Continuity of language learning from primary to secondary: secondary school language learners' investment and identity development in language learning

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This paper explores secondary school students' investment in their language learning after having graduated from of one of four bilingual (also termed Content and Language Integrated Language (CLIL)) primary school programs in New South Wales (NSW) Australia. We show the different study pathways pursued by a selection of students and illustrate whether and how students continue with language learning from their bilingual primary program, how they may have invested in their language learning, and how this investment may have assisted with their identity development and related continuity with language study. Investment (individual and community) impacts upon learners' identity development in the additional language, and thereby impacts choices made to continue or cease language learning when challenges are encountered in the progression of language learning across the year levels and as learners progress from primary to secondary school.

Keywords: CLIL; investment; identity; primary schools, language learning

Introduction

This paper examines secondary school students' investment in their language learning after having graduated from one of four primary school CLIL programs. Prior to being at their current secondary school, the students had been learning an additional language

(Indonesian, Chinese, Japanese or Korean) through a primary CLIL program (Fielding & Harbon, 2014; 2018; 2022). These programs delivered a subject area(s) (eg. science, maths or geography) through the additional language for one hour per day from Kindergarten through to Year 6 (the seven years of primary schooling in NSW).

The four targeted languages were geo-politically strategic within a Federal government program prioritising learning of certain languages (see http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/nalssp/ for information). These primary CLIL programs, first introduced in 2010, were intended to be taught in a second language program model: that is, adding a new language for all (or most) students in the program – and open to any student in the school. The programs had been announced in 2009 and implemented quickly in 2010 (see Fielding & Harbon, 2014, for details), in some cases delivered by a language teacher already working in the school. In other cases new teachers were recruited. The implementation plan was for primary students to continue learning through the additional language through to the end of primary school at Year 6, so that after completion of 6 years of participating in the CLIL program there would be a CLIL stream across all year groups in the school. There was also an initial promise to offer an accelerated language pathway for graduates of these primary school programs, which has not eventuated.

The graduates of these four primary school CLIL programs are now in secondary school and have varying access to additional language learning. Our research explores not only the different paths of languages study offered in the various school contexts, but also students' subsequent language learning experiences post-primary, their perceived language investment and other factors which have influenced students' continuation of learning languages in general, as well as in relation to the particular language learned at primary school.

Research has shown that the primary school language learning experience may have a positive impact upon students' metalinguistic, cognitive and interpersonal skills that they bring to learning other languages even if they are unable to continue with the same language learned at primary school (Hofer & Jessner, 2019; Worsley & Harbon, 2001). In the NSW school context, the lack of dedicated pathways to continue with the same language from primary school into secondary school was a concern for some students, parents and teachers (Fielding & Harbon, 2014). There is not a mandated pathway for students to continue learning the same language through primary and secondary school. Compounding that issue, learning an additional language is not a compulsory part of the primary curriculum, with only 100 hours of language learning mandated in the first two years of secondary school. The CLIL programs in this study go beyond the minimum mandate for language learning. Therefore, pathways for language learners are not guaranteed.

Our project gathered qualitative data about the students' language learning journeys once in secondary school, and explored any connections between the primary school CLIL language learning experiences and the subsequent secondary school (non CLIL) experiences. We aimed to understand the different study pathways, and to highlight any challenges through the lens of investment as part of linguistic identity. We found that students required a level of personal and community investment in learning the particular language of the primary school in order to continue to learn that language at secondary school.

Literature Review

Research studies have examined multiple aspects of the implementation and impact of as CLIL programs on learner achievement, learner identity development and school/stakeholder perceptions and support.

Continuity in language learning

Continuation with the same or different language and time allowance for learning the additional language are important planning considerations for secondary schools offering language programs. School students who have graduated from primary school language learning programs can either continue or discontinue learning the same language at secondary school (Hunt, Barnes, Powell, Lindsey & Muijs, 2005), or commence learning a different language to the one they learned at primary school.

Secondary schools must consider providing options for student language learning. Hunt, Barnes, Powell and Martin (2008, p. 917) found "students enter secondary schools with very different levels of 'interest, experience and competence', thereby creating challenges for decision-making at secondary school level." Reddan (1998) contended that continuing with the one language is hugely important and involves stakeholder decision-making regarding curriculum, methodology and resources.

The choice of learning area/subject (eg. science, the arts) for delivering the CLIL curriculum has been the focus of studies exploring the motivation associated with CLIL programs (Pladevall-Ballester, 2019). Pedagogical strategies chosen by the teacher may also impact on the language learning experience (Graham, Courtney, Tonkyn & Marinis, 2016; Pladevall-Ballester, 2019).

Graham et al (2016) consider key factors in the success and continuity of language learning. They followed Dörnyei and Ushioda's (2009) *L2 Motivational Self System* research. A key factors is the learner's motivation to learn a foreign language involving the learner having an 'ideal self' image that includes the ability to speak that second language. Graham et al (2016, p. 686) found that "learners attributed a dip in motivation at the start of secondary school to teaching that seemed to place more

emphasis on accurate task completion (e.g. sentence matching, copy-writing) than on communication." This shows a link between learners' vision of their future self and teaching which enables them to communicate meaningfully.

