

# Rethinking Multiculturalism Reassessing Multicultural Education International Symposium

Institute for Culture and Society  
University of Western Sydney  
30-31 August 2011



Australian Government  
Australian Research Council



Education &  
Communities



NSW INSTITUTE  
OF TEACHERS



University of  
Western Sydney  
INSTITUTE FOR  
CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Report prepared by Michelle Kelly, Institute for Culture and Society UWS

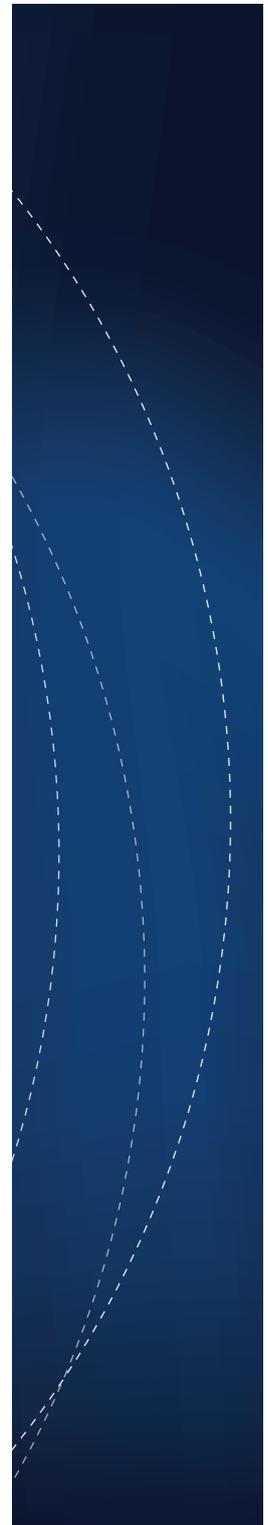
and

Dr Megan Watkins, Institute for Culture and Society UWS

Associate Professor Greg Noble, Institutet for Culture and Society UWS

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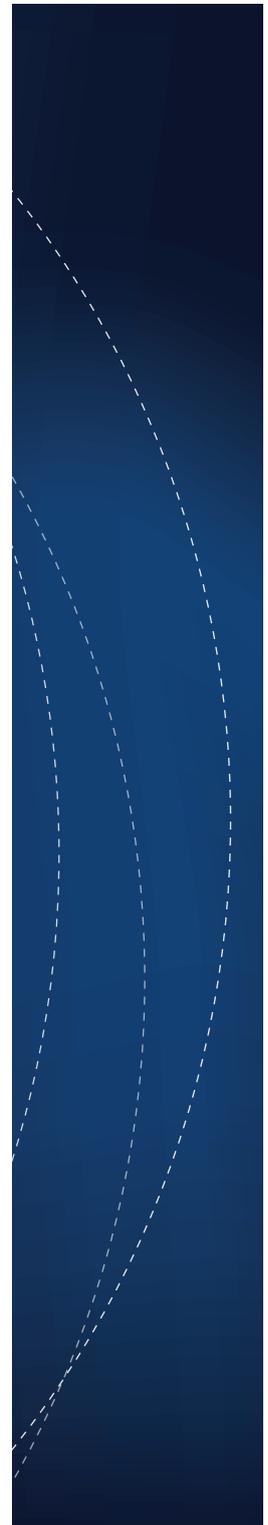
## Symposium Rationale

Despite considerable public support within Australia for cultural diversity, the national and international contexts since 2001 have heightened anxieties around immigration and social cohesion. This has exacerbated ongoing concerns regarding the lack of clarity about what multiculturalism means, the ways in which multicultural policy is currently managed and its usefulness within twenty-first century nation states. Recent pronouncements by leaders in the United Kingdom (UK) and Europe question its success (Henderson, 2011), following a decade or more of challenges to multiculturalism (Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010; Koleh, 2010). Yet in 2011 the Australian Government reaffirmed its commitment to multiculturalism in a new policy statement, *The People of Australia* (2011). Since the multiculturalism of the 1970s, however, the nature of diversity in Australia as elsewhere has changed dramatically due to intergenerational change, cultural adaptation, intermarriage, and the widening cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of Australia's immigrants and their children (Ang et al., 2002, 2006; Vertovec, 2006).

Within this context, multicultural education faces questions concerning its relevance, framework and modes of delivery. 'Multicultural education' covers a range of programs – English as a Second Language (ESL), multicultural perspectives in the curriculum, anti-racism initiatives, community languages, community relations, and so on – and draws on diverse rationales – cultural maintenance, social equity, community harmony, cultural awareness. Yet many of these rationales, as with the notion of multiculturalism more generally, may need to be rethought if they are to retain their relevance in the culturally complex world of 21st century Australia (Noble and Watkins, 2010; UNESCO, 2009; Race, 2010).

As a part of the reassessment of the concepts, practices and goals of multicultural education, on August 30 and 31, 2011, the Centre for Cultural Research (CCR) (from 2012 the Institute of Culture and Society) at the University of Western Sydney hosted an International Symposium bringing together national and international scholars in the fields of multicultural education and multiculturalism and senior bureaucrats from education departments across Australia and other relevant national bodies.

The Symposium was a part of a much broader Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project, *Rethinking Multiculturalism/Reassessing Multicultural Education* (see website <http://www.multiculturaleducation.edu.au/>), between the University of Western Sydney (UWS), the NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) and the New South Wales (NSW) Institute of Teachers. Together with the Symposium, the Project involves an analysis of policy discourse, a NSW state-wide survey of teachers, focus groups with teachers, parents and students, professional learning for teachers and action research projects in 14 schools developing innovative approaches to meeting the needs of culturally diverse communities and improving teacher knowledge. Occurring at the beginning of the Project, the Symposium had a number of goals. These were to:



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- survey recent scholarship in the fields of multiculturalism and multicultural education from Australia and abroad, both by gathering a range of academic perspectives and by developing a sense of what is happening on the ground in different government departments;
  - establish links between local, national and international researchers and government, including via the Rethinking Multiculturalism/Reassessing Multicultural Education website;
  - connect the Rethinking Multiculturalism/Reassessing Multicultural Education Project to comparable initiatives in Australia and abroad;
  - develop future national and international collaborations in this area.

Three broad questions framed discussion at the Symposium. These were:

- Does multiculturalism need to be rethought and if so why?
- In what ways does it need to be rethought?
- What are the implications of this rethinking for the policies and practices of multicultural education?

This report provides a summary of the Symposium presentations and key issues raised following each session over the two days. It concludes with a list of summative comments and possible future directions for the field.

# Symposium Attendees

## Project Team

### University of Western Sydney

Dr Megan Watkins, Centre for Cultural Research and School of Education, University of Western Sydney

Associate Professor Greg Noble, Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney

Professor Kevin M. Dunn, School of Social Sciences, University of Western Sydney

Virginia Piccone, Research Assistant, Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney

Garth Lean, Research Assistant, School of Social Sciences, University of Western Sydney

Neroli Colvin, PhD candidate, Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney

### New South Wales Department of Education and Communities

Amanda Bourke, Manager, Multicultural Programs Unit, NSW DEC

Nell Lynes, Senior Education Officer, Multicultural Programs Unit, NSW DEC

Eveline Mougialis, Senior Education Officer, Multicultural Programs Unit, NSW DEC

### New South Wales Institute of Teachers

Robyn Mamouny, Manager, Standards and Accreditation, NSW Institute of Teachers

## Academic Presenters

Distinguished Professor Ien Ang, Director, Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney

Professor Geneva Gay, College of Education, University of Washington

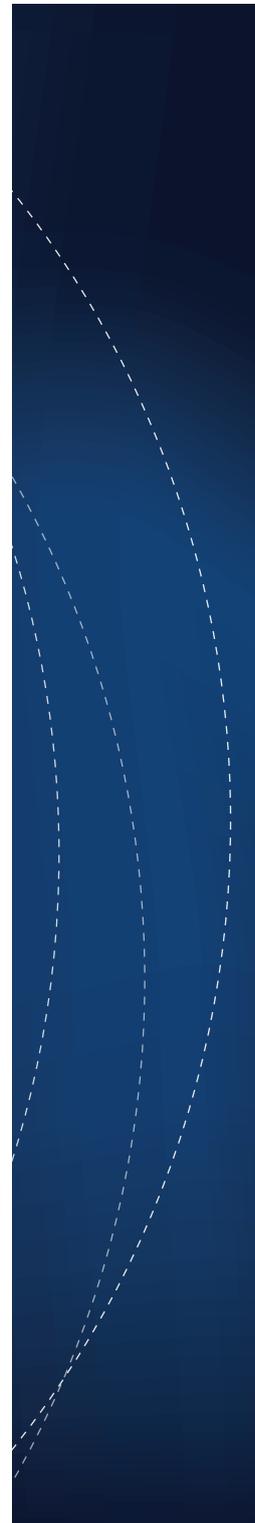
Professor Mary Kalantzis, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (via videolink)

Professor Stephen May, School of Critical Studies in Education, Faculty of Education, University of Auckland

Dr Richard Race, Department of Education, University of Roehampton

Professor Georgina Tsolidis, School of Education, University of Ballarat

Professor Handel Wright, Centre for Culture, Identity and Education, Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia





## Federal Government Department and Agency Presenters

Matthew Davies, Acting General Manager, Engagement and Wellbeing Group, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)

Dr Wendy Southern, Deputy Secretary, Policy and Program Management Group, Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

Robert Randall, General Manager, Curriculum, Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

Grette Toner, Senior Project Officer, Cross Curriculum, ACARA

## State and Territory\* Education Department Presenters

Vincenzo Andreacchio, Executive Officer, Multicultural Education Committee (South Australia)

Jennifer Barclay, Principal Education Officer, English as an Additional Language Program, Department of Education (Tasmania)

Coral Jenkins, Principal Consultant, EAL/D, Department of Education (Western Australia)

Angela Maclaine, Director, Education Queensland International, Department of Education and Training (Queensland)

Jennifer Mayers, ESL Executive Officer, Policy and Programs, ACT Education and Training Directorate

Lynn Pickles, Manager, Multicultural Education, Targeted Programs Branch, Office for Government School Education, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) (Victoria)

## Other Attendees

Dr Cameron McAuliffe, School of Social Sciences, University of Western Sydney

Hanya Stefaniuk, Head of the Secretariat Ministerial Advisory Group on Literacy and Numeracy NSW DEC

Bettina Roesler, Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney

\* There was no attendee from the Northern Territory

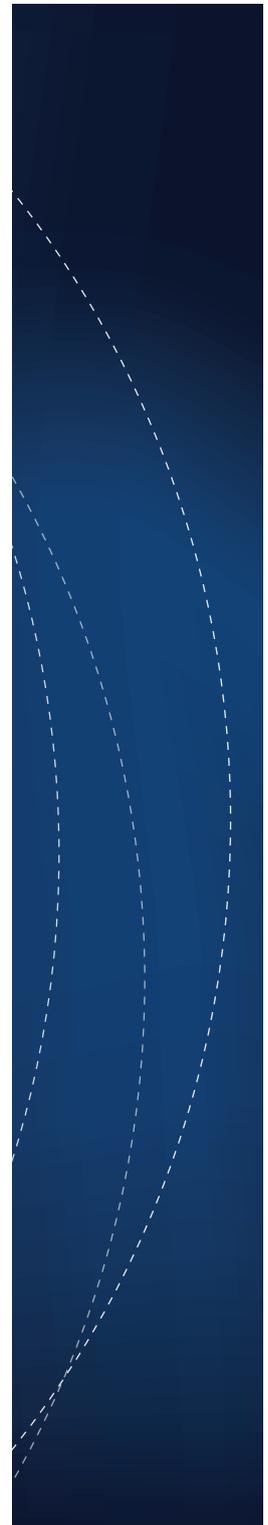
Disclaimer: This report is an overview of the Rethinking Multiculturalism/Reassessing Multicultural Education International Symposium. It is based on an audio recording of the presentation and discussions, and the presentation overviews have not been supplied by the presenters. For further information or clarification please contact the individual speaker.

