identified and explored: First Nations peoples and their multilingualism, language and migration, language testing and assessment, language curricula and pedagogy, and, teacher development, their identity and beliefs. Represented in this review are more than 200 publications. We acknowledge that there were others published during this time in Australia; however, we needed to be selective in ways that are illustrative of what is happening within Australia in these identified areas.

As evidenced by the increasing number of publications in the area and heightened attention in the media, there has been a growing recognition of the significance of First Nations peoples within Australian society. Generally, particularly within education circles (e.g., as demonstrated in the national school curriculum) there has also been a growing understanding of the importance of language and culture – for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – and for migrants. At the

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same time, there has been increasing interest in and understanding of the importance of diversity, equity and access in language education and consequently increased effort in developing language teaching, pedagogical approaches and assessment in integrated ways to enable access and participation for those who might be marginalised (e.g., equity and access are specifically addressed in the Australian Higher Education Standards Framework, 2014). Connected with this is the key role language testing and assessment has within the field – not just in response to political agendas, but also for determining the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of language teaching. Furthermore, this has involved researchers and practitioners reflecting on curriculum and pedagogical development in order to optimise language learning and teaching. Australian scholarship related to language curricula and pedagogy has also provided significant insights into the enactment of the national Australian Curriculum for Languages and for English, which it should be noted are framed very differently. Australian researchers have challenged political decisions related to language education and contributed in important ways to understanding language provision and the problems related to this, issues related to national curriculum decision making and the implementation of languages and English, and the ways English language learners in school and tertiary contexts are currently and/or need to be supported. Publications related to these key areas are described in the following sections.

In addition, we report how Australian researchers have explored the way migrants represent themselves and/or are represented in various social contexts and how, in turn, this is critically linked to the kinds of communications and interactions they participate in and how this forms part of their ongoing second language (L2) learning. We do this recognising that individual language learners and their self-representation have been placed at the centre of language use and identity. We describe Australian studies undertaken during the review period and how identities are represented, not as static, but instead as fluid, multiple and changeable across time and space, and always constructed in relation to interactions with others, but also how teachers and language learners see themselves.

2. First Nations peoples and their multilingualism

The First Nations peoples of Australia – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – make up about 3% of the country’s population. It should be noted, here and elsewhere, that we intentionally use the plural for peoples – they are not one homogenous group, but instead are made up of hundreds of nations of different cultural and language groupings. Although small in number, as the original inhabitants the First Nation peoples of Australia have a unique standing and contribute in important ways to the country. In recent times, their significant place in Australian society is increasingly being understood and recognised – addressing the historical dispossession and discrimination they have faced since colonisation. During the period of this review, their significance was recognised by the newly elected federal government who in 2022 announced a national referendum for constitutional change, one to give the First Nation peoples a ‘voice’ within laws of the land. This referendum built upon a petition drawn up by Indigenous leaders – the ‘[Uluru statement from the heart](https://ulurustatement.org/the-statement/)’ (https://ulurustatement.org/the-statement/) – which asks for the Australian people to ‘walk’ with them to create structural reforms so that they can advise the Australian Government on the development of legislation and policy that affects their communities. Unfortunately, the referendum was unsuccessful, leaving many First Nation Australians deeply saddened by the result. However, it served to raise national awareness of the challenges these peoples face.

Whilst such awareness comes after more than 200 years of subjugation, those working both in the fields of linguistics and applied linguistics in Australia have been researching the strong cultural and rich linguistic traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders for some time. As noted in the previous review in this journal (Oliver *et al.*, 2016), and reflecting the intersection of these two fields, this has included in-depth and technical descriptions of endangered languages and the maintenance and revitalisation of these (e.g., Amery, 2016; Angelo *et al.*, 2022; Karidakis & Kelly, 2018; Wafer & Lissarrague, 2008; Walsh, 2011; also see Pennycook & Makoni, 2019, for discussion) and other research reflecting the linguistic innovation of Aboriginal peoples and their development and creative

use of new English lexified languages (e.g., Kriol – a creole spoken across northern Australia, such as Kimberley Kriol, Fitzroy Valley Kriol, Cape York Creole, Torres Strait Creole and varieties of Australian Aboriginal English (AAE)) (e.g., Angelo, 2013; Malcolm, 2018). Work by Meakins and O’Shannessy (2016) also provides a broader description and discussion about contact languages and language contact processes, including pidgins, creoles, mixed languages, contact varieties of English and restructured Indigenous languages. Work in this area continues and within education circles, in particular, this type of research serves to counter the deficit models and negative attributions that exist in response to non-standard and non-dominant forms of language. Thus, investigations focusing on how school-based English curricula and pedagogy can support the learning of Standard Australian English (SAE) as an additional language, and recognising the importance of home language, continues to be the focus of growing body of research. Research published in this area during 2015–2022 is described in detail in the section that follows. In parallel to this, and building on language maintenance and revitalisation (e.g., Simpson et al., 2019), there are other articles concerned with pedagogical approaches and resources useful for teaching and learning of traditional languages as L2 or maintenance of traditional languages as first language (L1) (e.g., Angelo & Poetsch, 2019; Disbray, 2019). The literature published in the period of this review is also outlined in the second part of this section.

2.1 Teaching SAE whilst recognising home languages

There remains a tension both educationally and linguistically about how to support the development of SAE, whilst recognising the importance of supporting home language.

As a first step, this requires a recognition of the diversity of languages students bring to school, but also identifying that many children will be English language learners, including those who are learning SAE as an additional dialect. Hogarth (2019), for example, explores and challenges the privileging of SAE and the negative impact it can have on AAE speaking students. She describes how one of her students asked her: ‘Why bother, Miss? I am a D student! I have failed before I even start so why bother??’ (p. 5). When students’ home language is not reflected, nor appears to be valued, in what is done in the classroom, it is not surprising that students are conscious of the deficit notions attributed to how they speak. And the consequences of this lack of recognition extend to the impact of formal assessments. For instance, Daly’s (2015) correlational study shows a significant relationship between students’ spoken language and their reading comprehension scores (i.e., low complexity relating to poor comprehension) with Indigenous status of the students impacting on this further. Yet, as Wigglesworth (2020) notes, there is insufficient recognition given to the difference between students’ home language and that used in schools, specifically the contrast between AAE (and other contact languages such as Kriol) and SAE, again creating deficit constructions of students who are learning English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D). This is further exacerbated by practices undertaken within the national standardised literacy testing ‘National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy’ (NAPLAN) regime where First Nations students are the only ethnic group whose results are disaggregated.

Fortunately, however, within the national research landscape there are other publications that do acknowledge the complexity of Aboriginal students’ linguistic repertoire and advocate for inclusive curriculum and pedagogies. O’Mara et al. (2019) describe the artful use of discourses by a group of 9–12 year old boys as they engage in oral storytelling. The authors give a detailed account of how these boys translanguage between Ndjebana and English whilst sharing information about traditional knowledge and popular and mainstream culture. Wigglesworth (2020) also describes the translanguaging skills of Indigenous children as she gives an account of their linguistic context, where they may speak two or more local languages, but with minimal knowledge of English. Hence, she advocates for the use of translanguaging within the classroom because of the benefits it may have for these students.¹

Other publications in the period of review provide accounts of how teachers grapple with teaching the Australian curriculum to students who do not speak SAE as their home language – describing the

challenges they experience and the issues they need to consider, particularly in relation to the teaching of literacy (e.g., Edwards, 2015; Gannaway, 2019; Scull, 2016), but also when teaching the language of mathematics (e.g., Edmonds-Wathen, 2015; Watts *et al.*, 2019). Poetsch (2020), in fact, describes teaching the content of the Australian curriculum in remote communities – where many students speak Kriol and traditional languages – as akin to working in a foreign language context. She highlights the lack of guidance provided by educational authorities regarding the type of language planning required for teaching such students and the need for different curricula in these settings. Angelo and Hudson (2020) support these claims by describing how Indigenous learners of EAL/D have historically not been the focus of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).² They claim that despite moving towards inclusion over the last two decades, Indigenous EAL/D learners remain on the periphery regarding research and teaching practices. Furthermore, contact languages (creoles and related varieties) remain overlooked and invisible in classrooms in terms of the curriculum and assessment practices (Angelo & Hudson, 2020; Gawne *et al.*, 2016; Macqueen *et al.*, 2019). They argue that understanding and considering Indigenous EAL/D learners' needs should become a priority. Similarly, Malcolm *et al.* (2020) argue for the need for a responsive curriculum, but in this case, they do so in relation to speakers of AAE.

In addition to concerns about the curriculum, others point to the lack of inclusion of Indigeneity in teaching materials and the insufficient acknowledgement of the Aboriginal cultural and linguistic background of students within different teaching approaches. For example, although Bacalja and Bliss (2019) acknowledge some positive trends, when interrogating the text selection between 2010 and 2019 in the Victorian Certificate of Education (for final years of high school for those living in the south-eastern mainland state of Australia), they found an underrepresentation of Indigenous authors and texts. Scarcella and Burgess (2019) examine this further using Lowe and Yunkaporta's (2013) Cultural Analysis Matrix to analyse representations of Aboriginal experiences and perspectives in six commonly used classroom texts. In this way, they were able to ascertain the nature and depth of the Aboriginal voices, experiences and perspectives. They argue that even when texts include Aboriginal characters and experiences, they are represented through non-Aboriginal perspectives, and are at risk of tokenism and shallow inclusion. They note that there are enormous advantages for students when texts embody and reflect Aboriginal ways of 'valuing, being, doing and knowing' (Lowe & Yunkaporta, 2013, p. 3) and demonstrate more nuanced and genuine insights into Aboriginal experiences in Australia.

There are other publications that provide, through case studies, reflections on teachers' own practices that involve successful implementation of approaches that provide Indigenous perspectives. For example, Wood *et al.* (2017) describe how they use critical theory, drawing on Bhabha's cultural hybridity with a post-colonial lens, to address reconciliation when teaching the subject English. Mills *et al.* (2017), on the other hand, describe a three-year participatory research on a teaching approach that used multimodal communication with upper primary Indigenous students. These students were taught to interpret and communicate emotions in contemporary ways including making semiotic choices about visual composition, such as gaze, facial expression, posture, framing, actor-goal relations, camera angles, backgrounds, props, lighting, shadows and colour. In response, the students embraced this knowledge and skill set in ways that, as their teacher said, gave them a 'voice' (p. 105) through their photographic representations.

