

# Being Multilingual: the experiences of young people learning community languages

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'Our future will be determined by how we interact with children today'

(Carla Rinaldi, Thinker in Residence, Adelaide 2013)

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## Introduction

The research study presented in this report addressed the question of how young people, learning their home languages, with the goal of developing their multilingual and intercultural capabilities and identities, perceive their experience of being multilingual in the context of community language learning in South Australia. The study was commissioned by Community Language Schools South Australia (CLSSA) as an initiative designed to capture the students' perspective.

CLSSA has undertaken an interrelated set of projects designed to improve policies, curriculum, the teaching and learning processes, professional learning of teachers and leaders and the overall operations of its program. This systematic line of development began with a comprehensive review of the program, published in 2018 (Scarino & Kohler with Loechel 2018), followed by the development of a curriculum framework (Scarino & Kohler with Loechel 2021), five professional learning courses (Kohler, Scarino & Loechel 2021) and a report on provision at senior secondary level (Kohler, Mercurio & Scarino 2021). This body of research and development work has involved the participation of the full range of stakeholders including policy makers, program leaders, teachers and to some extent, students. It is designed to lead to the improvement of all programs in all community languages offered by CLSSA, while recognising that a *differentiated approach* is needed for different languages each with their different migration and educational histories in South Australia (see Scarino & Kohler with Loechel 2018 for a discussion of 'the differentiated approach'). It incorporates a common set of principles of community language learning that foreground a multilingual and intercultural orientation to language learning, along with goals that develop and invite research experiences of languages learning as well as reflection upon identity formation on the part of students.

A distinctive feature of this body of work is that it has been undertaken collaboratively – in a close collaboration between various participants in offering community languages programs (policy makers, administrators, parents, leaders, and teachers) working with the research team from the Research Centre for Languages and Cultures at the University of South Australia. Students were an important stakeholder group in the research that informed the review, and their perspectives were captured in the review, however, the remaining developments to date have been focused on curriculum, programs, teachers, leaders and governance practices. It was therefore timely to include in this suite of research and development work, a distinctive focus on the student experience and perspective. This is because without the students themselves and an understanding of what their languages and cultures and 'being multilingual' and 'developing intercultural capability' means to them, there can be no community languages programs. It was therefore imperative to focus on the student voice. Although studies in relation to community languages learning in Australia have investigated the role of teachers and parents in community languages learning, there is a paucity of research that has considered specifically the experiences, interests, hopes, expectations, reflections and perceptions of students and their experience of community language learning, their identities and importantly, their multilingual lives.

## Rationale

The fundamental rationale for the research study is as follows:

- It is essential at this stage of development of the community languages program in South Australia to capture the voices of students in relation to their experiences, reflections, understandings of their community language learning, their affiliation with their home language, their community, and their multilingual lives and evolving identity formation;
- All stakeholders in community languages learning need to understand student experiences and perceptions in order to do justice to their learning and lives in their home language and in their lives in Australian communities; this is particularly important in the context of rapidly changing communities in diaspora, evolving intergenerational perspectives, and the changing nature of the students themselves, their interests, desires and affiliations with languages and communities;
- Communities and educational stakeholders beyond those involved in community language teaching and learning need to better understand who these young, multilingual South Australians are and how they experience their education, both in community language learning and in mainstream education;
- Drawing out the student experience and their reflections on experience provides insights into community languages programs and how best to meet the needs, interests and desires of the learners themselves;
- Students themselves, with different histories and trajectories of experiences benefit from sharing understandings and perspectives with peers across diverse languages and cultures; as such the findings of the study provide a mirror against which students can (re) consider their own perspectives
- There is value in sharing the research and development work on the students' experiences and perspectives with interested parties in Australia and beyond.

At the present time, there is an increasing diversity of community language learners with diverse repertoires, desires, affiliations, motivations and expectations (see Ndhlovu & Willoughby, 2017). This diversity of community language learners pertains both to recently arrived and long-established communities. The settlement of recently arrived communities has meant that young people come with pressing needs to continue to learn their home language as they acquire English. At the same time, the language learning needs of longer established communities have continued to change and encompass intergenerational perspectives.

The focus on the diverse experiences and perceptions of young people is set in the context of the contemporary reality of linguistic and cultural diversity in Australia (see Piller 2016), as in all parts of the world (see Kramsch 2009; Ortega 2019; Kubota 2016). Languages flow and interact with people and ideas across transnational communities. Globalisation has created complex local sites where languages and cultures are blended (Blommaert 2010). Layered with this diversity is the use of the internet and mobile technologies through which people *connect* in multiple and diverse ways. Understandings of communication itself have changed across diverse media and networks (see Castells 2009).

It is also set in the context of changing understandings of what it means to be bilingual or multilingual and how this relates to language learning and identity. Languages themselves are changing

and hybridising and people develop different kinds and levels of proficiency in different languages and use them for different purposes, and in a myriad of different ways to communicate. Much research in bi- and multilingualism has sought to depict this change. Cenoz and Gorter (2011) have developed 'a holistic approach' to understanding bi- multi-lingual capability. Cook (2005) talks about 'multicompetence'. Garcia and Li Wei (2014) discuss translanguaging practices of people, whereby they 'move between' languages in their repertoires (see also Li Wei, 2023). Norton (2013) describes the investment of bi- multilingual people in their language learning and connects this to identity development. This is the reality of young people living and learning community languages.

