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Korean Language Education in Australian
Schools: Current State, Issues and
Strategies*

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신성철. 2009. 호주 학교의 한국어 교육 조사 연구. *외국어로서의 한국어교육* 34, 175~225. 본 연구는 호주초중고교의 한국어 교육에 대한 조사 연구로서 한국어 교육 현황과 현안을 분석하여 발전 전략을 제시한다. 조사 방법으로 호주 전국의 교육 행정자, 교사 및 학자 등 주요 관계자들을 대상으로 설문, 면접 및 자문 방법을 취하였고, 문제만이 아니라 모델이 될 수 있는 사례도 포함하였다. 발전 방안으로 본 연구는 일곱 가지 핵심적 정부 정책 지원영역 및 과제를 제의한다.

(뉴사우스웨일즈대)

핵심어: Korean in Australian schools(호주 학교의 한국어), Korean language policy(한국어 정책), NALSSP(호주 국가 아시아 언어 프로그램)

* This paper is a revised version of my draft report (75 pages) that has been submitted to the Australian Government through the Asia Education Foundation. This version presented at the National Strategic Conference 2009 (UNSW, 19-21 November 2009) has been produced for academic purposes with permissions. For full details, please refer to the report (to be) published in December 2009 under the same title.

1. Introduction

This paper is the outcome of research undertaken to investigate the current state and issues of Korean language programs in Australian schools in relation to the Government's National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP).¹⁾ The research was motivated by a rationale that key stakeholders (education systems, principals, teachers, parents and students) require specific information and baseline data on the current status of Korean language in Australian schools if the NALSSP target of doubling the number of Year 12 students undertaking Korean language by 2020 is to be achieved. The research was also influenced by the work undertaken in 2008 by Dr Jane Orton (Orton, 2008) to report on the current state of Chinese Language Education in Australian Schools and the findings and recommendations that this report generated.

While many of the issues hindering Korean language are well-known and shared by other languages, these issues have been documented in other research projects. This paper highlights issues particularly pertinent to the study of Korean and provides strategies specific to Korean.

It was only in the late 1980s that Korean started to gain recognition in Australian language policy documents such as *National Policy on Languages* (Lo Bianco, 1987) and New South Wales (NSW) *State Language Policy* (MWP 1988), and government-commissioned reports

such as the 'Garnaut Report' (*Australia and Northeast Asian Ascendancy*, 1989). With recommendations from these policy documents and reports, a series of Korean curriculum and syllabus documents were developed through the National Korean Curriculum Project which started initially in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), then transferred to NSW (Board of Studies) in the early 1990s. During the early to mid 1990s, Australian schools began teaching Korean in NSW and the ACT, then in Victoria (VIC). By the mid 1990s a number of significant curriculum and delivery projects such as *Korean using Technology* (NSW Department of Education) were undertaken while tertiary and secondary Korean programs were supported by organisations such as the National Korean Studies Centre (defunct after 5 years of operation). After over 15 years of various development stages from the early 1990s to the mid 2000s, summarised as 'honeymoon, adjustment and the fight-for-survival' periods (Shin S-C, 2006), the current state of Korean language in schools gives cause for concern. Data shows that Korean is ranked 14th in terms of the number of enrolments in language courses in Australian schools. The total number of students studying Korean is very low (4,000 students, or 0.1% of all Australian school students, 2009). Much work needs to be done to address what is hindering the advancement of Korean in mainstream Australian schools. The Government's NALSSP initiative has presented an excellent opportunity for Korean to renew and redirect its status by expanding quality educational programs to new schools while nurturing and providing support to existing Korean language programs.

1) The Australian Government has committed funding of \$62.4 million over four years (2008-09 to 2011-12) for the NALSSP to significantly increase the number of Australian students learning key Asian languages (Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean).

2. Aim and Method

The aim of this paper is to provide an evidence-based analysis of issues from which stakeholders can draw on as they work towards practices and programs that result in more students undertaking and continuing Korean to Year 12. The following specific objectives are addressed: 1) Present, analyse and discuss the latest available statistical information on Korean language study in schools (schools, teachers and students); 2) Describe factors that support or strengthen Korean language programs in schools; 3) Describe factors and issues that limit or hinder the success of Korean language programs in schools; 4) Provide case studies to identify exemplary or promising practices in Korean language education; and 5) Offer support strategies specific to Korean language education in the current education environment.

To undertake the research, five steps were taken: 1) Review recent evaluation reports, relevant Australian and international research on Korean language education, policy statements, curriculum and syllabus documents, units of work, guidelines and resource materials; 2) Gather statistical data to understand the uptake of Korean - the number and nature of schools, students and teachers - through correspondence, meeting in person or public sources such as website information 3) Carry out interviews with representatives from state and territory education systems, principals, Korean teachers associations, academics and other representatives from the Korean community to identify issues or factors that promote and hinder success in the Korean language; 4) Further examine some cases of exemplary or promising practices in Korean language education in depth; and 5) Develop strategies and models specific to Korean and may assist in

strengthening Korean as a sustainable program.

3. Literature Review

There are relatively little in the literature about the teaching of Korean in Australian primary and secondary schools, and the literature currently available includes Buzo, A. Dalton, B. M. & Wood, C. (1995), NALSAS Taskforce (1998), Shin, G-H. and Suh, C-S. (2002), Shin, S-C. and Baik (2002), Shin, S-C. (2002, 2006, 2008), and Suh, H. (2004). This literature review focuses on some selective studies in relation to the issues concerning the teaching of Korean in Australian primary and secondary schools, as well as similar issues in the USA.

The NALSAS Taskforce (1998) identifies factors working against primary and secondary Korean programs, such as funding restrictions, limited pool of teacher availability, background teachers' teaching style, lack of appropriate classroom resources, lack of relevance to students, absence of appropriate courses for specific groups of students and competing priorities such as time and subject choices. It also points out that the Korean programs based on technology (*Korean using Technology*) make them vulnerable and are questionable for the long-term sustainability since such programs carry significant resource and infrastructure implications. Other important issues the study raises include a lack of promotional activities, a lack of continuity from feeder schools and tensions between background and non-background speakers of Korean. Erebus CPPT (2002b) finds that Korean has been small in enrolment numbers and growth over time nationally, and warns implicitly that Korean needs to attain sufficient critical mass to

be self-sustaining if it is to retain focused national support.

In his key note address, a former Ambassador to Korea Mack Williams (2002) maintains that the images of Korea in the Australian mass media (and vice versa) tend to be dominated by negative connotations but this has slowly improved with the emergence of more positive images in both countries due to a significant increase in human interaction, the impact of Korean brand leaders in the Australian market and a generational change. At the same time Williams recognises there are more challenges ahead to correct the stereotyped picture that still exists in the image of each country, suggesting that education should play a major role for this and the prime targets should be the young generations of both countries.

Shin, S.-C. and Baik (2002) presents findings of a survey study on Korean teacher training needs. The key findings are: 1) non-Korean teachers are more interested in language training programs to improve their Korean language skills, while Korean native speaker teachers are more interested in teaching methodologies and resource development; 2) a graduate diploma or certificate program that can be offered as an ongoing in-service program to refresh the teachers' knowledge of language teaching methodologies and to upgrade their qualifications is more desirable; 3) given a number of restrictions such as time and geographical distance, such programs are more feasible when a combination of distance education (e.g., e-learning) during the school terms and an intensive on-campus face-to-face mode during the school break are provided; and 4) the program should include both theories and practice, with greater emphasis on practical aspects which focus on practical application of theories and an immediate use in the classroom.