2.2 Teaching and learning traditional languages

The importance of revitalising and, therefore, learning traditional home languages and how this can be achieved as a way to overcome further language loss, has been the focus of another line of research inquiry. One key example is the various papers in the double edition of *BABEL* (the journal produced by the Australian Federation of Modern Languages Teachers Associations) in 2019 – special issues dedicated to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in celebration of the International Year of Indigenous Languages. In the introductory chapter, Simpson *et al.* (2019) provide an overview

of the themes emerging and describe how the various research was undertaken in a ‘collective and consultative method of yarning, or conversations, and collaborative writing’ (p. 9).

The collection of papers shows that the learning and teaching of traditional languages, mostly by Aboriginal but also by non-Aboriginal students, relate to their ecologies. However, the pedagogy required is impacted by the Australian curriculum, particularly, one part of this, namely the Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander languages. Angelo and Poetsch (2019), for instance, describe the skills required by four Aboriginal language teachers working in diverse contexts to overcome the minoritisation of their languages in terms of language maintenance and revitalisation within their specific language ecologies. In another paper, Angelo et al. (2019) describe how language posters can also be used for the promotion of language maintenance and revitalisation. McCormack (2019) provides a further case study in her paper, describing the learning of Arrernte (a traditional language of central Australia). Bow (2019) and Smith (2019a) provide further case studies; in the first instance, outlining an approach used to teach Gamilaraay culture in university courses. The latter describes how Indigenous university language courses can be designed collaboratively. Browne (2019), in her case study research, focusses on Year 6 Warlpiri students in a remote bilingual school in Australia’s north. This paper describes two arts-informed, multimodal language awareness activities: language portraits (Busch, 2016; Wolf, 2014) and interactional language network maps (Dagenais & Berron, 2001; Prasad, 2014; Smythe & Toohey, 2009) that were used to help the students understand and represent their diverse communicative practices (i.e., their complex plurilingual repertoire). Lowe and Giacon (2019) then consider the current status of the languages being taught in the state of New South Wales, and how the teaching of these languages may serve to meet community aspirations. In contrast, Disbray (2019) provides a more critical perspective, reflecting on the Framework itself and identifying the challenges of enacting the curriculum. The authors within these *BABEL* editions highlight some of the difficulties of teaching traditional languages, including the lack of documentation associated with the target languages, the lack of speakers of these languages, and other challenges related to the context of revival. Richards and Lardy (2019), however, provide a positive account, pointing to how the digital revolution has provided a wealth of resources and opportunities for those interested in learning an additional language. While such resources generally do not exist for smaller speech communities, such as Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, they do indicate that there is a rich legacy of materials with the potential to provide language learning opportunities, including documentation of traditional languages that date back many years.

Outside the key special issues described above, there have been only a limited number of publications that have discussed the teaching and learning of traditional languages. Small (2019), for instance, describes a project where the complexities of First Nations’ identities, cultures and languages were captured and portrayed through storytelling. This was also exemplified in an article about ‘Yutu Gonydjuy’ (2019), a story written in both Warramiri and English by Kathy Guthadjaka (a traditional elder of Gawa, Elcho Island). With her co-author Gelderen, they describe how this resource can be used for a ‘Lonydju’yirri (side-by-side) multi-literacy and transcultural approach. A small number of other studies have explored the impact of traditional language use and AAE on developing positive self-identity (e.g., Oliver & Exell, 2019, 2020; Tankosić et al., 2022). It also should be noted that because of the burgeoning interest of applied linguists concerning unique contexts, as with the other themes described in this review, several Australian researchers working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants have published their work internationally, rather than in national journals (e.g., Disbray & Martin, 2018; Macqueen et al., 2019; Oliver et al., 2021; Simpson & Wigglesworth, 2018; Steele et al., 2022).

With respect to First Nations peoples’ language use and language learning, applied linguistic research in Australia has contributed in significant ways – documenting the nature of the languages being used by these multilingual peoples, the impact this language use has on its speakers and the implications for the learning and teaching, revitalisation and maintenance. This first section has explored the first inhabitants of Australia. In the next section, we turn to another cohort of the

population – migrants. Although all those arriving after the First Nations peoples could be classified as migrants in terms of their heritage, we focus here on those who are newly arrived in Australia.

3. Language and migration

Migrants make up and have contributed in significant ways to Australian society post-colonisation. At present, there are over 7.6 million migrants living in Australia, meaning 29.8% of the Australian population was born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018). More than one-fifth of Australians speak a language other than English at home and up to one million residents do not speak English or do not speak it well (Piller, 2016). Over the past few years in Australia, policymakers have placed much emphasis on mechanisms to develop and measure the linguistic proficiency of migrants in SAE in all four macro-skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking in SAE (Hudson & Angelo, 2020). Long-standing claims have been made that Australia's successful multicultural society is at risk if migrants fail to integrate and develop proficient English skills. For new migrants, developing proficiency in SAE can help build recognition within society, allowing them to develop a strong sense of belonging (Dovchin, 2022; Dovchin & Dryden, 2022).

Perhaps because of these political and social imperatives, research focusing on L1 and L2 issues for migrant populations in Australia has increased in the last decade. During the period of review in Australia, two main topics have emerged: (1) language and identity and (2) translanguaging. Collectively, such studies provide empirical and ethnographic insights into migrants, primarily in relation to educational and classroom contexts.

3.1 Migrants' language and identity

A prominent trend in language and migration studies in Australia between 2015–2022 focused on language and identity issues, highlighting the recursive relationship between identity, capital and ideology. Language is commonly viewed as a crucial resource for performing and enacting identity.³ The links between L2 use, membership and social/personal identities in Australia have been highlighted in several studies (e.g., Park, 2022; Perera, 2021). For studies within the period under review, self-representation is placed in the centre of language use and identity (Chowdhury & Hamid, 2016; Cummins, 2015; Minagawa & Nesbitt, 2022; Tankosić, 2022). How migrants represent themselves and/or are represented in various social contexts is critically linked to the kinds of communications and interactions they participate in, their ongoing L2 learning (and hence the teaching they experience) (Minagawa & Nesbitt, 2022), and their overall integration into mainstream society (Chowdhury & Hamid, 2016). Addressing the identities and self-representations of migrants from non-English-speaking backgrounds is one of the essential investments at the dynamic intersection of social identities, capital, ideology, institutional contexts, language resources and social identities (Chowdhury & Hamid, 2016). Australian studies undertaken during the review period highlight that identities are not static, but instead fluid, multiple, changeable across time and space, and always constructed in relation to interactions with others – including, of course, in many other identity studies conducted outside Australia. (e.g., Cummins, 2015; Tankosić, 2022). In other words, identities are constantly in motion (Cummins, 2015). Overall, these studies highlight the importance of developing language teaching and learning pedagogical approaches that enable education in sites of settlements to be a holistic and transformative experience and that engage marginalised migrant background language learners, promote positive identities, and thus optimise language learning and teaching investment (Barnes, 2019). The studies reviewed here are categorised on the basis of participants: migrants, refugees and international students.

3.1.1 Migrants

Several studies highlight the importance of taking into account migrants' personal identities, their individual circumstances and their desires, aspirations and expectations in relation to their social

identities and origins, including greater recognition of the role that these migrants' L1s have in the new society (Chowdhury & Hamid, 2016; Palmieri, 2017; Park, 2022; Park et al., 2022). For example, drawing on the language experiences of three Bangladeshi migrant workers with low English proficiency in Australia, Chowdhury and Hamid (2016) point out the significance of narrative inquiry for assisting in the construction of discourse about one's identity as a migrant living in the host society. As migrant identities, these Bangladeshi workers have navigated their work and social life and developed social and communicative strategies to survive in Australia, despite their limited English proficiency. Palmieri's (2017) study echoes these points, and she argues that the motivations for learning an L2 are influenced mainly by the process of understanding the negotiation of identity, which is generated by the desire to acquire some forms of symbolic capital rather than material resources. The willingness to invest in developing elements of symbolic capital is suggestive of L2 learners' desire to achieve goals related to self-growth and identity development, which in turn generates more significant gains in wellbeing. Furthermore, the importance of cultivating meaningful relationships to perform individuals' identities and wellbeing and nurture a sense of attachment and affiliation is critical in understanding learning an L2 in relation to identities.

Identity is also highlighted in the study of Park et al. (2022). This study provides significant insights into the influential role of parents as pivotal contributors to bilingualism, identity and family language policies. While Korean mothers' beliefs about bilingualism and their family language policies seem to be the influential decision-makers for their children's language learning processes, these Korean mothers are still bound by Korean cultural values. Although Korean mothers believe that their children's social identities are Korean, they appear to acknowledge their children's alternative identity development as part of their English language learning. Such research tangibly shows how beliefs and ideology apply to the provision of communicative practices and environments for their children's bilingual development and identities (Park et al., 2022).

In contrast, Rubino and Cruickshank (2016) highlight the importance of interactional approaches for language alternation as identity construction. Drawing on micro-sociolinguistic research conducted in Australia in the ethnic media and community language schools where heritage languages (HLs) are taught, the authors explore how language choice can be negotiated across various community sites in Australia. They also describe how the issues of language use and identity tend to be more evident in multilingual community sites than within the family and in mainstream schools.

Similarly, Park's (2022) study, explores four 1.5-generation Korean-New Zealanders' perceptions of bilingualism, HL competence and identity. Reflecting the close relationship and interaction of researchers in both countries, this study was published in Australia, but based on experiences in its near neighbour New Zealand (NZ).⁴ Park argues that the participants were strongly connected to their ethnic group and strove to accept and strengthen their hyphenated Korean-New Zealander identities through foregrounding their bilingual and bicultural competence. In addition to their Korean use at home, socialising with other Korean speakers at church and in peer groups aided their learning of a wide range of registers in context while providing culturally sensitive places for the participants to explore their identities. Nevertheless, the participants encountered racial and linguistic hierarchical structures (e.g., SAE as dominant and other HL as minority) from which they were marginalised, which also delayed their construction of positive bilingual identities. Park (2022) concludes that enabling a deeper understanding of how family-internal and family-external factors shape migrant children's identities is essential, and substantial institutional and societal support is needed to foster migrant children's bilingualism and biculturalism.

3.1.2 Refugees

Another group of studies has exclusively dealt with the language and identity issues in the context of refugees from non-English-speaking backgrounds and how these participants navigate their lives through the intersections of identity, capital, ideology, institutional contexts, language resources and social identities. Based on Darwin and Norton's (2015) reconceptualisation of identity theory, Donehue (2017), for instance, highlights the recursive relationship between identity, capital and

ideology in the context of refugees. Donehue (2017) notes that refugees and asylum seekers are commonly understood as having a ‘displacement identity’ through externally imposed normative ideologies. As an EAL teacher at the Nauru Regional [refugees] Processing Centre, established by the Australian Federal Government for off-shore detention and processing of so-called illegal migrants, Donehue (2017) suggests that understanding English language learning is an investment in the dynamic intersection of identity, and capital. Ideology is important because there is a direct link between internally inhabited displacement of identity formation and symbolic capital affordances. Smith-Khan’s (2019) study of a Somali refugee in Nauru similarly acknowledges how the media’s representations can shape one’s identities and credibility as a key speaker. Smith-Khan (2019) describes how Abyan, a Somali refugee and a rape victim, has defended herself and her credibility as a rape victim despite her limited linguistic and communicative ability to protect her self-representations, identity and credibility. According to Smith-Khan (2019), credibility remains an essential factor at the level of public and media discourse on refugees and the way media discourse portrays refugees significantly affects how their credibility and identity can be constructed and defended.

