

Languages Education, Attitudes and Human Rights

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Abstract

Individuals' human rights can exist only to the extent that attitudes in the wider community allow them to exist. Fostering positive cross-cultural attitudes is, therefore, a critical element of human rights education. The paper discusses the role of L₂ education in promoting positive cross-cultural attitudes, referring to studies in Australia and Japan and to current debates affecting Australia's multicultural community.

The Presenter

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I INTRODUCTION

Individuals' human rights can exist only to the extent that attitudes in the wider community allow them to exist. Fostering positive cross-cultural attitudes is, therefore, a critical element of human rights education. A number of United Nations conventions endorse the need for all people to live in a spirit of tolerance and for the education systems to promote that. The 1989 *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, for example, states in the Preamble that

... the child should be ... brought up ... in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity

while Article 29 says, in part, that

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to ... :

(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin ...

The 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* is similar but refers specifically to education, stating in Article 26:

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

Language policies and language syllabuses around the world generally claim as one of their main goals the fostering of inter-cultural understanding and positive

cross-cultural and inter-cultural attitudes. Yet the research evidence is neither definite nor definitive and one has to conclude that language education, *per se*, does not inevitably produce more favourable cross-cultural attitudes and that, at best, certain elements of methodology are necessary if a favourable effect is to be achieved.

On the one hand, persons and organisations involved in language education (including the present writer) like to assert that they are addressing the need for positive cross-cultural or inter-cultural attitudes in society. The *Australian Language and Literacy Policy*, for example, states:

... language proficiency improves social cohesion, communication and understanding throughout the Australian community. [DEET 1991a: 62; cf. Lo Bianco 1987]

It goes on to assert that language teaching

... can promote ... greater tolerance within the broader community of linguistic differences in Australia and internationally ... [DEET 1991a: 63]

The global aims of the 2001 Senior language syllabuses in Queensland, which the present author helped to write, state:

... learning a second language widens horizons and leads ultimately to the capacity to look out from the new language and culture and, in effect, to develop a soundly based world view. This, in turn, fosters cross-cultural understanding and empathy with people of other languages and cultures ... [Queensland Board of Senior Secondary School Studies 2001: 1]

In Japan, the 1999 Senior High School “course of study” sees as part of its aims

to deepen students’ understanding of the peoples and places of the world ... to foster an attitude of respect for those cultures,

to deepen international understanding... and to foster the spirit of international cooperation. [1999 Course of Study, Foreign Languages (Senior High School), Chapter 8, p. 39]

Over the last 3 decades, the Council of Europe has made an outstanding contribution to language education not only in Europe but worldwide and has done so with the firm conviction that language learning improves intercultural understanding and cross-cultural attitudes. Recommendation R(82)18 of the Council’s Committee of Ministers stated unambiguously the belief that language learning promotes

... mutual understanding and co-operation, and overcome[s] prejudice and discrimination ... [Recommendation No. R(82) 18 of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers]

Trim, the principal leader of the Council's "modern languages projects", has stated:

The best protection against all forms of racism and xenophobia is provided by knowledge and direct experience of the foreign reality and improved life and communication skills ... [Trim 1997a: 6]

and he states one of the aims of European language teaching to be

... to promote the personal development of the individual, with ... positive attitude towards other peoples and their cultures, free from prejudice, intolerance and xenophobia ... [Trim 1997: 5 – 6]

There are numerous Council reports that endorse language learning as a means to promote more favourable inter-cultural attitudes. In one, for example, the report on the project "Language Learning for European Citizenship", the statement is made that the aims of European language teaching include

... - to build up mutual understanding and acceptance of cultural and linguistic diversity ...

- to promote ... a well-informed, positive attitude towards other peoples and their cultures, free from prejudice, intolerance and xenophobia ... [Trim 1997: 5 – 6]

It is relevant to comments to be made later that the report also states that foreign languages programmes should aim to develop learners' acceptance of, and respect for, the cultures of other people and states that

Acceptance should be based on knowledge, understanding and appreciation. This aim involves analysing and, where appropriate, questioning the learners' own culture as well as that of others. [Trim 1997: 61 – 62]

Many United Nations, especially UNESCO, documents link languages with inter-cultural attitudes and understanding. UNESCO's 2002 document, *Education in a Multicultural World*, states:

Learning another language opens up access to other value systems and ways of interpreting the world, encouraging intercultural understanding and helping to reduce xenophobia.