## Opening the Symposium

Following an acknowledgment of country, the two-day Rethinking Multiculturalism/Reassessing Multicultural Education International Symposium was opened by Distinguished Professor Ien Ang, Director of the UWS CCR. In her address she explained how the Symposium was responding to the need for a close investigation of how multiculturalism is institutionalised in particular areas of social life. She pointed out how cultural diversity is a fact of life which must be engaged with, and that there has been too little research on how it operates in particular contexts. The Symposium was an attempt to develop nuanced and more situated understandings of how cultural diversity plays out in the education field<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The following sessions do not always correspond to how they occurred on the symposium program. The sequence of sessions and grouping of presentations have been changed for the report format.





## SESSION 1

# The Rethinking Multiculturalism/Reassessing Multicultural Education Project

### Part 1 – Project Overview

*Associate Professor Greg Noble, Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney*

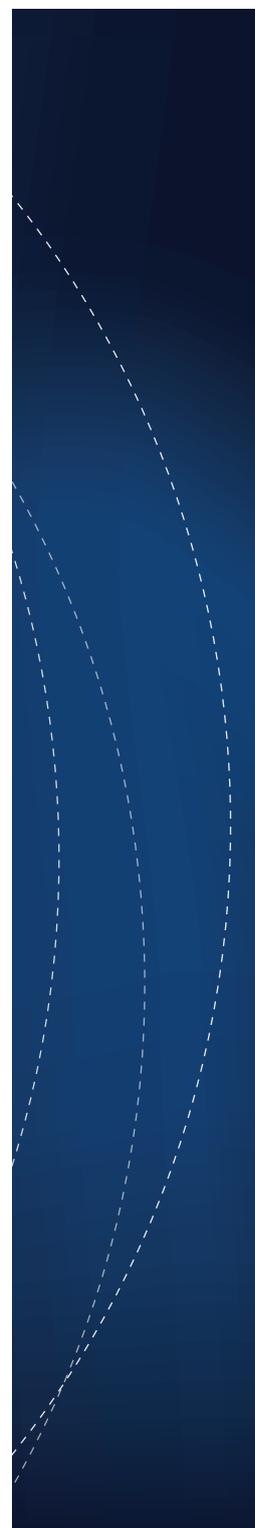
*Dr Megan Watkins, Centre for Cultural Research and School of Education, University of Western Sydney*

Students in Australian school systems are living hybrid lives. Australian society is marked by an increasing ‘diversification of diversity’ as a result of high levels of intermarriage, cultural mixing of young people in everyday life, and their diverse appropriation of cultural resources. Young people’s hyphenated identities challenge earlier multicultural policies, which were often based on assumptions about the unique, relatively bounded nature of cultures. Recognising the diversification of diversity is essential to any sustained exercise of reconsidering multiculturalism and multicultural education.

Rethinking Multiculturalism/Reassessing Multicultural Education (RMRME) is a three-year ARC Linkage project conducted jointly by the University of Western Sydney, the NSW Department of Education and Communities, and the NSW Institute of Teachers. It aims to shed light on the challenges posed by increasing cultural complexity in NSW government schools and their communities in urban and rural areas, and the role education can play in social inclusion. The Project grew out of an earlier ARC Linkage project with the NSW DEC and UWS, Cultural Practices and Learning, (CPLP) (see Watkins and Noble, 2008). In the process of investigating the differential achievement of students from Chinese, Pasifika and Anglo Australian backgrounds, among other things the CPLP found a prevalence amongst teachers to make use of essentialised notions of ethnicity in dealing with non-Anglo students which impacted on student learning. The Multicultural Programs Unit within the DEC was keen to follow up on this finding and, as with the UWS project team, to rethink and reassess multicultural education.

The RMRME Project then set itself a number of research questions:

1. What approaches to multiculturalism and multicultural education currently exist within government agencies both within Australia and internationally?
2. What are teachers’, parents’ and students’ perceptions and understandings of cultural diversity, multiculturalism and multicultural education within the NSW education system?
3. How do these perceptions and understandings affect the school community as a whole and teaching/learning practice in particular?
4. What do teachers, parents and students see as the role of education in promoting social inclusion?
5. What are the educational challenges that arise in culturally complex societies?



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6. What are effective strategies to realise the goals of multicultural education that move beyond cultural sensitivity and improve the learning outcomes of all students?
  7. How can reflection on the goals and practices of multicultural education inform school-based approaches to socially inclusive curriculum and pedagogy?

To investigate these questions the project is undertaking the following: a literature review and an international symposium, a large scale survey of NSW DEC teachers, focus groups with parents, teachers and students, professional learning for teachers to conduct site-specific action research projects in 14 schools both primary /secondary, urban/rural, high/low SES, high/low cultural diversity. The Project is in its early days and to date the survey and some initial analysis has been undertaken (see <http://www.multiculturaleducation.edu.au/> for more information).

Distributed to all 55,000 teachers in NSW public schools, the RMRME survey was the first large-scale survey of its kind and it delivered a rich and nuanced dataset. For example, when teachers were invited to define their own cultural background, the 5,133 survey respondents gave 1,155 different kinds of responses. They described themselves with reference to provincial, ethnic and 'racial' categories; with reference to language, faith and geopolitical region; and with reference to a vast range of 'Australianness' ('9th generation Australian'; 'Anglo-Australian dating back to the 2nd Fleet'; 'True blue', 'Australian with multicultural background', 'Australian-WOG!'). They also generated a variety of more and less extended hyphenations ('Malaysian Chinese'; 'Chinese-Khmer'; 'Aboriginal/Irish Australian/Chinese/Italian').

Both the CPLP and a pilot of the RMRME conducted in 2009-2010 (see Part 2 below), indicated that teachers did not use these multiple forms of identification when they represented their students' backgrounds. While teachers recognised diversity within themselves, this previous research indicated they didn't always extend this diversity to their students, and singular and reductive categories such as 'Chinese', 'Pacific Islander', 'Lebanese', 'Arabic' and 'Asian' predominated. This leads us to ask whether Australia's multiculturalism of the past few decades is adequate to the task of grappling with the nuances of these schemas of perception, or does something else have to be designed? Do we need to rethink multiculturalism?

To begin to answer this question, we need to investigate the different 'logics' of multiculturalism. Objectives expressed in policy documents such as *The National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* are not only goals, they are ways of shaping practice. In multicultural education policy and documentation, three different kinds of 'logics' emerge: social justice, cultural recognition and maintenance, and intercultural relations. In schooling systems where there are scarce resources, these goals enter into competition with each other, and policymakers, schools and teachers must make decisions about their priorities.

In the survey, teachers indicated that they operate according to very different logics when they were asked what they understood by multiculturalism. The top responses to this question were 'a society made up of many cultures' and a 'celebration of all cultures within one society'. Different logics of multiculturalism take people in different directions. The first logic involves no compulsion to act. The second logic, built around an idea of celebration, is active and has a moral imperative. Divergences around the meaning of multiculturalism such as this are significant and in this context all the more so given the respondents are the people who put multiculturalism into practice; teachers in NSW schools.

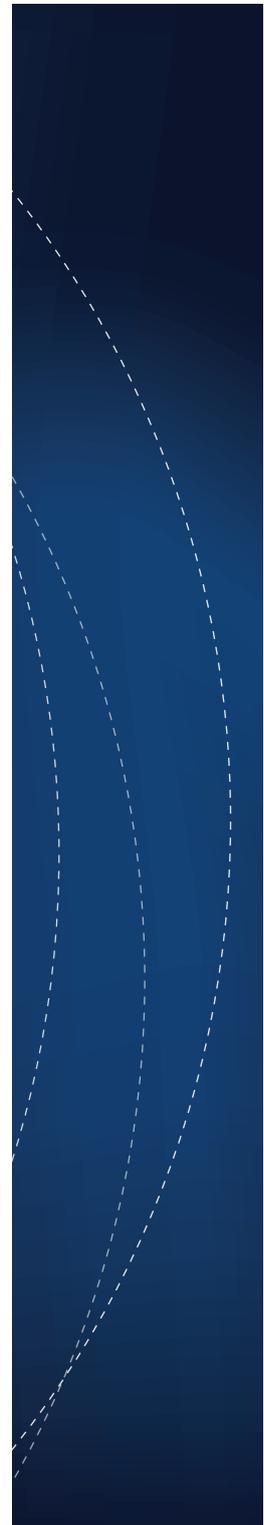
## Part 2 Multicultural Education in NSW

*Amanda Bourke, Manager, Multicultural Programs Unit, NSW Department of Education and Communities*

Multicultural education includes practical and aspirational aspects, some of which are easier to respond to than others. English as a Second Language (ESL) education responds to a clearly identified need, while questions around cultural diversity and intercultural understanding are nebulous and harder to unpack. The NSW DEC is committed to exploring these more difficult issues in multicultural education.

Two years ago, in conjunction with UWS, the NSW DEC conducted a pilot project for a small number of schools to run action research projects. It developed a model which showed the dimensions involved in multicultural education, to help systems, schools and teachers think through the issues involved. Two dimensions operate at the whole-school level: school culture and organisation (including school leadership; planning and reporting; relationships in the staff room; how social events are organised and religious diversity managed) and community relations (including how the school relates to parents and community bodies). Three dimensions operate at the classroom level: curriculum content; classroom pedagogy; and targeted programs for students of particular backgrounds who have particular needs. Two dimensions operate at both levels: anti-racism education and targeted services from external providers (such as settlement support programs, counselling programs and extra-curricular support for refugee families).

Drawing on these findings from the pilot, the RMRME Project is an important part of the NSW DEC's commitment to investigating multicultural education more closely. The DEC has identified several outcomes it hopes RMRME will generate. It would like to make more resources available for schools and teachers to use in managing contentious issues associated with cultural diversity. It is particularly interested in training for school leaders on how to lead a culturally diverse school effectively. NSW DEC would also like to look more closely at the intersections between multicultural education and indigenous education. Each of the action research projects implemented as part of the RMRME Project will be designed to make an intervention in an area of





multicultural education as outlined above. It is anticipated that 14 very different and informative projects will emerge, developing new ways in which multicultural education might be conducted.

*Robyn Mamouney, Manager, Standards and Accreditation, NSW Institute of Teachers*

The value of the RMRME Project for the NSW Institute of Teachers is its strong focus on teachers, and potential impact on teacher development and teacher quality. The Institute approaches the project through the framework of teacher accreditation (similar to 'registration' in some states and territories). In NSW teacher accreditation was established by the NSW Institute of Teachers Act 2004. This legislation was a response to the Ramsey report (2000) which found that many early career teachers left the profession because they received an inadequate level of support from schools. The report found that a major factor for success as a beginning teacher was the provision of a well structured process of induction. It also questioned the adequacy and relevance of teachers' preparation programs.