These studies collectively point to the importance of the development of pedagogical approaches as a way forward to enable education in sites of transitory settlement in the context of refugees. In addition, these studies advocate for holistic and transformative experiences for marginalised language learners, to promote positive identities and optimise language learning investment (Donehue, 2017). Concurrently, there needs to be greater recognition of the role of all migrants’ L1s in the new society, as these intersect with migrants’ narratives, stories and texts and can reveal important cultural and/or social assumptions about migrants’ identities, beliefs and stereotypes (Barton *et al.*, 2021). A differentiated view is warranted, and this may require considering migrants’ individual and social identities. For example, discussions on the representation of cultural and linguistic stereotypes through a range of texts in the classroom may illuminate the perpetuation of such biases against refugees’ identities and cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As Amorati (2022) points out, language learners’ motivation is influenced by their exposure to language and cultural resources in local contexts and their broader engagement with a community that forms part of Australia’s culturally and linguistically diverse population. The notion of identity negotiation, in this regard, contributes in vital ways to educational effectiveness and instructional efficiency (Naqvi *et al.*, 2015).

3.1.3 *International education*

Language and identity issues have also been examined in studies undertaken in tertiary education contexts both in Australia and NZ. Drawing on data from Saudi Arabian international students who at the time were studying at an Australian University, Groves *et al.* (2022) describe how multiple identities and positionings can be negotiated as either a cultural insider or outsider, and, that such positioning processes impact the establishment of intersubjectivity. Similarly, Minagawa and Nesbitt’s study (2022) also examines the process of identity formation, specifically how native Japanese as a Foreign Language (JFL) teachers working in tertiary institutions in NZ and Australia perceive their English proficiency, how it influences their linguistic identity, and how their status as native speakers affect their linguistic identity. The authors argue that these JFL teachers’ linguistic identity is not narrowly conceived around their non-nativeness in English and nativeness in Japanese, but rather constructed from more multi-faceted aspects of language teacher identity formation, especially by factors pertinent to the very nature of the tertiary teaching environment in their host countries (Minagawa & Nesbitt, 2022).

Considering the complex intersections of linguistic and cultural diversity that profoundly impact the policies and practices of education in transnational societies today, including Australia, schools and educational institutions are facing challenges in meeting the needs of students and teachers for whom English is an additional language, while at the same time recognising home languages. Educational systems in migrant-receiving hosting societies are encouraged to better support and affirm the identities of both students and teachers who do not fit the predominantly white, monolingual

English-speaking, middle-class, female teaching force. In so doing, the concepts such as plurilingualism, identity texts and transnationalism point to how teachers' identities may positively impact the academic and social development of international students (Schmidt & Gagné, 2015).

Ross and Bayes (2016) further extend this line of research into language and identity, with a particular focus on students. They describe the discrepancy between 'imagined communities' – a vision of what one might experience in their new location as a student and as a member of society and the identities of these students and the actual reality they might face in a host society. They show that over time students became more conscious of the importance of cultural awareness and that this is of great value in helping students reconcile their imagined and actual identities. Therefore, the implications for the language classroom are to improve cultural and linguistic meta-awareness among educators and students.

As an alternative, Yin et al. (2022) argue that online and digital sites are important for understanding international students who exist as another migrant identity group in Australia. This is because the impact of global mobility and technology advancements have created challenges to understanding how and to what extent international students are immersed in the target language. Hence, they suggest that international students and their language diversity, along with different modes of communication should be understood both in terms of online and offline resources. For example, Chinese international students in Australia present their online identities as someone who can go beyond the fixed notions of 'languages', despite their offline identities of being language learners in an English-dominant country. In this way, understanding international students' experience in Australia through both online and offline resources provides powerful insights into L2 or foreign language teaching contexts. Chen's (2021) study carries a similar ethos as he explores the impact of avatar identities on language learning and teaching in 3D virtual environments. He argues that avatar identities may safeguard learners' self-efficacy and empower their language practices.

Lastly, a small group of studies explore language, migration and identity issues in relation to linguistic landscape. For example, Tran et al. (2020) seek to extend our understanding of the view of language and migration by investigating the discursive constructions of the bathroom within a shared home through the voices of six international (Vietnamese) students living and studying in Australia. When the residents of the home were asked to reflect on their perceptions of the language used in this locale, the findings show that they attend to the inscriptions on the artifacts, the linguistic activities that take place within the bathroom, or see no linguistic landscapes whatsoever because of the ways they construct the locale. The findings suggest that researchers need to give more consideration to the types of linguistic activities that occur in particular situations when exploring how individuals metalinguistically view their own linguistic landscapes (Tran et al., 2020). Similarly, a multi-layered investigation by Yao and Gruba (2020) explores Chinese language in the linguistic landscape of Box Hill, a large suburb of Melbourne in Australia. The authors adopted a multi-layered approach to investigate this, drawing on hundreds of photographs of street signage in one square block area of the shopping district. Results of their analyses show that signage portrays a variety of code preferences and semiotic choices that, in turn, reveal insights into the identities, ideologies and strategies that help to structure the urban environment.

In summary, the understanding of language and identity in relation to migrants continues to be an important applied linguistics discussion in the Australian context. Communities of migrants, refugees and international students give an alternative view to the language-identity model that often exists within applied linguistics. These cohorts provide a crucial resource illustrating how identity is performed and enacted in dynamic rather than fixed social categories.

3.2 Translanguaging

As has been the trend internationally, in the last few years translanguaging has received increasing attention from applied linguists in Australia. As a result, many studies and resources are becoming available for translanguaging classroom practices, activities and overall pedagogy (Sultana, 2022).

Translanguaging problematises the tradition of demarcating language categories that are essentially embedded in bi/multilingual studies (Dovchin & Dryden, 2021). It challenges the concept of fixed language boundaries and the insufficiency of such for describing language practices constructed out of the complexity of linguistic, paralinguistic and semiotic repertoires in today's highly diverse classrooms. Alternatively, translanguaging advocates for the flexible and fluid transitioning between and across languages, cultures and identities in the classroom and elsewhere, exhibiting more emergent negotiation of linguistic, semiotic and cultural resources for social interactions and meaning making (Dryden, 2022; Dryden & Dovchin, 2021). The emphasis is on language learners' 'fluid and creative adaptation of a wide array of semiotic resources,' and 'a product of their sociohistorical trajectories through a multitude of interactions across space and time' (Hawkins & Mori, 2018, pp. 2–3). It is, thus, understood through complex processes of entangled and intertwined resources – the (dis)assemblages of multimodal and multi-layered resources, modes, styles, acts, genres, texts and speeches. As Dovchin (2016) notes, translanguaging refers to how so-called languages (e.g., English, Japanese, etc.) become continuously dis-invented and reconstituted (Makoni & Pennycook, 2005) when language users are involved with the constant process of semiotic mobility across time, space and resources, and dislocation from and relocation into newer social contexts (Canagarajah & Dovchin, 2019).

Generally, the concept of translanguaging within Australian research has been extended in three main ways: (1) examining how speakers negotiate identity and resist discrimination. For example, where migrants, heritage speakers and language learners in Australian contexts choose to translanguaging using their full linguistic repertoires, but with appropriate communicative adjustments made for their interlocutor(s); (2) displaying respect towards speakers of HLs, and other languages; and (3) exploring translanguaging as an inherent everyday practice where the language users constantly negotiate between HLs and other foreign and L2s.

Translanguaging is key to constructing national identity (Sultana, 2022) since the translingual practices concerning national issues and events drawn from digital spaces show that translingual users nurture beliefs, values and ideologies in their translingual practices regarding a territory-based notion of nation, religion and national identity. Their discursive construction of nation and national identity also seems entangled with a non-discursive bundle of activities and symbolic and material artefacts within material arrangements of spaces (Sultana, 2022). Diverse semiotic resources and their spatial factors permit or limit access to translanguaging resources and can be essential in individuals' access to communication (Sandbulte & Canagarajah, 2022). Despite participants' low English proficiency, translingual migrants can engage in conversations in many spaces through strategic employment of semiotic resources, including multiple languages and material objects. The language users can also create positionings that afford them more opportunities to interact. Thus, the usefulness of semiotic resources embedded within translanguaging is tied to the spaces in which they are employed, and access to these resources is shaped by subject positioning (Sandbulte & Canagarajah, 2022).

A large volume of studies between 2015–2022 focused on sociolinguistic aspects of translanguaging in the context of Australia and its role as an inherent, ordinary, mundane everyday practice, where speakers use it to negotiate HLs and L2s (Perera, 2021; Tankosić, 2022; Yin et al., 2022). For example, Tankosić (2022) argues that translingual identities of the Eastern-European background immigrant women in Australia expose them to the perpetual foreigner stereotype. As Australian-by-passport, these women often seem to be stereotyped as 'different' and/or as 'Russian brides', which leads to their feelings of inferiority and social inequality. By expanding the scope of the translingual identity and how it is perceived in Australia, Tankosić (2022) provides an important contribution to the translanguaging literature while simultaneously advocating for the quality of life and justice for translingual immigrants in their new homes in Australia. Dryden (2022) highlights the advantages of semiotic resources embedded within translanguaging for meaning-making and relationship building. She also shows how it can be used to assist migrants to manage barriers in their telephone conversations. Despite this, not all semiotic resources are equal for enhancing these features. For instance, in service situations, such as that related to managing finances, migrants need to speak in English with unknown

interlocutors, and so translanguaging becomes the main communication tool. However, this in turn highlights migrants' difficulty in using phones as a semiotic resource, yet it may also reveal their linguistic superiority. Overall, translanguaging goes some way to addressing the deficit constructions attributed to those who have English as an additional language.