Lee (2003) examines the teaching of foreign languages in secondary schools in the U.S with particular reference to the US Korean Language Pilot Flagship program, mandated by the American National Flagship Language Initiative aimed to produce speakers with "Professional Working Proficiency". Lee estimates that a minimum of 1,320 hours (or 11 years of study based on 4 hours per week) are required for average students to reach that level of proficiency, and argues that the level of proficiency is not achievable within the U.S. secondary curriculum. Lee, while recognising the importance to promote the teaching of Korean to non-Korean background students, argues that the secondary Korean programs are more realistic, effective and beneficial when they focus on the large pool of Korean heritage students who have already reached a considerable level of proficiency, especially at receptive skills. In relation with the benefits of learning Korean, Sohn (2005) lists six types of benefits that Korean heritage students will gain when they learn Korean: contribution to the communities; confidence in identity issues; individual competitiveness; academic performance; proficiency attainment; and career opportunities.

As strategies to advance Korean language education in Australia, Shin, S.-C. (2006) makes recommendations in eight areas, including: the necessity to form an action group to prepare a short and long term plan that specifies feasible strategies to increase enrolments in Korean and advance Korean programs, the need to undertake promotion activities not just focused on trade relationship but more importantly on human interactions and socio-cultural relevance; and the need to encourage heritage speaker students to undertake Korean in regular educational systems. Byon (2008) outlines four factors that have contributed the recent growth of Korean language programs in the

USA: 1) South Korea's increasing visibility in the international community; 2) the increase of Korean-American population; 3) the continuing support from the Korean government; and 4) the US government's bilingual and foreign language policy. As ways of improving the profile of Korean programs, Byon raises two important issues: one being students and parents (especially Korean-Americans) needing to be aware of the importance of bilingual and bi-cultural competence; and two being the necessity of active communication and cooperation between community schools, K-12 schools and universities, preferably in the form of a national body.

4. The Results

4.1. Provision - Schools, Programs, Resources and Support

1) Number of Schools

Table 1 below shows the current (2009) number of schools offering Korean in Australia. In this data ethnic schools run by ethnic community organisations are not included unless they offer Korean as an approved school certificate curriculum (e.g. VCE).²⁾

<Table 1> Number of Schools Offering Korean in Australia, 2009

School Type	No. of Schools	School Level	No. of Schools
DET/DECS	33	Primary	22
CEO	3	Secondary	27
AIS	3		
IB	9		
Ethnic ³⁾	1		
TOTAL	49	TOTAL	49

2) Note: DET/DECS = Government schools, CEO = Catholic schools and AIS = Independent schools; and IB = International Baccalaureate.

The state with the highest number of schools teaching Korean is NSW, where Korean is offered at 26 schools. Within the government school sector, Korean is offered at 19 day schools, 4 different centres of the Saturday School of Community Languages (SSCL) and 1 Open High school through distance education programs. With more than 120,000 residents and long-term stayers of Korean background living in Sydney alone, it is not surprising that NSW dominates these statistical accounts. Table 2 below shows the trends in the number of Australian primary and secondary schools teaching Korean in the past 10 years (2000-2009). IB schools are not included in the Table below. They are shown separately in Table 3.

<Table 2> Number of Schools Offering Korean in Australia, 2000-2009

Year	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09
TOTAL	41	35	33	34	36	34	34	37	38	40

As shown in the Table above Korean language education in Australia has traditionally had a very, very low base. The total number of schools teaching Korean in Australia is extremely small compared to other NALSSP languages and has not increased for the past 10 years. Of note is that IB schools offering Korean have increased in the past 10 years. With only one school prior to 2000 offering Korean through the IB, there are now 9 schools doing so. Table 3 below shows the trend of IB schools that offer Korean.

3) One Korean ethnic school offering VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education) Korean.

<Table 3> Number of Australian IB Schools Offering Korean 2000-2009

Year	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09
TOTAL	1	1	1	2	3	5	5	9	8	9

Interestingly, the increase of IB schools in Victoria has coincided with the closure of Korean programs in three secondary schools in the 2005-2007 period, suggesting perhaps that schools offering IB programs have filled a 'gap' in the market place for students wanting to study Korean. Also notable is that there has been an increase in enrolments of Korean background speaker students in private schools in Victoria, NSW and in SA. These schools offer Korean through the IB program.

2) Programs

The nature of programs in each State and Territory differ slightly, however Korean has been taught either through a program targeting second language learners or background speakers, or both through second language programs and community language or background speaker programs. In the majority of the programs, especially in primary school programs, cultural components are integrated into the Korean language program for intercultural understanding, rather than teaching the language and culture separately.

Nationally, what is absent in Korean program offerings is a Beginners course in Korean in the Senior Secondary Certificate program. There was a Beginner course offered through the Higher School Certificate (HSC) curriculum⁴⁾ in NSW until the beginning of 2000, however due to the low interest/enrolment of students the NSW Board of Studies suspended the course. In Victoria the VCE program

4) Years 11-12 courses in NSW.

does not offer a specific Beginners course in Korean. A Beginners course is vital for the incremental expansion of Korean for L2 learners in Australian schools.

Furthermore, what should be emphasised is the issue that has been pointed out as a major impediment for Korean language programs for many years, that is, the lack of course provision for heritage speakers.⁵⁾ There have been no appropriate learning opportunities available for Korean heritage students born in Australia or who migrated to Australia at very young ages. In this regard, the announcement made by the NSW Board of Studies at the beginning of 2009 to create a new Heritage Speaker course and the subsequent curriculum development being undertaken for implementation in 2011 is encouraging.

The availability of a Heritage Speaker course has the capacity to increase the number of students studying Korean exponentially (Lee, 2003), especially in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, where relatively large populations of Korean-born residents exist. Such growth will support the achievement of the NALSSP's target and increase the pool of Korean speaking Australians.

Whilst the prospect of increasing the number of heritage speaker students across the country is welcomed, the need to build a demand for Korean language among non-Korean background students remains. This growth requires careful management to be sustainable and effective.

5) Cho (2004) discusses in detail policy issues for Korean heritage students.

3) Time Allocation

As reported by schools and teachers, overall time allocation for language programs including Korean on a national basis is very much similar. It appears that most primary schools run approximately 45 minutes a week while secondary schools allocate 2-3 hours a week (approx. 100-200 hours a year). Certain primary schools or years run classes for only 30 minutes a week, while IB schools allocate up to 5 hours of class per week.

There are two key issues for consideration: one being the inconsistency of the time allocation across the states and schools; and the other being the insufficiency of class time. In some schools the primary Korean class lasts merely 30 minutes per week while other states and schools run it up to 120 minutes. The 30-minute classes in primary schools may not be enough to be considered as a serious language program. In secondary levels a mandatory program is obligated to do 2-3 hours per week, but in elective years the class is held for 1 hour or less.

While acknowledging that issues such as school timetabling and teacher availability restrict the duration of language classes, taking into account that Korean is a character-based language, it will be necessary to allocate a minimum of 90 minutes per week (or 60 hours per year) for primary schools courses and a minimum of 180 minutes per week (or 120 hours per year) for secondary school courses to achieve anything near 'proficiency' (Lee, 2003). The challenge is to determine how contact hours can be structured to meet this requirement.

4) Proficiency Levels

Entry levels for Korean courses differ slightly depending on the

state's curriculum, program and school sector, however the proficiency levels that students seek to achieve are either similar or the same nationally. Generally the Korean programs at the primary school levels and the beginner programs of the secondary levels teach basics including greetings, counting and simple conversation. Students in Advanced, Background Speaker and First Language courses at the senior secondary levels are expected to reach levels of native or near-native speakers who can deal with, for example, Korean literature. The proficiency levels of Korean A and B courses in IB programs are similar to those of these programs.