The level of professional competency that teaching standards articulate is the level which all teachers are expected to attain. A multicultural education component is included in the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's *National Professional Standards for Teachers* (which is likely to be adopted by all states and territories in 2013). There are different requirements for different levels of teaching experience. For example, at one level a teacher is expected to be able to 'design and implement teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning strengths and needs of students from diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds'.

The RMRME Project may also clarify the impact of policy in relation to the teaching workforce, including in relation to mandatory requirements for pre-service teacher education and for in-service professional learning. Preliminary data from the RMRME Project's teacher survey indicates that pre-service teacher training now includes a greater level of English language teaching, as well as an increased training in relation to other aspects of multicultural education. The research also suggests that both early career and more experienced teachers agree upon the areas of greatest need for early career teachers: teaching ESL, developing intercultural understanding and teaching a culturally inclusive education.

### Part 3 The Teacher Survey: Some Early Findings

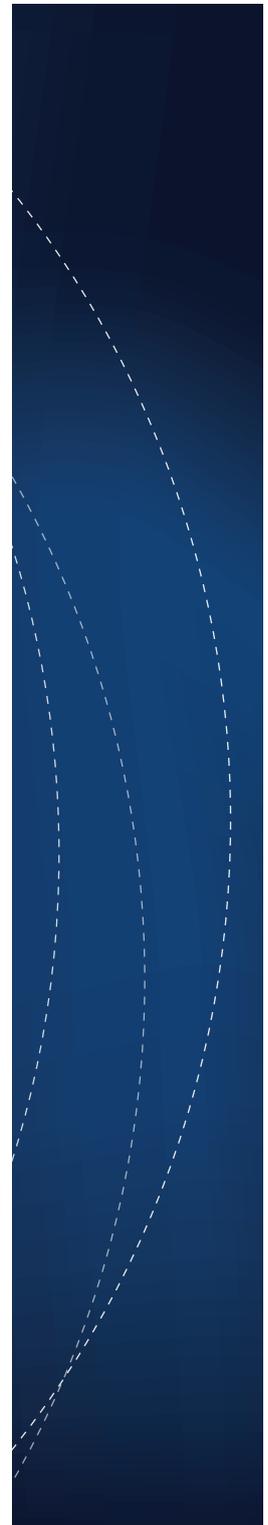
Professor Kevin M. Dunn, School of Social Sciences, University of Western Sydney

Garth Lean, Research Assistant, School of Social Sciences, University of Western Sydney

The Multicultural Education Survey, conducted as part of the RMRME Project, generated a 9.3% response rate. It revealed that NSW public school teachers in 2011 are strongly pro-diversity (94.5%), have a non-assimilatory stance (74.8%) and acknowledge racism is a problem in Australian society (70.1%). The survey also found that teachers are pro-multicultural education (84.0%) and strongly support anti-racism in schools (94.7% disagree with the statement that 'It is not the responsibility of schools to address racism or discrimination in their schools'). Comparing this data to the national *Challenging Racism* (see [http://www.uws.edu.au/ssap/school\\_of\\_social\\_sciences\\_and\\_psychology/research/challenging\\_racism](http://www.uws.edu.au/ssap/school_of_social_sciences_and_psychology/research/challenging_racism)) the RMRME project indicates that teacher attitudes are more strongly pro-diversity than the general Australian population and that teachers are less likely to hold assimilatory views. Teachers are also less likely to acknowledge racism than the general Australian population: only 53.6% of teachers agreed that racism is a problem in schools. One interpretation of this data is that schools could be sites of less racism and less intercultural tension than elsewhere in society.

In most questions in the survey, there was only a single percentage point variation between teachers who had been in the profession for less than six years, and those who had 26 years of experience or more. However, in response to certain questions there was some disparity. Teachers with more experience showed a higher level of assimilatory attitudes and a lower acknowledgement of racism in Australian society and in schools. These disparities may be related to age or tertiary training. The qualification that survey respondents represent only a subset of teachers must be borne in mind, and it is also useful to reflect upon whether individuals with pro-diversity stances would be more likely to respond to the questionnaire than others. From the survey results, however, it appears that there is a general whole-of-sample trend of pro-diversity and anti-racism for teachers.

There are two main implications of these findings. The first is that teachers' positivity towards diversity and anti-racism is a resource which needs to be leveraged. Much work remains to be done in multicultural education, and teacher attitude is a positive basis for future efforts. The second is that it is important to realise that these attitudes are a precious resource. Moving forward, it is crucial not to jeopardise the pro-diversity attitudes of NSW teachers by whatever new interventions, logics and paradigms are assembled and introduced.





## SESSION 1 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The discussion section for this session considered:

- the racial and ethnic composition of teachers in NSW schools;
- students' involvement in the RMRME Project;
- disaggregating the RMRME Project teacher survey data according to criteria such as gender, country of birth, and the level of cultural diversity at a particular school;
- the tendency of attitude surveys to return positive responses in relation to general questions, but more ambivalent responses when specific initiatives are considered;
- terminology in Australia, particularly the use of 'anti-racism';
- terminology in the RMRME Project survey, in particular the category 'Anglo-Australian'.

## SESSION 2

# Australian National Perspectives on Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education

### Access and Equity: Reflecting on Multicultural Education

*Matthew Davies, Acting General Manager, Engagement and Wellbeing Group, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)*

While state and territory governments are responsible for education in public schools, the Australian Government has an important role to play in policy formation. There are three 'tent poles' which inform multicultural education at the federal level. The *Access and Equity* strategy outlines requirements and aspirations for Federal Government services when taking the cultural and linguistic diversity of their clients into account. It is a fundamental plank in Australian social and educational policy. *The People of Australia*, launched in February 2011, is the Federal Government's most recent policy on cultural diversity. It emphasises social inclusion, which is much broader than multiculturalism. Nevertheless, the policy was developed with advice from the Australian Multicultural Advisory Council which recommended that the Federal Government should implement the 'Commitment' of the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008) in the design of an Australian curriculum, with particular reference to education in civics and languages. *Australia's Human Rights Framework*, launched in April 2010, expressed a commitment to support human rights education across the Australian population, including in primary and secondary schools.

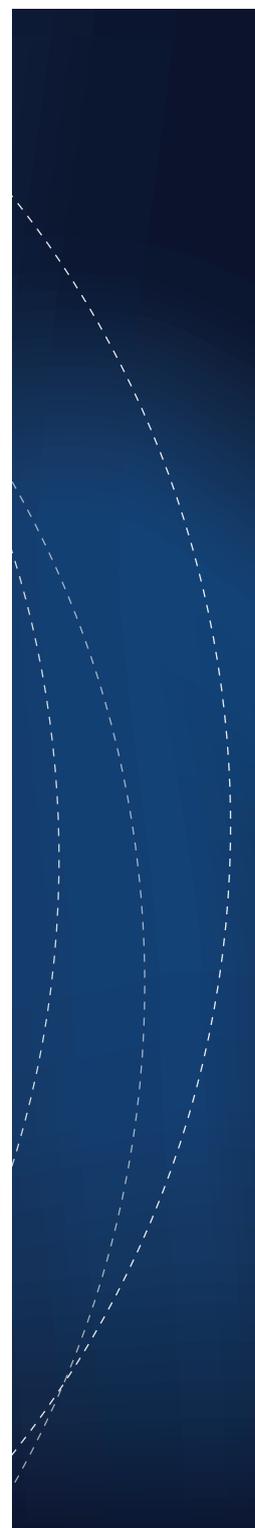
Holding principals and teachers responsible for the quality of multicultural education in their schools is essential. A major measure of this is parents' views on their children's education. The attitudes of parents towards racism might not be as positive as the teacher attitudes expressed through the RMRME survey data; parents can experience latent racism, and withdraw from the school community. The introduction of teaching standards in relation to multicultural education is a major reform, as it has involved a clear articulation of what is expected of teachers, and an accreditation process for universities. A quality loop operates here: the DEEWR works to ensure that universities commit to the quality of their programs; that regular accreditation processes retain their integrity; and that underperforming teachers aren't allowed to 'fall through' the cracks.

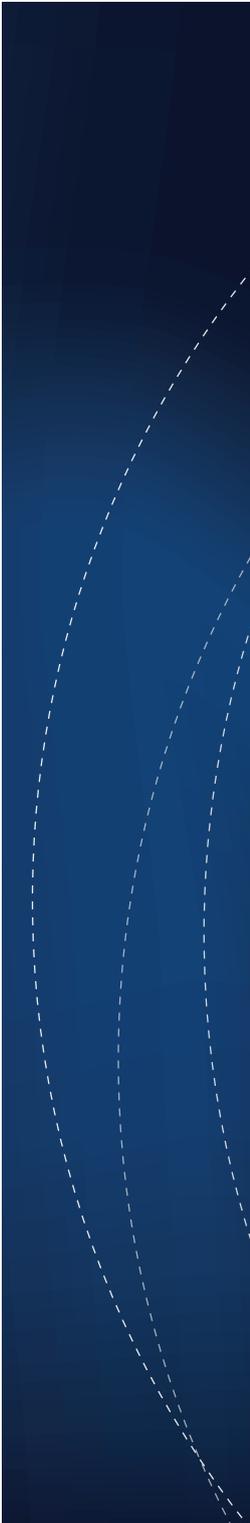
### Multicultural Education and the Australian Curriculum

*Robert Randall, General Manager, Curriculum, Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)*

What does the new Australian Curriculum look like from an intercultural perspective?<sup>2</sup> The curriculum is built from eight learning areas (English, mathematics, science, humanities and social sciences, arts, languages, health and physical education, technologies), and also includes seven general

<sup>2</sup> ACARA is the national body appointed by the Australian Federal Government to design and implement a national curriculum for its six states and two territories which up until now have each had their own school curricula.





capabilities (literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology, critical and creative thinking, personal and social competence, ethical behaviour, intercultural understanding) and three cross-curriculum priorities (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia, sustainability). The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is currently in the process of tagging and sequencing the key learning areas with different general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities. These act as dimensions which can be used to expand the key learning areas, allowing teachers to look at the same content from different perspectives – a teacher may use intercultural data as part of the mathematics curriculum, for example. ACARA has adopted this approach to avoid the problem of over-crowded curricula. Instead, the Authority is trying to get the balance right by testing which learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities come together naturally and powerfully. For instance, the teaching of history is generally recognised as something which can enhance intercultural understanding.

The general capability of intercultural understanding has a conceptual statement which reads: 'In the Australian Curriculum students develop intercultural understanding as they learn to understand themselves in relation to others. This involves students valuing their own languages, cultures and beliefs and those of others, and engaging with people of diverse languages and cultures in ways that recognise commonalities and differences, create connections and cultivate mutual respect'. ACARA has identified six inter-related elements through which students develop and demonstrate intercultural understanding: *recognising, interacting, reflecting, empathy, respect and responsibility*.

The curriculum was designed around Standard Australian English, however, ACARA is also developing the *English as an Additional Language or Dialect: Teacher Resource*. This will help teachers to identify how English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) students are progressing with their English language learning; understand students' cultural and linguistic diversity, and identify areas of the curriculum that EAL/D students may find challenging.