McLachlan (2009, p. 183) studied how four primary schools in England handled integration of languages into the curriculum and found that "repetition [of what students have learned in primary school] is inevitable; repetition demotivates; demotivation contributes to negative attitudes; negative attitudes will simply fuel the rate of … drop-out." (p.202). Further research is needed into the importance of primary school language learning experiences and how they impact what happens in secondary school.

In Scotland Low, Brown, Johnstone and Pirrie (1996) asked students to identify the things they liked about primary and secondary language education and the differences, if any. The majority of students were aware of a distinct change in emphasis from primary to secondary. Secondary students reported more formal learning, memorisation, and writing as opposed to whole-class involvement in songs, games, and speaking. Students felt that writing was part of the 'real learning' involved with secondary school (Low et al, 1996).

Tolbert's (2003) report from the Australian state of Tasmania, confirmed that a well- planned approach helped continuity into secondary. Reporting on the same context, Harbon (2009) noted that the languages education policy in primary and secondary schools in Tasmania at the time guaranteed eight years of continuous learning of the same language.

In examining how and/or why students continue to pursue their language learning after graduating from a primary CLIL program, Rumlich's (2019, p 3) important reminder is that CLIL is "context-sensitive": it is difficult to have a one-size-fits-all remedy for issues arising for primary to secondary languages learning

particularly in a CLIL context. To examine the gap in such understandings, we turned to the notion of 'investment' as a means to understand the student's own identity development and agency in pursuing language learning beyond the primary school.

Conceptual frame: investment and identity development

Investment is the lens through which student commitment to continue with their language learning is viewed. Investment first developed as a term used by Bourdieu (1977) to signify the idea of language as capital. Norton (2000, 2014) developed the term investment and re-configured the conceptualisation of the role of individual motivation in language learning success, arguing that a combination of individual drive and community support is necessary for continued successful language learning.

Investment has been defined as an aspect of linguistic identity, which impacts upon a person's ability to progress in the language combining 'individual' factors and 'community' factors helping or hindering access to language (Norton, 2000). Fielding (2015, p. 20) found that young students need support from family for their bilingual learning, and need to develop feelings of power and agency associated with their languages. Fielding's (2015) *Bilingual Identity Negotiation Framework* places investment as one of three central elements of bilingual identity, along with sociocultural connection and interaction. This current study embarks from the same premise: that identity is socially constructed and influenced by the interactions that a person experiences in their language community (Fielding, 2015).

Darvin and Norton (2018) further emphasise the link between investment and identity development. They state (2018, p. 1) "…language learners are not uni-dimensional, but have identities that are multiple, changing, and often sites of struggle". They add (2018, p. 2),

> "…language learning as a social practice is implicated in the operation of power, the construct of investment signals the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language and their sometimes ambivalent desire to learn and practice it."

Thus the positioning of languages in primary and secondary settings may impact upon the students' ability to study, and their investment in, the language. Where the continued study of a language into secondary is threatened, investment in the form of individual and community support is essential to overcome this.

Darvin and Norton (2018, p. 4) indicate that by looking through the lens of investment, language teachers are able to "understand the conditions under which language learners will invest in language and literacy practices of diverse spaces." They asked whether learners are invested in their present and imagined identities and what learners perceive are benefits if they invest in their language learning (2018, p. 5).

