

They still call multiculturalism home: Migration, language and education in Australia

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Australia is an island continent of 20 million people located on the South Pacific edge of Asia, and like the USA it is an Anglo-European settler state formed by migrants from diverse locations. The 2001 census found that at least 4.1 million (22%) Australians were foreign born, more than 40% had at least one foreign parent, and at least 15% were from homes where English was not the main language spoken. The last three decades has seen the broad opening of Australian immigration; an engineered shift in the composition of migration in favour of skilled and qualified applicants; the effects of more extensive and intensive global economic and cultural flows in continuous international engagement, heightened mobility and more fluid and complex diasporic identities; and the growth in temporary migration for work and education. More than 22% of Australia's tertiary students are now foreign students, three quarters of them studying in Australia; and many foreign graduates migrate to Australia: the line between the categories 'temporary' migration and 'permanent' migration is becoming blurred. Among long-term migrants, between the 1996 and 2001 censuses there was sharp growth in foreign-born Australians from Asian and Pacific nations, including New Zealand (22%), India (23%), Thailand (25%) China (29%) and Korea (29%). There was even faster growth on a smaller scale from South Africa (43%), Bosnia (75%), Iraq (77%) and Afghanistan (94%). Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan and their neighbouring nations are also becoming significant (DIMIA 2003).

Between 1981 and 2001 Asian-born people increased from 1.8% to 5.5% to outnumber those born in the UK (5.4%), and in Ireland and Europe (5.0%). Europe dominated migration to Australia from the 1950s to 1970s but now plays a more modest role, and there has been a shift from Western and Southern Europe to Eastern Europe. First and second generation migrants from Italy and Greece are now concentrated in the older age groups. The pattern is similar to the USA, except that there is no equivalent of the migration from Spanish-speaking America; and among the Asian born the largest single group is from Southeast Asia not East Asia; though migrants from South Asia are growing faster than either. The foreign-born, especially recent arrivals from Asia, the Middle East and Africa, are concentrated in large cities of Sydney and Melbourne. In 2001 the proportion of people speaking a language other than English at home ranged from 20% in Victoria where Melbourne is located, to 7% in Queensland and 3% in Tasmania. Of young people aged 15 to 24 years in 2001, 71% of those born overseas were from non English-speaking nations, including Vietnam (6%), Hong Kong, Malaysia and mainland China (each 5%), the Philippines and Indonesia (each 4%), India (3%) and Singapore (2%). More than half a million young people spoke a language other than English at home: the largest groups were Cantonese, Arabic, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Italian, Greek, Spanish and

Indonesian. Among speakers of Chinese languages the number of Australians that speak Mandarin is in the process of over-taking the number that speak Cantonese.

The Australian census also collects data on 'Ancestry' enabling respondents situate their origins regardless of birthplace. Between 1986 and 2001 the number of people with Chinese ancestry rose from 0.2 to 0.6 million. In Sydney in 2001 19% nominated Asian or Middle Eastern ancestry, in Melbourne 13%. Strikingly, in 2001 22% of all people reported that they had mixed ancestry. In most ethnic groups, by the second generation over half the marriages are inter-cultural, though less among East Asians, and Turks and Lebanese (Khoo and Lucas 2004). Religious faith is also pluralising. While the 2001 census found that 72% of the Australian born profess to be Christian, only 49% of recently arrived migrants are in this category. In 2001 Australia had 357,813 Buddhists, constituting 1.9% of the total population, and 281,578 Muslims (1.5%). More than one fifth of all Muslim citizens had arrived in the 1996-2001 period or were children born to those migrants (Hugo 2004, pp. 132-133).

All of this has greatly increased cultural diversity and the potential for plural identities and hybrid cultural forms. (I will not use the terms 'racial diversity', or 'race' in this short paper. Identity is not genetically programmed and determined by skin colour; it is culturally programmed and determined by people themselves).