Its 1995 *Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy* promotes foreign language learning in order to foster understanding between communities and nations. The 1998 *World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century* stresses the importance of multilingualism in encouraging international understanding. Its 2003 document, *Education in a Multilingual World*, emphasises the importance of language learning for all persons to facilitate understanding of other racial, linguistic and cultural groups and to foster positive inter-cultural attitudes. This document cites some 13 United Nations conventions and notes “certain basic guiding principles” common to all of them, including:

... UNESCO supports bilingual and/or multilingual education at all levels of education as a means of promoting both social and gender equality and as a key element of linguistically diverse societies.

UNESCO supports language as an essential component of intercultural education in order to encourage understanding between different population groups and ensure respect for fundamental rights. [UNESCO 2003: 30]

II WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Despite such aspirations, the research literature does not suggest that language teaching inevitably has a positive effect on cross-cultural attitudes and, if such an effect is to occur, it suggests that the course content and the methodology by which the language is taught and learned are more important than the fact of language learning *per se*. The present writer has reviewed the research literature in other publications [e.g., Ingram 1978, 1999, 1999a; Ingram, O’Neill and Townley-O’Neill 1999] but, in summary, one has to conclude from the published research that:

1. Language learning, *per se*, irrespective of how it is taught, does not inevitably have a positive impact on cross-cultural attitudes.
2. There are many theoretical and empirical studies that have found a favourable relationship between language learning and positive cross-cultural attitudes [e.g., Ingram 1978, 1980b; Riestra and Johnson 1964, Gardner and Smythe 1975, Bartley 1969, 1970]. However, the relationship is not automatic, there may be no effect or the effect can be negative and background variables such as socioeconomic class and social and parental attitudes may be more influential [e.g., Mantle-Bromley and Miller 1991, Byram and Estate-Sarries 1991, Jaspers and Hewstone 1983].

3. One of the most important factors if there is to be a positive effect seems to be interaction with speakers of the other language though how such interaction is managed is also important [e.g., Ingram 1980a, 1980b, 1978, 1977, 1977a; Clement, Gardner and Smythe 1977]. Wilkins, reviewing a number of studies and quoting Genesee's conclusion, observes:

There may be limits to the extent of attitude change that can be achieved in second language programmes which do not provide real meaningful contact between the learner and members of the target language group. [Cited in Wilkins 1987: 23]

4. A critical element in that management is the need for learners to have the opportunity to externalise their own intuitive responses and attitudes for examination and rational modification, i.e., they need the opportunity to think and talk about their cross-cultural experiences, reactions and attitudes and to modify them in a positive direction [Ingram 1978, 1980b, 1980c; Morgan 1993; Kramsch 1993; Mantle-Bromley 1995].
5. For this reason, "culture shock" seems to play an important part in the learning experience since it makes learners aware of their intuitive reactions and pre-conceptions and provides teachers with opportunities to stimulate discussion about cultures and inter-cultural relations, and to explain adverse reactions and prejudices and so help to effect positive attitudinal change [see Ingram 2001, 1999, 1999a, 1996, 1995, 1980a, 1980b, 1978, 1977, 1977a; Ingram *et al* 1999].
6. Knowledge alone about another culture does not automatically have a favourable effect and may even worsen attitudes unless there is intervention that leads to the sort of rational consideration and, if necessary, modification of attitudes just referred to [cf., Ingram 1978, 1980b, Jones 1996, Mantle-Bromley and Miller 1991]. Nevertheless, profound cultural knowledge and understanding (not just knowledge of the superficial or trivial aspects of a culture) also seem to play a part in the complex of activities required.
7. Through this complex of learning activities, including language learning itself and, especially, through interacting with speakers of the other language, learners need to be led to be aware of, and sensitive to, two important contrasts: the individuality which exists within the universality of a culture and the universal, fundamental humanity that underlies and permeates the diversity of cultures.

In brief, despite the aspirations of language syllabuses and language education policies around the world, one has to conclude that there is no simple cause-effect relationship between language learning and positive cross-cultural attitudes and a positive effect is likely to be achieved only if certain variables

within the design and methodology of language courses are managed appropriately. To examine these further and to draw whatever implications are possible for course design and methodology the present writer along with colleagues in the contrasting societies and educational environments of Australia and Japan have conducted a number of studies both of the attitudes of students who have undertaken language study and of the outcomes of language programmes specifically designed to incorporate some of the variables that the research literature identifies as possibly significant in effecting positive attitude change.