Drawing on the work of Darvin and Norton (2018), Fielding (2015) and Van Rens, Haelermans, Groot & Maassen Van Den Brink (2018), the conceptualisation of this study is at the intersection of notions of investment and identity. We see investment and identity inter-relating with the continuity of language learning. Figure 1 presents our conceptual frame.
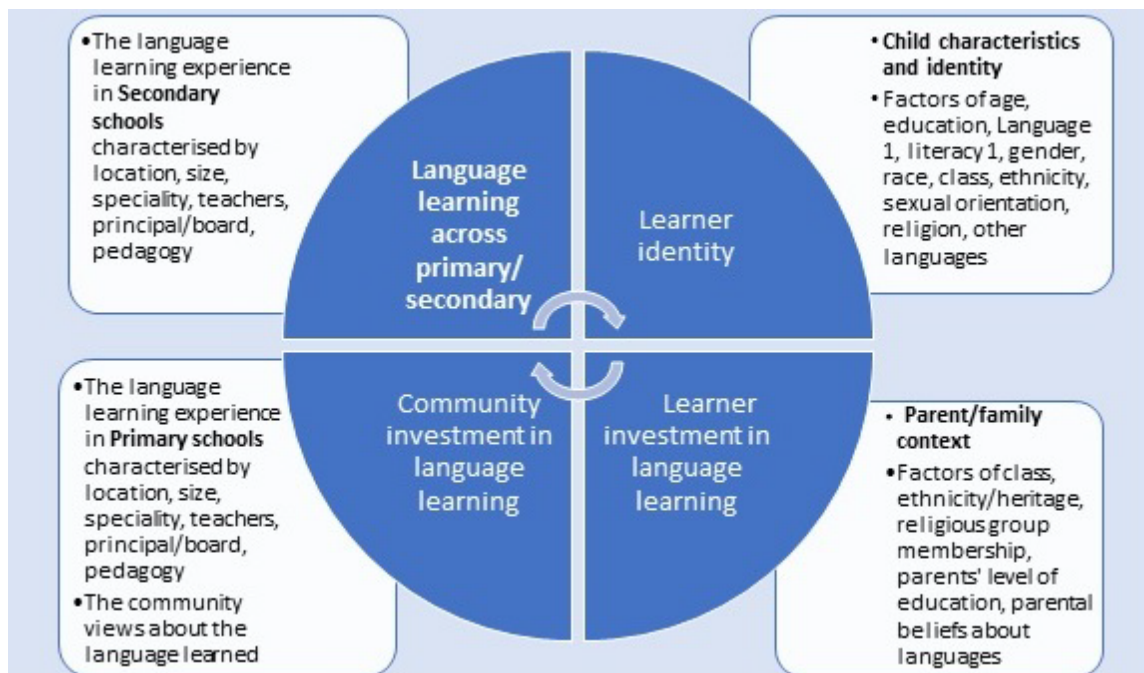
FIGURE 1 NEAR HERE

Figure 1: investment in language learning during the primary/secondary period, influenced by Darvin & Norton, 2018; Fielding, 2015; and Van Rens et al., 2018.

Methodology

Our research gathered data using focus groups to understand student perceptions of their primary CLIL language learning as well as their current language learning (if any) in secondary school. We explored whether students invested in studying the same language they had been studying in primary school, or whether they began to study another language. We explored whether the schooling system had required students to discontinue the study of one language to begin another. We noted any perceptions of challenges reported. We gathered the students' reports on the accessibility of the language programs and the pathways open to them.

We selected focus group research to allow students' responses to the prompts to flow freely, establishing a non-threatening environment for trustworthy data to be

gathered (Asbury, 1995; Breen, 2006). The focus groups took place in a quiet room at each school. Discussion was audio recorded for the purpose of transcription.

Data collection followed the approved plan (with associated university and school sector ethics approvals) and was undertaken over a two-week period. Focus groups were undertaken at each school that had been identified as a secondary school at which primary CLIL graduates were subsequently enrolled. The focus groups took place in a room selected by the administrators in each school. Each secondary school identified between 1-10 students who had graduated from the primary schools. Participants were not randomly chosen: a designated person at each school was responsible for arranging for the students to participate in the focus groups. Participants were therefore the students who could be located, who were interested to participate, and whose parents had approved their participation.

Table 1 shows numbers of students at each secondary school and language taught through CLIL pedagogy at the associated primary school. In total there were 22 student participants.

TABLE 1 NEAR HERE

Table 1: Schools (HS = High School) and Focus Group students

	Yarmouth GHS	Owen BHS	Dart HS	Funder HS	Namala HS
No. of students	2	5	4	4	7
Language of primary CLIL program	Korean	Korean	Japanese	Chinese	Indonesian

In the first phase of the focus group process, the secondary school students were asked to describe their learning of languages following a set of guiding questions (see questions in Appendix). During the second phase of each focus group we asked each student to depict the languages in their lives in a visual representation to show how they connect with all languages that are meaningful to them. They then provided verbal

descriptions of what they drew. Drawings were coded thematically, using the themes/labels given by the students. Each students' drawings were reduced to a series of thematic tags. This enabled a deeper understanding of each student's connection to their languages, and a fuller appreciation of their investment and linguistic identities.

Focus group data audio recordings were transcribed. The two researchers read and re-read the transcriptions, coding the different student comments into thematic areas. Data were reduced to allow descriptive comments to be made about the school language programs reported in the Findings sections following. Drawings were examined and researchers independently coded the images in the drawings as per the thematic areas in the study.

Ethics permission

The researchers gained permission to conduct focus groups with secondary school students who had graduated from the primary CLIL programs. The research plan was approved by two university ethics committees (UTS and Monash Human Research Ethics Committees) and the Department of Education NSW State Education Research Applications Process (SERAP), an ethical research process set up to allow researchers to undertake research in New South Wales public schools. The instruments were pre-approved by both processes. Language teachers provided the information statements and consent forms to students who took the forms home. Those students whose parents/guardians completed the consent forms participated in the focus groups. The students' names used in our reporting are pseudonyms.

Findings

This section first indicates the details about each secondary school and the participating students and then presents students' beliefs about language learning and connection to

various languages. Following that, common findings about investment in the primary languages are presented according to the conceptual framework themes relating in particular to language learner investment and identity development.