Some studies have also been undertaken in relation to young peoples' identities in the context of linguistic and cultural diversity –mainly with secondary and tertiary level students. Canagarajah (2013), for example, investigated the question of language maintenance of young Sri Lankans who had migrated to Lancaster (California), East London (UK) and Toronto (Canada). Although on the surface these young people identified English as their dominant language, they maintained that it did not affect their positive orientation to ethnic identity and community affiliation. They found ways of using Tamil to mark their Tamil identity. This is in contrast to the traditional view that holds that language attrition means a loss of language but also identity as a member of a particular community. Blackledge and Creese (2017) considered the language use practices of young people in urban settings in Denmark, Sweden, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom from the perspective of translanguaging. They found that the language practices of young people in Europe are not only about their mixing of languages but also about how their use of languages positions them in the social world. Furthermore, a recent study in the Australian context with Italian youth, found that these young multilinguals felt a strong sense of belonging and identification with Italian language and culture, even when they did not have high levels of proficiency in the language. The study showed that the role of grandparents and opportunities to use the language with family members at home, was particularly important in fostering this identity, and enabling these young people to move with ease between their two identities (Farina, Scarino & Tudini, 2021).

The work of Agnes He has considered heritage language learning as it takes place both at home, informally, and in the classroom, as well as other sites, to create dynamic knowledge, skills, values and sensibilities over their lifespan (He 2016; 2018). A body of work related to Heritage Language learning in the US particularly in relation to Spanish focuses on critical language awareness, (see Baudrie & Loza, 2021; Prada, 2021) It arises from questions about the educational principles, goals and practices to include in languages education and how social relations of power shape linguistic practices. It seeks to address the social injustices that researchers in Heritage Language education have long observed and contested. The intention with critical language awareness as a goal of Heritage Language learning is to provide learners with ways of inviting them to reflect on and explain their own experiences and practices within the larger system of values and beliefs in their environments and thereby develop enhanced consciousness about the use of languages in the context of diverse cultures. The overarching intention of this body of work is to create a more equitable language learning enterprise. In a study of young people in Western Sydney, Fabiansson (2018) examined everyday life in multi-ethnic communities. Rather than examining their identity and belonging in relation to their countries of origin, she focused on their belonging to Australian society. These studies highlight, in different ways, an appreciation of the fact that traditional perspectives of young people and their identity formation, affiliation and belonging have become insufficient. They do not capture the dynamic nature of the multilingual and intercultural lives of young people and



their social identity that is rebuilt continuously. (Miller & Kubota, 2013). This calls for a marked rethinking of community languages education (Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014). It is these understandings of the interrelationship of multilingual and intercultural language learning and use and identity formation, together with a strong desire to tap into students' perceptions and consciousness that have informed the conceptual basis of the project.

## Methodology

This research study was designed to elicit understanding about the multilingual lives of young people learning community languages in South Australia in contemporary times through the voices of the young people themselves. The study used a mixed methods approach, that is, both quantitative and qualitative processes of data gathering and analysis. The study comprised three interrelated stages, each with a distinctive method of data gathering: an online survey, a series of in-depth interviews, and a youth forum.

The ethical aspects of this research project were approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the University of South Australia as required by the Australian Government research requirements, specified in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007 - updated 2018). The Board of CLSSA also gave its approval to conduct the study and the research team sought and gained feedback and approval for the research protocols (survey and interview questions) from the Executive Officer at the time. Where students are referred to in the analysis, a generalised description has been used instead of actual names, for example, 'Primary student of Vietnamese' in order to respect anonymity.

Specifically, the study sought to address the following research questions:

- How do students perceive and experience their multilingual and intercultural lives?
- How do students perceive and experience community language learning?

The research questions were then investigated through a series of data gathering processes, designed to directly and indirectly yield the perspectives of young people studying their 'community' language in a community language program. In fact, the qualitative processes taken together represented a kind of invitation in themselves, for students to reflect on their experiences of being multilingual, with some degree of criticality.

The three methods were also designed to be interrelated: the broadest being the largely quantitative survey, to the more in-depth interviews, and culminating in the arts-based youth forum, comprising two further processes of a writing workshop and a 'question and answer' panel. Recruitment for each stage was iterative, with all participants in the online survey being invited to participate in the subsequent stage, and then those who participated in the in-depth interviews, being invited to participate in the youth forum. Details about each stage are elaborated below.

## Data gathering

### Stage 1: Online survey

The survey was created using the Microsoft Forms program. It consisted of 29 questions, including a combination of multiple choice and open-ended questions regarding the background of participants (age, year level at school, country of birth, etc.), and language use (language/s learnt and spoken and domains of use). One extended response question was included that asked participants to reflect on a time that they had used all of the languages in their repertoire in an exchange, interaction or conversation with another person or people. The final questions of the survey were included to recruit participants for stages 2 and 3 of the study. See Appendix 1 for the survey protocol.

The survey was emailed to all students enrolled in a CLSSA community language program. The link to the survey was also included on the opening page of the Community Language Schools SA website. The Executive Officer of CLSSA wrote to all students and offered a small incentive to schools as a method for increasing participation. Subsequently, the survey link and recruitment letter were emailed to all students several times. The survey remained open for 7 months from late July 2022 to February 2023. Despite the continued efforts of the researchers and officers of CLSSA, participation was lower than expected. There were 188 responses, from approximately 8000 students.