### **The Australian Migration Program: An Overview and Some Implications for Multicultural Education**

*Dr Wendy Southern, Deputy Secretary, Policy and Program Management Group, Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)*

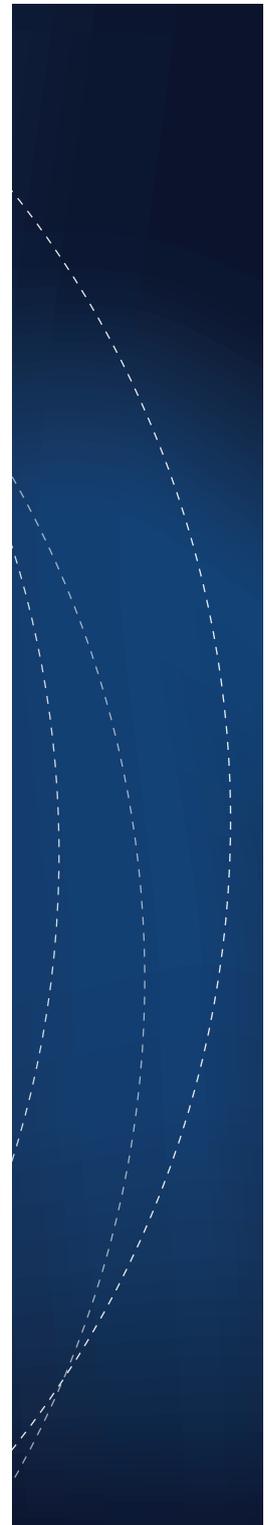
Australia's migration program will be its largest ever this year, with 185,000 migrants and 14,000 refugees coming to Australia. Migration to Australia is expected to remain strong. The composition of Australian migration and humanitarian intake has changed dramatically over time – it has shifted from a largely Anglo-Celtic focus to something much more diverse, and this trend will continue. In the post-war period, Australia's immigration program was sourced mainly from European countries. Today Australia's main source of entrants is the United Kingdom – which has remained constant – but there are growing

numbers of people from China, India, South Africa and the Philippines. In the refugee program, people from Asia, the Middle East and Africa make up the majority of the program. These trends have substantial implications. A large number of people, particularly those who have entered Australia under the humanitarian program, come from situations where they might have spent a protracted amount of time in refugee camps with no access to formal systems of education.

Chris Bowen, Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, celebrates what he calls 'the genius of Australian multiculturalism'. He believes in multiculturalism's power to strengthen societies, and says that one of its most important features is that it is citizenship-centred multiculturalism. Australia has a very high uptake of citizenship compared to many other countries, although this is changing: temporary migration has also become a more prominent feature of Australia's migration program.

The DIAC released two reports on settlement in 2011. *Settlement Outcomes of New Arrivals* surveyed people in relation to their first five years of settlement in Australia and indicated that outcomes for all migrants improve the longer they reside in Australia. It also found low levels of participation in the workforce, especially among humanitarian refugee entrants, and pointed to very low levels of English language uptake. DIAC intends to keep working on these issues. *Economic, Social and Civic Contributions of First and Second Generation Humanitarian Entrants* provided the Department with valuable evidence attesting to the contribution of these individuals. Humanitarian entrants are very keen to work hard to ensure the success of their children in Australia; they are gifted entrepreneurs in terms of setting up their own businesses; and they place a high value on education.

Regional Migration Agreements and Enterprise Migration Agreements are DIAC programs which look closely at skill sets needed in regional Australia, and how these needs might be met through migration. When migrants come to regional areas, they bring their families with them. This has implications for infrastructure and services – including education – and DIAC is committed to ensuring that people will go to places where resources and provisions are in place.





## SESSION 2 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The discussion section for this session considered:

- assessment and monitoring of the implementation of the national curriculum;
- assessing certain areas of the new curriculum such as intercultural understanding and civics and citizenship (under the key learning area of humanities and social sciences);
- resources and resource provision for the new curriculum; in particular provision at the national level and guidance as to resource quality;
- terminology in the ESL and EAL/D debate, especially in relation to the word 'dialect';
- assessment and reporting for the new curriculum across jurisdictions;
- the need for multicultural education to redress structural inequalities as well as enhance intercultural understanding;
- the need to be vigilant against the essentialising of difference in multicultural education.

## SESSION 3

# Australian State and Territory Perspectives on Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education Part 1

### Developing Victoria's Students for Global and Multicultural Citizenship

*Lynn Pickles, Manager Multicultural Education, Targeted Programs Branch, Office for Government School Education, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Victoria)*

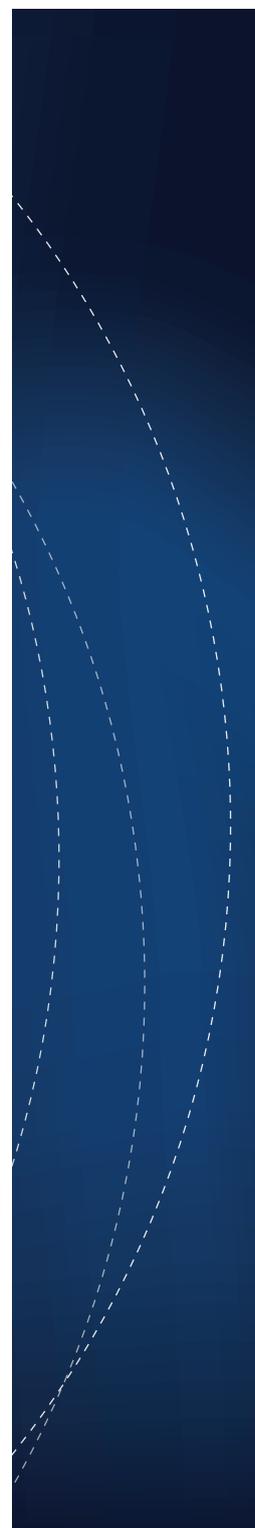
The Liberal Nationals Coalition recently came to power in Victoria, and two new key policy documents have been issued: *The Liberal Nationals Coalition Plan for Education* and *The Liberal Nationals Coalition Plan for a Multicultural Victoria*. Together with these, there are a number of language initiatives taking place in Victoria. Under long-term commitments outlined in the state's multilingual plan, the Government intends to introduce compulsory language classes for every Victorian primary school, and provide languages training for every government school student from Prep to Year 10. Victoria has Indonesian, Japanese, Spanish, Chinese, Mandarin and Greek language advisors and there are subsidies to increase the number of language teachers and attract teachers to the discipline. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) is locating English language schools, centres and outposts in regional and outer urban areas as settlement patterns change. Working with the NSW Department of Education and Communities and the University of New South Wales, the DEECD has also worked on the development of a proficiency tool which will provide funding to ESL students based on the gap in their English proficiency.

In 2009, the Victorian government launched *Education for Global and Multicultural Citizenship: A Strategy for Victorian Government Schools, 2009 – 2013*, which focuses on the knowledge, skills and attributes of productive and active citizenship in multiple contexts. DEECD has identified entry points that schools can use for global and multicultural citizenship education: values education; Studies of Asia; Civics and Citizenship Education / Student Voice, Internationalisation, Languages and English as a Second Language. Related programs include a Studies of Asia program for school principals (a key plank of Victoria's education policy is increasing autonomy for principals); a Global and Multicultural Citizenship Education professional learning program for leadership teams and teachers; and an expanded Civics and Citizenship Education / Student Voice program. DEECD is also conducting intercultural understanding field trials in preparation for the new national curriculum.

### Internationalisation of Queensland State Schools

*Angela Maclaine, Director Education Queensland International, Department of Education and Training (Queensland)*

What can be learned about best practice for internationalisation in the school environment, from schools which run programs which are positive and dynamic? This is just one aspect of the multicultural program in the state, but it is important. Education Queensland International is a commercial unit within





Queensland's Department of Education and Training, and director Angela Maclaine has developed a list of observations based on her experiences in the sector and interviews, observation, site visits and document analysis. Many schools pin down their activity in this area to things like 'Harmony Day' which – while valuable – is a limited way to address internationalisation in the school environment.

The most successful schools practise a strategy of differentiation in providing equitable access to curriculum for all students, including differentiation through resources, support, environment and assessment. Facilitating equitable curriculum access does not mean that all children get the same input; some children might need more support and resources to attain the same outcome at the other end. Such schools strive to meet the needs of all children: not just international students, but students with disabilities, students in care and students with behavioural problems. Everybody's needs are important because they are learning needs. Successful internationalisation is also represented by a learning environment that is inclusive of cultural and national diversity, where students share equal opportunities for achievement.

Other hallmarks of successful internationalisation include engagement with the local community; a strong commitment to ESL provision and support; a commitment to the teaching of languages other than English; the implementation of strong, well-structured and monitored buddying programs designed to help students integrate and make friends; and the upholding of respect for others – irrespective of difference – as a major school value.

### **An Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Perspective on Multicultural Education**

*Jennifer Mayers, ESL Executive Officer Literacy and Numeracy Section, ACT Education and Training Directorate*

There are several factors which make the ACT a unique environment for multiculturalism and multicultural education. As an affluent society with the most expensive rental market in the country, there are barriers to long term settlement in the ACT, particularly for refugees. The diplomatic community gives a different flavour to education in Canberra, and is an important resource for schools and communities. The ACT is a jurisdiction with excellent student outcomes as measured by the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), however this is being challenged by a growing population which is less homogeneous (or more diverse) in terms of language, culture and educational background. There is also a changing approach to school management, with the ACT rapidly moving towards a system of autonomy where schools are primarily led by school principals.

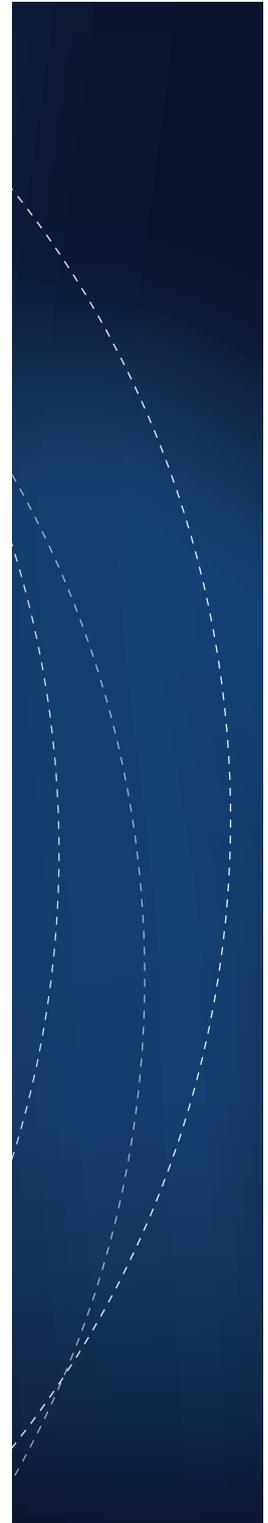
The Australian Capital Territory Multicultural Strategy 2010–2013 is a shared Territory strategy, and all government agencies report annually on their progress against its actions and key performance indicators. There are various ways in

which this strategy impacts upon education. In terms of languages (LOTE and English), there is ethnic schools funding; three primary and one secondary Introductory English Centres (IEC) for students with minimal English language skills; the Translating and Interpreting Service; and the training of ESL teachers through scholarship. For refugees, asylum seekers and humanitarian entrants, there is extended enrolment time in IEC programs, the College Bridging Program, and close relationships with external agencies such as Companion House. In terms of intercultural acceptance, the Department promotes Harmony Day and a training program, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander – Towards Cultural Competency, for school executives.