Across the five schools three types of language program can be seen:

- start-again language programs, where the CLIL primary program graduates join with *ab initio* classmates from other primary schools to begin with no assumed prior knowledge;

- taster language programs in Year 7, a 'taste' – through 6 - 10 week modules – of four to six languages, followed by a compulsory year in Year 8 of one of those languages (followed by electives for Years 9, 10, 11 and 12);

- advanced-standing classes for the CLIL primary program graduates, which move on from the prior learning and progress at a faster pace than other language classes in the school.

School 1 – Yarmouth Girls' High School

The high school's languages program

Yarmouth Girls' High School offers six languages as "tasters" during Year 7 (French, Japanese, Italian, Korean, Chinese and Indonesian). All Year 8 students choose one of those languages for Year 8. There is a choice to continue with that language in Year 9, or drop language learning altogether. There is no specialised advanced program for students who graduated from the primary CLIL program. In the secondary program, Year 8 and higher have 3 hours of language classes each week.

The students' connection to languages

Two female students were identified at Yarmouth Girls' High School and participated in the focus group. Both students reported having enjoyed learning Korean in the CLIL program at the feeder primary school.

Miyano was nearing the end of Year 7, the first year of secondary school. She had studied in the CLIL Korean program at the feeder primary school from Kindergarten through to year 6 before continuing to this secondary school. She has Chinese heritage, but has completed her schooling in English. She also reported attending private Chinese lessons a couple of times a week during her primary school years.

Esther was nearing the end of Year 8, the second year of secondary school. Esther also has Chinese heritage and speaks Chinese at home. She had studied in the CLIL Korean program at the feeder primary school for one and a half terms (15 weeks) during Year 6, the year prior to entering secondary school. Prior to that she had undertaken schooling in China.

The students' decisions about language study

Miyano reported being quite sure, even in Year 7, that she would choose to study Korean all the way through school. She indicated she would complete the taster course in Year 7, then choose Korean for the Year 8 compulsory language hours, followed by elective Korean classes through Years 9 to 12.

Esther's language learning pathway is more complex. Esther described Chinese as her strongest language, having immigrated to Australia two years prior, therefore undertaking only a short amount of time within the Korean CLIL program. She chose Chinese for her Year 8 compulsory language. However, there were not sufficient students for a viable class so she was transferred into Japanese. She reported her intent to pursue her Chinese studies for Years 9-12.

When asked about perceived differences between the primary and secondary language programs, Esther commented on how much more material is covered in secondary school compared to primary school language classes:

> *"I just feel like, in high school language classes, you get more to learn in every lesson. So it's kind of like they put more stuff in one lesson when you're in high school… And it requires more of, like, homework. Like you need to remember the characters by itself."*

Esther indicated that she believed there were engaging aspects in the secondary program:

> *"we got a lot of exchange students and like for Japanese, we've got a sister school in Japan … every year they came [sic.] here. I think it's just last term that we get a project together of the bomb being in Hiroshima … it's really interesting."*

Esther liked the pedagogy in the secondary context. She said:*"so we don't learn … about science or things like that in [Japanese] language. But we do learn about the country's history and it's culture and to get more understanding for some of the words."*

The absence of content such as science is a notable difference mentioned by this student, but she likes the depth that is possible in the way that broader understandings of history and culture inform the language learning itself.

School 2 – Owen Boys' High School

The school's languages program

The secondary school languages program at Owen Boys' High School does not offer a designated class for graduates of the bilingual program. In Year 7 there is a taster course offering Korean, Chinese, French and Italian. Korean and Chinese are taught in Years 7 – 12; French is taught in Years 7-8 only, and Italian is taught in Year 7 only.

The students' connection to languages

Five male students were identified at Owen Boys' High School and participated in the focus group interview about their study of Korean. All five students were continuing study of languages in some way, either in school, by distance education or privately. The students were from years 7, 8 and 9. The secondary school they attend offers Korean, Chinese, French and Italian.

All five students studied Korean from either Kindergarten or Year 1. Avi, now in Year 7, mentioned he will continue with his Korean lessons in Year 8, so he can further what he already knows. Jackson, who was in Year 8 at the time of the focus group, had not chosen Korean for Year 8 study. Instead he undertook lessons in Greek privately in a Saturday school context. George elected to continue with his Korean in Year 8. One student, Jason in Year 9, was pursuing Korean through Open High School – a distance learning option when a full language class could not be offered face-to-face within the school. Jason reported that there were four boys at this school who study Korean via the Open High School. Bob, in Year 9, elected to study French in Year 8, but discontinued languages altogether for Year 9.

Most of the boys in this group spoke a range of languages in their home lives: George has a Chinese heritage and speaks Chinese, having also attended private Chinese classes when he was younger. Bob speaks conversational Vietnamese with his family. Jason's sister teaches him some Indonesian that she is learning at primary school. Jackson and Avi speak Greek and Hebrew within family and religious activities.