### Stage 2: In-depth interviews

The researchers conducted 19 interviews, which involved the participation of 25 community languages students. Those who participated in the online survey were invited to participate in the subsequent interviews; students self-nominated for this process. In some instances, families invited a sibling of the student who had originally nominated to participate to join a single interview or in other cases, a parent observed. In one instance, a school leader and teacher arranged for 4 students to be interviewed at the same time. Interviews were conducted either face to face, with either one or two of the researchers present or via the video conferencing application, Zoom, depending on the preference of the students involved. Most interviews were of 30 minutes duration, and all were recorded to assist the researchers with data capture and subsequent analysis. 11 languages were represented in the group of interview participants. There were 16 boys and 9 girls interviewed and their ages ranged from 5 to 17 years.

During the interviews, participants were asked a series of 22 questions (See appendix 2). The questions related to four broad categories; languages profile, experiences of being multilingual, experiences of community languages learning, and connectedness with language and culture. Prior to attending their scheduled interview students were asked to select an artefact or picture that in some way related to their language and/or culture and the final interview question asked students to reflect on its meaning.

### Stage 3: Youth forum

The students who participated in interviews were then invited to participate in a youth forum, held November at the Magill campus of the University of South Australia. It involved a writing workshop with a multilingual writer, and a panel question and answer segment (refer to Appendix 3 for prompts). It must be highlighted that there was no rehearsal or briefing of the students in relation to their participation. This was intentional as it was important to capture their spontaneous and

authentic responses. The youth forum was audio and video recorded to capture students' authentic responses to the arts-based activities with the intention that such activities may yield responses that are complementary to the other data sets, as students may be less guarded or more 'authentic' in a less formal modality.

The youth forum was facilitated by a community-based writer and poet, Ms Lur Alghurabi. The process involved students completing a series of activities initiated by the artist as she explored aspects of students' experiences as multilinguals living intercultural lives. The sequence of activities began with a prompt to engage students emotionally, to connect with them and create an atmosphere of trust. The next task considered meaning, and the affordances that certain languages provide for meaning, and how this does not always readily translate to other languages. The major task was to write a memoir focusing on the notion of 'A Special Place', evoking memory, emotion and consideration of language, meaning and identity and belonging. Students were invited to share their memoir, reading aloud and then teasing out random words and expressions to explain moments of their story with the group. The writing workshop process is outlined in Figure 1.

### STAGE 3 (A) WRITING WORKSHOP

#### **Warm up**

Participants respond in turn to the following questions

- Tell me your name and something that's really 'pissing you off' right now.
- Now tell me something that's made you very happy this week.
- What language do you speak? What language would you wish to learn, if anything?

#### **'Swimming Pool' and 'Brick Wall'**

George Szirtes says: 'Sometimes language seems no more than a piece of tissue paper carried on the wind: flimsy, semi-transparent, endlessly vulnerable, like a deflated talk-bubble, almost weightless. At other times it is a brick wall, or worse still a room with dense walls and no exit, with only the sense of voices beyond the wall, faintly audible and never clear enough, everything they say immediately becoming part of the wall.'

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/may/03/george-szirtes-bilingual-poetry-translation>

Participants reflect on the quotation and share experiences of when language has felt effortless or like a 'brick wall'.

#### **Brainstorm**

Participants share

- letters or sounds or symbols that exist in one language but not the other
- phrases or expressions that exist in one language but not the other.
- physical gestures that exist in one language but not the other
- words that are not translatable.

These are recorded on the whiteboard and participants choose one as the title for their writing.

#### **Memory**

Participants watch the short film and reflect on the questions that follow

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KrW2qk2wwF8>

- What do you use one language for, what do you use another language for?
- The place we live is more than a physical site - it's a collection of stories, emotions, people, and so much more.
- Country is storied. Land, water and sky hold millennia of knowledge, stories, memories and emotions. From a place that is sacred to you, make the invisible visible on the page.

Participants write about the place in which they live, or the place where they grew up, as if it were an old friend, and tell it anything they feel for it.

Figure 1. The writing workshop process

Following the writing workshop, students were invited to take part in a panel discussion in which they were given cue cards with prepared questions. They were given the option to respond or not, depending on their reactions and desire to address the particular question. The questions were generated by the research team in consultation with other young people, including those not studying in community language programs, so that the questions were age appropriate. Students formed small groups or pairs to respond to the questions and their responses were audio and/or video recorded. In sum, these processes were carefully designed to prompt their reflections, reactions and insights. With consent, the data were used to create a series of films for CLSSA to use for a range of purposes.

#### Possibilities/affordances and limitations

The suite of methods taken together yielded a rich set of data that captured students' experiences, reflections, reactions and insights. The notion of 'cascading' or interrelated methods proved valuable also in selecting participants, building on previous contributions and gathering richer, more personalised data with each step. The methodology did, however, also have certain limitations. For example, the original survey was designed as voluntary rather than compulsory or targeting a sample of participants. The result of this was that the sample size was not as significant as was hoped, and the sample were self-selecting, often with a tendency towards a positive view of their community language learning experiences.