### SESSION 3 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Discussion points for the first Australian State and Territory Perspectives session included:

- the tensions between equipping students with the skills they need in a globalised world, while remaining sensitive to their culturally specific learning styles and practices;
- the ineffectiveness of foreign language teaching in comparison to language medium instruction; is the persistence of the former indicative of a gap between theory and practice in the teaching profession?;
- the need to penetrate the mindset of the teachers and change their deep-seated notions about who they are, prior to implementing strategies and best practices about what works in successful schools.





## SESSION 4

### Australian State and Territory Perspectives on Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education Part 2

#### ‘Waves, cycles and wheels’: Learning from the Past in Moving Forward in Multicultural Education in South Australia

*Vincenzo Andreacchio, Executive Officer Multicultural Education Committee*

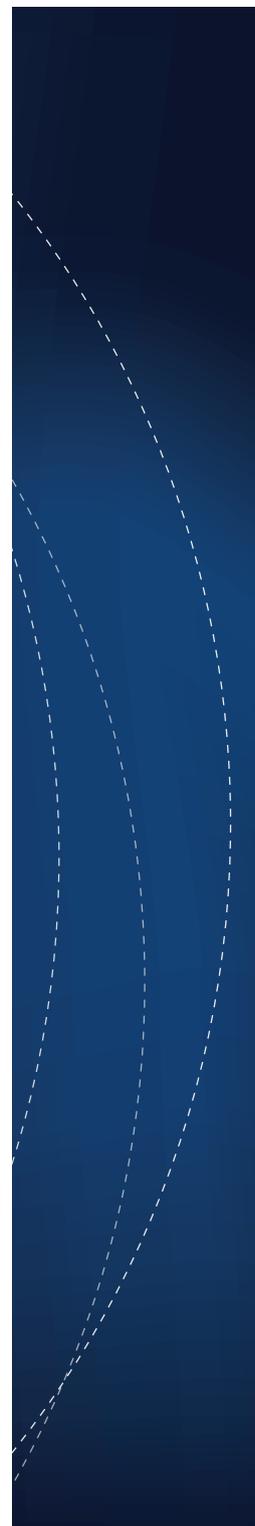
Multicultural education has been driven by both government support and the passion of individuals in South Australia. The state has a longstanding Multicultural Education Committee (MEC), and was the home to Professor J. J. Smolicz, a leader in the field of multicultural education. Smolicz’s concept of multiculturalism has been used in South Australia for over 30 years. Smolicz theorised that every culture emphasises one of three core values: language, religion or family. Integration as a way of managing diversity is critical, as it includes the concept of sharing, a real engagement. Smolicz’s ideas about dynamic multiculturalism emphasise both diversity and interplay, with different cultural groups contributing to the overarching core values of a country such as Australia. The policy document *The People of Australia* incorporates all of these elements: it discusses Australia’s ‘shared values’, it describes diversity, and it also suggests the dynamic interplay between them. The dynamic interplay of multiculturalism is what has been promoted in South Australia.

The MEC brings educational institutions and communities together to provide independent advice to the state’s Minister for Education. The Committee has a Schools and Children’s Services Grant Program, and has administered grant programs every year since 1980. Grants now include collaboration, outcome and acquittal components. The 2012 focus is ‘Healthy Living, Caring Communities’. Looking back at the grants since 1980 provides an interesting picture of what is happening at a school-based level, with activity in areas including countering racism, multicultural education in the state curriculum, reconciliation, human rights education, language education and culturally inclusive education.

#### A Western Australian Perspective on Multicultural Education

*Coral Jenkins, Principal Consultant, EAL/D Department of Education (Western Australia); on behalf of Majella Stevens, Manager, Tri Border and Early Years, Department of Education and Training (Western Australia)*

Western Australia has a sustainable and successful economy which is transforming into a two-tier economy as a result of the mining boom. There is an increasing number of people from all over the world entering the state on temporary 457 visas. Their children are arriving at schools which have never had migrant students or students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds before. This presents challenges not only for education, but for other government services including housing and healthcare. There are three pieces of overarching policy to guide multicultural education in the state: *The Western Australian Charter of Multiculturalism*, the overarching statement and values in the *Curriculum Framework*, and the 2011 revision of the *Anti-Racism Policy* for the Department of Education.





The focus here is on one program that targets Indigenous students. Indigenous people make up just over 3% of Western Australia's population. *Understanding Stories My Way* is a project which investigated Aboriginal English-speaking students' understanding of school-based literacy materials written in standard Australian English. Using different children's texts it found there was a dramatic difference in interpretation between groups of indigenous and non-indigenous students and that these interpretations clearly expressed different groups' cultural schemas (for example, there was a clear difference in understanding the notion of 'family'). This research has many implications for classroom practice, including the need for teachers to recognise that successful comprehension requires a significant amount of work around concept building and linguistic front loading. There are also attendant considerations for two-way pedagogy, by engaging with students using both English and Aboriginal English and pointing out the difference between them. Tracks to Two-Way Learning is the program that has come out of the *Understanding Stories* research, and it aims to strengthen cross-cultural teaching practice and develop effective and sustainable teaching and learning programs for Aboriginal learners.

### **Collaboratively Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners in Tasmanian Mainstream Classrooms**

*Jennifer Barclay, Principal Education Officer, English as an Additional Language Program, Department of Education (Tasmania)*

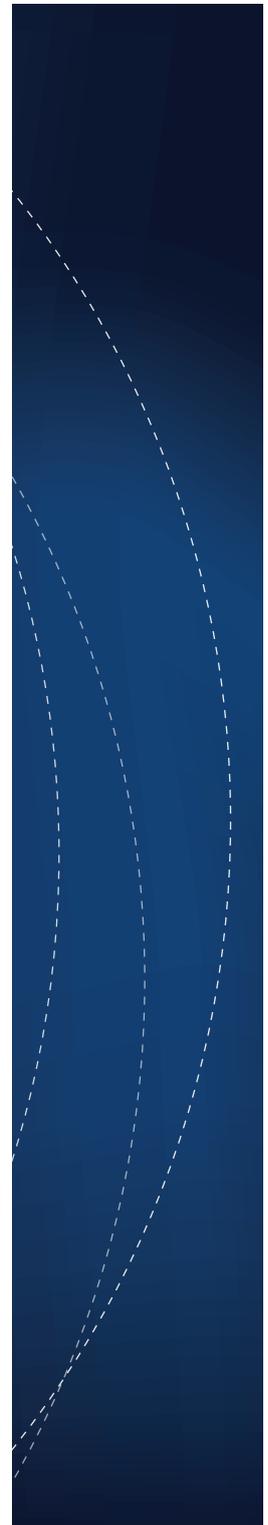
Tasmania is a small state with a decentralised population, and this is its strength. Tasmania's multicultural agenda is served through various means, including the state-wide programs 'Better Access to Government Services' and 'Inclusive Language'.

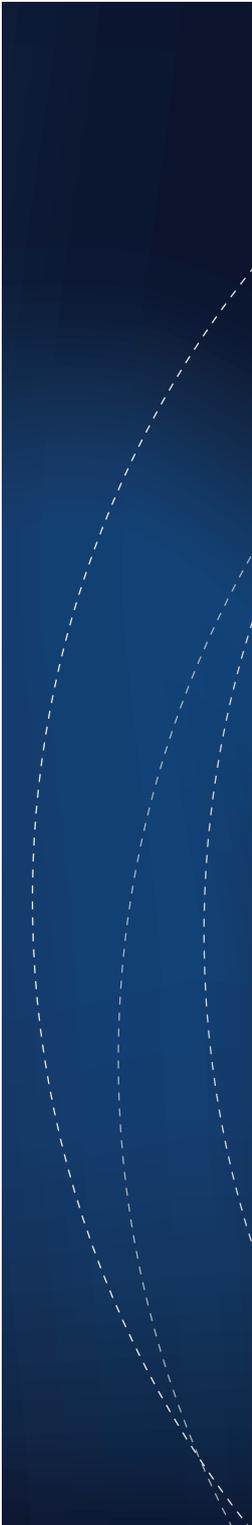
The state has an English as an Additional Language (EAL) program in which EAL teachers work in collaboration with class teachers and the school to guide the language acquisition of students and develop appropriate programs and practices that enable students to reach their full potential. The program is based on a set of principles, developed especially from the work of Joe Lo Bianco. Tasmania does not have reception centres or intensive language schools, and this is a deliberate policy. The state works from a model of inclusion that people should belong to their local communities and their local schools. One of the challenges the EAL Program faces is embedding its practices and principles systemically throughout the state. Recent successes, however, include permission from the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority allowing English language learners to apply for extra time on exams, and have a 'talking dictionary' if there are no appropriate dictionaries available in their language.

## SESSION 4 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Discussion points for the second Australian State and Territory Perspectives session included:

- the importance of educating teachers to understand the different conceptual and linguistic frameworks indigenous students bring to school, and increase the ability of indigenous students to access Standard Australian English texts more successfully;
- partnerships between education departments and government and non-government sectors;
- the ambiguous relationship between foreign governments and community language schools;
- the different situations and approaches of indigenous populations to education and multicultural education in Canada and the United States.





## SESSION 5

# A National Academic Perspective on Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education

### Educating for Australian Multiculturalism – Where from and where to?

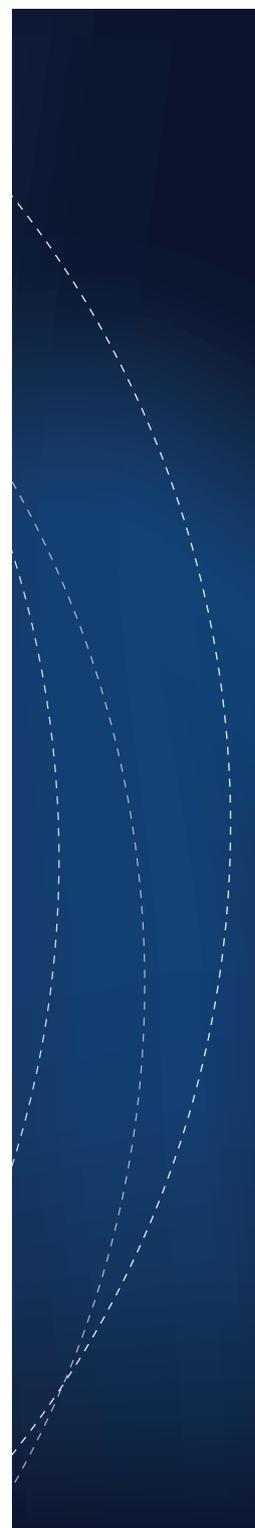
*Professor Georgina Tsolidis, School of Education, University of Ballarat*

In Australia, the term 'multiculturalism' has a place in the popular imaginary. Nevertheless, there are many signs that there has been a political shift away from multiculturalism which coincided with the election of the Howard Government: the dismantling of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Tampa controversy, the citizenship test, the mooting of a ban on the wearing of the veil by school girls, and inflammatory comments by the Treasurer and Deputy Prime Minister Peter Costello subsequent to the Cronulla riots.