III THE PROJECTS

The first two projects discussed here sought to examine the cross-cultural attitudes of students in the middle of Secondary School in Australia and Japan in an attempt to identify the nature of their cross-cultural attitudes and whether these were related to their language learning experiences. The second two projects implemented a methodology that incorporated as the central theme “community involvement” or interaction with native speakers of the target language along with the other variables referred to earlier. These projects have been written up in various places and a book is in the final stages of preparation. Here the projects and their outcomes will be summarised without tables of data though these are available in the other publications or on request from the present writer [see Ingram et al, in preparation; Ingram 2003, 2003a, 2002; Ingram and O’Neill 2001/2002; Ingram et al 1999].

III.1 Australian Survey

This survey sought to examine the cross-cultural attitudes of Year 10 students in State and non-State Schools around Brisbane and to see whether any relationship could be established with their language learning experience. Unfortunately, the funding obtained did not allow for a longitudinal study (which is desirable if cause-effect relationships are to be clarified) and it proved impossible to find enough students who had not experienced language learning to compare with those who had. Nevertheless some 40% of the students were not currently studying a language. Hence, the study sought to discover whether those students currently studying a foreign language were significantly more positive in their attitudes to other cultures than those who had dropped out of language study some time earlier). It also compared the attitudes of students who had studied a language for four or more years with those who had studied it for less.

There were 598 Year 10 students in 7 State and 10 non-State secondary schools in and around Brisbane. For most, English was the language of the home (87%) but another 25 languages were also spoken at home. Almost half the students

had learned Japanese with the next most frequent languages being French and German.

The questionnaires elicited personal information about the students, their language classes and learning activities, and their attitudes to language learning, migrants and other cultures. Identical sets of semantic differential scales were used to elicit the students' attitudes towards speakers of the language they were learning, other Australians, Europeans, Asians, Australian Aboriginals, their language teachers, and themselves. The last question asked the students what they would like to change in their language classes.

Overall, the students' cross-cultural attitudes were favourable and there was no significant difference whether they were in a FL programme or not and whether they had learned the language for less than 4 years or more. However, closer investigation identified some tendencies but so mixed that it is difficult to conclude whether foreign language learning had a positive or a negative effect on the students' attitudes. There was a slight tendency (just 4%) for those in the FL programme to be more favourably inclined towards the target language group than those who had dropped the subject, generally in Year 8. On the other hand, those who had been learning the language for less than 4 years showed a very slight tendency (2.88%) to be more favourably disposed towards the target language group than those who had been learning the language for 4 or more years. Attitudes to Australians were virtually indistinguishable, as were attitudes to Europeans, except that those who had studied languages for more than 4 years responded slightly less favourably towards Europeans though it is probably significant that about half of the students were in Asian language programs. However, attitudes towards Asians were considerably and significantly lower than towards Europeans or towards the target FL group and attitudes towards Aboriginals were the lowest of all. Again, it is noticeable that attitudes of those who had studied a language for less than 4 years were slightly more positive towards Asians (by just over 5%) than were those of students who had studied the language for 4 or more years. This again makes one question the belief that language learning will necessarily produce more favourable cross-cultural attitudes. However, it should also be noted that, coincidentally, this survey occurred at the time of a community debate over immigration policy and, in light of the importance of background variables in determining attitudes, this could well have intruded substantially on the results. Nevertheless, overall attitudes were, as already noted, quite positive [see Ingram and O'Neill 2001/2002 for further discussion of this point].

1. The questions about the students' perception of classroom practice yielded results that were probably significant. The activities that the students most valued or that they wanted to be used more often tended to be those that research suggests are more likely to have a favourable effect on cross-cultural attitude development though the teachers' responses put those activities relatively low on their list of priorities. In particular,

1. The students wanted their language classes to be more oriented towards active use of the language in real-life communication and interaction with native speakers face-to-face or over the internet.
2. A majority of students (59%) wanted to see increased attention to the teaching of culture.
3. Approximately two-thirds of the students did not want any increase in the more formal aspects of language teaching such as formal accuracy in pronunciation or grammar or in the teaching of other subjects through the language. Again, this seemed to match their preference for a focus on real-life communication activities.
4. There was a strong mismatch between the students' perceptions of what was happening in their language classroom, the goals and the point of the activities and what the teachers perceived as going on [see Ingram et al 1999].