Outcomes for migrants

The outcomes for migrants are mediated by policies and institutions, especially those of education, language and the economy. As in all settler states, there is space for many migrant families to make a mark, especially when unemployment is relatively low as it has been for the last decade. The migration program has always been a normal part of life in Australia though one never entirely free from tension. The cultural history of the nation is less fraught than that of the USA. There is no slavery, or civil war, or 9/11, though sometimes it seems that the government is at war with refugees. However, the genocide of indigenous people took place in living memory, and their living standards are poor. Education has largely failed to either connect positively with indigenous traditions, or draw indigenous students successfully into the dominant culture, though it has shared in the half-completed governmental project of 'reconciliation' between the indigenous population and later settlers.

Migrants are better placed than indigenous people, but outcomes vary by ethnic group. In February 2003 there was a higher rate of unemployment among people born in non English-speaking nations (7.6%) than overall (6.7%) (ABS 6203.0). Higher than average rates were recorded for Southeast Asia (8.1%) including Vietnam (10.4%), China (9.1%) and the Middle East and North Africa (13.6%). Nevertheless, among Chinese and Vietnamese, employment and education indicators improve dramatically in the second generation and the overall rate of unemployment has dropped sharply in the last decade. There is some evidence of binarism among the large Vietnamese population; with many families forging upwards and others stuck in poverty traps. Some migrants from Turkey and Lebanon experience acculturational dissonance (Zhou 2004); and longstanding Lebanese migrants are unemployed at double the average rate. Outcomes vary significantly by migration category. Unemployment is low among migrants admitted in the skill category, even new arrivals, and high among refugees (Hugo 2004, p. 33 & 104).

Indigenous young people have lower the average scores in standardised tests of reading, maths and science at age 15 years; lower rates of youth participation in education and training, and lower enrolment in degree-level programs in higher education. On the other hand students born outside Australia, and those speaking a

language other than English (LOTE), are on the whole do better than the average Australian student. LOTE students score below the national average in standardised tests at age 15, though they are close to the national average in mathematics; but they have much stronger than average rates of participation in education.

- In the PISA 2000 international comparison of student achievement scores, 15 year olds in Australia had average scores of 528 in reading, 533 in maths and 528 in science (mean score across OECD nations 500, standard deviation 100). Among indigenous 15 year olds the average scores were only 448 in reading, 449 in maths and 448 in science, well below both the Australian average and the OECD mean. Among students speaking a language other than English, the average scores were 506 in reading, 522 in science, not far from the Australian average, though 497 in science.
- The 2001 census found that among 15-19 year olds in Australia the rate of participation in education is 76%. Participation is much lower 52% among indigenous youth. But it is relatively high at 86% among those speaking a language other than English (LOTE). The pattern is similar with 20-24 year olds: total 36%, indigenous 19%, LOTE 52% (ABS 4230.0).
- The census also found that among 15-24 year olds, 45% overall had completed the final year of school, but 58% of those 15-24 year olds born overseas in a non English-speaking nation. Only 20% of indigenous youth had completed the final school year.
- These differential patterns show themselves strongly in participation in degree level programs in higher education. Overall 16% of 15-24 year olds are enrolled in higher education, but 34% of young people born overseas in a non English-speaking nation. Higher education participation among indigenous 15-24 year olds is at only 4%. Non English-speaking students also stay on in higher education longer than average. Among 20-24 year olds the overall rate of participation in higher education is 21% but it is 44% among young people born overseas in a non English-speaking nation. Young people aged 20-24 years from non English-speaking backgrounds also exhibit slightly higher than average participation in sub-degree vocational courses (ABS 2059.0).
- The 2001 census also asked a question about use of the Internet in the week preceding the census. It found that among 15-24 year olds overall, 62% of women and 58% of men had accessed the Internet. Among 15-24 year olds born outside Australia in a non English-speaking nation, Internet access was higher than average, 74% among women and 75% among men. Among indigenous youth it was just 26% and 21% respectively (ABS 4230.0).

Educational outcomes for particular ethnic groups can be traced by comparing the cultural composition of the youth population, to that of students enrolled in degrees or advanced diplomas in higher education. Australian students born in China constitute 1.34% of all students in higher education, more than twice their ratio in the population aged 20-24 years (0.62%). Young people from Hong Kong, Taiwan, India, South Africa and to a lesser extent Malaysia are also over-represented in higher education. Young people from New Zealand, Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines are under-represented. Overall the foreign born constitute 23% of higher education students compared to 18% of all 20-24 year olds (see Table 1).