Teachers report that many L2 primary students achieve a reasonable level of reading and writing but textual comprehension is somewhat lacking. For many Korean heritage students, teachers find that speaking and listening achievement is satisfactory however, the standard of reading and writing skills remain low.

5) Curriculum and Resources

The data received from Korean teachers, teacher associations and language managers of various education systems suggests that one of the most urgent issues is the lack of adequate resource materials that can be used to support existing primary and secondary Korean programs. Most of the resources used for Korean programs in primary and secondary schools are outdated, culturally inappropriate or lacking in quality.

There are three main types of resource materials used within schools. First is the *Arirang* series, *Nu-gu-mi?*, and *Cho-ah-yo*, both developed in the mid 1990s. Alarmingly, there is an absence of better quality materials to replace the outdated, black and white course

books. So these are still being used as core resources. The second type of resource material comes from abroad, mainly from Korea. These materials have been made for primary and secondary level students in Korea or for Koreans living abroad. In most cases, the resources do not suit the Australian educational environment (e.g., often containing patriotic references and are very specific to Korean icons, social norms and cultural nuances), or do not correspond with Australian curriculum requirements and teaching learning methods and styles. The resources do not provide scope for two-way intercultural learning that is the contemporary aspiration of Australian languages studies. The third type of resource material is developed by teachers. These materials often closely follow the curriculum, but the quality of the materials is questionable as they are often not adequately researched and are simply based on secondary sources.

6) Supporting Programs with Partnerships

In a number of schools where Korean is taught, students are participating in a range of extra curricular activities such as food tasting, performances of music, plays and dance, speech and essay contests and annual UN day event. Some schools have exchange programs with sister schools in Korea, involving occasional student exchanges and some in-country experiences. However, many schools have no such partnerships. This issue urgently needs to be addressed and a project established to partner all Australian schools teaching Korean with a Korean school.

4.2. Student Participation

1) Student Numbers

Before examining the detailed feature of student participation in Korean, it is worth observing Korean enrolments from the perspectives of the four NALSSP languages and the total number of Australian students, as it will give the comparative status of Korean.

<Table 4> Korean with NALSSP Enrolments 2008*

	K-12	Year 12	% out of NALSSP K-12 Total	% out of NALSSP Y12 Total	% out of K-12 Total (3,434,291)	% out of Y12 Total (202,453)
CHIN	92,931	2,944	14.9	31.4	2.7	1.5
INDO	191,356	1,713	30.8	18.3	5.6	0.9
JAPN	334,674	4,538	53.8	48.4	9.8	2.2
KORE	3,190	177	0.5	1.9	0.1	0.1
TOTAL	622,151	9,372			18.2	4.7

*Some figures are based on 2006, 2007 or 2009 data. Year 12 numbers in South Australian Independent schools are not included since the breakdown figures are unavailable at this moment.

When the enrolment number of the four NALSSP languages is compared, it clearly shows where Korean stands in the overall Australian languages education landscape. As Table 4 demonstrates, the Korean enrolment rate nationally was merely 0.5% out of the total NALSSP enrolments and at Year 12, only 1.9%. In simple terms, if students learning Asian languages were asked which Asian language(s) they were studying at school in 2008, one in two would say 'Japanese', around one in three 'Indonesian' and one in seven students 'Chinese', while only one of two-hundred students would say that

they were studying Korean at school. Even if we apply the 2009 figures for Korean, which has increased to approximately 4,000 in K-12 enrolments and just over 300 in Year 12 enrolments, the minimal enrolment rate is not much changed, with 0.6% and 3.2%, respectively. While there is a need to increase the enrolment number of the Asian languages across the country (18.2% of intake rate in 2008), especially at senior secondary enrolments (merely 4.7% of Year 12 enrolments in 2008), the data clearly shows that there is a very urgent need to increase the number of students learning Korean in Australian schools.

Table 5 below shows the total number of students currently (2009) taking Korean in Australian schools.⁶⁾

<Table 5> Number of Students Taking Korean in Australian Schools (2009)

States	Primary	Secondary	Total
ACT	128	30	158
NSW	1,110	919	2,029
QLD	602	194	796
SA	0	71	71
TAS	235	0	235
VIC	679	261	940
TOTAL	2,754	1,475	4,229

As shown in the table above, currently (2009) the total number of students studying Korean in 49 schools (including 9 IB schools) is just over 4000. This is a very minimal figure compared to Australia's other NALSSP languages, as it represents only about 1.1% of students of Japanese (approx 350,000), around 2% of students of Indonesian (200,000) and approximately 4.3% of students of Chinese (94,000) in

6) The figures do not include student numbers in ethnic schools in the Korean communities but an exception has been made for one Victorian ethnic school, which has offered the VCE Korean program for over 20 years.

Australian schools. Among the 4000 students, approximately half were from NSW with 2,029 students; Victoria had about one quarter with 940 students; and 796 students in Queensland (QLD).

There were 2,754 primary students studying Korean, 1,475 secondary school students and among them 318 students were studying senior secondary certificate courses in Year 12. When looking at these figures per state and territory, NSW had the most primary school students with 1,110, followed by Victoria with 679 students and QLD with 602 students. At secondary level, NSW also had the most secondary school students with 919 students, followed by Victoria with 261 students and QLD with 194 students.

Drawing on the data provided by States and Territories it is possible to illustrate the student enrolment trends in each state and territory for the past 10 years. Whilst there is evidence of some growth in student numbers, all data should be read within the context of the extremely low-base of student participation from which Korean language operates in Australian schools.

In NSW in the last decade there has been an overall decrease of 4.1% in student numbers. Primary school numbers have decreased by 3.2%; junior secondary numbers by 2.8% and senior secondary by 10.1%. Since 2007 however student numbers have increased slowly to return to somewhere near the levels of 2000, with most of this growth in primary and junior secondary schools.

<Table 6> Number of Students Taking Korean in NSW by School Level 2000-2009

School Level	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
K-6	1147	852	1031	948	804	1122	1122	798	837	1110
7-10	672	572	373	417	411	416	335	314	325	653
11-12	296	179	210	345	337	191	176	257	235	266
TOTAL	2115	1603	1614	1710	1552	1729	1633	1369	1397	2029

Currently (2009), 82.3% of Years 11 and 12 HSC students are studying Korean through the Saturday School of Community Languages (SSCL) and if this number is combined with the 36 Year 11 and 12 students studying Korean through distance education mode at the Open High School there is only 4.1% of students studying Korean at the school they attend on a weekday. Among the total of 653 Junior-Middle Secondary students, there are 136 (20.8%) heritage students enrolled at SSCL. Therefore, one might reasonably assume that a considerable number of the remaining 517 (79.2%) students would be non-Korean background students. However students continuing Korean through the HSC Continuers course over the 2001-2008 period have been only 6.5%, or 9 students on average per year. One thing to note here is the anticipated increase in the number of Korean Heritage students who will undertake the Heritage speakers' course for their HSC after the implementation of the Heritage Speaker program in 2011.

Currently the state showing the most growth in student numbers is QLD. For the past 5 years junior and senior secondary participation numbers have been steadily growing and it is the only state that has offered Korean in at least one school in each school sector.

<Table 7> Number of Korean Enrolments in QLD by School Level 2005-2009

School Level	2005*	2006	2007**	2008	2009
Yrs K-7	366	440	524	459	602
Yrs 8-10	17	0	3	108	130
Yrs 11-12	9	6	7	34	64
TOTAL	392	446	534	601	796

*2005 (excluding government school students in years 8 to 10)

**2007 (K-7 are for government school students and AHES students only)

Due to some exclusions in the data provided to the researcher, it is not possible to develop a 'complete' picture, but as shown in Table 7 above, QLD enrolments have increased by 103% from 2005 to 2009. Increases have occurred across the primary, secondary and senior secondary level and are attributable to a number of factors. Attempts made to secure continuity in pathways for Korean language from primary to senior secondary, (the result of cluster schools involving one state high school and four primary schools in Gladstone), the excellent work of an independent school to manage their Korean program effectively, and the fact that bonus OP (Overall Performance) marks (QLD tertiary entrance assessment scheme) are given to students studying NALSSP languages have each played a role in growth.