Katharyne Mitchell has argued that the shift away from state-sponsored multiculturalism which occurred in several countries in the 1990s was a result of macroeconomic issues, where 'individuals are constituted as atomized, free-thinking and entrepreneurial subjects who can 'choose' to assimilate or not as they wish' – a move which allows the state and the nation to take less responsibility for managing difference, as the onus is on the individual to integrate. Perhaps the classic example of this in the Australian context is the citizenship test, which under the Howard Government was based on a revisionist conception of what constituted Australianness – including questions relating to cricket and the Anzacs – but which has now shifted to a more civic focus, based on questions around legislative issues and so on.

Education has always been a cornerstone of Australian multiculturalism. From the 1970s onwards, multicultural education has mirrored the development of multicultural policy more broadly. It was particularly prominent in the 1980s, and it might be speculated that this decade was the high point of multicultural education in Australia. Multicultural education in the period included mother-tongue maintenance; the teaching of community languages; bilingualism as pedagogy; multicultural perspectives across the curriculum (including anti-racist initiatives); and school/community liaison towards involving minority group parents in school governance. In the 1980s, multicultural education worked towards a form of unity that did not rely on those entering a society losing their identity in order to fit in.

There are several important issues around multicultural education which should be drawn out. Firstly, because multicultural education represents different things to different people it has been difficult to evaluate its contribution. It may receive harsher treatment than other approaches which have more measurable outcomes, such as programs around gender equity. Finally – and this criticism remains valid today – despite its stated aims, multicultural education has remained strongly associated with immigrants rather than shifts in society more broadly.





There are several ways forward for multiculturalism and multicultural education in Australia. We should embrace and value cultural diversity as a constituent part of Australian history and cultural identity. We should link multiculturalism to economic opportunity and redistribution, and recognise it as internally multifaceted in relation to gender, class, and so on. We need to weaken the link between cultural diversity and migrancy. We need to develop creative ways of combating racism which do not demonise young people who already feel disenfranchised, and are drawn to the new right movements which do exist. And finally, we need to place more emphasis on multicultural education, especially beyond language teaching.

## SESSION 5 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The discussion section for this session considered:

- has the Australian Curriculum, especially in the area of history, adequately represented immigration and migrant experiences in and contributions to the country?
- does multiculturalism encourage the reifying of difference and cultural stasis? Does it have difficulty dealing with cultural change, hybridity? What is multicultural education's relationship to extra-curricular activity and traditional and contemporary cultural practices (capoeira versus hip hop, for example)?
- what ethical issues arise when a school runs culturally-specific programs for particular groups of students, particularly when they are implemented as part of a program of behaviour management, or redressing underachievement? Is such an approach a way to engage the students to ensure school attendance and participation, or is it addressing a peripheral issue, rather than the skills and capacities that students need to perform?

## SESSION 6

# International Academic Perspectives on Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education Part 1

### Biculturalism, Bilingualism and Multiculturalism: Lessons from Aotearoa/New Zealand

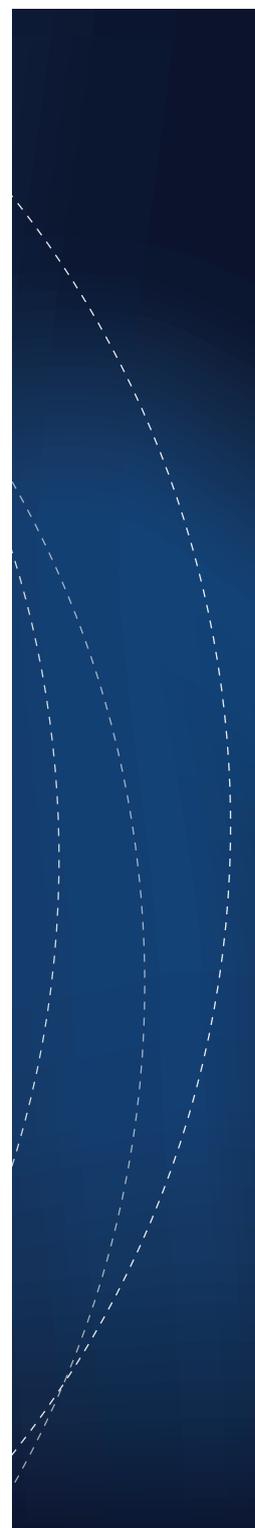
*Professor Stephen May, School of Critical Studies in Education, Faculty of Education, University of Auckland*

Why have multicultural policies been so effectively dismantled over the past ten years in countries around the world? What are the challenges that still attend the defence of multiculturalism as a public policy today? Writing in the early 1980s, Brian Bullivant outlined what he called the 'pluralist dilemma': the problem of reconciling the diverse political claims of constituent groups and individuals in a pluralist society with the claims of a nation state as a whole. He describes these competing claims as civism or pluralism. Such a position is also supported in liberal theory, where citizenship is understood as individual and culturally free, and everyone is treated the same. Multiculturalist policy has been so easily broken down over the last decade because liberal pluralism has always involved a wilful unwillingness to recognise difference in any legalised way that holds sway in debates about the pluralist dilemma.

In the pluralist dilemma, there is a consensus that the nation state as a whole must be maintained, through a common language and a common political system. Cultural pluralism is only accommodated at the level of the private, not the public. The ongoing scepticism around the pluralist dilemma must be addressed if effective multicultural policies that hold over time are to be developed. This will involve moving beyond ideas about culture to look at the issues of structural inequality (racism, institutionalised poverty and discrimination) that are faced on a daily basis by minoritised groups. Two key examples – around language and indigenous peoples – make this argument clear.

Australia, like many English-speaking countries, is resolutely monolingual. Multilingualism and bilingualism are primarily limited to the private domain – the family, the community – and have very little institutional support. Language often gets excluded in discussions of multiculturalism – it is much easier to focus on celebrating aspects of culture. If we are going to change society so that it has more genuinely institutionalised support for multiculturalism, we need to recognise the significance of language. This has been one area of success in New Zealand. The Maori Renaissance movement has been significant, as well as the advent of Maori medium-language instruction as a parallel to English-medium language instruction.

The question of indigenous / ethnic relations is largely unexplored. Although both are inter-aligned in terms of social justice, they are seen as two discrete academic areas of inquiry. The work of Will Kymlicka is important for issues around minority rights and indigenous peoples. Societies are often multinational: they include groups who have been conquered, configured and colonised and are now national minorities within territories with which they have long been associated. This includes indigenous peoples, but it also includes other groups





(Hispanic people in the States; Welsh and Scots in the United Kingdom). All of these groups have entitlements but there are different bases to them, and for new migrants and indigenous people there are particular historical relationships which need to be addressed in their specificity, with appropriate rights and entitlements.

In New Zealand, biculturalism is a key policy response which recognises Maori's indigenous people and associated notions of autonomy. Biculturalism is not about separating one group from another or cultural boundedness. It is based around the idea of developing autonomy in key areas, such as a system of education which focuses on Maori language as an autonomous institutional space, allowing for the preservation and renaissance of language which would otherwise be subsumed by English. This has also resulted in structural reparations of giving back crown land which was stolen as part of the colonial enterprise.

It is crucial to recognise that civism (everyone must be treated equally and the nation state should be attended to as a whole) is also a product of the history of nationalism, and is historically predicated on linguistic homogeneity and assimilation. The notion of civism still broadly holds sway, and to redress this we must look at structural and cultural factors in relation to multicultural policy, including the fostering of public monolingualism, bilingual education, indigenous inequalities and rights, racism and discrimination.

### **Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education: A UK Perspective**

*Dr Richard Race, Department of Education, University of Roehampton*

When investigating multiculturalism today it is also necessary to consider integration. Integration is a conditional two-way relationship between the state on one hand, and the individual and community on the other. The state influences policymaking processes, affecting how individuals and communities are shaped and, therefore, how they socially and culturally exist. Multiculturalism, in contrast, promotes equal rights and discourages discrimination. Multiculturalism cannot be thought of as a single concept which is socially on its own, and – just as cultural diversity itself is constantly changing – it must be understood to be plural and fluid. In the context of a discussion about multiculturalism and multicultural education, it would be ideal to be moving forward towards an investigation of anti-racism, anti-discrimination, citizenship and human rights. In today's climate, however, we are compelled to look backwards, towards assimilation, separatism, and most especially integration – all of which are situations where people are not able to participate fully in political, cultural and social spheres.

In the English context education policy has been influenced by an integrationist agenda more than a multiculturalist one. The majority of education policy documentation in England has an integrationist position: *Education of Immigrants* (1965; 1971), the Plowden report (1967), *Every Child Matters* (2003, 2004),

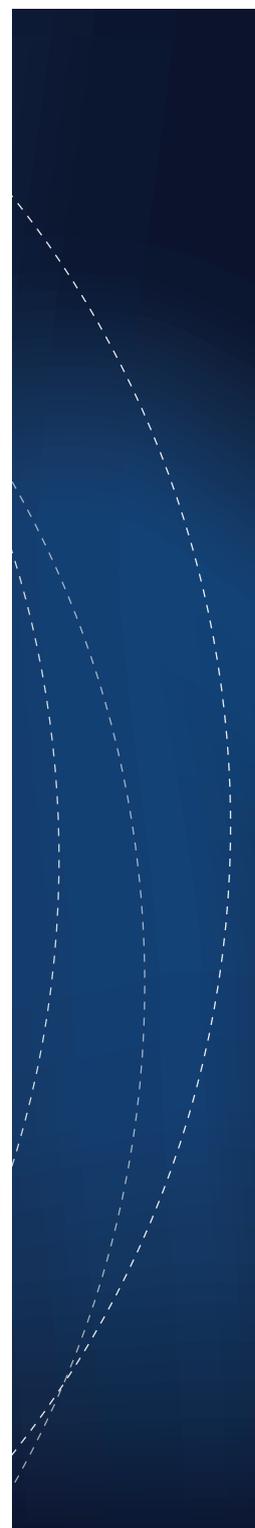
the Ajebo report (2007) and the approach of academy schools can all be characterised in this way. In contrast, the 1981 Rampton report and the 1985 Swann report can both be described as multiculturalist, and the 2010 Citizenship Curriculum straddles both categories. Certain elements of the language used in Australia's multicultural policy and associated debates are structured around integrationist ideas: this is evident in terms such as 'rights', 'responsibilities', 'duty', 'recognition', 'tolerance' and 'citizenship'. It is possible that there are similarities between *The People of Australia: Australia's Multicultural Policy* (2011) and England's *Education for All and Every Child Matters* in the sense that cultural diversity is celebrated at the same time as being 'recognised' – the latter word betraying a power relationship and indicating that an integrationist, conditional relationship between the state and the individual / community is being promoted.

Multicultural education depends on three key points: method (how practice allows students to talk, think and reflect), depth (practice needs to avoid the tokenistic; stereotyping needs to be avoided at all cost), and reach (practice needs to be international rather than national). Awareness training and continuing professional development for all education practitioners is important: an inclusive, multicultural, anti-racist program of lifelong learning is necessary to address social and cultural concerns such as racism and discrimination. Many teachers who trained prior to 2002 are unsure about citizenship because they have not been taught how to teach the subject, and more teachers and specialists in citizenship are required.

It is important to rethink multiculturalism, and apply it to what is going on socially, culturally and educationally in different contexts. However, multiculturalism is only one concept amongst others which need to be investigated in order to increase our understanding of society, cultures and education.