The methodology also provided affordances for students to express views about their experiences that would not have been captured using more traditional methods. That is, on conclusion of the youth forum, students were invited to comment on the methodology used. They expressed genuine appreciation for the opportunity provided, indicating that they found the experience liberating and enjoyed the chance to express themselves freely and without constraint as to which language was required and whether their expression was grammatically accurate or not.

#### Data analysis

Following the data gathering phase of the study, each of the data sets were analysed. The quantitative responses to the online survey were analysed using simple statistical analysis. The analysis comprises a synthesis of responses based on the questions and reflecting categories such as profile of respondents, languages studied, with whom their languages are used and for what purposes. The final question was designed to be open-ended, enabling students to provide a more extended response of their choosing. The question prompted them to recount a significant moment where they used their multilingual capability, and students could provide a visual image or artefact to support their response. Very few students completed this question, however, from those who did, their responses were integrated into the qualitative data from the other data gathering processes. The in-depth interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. This involved an initial inductive review of the data for possible themes. This process generated several 'working' themes that were then applied during a closer analysis of the video material, transcriptions of the audio-recorded interviews, and responses to the qualitative question in the online survey. The 'working' themes were refined following a final review of the data in order to develop the overall set of themes. In the next sections we report in the results of the analysis of the survey followed by a discussion of each of the themes that emerged from the qualitative analysis.

## Analysis of the survey data

This section reports on the responses received from students in relation to the online survey. As noted previously, 188 responses were received in total.

### Part 1: Student profile

#### Question 1: Name

The survey asked for students' names so that those who indicated a willingness to be involved in phases 2 and 3 could be contacted.

#### Question 2: Age

While the target age range for the survey was 6 to 18 years of age, the responses indicated a wider range of ages from 2 to 50 years old. This range may indicate that some parents assisted students in completing the survey. Students aged 5 to 12 accounted for 80% of the respondents, with the highest number of survey participants being 10 years old.

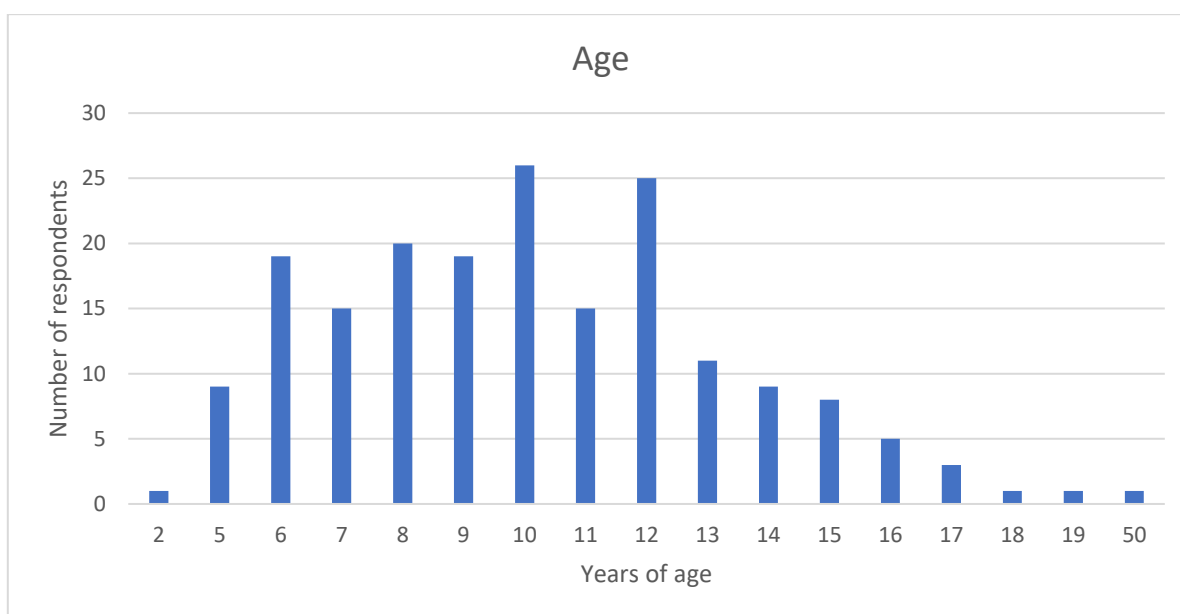


Figure 2. Age

#### Question 3: Current year level at your day school:

As also indicated by Figure 2, the highest percentage of respondents (74 %) to question 3 (Figure 3) were primary school aged (Year 1 to 6). We note the discrepancy between the age and school year level data with the age of some respondents being outside of the given Year 1 to Year 12 range. As indicated above, the target group for the survey was 6 to 18 years of age or Year 1 to Year 12. There was no provision to exclude responses from willing participants from outside of the range, so it is likely that those currently in Reception would have indicated Year 1 on the survey.