Unlike the foreign born, young people from homes in which English is not the principal language spoken are under-represented in higher education, constituting

21% of 20-24 year olds in the 2001 census but a lesser 17% of higher education students in 2003. A striking feature of data on the languages of higher education students is the under-representation of migrant families from groupings that dominated migration before 1980; and the over-representation of speakers of Chinese languages who are mostly more recent citizens. Whereas Arabic speakers (mostly Lebanese) constituted 1.57% of all 20-24 year olds in 2001, they made up only 0.88% of higher education students in 2003. Speakers of Italian (especially), Greek and Macedonian at home are also under-represented in higher education, though families from these language groups that have switched to English have done better in education. On the other hand speakers of Cantonese (especially) and Mandarin at home are noticeably over-represented in higher education. Speakers of Vietnamese at home are slightly under-represented in higher education and speakers of Indonesian more so (Table 2). Only a very small number of people who speak Australian indigenous languages at home enrol in higher education. There were only 436 such students in 2003, though the census recorded 7022 speakers of indigenous languages in the 18-24 year age group in Australia in 2001.

Segmented assimilation

The social mobility of migrants in the first and succeeding generations varies not only by national origin but also by the factors of exit (the context of their departure and the attributes they bring to the new nation) and reception (the policies and other conditions shaping their arrival and settlement). Zhou's (2004) notions of segmented assimilation, and diverse paths for the re-formation of identity in the new nation, are explanatory also in Australia. In the earlier European migration, and the entry of Turkish and Lebanese migrants in the 1970s, lower socio-economic status and education levels were dominant. The Vietnamese 'boat people' accepted as refugees in the 1970s had mixed socio-economic status and educational levels. In contrast, the Asian and African migrants of more recent years entered at a time when entry criteria had become weighted in favour of those with degrees, those with proficiency in English, and those with private economic means. The 2001 census found that overall among recently arrive migrants, 26% had bachelor degree level qualifications or higher compared to 12% of the Australian born (Hugo 2004, p. 113). Thus the changing 'exit' characteristics of migrants were determined by Australia's 'reception' policies. No doubt this explains the relative success of many recent Asian and African migrants; their ease of passage into mainstream Australian life despite the apparent cultural distances they have travelled. Here tertiary education plays a crucial role in both broadening the potential life choices and changing the potential for agency itself. University provides not just saleable human capital, but a set of modernist sensibilities and skills, common to much of the world, which facilitate cultural flexibility and adaptation. It provides resources for identity formation in new contexts.

Tertiary education, coupled with intensive diasporic communications back home and more frequent travel in a more global era, enables migrants to pursue more complex cultural choices and strategies than are suggested by the old dichotomy of mainstream assimilation versus cultural ghettos. In Australia Chinese and some Vietnamese families combine success in the English-language education system, providing a springboard for superior access to the professions and business, with a high rate of language maintenance at home (note that this continuity of language is probably assisted by the after-hours ethnic schools). In 2001, 98% of third generation migrants with German ancestry spoke only English at home, 64% of third generation Greeks spoke only English, but 11% of third generation Vietnamese (ABS 2054.0). The other 89% of Vietnamese had sustained their national language

successfully. It appears to be a double strategy of 'selective acculturation' involving competence in English, plus the preservation of 'immigrant values', and the fostering of 'ethnic networks for socio-economic advancement in the mainstream society' (Zhou 2004). Vietnamese Australians also exhibit relatively low rates of intercultural-marriage, which is a medium of homogenisation. This is less true of other Asian groups, especially among females. However the size of community also affects the capacity for identity maintenance. Language shifts in favour of English occur more rapidly in smaller communities located outside the major cities (Hugo 2004, p. 134).

