

Schooling within shifting langscapes: Educational responses in complex Indigenous language contact ecologies

Denise Angelo, Australian National University
Nina Carter, Australian National University

1. Introduction

Complex language ecologies generated by historical and ongoing language contact and language shift can present considerable challenges to educators in terms of their ability to 'recognise, respect and respond'¹ to students' rich and dynamic linguistic repertoires. This is certainly the linguistic and educational reality in the state of Queensland in the north-east of Australia. Here, Indigenous² language ecologies are characterised by a shift away from traditional languages, the use of English-lexified contact varieties as vernaculars, and a degree of contact and proficiency with Standard Australian English (SAE), the dominant 'mainstream' and national language. Sellwood and Angelo (2013) report how the contact language varieties in this context suffer from negative evaluations in contrast to the once colonial, now standard/lexifier language, English, as well as to the traditional Indigenous languages, both from within their own speech communities and without. They argue this can effectively result in 'lingua nullius' –extending the term 'terra nullius', the invisibility of Indigenous land tenure in colonial times, to the present profound invisibility of Indigenous contact languages.

In order to support students and teachers within these 'shifting langscapes' (Angelo, 2006a), a considerable body of work has been undertaken in recent decades in Queensland. Language Perspectives, a team of linguists and classroom teachers, including language teachers, working for the Indigenous Schooling Support Unit within Education Queensland, the state government's education department, has taken a particular lead in this area. The authors' experiences as part of this team have inspired the practical subject matter for this chapter.

The discussion here reports on 'capacities' that have been identified as fostering Indigenous multilingual students' learning in SAE-medium classrooms. It positions 'language awareness' (following Siegel, 2010) as a primary enabling capacity and explores the reasons for its pivotal role for schooling in complex language contact ecologies. By exploring the nature of language awareness as conceptualised by Language Perspectives in Queensland, existing work at this intersection between linguistics and education is refined and expanded (Angelo, 2011, 2013a; Angelo & Carter, 2010; Angelo & Frazer, 2008; Migge, Léglise & Bartens, 2010; Malcolm & Königsberg, 2007; Shnukal, 2002; Siegel, 2010). While language awareness has been found to provide a *necessary conceptual basis* for acknowledging contact languages, additional understandings and skills, or 'capacities', have been identified as essential for effective classroom responses. These include an understanding of multilingualism and second language acquisition, an ability to analyse the language demands of curriculum content, and the ability to plan for and teach the language in which this content is delivered. Whilst planning and teaching the language of the curriculum content might seem to be the logical first step towards

¹ The byline of the Language Perspectives team, the lead unit researching Indigenous language ecologies and delivering responsive services for Queensland government schools.

² Australian Indigenous peoples are referred to, broadly, as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander: Aboriginal peoples' homelands are the mainland and islands located offshore, except for the Torres Strait –between Australia and the island of New Guinea– where the homelands of Torres Strait Islanders are located. The use of 'Indigenous' in this paper is intended respectfully to include both groupings.

enhancing Indigenous multilingual students' classroom learning, in fact, cumulatively, the other capacities provide the foundational understandings which bring educators to the point of understanding the need for differentiating their pedagogical practices to benefit these students.

Without doubt, challenges for schooling in contact language ecologies are highly context dependent, so all aspects of approaches discussed here are not automatically transferable to all situations elsewhere. It is hoped, however, that this chapter will be thought-provoking, informative and/or encouraging to those grappling with education in similarly complex contact language ecologies found throughout the Commonwealth and elsewhere. Accordingly, this chapter presents introductory information about language ecologies and education environments in Queensland to contextualise the discussion. It then proceeds to outline the core capacities that have emerged as essential for classroom teaching in this context.

2. Indigenous Language Contexts

Queensland covers 1,730,648 sq km and encompasses the entire north-east of the island continent of Australia. Facing Melanesia and neighbouring south-east Asian and south Pacific regions, the state is home to a great diversity of Indigenous peoples who today are dispersed throughout this extensive geographical area in cities, towns, rural areas and remote communities. Traditionally, around 50 distinctive languages were spoken on Indigenous peoples' lands and islands in Queensland (Dixon, 1980, p. xvii-xix). Transmission of most of these 'traditional' languages has been profoundly disrupted across the Australian continent. In Queensland this has been so extensive that if Indigenous school-aged children speak languages other than the standard English of mainstream Australian society, SAE, then these are typically English-lexified creoles or non-standard dialects of English (Angelo, 2012a, 2013a; Dixon & Angelo, in press; McIntosh, O'Hanlon & Angelo, 2012).