Jackson reported being concerned about the school's languages offerings. He believed that he may forget some Korean during the Year 7 taster program because he will not have studied Korean for 12 months by the time he resumes. He explained,

> *"because at the end of Year 6 … I was getting pretty good at it…. But I'm scared I might have lost a bit of that and the momentum going forward… Because…*

you were doing it every day. So that momentum was, ah, carried on each week.

But then, um, stopping for a year... ...would have really stunted it."

The lack of continuity is clearly a cause for anxiety described through the words such as 'momentum' and 'stunted'.

School 3 – Dart High School

The school's languages program

The secondary school languages program at Dart High School offers a taster Year 7 languages course, studying one language per term of Latin, German, French and Japanese. Latin does not continue past Year 7, and the elective languages from Year 8 are a choice of German, Chinese or Japanese.

The students' connection to languages

Four students participated in the focus group interview at Dart High School, three male and one female. All four indicated their intent to continue with Japanese - the language from the primary bilingual program- through to Year 12, although all were less forthcoming about their language experiences in the interviews than was found at the other four schools.

Edward, Samuel, Sally and Reis are all in Year 7, after graduating from the CLIL Japanese program at the feeder primary school. All four students had completed a number of years in the CLIL program. Sally has a Chinese father and Japanese mother and speaks both languages at home. Reis has one Japanese parent. Edward and Samuel have Chinese heritage but did not indicate their language proficiency.

After graduating from primary school, the students had a break of three terms without Japanese by the time the school's program enabled them to continue.

School 4 – Funder High School

The school's languages program

Funder High School offers Chinese and Japanese. Funder High School caters for the students who graduated from the CLIL Chinese primary program by offering Year 7 Chinese. There are 3 Chinese classes and one Japanese class for students who had not attended the feeder primary program. The Year 7 languages classes run for 80 minutes five times per fortnight, almost as much time as at primary school. Any student who has not graduated from the CLIL Chinese program is placed in the Japanese class. This allows the school to stream the teaching of Chinese more easily. In Year 8 there is no Chinese or Japanese class. Students can elect to continue the language again in Year 9.

The students' connection to languages

Four female students participated in the focus group interview at Funder High. They had all continued with Chinese from the primary CLIL program into their program at Funder High School and were in Year 7 at the time of the focus group. All indicated an intent to continue with the language at elective levels and possibly into the senior years. Joy, Amy, Hayley and Abigail were all in Year 7 at the time of data collection. Only Hayley had any other language than English or Chinese in their repertoire. Hayley reported that she spoke Ukrainian with her grandmother. Joy and Amy had studied Chinese at the primary school from Kindergarten to Year 6, Abigail joined in Year 1 and continued to Year 6, and Hayley joined in Year 2 and continued to Year 6. All four had travelled to the sister school in China previously for 10 days, a tour which involved sightseeing and attending the sister school.

Joy explained the complexity of the language program in their secondary school. She said: "*one class does Japanese [but the rest of Year 7] we all do Chinese*". She continued: "*I think it's 'cause there wasn't enough teachers… Because we've only got the one Chinese teacher at our school so… And there's like six year 7 classes …*".

Students indicated that they noticed a difference between the primary CLIL and the secondary teaching of Chinese, Joy said:

"I have found it very different. [With] Chinese in primary school, it used to be really hard to understand and nothing was very clear. But when I came into high school with Miss X, she has like made things more clear and slowed it down for us… And I've learnt more this year than I did in primary school… I feel like Miss X understands like different like ways to help us, how to learn."

It is notable that the students in this context prefer the non-bilingual model in secondary school.

School 5 – Namala High School

The school's languages program

Namala High School offers a Year 7 taster program and Indonesian language learning is one of the Year 7 options. For students who have graduated from the feeder CLIL primary program with Indonesian, there is a specific elective class straight away in Year 7. Students have an opt-out opportunity should wish to discontinue their Indonesian.

The students' connection to languages

At Namala High School seven students participated in the focus group. Daisy, Harriet, Gemma, Molly, Kane, David and Tom all reported growing up in a monolingual family using English, with Indonesian being their only language other than English. All except Harriet learned Indonesian from K-6 at the feeder CLIL primary program: Harriet spent Year 4 away from the program.

Daisy explained that five students from the CLIL primary program have been allowed to have a separate language class, whereas the students coming from other feeder primary schools into Namala High are "*learning what we learned back in*

primary school.'' Such a system aims to bring all students to the same language proficiency by Year 8.

How have students invested in language learning continuing on from primary CLIL?

