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ABSTRACT

The Language and Culture Initial Teacher Education: Primary (LACITEP) program in Australia, a preservice teacher education program designed to train elementary school teachers as specialists in Japanese language teaching, is described. In the partial immersion format, at least half the courses are taught in Japanese. Courses in the first year emphasize the learning process. In the second year they focus on improving learning processes, and in the third year on the sociocultural context of learning. The six curriculum components are: foundation subjects; second language teacher development; second language teaching methodology; curriculum subjects; second language enhancement subjects; and practicum and study in Japan. In each year, the components take on the particular focus of that year's instruction. The program recruits top students from high school graduating classes for the 22 student places available. The first cohort began the program in February 1993. Even in its early stages, the program has given evidence of success in terms of students' Japanese linguistic proficiency and teaching skills. It is seen as a promising means for improving second language teaching in Australia and supporting the national policy of extensive elementary and secondary school second language instruction. (MSE)

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LACITEP in Action: Primary teacher language education

through partial-immersion.

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CONTEXTUALISATION

Teacher education in general is in a state of change, and a number of reforms are gaining currency among pre-service teacher education. In particular primary teacher education is responding to the changing nature of the primary school teacher's work. Primary teachers are required to teach a growing range of curriculum areas, so the demand for more content-area knowledge is great.

In Australia, these demands have resulted in a rise in the number of specialist teachers in primary schools, for example, music specialists, physical education teachers and teacher librarians. In the case of this paper one of these curriculum demands has resulted in a new primary specialist teacher, the LOTE (Languages other than English) specialist. These LOTE specialists again specialise within this broader categories with regard to the foreign language.

The Australian National Policy on Languages,(1987) known as the LoBianco Report clearly states:

All Australian children should learn at least one language in addition to English, ideally, continuously throughout their years of compulsory education.

In Australia, the idea of P-12 Language Other than English (LOTE) education has in recent years been reinforced by such reports as the White Paper (1990) and the Leal Report (1991) in addition to the Finn (1991), and the Mayer (1992) reports which focus on training/competency and employment issues.

In the state of Queensland, the Minister for Education has said that,

... all young Queenslanders should have the opportunity to gain intellectual, cultural and economic benefits of an education in a foreign language.

July 1991

Given the State government's target for LOTE Teaching in Queensland the only pragmatic way of reaching these targets in the Japanese language, is to have a cohort of students graduating as Primary teachers with LOTE proficiency.

PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

It is the purpose of this paper to describe a reform in primary teacher education, which is a result of a need to train specialist LOTE teachers to address the growing need within the Queensland Education Department for teachers of Japanese.

A further purpose of this paper is to accentuate what is innovative about this program from its conception, through to its funding arrangements.

RATIONALE OF LACITEP

The Language and Culture Initial Teacher Education: Primary (LACITEP) program is the result of collaborative work between the Faculty of Education at the University of Central Queensland and the Languages and Culture Unit (LACU) of the Queensland Department of Education.

The broad underlying principle of this program is that the experiences of the L2 learners will be cognisant of the knowledge that children's second language (L2) acquisition is enhanced by interaction with fluent language users in their normal day-to-day environment.

There are a further six principles of this LACITEP program

1. The L2 experiences for students should reflect current LOTE methodological approaches.
2. The students will be provided with the necessary second language theory to enable them to make autonomous and responsible decisions about the second language learning process.
3. Immersion will provide a clear demonstration to the students of the concept of "through doing comes learning". In the context of this program immersion refers to delivery of content knowledge in the LOTE.
4. The in-country experience will be a fundamental part of the whole learning experience in the LACITEP Program and integral to teacher development.
5. The LACITEP seeks to develop students who are proficient speakers of Japanese and who can function competently in primary classrooms.
6. The students will have a thorough understanding of all socio-cultural aspects of Japanese life.

The LACITEP program seeks to educate teachers in an appropriately designed initial teacher education program to meet current and future demands for LOTE teachers in primary school settings.