In summary, though the students' cross-cultural attitudes were generally positive, no significant evidence was found to suggest that those in language programmes or who had studied the language longer would have more favourable cross-cultural attitudes. At the same time, it was evident from both the students' and the teachers' responses that little use was made of those activities that the literature suggests are probably most conducive to positive cross-cultural attitude development even though these, as it happened, were also the activities which the majority of students wanted to see increased in their language programs.

III.2 Japan Survey

The Japan study used similar questionnaires to the Brisbane survey, with the same purposes, translated into Japanese and adapted only to the extent necessary to fit the different educational and cultural context. It surveyed over 630 students and their teachers in ten schools in Akita Prefecture of Japan.

No statistically significant difference in attitudes to English-speaking people was found between students according to how long they had been learning English or towards people of other cultures (Europeans, Asians and the indigenous Ainu). However, those who had been learning English longer were positive but significantly less so towards Japanese people as though greater knowledge of English language and culture led them to re-evaluate their own culture or, at least, to see its strengths and weaknesses more discriminately. On the other hand, even though the overall difference fell below the significance level, the feelings

towards themselves of those students who had been learning English for more than four years were slightly more positive on almost all features than for those who had been learning it for less than four years.

Unlike the Brisbane study, many more of the Japanese students surveyed had had the opportunity to visit a country where English is spoken. Attitudes of both groups (those who had and those who had not visited an English speaking country) were very positive. Those who had visited an English speaking country were, overall, slightly more positive (but not significantly so) even though a small difference was found on most features. Those who had visited an English-speaking country viewed English-speaking people as more interesting, more handsome, more colourful, more honest, more kind, more sophisticated, more reliable, more hard-working, less strict, and more civilised than did those who had not visited an English-speaking country. This tends to support the notion that interaction with speakers of the language can have a beneficial effect on cross-cultural attitudes but, again, overall attitudes were all positive and the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant.

The teachers' preferred goals for their language programmes showed a mix of priorities. There was strong consensus that the most important goal is to communicate orally with native speakers of English, rated in the top five goals by 87%. However, most goals related to cross-cultural attitudes were not rated highly. It was striking that the goal "to gain positive attitudes about native speakers of English" was rated as of greatest importance by just 4% of teachers and in the top five goals by fewer than half (49%). "To learn about the culture of native speakers of English" was rated as of most importance by only 2% of the teachers but within the top five by 62%. Interesting and relevant, however, was the fact that 56% of the teachers rated the goal "to enable students to evaluate their own cultural preconceptions" amongst the top 5 goals. In brief, the goals specifically relevant to cross-cultural attitudes were given mixed priority by the teachers and considerably less weighting than the general "language learning" goals.

However, goals tend to be idealistic and the teachers' preferred teaching/learning activities are probably more relevant to student outcomes. Strong priority was given to "traditional", formal methods with a strong majority of the teachers saying that they "often" or "very often" used pronunciation drills (89%), formal grammar teaching (83%), grammar exercises (75%), and translation (58%). "Communicative activities" ranked 10th in priority order with just 29% of teachers saying they used them "often" or "very often", 49% "sometimes", and 23% "never" or "rarely". Activities that promote practical proficiency and provide an opportunity for learners to use the language creatively or for communicative purposes ranked even lower with, for example, language games being used "often" or "very often" by 21% and interaction with native speakers (probably mostly teaching assistants in class) by 20%. The focus in the nine most

preferred activities is clearly on formal knowledge and “traditional” methods rather than creative or productive use of the language in interaction.

Of those activities known to be conducive to more positive cross-cultural attitudes and a balanced understanding of the target culture, again the focus seems mainly to be on formal culture teaching. 45% of teachers, for example, said that they used “teaching of culture” “often” or “very often” and 49% “sometimes”. More informal activities that encourage learners to use the language for normal social interaction outside the constraints of the classroom and in contexts where there is some opportunity to live the culture rather than learn about it, activities such as language clubs, language camps or language evenings, were virtually never used with just 9%, 5% and 2% respectively saying that they used them “sometimes” and 87%, 95% and 98% saying that they used them “rarely” or “never”. Interaction with native speakers either face-to-face or via the internet were rarely used. Though 48% of the teachers said that they sometimes used “interaction with native speakers”, only 20% said they used it “often” or “very often”, and 32% said that they “never” or “rarely” used it. It is probable that those who used it most frequently had access to a native English speaking teaching assistant. Activities involving the internet or email were ranked very low with 81% and 92% respectively saying that they used them “rarely” or “never”.