The benefits of translanguaging also have been described in other Australian research. For instance, it has been claimed to increase students' creative engagement, allowing the flexibility to appreciate and use the home language at school while students are learning the target language (Perera, 2021; Yin et al., 2022). Furthermore, it eases the pressure of not having to constantly dwell on responding only in the target language, providing language learners with a safe and convenient communicative space. Perera (2021), for example, argues that translanguaging facilitates the expression of circumspect, nuanced and non-traditional interpretations of migrants' heritage religion in a faith classroom in a Tamil Hindu temple in Australia. Transplanting non-Western religions to Western nations results in first-generation migrant attempts to transmit the faith in vastly different contexts. Second-generation migrants, particularly adolescents, can be challenged when mediating their personal religious beliefs in a society with diverse religions and ideologies, especially when they must also negotiate membership in their ethnoreligious community. Perera found Sri Lankan teenage migrants' discourse in their faith classroom seems to elucidate processes of belief positioning through flexibility and, further, that translanguaging can complement their syncretic acts – the practice of drawing on diverse ideologies and experiences (outside the boundaries of a particular religion) to form personalised beliefs. Understanding such processes of belief positioning can help societies and institutions to work toward migrant youth inclusion.

Yin et al. (2022) similarly argue that the translanguaging practices of Chinese international students in Australia allow them to use their full linguistic and communicative repertoires to conduct various online and offline activities, ultimately empowering their English learning practices. An examination of online and offline linguistic practices demonstrates how their online translanguaging practices are merged into offline contexts to form communication opportunities for English learning and other social engagements. Students may take translanguaging to heart, appreciating the ease and comfort that it affords – by being able to fully participate in classes instead of being constrained by only using the target language. Understanding international students' experience in Australia through their translanguaging practices and processes is critical for classroom practices and activities. The significance of these studies lies in the normalisation of translanguaging by people from different backgrounds as a way for them to maintain their cultural and linguistic diversity (Tankosić et al., 2022).

Overall, applied linguistic researchers in Australia advocate for translanguaging because it provides language users, especially those who are minoritised, with potential access to rich and equal educational and linguistic opportunities, helpful and hopeful affordances, and engaged classroom participation, which otherwise would not be possible. In the next section, we look at the core part of classroom learning (and learning more broadly) – namely, language testing and assessment.

4. Language testing and assessment

Research and scholarship on language testing and assessment continue to make a significant contribution to Australian applied linguistics research in the period of review. The progress of the field can be attributed to its response to the national Australian curriculum mandate and to the NAPLAN testing administered annually to evaluate the literacy and numeracy skills of students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. In addition, it owes its progress to the growing body of research conducted by a group of researchers, including McNamara, Elder and Knoch in the Language Testing Research Centre (LTRC) at the University of Melbourne. This body of research is disseminated through the LTRC's journal *Papers in Language Testing and Assessment* (2012–2021), which has been transformed into an international journal, *Studies in Language Assessment* (2022–), overseen by the Association for Language Testing and Assessment of Australia and NZ (ALTAANZ). These works will continue to play an instrumental role in promoting and advancing Australian language testing and assessment research.

Australian research and scholarship in language testing and assessment in the review period has provided significant insights into the enactment of curricula and standardised testing, and high stakes decision-making regarding university admissions, migration and professional opportunities. The field has made notable conceptual advances in four areas: language assessment and curriculum enactment, validity and consequential impact of high stakes literacy testing, assessment for learning and readiness, and policy-responsive language testing.

4.1 Language assessment and curriculum enactment

The implementation of the Australian Curriculum: English (ACE) (ACARA, 2011) has provided the impetus for research into assessment practices in school contexts; in particular, the inextricable relationship between curriculum and assessment. The ACE provides a blueprint for specifying learning progression from Foundation to Year 10 and the quality/standards of learning expected of learners as they progress through years of schooling. Current efforts have revolved around challenges in implementing a coherent program of study across different years of schooling (Bibbens, 2018; Derewianka, 2012; Macken-Horarik *et al.*, 2011) and new multimodal literacy requirements (Callow, 2018; Unsworth *et al.*, 2019). Australian research in language assessment has examined a developmental approach to assessment design to address the cumulative development mandated in the ACE (ACARA, 2011). Bibbens (2018), for example, reports on an innovative intervention framed as a continuum of explicit strategies. The intervention comprises a series of formative assessments contributing towards a summative assessment. Explicit expectations of learning achievements are embedded within each incremental assessment creating conditions for transferring learning between activities and connection between year levels.

The ACE (ACARA, 2011) requires students to develop multimodal literacy. This entails the capacity to comprehend and create multimodal texts appropriate to their needs, interests and year levels across various curriculum areas, including English, History, Science and the Arts. Australian research responds to this curriculum imperative by investigating tasks and strategies for assessing the new multimodal literacy requirement – for example, the primary students' comprehension of visual and written texts in picture books (Callow, 2018) – and calls for the NAPLAN reading tests to be reformed to align with the curriculum requirements and international standards (Unsworth *et al.*, 2019). These studies contribute to understanding effective approaches to assessing the students' multimodal literacy, particularly in addressing the misalignment between the multimodal literacy emphasis within the ACE and the mono-modal approach to assessing reading prevalent in classroom assessment practice and high stakes testing.

The Australian Curriculum: Languages (ACARA, 2011) promotes a plurilingual view of language learning where learning the language entails learning to communicate within and across languages (Scarino, 2019). This conception of languages learning has necessitated a shift from a communicative to intercultural orientation in language teaching and a realignment of pedagogy and assessment constructs to those that promote and assess students' intercultural competence in the multilingual context. Drawing on a three-year study of the assessment literacy of intercultural language learning, Scarino (2017) discusses the need for enhanced literacy assessment as teachers make transition from communicative language teaching to a multicultural focus. She indicates that this will require teachers to learn about the integration of language, culture and learning and develop strategies for eliciting and evaluating intercultural competence (Scarino, 2017). Other similar studies – for example, Iwashita and Spence-Brown (2018) – highlight the importance of real-world communication skills in foreign language education, particularly in assessment tasks.

The need for language teachers to develop a broader repertoire of assessment practices is a notable theme in the body of research into classroom-based assessment practices (Hamp-Lyons, 2017; Hill, 2017; Tsagari & Vogt, 2017). This research acknowledges that teachers' assessment literacy should include knowledge of both formal summative assessments and informal and integrated classroom-based assessments during routine classroom interactions. Hill (2017) offers a comprehensive

framework for teachers to understand their current classroom-based assessment practices and identify areas that need improvement. The framework encompasses a full range of assessment practices, including incidental assessments occurring in routine classroom interactions. The paper concludes by suggesting that teachers improve feedback literacy, their ability to provide effective feedback.

4.2 Validity and consequential impact of national standardised testing

The Australian NAPLAN mass testing regime has been scrutinised and contested in public discourses and the research literature (e.g., Freebody & Chan, 2018; Smith & Wrigley, 2017). Research undertaken in the review period has interrogated the relevance, validity and consequential impact of these tests for school education (e.g., Caldwell & White, 2017; Carter et al., 2018; Portelli & O'Sullivan, 2016; Reeves et al., 2018).

For example, Portelli and O'Sullivan's (2016) study investigates teacher perceptions of different assessment forms and their impact within the classroom. Involving five participants from a single-sex school in Sydney, the case study examines ways in which systemic policies and a national testing agenda restricted classroom and assessment practices. The study underscores the importance of teachers finding a balance between external testing demands and their professional autonomy to implement effective assessment methods that align with desired learning outcomes. Reeves et al. (2018) provide further insights into the complex landscape of NAPLAN preparation for secondary English teachers in one Australian state, Queensland. Through analysing open survey responses from 30 teachers, the study identifies contradictory advice set by ACARA's curriculum agenda and the externally mandated assessment culture. The findings shed light on the intricate interplay between curriculum alignment, teacher autonomy and the testing regime. These insights offer important considerations for enhancing educational systems and developing practices that benefit both student learning and assessment requirements.

In a similar study, Carter et al. (2018) corroborate the negative test implications in their survey of 211 secondary school English teachers in New South Wales (NSW – a populous state located on the east coast of Australia, whose capital city is Sydney). They contend that the negative consequences perceived by teachers undermine the validity of NAPLAN in informing and enhancing learning and quality teaching sought by ACARA. Another negative impact was further explored in Dooley's (2020) examination of the parental use of private tutoring with children in Year 5. As the access to literacy tutoring is not equally distributed, the parental response identified by Dooley (2020) is likely to widen the achievement gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged groups. The unintentional discrepancy in educational opportunities stemming from test usage promotes a further consideration of the validity and consequential impacts of this national literacy testing regime in school education.

The notion of perceived validity has been widely recognised and accepted as a vital part of the validation process. However, Australian research in this period has also questioned the construct validity of the narrative writing genre as defined in the NAPLAN supporting documentation (Caldwell & White, 2017). The study finds that NAPLAN guidance notes and marking criteria narrowly characterised the narrative writing as a simplistic Complication-Resolution story, overlooking the wide range of narrative genres available for learners to deploy (see outlined by Martin & Rose, 2008). This narrow definition may result in misconceptions about the attributes of effective storytelling, potentially leading to discrepancies in the evaluation of NAPLAN assessments.

While there has been heightened interest in the efficacy of NAPLAN, Australian studies have examined the use of NAPLAN data to interpret writing attainment (e.g., Gardner, 2018) and learning trajectories (e.g., Creagh et al., 2019). Gardner (2018) conducted a systematic analysis of 2011–2016 NAPLAN writing data, identifying a decrease in students' writing achievement starting from Year 7. However, he cautions against using single-year data alone to determine the writing attainment. Creagh et al. (2019) analysed the academic trajectories of EAL/D students through quantitative analysis of their NAPLAN reading results (2009–2015) compared with the English as a First Language counterpart. Consistent with prior research by Cummins and Davison (2007), the data affirms the

relationship between the reading achievements of EAL students and the duration of their residency in Australia. Critically, most EAL studies do not include Indigenous EAL/D learners. Creagh *et al.*'s study, as well as the work of Angelo and Hudson (2020), which specifically addresses assessing young Indigenous English language learners, highlights the importance of re-examining teacher preparation and enhancing the support system in place for EAL learners.

4.3 Assessment for learning and readiness

A sustained strength of Australian research in language education is its examination of assessment for learning and readiness in the context of English for academic, occupational and professional purposes (Carless, 2007; Hamp-Lyons & Green, 2014).

Assessment for learning has been an area of recent development in Australian research in language assessment (Filipi, 2015; Green, 2017; Hamp-Lyons, 2017). This body of research contributes to the potential of learning-oriented assessment in supporting and promoting learning for English as a second language (ESL) learners in the tertiary context. In this review, Hamp-Lyons (2017) examines task characteristics of learning-oriented language assessments (LOLA) that have the potential to promote interactive responses in large-scale formal speaking tests. The role of interlocutor, effective questioning and scaffolding are highlighted as crucial strategies influencing the test taker's speaking performance and follow-on effect on learning (Filipi, 2015; Hamp-Lyons, 2017). Green (2017) extends this discussion by suggesting that LOLA strategies be embedded in the test preparation materials for teachers and learners. Such research significantly enhances our understanding of how the test taker's language ability can be most effectively exhibited, fostered and sustained through test preparation, extending the valuable insights into test preparation previously provided by Messick (1996) and Fulcher (1999).