A number of constraints existed from the initial stages, the most pressing of these was that graduating students need to be able to be registered by the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration and so be able to teach in this state. Students should be able to move from this program into the mainstream program without penalty and be able to complete their degree as a generalist teacher.

The program seeks to offer partial immersion, it is designed so that minimum of 50% of all subjects undertaken by the students will be taught in Japanese. The provision a program of this nature will allow the students a myriad of learning experiences to enhance their Japanese language ability. The students will be involved in knowledge based studies involving those course needed to become primary school teachers, 50% of these subjects will be offered in the target language. This, then

encourages the students to develop strategies and representations of information for easy memory storage and retrieval. Japanese will then become the means by which the knowledge base is stored, retrieved and communicated.

COURSE CONTENT

The concept of second language as well as content-based learning through immersion teaching as a model for pre-school, primary and secondary education is not new in Australia or overseas. The Canadian experience in L2 immersion education has been expanding since 1965, it is well documented and credited with having provided a unique contribution to second language pedagogy (Cummins 1980; Krashen 1984; Genesse et al 1985). In Australia, experiments in bilingual education can be traced back to German Lutheran schools of the mid 1800s in South Australia (Harmstorf & Cigler 1985). More recently, an increasing number of schools, Independent, Catholic and State, have established immersion programs based on catering to either majority, minority or mixed language background students (AACLAME 1990).

However the practice of an immersion tertiary education for pre-service primary LOTE teacher-trainees of Japanese is unique in Australia

In the first year of the LACITEP program, students undertake 10 one semester subjects. In the second year and third years this increases to 12 one semester subjects.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Each year level of the program has a particular focus, this focus is designed to ensure that all subject content involves a focus which initial begins with the learner, then moves to the leaning environment and then to the sociocultural environment.

We have identified the years as:

<i>First year</i>	How I learn
<i>Second year</i>	How I can learn better
<i>Third year</i>	The socio-cultural context of my learning

There are six components in the LACITEP program, each of which is compulsory and interdependent.

These are:

- * Foundation subjects
- * LOTE Teacher Development subjects
- * LOTE Teaching Methodology
- * Curriculum subjects
- * LOTE Enhancement subjects
- * Practicum and 'in country' component

These six strands are elaborated below:

* *Foundation subjects*

Students enrolled in the LACITEP program will complete a three year program similar to the Faculty of Education's three year Bachelor of Teaching degree. Given the importance of a number of foundation subjects in an undergraduate education degree the following subjects will be retained.

Human Development
 Education Psychology
 Sociology of Schooling
 Introduction to Philosophical Analysis
 Children with Special Needs
 Language and Literacy I
 Language and Literacy II

** LOTE Teacher Development*

The existing Teacher Development strand provides a comprehensive study of Teaching, it was decided to retain these and enhance this strength by the addition of studies in the learning of LOTE.

Year One: How I learn

Aims to increase the students awareness of their own learning strategies and evaluate their effectiveness in relation to their own LOTE development.

Year Two: How I can learn better

Aims to equip the students with the ability to select ways of learning tailored to individual needs and preferred learning styles.

Year Three: The socio-cultural context of my language learning

Aims to reform the students views of Japanese society instead of looking from the outside in, they will be encouraged to explore Japanese attitude, belief, emotional response and cultural conditioning from the Japanese perspective.

** LOTE Teaching Methodology*

The nature of the four semester course on LOTE teaching methodology aims to introduce the students to all issues specific to language teaching methodology.

some examples:

- approaches to teaching
- processes in using second languages
- learners as individuals
- language and input in the L2 classroom
- learning outcomes
- classroom research methods
- second language acquisition theory
- bilingualism in education
- Japanese linguistics

** LOTE Enhancement*

In the early part of the program, curriculum subjects offered in the LOTE will be enhanced by specific language study. Given the nature of the LACITEP program and the principles previously outlined it is important that all LOTE content be presented in real situations and that such experiences are seen to complement the LOTE teacher development strand of the program.