In Victoria the impact of 3 secondary schools phasing out Korean programs over the period 2004-2007 has been significant. As shown in Table 8 below, there was a sudden drop in student numbers coinciding with the phase out, although with the Victorian School of Languages (VSL) program numbers have recovered some ground in the past 1-2 years. Primary level students have increased by 61.7% compared to the 2007 figure, again, from a very low-base.

<Table 8> Number of Students Taking Korean in VIC by School Level 2007-2009

School Level	2007	2008	2009
Yrs K-6	420	650	679
Yrs 7-10	43	9	37
Yrs 11-12	157	34	224
TOTAL	620	693	940

The impact of two government schools closing their Korean programs between 2004 and 2006 is evident. There was only one Year 12 student in a Victorian government school (outside of VSL) studying Korean in 2007 with no other secondary students in government schools being recorded. On the other hand, the number of junior and secondary level students in the VSL Korean program has been increasing for the past 10 years. Effectively, the VSL program is offering a 'lifeline' for Korean language within the secondary years of government schools.

<Table 9> Number of Victorian Students Who Completed VCE Korean 2001-2008

UNIT Name	Unit	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
KL1 Total	1+3	40	77	68	82	73	92	122	134
KL2 Total	1+3	57	58	55	84	85	92	87	123

As is clearly shown in the table above, the number of students at VSL taking Unit 1 and Unit 3 in the Korean First Language stream has increased from 40 students in 2001 to 134 students in 2008. The number of students in the Korean Second Language stream increased from 57 students in 2001 to 123 in 2008.

2) Background of Students

The background of students studying Korean differs depending on

the state, the educational sector, the schools program and also how they are classified. As shown in the table below, most students studying Korean at the primary level are non-Korean background students, while students at the secondary level are split almost equally into non-Korean students and Korean heritage or background speakers.

<Table 10> Background of Students of Korean

Background	Primary (n/%)		Secondary (n/%)		TOTAL (%)
NKB	2,143	77.8	697	47.3	67.2
KH or KB	611	22.2	718	48.7	31.4
TOTAL	2,754		1,475		

NKB: Non-Korean background students; KH: Korean heritage students;
KB: Korean background students (e.g. international students)

3) Year 12 Certificate Enrolments

Currently Victoria has the largest number of Year 12 students with 117 students, slightly higher than NSW which has 111 students, followed by QLD with 39, SA with 37 and 14 in the ACT. Table 11 below summarises the 318 Year 12 enrolments in 2009.

<Table 11> Year 12 Enrolments 2009

State	Year 12	Background	
		NKB (%)	KH or KB (%)
ACT	14	9 (64.3)	5 (35.7)
NSW	111	0	111 (100)
QLD	39	13 (33.3)	26 (66.7)
SA	37	0	37 (100)
VIC	117	0	117 (100)
TOTAL	318	22 (6.9)	296 (93.1)

When looking at the background of Year 12 students, 100% of students are Korean heritage or background speaker students in NSW,

SA and VIC. The exception is the ACT and QLD with 64.3% and 33.3% of non-Korean background students, respectively. Of crucial note here is that in Sydney, by way of example, there are hundreds of Korean heritage students in the Korean community who opted out of enrolling in HSC Korean as the course content was either too hard for them or because they fear that they will be disadvantaged when competing with Korean L1 speaker students who came to Australia after undertaking primary and/or junior high school studies in the Korean educational system. The situation in Melbourne is similar to Sydney, and for this reason the introduction of a Heritage Speaker program and associated support is urgent. Running parallel to this is the urgency to make provision for non-Korean background speaking students in senior secondary levels to study Korean as a second language through Beginner or Continuers courses.

<Table 12> Trends in Year 12 Enrolments 2001 – 2008

	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08
ACT	7	4	6	12	12	17	17	17
NSW	118	112	158	154	147	135	117	108
QLD	5	2	7	15	8	12	45	38
SA	20	22	24	25	33	37	37	33
VIC	60	103	97	112	112	134	140	171
TOTAL	210	243	292	333	312	335	356	367

As shown in Table 12, with the exclusion of NSW (where enrolments have decreased by around 10%)⁷⁾, Year 12 Certificate Korean enrolments have increased for the past 10 years. In Victoria, the number of Year 12 enrolments increased by 185% from 60 Unit 4

7) Shin, S-C. (2002) gives the picture of Year 12 enrolments in NSW and argues for the urgent need to increase the HSC enrolments.

enrolments in 2001 to a total of 171 in 2008. In QLD, it increased from 5 enrolments to 38.

4) International Baccalaureate

IB student numbers reflect the increase of schools offering Korean through the IB program. There was only one IB School in Victoria in 2000, but this has increased to a total of 9 schools among 3 states (NSW, SA and Victoria) in 2009. These schools offer Korean A and B to 21 students.

<Table 13> Number of IB Students Taking Korean 2000-2009

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
TOTAL	7	8	8	5	6	10	9	15	10	21

Based on data provided by the IB Schools Association, the majority of the 21 students taking Korean are Korean heritage or native speaker students (most likely native or background speakers). These students are enrolled in Korean A and study Korean literature and world literature.

4.3. Teachers

1) Teacher Number and Availability

Currently there are 69 teachers of Korean in Australian schools, including Melbourne's ethnic school which offers VCE Korean programs. As shown in Table 12below, there are 49 secondary school teachers and 20 primary school teachers teaching Korean. Looking at the figure by state and territory, NSW has the largest number of teachers with 45 followed by Victoria with 15, including 5 ethnic

school VCE teachers and 8 VSL teachers.

<Table 14> Number of Teachers of Korean in Australian Schools

	Primary	Secondary	TOTAL (n/%)	
ACT	1	1	2	2.9
NSW	14	31	45	65.2
QLD	2	3	5	7.2
SA		1	1	1.4
TAS	1		1	1.4
VIC	2	13	15	21.7
TOTAL	20 (29.0)	49 (71.0)	69	100

This figure simply reflects the number of schools offering Korean and students taking the language in each state and territory. Among these teachers, some full-time teachers participate in weekend teaching at language centres such as the Saturday School of Community Languages, the Victorian School of Languages or at the Korean ethnic language school.

The issue of teacher supply needs to be understood in terms of the two distinct cohorts of teachers available to teach Korean and whom these teachers teach:

1) L1 Focused courses such as Background and Heritage Speaker programs:

If we accept that Korean native speaking teachers are best placed to teach L1 focused programs, then there currently exists a relatively large pool of qualified teachers available in the community to meet existing and/or increased demand for teachers. Information supplied by the NSW Department of Education indicates that there are more

than 21 qualified teachers of Korean currently teaching other subjects instead of Korean in NSW schools. It is known that many of these teachers are willing to teach Korean, however the combined impact of a lack of suitable courses, teaching resources and student demand mean that these teachers do not utilise their area of specific expertise.

Further, there are approximately 40 qualified teachers of Korean in NSW who are not currently employed, simply because there are not enough schools offering Korean or because they are unwilling to work in schools outside of metropolitan areas. Many of these possible teachers of Korean are 2nd or "1.5" generation bilingual speakers who did all or most of their schooling in Australia. It appears that other states with a large Korean community, such as Victoria (Melbourne) and Queensland (Brisbane), have a similar pool of potential teachers, though much smaller in number.