Investment in languages learning as part of identity development: the home and life-outside-school link

Students demonstrate an investment in their language learning when they link their language learning to home and life-outside-school. Miyano, for example, who had come through the seven-year primary CLIL program in Korean, and who was participating in a 'taster' Korean class in Year 7, indicated other ways outside of school she invests in building her Korean language skill. Primarily this occurs with her mother's participation – "*because my mother knows Korean*" – and with leisure-time choice of music as she sometimes listens to K-Pop bands. Esther who was placed in Japanese classes instead of her initial preference (Chinese), exhibited her investment in language learning more broadly by switching to a new language. She said: "*I'm learning Japanese, so I read mangas and stuff like that*". Jackson recalled feeling proud when Korean visitors came to his primary school, and he was pleased he put extra effort into "*expressing* [sic.] *Korean to other people.*"

The four students in the Chinese program reported being quite motivated to keep learning Chinese into secondary school because of the opportunity to extend beyond school. The opportunity offered to them to visit China and have Chinese students stay with them was an enactment of the school's investment in students' ongoing language learning. Joy explained about a pen-pal partnership with a class learning Chinese at another secondary school:

> *"we get a buddy which we write to in Chinese. So, we will write to them asking questions, like how old are you? What's your name? My name is Joy, or whatever. And then they'll reply, oh, my names so and so, I am 12 years old, … and as our … topics went on, like the topic of the letters would shift to suit what we've been learning like in the classroom".*

The school showed additional support of students' learning by providing community investment through the support of sister-school relationships. Joy described motivating aspects of the visit,

> *"I had a buddy come to my house to stay and we took her out to dinner with other friends and like people that she knew, because my friends were also hosting… And it was really good to … talk to somebody that's not like just in Chinese, because nobody - not many people gets a chance in their family…*
> *'Cause they don't learn Chinese or anything."*

The Chinese pen-pal activity with the other high school appealed to the individual students at Funder High. Each student, at a different point in their learning, was able to personalise their learning and make it meaningful to communicate with a friend in another country. Amy indicated,

> *"I like being able to use the language because like, for example, at home no one speaks Chinese. Like the only time I really use Chinese is at school, when I'm with Mrs X. So, getting to actually use it, not on an assignment or something, is cool."*

Abigail described the handwritten letters which went back and forth between the students in the two schools. The individualised nature of the material being specifically for her only seemed to encourage her identity-building in Chinese:

> *"In our class, like people had um envelopes that had like a letter in it, but it was full of like glitter and stuff … some people got photographs… some people got YouTube channels to look up, or Twitter accounts, or various different things…"*

The personalised nature of this interaction with Chinese native speakers was a clear motivator for these students to continue their language learning.

The link to home and life-outside-school caused Jackson, at Owen Boys' High School, to invest in language learning in general. Jackson, who not only had the K-6 Korean learning experience, but also reads Hebrew and studies Greek on Saturdays, commented on his investment during the CLIL program: *"…it has got me interested in more things about other languages… it jump-started that."* This comment shows that the bilingual experience has had a lasting experience in terms of this student's overall attitude towards languages. It has sparked interest and investment for languages in general.

Investment in languages learning as part of identity development: personal improvement and character development

The students' statements sometimes emphasised appreciation of the primary language learning building to secondary language learning, with the continuation of language learning being a character-building exercise. Esther (from the Korean CLIL program) stated,

> *"it's fine because in Year 8 the language you choose you started from the basic and I feel like I can know - get a little bit of Japanese - I can speak a little bit of it… I won't go for Japanese for my HSC (the matriculation exam), but it's still good for me to like, know another language."*

Esther took a utilitarian view of developing herself and her identity. She said: *"learning a new language … it's [sic.] kind of improves my memory."*

Jackson commented that reflecting some years later, he *"may have taken it …for granted when I was …participating in that… Looking back, I think I'm really lucky to have been a part of it."* George made a similar point, saying, "*I remember taking Korean quite for granted, actually … I didn't really notice until … quite recently actually, in Year 9"*.

When asked by the researchers to imagine a world where he didn't have Vietnamese, English or Korean, Bob indicated he might not have had "*all my sense of matureness*" [sic]. explaining,

> "*I wasn't very educated and well-mannered back then, and I kind of felt some sense of nationalism towards my own culture...compared to Korean…So I actually rejected the whole program entirely.*"

When asked to recall the primary CLIL program Bob said, *"It also taught me to be more grateful towards things that, um, the authorities/guardians put towards us. And I only just realised that when I just came to this high school."*

These three boys indicated a valuing of their experience at primary school that was only possible when they reflected back on that experiences with more maturity.

The experience of learning in the bilingual program has clearly has had an impact on Bob, particularly as he reflects back on that experience in hindsight. He indicates it has changed him as a person. Another student, Jason, also noted the impact that the bilingual primary experience had on him:

> "*I think learning it … in primary … definitely brought me towards the Korean culture and food and stuff. So like I never used to eat Korean food. I didn't - barely even knew about Korea… But now I go out to like Korean barbecues and I'm able to communicate with the, ah, waiters and waitresses… So, yeah, it's - it*

definitely is a lot better because … just communication and learning the food

and culture and stuff and knowing about it".

Jason indicated that the CLIL program has specifically had an impact on his identity

through developing a connection to both the language and the culture. He indicated that

this had impacted upon the things he is interested in doing, the places he visits and the

food he chooses to eat.