Figure 1: Map of Queensland, with inset showing Australia, south-east Asia and the south Pacific



Intensive contact between Indigenous peoples and English speakers began later in Queensland than in some southern Australian states and proceeded at different rates

through Indigenous lands and islands. Inland, the moving pastoral frontier entered Queensland from the south around the 1840s and spread the associated English-based pidgin northwards, reaching the Gulf of Carpentaria by about the 1870s (Dutton, 1983; Harris, 1986). Along the seaboard, South Pacific Pidgin entered Queensland from the north-east through coastal communities and ports from the 1850s, disseminated by a succession of maritime-based industries (such as sandalwood, *bêche de mer*, trochus and pearl shell) and the supply of plantation labour (Tryon & Charpentier, 2004, p.16-18; Shnukal, 1988, p. 5). Such pidgins sowed the linguistic seeds from which a multiplicity of Indigenous contact language varieties developed, with their present-day differing characteristics arising on account of their unique historical trajectories influenced by specific constellations of local social and linguistic factors (Language Perspectives, 2009, 2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2013).

In addition to these external influences, the Queensland government's internal policies drove the removal of large numbers of Indigenous peoples from their lands and islands into (often distant) government reserves or missions. Children were also separated from their families and raised in dormitories in many locations (Copland, 2005; Hume, 1991). These circumstances had a profound impact on Indigenous language ecologies, both in the reserves and in the homelands. In the reserves, new speech communities emerged as peoples with many different language repertoires, including distinctive contact languages and/or traditional languages, were brought together. For example, 52 different traditional languages were represented in the reserve at Woorabinda (Munro & Mushin, in press) and at least 43 in Yarrabah (Sellwood & Angelo, 2013). Use and transmission of traditional languages was impeded where the language backgrounds of inmates were so diverse that like-language speakers had few opportunities for interaction and children little exposure. In addition, speaking traditional languages was a punishable offence under some repressive administrations (AIATSIS, 2005, p. 84). English-lexified pidgins spread and contact languages developed for use amongst reserve inmates themselves as well as with the (mostly) English-speaking missionaries, administrators and recipients of their labour. Proficiency in a standard form of English was difficult to gain due to widespread segregation of Indigenous peoples in colonial society of the times. Removals to these reserves finally ceased only relatively recently in the 1970s (Angelo, 2013a, p. 70-76).

The Torres Strait region had a distinctive language contact history as it was the site of tremendous economic and trading activity from around the 1860s onwards, when multilingual workforces and entrepreneurs from Melanesia, south-east Asia, China, Japan and the Pacific gathered there in addition to English speakers. Increased government control occurred later than on the mainland, with the first island reserves gazetted in 1912. Although paternalistic and intrusive, these were less disruptive of land tenure and social relationships in most instances than those on the mainland. Some legislation controlling Torres Strait Islander peoples was repealed in 1939 (Shnukal, 2001, p. 7-8).

Other common language contact scenarios in Queensland range from rapid population influxes into Indigenous homelands through discoveries of exploitable ores, such as gold; to the more localised missions which tended to be less multilingual than the larger government reserves (mentioned above), to fringe camps around towns. Each social setting created its own landscape: Some mission environments supported a degree of traditional language maintenance, but some did not. Town fringe camps, typically with longer term and higher frequency contact with English speakers, generated Indigenous speech varieties levelled more towards SAE.

Even this (necessarily) brief snapshot of language contact history in Queensland, gives some insight into the many different factors which have influenced the linguistic outcomes

of language contact and shift processes in this part of the world. The widespread shift to contact-induced vernaculars in Queensland parallels the shift away from traditional languages. Apart from the few 'strong' traditional languages that are commonly spoken and have child speakers in the topmost north-western Torres Strait, on central-western Cape York and in far western Queensland (Angelo, 2013a, p. 75), it is more likely that fully proficient speakers of other traditional languages will live in (or hail from) remote areas, and be in an older age bracket. Younger Indigenous peoples represent a range of possible knowledge of their traditional languages, perhaps some spoken proficiency, receptive understanding, use of common lexical items in their vernacular or the ability to name their language group affiliation(s).

It should also be noted that, in Queensland, Indigenous languages –both traditional and contact– are predominately utilised orally by their speakers at the present time. Standardised writing systems (or practical orthographies), if they exist, are recent developments for specific purposes including religion or language documentation, but occasionally also in schools for L1 medium (mother tongue) programs, or L2 (target language) teaching. To date, all Indigenous L1 and L2 programs in Queensland have had a traditional language focus, with the exception of a bilingual 'home language' program at Injinoo on northern Cape York in the 1990s, which was implemented in SAE and the local creole spoken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (Turner, 1997).

The increasing use of mobile phone and web-based interactions amongst Indigenous Australians has been observed by the authors to be providing new interpersonal spaces for utilising Indigenous languages in innovative (texting, chatting and social media) modes. Nevertheless, Indigenous peoples typically do not often hear or see their languages used in wider public domains in Queensland and Indigenous languages –traditional and contact– have received only sporadic support in educational contexts here. There has, however, been a recent resurgence in the teaching of Indigenous languages as L2 programs in Queensland schools (Ketchell & Foster, 2010; QSA, 2010; ACARA, 2013) to support the maintenance or revitalisation of traditional languages.