In brief, the teachers’ responses concerning their preferred teaching and learning activities suggested a largely formal, teacher-centred, and “traditional grammar-translation” approach to language teaching with relatively few opportunities given to the learners to use the language creatively, informally or in uncontrolled situations for normal social interaction (or situations that approximate to such interaction). Similarly, those activities most conducive to balanced cultural understanding and positive cross-cultural attitudes (other than probably formal “teaching of culture”) were also rare.

Like the Australian students, many of the Japanese students wanted more opportunities to talk with native speakers, learn to use English for everyday purposes, learn about the culture of English-speaking countries, learn English for the job they wanted to do in future, and, unlike the Australian students, listening to more songs in English. However, they also generally endorsed the formal teaching practised by their teachers, possibly because of their perceptions of the examinations they sit.

III.3 Summary of the Australian and Japanese Surveys

In summary, in both the Australian and Japanese studies, there is little evidence that language learning had significantly influenced the students’ cross-cultural attitudes (though the Japan study, where there was more opportunity for the students to interact with native speakers of their language during trips abroad, showed slightly more effect). However, it was also evident that the nature of the

programmes and especially the activities favoured by the teachers were not conducive to the improvement of cross-cultural attitudes. At the same time, the changes that students wanted to see in their programmes tended to be towards activities that are known from the research literature to be more beneficial both for the development of language proficiency and for fostering more positive cross-cultural attitudes.

The next two projects to be discussed implemented methodologies that particularly emphasised interaction with native speakers as a core aspect of the methodology and course design, the most important factor that both the research literature and the studies just described suggest may positively influence cross-cultural attitudes.

III.4 French in a Teacher Education Programme

The present writer's earliest attempt to implement a methodology based on the principles emerging in this paper was made some 20 years ago with students in the first and third year French programmes in a teacher education programme. The project and its results have been reported in other papers [Ingram 1980c and d] and will be discussed only briefly here for their relevance to the effect of the project on the students' cross-cultural attitudes.

The central learning activity in the design of the course was "community involvement" in which students set up meetings with French speakers in the Brisbane community and discussed some topic of mutual interest with them. Afterwards, the students presented a detailed oral report to their class and submitted a written report to the lecturer. In most cases, this formal activity led to informal social interaction with the community members in their homes or in a social event. The course also contained formal teaching of the language in response to student need, another segment focussed on different registers and genres of the language, there was a course of French and Australian social studies taught in French once a week, and there were many opportunities given to listen to daily Radio Australia newsbulletins in French and to view and discuss French films or slide shows. Regular discussions were held on intercultural and interracial relationships and attitudes and occasionally games were used that highlighted issues of relationships between dominant and smaller societies or communities.

The **project outcomes** proved to be very successful both in terms of the students' language proficiency and in producing more positive cross-cultural attitudes. In summary, the benefits relevant to attitudinal change included the following:

1. Once they overcame their initial fear of contact with native speakers, the students showed considerable willingness to converse and participated much more readily and confidently than previously.
2. Other lecturers who had not participated in the programme evaluated the students, commenting favourably on their progress, especially in such features as readiness to participate in conversation, confidence, fluency, comprehension, initiative in directing conversation, and poise. Though such features relate more immediately to language proficiency, the students' increased confidence and poise very likely rubbed off onto their attitudes.
3. The results on a simple cross-cultural attitude questionnaire administered pre- and post-course showed a considerable shift towards more positive attitudes both towards French people and more generally, including towards Indigenous Australian.
4. The favourable attitudinal effects were seen not only in the students but also in the people with whom they had met. Many community members, for instance, commented that these were the first "real" Australians they had met socially, they appreciated the opportunity to meet the students, and they were keen to maintain contact with them [cf. Ingram 1980d].
5. In brief, this project with its integration of social interaction or "community involvement" in the methodology and course design seemed to have a favourable impact, not only on the students' proficiency but also on their cross-cultural attitudes.

III.5 Languages at University

More recently, the present writer and a colleague implemented a long-term project entitled "Taking 'foreignness' out of Languages other than English". Its aim was to implement a "community involvement" approach in the teaching of both Asian and European languages at university level and to examine the impact of the approach on both proficiency development and other goals, including cross-cultural attitudes. Here, only the latter will be reported though more extensive reports have been published [e.g., Ingram 2002, 2002a, 2002b, 2001].