The importance of learning-oriented assessments in the tertiary context is a recurrent theme highlighted in a special issue of the *Papers in Language Assessment and Testing*, edited by Youn and Burch (2020). Much effort has been focused on specifying knowledge, skills and test requirements that best represent the language demands of the target context. The inclusion of International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic Writing Task 2, for instance, was implemented to emulate the language demands encountered in tertiary studies. However, there have been warnings that matching the nature of test tasks to that of the target language use tasks is not sufficient (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; O'Sullivan, 2006). What is lacking in such representations of the target context is attention to interactional authenticity – the extent to which the underlying processes and language resources are called upon by the test task (O'Sullivan, 2006).

The collection of articles included in the special issue sheds light on how the fundamental components of interactional competence, such as intersubjectivity (*i.e.*, mutual understanding) (Burch & Kley, 2020) and progressivity (*i.e.*, sustaining conversation) (Coban & Sert, 2020), can be assessed through construct definitions, test design and rater training. These studies contribute towards a more valid representation of interactional competence as a testable construct. This is important as it ensures that valid inferences about learners' interactional competence can be drawn. Assessment practices play a crucial role in ensuring valid inferences about the multifaceted aspects of L2 learners' interactional competence.

Assessing academic readiness is another critical development in the selected studies of language assessment (Gardiner & Howlett, 2016; Macqueen *et al.*, 2016). In some Australian universities, candidates possessing IELTS scores half a band slightly below the established cut-off scores (typically set at 6.5, although this can vary between universities and even across different courses within universities) are considered for admission in internal English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programs. Final admission decisions are then made based on the candidate's performance in internal exit exams or external tests as meeting English language entry standards (Knoch, 2021a). The high stakes nature of different entry pathways means that their use and comparability should be part of ongoing test validation research (Ohkubo, 2009). Australian research in the review period has examined the relative validity

of the various pathways to tertiary study for international students, focusing in particular on university gateway tests (IELTS, PTE-A, CAE and TOEFL iBT) and internal university EAP tests (Gardiner & Howlett, 2016; Macqueen et al., 2016). For example, Gardiner and Howlett (2016) provide a comparative analysis of test-taker perceptions across various English tests, while Macqueen et al. (2016) examine the alignment and effectiveness of Academic English program assessments, highlighting the intricate interplay between program evaluations and external proficiency test standards. The insights from these studies enhance our understanding of the impact of test familiarity on the validity of test scores (Gardiner & Howlett, 2016). This points to the inherent tension between optimising achievement test practices in academic English pathway programs and adhering to the rigorous standards of high-stakes proficiency tests (Macqueen et al., 2016).

The issue of interactional authenticity is conceptualised in a body of work researching the assessment for professional readiness and competence to work in English-speaking countries (Fan & Knoch, 2019; Knoch et al., 2015, 2016, 2018). Knoch et al. (2015) report on a large-scale, mixed-methods project aimed to improve the assessment of English proficiency for overseas trained healthcare professionals. Drawing on interview data from key stakeholders, including senior doctors and nurses and medical written communication, the study provides insights into the development of professionally relevant criteria and evidence-based language standards. It contributes to understanding the process of establishing criteria and standards for assessing the readiness and confidence of overseas-trained professionals' readiness seeking registration in English speaking countries such as Australia. As such, the study advances the knowledge of language for specific purposes testing design and practices that are aligned with the writing demands of the authentic healthcare settings (Knoch et al., 2015).

There is also a small body of research that address the issues of fairness in language assessment (Fan & Knoch, 2019) and the challenges faced by large-scale proficiency assessments in providing face to face rater training programs (Knoch et al., 2016, 2018). Fan and Knoch's (2019) comprehensive analysis of published articles sheds light on the pivotal role of the Rasch model in enhancing and ensuring fairness in language assessment. Knoch et al. (2016) presents a collaborative evaluation of an innovative online rater training system, shedding light on the complexities of this collaborative approach and challenges involved in implementing a new system. Knoch et al. (2018) further examine the efficacy of the online training model by comparing raters trained through both online platforms and traditional face to face methods. This body of research collectively contributes to a deeper understanding of issues related to fairness and score consistency within the field of language assessment.

4.4 Policy-responsive language testing

One notable achievement in Australian language assessment research is its continuous theoretical exploration of the nexus between language testing and policy (Elder, 2021; Knoch, 2021b; Lo Bianco, 2021; Macqueen et al., 2021). In Australia, as in many other English-speaking countries, language tests are often used as policy instruments for regulating high stakes decision making, such as university admissions, professional registrations and migration status determinations (Elder, 2021; Knoch, 2021a; Macqueen et al., 2021). Given the high stakes nature of these language tests, it is crucial for the test validation research to focus on both the language test use and the consequences resulting from implementing a policy-focused testing agenda (McNamara, 2021). The conceptual advancement extends the analysis of the design validity and construct specification (e.g., McNamara & Roever, 2006) to encompass the ethical use of the test and its consequences in the policy context (Frost, 2021; Macqueen et al., 2021). This shift in perspective is captured in a dedicated special issue comprising four papers featuring an introduction by McNamara (2021) and a concluding contribution by Lo Bianco (2021).

Reflecting on the LTRC's policy involvement, Elder (2021) challenges the narrow definition of professional accountability for language testing, which primarily focuses on the technical integrity of the test instrument. Instead, Elder advocates for a broader perspective where language testing professionals are seen as 'experts contributing to knowledge exchange in the larger policy arena' (p. 25) – a novel

concept she terms as ‘policy responsible’ language assessment. She draws evidence from a comprehensive analysis of the LTRC’s policy contributions, particularly the various ways in which the LTRC engaged with language testing policy, from informing policy making, to implementing and evaluating it. The paper highlights the intricate factors within the policy context that shape and influence the development, enactment and refinement of language testing research. Elder contends that language testers should attend to the technical construct of the test design and the just and fair use of language tests, along with the accountability for language testing. She aptly argues that teacher assessment literacy should encompass technical testing expertise and social, ethical and situational responsibilities (Elder, 2021).

The theme of policy-responsible language testing conceptualised by Elder is further explored in Knoch’s (2021b) review of the multifaceted roles of language testing specialists in shaping language-related policies. By analysing three instances of advisory contributions, the paper identifies factors triggering the invitations, advice sought and the complexity of the advisory processes, and the uptake of the expert advice by policymakers. These findings have important implications for preparing emerging language testers for advisory roles.

Other studies continue the discussion by directing attention to the actual uses of language tests and the impact of tests and standards on policy development (Frost, 2021; Macqueen *et al.*, 2021). Applying Macqueen and Ryan’s (2019) innovative approach to analysing ‘mandate discourse’ in policy documents, Macqueen *et al.* (2021) make a significant contribution to our understanding of how English language test scores are interpreted by professional bodies for skilled migration decisions in policy settings. Frost (2021) challenges the limitation of prevailing validation frameworks in language testing that often fail to consider test takers’ perspectives, masking complex consequences and ethical implications, using Australian immigration related language testing as an example. The study argues for a shift to a more critical testing approach that attends to test takers’ expectations and broader context that shape language, policy and societal impacts.

Australian research in language testing and assessment has made notable achievements, refining the alignment between assessments and curriculum for real-world impact. There is a growing concern about high-stakes literacy tests, prompting research into their validity and consequential effects. In addition, there is a shift towards more formative, learner-focused assessment, and an acknowledgement of the influence of sociopolitical factors on language testing policies. In the following section, we discuss insights and advances made in the field of language curricula and pedagogy.

5. Language curricula and pedagogy

Australian scholarship on language curricula and pedagogy in the review period has provided significant insights into the enactment of the national Australian Curriculum for Languages and English. This body of work has made pivotal contributions to our understanding of language provision in Australia, the development and implementation of national curricula for languages and English, and pedagogical changes that support English language learners in both school and tertiary settings.

5.1 Language provision, curriculum and pedagogy

The provision of languages other than English programs has remained a topic of interest in applied linguistics research. For many years, Australia and other English-speaking jurisdictions have been confronted by the challenge of the rapid decline in languages studies in senior secondary school years. In Australia, despite numerous policy initiatives (e.g., Liddicoat *et al.*, 2016; Lo Bianco, 1987) and rich language diversity within the community, fewer than 10% of Year 12 students study a language as their final year subject (Cruikshank & Wright, 2016). The low-level uptake in language studies mirrors trends found in the United Kingdom (Board & Tinsley, 2016; Tinsley & Dolezal, 2018) and the United States (Pufahl & Rhodes, 2011).

Australian applied linguistic research in the review period has advanced knowledge on critical issues and, therein, strategies for redressing the widespread decline (Caruso & Brown, 2015, 2017; Cruickshank et al., 2020; Cruickshank & Wright, 2016; Kohler, 2021). Cruickshank and Wright (2016), for example, provide a comprehensive analysis of provision of languages in primary schools and uptake and continued study in upper secondary schools. The study finds that language provision and uptake vary across schools, educational systems (i.e., government, catholic education and private independent schools), and between metropolitan and regional areas (Cruickshank & Wright, 2016). Notably, the social economic status (SES) of a school strongly influences both the availability and types of languages offered. The influence of SES influence was most pronounced in Years 9 and 10, where lower-SES schools predominantly offer community languages as their language electives (see also, Scrimgeour et al., 2018). Contrary to expectations set by language policy discourse, Cruickshank and Wright (2016) argue that early language uptake does not necessarily result in sustained language studies during senior high school years. Instead, the lower scaling of community languages in the university entry ranking strongly influences the student's decision to study a language in the final high school year. Thus, the SES distribution of languages provision reproduces social inequality, further 'marginalising students in lower-SES schools' (Cruickshank & Wright, 2016, p. 91). The issues of equity and access to languages studies are further explored by Cruickshank et al. (2020), which offer suggestions for addressing the gap between language policy and uptake. These include mandating language provision, the enhancement of resource allocation, and a re-evaluation of the university entry scaling, specifically for language subjects.