Although differing in make-up at the local level, Indigenous language contact ecologies are commonplace across Queensland. These shifting langscapes need to be navigated by educators to achieve optimal schooling experiences for Indigenous students.

3. Indigenous educational contexts

Acknowledgements of the linguistic complexity inherent in many Indigenous educational contexts are difficult to find in the two national policies that influence Indigenous education in Queensland. The National Indigenous Reform Agenda (NIRA) has targets to increase Indigenous students' literacy and numeracy scores in the high stakes, standardised National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan (NATSIEAP) also has targets relating to NAPLAN data. Whilst NIRA does not acknowledge students' language backgrounds at all, NATSIEAP does so in the contextualising information, but not in the quantifiable responses and targets (Angelo, 2013a, p. 82-84; McIntosh, O'Hanlon & Angelo, 2012, p. 454, 458).

NAPLAN, the performance data source for these policies' targets, obscures language(s) as an operative variable in measuring Indigenous students' educational achievement. It silences language(s) in terms of what is claimed to be assessed ('literacy and numeracy', apparently, not language) as well as which student characteristics are disaggregated in reporting. Disaggregation of NAPLAN results according to students' levels of English language proficiency is unavailable, but this omission is obfuscated by the availability of

(poor) demographic data about whether or not students have language backgrounds other than English (Angelo, 2013a; Dixon & Angelo, in press; Lingard, Creagh & Vass, 2012). In Queensland, NAPLAN has had significant washback effects on curriculum and pedagogy, particularly for Indigenous students who speak languages other than SAE. As the 'language factor' is invisible, the programs touted to ameliorate Indigenous student test performance neither address language nor include language approaches (Angelo, 2012b, 2013b).

The state-wide curriculum implements 'mainstream' English-medium instruction undifferentiated at the curriculum content level³ for Indigenous students (or others) who are L2 learners of SAE (Angelo 2013a). These learners rely, then, on classroom teacher capacity to deliver this curriculum content through appropriate pedagogies. Queensland's education workforce is, however, made up of predominately non-Indigenous teachers who are trained to teach in 'mainstream' classrooms, and so are mostly unprepared for adapting their pedagogy for L2 learners. Teachers typically have limited awareness of their Indigenous students' language backgrounds, particularly of contact language varieties, and little understanding of effective educational responses (McTaggart & Curro, 2009). While recent Queensland government publications (DETE, 2011, 2013a, 2013b) are attempting to establish a shared vision and knowledge in relation to this situation, teachers with some awareness of Indigenous students' language backgrounds readily acknowledge the need for specific, additional up-skilling in this area (Carter, 2011). A further complication is the transient nature of teachers working with Indigenous students, particularly in remote areas: Professional growth is often lost when teachers move away. A long-standing and acclaimed community-based program, Remote Area Teacher Education Program (RATEP), provides pathways for Indigenous peoples to gain teacher accreditation (York & Henderson, 2003) but demand for local Indigenous teachers still outstrips their availability.

Such conditions might be expected to profit from the 'made-to-order' expertise of English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D)⁴ specialists. But this is not a straightforward matter. Queensland's EAL/D specialist services have been reserved almost exclusively for students of overseas backgrounds due to the focus of past and present programs (Angelo, 2013a; Dixon & Angelo, in press). EAL/D specialists' 'toolkits' therefore suit (non-Indigenous) language contexts where –amongst other things– students speak recognised L1(s) clearly separate from SAE, are acknowledged as learners of SAE by themselves and others, reside within an SAE-speaking community and (may) have experienced education and literacy in their first language(s). EAL/D tools honed for such conditions 'lack pivotal contextual understandings' in relation to Indigenous learners of SAE and 'may miss the mark –or not even see it' (Angelo, 2013a, p. 69), and thus require significant modification.

Compounding the invisibility of languages in Indigenous multilingual learners' education is mainstream Australian society's inclination towards a 'monolingual mindset' which can render languages other than SAE unnoticed or even undesirable in public life and institutions (Clyne, 2005). These pervasive attitudes influence education, at the very least

³ There are two recent exceptions to this generalisation: the 'English for ESL learners' subject for senior high school students intending to undertake university studies, offered by some schools with eligible student cohorts (QSA, 2007); 'Foundations for Success', guidelines for kindergartens in remote Indigenous communities, which encourages 'parallel' language development of 3.5-4.5 year old children's first languages alongside English as an additional language/dialect (Queensland Government, 2013; Perry, 2011).

⁴ Queensland has adopted this national terminology: 'dialect' in this context indicates those varieties not always acknowledged as separate languages, such as contact language varieties. (DETE, 2013b, p. 4)

in the sense that such hegemonic notions disallow space for perspectives other than monolingual ones.