2) L2 Focused courses such as Beginners and Continuers/Continuing programs:

The teacher supply situation for this cohort is very different. If we assume L2 courses are best taught by L2 teachers (who are most likely to understand better Australian language teaching methodologies and school culture/s), it is certainly the case that there is a shortage of this cohort of teachers. There are simply not enough L2 teachers of Korean available to cater for any rapid growth in schools offering Korean as L2 focused courses. This is acutely the case in all states and territories, even in regional and rural NSW. This reality needs to be acknowledged and any strategies to expand the number of schools across Australia offering Korean to L2 students needs to be cognisant of this issue.

2) Background and Qualifications of Teachers

As shown in the table below, the majority (82.6%) of the 69 teachers of Korean nationally are Korean native speaker teachers (KNST).

<Table 15> Cultural Background of Teachers

	Primary (20)		Secondary (49)	
	KNST	NKBT	KNST	NKBT
TOTAL	14 (70.0)	6 (30.0)	43 (87.8)	6 (12.2)

The fact that the overwhelming majority of teachers in schools are background speakers is not surprising. It reflects the nature of Korean courses currently being offered and the student demand in Korean at both secondary and tertiary levels. In terms of teacher qualifications, the majority of the practising teachers of Korean are qualified with Australian degrees and/or diplomas as shown in Table 16.

<Table 16> Number of Teachers with Australian Teacher Qualifications

	Primary		Secondary		TOTAL
	KNST	NKBT	KNST	NKBT	
Sub-Total	13 (92.9)	6 (100)	37(86.0)	6 (100)	62 (89.9)
TOTAL	19 (95.0)		43 (87.8)		62 (89.9)

Teachers of Korean generally fall under 3 groups in terms of their teaching qualifications:

- a. Multiple qualifications: teachers with both Korean and Australian degrees such as Korean BA or higher + Korean Teacher Certificate + Australian BA or higher + DipEd. Many of the Korean native-speaker teachers belong to this group;
- b. Australian qualifications: teachers qualified with Australian BA or

higher plus DipEd. Most of the non-Korean background teachers and Korean heritage teachers belong to this group;

- c. Korean teacher qualifications: Usually working at special language centres such as SSCL, VSL or ethnic language schools on a part-time or fractional time basis with Korean qualifications and/or while completing Australian qualifications.

3) Language Competence

Korean-native speaker teachers are generally highly skilled in regards to language competence. The major challenge for this group of teachers is their approach to language teaching in the context of Australian schools, combined, in some cases, with limited language competence in English. While there are individual Korean-native teachers who are exceptionally competent in Australian learning contexts, some administrators interviewed raised the issue of this cohort's 'limited' intercultural understanding of Australian pedagogical practices and their English language competence. Administrators stated their concern that Korean native speaker teachers who are unfamiliar with Australian school contexts and who possess limited English language skills can often impact less than positively on the quality of program delivery.

On the contrary, non-Korean background teachers do not experience the same challenges in regards to pedagogical issues, however, their Korean language competence is a major stumbling block. Information obtained from interviews, surveys and consultations indicates that this cohorts' proficiency in Korean is generally at beginner to lower intermediate level by TOPIK (Test of Proficiency in Korean) scales. This is reflected in their teaching portfolio where half the non-Korean

teachers are involved in teaching Korean at the primary level Korean and the remaining half at junior secondary years, mostly Year 7-8. Only one non-native speaking Korean teacher currently teaches at senior secondary level in Australia (a Year 11 class).

4) Teacher Training and Professional Development Programs

Teachers of Korean are, for the most part, significantly underprepared for the full set of skills and competencies that will support their work in Australian classrooms. Up until 2009 there have been effectively no or few tertiary programs that systematically offer both language and methodology courses for teachers and student teachers. This is a major issue that needs to be addressed at the teacher training level.

Australian teachers routinely participate in all sorts of professional development programs. For teachers of Korean however, the availability of on-going professional development is virtually non-existent in any state except NSW, where some occasional workshops are conducted. There is an urgent need for professional development opportunities to be provided for both native-speaking and non-native Korean language teachers.

5) Korean Teacher Networks

Whilst there are some individual Korean teachers affiliated with different associations such as the Modern Language Teachers Association (MLTA) and Australian Educators Union (AEU), historically there has never been a national association for teachers of Korean. In 2001, the Korean Language and Studies Association (KOLSA) was established with the leadership and funding assistance

of the Korea-Australasia Research Centre (KAREC) but it was NSW-based and thus its main activities limited to NSW. It has now changed its name to the Korean Language Teachers Association (KOLTA) NSW and has approximately 30 members. The association holds two or three workshops annually and supports its members by sharing resources and exchanging information and ideas. Notably, there are no non-native Korean speaking teachers who are members of the association or involved in its activities.

In Victoria, the Association of Korean Teachers in Victoria (AKTV) was established more than 10 years ago, but with the closure of Korean programs at three secondary schools, much of its functions have been reduced or discontinued. Approximately 15 members are currently affiliated with this association and meet when necessary.

6) External Support

External support for teachers and schools offering Korean is minimal and access to support unbalanced across the country. NSW teachers and schools have access to a considerable level of support from the Sydney-based Korea Education Centre, which is funded through the Korean Ministry of Education. Teachers in other states/territories do not have access to this support.

5. Case Studies of Exemplary Practice

Based on information gathered and consultation undertaken, this research has identified four cases of exemplary or promising practice in Korean language education, and among them two cases are briefly presented in this paper.⁸⁾

5.1. 'Plant a school' Program

The NSW 'plant a school each year' initiative is a scheme that involves identifying one new school to commence the teaching of Korean annually. This of course requires one new teacher of Korean to be identified and employed. To facilitate this process, the Korean Education Centre (KEC), which is an overseas representative office⁹⁾ of the Korean Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, pays two days of the Korean teacher's salary for the first year, with the balance on time fraction being paid by the school. In the second year the KEC pays one day salary with the school contributing the balance and by the third year and thereafter, the school covers all salary payment. A classic story of seed funding!

Crucially, schools that apply for this scheme must make a commitment, in writing, to a long-term investment in a Korean language program. The intention of the scheme is not speculative. It is based on partnerships and shared agreements on what is being aspired to as the outcome and requires financial and in-kind contributions from all partners.¹⁰⁾ As a result of the scheme, the number of schools teaching Korean in NSW has increased by at least one annually since 2006, and the schools which have instigated programs through the scheme (Chatswood High School, 2007, Cabramatta High School, 2008 and Bathurst Public School, 2009) each

8) The other two cases are about pedagogy - Korean through iPods and school-based awareness-raising activities.

9) Located at the Korean Consulate-General Office in Sydney.

10) There were MOU agreements made between the NSW Department of Education and the Korean Ministry of Education represented by and acting through the KEC in 2004.

have very promising Korean programs.

What should not escape attention is that all schools involved in the scheme to date are from NSW, where the KEC is located and where the locus of Australia's Korean population can be found. The scheme needs to be 'exported' or made available to other states and territories. In states and territories that have few or no Korean language programs, as well as in remote and rural areas, this scheme presents as a proven and relatively economical way forward to support the incremental and properly supported growth of Korean language programs.

5.2. Clustering of Schools - A Regional Approach

Gladstone in Queensland is a unique and fabulous story in the development of Korean language education in Australia. Located approximately 5-6 hours drive from Brisbane, the town is host to a 'cluster' of schools (one high school and four primary schools) where Korean has been taught for about 15 years. What was the motivating rationale for introducing Korea? As a mining town with a large port, trade relations with Korea have existed for a long period of time. These relations were enhanced during the 1980s when trade between the two countries started to increase significantly. Korean ships have regularly accessed the port on their way south to Sydney or Melbourne, so both business and school communities intrinsically 'knew' the relevance to Korea to their lives and the local community. Rumour has it that once the idea of introducing Korean was suggested to the Gladstone Mayor and had positive support from the QLD Department of Education, things just 'fell into place' thereafter.