Therefore, it is proposed that the content of this subject be presented in "Project Work" style. This approach will facilitate active learning rather than passive language acquisition. Apart from the linguistic objective LOTE enhancement seeks to foster the socialization of students into Japanese language and culture. Topics covered will correspond to the cognitive and affective needs of the students (Leaver and Stryker 1989) and so serve to engage the student at a higher linguistic level

By constant application of various needs assessments and proficiency assessments will help to highlight the areas where remediation is necessary, and the syllabus needs to be adjusted (Nunan, 1988).

** Curriculum Subjects*

Following is a list of curriculum subjects which may be offered in this immersion program. A decision is made each year depending on staffing, and resource implications for the Faculty, remembering the principle of up to 50% immersion.

Health and Physical Education curriculum

Music Curriculum

Social Studies Curriculum

Drama Curriculum

Maths Curriculum

Science Curriculum

* *Practicum*

The Faculty of Education at the University of Central Queensland seeks to take heed of the recent reports dealing with foreign languages and employment issues (Leal 1991; Finn 1991; Mayer 1992) and seeks to expand the learning opportunities for LACITEP students. At the same time the Faculty is aware of accreditation procedure for teacher trainees to become registered and so the requirements for practicum must fit the guidelines.

There are four facets of the practicum in relation to this program.

(a) *Observation and Supervision:*

Health and PE students from nearby primary schools ages 6-9 years attend classes at the University Sporting complex in swimming, these classes are conducted by the lecturing staff and the teacher education students act as supervisors and observers. In 1993 the primary children attending these classes will be learning Japanese, so where practicable these swimming classes will be conducted in Japanese. This allows both groups to be immersed in the Japanese language outside the normal classroom environment.

(b) *Saturday Morning School:*

In the immediate environment of the University of Central Queensland there are few examples of classrooms which incorporate examples of immersion programs. One of the principles of the LACITEP program is that the students should have opportunities to see current theory in practice, so the following idea has been designed. On Saturday mornings the Faculty will run a school on campus for the learning of Japanese. This will be open to the public and family groups will be encouraged to attend, the classes are especially designed for beginners. The teacher education students will have input in their Teacher Development lectures, and the LACITEP student will be expected to take in new ideas, prepare lessons, and video tape these lessons for future discussion in tutorials. This concept was developed so that the existing paradigm of LOTE teaching could be interrupted and new methods taken on.

(c) *Queensland Primary School Blocks:*

Teaching in Queensland primary schools will continue to widen the student's teaching horizons. Block practicums will occur in each year of the LACITEP program, these blocks could include teaching in distance education programs, in clusters of schools, or a composite class, as these are unique features of the Central Queensland educational environment.

(d) *In-country component:*

Leal(1991) insists that in order to maintain adequate standards of language competence and pedagogical training for future tertiary language programs and teacher training programs should provide provisions for in-country experiences and recommends that by 1998 a period of residence in the target language become a compulsory requirement. In the LACITEP program students will spend about two months in Japan. During this time they will be placed in a Japanese elementary school as a teaching assistant for three weeks. In addition all students will undergo an intensive two week Japanese language course. The designers of this course envisage these visits to be the beginning of continual professional visits to Japan, and that the students will establish contacts and links to people and institutions in Japan.

This program will allow students experience in using the type of language used in the elementary school classroom. Another important facet of this program is that the students will visit Japan in small groups of five, so encouraging them to mix with native speakers more readily.

There is another important facet of this program which allows for equity across the group, a number of sources of funding will be sought for these visits, these funding arrangements are with the Australia Japan Foundation, The Japan Foundation, utilising sister state and sister city relationships and similar relationships.

PROMOTION AND RECRUITMENT

The LACITEP program was actively marketed in schools, newspapers, through LOTE teachers, LOTE consultants and professional associations. This resulted in a slow response to expression of interest requests.