All in all, these factors seem to ensure that Indigenous students' schooling frequently overlooks the interactions between their linguistic repertoires and the linguistic medium(s) in which classroom information is transmitted, learning is undertaken and achievement is assessed.

4. Capacities for linguistically complex classrooms in shifting langscapes

Educators with specific professional 'capacities' can counter the policy and social invisibility surrounding Indigenous students' linguistic repertoires and can foster Indigenous multilingual students' engagement in classroom learning. These capacities are explained in detail below.

Language Awareness: a necessary enabling capacity

Language awareness is a critical requirement for effectively negotiating the linguistic complexity of contact language ecologies and multi-lingual and -varietal classrooms. In such contexts, language awareness serves the vital function of engaging and informing participants –and other stakeholders– in school education about language varieties that otherwise have little public visibility and prestige. This process enables conversations about these language(s), about the nature of language differences and about the role language(s) play in communicating and learning in classrooms and beyond. The authors of this paper would like to emphasise the transformational aspect of language awareness which creates new spaces for students and educators (and community and policy makers) and gives speakers of stigmatised or even invisible varieties a voice. In the prevailing 'monolingual mindset' of the Australian context in particular, 'language awareness' is an essential component of building shared language understandings to alter the status quo. Without this awareness, contact languages lexified by English will continue to be appraised as poorer versions of the same language (Sellwood & Angelo, 2013) and the implementation of linguistically undifferentiated educational approaches will continue (Dixon & Angelo, in press).

Siegel (2010, p. 210) describes 'language awareness' programs as typically including at least two of components 'a', 'b' or 'c' in Figure 2 below. He proposes that component 'd' is an additional element that increases the efficacy of traditional language awareness programs by addressing the ideologies underlying the current linguistic balances of power (pp. 228-234). Language awareness approaches used by the Language Perspectives team have innovated on the components 'a'-d' described by Siegel to include the additional elements 'e', 'f' and 'g' (Angelo, 2011; Angelo & Carter, 2010; Angelo & McIntosh, 2010).

Figure 2: Evolving components of Language Awareness in Queensland

Component	Focus
a. accommodation	accepting and respecting students' first languages or dialects within educational settings
b. sociolinguistic study	learning about linguistic variation, including dialects and creoles
c. contrastive analysis	comparing the language features of a non-standard variety with a standard language
d. critical positioning	understanding the socio-political dimensions of how different varieties are valued and positioned
e. developmental pathway	building language awareness by adding concepts of increasing depth and scope
f. L2/D2 proficiency	linking language awareness to the learning of a standard language by speakers of non-standard varieties
g. reciprocal learning	working with both teachers' and students' beliefs about their own and each other's languages

Implied, but not explicitly drawn out in Siegel's account, is that a sophisticated level of critical language awareness will be the outcome of long term and deep engagement with the topic and its issues. Angelo (2006b) conceptualised this 'developmental component' (component 'e', Figure 2 above) in the form of a Language Awareness Continuum (LAC), which describes a hierarchy of concepts from 'entry level', to successively more weighty understandings approaching a 'target level' (see Figure 3 below). The LAC's design thus makes apparent the considerable body of knowledge involved in attaining sophisticated and empowering levels of language awareness.

Figure 3: Language Awareness Continuum: Mapping developing socio-linguistic understandings

	Levels	Which languages are spoken and why	How these languages are structured
Hierarchy of language awareness understandings	target level 7	Explain linguistic, historical and current relationships between contact and other non-standard varieties to standard languages	
	6	Study historical and present socio-economic factors in language shift	Contrast different languages' ways of fulfilling the same functions
	5	Research history of language use in the community	Analyse features of languages spoken by students and community
	4	Investigate language varieties spoken in the community	Compare 'home language' and 'standard English' at all linguistic levels
	3	Identify factors involved in making language choices	Differentiate 'home language' from 'standard English' using language features
	2	Negotiate names for the different kinds of language in students' lives	Recognise obvious markers of linguistic differences in language use in the classroom
	1 entry level	Notice different kinds of talk used by familiar people in everyday contexts	

Source: Angelo, 2006b

A further extension of language awareness approaches developed in Queensland has been the correlation of language awareness levels to proficiency in English (component 'f', Figure 2 above). In contact language ecologies overlaid with manifold sociolinguistic complexities, language awareness processes are a tool for respectfully teasing out 'non-standard' varieties from the standard lexifier language for classroom (or other) language learning purposes. This methodology is intended to assist speakers and teachers to achieve greater clarity about the language learning and teaching journey involved in adding a developing proficiency in the standard language to students' existing language varieties.