Studies reviewed have also examined the provision of specific languages in schools (Kohler, 2021) and tertiary settings (Caruso & Brown, 2015, 2017). Kohler (2021), for example, provides a detailed analysis of the state and nature of Indonesian language education in government schools in Australia. The study offers rich insights into the complex forces and ideologies influencing Indonesian language provision in Australian schools. Within the tertiary context, Caruso and Brown (2015) shed light on critical factors such as degree structure and accessibility in influencing students' choices in language study through an examination of the uptake of Italian. While these structural elements are critical, they argue that they need to be complemented by robust policy support to be truly effective. Building on this work, Caruso and Brown (2017) provides a critical analysis of Australia's policy incentives (such as the Language Bonus, which offers tangible benefits such as additional points and financial incentives) to stimulate and sustain student engagement with language studies at the school and university settings. They suggest that, although these incentives have been successful in promoting initial uptake in language studies, their long-term effectiveness in maintaining interest and proficiency requires further investigation.

Another significant development in Australian language education is the development and implementation of its first National Australian Curriculum for Languages. Curriculum-making is a product of 'a selective tradition' – it is 'someone's selection, some group's vision of legitimate knowledge' (Apple, 1993, p. 222). The selected Australian applied linguistics research contributes significantly to understanding the national curriculum making initiative for defining and specifying content and learning pathways for languages. Through a critical analysis of the conceptual bases, Scarino (2019) provides novel insights into the conceptual shaping and the tensions and complexities involved in the national deliberations as the Australian Curriculum: Languages was developed as a policy blueprint for reforming languages education in Australia.

The issue of what counts as conceptual knowledge for language study has been a focal point of discussions in selected studies in the review period (Orton, 2015; Prescott, 2015). Drawing on a social realist theory of knowledge, both Orton (2015) and Prescott (2015) advocate strongly for developing a conceptual, knowledge-driven curriculum for languages education. Such a concept-based curriculum emphasises essential knowledge that enables students to access 'productive "heuristic" strategies' for problem-solving and transfer of learning to a new context (Orton, 2015, p. 11). Prescott urges teachers and curriculum writers to consider what knowledge and what way of thinking can form the usable foundations for learning languages in general and Chinese in particular.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has been widely adopted in Europe and elsewhere to redress student engagement, attrition and attainment, long identified as issues in languages studies (Coyle, 2007). Australian research has also contributed to developing CLIL-inspired pedagogy in bilingual classrooms within the nation (Fielding & Harbon, 2017; Okumura & Obara, 2017; Prescott & Zhang, 2017; Smala, 2015). Smala (2015) provides an insightful analysis of immersion programs in Queensland, Australia's north-eastern state, where students in Years 7–10 learn mainstream subjects such as Science, History and Mathematics through the medium of an L2. The in-depth qualitative analysis of interview data from program directors and teachers at 11 schools with Queensland CLIL/Immersion identifies a consistent focus on integrating language and content outcomes. The convergence of these aspects points to a need to redefine these immersion programs as CLIL immersion, to better reflect the dual-focused language pedagogy that not only teaches subject matter, but also concurrently develops L2 proficiency. In other studies, Prescott and Zhang (2017) explore CLIL pedagogy in a secondary bilingual Chinese program, while Okumura and Obara (2017) address the challenges of implementing a Japanese/mathematics CLIL pedagogy and strategies for overcoming the challenges. In New South Wales, Fielding and Harbon (2017) present a model of CLIL pedagogy aimed at enhancing classroom practice through the examination of semiotic resources. Building on this, Angelo and Hudson (2020) describe a CLIL-inspired planning model for mainstream classroom teachers to support EAL/D learners. In the special edition of *TESOL in Context*, devoted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contexts, Poetsch (2020) highlights the use of co-planning and co-delivery by bilingual Aboriginal teaching assistants and the English-speaking teachers in remote traditional language speaking community. Together, these studies advocate for nuanced, flexible approaches that integrate the pedagogies of CLIL and translanguaging to better address diverse student needs.

A unique contribution to the scholarship of teaching and learning languages is a creative collation of 21 ideas for languages learning in the twenty-first century, which included contributions by internationally renowned language experts, including Ann-Marie Morgan, Nina Spada and Jane Orton (Morgan *et al.*, 2017). The 21 seminal ideas, spanning from effective pedagogies to policy influence and teacher preparation, provide significant insights into pressing themes in the teaching and learning of languages. Other Australian studies into pedagogic developments include using community resources for Chinese cultural learning (Huang & Cordella, 2017); the role of poetry in the beginner languages classroom (Pearce *et al.*, 2018); work integrated language learning for advanced students of Italian (Rubino & Beconi, 2018); and language programming for distance education (Slaughter *et al.*, 2019).

5.2 Teaching and learning of EAP

As a crucial gateway for international students seeking tertiary education in English speaking countries, English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) serves as a cornerstone of Australia's language education ecosystem. The studies in the review period delve into the pivotal role of innovative curricular approaches and pedagogies in elevating the effectiveness of English teaching for tertiary studies.

EAP has been a dominant curriculum approach focusing on the communicative need of English language learners to access and use English in the academic context (e.g., Floyd, 2015). In Australia, because of the influence of the Sydney genre-based pedagogy (Martin & Rose, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012), a combination of approaches is typical in ELICOS programs in Australia, informed by both EAP and a genre-based approach. Dyson (2016) examines the efficacy of the two curricular approaches by analysing student essays using the Measuring the Academic Skills of University Students (MASUS) procedure and self-reported perceptions of course preparation. The study finds that students enrolled in the genre-based course significantly outperformed their counterparts in the EAP course in overall measures and grammatical correctness. In addition, the genre-based students reported more favourable perceptions of their academic and language preparation. The findings

indicate that the genre-based approach leads to improved writing outcomes and heightened student satisfaction.

Australian research into ELICOS programs has advanced knowledge of fluency development through extensive reading (Brigg & Chik, 2016) and book club café activities (Speer & Lara, 2017) and literacy development through an innovative pronunciation approach (Playsted & Burri, 2021). Several Australian studies have considered innovative pedagogic practices to improve writing outcomes through data-driven learning (Crosthwaite, 2020), corpus-based innovations (Truong & Do, 2021), digital resources (Sleeman, 2015) and technology-enhanced academic language support (Smith, 2019b). Several studies provide timely insights into the delivery of EAP during the challenging time of COVID lockdowns (which occurred during the period of review) – a time that put considerable strain on the educational sector (Owen et al., 2021; Parr et al., 2021; Pusey & Nanni, 2021). The studies not only have implications for effective pedagogical approaches, but also provide a navigational tool for EAP programs grappling with the unique challenges posed by the pandemic.

In the context of the internationalisation of higher education, where student cohorts are culturally and linguistically diverse, one of the challenges is ensuring students' continuous language development within mainstream disciplinary learning (Arkoudis, 2014; Johnson et al., 2015). Consequently, changes to curriculum have focused on providing embedded language support to enable students to continue to develop their English language proficiency and academic literacy in higher education institutions (Drury, 2018; Moore et al., 2018). One example is Drury's (2018) examination of an interdisciplinary collaboration among discipline experts, namely an academic literacy specialist and e-learning experts in designing online learning materials for teaching the laboratory report genre in physiology. The study emphasises the value of such collaborations in generating knowledge and effectively embedding it into online educational resources. In another study, Moore et al. (2018) investigate the challenges and successes of 'curriculum embedding' in Australia by focusing on a collaborative initiative between Sociology academics and an academic literacy specialist. By developing a shared metalanguage for exploring key discipline concepts such as 'theory' and 'critique', the study underscores the critical role of interdisciplinary collaboration in embedding writing tasks that enhance both disciplinary learning and academic literacy.

According to the literature, one of the key features that distinguish effective academic essays from less effective ones is the extent to which the student can establish an authorial presence (e.g., Atkinson, 2001; Ivanic & Camps, 2001). Yet, this essential quality is not well understood in the literature as it is elusive (Chen, 2001; Thompson et al. 2016). Drawing on a case study approach, Thompson et al. (2016) investigate rhetorical and linguistic resources that three EAL doctoral students draw on to project themselves a credible and authorial writer. The study reveals that EAL doctoral students employ a mix of linguistic and rhetorical tools such as source attribution and stance markers in their written Ph.D. confirmation reports. Continuing the theme of authorial voice, Liardét and Black (2016) examine effective referencing practices in synthesising the voice of others as evidence while projecting an authorial stance. The study uncovers that both English as a First Language and EAL students exhibit a similar lack of proficiency in effectively synthesising evidence to establish their authorial voice. The authors advocate for pedagogical shifts that consider referencing as a constructive skill rather than a punitive measure.

Taking an evaluative stance is a key textual manifestation of the authorial voice (e.g., Chen, 2001; Hyland, 2005). McRae (2018) reports on pedagogy that exploits debates as a powerful resource to develop the student's ability to indicate and justify a position. Using a two-year analysis of six sessions at a Sydney tertiary institution, the study finds that incorporating debates as an interactive assessment task not only enriches non-English speaking background (NESB) students' skills in oral and written argumentation, but also positively impacts their academic progress. This approach extends beyond a form-focused method, employing a more interactive approach to foster students' ability to adopt and articulate their stance.

The issue of academic integrity has gained increasing attention in higher education. Selected Australian research contributes to understanding the complexities introduced by digital technology

in upholding academic integrity, specifically in the context of Australia's high-stakes Direct Entry English Programs. Dinneen (2021), for example, sheds light on ways in which digital technology, such as digital translation and paraphrasing tools, are exploited for assignment writing and how they pose a threat to academic integrity and the potential impact on the quality of the ELICOS Direct Entry English Programs. The paper concludes that the issue goes beyond a simple policy problem, warranting further attention in both teaching and learning. This includes redefining the concept of academic integrity and offering guidelines on the appropriate use of digital tools. These considerations have significant implications for current debates about the ethical application of Artificial Intelligence tools.

The provision of written feedback has attracted considerable attention in the field of EAP in the review period. Kettle *et al.* (2018) explore the challenges of providing written corrective feedback in English language classrooms for adult learners. Focusing on two teachers in discipline contexts, the study reveals a tension between the value students place on feedback and the teachers' unfamiliarity with best practice. The study offers valuable perspectives on how teachers can improve their feedback practices through insights from L2 written corrective feedback. Carr and Weinmann (2018) challenge traditional views on the efficacy of written corrective feedback in language learning. Adopting a socio-culturally informed framework, the paper emphasises the importance of collaborative learning. It suggests that for written corrective feedback to be effective, it should occur within a co-constructed process facilitated by multiple encounters. Malecka (2019) investigates the impact of feedback in writing, emphasising mindful reflection and analysis as crucial to the learning process. The study highlights the pivotal role of online learning management platforms and collaborative technologies in making this reflective process dialogic and accessible. The use of technology empowers learners by giving them greater control and enabling active participation in the feedback process. This focus on learner agency and engagement represents an important shift that has been often overlooked in existing literature. Finally, a small body of research examines supervisory written feedback practices on doctoral theses (Stracke & Kumar, 2016) and highlights the transformative role of expressive types of supervisory feedback such as praise and criticism in motivating and challenging doctoral candidates, thereby enhancing learning and writing development.