Role of education

Ethnic and regional variation, the capacity of individual communities to make their own identity-paths, and the more fluid possibilities vectored by globalisation, are over-determined by the homogenising effects of national culture and state institutions. On the spectrum of policy frameworks for organising national diversity - from segmented monoculture, to inclusive monoculture, to managed diversity, to an inter-cultural pluralism grounded in equality of respect between cultures – Australian 'multiculturalism' sits somewhere between inclusive monoculture and managed diversity. If anything the emphasis has swung back to the former. The Prime Minister's foreword to *Multicultural Australia: United in diversity* (2003) suggests that the assimilating element is uppermost and at present in Australia stability and quiescence dominate over the celebration of self-determining difference:

The government remains committed to nurturing our inclusive society with its proud record of community harmony. This new statement reaffirms the government's commitment to promoting diversity, understanding and tolerance in all areas of endeavour... All Australians, regardless of their ethnic, cultural or religious background are encouraged to participate fully in the wider Australian community to show a commitment to our nation, its democratic institutions and its laws (Howard 2003).

The accompanying statement by the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs talks about 'the challenge of drawing the best from the many histories and cultures of the Australian people, within a framework of a uniting set of Australian values (Ruddock 2003). Likewise leaders have made much of the concept of 'productive diversity' whereby different cultural sensibilities are harnessed to the development of economic markets. This suggests that (1) despite global effects spilling across borders, national government in Australia still sees itself as able to set the terms for the national populations; and (2) official multiculturalism sees itself as harmonising diverse origins into common institutions, rather than creating openings for diverse cultures so as to pluralise, enrich and transform the mainstream. It seems that Anglo-Australian culture is a given and does not need to change.

Here education plays a key part in managing diversity and securing assimilation. First, within the framework of educational opportunity there is one single academic curriculum, which is the high road to university. It is a powerful homogenising device, disciplining students and their families to the dominant work program while immersing students in its cultural contents. The lodestone for migrant families is the educational success of their student children, which is *the* key to upward social mobility (Inglis 2003, p. 144). This ties the great bulk of migrant families to the mainstream school curriculum, regardless of their national origins or religious beliefs.

Second, the structure of structure of schooling is more culturally homogenous and homogenising than it might first appear. A feature of Australian schooling is the relatively low and declining proportion of students enrolled in government schools, 68% in 2003. The bulk of other students are found in the Catholic systemic schools (20%), or independent private schools (12%) ranging from affluent and powerful institutions seen as the leading schools to small low fee establishments highly dependent on government. It is often held up as an example of broad-ranging diversity of provision. But though most private schools carry a religious or cultural identity, and many foster distinctive values up to a point, these values are subordinated to the mainstream curriculum and examinations, especially in secondary education, where social success and failure are assigned. Idiosyncrasies are constrained. Most private education is closer to government education than status or branding differences suggest. Public-private streaming in Australia reflects more the workings of a stratified parent market than a range of diverse cultural options. Affluent s.e.s. families are concentrated at the top end of the independent school sector, where the proportion of enrolments rises at the end of secondary school with competition for university entrance. Catholic systemic schools take a middle role in term of s.e.s composition and student achievement, are seen to offer a disciplined environment and have become sites for investment in upward mobility. Many students enrolled in Catholic schools are from non-Catholic families.

The bulk of newly arrived migrant families enrol in the government schools. As time goes on and in later generation they tend to follow the overall Australian pattern of sectoral streaming. The 2001 census found that among 15-17 year olds, among those born overseas in the non English-speaking nations there was a broadly similar pattern of school sector attendance to that of the youth population overall. The non English-speaking born were slightly more likely to be found in government schools (64%) than the average (62%), and slightly less likely to be found in Catholic schools (20% compared to 22%) with about 16% enrolled in independent private schools in each case. In contrast, indigenous students enrolled in government schools at a higher than average rate (80%) and were less likely than average to be found in Catholic schools (12%) or independent private schools (8%).

The great majority of Muslim students enrol in government schools, rather than the 25 Islamic schools in major cities, or other private schools (Saeed 2003). Attendance at Islamic schools is stronger at primary than at secondary stage. Within government education some families attempt to secure special arrangements (for example girls only classes): these are mostly resisted by authorities. There are no restrictions on student dress, such as the wearing of the hejab. Within the common government schools, racist incidents between students are not unknown, but are perhaps becoming less prevalent; many observers note that that the norms of cosmopolitan tolerance are well established particularly in Melbourne schools. There is public criticism of Islamic schools as such, but given the long tradition of religious schools in Australia the grounds for criticism are incoherent. Islam in Australia has highly diverse national origins and traditions. Aside from Muslims born in Australia itself (a total of 102,566 people in 2001), in 2001 the main groups were from Lebanon (29,321), Turkey (23,479), Afghanistan (9923), Bosnia (9892), Pakistan (9238), Indonesia (8087), Iraq, Bangladesh, Iran and Fiji. Islam no more constitutes a single educational personality than does Christianity.