Out of necessity in Queensland, the need for language awareness applies to educators' understandings as much as to those of students, hence the acknowledgement of the role for reciprocal learning (component 'g', in Figure 2 above): Teachers need to learn about English-lexified contact languages so they recognise their students as speakers of full, valid languages who are adding SAE to existing linguistic repertoires, and so they can facilitate classroom discussions in this area. Where teachers themselves are speakers of these languages, they may have heightened awareness of their significant impact in the classroom as a result of their lived experiences (Carter, 2011), but may also not acknowledge these languages as valid in the classroom, in school settings and/or beyond their own speech community. Language awareness for teachers and Indigenous students implies gaining an appreciation of contact varieties as vibrant means of communication in their own right, and as powerful markers of modern day Indigenous ('insider') identity and community connection.

Language awareness considerations extend beyond the classroom as well. In

Queensland, an awareness of English-lexified contact language varieties has been shown to be essential for Indigenous language backgrounds to be properly identified and recorded in the national Census (Angelo & McIntosh, in press) and school data (Carter, 2010; Dixon & Angelo, in press). Contact varieties are prone to being misrecorded. Sometimes they are erroneously documented as English, presumably because English-lexified varieties appear somewhat similar to SAE at a surface level and have historically lacked recognition. A lack of standardised nomenclature for contact language varieties can also obscure speakers' responses and their descriptive or localised terms are easily misunderstood or mis-coded. Awareness of language contact ecologies creates a conceptual space that enables information to be imparted and understood.

Language awareness is a critical first step for educators, as it alerts them to language contact processes and outcomes, attunes them to language variation and directs their attention to different linguistic systems. Although a vital capacity, it is insufficient on its own: If educators know that many Indigenous students in their class might speak an English-lexified contact language, they are not automatically any the wiser about how, precisely, to support students' multilingual learning trajectories or to effectively deliver classroom curriculum given this student attribute.

Multilingualism and second language acquisition pathways

In complex language contact contexts where non-standard language varieties abound, a capacity for appreciating and responding to multilingual students and their L2 acquisition in the classroom is required. In the authors' experience, most Queensland educators are conscious in a general fashion of the value of cultural and linguistic diversity, but this abstract notion does not tend to operationalise into specific pedagogical responses in classrooms. Moreover, in Indigenous language contact contexts, students' multilingualism is often invisible due to assumptions that these language varieties are (poor) English. As this misconception is gradually cleared through growing language awareness, the multilingual behaviours of these students can be increasingly appreciated and supported.

Given the 'monolingual mindset' that persists in Australia, it is hardly surprising that 'multilingualism' is not a concept automatically addressed in teacher training (Dixon & Angelo, in press). In contact language ecologies, multilingualism can be even more difficult to conceptualise and celebrate. In order to scaffold understandings about multilingualism in Indigenous contexts in Queensland, the '3 way strong' model was developed. '3 way strong' refers to the characteristic make-up of rich and complex Indigenous language contexts where traditional/heritage languages, English-lexified contact varieties and SAE all exist. Moreover, it is a reminder that the educational aim for all Indigenous learners of SAE is additive multilingualism.

Figure 4: 3 way strong: Placing traditional, contact and standard languages in education

In order to foster Indigenous students who are linguistically '3 way strong', educators...



Traditional languages

Support students' rights to their traditional language heritage through language maintenance, language teaching or revitalisation initiatives.

Contact languages

Recognise the (spoken) contact language varieties used everyday by many students with family, community and peers by acknowledging their validity, histories and linguistic attributes.

Standard languages

Engage students with the standard linguistic medium of school and tertiary education and/or national and international exchanges by respectful, explicit, meaningful language teaching.

Source: Angelo, 2009, pp. 5-6

As well as highlighting (at least) three kinds of language in most Indigenous students' linguistic repertoires (standard, contact and traditional), the 3 way strong model suggests the differential role educators might play in supporting each. This model has been used in state-wide education policy (DETE, 2011, p.4-6), and for advocacy at a national level (Angelo 2012a).

Just as quality information about multilingualism for Indigenous students in contact language ecologies is uncommon in education contexts, so too are practical supportive strategies. In this professional void, unhelpful notions can proliferate. In the Understanding Children's Language Acquisition Project (UCLAP), for instance, it was found that many early childhood educators insisted on children speaking SAE exclusively, regardless of children's language backgrounds and/or their levels of proficiency in SAE. UCLAP provided a forum for Indigenous educators to describe their own schooling experiences with such practices as a means of tackling these ill-founded beliefs: 'I was told, "You can't speak that [Indigenous creole] language!" So we just sat there like little statues.' (Ara in Angelo, 2009, p.14). Some Indigenous educators spoke about the disjunct between home and school language: 'How you talk at home is wrong when you come to school' (Douglas, p.14), while others spoke about being fearful: 'I was very quiet because I was afraid of being wrong' (Billy, p.14).