5.3 School-based curriculum and pedagogy in English education

Australian research into school-based curriculum and pedagogy occurs against the backdrop of the implementation of the country's First National English curriculum – ACE (ACARA, 2011) – amidst increasing national and international efforts to nationalise the curriculum to achieve standardisation and elevate classroom practices (Sawyer, 2019; Sivesind & Westbury, 2016).

The selected studies in this period have provided significant insights into curriculum developments as the national English curriculum is implemented across Australia. Macken-Horarik *et al.* (2019), for example, examine the complexities of understanding the subject of English, particularly in the interpretation and analysis of both traditional and multimedia texts. The study delves into the challenges of teaching and learning textual concepts such as theme, narrative structure, character and perspective in Year 9/10 curricula in the state of NSW and the Australian Capital Territory. Data from ten case studies and interviews demonstrate that deep understanding in English is fostered by supportive school leadership, teachers' willingness to engage with complex concepts, cohesive curriculum design, professional dialogue and contexts that encourage student learning transfer. These insights have crucial implications for future oriented research in English. Ireland *et al.* (2017) continue the thematic discussion of concepts by interrogating the complex interplay between literary theories and teachers' personal epistemologies and teaching beliefs drawing on interviews and surveys with 50 teachers. The analysis demonstrates varying degrees of alignment between the syllabus' theoretical underpinnings and the teachers' preferred literary theories. The misalignment often leads to the perception that the syllabus is flawed, impacting on teachers' confidence and teaching practices. The findings highlight the critical importance of considering teachers' beliefs when developing and implementing new syllabi.

Gauci and Curwood (2017) along with Curwood and Gauci (2020) focus on the challenges and imperatives of implementing Asia literacy in education. Asia literacy and teaching students about Asia's diverse cultures, histories and current affairs, is a cross-curriculum priority in the new ACE for Years 7–10 (ACARA, 2011). Their findings reveal a significant gap between curriculum demands and teachers' preparedness for effectively incorporating it into their lessons (Gauci & Curwood, 2017). Through case studies of two secondary English teachers in New South Wales, Curwood and Gauci (2020) further examine the complexities of integrating this cross-curriculum priority. Their research emphasises the vital role of text selection and strategic incorporating, all informed within the lens of culturally sustaining pedagogy, to enhance students' meaningful engagement with this curriculum focus. Finally, Weaven and Clark (2015) contemplate the tension Australian secondary English teachers face in curriculum decision making, particularly concerning the teaching of poetry in senior secondary classes, in the context of a centralised curriculum and increased standardised testing. The study uncovers a paradox between teachers' sense of reduced professional autonomy – due to mandated curriculum changes and increased standardised testing – and their belief that a national curriculum could better serve students from diverse backgrounds. Findings raise important questions about teachers' roles in curriculum decision making.

Australian research within the review period has examined pedagogical approaches for addressing the diverse needs and rights of EAL students in the school curriculum (Janfada & Thomas, 2020). Janfada and Thomas (2020) provide a critical examination of the ideologies shaping the EAL curriculum in secondary schools, in the state of Victoria. Grounded in Bakhtin's (1986) dialogic approach and van Lier's (1996) AAA principles (Awareness, Autonomy, Authenticity), the study presents the reflections of an experienced EAL teacher, grappling with critical issues such text selection, assessment criteria, and inclusion and exclusion of EAL students in mainstream classrooms. Using narrative writing, a commonly taught genre in Australian schools as an example, the paper examines its potential and limitations for fostering a more inclusive and diverse curriculum for English in a plurilingual world. Findings hold significant implications for reshaping understanding of literacy and curriculum design and for cultivating more inclusive and responsive pedagogical practices for EAL students.

A special edition of articles published in *English in Australia* features a repeated theme of incorporating multilingual perspectives into school curricula particularly for English learners, both first and additional language speakers (Cox et al., 2015; Durrant & Cox, 2015; D'warte, 2015; Humphrey, 2015; Walsh et al., 2015; Willenburg, 2015). Durrant and Cox (2015) introduce the discussion by exploring the impacts of globalisation and policies on education and transnationalism, on school education, particularly highlighting the linguistic and cultural challenges EAL learners encounter due to monolingual assessment practices. However, findings of the study also indicate that language-focused pedagogy has the potential to benefit all students. D'warte (2015) reports on a novel approach that can engage secondary multilingual students as linguistic ethnographers of their own language practices, empowering learners as experts in their language use. This innovative approach shifts the discourse from viewing multilingualism as a deficit to recognising it as an asset. This study makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of how to create a more inclusive and effective strategy that benefits every student in the classroom.

Humphrey (2015) extends this discussion by focusing on a whole-school literacy initiative, targeting the needs of multilingual learners. The study revolves around a functionally oriented metalinguistic toolkit designed to equip teachers with language resources and metalanguage essential for effective instruction and assessment. The findings suggest that the professional learning not only provides teachers with valuable skills, but also significantly improves literacy outcomes as confirmed by formal assessments. This adds to our understanding that thoughtfully designed teaching resources and methods can enhance educational outcomes for a diverse student population. Finally, Walsh et al. (2015) explore the instrumental role of multimodal theory in enhancing academic literacy among multilingual students. The study argues for the potential of future digital environments to provide innovative pathways for these learners to acquire and excel in academic literacies essential for EAL learners' success in curriculum learning.

Other literature focusing on pedagogical initiatives undertaken in the review period also include those informed by Hallidayan systemic functional linguistic theory of language (Chen *et al.*, 2021; Huisman, 2016; Macken-Horarik, 2016; Rose, 2016; Thomas, 2016). Macken-Horarik (2016) advances our knowledge of the potential of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) in enhancing the teaching and understanding of multimodal literature in English curriculum. Findings demonstrate improved student engagement and deeper understanding, making a compelling case for the broader adoption of SFL in literary studies. In a similar vein, Huisman (2016) provides an enlightened exploration of how a multidimensional meaning system afforded by SFL can enrich and deepen our understanding and interpretation of poetry. In another study, Thomas (2016) showcases how elements of SFL can be employed by educators to teach complex textual concepts such as character, representation, authority and theme in a coherent and accessible manner. Rose (2016) proposes a multi-tiered framework for literary analysis that provides tools for examining texts at sentence, structural and whole levels. This novel synthesis of the SFL based genre-based research aims to not only educate, but also to cultivate a lifelong love for reading and writing. In a recent SFL application, Chen *et al.* (2021) address the crucial yet complex issue of teaching argumentative writing skills in early primary education. Reconceptualising argumentation as critical reasoning rather than merely a written form, Chen *et al.* propose an innovative pedagogical approach that can cultivate students' ability to reason, argue and critique effectively. Collectively, this body of research contributes to understanding innovative pedagogical practices for enhancing critical writing, interpretation and thinking skills, thus tackling long-standing challenges in literacy education in Australia.

The studies we have examined on language curricula and pedagogy have generated crucial insights into Australian's language education landscape. Before we pivot to the next emerging theme, it is vital to acknowledge that the effectiveness of any curriculum and pedagogy is inextricably linked to the qualities of educators themselves. With this in mind, we now focus on teacher development, exploring the intricate concepts of teacher identity and pedagogical beliefs.

6. Teacher development, and their identity and beliefs

As in many locations around the world, applied linguistics research in Australia has had as one of its key areas of research the teaching of languages (especially English) and how teachers approach this. Because of a number of neo-liberal governmental initiatives within Australia, literacy – and especially the teaching of it – is also a primary concern for educational authorities, politicians and society more generally (e.g., Gannon, 2019; Owen, 2019). Within these areas of language and literacy, there have been several studies during the period under review focused on the development of teachers, with investigations seeking to address the questions of how to ensure they are adequately prepared for teaching. This has involved investigations of pre-service (e.g., Jones, 2017; Morgan, 2015), as well as in-service teachers – examining what has helped their development, with particular attention given to their professional development (e.g., Barnes *et al.*, 2019; Reed & Chappell, 2021). Barnes *et al.*, for instance, explored teacher beliefs, finding that whilst teachers were generally positive about EAL students, they felt the burden of the additional time needed to support these students. There have also been other studies that have explored teachers' pedagogy and factors that affect their teaching including teacher identity and beliefs, and related to these aspects, their experiences and the impact of teachers' language backgrounds (such as being plurilingual) (e.g., Benson, 2016; O'Sullivan, 2020).

6.1 Teacher development

Between 2015 and 2022, most studies in this category focused either on pre- or in-service teachers, with only a small number looking at the transition of students into the teaching profession. In terms of pre-service teachers, a key focus of investigations was the role of different models for practicum placements (i.e., students working as practice teachers as part of their teaching degree) (e.g.,

Bellamy, 2017; Moloney et al., 2017). For instance, the study by Andrew and Razoumova (2017) undertaken using surveys, examines practicums related to becoming TESOL educators and the role they may have in the students' development. They found reflective practice was a useful approach to support their emerging agency as teachers. Nguyen & Williams (2019), in their case study research, had a very specific aim in relation to practicums – namely, looking at how instructional scaffolding may be developed as part of an EAL program. They found with theoretical input and reflection that participants were able to employ a number scaffolding strategies in their practice.

Morgan (2015), however, looks beyond just practicums and explores how online collaborative communities may be helpful for pre-service teachers of languages. Reflecting on an approach she adopted in her university course, she describes how a cohort of students could act as a learning and inquiry group, engaging dialogically so that they could share their understandings and knowledge across the various learning topics. These communities of practice were for students of all languages and year levels, regardless of school system. It included the university and preservice (student) teachers and extended into the period that the students transitioned into the workplace. In a special issue of *English Australia*, Curwood and O'Grady (2015) reflect on pre-service teacher education from their experiences as researchers and teachers, making a strong call for future and multi-faceted research into professional learning.

As noted previously, the period of review included the time when the COVID pandemic occurred. Lockyer et al. (2021) reflect this in their study that focuses on the impact of lockdowns on pre-service teachers. They did this using a narrative approach to give voice to four participants from different backgrounds who shared their experience when they were enrolled in initial teacher education during this time. Other similar small-scale studies, based on interview data, consider the development of pre-service English teachers, focusing on what they should be taught (Jones, 2017), how they should be taught (e.g., Kosnik et al., 2017) and the type of resources that should be used, such as using online tools (e.g., Woodford & Southcott, 2018). For example, Watkins and Wyatt (2015), using interviews and surveys, evaluate materials designed to support trainee English language teachers. O'Sullivan (2020) also undertook an evaluation, but this time of a purpose developed intervention – an online resource – for helping students prepare for the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE, ACER, n.d.). This test, which is required to be passed by all teaching students in order to graduate, was introduced and mandated by the federal government in 2016. As O'Sullivan indicates, it creates further pressure on the tightly regulated area of Initial Teacher Education. She also raises important questions about the nature of the test, future teachers' capabilities – including personal literacy skills and test preparedness – and contemporary conceptions of literacy. She outlines the need 'to develop tertiary students' personal and professional confidence across a range of multi-literacy practices and multimodalities, and to extend these well beyond any single test measure' (p. 177).