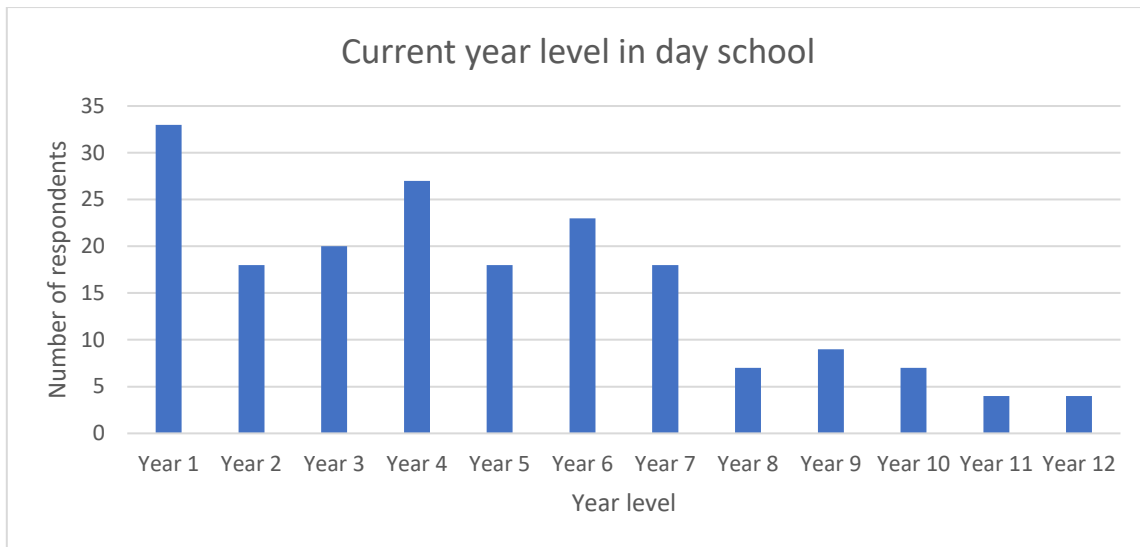


Figure 3. Year level in day school

Question 4: Which community language are you learning at a community language school.

Students of 32 different languages responded to the survey. In some cases, respondents recorded their school name as the answer to the question, 'which community language are you learning at a community language school?'. Where a community language school was named, we were able to ascertain the language being learnt. One student named their day school under this question, and this is recorded as 'unknown' in Figure 3. Two students recorded two languages as answers to this question and since it is not known if they are currently enrolled in two languages they are included as separate groupings in Figure 4. Students who answered 'Chinese' or 'Mandarin' are both included in Figure 4 as 'Chinese'.

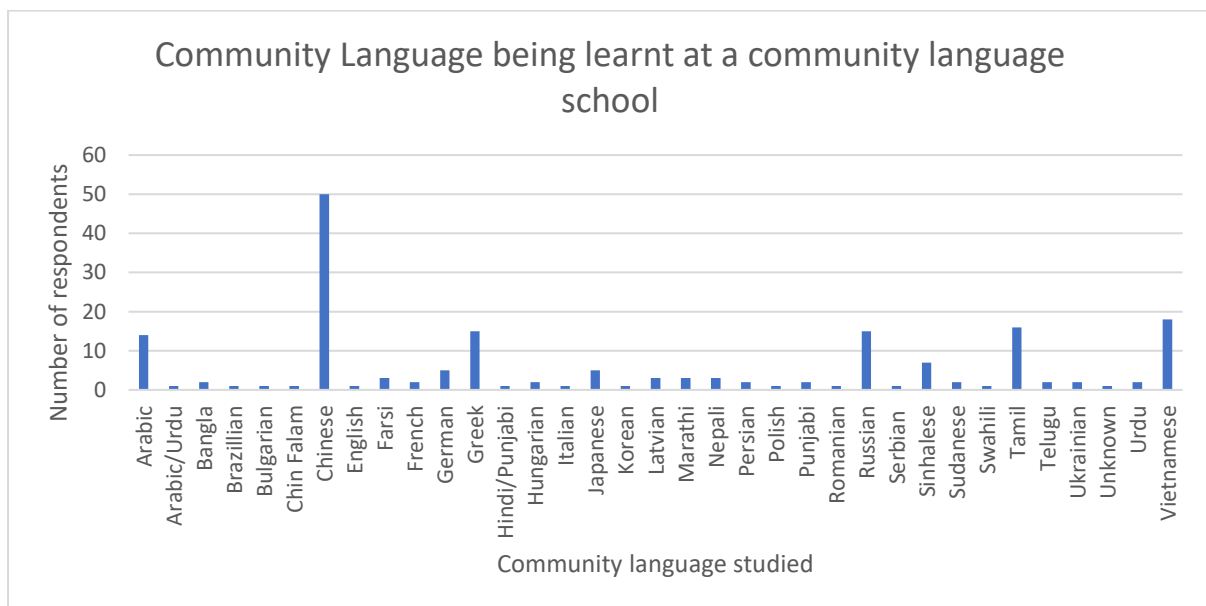


Figure 4. Community language being learnt at a community language school

Question 5: For how long have you been learning a community language at a community language school?

The largest group of respondents to the survey indicated that they had been learning a community language at a community language school for 3-4 years, while the smallest proportion had been learning a community language for 11-12 years. This may indicate that the majority of students study their community language for a few years rather than as a long-term endeavour.