The students' overall assessment of the use of community involvement in their course was strongly favourable. In the Japanese classes, 90% of one group and 100% of the other rated the project as "good" or "excellent" while 73% said that they would participate again the following year and 95% said that the project should be run again for future students.

Most saliently, both teachers and students reported a great increase in the students' confidence in using the language. This was also reflected in the students' belief that the project had been "fairly" (37%) or, more frequently, "extremely" (58%) useful in improving their language skills. One group of 21 Japanese students was asked whether they felt nervous speaking Japanese with native speakers. Of the 20 who responded, 75% of the students said that, as a result of their experience, they did not feel so nervous, a response which might also suggest a more favourable attitude towards Japanese speakers.

The student questionnaires did not specifically address the question of cross-cultural attitudes but it would seem reasonable in the light of the positive nature of the students' responses to expect that cross-cultural attitudes had also benefited [see also Ingram 1999, 1999a]. Possibly the most relevant question related to whether the students planned to keep in touch with the community member they had been meeting with and, overall, 76% of the students of Japanese indicated that they did intend to keep in touch. In addition, the question about the range of contacts the students had had was also suggestive of cross-cultural attitudes. A small majority (58%) in one Japanese group had met only with the community member they had been allocated but a substantial number (42%) indicated that they had also met with the community member's family or friends. This willingness on the part of the students to meet with more people than the organised contact suggests a desire on their part to have more involvement with Japanese people and, therefore, probably that they had a positive attitude.

As in the earlier French project, the response of community members to their involvement with students learning their language was also very favourable. They appreciated the opportunity to make contact with the students, the formal involvement often led to more informal social interaction in the community members' homes or elsewhere, and, in some instances, on-going friendships seemed to be developing. Typical comments by the community members included that they found the experience "interesting and useful", that it is a positive experience to meet other people and to help students with their language, and that they (the community members) would be happy to be involved again. Clearly, the community involvement approach benefited the cross-cultural attitudes of both the students and the people with whom they interacted.

IV IMPLICATIONS FOR METHODOLOGY

Despite the common belief that language learning contributes to the development of more positive cross-cultural attitudes, certain elements of course design and methodology seem to be necessary for it to do so. It is noteworthy that those features of methodology most likely to promote positive cross-cultural attitudes

are also relevant to the development of language proficiency [for further discussion, see Ingram 2003, 2000/2001, 1999, 1999a, 1980a, b, c, d; Ingram, O'Neill and Townley-O'Neill 1999]. In summary,

1. In the context of human rights education but, more generally, in the context of education systems that seek to foster favourable inter-cultural attitudes and understanding, it is vital that education policy-makers, curriculum designers, and teachers seriously and systematically identify the fostering of more positive cross-cultural attitudes as a central goal of education and specifically of language education and that they develop programmes and methodologies that will achieve that goal. That goal will not be attained by pious wishing but only when the complex of factors that contribute to its attainment are addressed.
2. It is probable that such intervention in children's attitude development will be more effective if it occurs before attitudes become less malleable with the stabilisation of personality through adolescence and so it is desirable that foreign language teaching commence early in the Primary School.
3. The central learning activity should be seen as social interaction or "community involvement" in which learners are given continual opportunities to interact with speakers of the target language and to use it for real communicative purposes and for normal social interaction, whether that is face-to-face, through videoconferencing (as used by my colleague, Masako Sasaki, in Akita University in Japan), travel, language "camps" or language "towns" (whether actual or cyber-based and "virtual") and a variety of other possible activities over the web [see Ingram 2001, 1999, 1978]. In the present writer's approach to methodology, "community involvement" takes three forms:

Extramural CI activities, which extend the language learning beyond the classroom in activities that essentially enable learners to re-experience their own environment and concepts through the foreign language, e.g., field trips, excursions, local newspapers, magazines, language camps and cyber villages, or radio and television in the target language.

Formal CI activities are a formal course requirement that mandates interaction with speakers of the language and may take a range of forms from very simple directed tasks such as asking directions through to extended enquiries about some topic of interest. Again, this might occur through face-to-face interaction in the local ethnic community, during travel abroad or mediated electronically by telephone, videoconferencing, web cameras, internet chatpages, and so on.