As noted, few studies have examined graduating students' transition into the workplace. An exception was a study by Manuel and Carter (2016). Their findings revealed that for a significant proportion of teachers early in their careers, their initial aspirations, expectations and goals had been disrupted by a range of contextually contingent forces. Half of their sample ($n = 22$) indicated that their sense of professional agency had been undermined by the pressures associated with preparing their students for high-stakes external examinations and their marginalisation from decision-making processes that impact upon their classroom practice. More than a third of the sample disagreed or were 'unsure' that they would be teaching for another five years. Other researchers found that such things as Standards-based Reforms impact early career teachers' capacity (Owen, 2019). In this case study, Owen reports on how one teacher navigates the confines of the 'structures and systems of governments and schools to teach her way' (p. 24). Given the reported rates of early-career teacher attrition (Buchanan et al., 2013), studies such as these have important implications for the teaching profession and particularly how to retain staff within the profession.

Other work highlights the professional challenges of more experienced teachers. For example – like Owen (2019) – in a survey of 180 teachers, Gannon (2019) also found that 'standards' related testing

(i.e., NAPLAN) was also reshaping the work undertaken by experienced English teachers, with considerable classroom time and attention diverted to this testing and general heightened anxiety amongst staff and students. A study by Manuel *et al.* (2018) of 211 experienced English teachers shows the impact of an intensified workload on their capacity for quality teaching and continued investment in teaching as a career. In their next study, Manuel *et al.* (2019) explore whether or not experienced English teachers sustain their motivation for teaching. They found a waning of initial intrinsic motivation over time, with the impact of extrinsic factors leading to further decline of motivation.

A further study that considers the impact of workload, including that associated with supporting EAL students, particularly those in regional areas, is one by Barnes *et al.* (2019). Similarly, Hattingh *et al.* (2017), in a case study of one secondary school, found that because of internationalisation in schools (i.e., enrolment of large number of international [often EALD] students), teachers ($n = 25$) felt ill-prepared and were left with many unanswered questions about the curriculum and student participation. They also felt they needed more intercultural competence and understanding of the relationship between language and literacy, which together highlights a strong need for greater professional development opportunities for teachers. Turner (2015) suggests there are opportunities for EAL teachers to work collaboratively with content teachers to support these students using the Australian curriculum and especially if the supplementary documentation is utilised. However, based on interviews with four participants (pre-service teachers), she found there was a general lack of confidence in the possibility of such collaboration. Gleeson and Davison (2019) also note the importance of partnership and the need to integrate language and content teaching. Furthermore, based on their data from questionnaires, interviews and observations in two secondary schools in Sydney, they found that most teachers feel they have sufficient strategies to meet the needs of the EAL students, although the authors call for 'a renewed focus on integrating language and content teaching and partnership models of professional learning and evaluation are needed' (p. 301).

Many of the publications concerning in-service teacher development relate to the provision and different types of professional development available for teachers. Reed and Chappell (2021), for instance, provide an overview of what is considered best practice in professional development in English language teaching according to teachers and researchers. They describe a project they undertook investigating how satisfied English language teachers are with professional development. They point to the need for teachers to have more input into every stage of professional development programming so that they may become more autonomous and reflective as teachers and as learners. This need for autonomy is also advocated by Loyden (2015, p. 15) in her exploration of how English teachers govern their own professional development 'in response to neoliberal mandates and accountability regimes'. Benson *et al.* (2018) extend this by providing illustration of how professional development can be both self-directed and collaborative. They did this by using narrative inquiry as a teacher reflection tool. Narrative inquiry, specifically for analysis, was also used by Alexander (2016) in his case study of a teacher's preference for her post-graduate education. Also looking at individual development, Goodwyn (2017) explores Personal Growth and Social Agency for English teachers building upon the model initially proposed by Dixon (1967). Edwards (2018), on the other hand, considers the challenges and potential benefits of action research for teacher development. Singh (2016), however, suggests the need for scaffolding graduate teachers' professional learning – through a post-monolingual approach – especially for EAL teachers to develop their understanding about intracultural language and literacy education. Premier and Parr (2019) extend this further suggesting the value of a 'community of practice' approach for professional learning for teachers to enable a whole-school approach enabling collaboration, use of appropriate EAL strategies to meet the needs of the students and enriched classroom practices.

6.2 Teacher identity and beliefs

Closely connected to teacher professional development, are the areas of teacher identity and pedagogical beliefs. For example, a number of studies in Australia during the review period explored the

connection between teachers' identity as writers and how this can impact on their identity as teachers (e.g., Frawley, 2018; Locke, 2018; Wells et al., 2016). Frawley (2015), for example, describes her pathway into English teaching. She argues that 'relatively little is known about the affordances of being a teacher-writer' (p. 52), which contrasts to the usual expectation for English teachers to be readers.

Another area within the teacher identity field includes work on the identity of TESOL teachers (e.g., Benson, 2016), and plurilingual teachers working in both TESOL and mainstream contexts. Studies by Coleman (2015) and Moloney and Giles (2015) consider opportunities for education, but also the challenges for pre-service plurilingual teachers. The latter study considers the dynamic and tension that occurs within their identity construction with respect to their personal and professional lives. Ellis (2017), in her study of plurilingual teachers, describes how their valuing of various levels of 'use and engagement with languages' can open up as they reflect on their lived lives and relationship with their languages as 'semiotic or meaning-making resources, which impact not only on [their own] lives, but how they interact with students' (p. 15). Despite these advantages, Cruickshank (2015) and Phillips (2017) highlight the marginalisation and discrimination experienced by such teachers, especially as it relates to their employability and inclusion. In support of these claims, de Jong (2019) in her paper cautions against the monolingual bias in pre-service teaching and argues 'for the mandate for developing a multilingual stance for all teachers ...' (p. 5).

Another line of enquiry in Australia has been the examination of how English and other language educators conceptualise their own skills with respect to the content they need to teach. An example of this is a study by Freebody (2021) of teacher beliefs about and pedagogical approaches for literacy teaching. He used interviews with teachers from pre-primary through to Year 7 to explore how they characterise the teaching and learning of literacy over the primary school years finding that their application of theory to practice changes according to year level. Focusing on one specific area was a study undertaken by Love et al. (2015) that examines how teachers approach the teaching of grammar, which is now incorporated within the Australian Curriculum. The curriculum requires 'teachers to have linguistic subject knowledge which includes knowledge of the structures and functions of word and teach sentence-level grammar, as this relates to a wide range of texts in different modes' (p. 171). The authors surveyed 373 teachers to determine their preparedness to teach what is required by the curriculum, their understandings of grammar, and how they teach, plan for grammar teaching and assess their students' work, finding a complex pattern of responses and teacher preparedness to teach grammar. Another example is a study by O'Sullivan (2020) who looks at the relationship between English teachers' beliefs and values related to Literature teaching. She undertook interviews with 18 Australian teachers, focusing on their constructions of identity and the relationship between this and their passion for both teaching and for the subject they teach – literature. She reported that there was a complex relationship between their identity constructions, teaching, and especially their teaching practices and their beliefs about literature.

Publications in Australia have also included an examination of beliefs and practice of teachers working in other countries, as for example, one such study undertaken by Shi and Chen (2020). Like the work described above, they also explore teacher knowledge and practices – but this time the context was English teaching in China and their approach used SFL to teach writing. Their findings show that positive changes in teacher knowledge corresponded to improvement in student writing (Shi & Chen, 2020).

Translating teacher knowledge and beliefs about teaching into practice – that is, the 'how to' of teaching underpins other pedagogical oriented publications about teachers. In her article based on a case study undertaken at one school, Humphrey (2015) reflects on personal 'Teaching Philosophy Statements'. She outlines the uses and benefits of this approach and how the process of having teachers write such statements can be as useful as the final product. Other publications reflect different skill areas of language and literacy teaching such as reading (e.g., McGraw & Mason, 2017) and writing (e.g., Ngo, 2016; Pasqua, 2017). In contrast, Roberts (2019) explores the role that leadership can play in supporting teachers within the English teaching and learning area, and specifically how the support they provide can bring balance to educators as they work to overcome the 'tick-box mindset'

(p. 65) of a ‘standards imposed’ approach. School leaders, along with classroom teachers, are also seen as pivotal for promoting cross-curricular intercultural understanding and enactment according to Liyanage *et al.* (2016).

Much of the research in Australia related to language teachers has focused on the ‘how to’ of teaching, and especially teacher development and beliefs, but also the impact of the characteristics of teachers, coupled with outside forces – such as the imposition of national standards and the washback effect of testing – on teachers and their learners. A lot of this work has been qualitative, including case studies and interviews, with only a few larger scale survey studies.

7. Conclusion

This review highlights the wide ranging and diverse range of applied linguistics research undertaken in Australia during the period 2015–2022. The research is applied both in focus and intent with the key areas including First Nations peoples, their diverse languages and language learning, language and migration, language testing and assessment, curriculum and pedagogy, and teaching and learning English, language and literacy. Studies have explored language issues confronting marginalised communities (First Nation peoples, migrants and refugees), provided empirical support for and exploration of language learning – home languages, other languages and the teaching of SAE. This paper has examined the positioning of diverse background language speakers, but also the various ways they use language (e.g., through translanguaging) and how this has allowed them to create new bilingual/bi-cultural identities. Australian applied linguists have also entered into debate about the hegemony around language standards, the related curriculum and pedagogy, national testing, and the subsequent washback of these politically motivated initiatives. In doing so, Australian applied linguists have provided a platform and evidence for advocacy around language use and language learning, literacy and diversity, and for the work of teachers. The body of work emanating from Australia in this period represents a range of research methods including quantitative methods (e.g., surveys), but also a predominance of qualitative approaches including ethnography, narrative inquiry, conversational analysis, linguistic landscapes analysis and case study research. Overall, the field of applied linguistics in Australia continues to grow and evolve as it works to address language issues in authentic ways.

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Notes

¹ How this might be achieved is outlined in an article by Oliver *et al.* (2021).

² Within Australia and depending on the state or territory, EAL or EALD – English as an Additional Language or Dialect – is often used rather than TESOL.

³ Note here the important contribution internationally of the Australian scholar, Tim McNamara (2019).

⁴ There is a strong interconnection between Australia and NZ in other studies due to their geographic proximity.

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