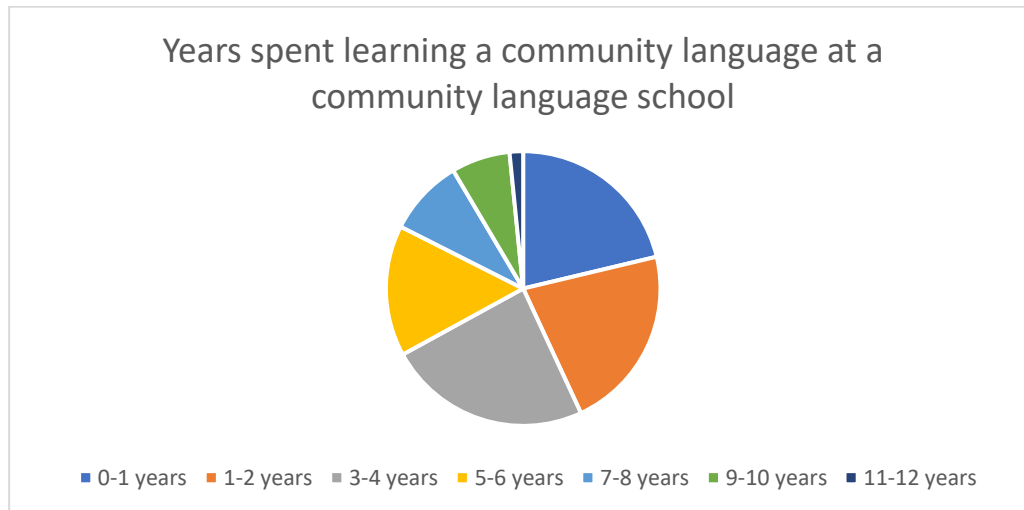


Figure 5: Years spent learning a community language at a community language school

Question 6: Select all of the day school year levels that you have studied your community language in a community language school. (What year levels were you in at your day school when you studied a community language?)

Responses to this question have been excluded from the data due to an error with the survey form that did not allow respondents to select more than one response.

Question 7: Do you study this community language in your day school?

Eighty percent of students surveyed did not study their community language at their day school, meaning that at the time of the survey, the only opportunity for formal study of their home language was through enrolment in a community language program. Twenty percent of students were also able to study their community language at a mainstream school.

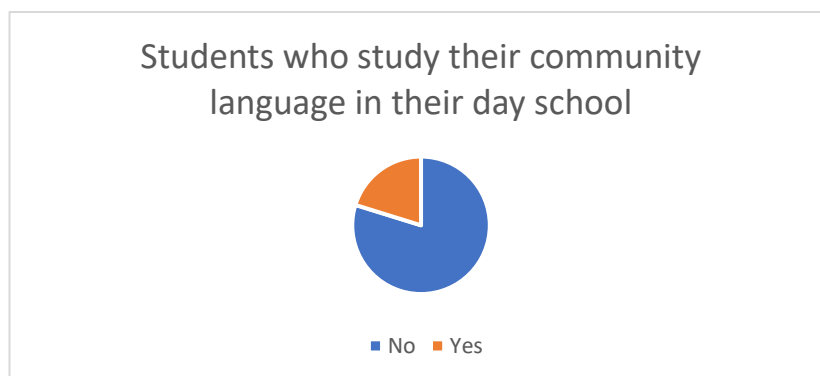


Figure 6. Students who study their community language in their day school

**Question 8: What is your country of birth?**

Most respondents to the survey were born in Australia (119). 25 additional countries were represented in the data with China as the country with the second highest number of respondents (12), followed by India (9).