## SESSION 6 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The discussion section for this session focussed especially upon citizenship. What is the relationship between national citizenship and recent moves towards global citizenship – do they need to be reconciled? Is such a relationship being played out already by the people who already live lives which straddle both categories, such as new Filipino immigrants in the United States? Is there a shift towards citizenship being a discourse of responsibility in the post-9/11 environment? Is the ethnic majority willing to situate itself in citizenship debates, or do its members construct themselves as the 'white Anglo normative unmarked' category, and fail to deal with their own positionality and the privileges they enjoy? How might working with the personal, familial and ancestral histories of teachers help them to better engage with issues of citizenship and injustice? And finally: citizenship from whose perspective? There is an academic and activist perspective of citizenship but what does citizenship mean for the people advocated for: the immigrant, the minority, the marginalised,





the disenfranchised? Citizenship entails something significantly different for individuals who don't have to worry about it, as opposed to those who are in a situation where they have to ask – or even fight – for it.

There was also discussion around:

- the media's role in public discourse around multiculturalism, and how ethnicity is singled out as a differential characteristic among others to be politicised;
- social psychology work which suggests that anti-racism campaigns that emphasise differentiation and neglect universality and sameness tend to fail;
- possible relations between financial changes in nation states and citizenship; and
- the recent riots in London and the British Government's response; a related conflation of ethnicity and race in relation to broader issues of globalisation, and the problematisation of youth in public space.

## SESSION 7

# International Academic Perspectives on Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education Part 2

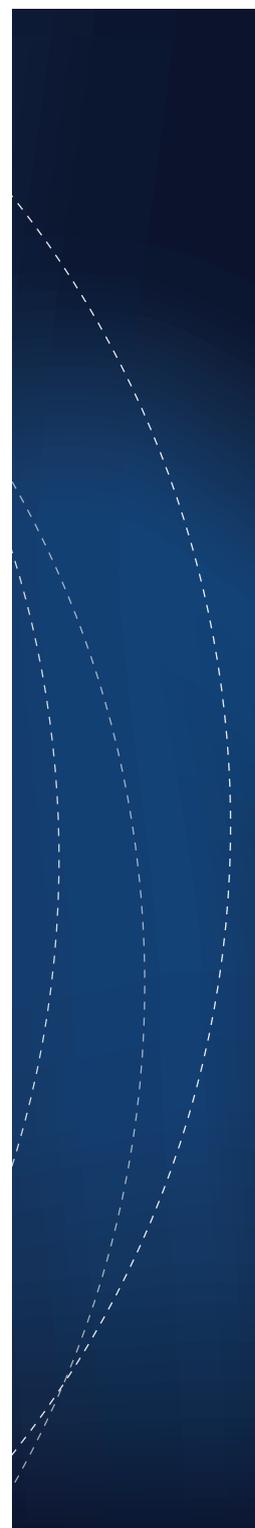
### Some Insights on Australian and US Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education

*Professor Mary Kalantzis, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (via videolink)*

In Australia I was a member of a group of academics and activists who believed that the country was moving towards a sense of nation that was not tethered to one ethnic group, and that multiculturalism was a contribution to that process. Our approach was a pragmatic one. We worked to convince employers, educators and others that it was in their own self-interest to recognize and harness diversity in productive ways – in terms of providing efficient and effective services and facilitating higher levels of performance. For example actively recruiting women, Indigenous people, Chinese-speakers and other people of more recent immigrant backgrounds, to help create products and services that people needed as well as to promote harmonious workplaces without discrimination and racism, which produce downtime. Some of these objectives were met through the development of Human Rights Commission and Anti-Discrimination legislation; there were also efforts to ensure that the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) remained an independent entity and to encourage, at the same time, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) to be more inclusive in their recruiting practices and programs. In a small country like Australia it was possible to reach across many domains: working not only on the margins or only in the interests of minorities, but to focus on the mainstream society so that minorities could be included, in their difference and thereby transform the national ‘centre’ itself.

Several characteristics are distinct when shifting from an Australian to an American context. The category of race, based on pigment – ‘black’ and ‘white’ – is difficult for a newcomer: to have to use this language and live within it as ‘natural’ is very uncomfortable. Similarly difficult is the American system of education’s heavy emphasis on tests and standards. Civil rights legislation is the framework for diversity in America and it is very different from the Australian multicultural agenda. However, something which might be called ‘reflexive civility’ or ‘learned cosmopolitanism’ is now central to both Australia’s new national curriculum and the new common core standards in the United States. This might not be as strident or demanding of justice in the way civil rights, anti-racism or multiculturalism has been, but the acceptance and negotiation of difference is certainly now embedded, as a matter of form, in any new education framework in both countries.

There are vast differences in education across America, as a consequence of historic racism, funding inequalities and the social economic backgrounds of students. The context of Champaign, Illinois where I now live and work reveals some vexing ongoing tug of wars. In the five years since I have been here, the term ‘multiculturalism’ has not really been one with much currency, rather it is the term ‘diversity’ that has more power. It refers firstly, to African Americans and then, in addition, to Hispanics and Native Americans. So, in everyday terms,





the hardest part is dealing with the legacy of slavery. This was exemplified by the fact that when I arrived in Champaign I was confronted by a consent decree, which meant that the courts were monitoring the school system as the result of a discrimination case lodged by the local African American community. This was removed after much effort– but as soon as this happened there were fears that resegregation would re-occur under the guise of local school boards preferring the reintroduction of a ‘neighborhood schools’ enrolment policy. These moves are in line with findings from research by the Pew Research Centre that claims that, generally, although most people say that they are comfortable with diversity many still exhibit actions that counteract this by producing resegregation on the basis of affinity, socio-economic background, location or some other factor.

It is important to keep in mind what it is we are rethinking at this symposium. Is ‘multiculturalism’ the right word to use; what other language might there be? Research by Pew also suggests that this generation feels more anxious and fearful than previous generations. What is absolutely clear is that the effort to produce a cohesive sociality and a just society cannot be based on accusations, or anything else that makes people fearful or demeans them. There has been some significant progress towards a more inclusive sociality. Certain hate based behaviors and articulations are generally unacceptable, and few people will claim to be racist or say diversity doesn’t matter. However, when people talk against multiculturalism these days, they use a new kind of language: they talk about self-preservation; about maintaining values; about their concerns to not fall behind or being left out. This grows louder as the so called ‘majority’ sees itself become, numerically, the new ‘minority’. How do we position the goals of multiculturalism in a way that is genuinely inclusive, even for those who are fearful? How do we create a multiculturalism that makes even the Tea Party think it’s for them?

In all of these endeavours the most critical factor for us as educators is the people in the classroom who enable and facilitate learning, who focus on learner performance as well as identity and who make such a difference by their dispositions as well as their interests. We must prioritise investment in such teachers.

## **SESSION 7 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

The discussion section for this session considered:

- The need for continued vigilance once cosmopolitan and reflexive civility principles are embedded in the curriculum; there is inevitably ‘pushback’ against such achievement. Uneven experiences of opportunity remain systemic; there is a coupling of historic disparity (such as racism) and socio-economic difficulty.
- Teachers have to create conditions of belonging and conditions of engagement, and these are the measures of the teacher’s ability to translate multicultural principles. When evaluating intercultural understanding, the test is on the basis of where the students are and how they’re travelling.

## SESSION 8

# International Academic Perspectives on Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education Part 3

### Multicultural Education in the United States: Polemics of Progress

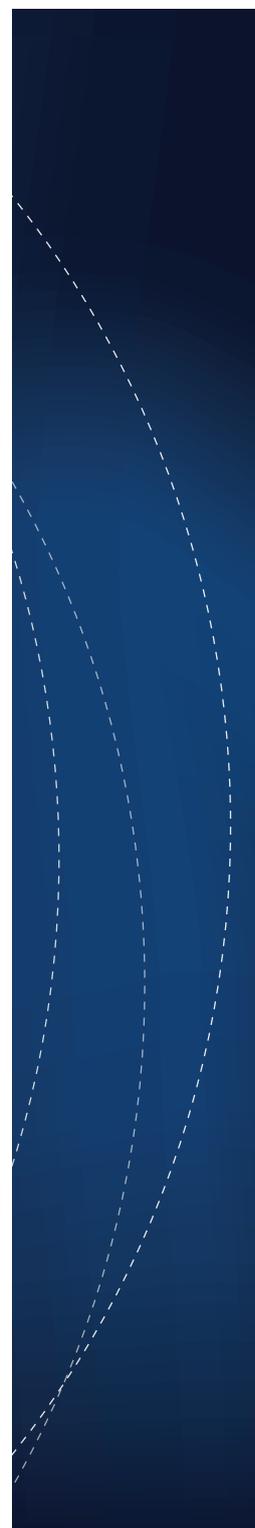
*Professor Geneva Gay, Professor in Curriculum and Instruction –  
College of Education, University of Washington*

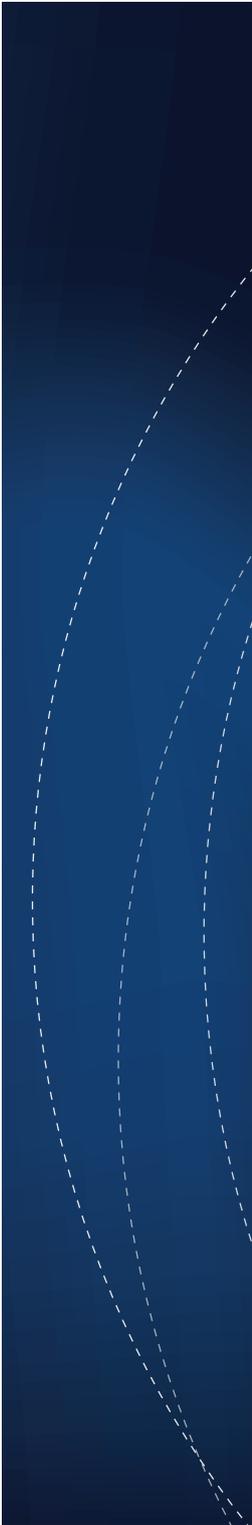
In the US context, multicultural education is an academic manifestation of the civil rights agenda. Before the late 1960s – when the civil rights movement was in its heyday – there was no discussion of what later became multicultural education within the education arena, and as civil rights began with peoples of colour and then spread to other groups, multicultural education followed a similar path. From the beginning, multicultural scholars have argued that you can have unity and diversity simultaneously, and that genuine unity is not based on ‘clonism’ but grounded in diversity. It was the critics of multiculturalism who have pitted the idea of unity against diversity. The main core of multicultural education scholars came from social sciences backgrounds, and from this disciplinary basis they brought with them the idea that true community is based on the differentiation of capabilities.

While multicultural education theory has progressed and developed in the US, the practice of multicultural education has stood still or regressed. There has been a high degree of continuity in theory, and its practitioners have been productive for 30 years or more. Multicultural education practice, however, has been subject to stops and starts. One issue is that superintendents in US school districts often have an extremely short tenure (around two and a half years), and any multicultural education program they may initiate is unlikely to be continued by their successors

In the US multicultural education began as a primarily curricular exercise, and the leading theorists were pedagogues. It is now a much more holistic exercise; however there has not been even progress across areas. Because multicultural education’s first leading scholars were pedagogues, they understood pedagogy and curriculum better than other aspects of the academic enterprise such as administrative leadership, assessment or counselling. Thus, while multicultural education can impact all of these dimensions, there is not necessarily substantive conversation developed around every area.