Third, there is language policy. Despite the linguistic diversity at the roots of Australia it has a notable absence of linguistic plurality in public life, including education. The dominant aspect of language policy in education is the relentless promotion of English as meta-language and the sole mainstream cultural medium.

English is the only language of instruction permitted in normal schools, except in foreign language classes. Migrant students soon realize that they must be good at English to succeed. For their families the point is underlined by the growing global role of English and its increasing usage in the countries of origin. Newly arrived non English-speaking students are provided with intensive English in special centres, and later with English as a Second Language support in mainstream government education. For example in the state of Victoria, the state with the highest incidence of community language use, a total of 25% of all government school students received ESL assistance in 2003 (Victoria 2004). Adult migrants receive a funded minimum of 510 hours English instruction. This is estimated to be about one third of the average level of hours required to achieve basic competence in English

The other side of the homogenising coin is the weakness of the study of languages other than English (LOTE). There is currently no national policy, and the evolution of LOTE is left to the individual schools and state-based systems. At primary level a significant proportion of 'language' enrolments are limited to 'language awareness', which encompasses cultural awareness and a limited vocabulary, rather than learning the language. The comparative OECD international data for 2001 on the instruction time given to different school subjects taught to 12-14 year olds show that Australia gave the lowest priority to modern foreign languages (5%) of any nation for which data were provided. The level in England was 11%, Japan 13%, Netherlands 14% and Germany 16% (OECD 2003, p. 320. See Table 3). In Australia the priority given to languages other than English diminishes further as students move through the school system; and LOTE becomes more of a female domain. Among the 188,110 year 12 students in Australia in 2001, there were only 26,102 LOTE enrolments. About two thirds were female. The principal languages at year 12 were Japanese (21% of LOTE enrolments), French (17%), Mandarin (14%), German (11%), Indonesian (9%) and Italian (8%).

Within the daily business of schools there is little official support for first language maintenance as LOTE, despite the widespread belief of professional educators that this helps to foster literacy. Most LOTE enrolments are on a second language basis. For example in Victoria, only about 1 per cent of LOTE enrolments are by students whose first language is the LOTE (Victoria 2002a). The map of LOTE provision bears little resemblance to the map of language competence among families. Among the families in which languages other than English were spoken at home in 2001, the largest groups spoke Italian (9%), Greek (7%), Cantonese (6%), Arabic/ Lebanese (6%), Vietnamese (5%), Mandarin (4%) and Spanish (2%). The low priority given to LOTE learning in Arabic and Vietnamese stands out, the more so given the global and regional importance of these languages for Australia. There is surprisingly little objection to the weakness of community language provision among ethnic organisations. The growing role of global English may be part of the explanation. Certainly, in policy circles a homogenous reading of globalisation currently holds sway. This emphasises the acquisition of global competences, defined in Anglo-American terms, rather than intercultural pluralism (Inglis 2003, 142-144).

At the same time education permits a limited diversity of cultural expression within the monoculture. The civic values propagated in all mainstream education systems include strong emphases on non-discrimination and tolerance, and foreground inclusiveness (Erebus 2003, p. ix), which is generally understood to incorporate respect for diverse origins and identities especially in primary (elementary) education. The provision of government supported ethnic schools outside normal school hours provides an auxiliary medium for community languages. Ethnic schools are both government accredited and supported by government

funding. They were originally funded as a national initiative, but specific funds are no longer targeted by the national government. Instead a notional allocation is made to the States and Territories which then determine how they will support ethnic schools. Ethnic enrol about 100,000 in Australia as a whole; including 46,000 students in New South Wales (Erebus 2002, pp. 83-84); and 31,000 students in almost 200 ethnic schools providing more than 50 languages in Victoria (Victoria 2002b). The ethnic schools help migrant parents to strengthen cultural and linguistic continuity, and reproduce community networks. They assist migrant parents to foster dual linguistic and cultural identities in their children. Ethnic schools also tend to reduce the pressure for change in the mainstream curriculum and the governance of schooling.