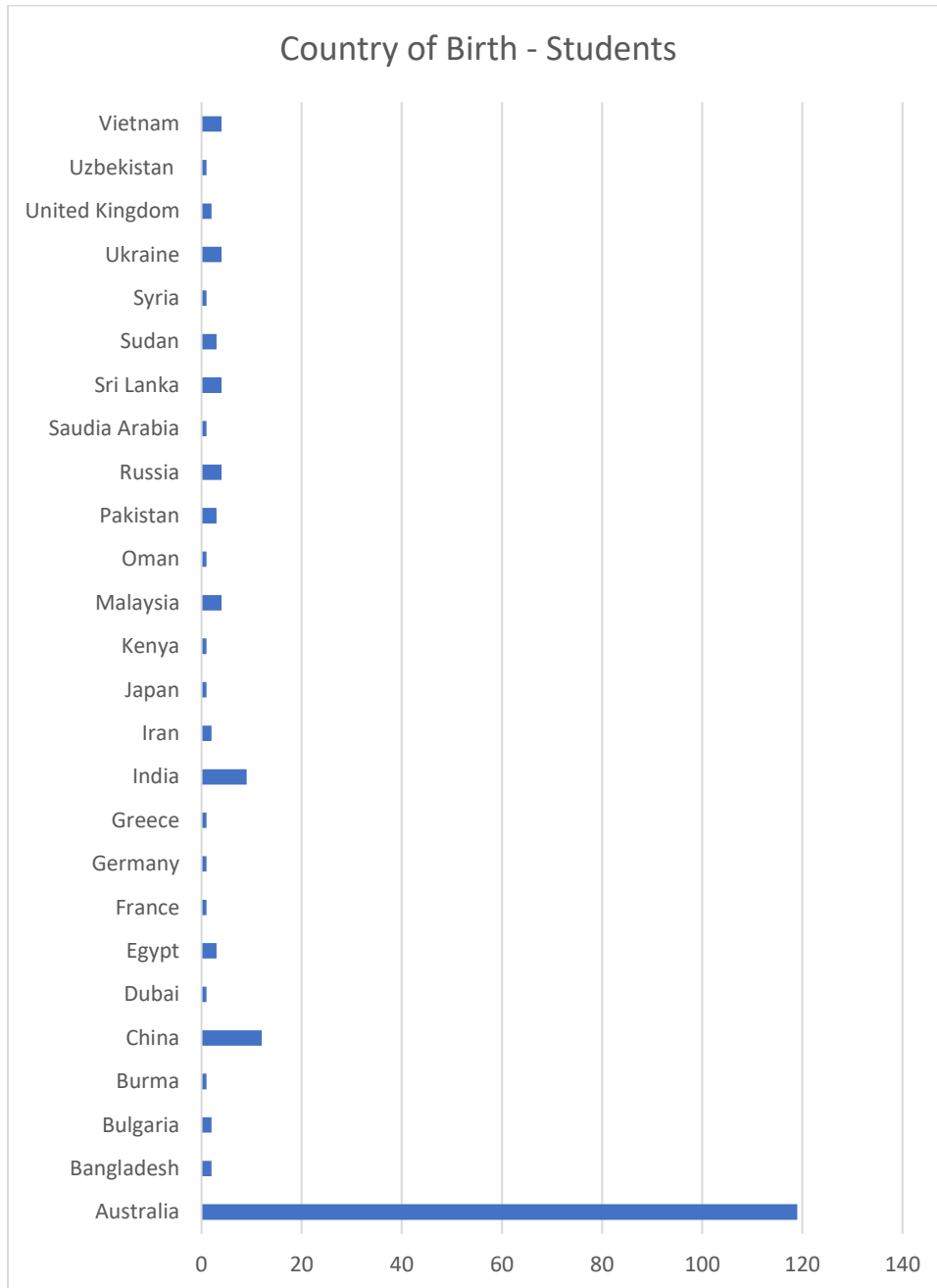


Figure 7. Country of birth – students

**Question 9: What is the country of birth of your mother/guardian?**

While the majority of students were born in Australia, China was the most common country of birth for their mothers/guardians (45), followed by India (23). There were 18 Australian-born mothers/guardians represented in the data. There were 43 countries of birth recorded overall.



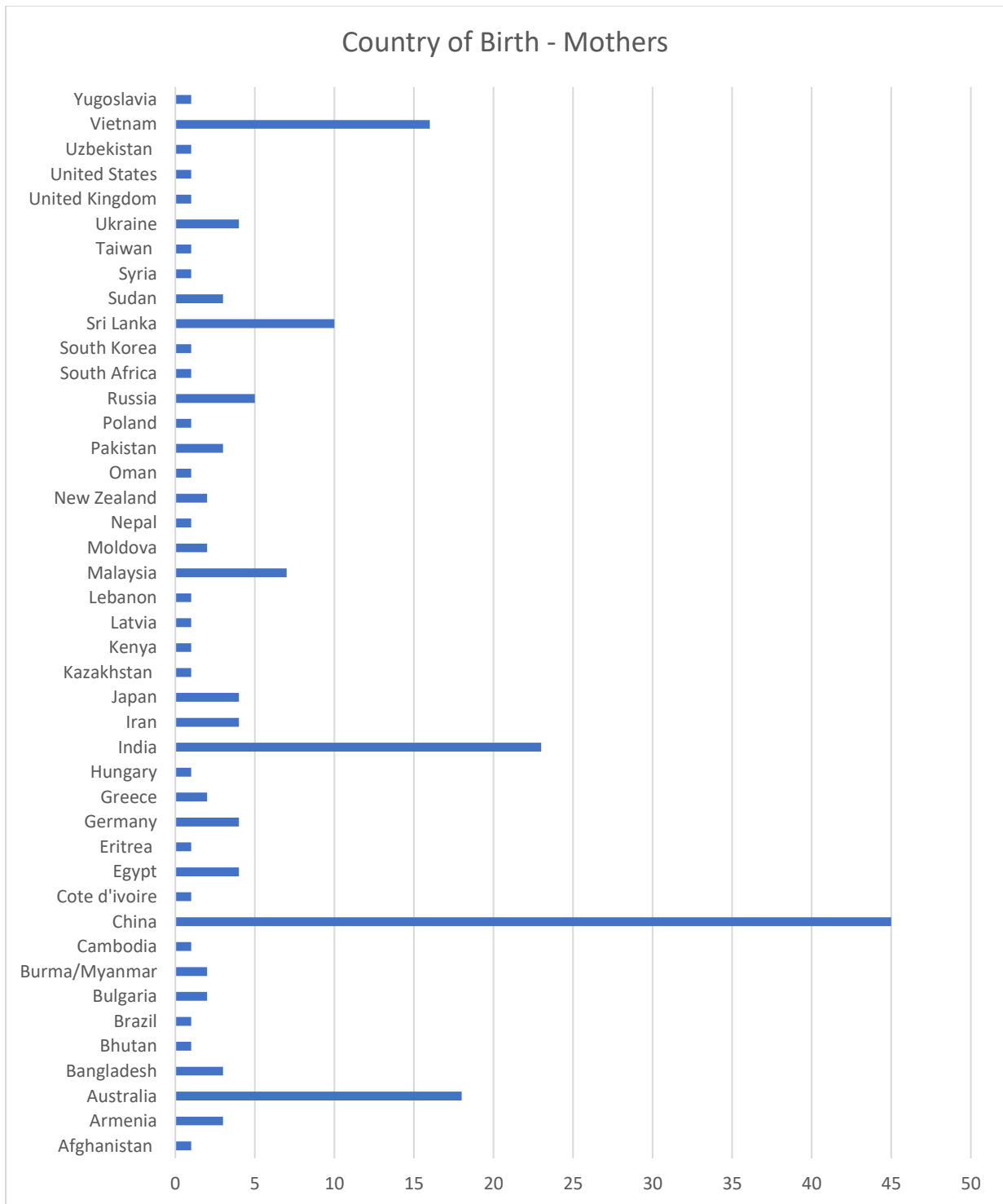


Figure 8. Country of Birth - Mothers

Question 10: What is the country of birth of your father/guardian?