In a similar vein, many educators bring neither personal experiences nor quality professional advice about how multiple languages operate within a classroom context, so they tend to understand the classroom as a monolingual space (even when students are acknowledged as multilingual learners). To illustrate, there is a common belief that students should only ever produce one kind of language in one setting/domain. This is often couched in over-simplified terms of 'appropriate language choice', thus disregarding entirely basic multilingual phenomena, such as relative proficiencies in each language. Similarly, the act of code-switching is often constructed by educators as a student functioning as two fully proficient monolinguals: Students are supposed to code-switch (perfectly) because they have been taught this behaviour. The roles of varying proficiencies, dynamic translanguaging and language teaching and learning are not easily discernible, or even considered, in this monolingual space. Again, multilingual Indigenous educators' narratives about translanguaging in educational spaces (García, 2009, p.149),

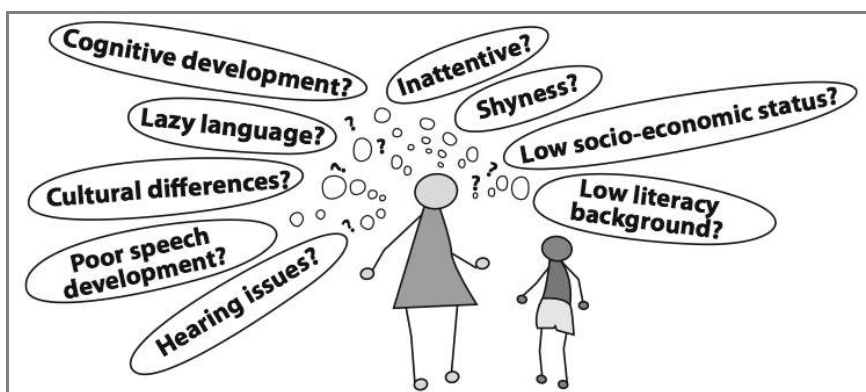
exemplify what this might look like:

And it's not leaving English out of it, or [Torres Strait] Creole out of it [...] they'll be speaking Creole to me, and I'll be speaking Creole back to them, but also, in English as well, you know. It comes together, rather than keeping them separate. And making them feel that it is valued. (Billy in Angelo, 2009, Appendix 7, p. 10.)

Within classrooms, more room can be made for supporting students' multilingual behaviours when teachers are sufficiently aware of what these are. For instance, when awareness has been generated about the 3 language strands identified in '3 way strong' and translanguageing is viewed as a natural and desirable multilingual behaviour (and not as a detrimental or worrying one), then classrooms can encourage a pro-multilingual environment.

In their pre-service training, most Queensland classroom teachers are exposed to no –or very little– information about second language acquisition/learning processes, let alone how these play out in less understood language contact contexts. This coupled with the lack of guidance about multilingual classrooms means that behaviours indicative of second language acquisition are likely not to be registered as such. The poster extract below illustrates how language differences displayed by Indigenous EAL students could be erroneously construed when L2 learning trajectories are unfamiliar.

Figure 5: Language differences erroneously attributed to factors other than L2 acquisition



Source: Angelo & McIntosh (2010)

The L2 pathways of the many Indigenous students who are learning SAE have been inconsistently visible in the Queensland education context. Indeed, the first English as a Second Language proficiency scales developed nationally for school students described only learners from overseas language backgrounds, and did not include Indigenous language backgrounds (McKay, Hudson & Sapuppo, 1994). The development of the Bandscales for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Learners (EQ, 2002) marked a significant point in the provision of education services to Indigenous students in Queensland. These scales revised and adapted the national proficiency scales to include input from educators experienced with Indigenous L2 learners of SAE. This development took into account Indigenous students' language varieties and language learning contexts, L1 oracy versus literacy and classroom culture (Turnbull, 1999; Turnbull & Hudson, 2001). Describing the developmental L2 pathways of Indigenous students validated this cohort as language learners, whilst differentiating them from other cohorts of L2 learners.

The capacity for recognising L2 language learning as experienced by Indigenous students

from contact language backgrounds provides impetus for conversations about what promotes these students' L2 development. Recognition and maintenance of students' L1s are fundamental to supporting multilingual students and are enshrined as principles fundamental to these Bandscales (Turnbull & Hudson, 2001, p. 1-2).

Identifying and teaching the language demands of curriculum content

The capacities that most directly address students' differential proficiencies in SAE, the official medium of classroom teaching in Queensland, include identifying the language demands of the classroom curriculum and teaching these explicitly and effectively. Nevertheless, in the shifting langscapes of Queensland, their very purpose is underpinned by awareness of students' language backgrounds and understandings about multilingualism and L2 acquisition.