At around the same time and in a stroke of fortune perhaps, a recent graduate from Griffith University who had majored in Korean and had done a DipEd program was both ready and willing to teach Korean in the Gladstone area cluster. The five schools - Gladstone High, Central State, Calliope State, West State and Yarwun State - are all located between 5 and 15 minutes drive from each other. In 2009 there are three teachers (one high school teacher and two primary school teachers) working across the cluster. The secret of how these schools are able to offer Korean in such a remote town is found in the commitment of each of the cluster schools, the skill of the teachers and the continuity ensured between primary and secondary school language study; there was provision for Korean language study from K-12.

The Gladstone school cluster supporting Korean language demonstrates that programs for second language learners in small candidature languages can be successfully introduced and sustained. The Gladstone model also proves that 'normalisation' of a language program within a school will happen over time when adequate levels of support are provided, the school community understands something about the links between the language and their daily lives, and a team of skilled and committed teachers is available.

6. Discussion of Key Issues and Strategies for Change

6.1. The Rationale for Korean Language

A general lack of awareness about contemporary Korea across mainstream Australian society works against the uptake of Korean

language in schools. Korean is a language 'less known' by the general public, and students, parents, principals and consequently education systems do not place a high value on learning Korean. The lack of awareness is a result of mainstream Australia having access to very little information about Korea and what information is available, such as the political tensions on the Korean peninsula, often does not offer a balanced, attractive image of the country. In contrast to its very visible neighbours, Japan and China, Korea remains to a large extent, invisible to most Australians. Very few Australians know about tourist destinations in Korea, or understand the country's contribution to popular culture in the Asian region or its excellence in the advancement of modern science and technology. Many Australians are unaware of the significant Australian contribution to Korea's political and economic development in the past 50 years, or that many of their personal household goods are produced in Korea (Williams, 2002).

Considering this state of affairs, an essential first step in the development of Korean language learning in Australia is to create a sound, contemporary rationale for its place and value in our schools. Such a rationale needs to appeal to student, parent, principal and education system audiences.

6.2. Teacher Supply and Quality

Teacher supply and quality often go hand-in-hand when considering key issues supporting effective language programs (Shin, S-C. and Baik, 2002; Lo Bianco, 2009). Korean language is no different in this respect. The broad cohort of Korean teachers can be into three distinct sub-cohorts, each having its own specific supply and quality issues

that need to be addressed.

- a. *Korean Native Speaker Teachers:* As described earlier, a relatively large pool of qualified L1 teachers exists. The main support these teachers lack is, firstly, continuing professional development in teaching methodologies appropriate for contemporary languages education in Australia, as well as more in-depth practical experience of the Australian school culture; and, secondly, continuing opportunities to upgrade their English language proficiency for working in English medium schools and society. L1 Korean teachers' perceived lack in these two respects is a major source of disquiet for school principals and education authorities. Currently, these issues are not addressed openly or adequately.
- b. *Korean Heritage Speaker Teachers:* Although they are sufficiently qualified and/or able to teach Korean, this sub-cohort can often be found teaching other subject areas. What is required for this group to become available as a pool of teachers nationally is support to update their Korean language skills to a level that will enable them to teach L2 and heritage speakers, and development of their teaching skills in the area of language pedagogy.
- c. *Korean L2 Teachers:* There are only 12 Korean L2 teachers at work nationally. Clearly those who study Korean at university do not often go into teaching. Yet this group is an essential component of a strong modern languages program. L2 speakers are usually passionate about the language, society, culture and people of their second language and they are also great role models for English speaking learners. While appeals to tertiary learners to continue into teaching and support of them while they prepare would be important, most L2 teachers also need strong, on-going support in developing their own language proficiency beyond their degree years.
- d. *Teacher Mobility:* To meet any increased demand for Korean

language programs (e.g. in States/Territories not currently offering Korean) and to support Korean teachers either currently unemployed or not employed as teachers of Korean, a nationally consistent approach to recognition of teaching qualifications will be an important step forward. A number of teachers interviewed noted the limits on career mobility caused by the existing lack of consistency. Even if they so desired, NSW teachers of Korean for example (where there is an apparent oversupply of teachers), may not be recognised as qualified to teach Korean in other States/Territories. For a small candidature language like Korean that is struggling for a foothold in schools, this is an unwelcome impediment.

- e. *Native-Speaking Language Assistants:* A scheme to attract native speaking Language Assistants from Korea to work in schools has potential to significantly enhance program delivery. Assistants can provide a layer of authenticity to programs, through their contemporary language usage and expressions of culture and identity, that is too often absent from classrooms. For students, Assistants offer a very 'real' link to the language being learnt, and a champion or role model for the language. Japanese Language Assistant schemes (with Assistants drawn from Japan) are well known to have successfully supported Japanese programs over many years and have played a large role in the relative popularity of Japanese in school education. Korean language in Australia has never benefitted from such a scheme.

As supply of potential Korean Language Assistants can be found in universities across Korea, where many students would be keen for the chance to live and work in Australia for short a period. In addition, international or Australian Korean speaking students doing postgraduate studies at Australian universities might look favourably on an offer to support Korean language in a school with the

incentive of receiving formal recognition for doing so. Importantly, the success of such a scheme will depend heavily on the academic background of Assistants and their motivations for being involved. Ideally, Assistants would be studying education related courses and/or have a desire to work with young people. Success will also depend on the conditions and support afforded to the Assistants.

Korean communities in Australia offer another supply of potential Language Assistants. To date, this group has remained a largely untapped resource. The opportunity to involve locally available expertise has the benefits of 'cultivating existing language competencies' (Lo Bianco 2009), harnessing local community involvement in school programs and acknowledges the rich language and cultural heritage within communities. There are likely to be many suitable and willing members of Korean communities around the country who would consider supporting Korean language learning in schools.

- f. *Itinerant Teacher Initiative*: An 'itinerant teacher' initiative would also be a step forward for supporting Korean language, particularly for reaching students disadvantaged by not having direct access to a teacher. This initiative is already implemented to support German, where a cluster of schools in a region teaching German shares a teacher across the schools. In several ways, the story of German language in Australian schools is similar to the Korean narrative. Both are languages with relatively low and diminishing demand, and with a supply of teachers not being replenished. Both languages share the problem of low profile and a fight for survival. This strategy, which has worked for German but has never been trialled for Korean language, could be a component of teacher supply planning moving forward.

6.3. Development of Resource Materials

All teachers interviewed spoke about the urgent need for a renewed focus on resource material development for students learning Korean as a first or second language. A lack of quality resource materials is hindering program implementation in all states and territories offering Korean. Problems with current resources include their being disconnected to the syllabus and too often, not relevant contextually or culturally to Australian schools. This gap in suitable resources has led teachers to develop their own materials with little or no processes in place for quality control or assessment of resources. Existing materials, such as *Arirang*, *Nu-gu-ni?* which have long been considered very useful, are now more than a decade old and do not always accurately reflect contemporary Korean language and society.

6.4. Online Delivery and New Technologies

The utilisation of technology provides an opportunity to add value to the teaching of Korean. However a note of caution is needed. Reflecting on the NSW Department of Education's *Korean using Technology* project, it is evident that Korean courses, if they are to be sustained, should not be based solely on online delivery, for which learning outcomes are mixed and the medium itself is still new and relatively unfamiliar to many educators and students. Korean language study is still very embryonic in Australian schools. A solid foundation of quality teachers, resources and programs, as well as increased demand for the language and a heightened value placed on learning the language, needs to be embedded prior to the broad

implementation of online delivery (NALSAS Taskforce, 1998).