Informal CI activities are ultimately the most desirable and involve normal social interaction with native speakers in ordinary social situations such as, for example, parties, excursions, home visits, or work experience in a company where the language is used in the workplace, or through the internet using the variety of activities already mentioned. [cf. Trim 1997: 62].

4. Culture learning is an essential part of any language programme and can play an important role in fostering positive attitudes and understanding [cf. Ingram 1978, 1999, 2001]. It should occur both through systematic teaching, incidentally to the language teaching, and as a result of interaction with native speakers through community involvement. Complementing systematic culture teaching with the immediate experience of the personal, individual culture that governs the everyday lives of real speakers of the language helps to overcome the stereotyping which formal culture teaching risks creating and which often forms the basis of negative attitudes. In this way, learners are better able to realise the individuality that exists within the universality of a culture.
5. Learners need the opportunity to re-conceptualise their own experience, to see it through the eyes of the target culture, and so to realise that both their own and the target culture have their own equally defensible internal logic. Again, to achieve this, learners need the opportunity to interact with native speakers and to discuss their own experiences and their own environment with native speakers using the target language [see also Ingram 1978, 1980b, and 1980c; and Morgan 1993].
6. "Cognitive processing" plays a vital role in both language learning and in fostering cultural understanding and positive cross-cultural attitudes. As already noted, learners need the opportunity to think about issues of inter-cultural relations and subject their often sub-conscious reactions and entrenched attitudes to rational examination and, if necessary, change. For this purpose, community involvement, often accompanied by some form of "culture shock", serves a vital purpose.
7. Clearly the issues discussed here have important implications for teacher education. The language teacher's role is not only to present and exemplify the target language but also to guide students through the experiences that will assist them to develop more positive cross-cultural attitudes, to understand other cultures and the nature of cultural difference, to help students to work positively through "culture shock" experiences, and, not least, to understand, manage and implement those features of methodology that are known to promote both language development and more positive cross-cultural attitudes. [For further elaboration on this, see Ingram 1978, 1980b, 1980c, 1999; Mantle-Bromley 1995, Triandis 1971, Morgan 1993, and especially

Ingram 1999a, 2001, Ingram, O'Neill and Townley-O'Neill 1999. See also Grenfell 2000: esp. 24 - 25].

8. Finally, the issues discussed here have serious implications for the justified or unjustified concerns that have been raised in recent years over ethnic communities (newly arrived or not) who, it is asserted, lack sufficient English and cultural understanding to integrate into Australian society. If the society wants such groups to integrate, to view the society positively, and to cope with life in the society, it would be much more effective to facilitate the migrants' entry into ESL programmes designed along the lines discussed here rather than to adopt the implicitly punitive approach of the present Federal Government in which tests (especially the invalid tests that have been proposed through the media) are mandated and persons who fail them are punished by being denied entry into the society as citizens. Such an approach could only further alienate the new (or long-standing) arrivals, further separate them from the rest of the Australian community, and make it even more difficult for them to acquire the language skills, cultural understanding and positive attitudes to Australia and Australians that the government claims to wish to encourage. In psychological terms, the Federal Government's approach, rather than encouraging increased understanding of Australian society and values and the further integration of the particular ethnic communities and individuals targeted, will increase their social and psychological distance from the English speaking community making it even less likely that the desired English language skills and inter-cultural understanding will be achieved. What is more desirable and more likely to be effective are English language programmes designed to respond to each learner's real needs, to provide deep cultural understanding and, most of all, to encourage interaction with individual Australians while, at the same time, assisting them to understand the nature and diversity of Australian society and culture and how to operate within it.

V CONCLUSION

The relationship between language education and cross-cultural attitudes is, at best, uncertain, as are the elements within language teaching that might be managed to have a positive impact on those attitudes. The issue, however, is of such immense social and global significance that further research to develop effective course design and methodologies is essential, not least through longitudinal studies focussing on students in and out of language programmes and in programmes using different methodologies.

What is clear is that, if language teaching is to play an effective role in generating more positive cross-cultural attitudes conducive to life in multicultural societies and the global village, it must be structured specifically to do so. If individuals are to demonstrate positive cross-cultural attitudes, they must be aware of and ready to accept human diversity while also valuing the essential humanity that permeates all cultures. Language teaching, appropriately structured, can help to achieve this understanding because it can provide the essential supplement to knowledge and understanding, i.e., the awareness and insight that come from equal status interaction between the learners and people of other cultural, racial, and language backgrounds.

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