In higher education the student body, plural in origins and homogenised in academic culture, is further pluralised by the influx of international students, which now numbers over 22 per cent of all students enrolled in Australian universities (DEST 2004). More than 85 per cent of the 210,397 foreign students in 2003 were from Asia. The largest Australian university, Monash University, illustrates the plural starting points of the student intake. A quarter of its domestic students and most of its foreign students are from non English-speaking backgrounds. Only 56 per cent of Monash students are from homes where English is the main language spoken. A total of 22,529 are from non-English speaking households. Half of these, 11,026 students (21% of the total), speak a Chinese language (Table 4). This plurality is not reflected in the curriculum within Australia, though there is some potential for courses in languages other than English in Monash branch campuses in Malaysia and China. Nevertheless, there is a cosmopolitan feel to the larger Australian universities. This provides all students with globally transferable resources; and perhaps the preconditions for a more adventurous form of educational diversity in future.

Conclusion

Migrants in Australia make their own conformity. Conforming to the dominant norms is a powerful means and an inevitable outcome of the will to succeed in education. But at the same time migrants in Australia have little choice. There is one principal curriculum. Though there is school choice, it does not take them far in the direction of cultural plurality unless they are to step outside mainstream education and its structure of opportunities and rewards. They also have few effective voices. The involvement of parents in schools varies by state, but newly arrived families are typically under-represented in school governance and there is little scope for parents and ethnic communities to negotiate schools of special character within the mainstream institutions. The teaching profession and to a lesser extent, government administration have been pluralised by the 1950s-1970s migration from Italy, Greece and central and Balkans Europe; but the later waves of immigration have yet to leave a mark. More Asians will enter educational leadership in the next generation. In higher education, pluralisation is more likely to be driven by globalisation than domestic elements. Given the sorry history of indigenous education, only one approach is likely to bear fruit – the development of more effective cultural synergies between indigenous traditions and modernised education, based in indigenous community involvement – but this has proved to be a very difficult step for Australia to take. Notions of cultural superiority remain deeply entrenched.

Compared to some nations of Europe and even the USA, Australia faces little pressure from specific cultural and religious communities for their own solutions, or even for the pluralisation of mainstream provision. The dilemma of some nations, which is values-oriented schools with minimum standards versus homogenising

mainstream schools regulated for quality, is under-developed in Australia. These tensions are not entirely absent, but the potential for them is weakened by the hegemony of the academic curriculum, and siphoned off into ethnic schools and special interest-private schools that cater to as yet relatively small minorities. Some of the small, special interest private schools face problems of standards, but the examination requirements of upper secondary education often bring their parent users back to the mainstream institutions, where private schooling provides some apparent choice within Anglo-Australian orthodoxy. The fact that there is no choice on language of instruction avoids a lot of issues. So does the hegemony of science and mathematics in the mainstream curriculum, which creates a broad pedagogical space that appears to be largely isolated from questions of value and belief. Yet it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that Australian education pays a price for its excision of foreign cultures via its typical social and administrative utilitarianism. There is an impoverishment of the imagination; and the commitment to democracy and tolerance is less profound than the liberal Australian ideology suggests.

The Australian case is attractive in the stability and harmony of relations between ethnic groups, the atmosphere of genuine tolerance of difference in some urban centres (though this by no means uniform to all parts of the nation, especially in relation to indigenous people) and the growing cosmopolitanism evident in many mainstream institutions. Yet Australia is an assimilationist 'multiculturalism' with all the limits this implies; and it shows at every level of education, especially in language policy where Australia shares the common Anglo-American instinct for monoculture. The larger opportunities of the global environment are missed. Between the twin risks of chaotic plurality and a limiting homogeneity, Australia has erred on the side of latter and could afford to take more risks with diversity.

In the long run, the limits of official policy and educational practice may not matter so much as they once did. People's life projects and sense of themselves were never completely programmed by state institutions. Now, in a more global environment, particularly among the university educated who have personal resources to reshape themselves as they want, it is less plausible for national governments to confine identities within national walls and pre-set them with policy and institutional practices, whether in education or anywhere else.