Identifying language demands (of lessons, readings, assessment pieces etc.) is necessary for focusing on the explicit language teaching required to convey curriculum content. In Queensland, however, mainstream classroom 'teacher toolkits' (skills, practices, knowledge, resources, programs etc.) are tailored to students with pre-existing fluency in SAE and not designed for the needs of L2 learners of SAE. Through their own SAE proficiency, teachers will notice, for example, that many Indigenous students seem to 'omit' language elements or to use them in 'non-standard' ways. If teachers also have a degree of language awareness about Indigenous contact language ecologies, then students' language backgrounds might be hypothesised as a possible factor for these features. Understandings of multilingualism and L2 language learning are likely to increase the likelihood that students' proficiency levels in SAE will be seen as the underlying cause of these 'learner approximations'. However, the acknowledgement of these factors does not mean that teachers can identify the nature of these demonstrated language 'snags'. Similarly, the *identification of language demands*, while necessary for focussed teaching of them, is still separate to the capacity of *explicitly teaching language* in the classroom.

As a tool for augmenting mainstream classroom teachers' language toolkits for L2 learners, the concept of 'language layers' has been introduced into education support documents in Queensland (see Figure 6 below). Such representations show the full range of (inter-relating) linguistic subsystems being acquired by L2 learners and can assist with highlighting teacher and student knowledge of components within each subsystem. As teachers become familiar with these 'layers', they are able to evaluate their own language toolkit and whether they have 'tools' that demonstrably support students across the entire span.

The concept of 'language layers' also assists in language awareness conversations. When conceptualising English-lexified contact languages, it is essential that the lexical layer can be separated from other layers in order to explain that languages with high percentages of vocabulary from a historically common source are not automatically mutually comprehensible. The morphosyntax layers of English-lexified creoles in Queensland, for instance, are profoundly different to SAE (Sellwood & Angelo, 2013). Similarly, 'language layers' authorise different socio-cultural uses of language, including in classroom texts.

Figure 6: 'Language Layers': a spotlight on linguistic subsystems'

Subsystem	Plain English	Description
text	communicating	the way sentences are structured, grouped and sequenced for achieving a particular purpose in a context
pragmatics	social usages	the factors governing language choices in social interactions
semantics	meanings	the way meanings are represented and conveyed
lexis	vocabulary	the way content is mapped onto words
syntax	structures	the way words are arranged to show relationships of meaning within phrases/groups and clauses
morphology	word formation	the words are built up from meaningful parts
phonology	sounds	the sounds of a language and the way they go together in words

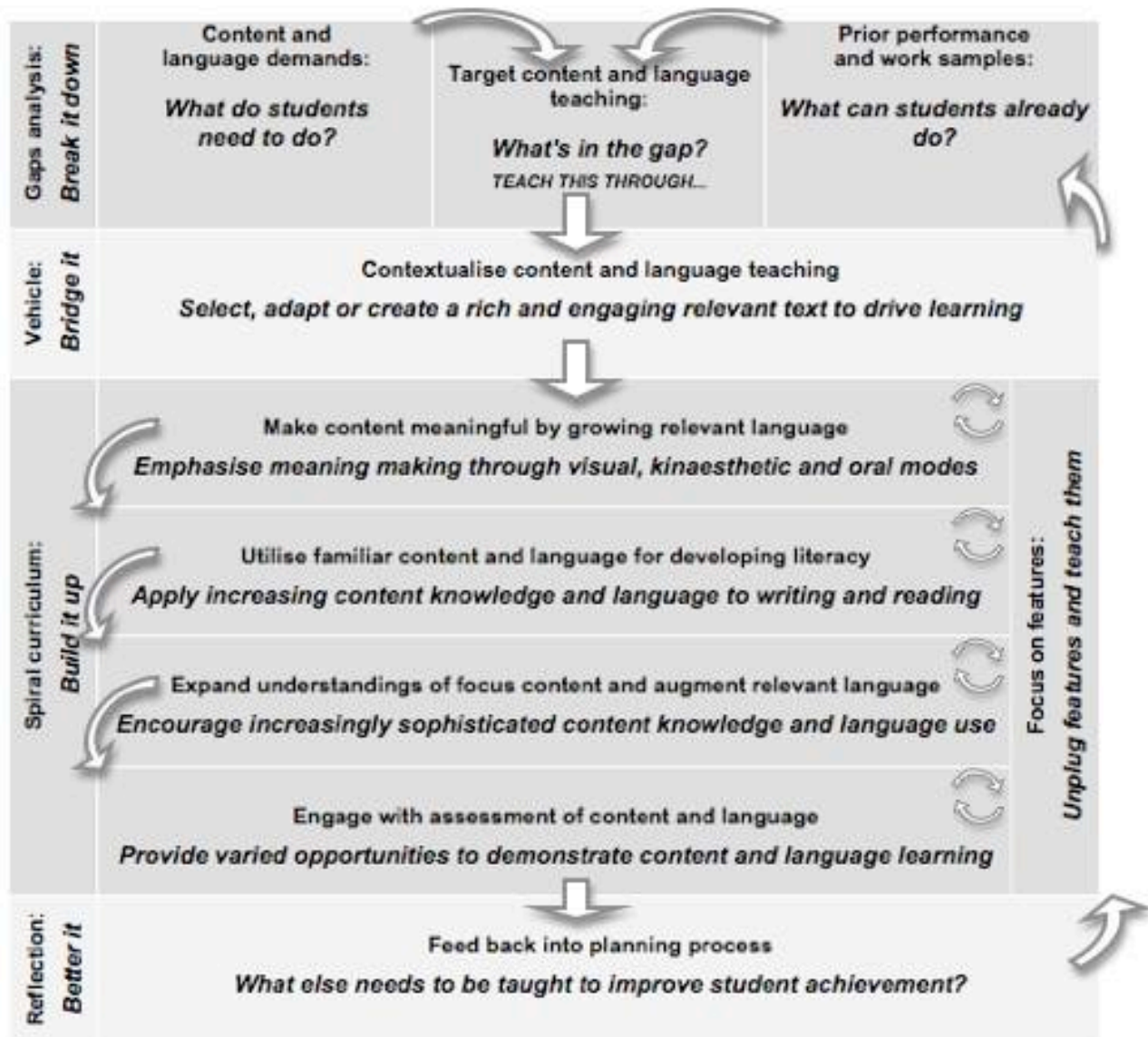
Source: Adapted from Education Queensland, 2008, p. 17.