An outreach visit was planned to each final year high school class in Central, Northern and Peninsula regions of the Queensland Department of Education and Catholic Education Offices. It was these visits which proved most successful in recruiting students, the enthusiastic, personal promotion of the value of this course encouraged final year secondary school students to supply expressions of interest where they may not have responded to a newspaper advertisement, in all 60 expressions of interests were received.

The entry criteria for this program are very high as it is essential that top level students are recruited to cope with the rigours of a degree program through partial immersion.

Final year secondary education students matriculating with a VHA - HA (Very High Achievement or a High Achievement) or equivalent are eligible to apply. All applicants undergo a formal selection process, this consists of

- (a) an interview
- (b) a two hour written examination modelled on the 1990 Japan Noryoku Shiken - Level 4 (Kanji, reading comprehension, grammar and written expression).
- (c) listening comprehension
- (d) a 'teacher potential' survey and essay.

All applicants are then ranked in order of merit and offers for the 22 places are sent out. For the 1993 academic year, 56 people applied of which 26 met the minimum criteria. Due to the funding arrangements 22 offers were made and by February 1993, 21 students began the LACITEP program.

EVIDENCE OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Although it is early days, the first students commenced on the 20 February 1993, there are early indications that in areas of L2 linguistic proficiency and teacher skills some development is evident.

* *L2 linguistic proficiency*

All students entered the program with overall ability in the range of 1 on the ASLPR. During the first week of the program those subjects taught through the medium of Japanese (Teacher Development, Health and Physical Education, and LOTE Enhancement), listening skills were not of a level to conduct lessons at normal pace, therefore the lecturers had to adjust the rate of speech delivery. The type of adjustments made can be summarised as follows:

- frequent repetitions
- low Type-token ratios
- short sentence constructions
- frequent use of redundancies
- heavy use of visual reinforcements
- use of elaborative speech
- conversational style of speech usage

After four weeks, all three teachers involved in content delivery in Japanese noticed improvements in overall listening comprehension (to be confirmed by further ASLPR proficiency testing).

Because there are three groups involved in the same course content, and only one group receiving content delivery in Japanese there is opportunity to make comparisons across groups. This comparison suggests that the LACITEP students have no trouble in understanding the material, and show no signs of stress at falling behind the other groups.

* *Teaching Skills*

The LACITEP students have different practicum experiences ongoing throughout the year. These are Saturday Morning School which has attracted much interest with 60 students enrolled in the 9am session and 40 in the 11am session. At the same time students are having mainstream weekly practicum visits, this

has enabled the students to separate the specialist skills needed for teaching LOTE.

The students concept of 'teacher' has grown to encompass not only teaching skills but also learning-how-to-learn skills, as they are still involved in L2 learning their readiness to understand children's L2 learning difficulties is more apparent and closer to their own L2 learning, as contrasted with the Grad. Dip model where the students have 'finished' learning their LOTE. This adds to their willingness to constantly fine tune their teaching skills.

Although it is early days, and the above is only anecdotal and must be borne out by ongoing research which is being conducted. The above constitute early indications of the effectiveness of the program.

CONCLUSION

Berthold (1991) describes a problem in LOTE teacher education in Australia succinctly,

It is difficult to launch proposed immersion language programs because of the lack of suitably trained teachers, and there are no teacher training programs within the schools ... So we have a vicious circle. No training courses are offered, so no teachers are being trained, so schools find it difficult to initiate immersion programs, so no demand is being made on the universities to train immersion teachers. Where do we break into this circle?

The LACITEP program provides an exemplary answer to this call for change. Firstly it breaks Berthold's vicious circle by establishing the first LOTE pre-service immersion primary teacher training program at a tertiary institution.. There is no need for major Faculty restructuring, and the financial burden associated with staff recruitment is offset by the contribution of these people to Faculty work. Secondly this program graduates special skill teachers and gives employing authorities the option of employing generalist primary teachers with a LOTE speciality.

Lastly, LACITEP will graduate informed, highly proficient and well trained LOTE teachers who can cope with the demands of 21st century education and carry on the momentum for a brighter, more educationally multilingual Australia.

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