Recent migrants from Asia and Africa have demonstrated the capacity to appropriate Australian institutions and resources in selective ways, shaping their own identity-projects that combine a self-managed conformity with the economic and cultural requirements of their new localities, with the reproduction of their traditions as themselves. The objectives are not simply to secure security and affluence in the new nation, but to gain status and wealth while maintaining control over themselves as their own project, and in a world of more mobile citizens to go elsewhere should they see fit. Educational strategies in both schools and tertiary stages will become increasingly sophisticated as skilled migrants and foreign students more fully exercise the scope for local and cross-border choice making that official ideologies valorise but do not really expect. Regardless of the homogenising intentions of governments and the techniques of official programs, it is a safe bet that migrants will increasingly pluralise multiculturalism and multicultural education in future.

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Table 1. Birthplace of young people aged 20-24 years (2002), compared to birthplace of domestic students in higher education (2003), ethnic groups

nation of birth	proportion of all 20-24 year olds June 2002	proportion of students in higher education 2003 *
	%	%
New Zealand	2.39	1.67
UK	1.90	1.94
Vietnam	1.15	0.91
Hong Kong	0.91	1.36
Malaysia	0.90	0.95
Indonesia	0.85	0.50
Philippines	0.71	0.64
China	0.62	1.34
India	0.55	0.79
South Africa	0.52	0.78
Taiwan	0.44	0.62
other overseas born	7.50	11.03
Australia	81.56	77.47
total	100.00	100.00

* does not include international students

Sources: ABS Migration 2002-2003 (3412.0), DEST 2004

Table 2. Language other than English at home: all 15-24 year olds (2001) compared to students in higher education (2003), main language groups *

nation of birth	proportion of all 20-24 year olds 2001	proportion of students in higher education 2003
	%	%
Cantonese	1.62	2.11
Arabic (inc. Lebanese)	1.57	0.88
Mandarin	1.19	1.35
Vietnamese	1.14	1.12
Italian	1.10	0.41
Greek	1.07	0.65
Spanish	0.58	0.52
Indonesian	0.53	0.38
Macedonian	0.43	0.20
Indigenous	0.40	0.01
Croatian	0.33	0.22
Serbian	0.28	0.22
Polish	0.26	0.34
other non-English **	11.44	8.24
English at home	79.42	83.35
total ***	100.00	100.00

* does not include international students

** includes those not specifying the foreign language

*** includes students with language unspecified

Sources: ABS 2059.0, DEST 2004

Table 3. Instruction time devoted to modern foreign languages as a proportion of total instruction time for 12-14 year olds, international comparison 2001

OECD nation	%
Germany	16
Greece	15
Turkey	15
Iceland	15
Netherlands	14
Finland	13
Japan	13
Belgium	12
France	12
Sweden	12
Czech Republic	11
Denmark	11
England	11
Korea	11
Spain	11
Austria	10
Italy	10
Norway	10
Portugal	10
Slovak Republic	10
Hungary	9
Mexico	9
Ireland	7
Australia	5
<i>country mean</i>	<i>11</i>

non-OECD	%
Egypt	13
India	13
Zimbabwe	13
Malaysia	11
Philippines	9
Argentina	8
Russia	8
Uruguay	8
Indonesia	6
Peru	6
Jamaica	5
Tunisia	5

Source: OECD 2003, p. 320

Table 4. Higher education students by principal language spoken at home, Monash University, Australia, 2004

language of domestic students		language of foreign students	
English	27,857	Cantonese	2943
Cantonese	1258	Chinese not specified	2941
Mandarin	745	Mandarin	2247
Vietnamese	730	Indonesian	1220
Chinese not specified	596	English	1145
Greek	529	Malay	861
Indonesian	332	Hokkien	296
Russian	309	Thai	278
Singhalese	284	Hindi	264
Arabic	278	Singhalese	240
Tamil	252	Tamil	236
Polish	249	Korean	164
Italian	226	Vietnamese	159
Hindi	222	Japanese	141
all other languages	2939	all other languages	1607
no information	270	no information	125
<i>total</i>	<i>36,894</i>	<i>total</i>	<i>15,032</i>

* includes no information

source: Monash University statistics 2004, <http://www.planning.monash.edu.au/statistics/>