During interviews, States and Territories not offering Korean or limited Korean expressed interest in accessing online courses in Korean. Given the note of caution above, provision of Korean in this mode alone is highly unlikely to produce the type of learning outcomes that systems, schools or students may desire, nor is it likely to improve the overall strength and sustainability of Korean programs.

With that understood, new technologies do have an integral role to play in supporting students studying Korean. The World Wide Web is full of Korean language websites, many with a youth focus and authored by youth. Students must be encouraged to engage with this material in and outside of formal classes. Students must utilise new technologies to access to Korean popular music, Korean fashion and sports e-magazines and online games in Korean language. These types of experiences will elevate student engagement. Likewise, the Web gives teachers access to vast resources to develop new teaching and learning activities. New technologies allow for easier and more economical real-time connections to people and institutions in Korea that can provide the intercultural experiences students need to stay engaged with the learning experience. It is accepted that good teachers and teaching is at the heart of good languages programs.

6.5. Support Networks

Like any profession, Korean teachers require access to networks that support their professional needs. Teacher networks usually operate both formally and informally to support professional learning around new pedagogies, resources and teaching opportunities and to keep

teachers 'connected' to each other. Support networks in States and Territories and nationally for teachers of Japanese demonstrate the positive impact and leadership that this type of support can have on teachers' work. Currently, Korean teachers are denied this type of support. NSW remains the only State or Territory with a dedicated Korean Language Consultant. The current consultant is based fulltime at the NSW Department of Education and is partially funded by the Korean Ministry of Education. Teachers in NSW describe the Consultant's role as crucial in supporting them to share information, develop and implement curriculum, undertake professional learning, establish exchange programs with Korean schools and most importantly, offers a central point of contact for the profession about these matters. Teachers of Korean outside of NSW do not have easy access to an equivalent level of support, and hence they feel isolated from central decision making and from colleagues. With respect to their own development, they either have to take on the extra burden of finding ways to improve themselves, or let these matters simply go unattended. Their situation needs urgent positive intervention.

Furthermore, a body or agency that promotes and advocates Korean language in the way that the Japan Foundation and the Confucius Institutes do for Japanese and Chinese respectively does not exist. This effectively means there is no coordinated voice speaking on behalf and representing the interests of Korean language. A strategy to achieve both networking and advocacy functions needs to be established and implemented as a matter of priority if other reforms are to be sustained.

6.6. School Clusters

The school cluster approach in Gladstone, QLD demonstrates a very effective strategy for supporting Korean language over the longer term and proves that increasing the number of L2 students in sustainable ways can be achieved. It points to a way forward for incremental and properly supported growth of the L2 cohort of students based around continuity between primary and secondary education language study and whole school community commitment to the language. The QLD Department of Education is considering forming two more clusters of this kind and the Northern Sydney Region in NSW is exploring the feasibility of clustering schools in one or possibly two suburbs in the region. This seems to be a very promising prospect for improving the situation in the future. This research recommends expanding the 'cluster' model to grow the number of schools offering Korean for the L2 cohort, both in states and territories where little or no Korean is taught, as well as to sustain it in regions where it is currently offered.

7. A Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations for Change

While the main findings highlight a range of common issues raised in other relevant studies (e.g. NALSAS Taskforce, 1998; Erebus CPPT, 2002a, 2002b; Shin, S-C. and Baik, 2002; Lee, 2003; Shin, S-C., 2006), the findings of this research more precisely highlight a number of issues and concerns for Korean. The key findings are summarised as follows:

- (1) Provision of and participation in Korean language programs nationally is alarmingly low. The current status of Korean as a small candidature language, whilst at the same time a language of a major priority to the Australian Government, provides policy makers and practitioners with significant challenges.
- (2) Currently there are approximately 3,000 Korean heritage speakers nationally who are not studying Korean in their secondary years, mainly due to an absence of courses that are suitable for their unique needs. To achieve the NALSSP target of increasing the number of Year 12 completions by 2020, provision of suitable curriculum for the large untapped pool of Korean heritage speakers is a priority.
- (3) Mainstream Australian community awareness of Korea and the profile of Korean language is very low, even in places where a relatively large Korean community has been formed (e.g. metropolitan Sydney). This has serious implications in terms of building demand for Korean language in schools, particularly amongst L2 learners.
- (4) In contrast to Japanese and Indonesian, at Year 12 level Korean is overwhelmingly undertaken by L1 learners with less than 5% of students who are L2 learners. Strategies that specifically target increasing the L2 student cohort studying Korean need to be implemented.
- (5) There are a total of 49 schools teaching Korean in Australia (2009), all in the Eastern States and South Australia. Nine of these schools offer Korean through the International Baccalaureate program. Only 40 of the 49 schools teach Korean during normal school hours.
- (6) Of schools teaching Korean, most are Government schools (33 or 67.3%). Among government schools teaching Korean, 26 schools (53% of the total 49 schools and 78.7% of the 33 government schools) represent day schools offering Korean within normal school

hours. Remaining schools are government-run special language schools offering languages on Saturdays or after school hours.

- (7) The total number of students studying Korean is just over 4,000 students including 318 Year 12 students, approximately 0.1% of all K-12 Australian school students and all Year 12 students.
- (8) Korean has approximately 0.5% of total NALSSP language enrolments K-12 and approximately 2% of the NALSSP Year 12 enrolments (2008). By way of comparison Chinese has 14.9% of K-12 NALSSP enrolments, Indonesian 30.8% and Japanese 53.8%.
- (9) In 2009, 100% of Year 12 students taking Korean in NSW, SA and VIC (the States which offer it/have students taking it) are Korean L1 students. In past years, the L1 cohort at Year 12 has been around 95%, with only a few heritage speaker students.
- (10) Most students (78.4%) at junior secondary level discontinue their study of Korean at senior secondary level due to the absence of suitable courses, a lack of qualified, skilled teachers, no clear pathways for continuation of studies and approaches to curriculum delivery that are not engaging and connecting with students' interests.
- (11) Four groups of Korean learners in three categories at senior secondary levels have been identified. At senior secondary level, 'beginners' commence the study of Korean in Year 11 for the first time in the classroom setting; 'Continuers' are students who continue the study of Korean in Year 11-12 from junior high or post-compulsory.
: Korean L2 (beginners and continuers), Korean heritage speakers and Korean L1 background speakers. Each learning cohort constitutes quite separate learner types and hence each needs its own curriculum and assessment framework. National recognition of each learning groups is required as a precondition for development of curriculum and assessment structures.

- (12) Locally educated Korean heritage speakers who would benefit from development of their home language are deterred from continuing by having to compete in class and examinations with students who have been raised and largely educated in Korean. Not surprisingly, to do so means certain failure.
- (13) There is a shortage of quality teaching resources available to support existing programs. Most resources used for the Korean programs in primary and secondary schools are outdated, culturally inappropriate or lacking in quality. Old black and white printed books are still being used as there are no better materials to replace them. The main types of resources used are ones that were developed in the mid 1990s for particular projects or were self-developed by teachers.
- (14) In 2009, there are 69 teachers of Korean teaching Korean in primary and secondary schools across the country, the majority (83%) of whom are Korean native speaker teachers. Nationally, there is a very limited supply of non-native speaking teachers of Korean and pockets of oversupply of native speaking teachers (e.g. NSW).
- (15) While there are excellent exceptions, many teachers of Korean are not adequately educated for the work they do. Korean L1 teachers have little or no problem with Korean language competence however, in areas such as intercultural understanding of the Australian educational context, pedagogical practices and the development of their English competencies, they lack knowledge and training. The language proficiency of L2 teachers of Korean is largely at the beginner to lower intermediate level.
- (16) There are only occasional or short-term training opportunities for teachers and even those programs are limited in their quantity and duration compared to desirable professional standards.
- (17) There are small scale associations operating amongst Korean L1 teachers around Sydney and Melbourne but there are no nationwide

associations for teachers of Korean and the integration of L1 and L2 teachers is virtually non-existent. Korean L2 teachers mostly working in regional or country towns in particular have been largely neglected in terms of collegial support, external support and networking opportunities.