Two students talked about their use of the language with other people in the

future as a motivator in their language study. Daisy said of her investment in learning

Indonesian, *"I think the communication, like being - being able to communicate with*

other countries is a big plus I guess [laughs].". Miyano showed that she is invested in

language learning to develop herself into what she perceives to be a good person.

Responding to the researcher's question about the perceived benefits of second

language learning, she commented: *"It's beneficial … because then if I do meet*

someone who needs help and they talk a different language, I could probably help

them." The students have an idea of how their language learning might benefit their

personal development in the future.

Investment in languages learning as part of identity development: the sense of linking multiple languages

For Bob, the ability to be able to use Korean added an aspect to his identity, where he's

able to mix English and Korean outside of class. He explained *"Oh, I usually, um,*

usually correlate like Korean and English together, just to make jokes with my friends…

introduce them into Australia and then they can help you with Korean and you

communicate in Korean." Bob's comfort in moving between the two languages, enabled

him to use both as a means for interacting with his friends, developing in-jokes within a social group and expressing group cohesion.

At Yarmouth Girls' High School, Esther reported that she invests because she works between languages generally, *"sometimes I come to find the chapter that's got a Chinese translation. So I have to read the Japanese one and put it into a translator."*

Miyano appeared to find support for her investment in language learning through the similarities that exist between the three Asian languages in her repertoire: Chinese, Japanese and Korean. She said: *"well for Korean, it's similar to Chinese so I'm learning - so when I learnt Chinese and Japanese, they both had like romanization. Like roma- romaji and … pinyin in Chinese. So I found it easier for me to read."* For Miyano, working with different languages seemed to be a valuable process. She found her prior knowledge useful across the languages: *"Oh, I think it's like, in Year 7. So we got the six languages and I just figured out … languages are quite similar to others. For example, French and Italian."* Being able to build upon and make links between languages is a source of confidence for Miyano, and therefore impacted upon her identity as a capable student of languages.

Discussion

For some students, investment in continuing their language learning is closely linked to the study pathways offered in secondary schools, and investment for others relates to a part of their developing personal narrative. As can be seen in the data reported above, there are varied models of language program provided in the secondary schools for the students who graduated from the primary CLIL language programs. Not all secondary schools cater for the advanced language learning and language knowledge of the CLIL primary program graduates.

Each secondary school has provided some form of pathway for languages learning into secondary school and for students to continue studying the same language if they so desire, albeit with a language learning gap in some cases and repetition of learning in other cases (Hunt et al., 2008; Low et al., 1996). The start-again model is problematic, as it does not cater for students' prior knowledge and therefore could be argued *not* to be a pathway for these specific students, as it takes no account of prior learning (McLachlan, 2009). While a class is available, it is not tailored to students' prior knowledge. Some schools offered other (different) languages as their pathway seeing language learning as a more flexible offering with meta-linguistic and cross-linguistic skill being built upon. Only two schools catered for multiple ability levels within the same language but there were still gaps in continuity of study at either Year 7 or 8. Scheduling and staffing of multiple level programs appears to be problematic for schools.

The advanced standing model was available to the graduates of the Chinese program, although for them a gap still existed in Year 8 when they had no language classes for one full academic year (the second year of secondary school). Challenges also arose once language learning became elective across all schools in Year 9, with some students having to undertake their elective study through a distance learning program in order to continue with their chosen language.

This study's findings build on existing research which shows that investment in language learning across the primary-secondary divide occurred for a variety of reasons (Hunt et al, 2005). Some students reported being motivated for language learning generally: these students appear to be invested in linking the languages they have in their repertoires which could be drawn on for later language learning across a variety of languages. Some students invested because they developed a link between the language

at school and their life outside school: languages learning was an authentic, real experience that could enrich their worlds and identities. Notably there were also students who indicated that investment in continued language learning could be a value-added bonus for personal improvement and character development, to help other people in a form of outreach – also indicating a possible identity factor in continuing language learning.

Students showed their investment in their languages in multi-dimensional ways (Darvin & Norton, 2018). They showed autonomy and drive in continuing to study their language, or intending to do so, in spite of less than ideal circumstances. One student at Owen Boys' High School did so using a distance learning option, when no Year 9 class was available for his language (Korean). Such a style of learning requires particular commitment from students to work autonomously and link up virtually with a teacher off-site. The students at Funder High School invested because they found the experience of learning enjoyable, inspired by the teacher's pedagogy thus indicating the community factor of investment (Graham et al., 2016; Pladevall-Ballester, 2019).

Other students traversed a language learning gap of three terms or a whole year. They indicated that such a gap made them nervous about their progress in the language, but they still indicated a desire to re-commence language study as soon as the option was available. In the mean time, students transferred their skills to learning a further language or languages through taster courses, or through a one-year music class.

In spite of these challenges students indicated their investment as they showed that they retained the intent to continue their language through to matriculation. Only time will tell whether this intent can be maintained over the longer term. It would be valuable to re-visit these students in their final two years of school to find out how/whether they maintained this dedication.