In the authors' experience, the morpho-syntax 'layers' are where Queensland teachers' language toolkits are emptiest, both in terms of identifying morpho-syntactic elements and teaching them. When learners' approximations of SAE morphosyntax cannot be analysed beyond 'errors', teachers are confused because they have taught curriculum content and corrected students' work (as if for L1 speakers of SAE), but their students are not progressing as they believe they should (if they were L1 speakers of SAE). Similarly, students know that they are 'trying, trying, but never quite getting it right' (Nakata, in Sellwood & Angelo, 2013, p. 254).

In order to support classroom teachers to plan their language teaching alongside curriculum content delivery in 'mainstream' classrooms, a framework, Break it Down, Build it Up (BIDBIU) has been developed in Queensland (see Figure 7). BIDBIU forefronts language and curriculum demands via a 'gaps analysis' which compares 'what students need to do' with 'what students can already do'. The identified 'gaps' –comprising the overlapping needs of the individuals in the cohort– are what needs to be taught. An exemplar of the assessment piece expected of students provides teachers with a concrete basis for identifying the kinds of language structures that students will ultimately need to produce.

The BIDBIU framework encourages teachers to use a contextualising device, preferably a text as it provides consistent language input, as a vehicle for building the language required for curriculum content. This becomes the basis from which a spiral curriculum plan is developed. Within this spiral approach, concepts are revisited ever more deeply through a succession of stages including: making meaning visually, kinaesthetically and orally; representing and augmenting this through literacy; applying this learning to expand curriculum content; assessing language and curriculum understandings; and feeding this information back into the next planning cycle. Throughout this process the extra 'gaps' can be explicitly taught by 'unplugging' a language element for targeted treatment then 'plugging' it back into the contextualised material to be recycled, practised, internalised and elaborated on.

Figure 7: Break it Down, Build it Up: A planning framework for classroom teachers



Adapted from Department of Education, Training and Employment, 2013b, p. 23

5. Conclusion

The shifting langscapes of Queensland are comparable to many former colonial contexts throughout the Commonwealth where language contact processes have generated an array of English-lexified creoles and related varieties. Schooling within these shifting langscapes requires educators to have specific professional capacities so that they can 'recognise, respect and respond' to these linguistically rich and complex contexts. These capacities go to the core of schooling within language contact ecologies as it differs markedly from archetypical L2 teaching and learning situations where, generally, students have clearly defined language backgrounds, educators teach clearly defined target languages, and all stakeholders share clear and mutually reciprocated understandings of this language situation. In classrooms operating in complex contact language ecologies, these 'givens' of L2 teaching contexts have to be created by teachers for and with their students. Consequently the capacities discussed in this chapter are imperative for these teaching contexts.

A chain of cause and effect leads educators to perceive how teaching language alongside curriculum content benefits Indigenous students within complex language contact ecologies. Language awareness alerts teachers to the existence, attributes and

positioning of contact languages, and their Indigenous students' linguistic repertoires. Understandings of multilingualism and second language acquisition processes supports teachers to value students' translanguaging behaviours and L2 proficiency development. Acknowledgement of the language demands in curriculum content enables teachers to identify students' needs in SAE. As the impact of languages on students' learning becomes more apparent to educators, they increasingly appreciate the need to include language(s) in their planning and teaching.

Ever-present tensions in educational contexts provide on-going challenges for long-term approaches to improving multilingual Indigenous students' experiences in education. The role for languages at the heart of learning therefore needs to be constantly foregrounded for Indigenous education, with a particular focus on the multiple riches and complexities of the often overlooked language contact ecologies.

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