- (18) There is no centralised organisation actively coordinating, initiating and supporting developments of Korean language education in Australia. There is little or no infrastructure established for a national coordination and support network involving states and territories.

Korean language does not operate in a vacuum. It is subject to the same policy variables as all second languages taught in Australian schools (see Lo Bianco 2009). The intent of this research has been to show the current state of Korean language under existing policy, and to identify the obstacles and possibilities facing the discipline now and moving forward, particularly through the period of the NALSSP strategy. The following interrelated change recommendations are therefore based on two key underpinnings: a. The current NALSSP strategy presents a window of opportunity to implement some immediate change strategies to support progress towards the NALSSP 2020 target, and Korean language generally. b. That each change strategy recommended requires the commitment and input of Federal and State and Territory education systems and the range of stakeholders with an interest in provision of effective Korean language programs.

- (1) As a first step, a Korean Language Working Party should be established within the next 6 months. The Working Party should

consist of representatives from education systems, the tertiary sector, Australian and Korean government agencies and Korean language teachers. A key task of the Working Party will be to develop a 5-year strategic plan for provision of Korean language programs and to provide high level program advice.

- (2) The Working Party should oversee a project that leads advocacy and championing of Korean language programs nationally. There is a strong argument that the absence of any national body or agency coordinating advocacy for Korean has been detrimental to the advancement of Korean programs (e.g. Shin, S-C., 2006; Byon 2008). Presently there is little vision for Korean at the education system or school level, despite Korean being an Australian government priority Asian language through initiatives such as NALSAS and the current NALSSP. There is an urgent need for nationally coordinated advocacy of Korean language.
- (3) As part of its brief, the Working Party should oversee a project to articulate the rationale(s) for the study of Korean language in Australian schools. Requiring in-depth study and modelling, the project will be a pre-requisite to the broader Korea awareness-raising activities urgently required to raise the profile of Korea and Korean language across mainstream Australia. This research will need to recognise the range of audiences whom the messages need to be tailored for, e.g. students, their parents, principals, career advisors and education systems. Sharpening the rationale must encompass the economic, strategic and socio-cultural relevance of Korea to Australia's future, as well as the intrinsic educational value of the learning process.
- (4) State and Territory education jurisdictions need to take action to support the large untapped pool of Korean heritage speakers to complete Year 12. An immediate doubling of current Year 12 enrolments from 350 to 700 is both realistic and feasible through

support for this cohort. Achieving this will involve: a. Official recognition nationally that there are four groups of Korean learners in three categories at senior secondary level, all of whom require separate curriculum and assessment frameworks. Korean L1 and L2 students require a separate curriculum and assessment structure. Likewise, there should also be a separate curriculum and assessment structure for Korean heritage speakers and Korean L1 background (native) speakers. b. The immediate development of new teaching and learning resources for all levels that maximise the possibilities offered through new technologies. Teachers of Korean frequently report their frustration with the lack of quality resource materials. Any new materials development need to maximise the opportunities presented by new technologies and be consistent with the directions of National Curriculum for languages.

- (5) At the same time the incremental growth of the L2 cohort remains a priority and requires a targeted and sufficiently resourced strategy. Growth should be based on each state and territory supporting one or more small clusters of schools ('lighthouse schools') to teach Korean. Some of these clusters will necessarily be new, others building on current clusters (e.g. QLD, NSW). If well supported, this growth can be both sustainable and a model for other small candidature languages.
- (6) A renewed commitment to sufficiently support the professional learning needs of the two different cohorts of Korean teachers: a. L1 teachers are already highly skilled in Korean proficiency. They require support to develop their teaching methodologies to better suit Australian educational context. This is an area of Korean language teachers' professional learning that has been insufficiently addressed. b. L2 teachers on the contrary are usually well equipped with methodology that suits Australian school contexts however, their proficiency levels are at best lower-intermediate level. This

does impact on student outcomes and the teachers own sense of professional standing. The professional learning in proficiency must include on-shore and off-shore opportunities to upgrade the L2 cohorts' skill base. A major investment in the professional development of teachers of Korean is now required to ensure that they are equipped to be 'the ultimate resting point of all language education planning and policy work' (Lo Bianco 2009). Professional learning must include a variety of short, long and continuing in-service courses in language proficiency, cultural understanding and/or teaching methods offered locally and in Korea (e.g. 1-year in Korea, 1-year graduate diploma course and weeks of in-country training).

- (7) As a further support for program provision, a project should be established to ensure Australian schools teaching Korean have a direct partnership with a school in Korea. On current program numbers this would involve up to 50 partnerships. Given that some Australian schools teaching Korean already have Korean partners and the general demand from Korean schools to connect with Australian schools, this is achievable. Importantly, the project will also support Australian schools commencing Korean programs to partner with a Korean school. The project will require collaboration from Australian and Korean governments and education agencies.

8. Conclusion

Korean is a small candidature language with a tenuous foothold in Australian schools, and at the same time it is a unique language in that it has been designated as a priority language by the Australian Government in its NALSAS initiative and current NALSSP strategy. Much can be learnt from the unique status of the Korean language

within the Australian context and beyond. When small candidature languages such as Korean are competing against large candidature or 'more fashionable' languages (e.g., Japanese, Chinese, French) for student numbers, the level of support required from national and state/territory education systems is considerable and must be ongoing.

Korea is underrepresented and the language undervalued in the general Australian community, despite its significant relationship with Australia and the government's wide recognition of Korean as a priority language. Korea's status of economic and strategic significance for Australia has not been adequately translated into the educational sector, and the profile of Korean language and studies in Australian schools (and universities) has never been matched with that of Korea's strong relationship with Australia. The issue of profile needs to be addressed.

There are some excellent examples of support for the teaching of Korean and exemplary practices of Korean language education. Despite this, the number of schools offering Korean has been the same for the past 10 years, with only about 40 schools across the country, and the number of students taking Korean is very small (less than 1% of NALSSP enrolments and only 4,000 students nationally), albeit with some minor increases in recent years. The evidence for this investigation suggests that the growth and long-term sustainability of Korean language programs in schools, the quality of the learning outcomes and ultimately the success of the programs are dependent on a number of interrelated provisions and factors, which must be addressed through a well planned and implemented strategy.

The strategy should involve specific measures to adequately address teacher supply as pertinent to the needs of L1 and L2 students. At

the same time, the specific and varied professional learning requirements of both types of teachers (Korean native and non-Korean background teachers) need to be catered for. To achieve this, commitment is required from state and federal educational departments. There must be sufficient and adequate teaching resources tailored for L1 and L2 learners of Korean to ensure that the Korean language programs have every chance of being sustainable or expandable. Given the extremely low level of public awareness about Korean throughout mainstream Australian society, urgent work needs to be undertaken to articulate the benefits of learning Korean. This work requires joint commitment from a range of stakeholders including the Australian and Korean governments. The strategy should facilitate the development of a centralised organisation that is capable of coordinating, supporting and nurturing Korean language programs for schools. This will require considerable financial commitment from both federal and state governments.

These issues indicate that the future of Korean in schools will be at significant risk unless coordinated efforts are made to consider the recommendations and strategic actions offered in this paper.

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