Investment in the teenage years is a complex, multi-dimensional matter (Darvin & Norton, 2018). Students maintain beliefs gained from the community around them about the value of language learning (Fielding, 2015). They also traverse the complex school environment where they may not wish to show interest in academic progress in front of their peers. This study provides a snapshot of some students' experiences of, and their investment in, continuing language study in a system which does not value language learning more broadly through mandated ongoing language learning. Within this challenging context, some students value and are invested in continuing their language learning and will overcome challenges to do so.

Conclusions

Overall we found that because all students were continuing with language study in some form, for these students the schooling system had provided for either continuation of the language learned in the primary CLIL program or offered study of another language. As the students were purposively selected by the school leadership, we presume too, that for students not selected for our study, the additional language learning pathway ended at some point. Knowing that the students who participated in our focus groups had continued their language studies to some extent, we heard from them that they were motivated to invest in their language learning alongside what other personal, family and school contextual factors were impacting their choices.

We acknowledge, however, that participants were not randomly chosen and did not cover a large number of graduates from the primary schools. With such a sample we learned about what students think, but were not able to undertake a general survey of all those who had entered the secondary school from the primary school and its CLIL

program. That wider more comprehensive data was not tracked and therefore following a whole cohort in a longitudinal manner was not possible.

Nevertheless, exploring the experiences of some students who had continued to pursue their languages provides valuable insight into what it takes to succeed in this context (Hertzog & Morgan, 1998). Giving students the opportunity to become expert language learners in the primary school can set them up to continue to pursue language learning throughout their schooling. School systems do not always allow for the progression in language learning to be smooth. Therefore students need to develop internalised ways to set up a valuing of language learning, an investment, and a linguistic identity associated with that language in order to overcome challenging learning environments.

Students in this study showed how they were invested in continuing with their language study in spite of challenges learning languages in secondary school. Even in schools where no senior secondary classes (years 9 – 12) were on offer, students showed their intent to continue with the language by other means, such as distance learning. This indicates the impact the primary CLIL experience had on these students, in that they feel invested in the process and identify with the language they have studied. Unless schooling systems can provide smoother pathways with options for students to continue with the same language at a suitable level of challenge the number of students undertaking language study may decline. Schooling systems cannot presume that students' individual investment will be sufficient enough motivation to continue language study when it is not fully structured, implemented, valued and resourced.

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<u>Appendix</u>

<u>Script: Semi-structured Interview Questions: Continued learning in 4 Bilingual/CLIL programs</u>

Script:
Thank you for your time in talking to me today. I am working on a project which will tell us more about the language learning experiences of school students who have graduated from CLIL/Bilingual programs at (insert school name) over the past two years. Language learning and is something we do over a long period, so we are interested in exactly what students believe about their language learning. I want to ask you some questions now. Please ask me to repeat anything that is unclear, or ask for further clarification. I cannot take notes as fast as we can both talk, so I will record this interview on my mobile phone to be able to play it back, to transcribe what we both said. This chat should take us around one hour. Do you have any questions before we begin?
About you:
1. Please tell me what name you would pick, if this research report were to quote you. Would you like to choose a name we can use to refer to you?
2. A bit about your language learning:
    a. What language are you studying now?
    b. What language did you learn in primary school?
    c. Which primary school did you go to?
    d. How many years were you at the primary school and part of the language program?
    e. Do you speak any other languages?

About the CLIL/Bilingual primary school program where you studied this language in the past:

3. What kinds of activities do you remember working on in your primary school languages program?

4. What are you most proud of in looking back at your time studying the language at primary school?
5. What did you find the most difficult thing about language learning at primary school?
6. Is studying that language the same or different at secondary school? How and why or why not?
7. Have you been able to continue to develop and use the language you learnt at primary school?
8. How and in what ways? Can you tell me about some of the ways you might use that language outside of school now?

About the successes and challenges of learning additional languages:
9. What do you think was good about studying an additional language the way you did it at your primary school?
10. Was there anything particularly challenging about it?
11. Was there anything particularly rewarding about it?
12. Were there any difficulties for you in learning the language that way?
13. If you are learning the same language now:
    a. How has the primary program helped you with language learning now that you are in high school?
    b. Can you tell me a bit about your experiences of language learning since reaching high school? What things have you done?
14. If you are learning a different language now:
    a. Do you think learning a different language in primary school has helped you with learning this new language? How? In what ways?
    b. Has learning a different language in high school to primary school caused you any challenges or confusions? How? In what ways?

Can you draw me a picture of your learning of this additional language:
Here is a blank piece of paper and a pencil and eraser. Do you think you might be able to draw an image of what learning an additional language means to you, or how you feel when using your language(s)?

About what you have brought along to show me today.
Thank you for bringing some of your work in to show me what you are doing in your language now. Can you choose a page and tell me about it? Does this work have any links to something you learned back in your primary school program? Can you explain the types of work you do now in your language(s) and how that is similar or different from your primary school language learning?