There remains many areas of tension, where there is a continuing need for progress. Many promises have been made which have not been fulfilled. There was a push to diversify the people working in positions in all levels of education. However, 90% are of European-American background, and the overwhelming percentage of teachers is female. The fact that there are very few students of colour in the teaching education pipeline means that this promise is not going to be filled in the foreseeable future. Furthermore, there is a danger that arguing too strongly for more teachers of colour could imply that is the responsibility of these teachers to carry the ‘burden’ of multiculturalism, and this would be an abdication of responsibility.





Secondly, racism continues to distort entitlement in the US. This might well be traced back to disparity written into the Constitution, and there is no easy way to resolve this problem.

Thirdly, it is notable that the resistance to multicultural education seems to be correlate to the growth of multicultural education. People know not to be gross in their resistance to multicultural education; however resistance can be subtle and creative. Teachers might claim not to know what to do for multicultural education; they may say they feel guilty about past injustices; they may weep and cry. Such resistances are deeply ingrained and imaginative, and people may not even be conscious of what it is they are doing. It is crucial that we strategise in deep, conscientious, deliberate and analytical ways how such resistances might be resisted.

Finally, there are cross-discipline collaborations which present both a challenge and an opportunity for multicultural education. Education is a non-capital producing institution in a capitalist country, and if the sector can engage in more cross-discipline ventures, it could increase the legitimacy and validity of multicultural education. 'Culturally-responsive teaching' or 'cultural responsiveness' is already becoming a vogue term in other sectors such as medicine, nursing, religion and the social sciences, and it may be a sign that there is genuine commitment to multicultural principles beyond education.

There is still cause to be troubled by how much progress has not been made. It could be argued that the people who have benefited most from civil rights and affirmative action are white European women. This needs to be redressed – it might appear as progress, but it is not progress across the board. There is not a limited pool of rights and opportunities to draw from, and the gains from civil rights need to be shared between all groups and constituencies.

### **Between Global Demise and National Complacent Hegemony: Canadian Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education in a Moment of Danger**

*Professor Handel Wright, Centre for Culture, Identity and Education,  
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Multiculturalism is part of the image text that Canada relays to itself and the world. A liberal, tolerant, celebratory multiculturalism is as Canadian as the Mounties and maple syrup or, as Janice Gross Stein describes it, 'part of the sticky stuff of Canadian identity'. Canadian education is thoroughly infused with multiculturalism. Policy and curriculum at all levels; pedagogy; guides to relationships between schools, parents and communities: all of it is 'multiculturally-driven'. For an international audience, Canadian multiculturalism is often understood as exemplary and pristine; or sometimes it is ignored in favour of multiculturalism in other countries such as the United States or

Australia. These interpretations need to be unsettled because there are signs that Canadian multiculturalism, and multicultural education in particular, is in a moment of danger.

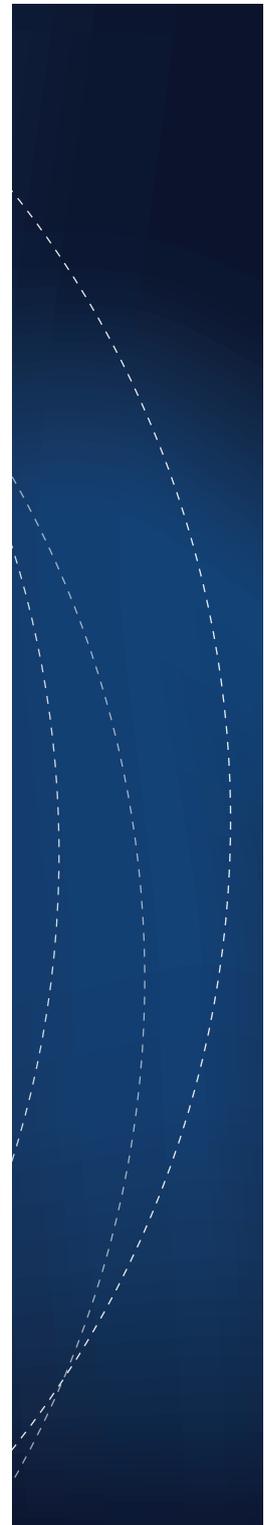
There are various ways in which the waters of multiculturalism are becoming muddied. Different school districts have different approaches to diversity, meaning that several alternatives are at play: in New Westminster it is 'Diversity and Anti-Discrimination'; in Surrey 'Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights'; and in Prince George 'Multiculturalism, Racial Harmony and Anti-Racism'. It may seem that these discourses are supplementary to multiculturalism – that they are all happening within multiculturalism – but considered in relation to certain other signs it becomes clearer that they are indicative of a fragmentation which means that multiculturalism itself is at risk.

Multiculturalism can be discussed in unitary terms, as if it is singular, but it has more than one meaning, and it is highly contested, both in Canada (by the left and right), and elsewhere. Multiculturalism is simultaneously a set of official social policies, a philosophical outlook, a practical philosophical stance, and a heuristic guide for how we live day-to-day with social and cultural diversity. Furthermore, multiculturalism is something which stretches across the political spectrum: there are conservative, corporate, liberal, neo-liberal, and critical multiculturalisms. Even in terms of pedagogy, there are different methods. Margaret Epp is working on a project which has identified four different ways that teachers approach multicultural education, ranging from merely mentioning the contribution of others through to educating young people to be activists for social justice.

In a recent paper delivered at the 2011 conference for the Canadian Society for the Study of Education, Kurt Clausen reported on a study which analysed Canadian social studies textbooks and found that multiculturalism is being represented as a 1970s discourse and phenomenon, rather than a contemporary frame and concept. He also discovered that multiculturalism is being replaced by other terms such as 'human rights' and 'anti-discrimination' which are being used interchangeably with multiculturalism – that is, not as something which happens under the umbrella of multiculturalism.

There is also a tendency to discuss multiculturalism as if it were the official discourse in Canada. Quebec, however, has an official policy of interculturalism. This presents a distinct problem for Canadian unity, and troubles Canada's image text as a country exemplified by multiculturalism.

Taken together, the proliferation of juxtaposed discourses at the school level; the pliancy of multiculturalism's meaning and characteristics; the quiet opting out from multiculturalism from school curriculum texts; and Quebec's interculturalism, are cracks in multiculturalism hegemony. They are crevices which amount to a largely undeclared but ongoing erosion of Canadian multiculturalism. There has been a global discourse about the end of multiculturalism – Merkel in Germany; Sarkozy in France; Cameron in Britain – and warnings about this





situation have been sounded by len Ang and Jon Stratton; by Nick Pearce, by Paul Gilroy and Christine Sleeter. In Britain, Trevor Phillips intimated that Britain might be sleepwalking into the death of multiculturalism, unprepared to provide a comprehensive, articulate and definitive response when needed. Canada, and perhaps Australia as well, might be similarly unprepared to answer Pearce's question: 'Goodbye to multiculturalism, but welcome to what?'

## SESSION 8 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The discussion section for this session considered:

- The quintessentially national nature of multiculturalism, which is part of its challenge;
- The imperative not to exclude constituency groups (the transnational is an important area of inquiry, but there are many individuals who are not transnational);
- Are teachers' tears the result of individuals not having the capacity to articulate what is troubling them about their own position on what is, after all, a difficult issue? What skills of critical analysis and intellectual language do teacher training institutes need to develop to help teachers talk about complex concepts such as globalisation and transnationalism, and their own position and practice in relation to them?;
- Is multiculturalism 'safe diversity'? When multiculturalism as public policy translates to the management of cultural diversity, is it that different from white hegemony? How do we keep multiculturalism unsafe enough to make a difference, yet safe enough to have an influence?;
- The need for a framework which will prepare people for difficult dialogues and the morality of compromise.

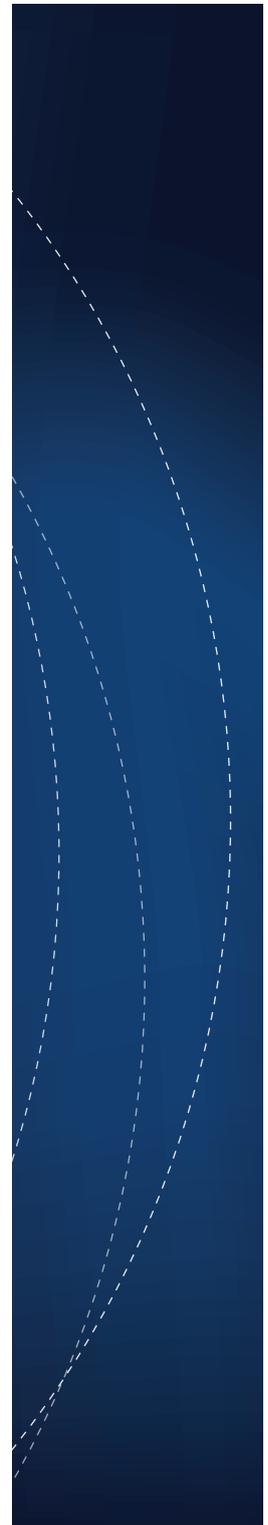
## Summative Comments and Key Themes

Multicultural education has two primary aims: it teaches students to be citizens of a multicultural society, and it teaches *to* and *for* a diverse student body. Multicultural education operates simultaneously along two orientations: engaging with difference (anti-racism, celebration; intercultural understanding) and promoting equitable outcomes (ESL; access and equity).

Debates about the definition of multiculturalism and multicultural education are productive: they articulate the tensions which underlie its policies and practices. Inventing new terms, however, will generate new debates that won't necessarily resolve old problems. If we understand that definitional challenges are characteristic of multicultural education, rather than redefine multicultural education, it might be more constructive to 'profile' it (see below). We need to fashion a multiculturalism to meet the challenges posed by transnationalism, cultural hybridity and globalisation and as it is realised within various social spheres.

Other key themes emerging from the Symposium include:

- There is a need to balance the response to social disadvantage with the recognition that culture is dynamic.
- There is a need to make multiculturalism relevant to all students without losing its social justice imperative.
- A new demand upon multiculturalism is that it expands to become amenable to complicated, hybrid identities. Policy, pedagogy and curriculum needs to respond to this emergent imperative and move away from essentialising student ethnicities.
- We need to always pose this question: How do we monitor ourselves as researchers, policymakers, education officers and commentators? Do we know as much as we think we know?



## Future Directions

- Symposium attendees saw the need for the development of a profile of multicultural education.

A profile of multicultural education will identify the characteristic features of multicultural education. It will hold the axes of theory / practice; difference / equity; local / state / national and national / global in a field of proximity. In certain contexts different features would have greater or less significance than in other contexts. These characteristics could be prioritised and then sequenced for teacher training based on levels of receptivity or resistance.

A profile of multicultural education would act as a template which could be moved between different contexts, without all contexts needing to be replications of each other. A profile of multicultural education doesn't require consensus, and it will serve to manage the inherent plurality and complexity of multicultural education as a phenomenon.

- Symposium attendees felt there was a need for the dismantling of the association between multicultural education and minority groups, particularly recent arrivals.

Debates about access and equity are critical, and they need to be conducted. Focusing too strongly on these aspects of multicultural education, however, might be the result of a reflexive link between multiculturalism and minority groups or new arrivals in the popular imaginary. This link comes with the danger of obscuring or leaving out key dimensions of multicultural education such as bilingualism, multilingualism, multiple citizenship, anti-racism, anti-discrimination and representative parent and community liaison.

- Symposium attendees also stressed the need to focus on access and equity for all parents in the school community.

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