The most common birthplace of the respondents' fathers/guardians was China (44), with Australia the second most common (29). The third most common was India (23). There were 41 different countries of birth of the fathers/guardians of respondents recorded.

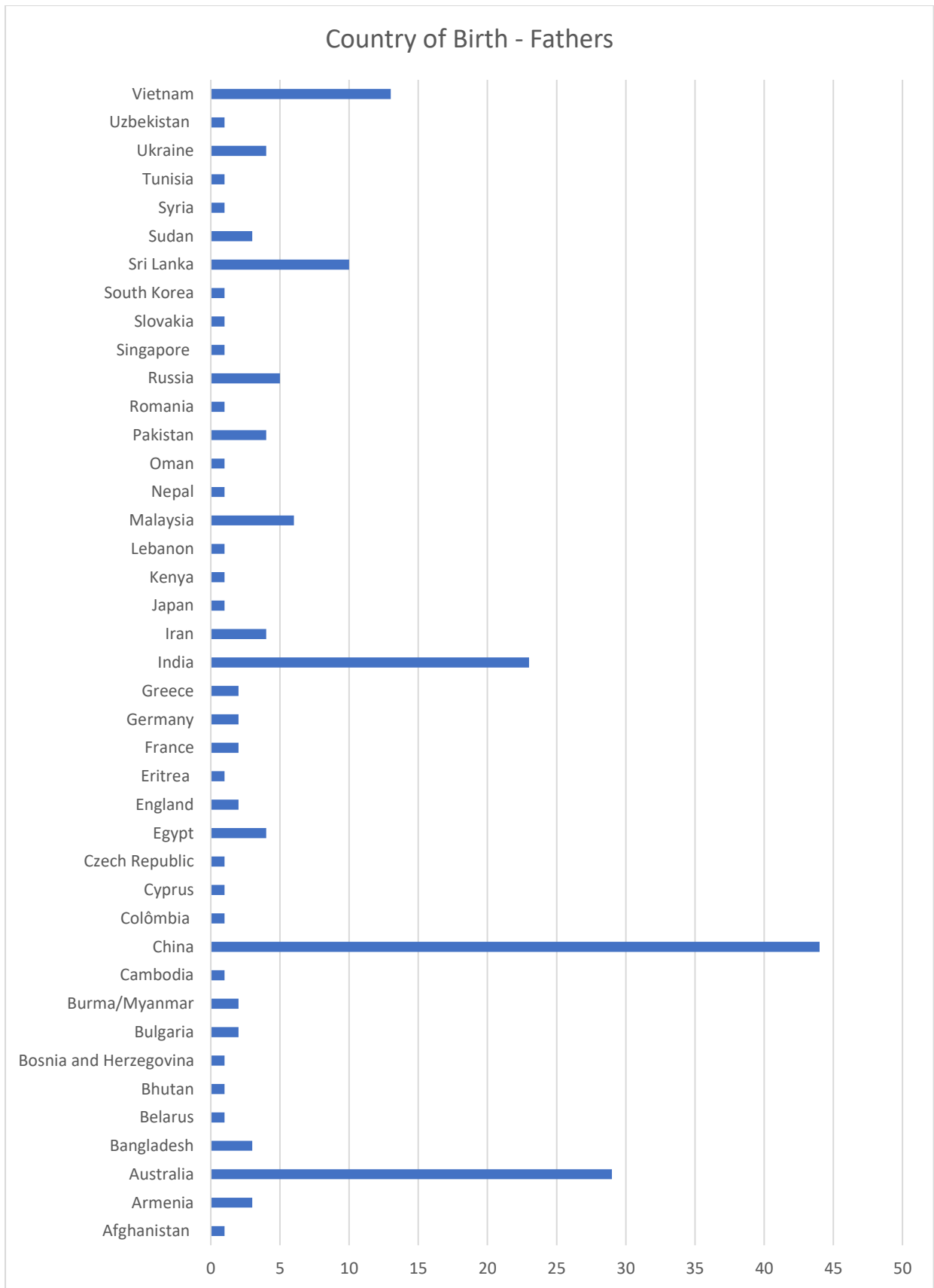


Figure 9. Country of Birth - Fathers

Question 11: What are the countries of birth of your grandfathers?

The survey asked respondents to record the countries of birth of their grandfathers, expecting that both paternal and maternal grandfathers' birth countries would be recorded. In fact, only 33 respondents listed 2 countries. Of the other 155 responses that only recorded one country, it may be that both of their grandfathers were born in the same country or that they misinterpreted the question and only recorded one of their grandfathers. Of note is that there were no responses that listed Australia as the birthplace of both grandfathers and only 11 responses that listed Australia as the birthplace of one grandfather.

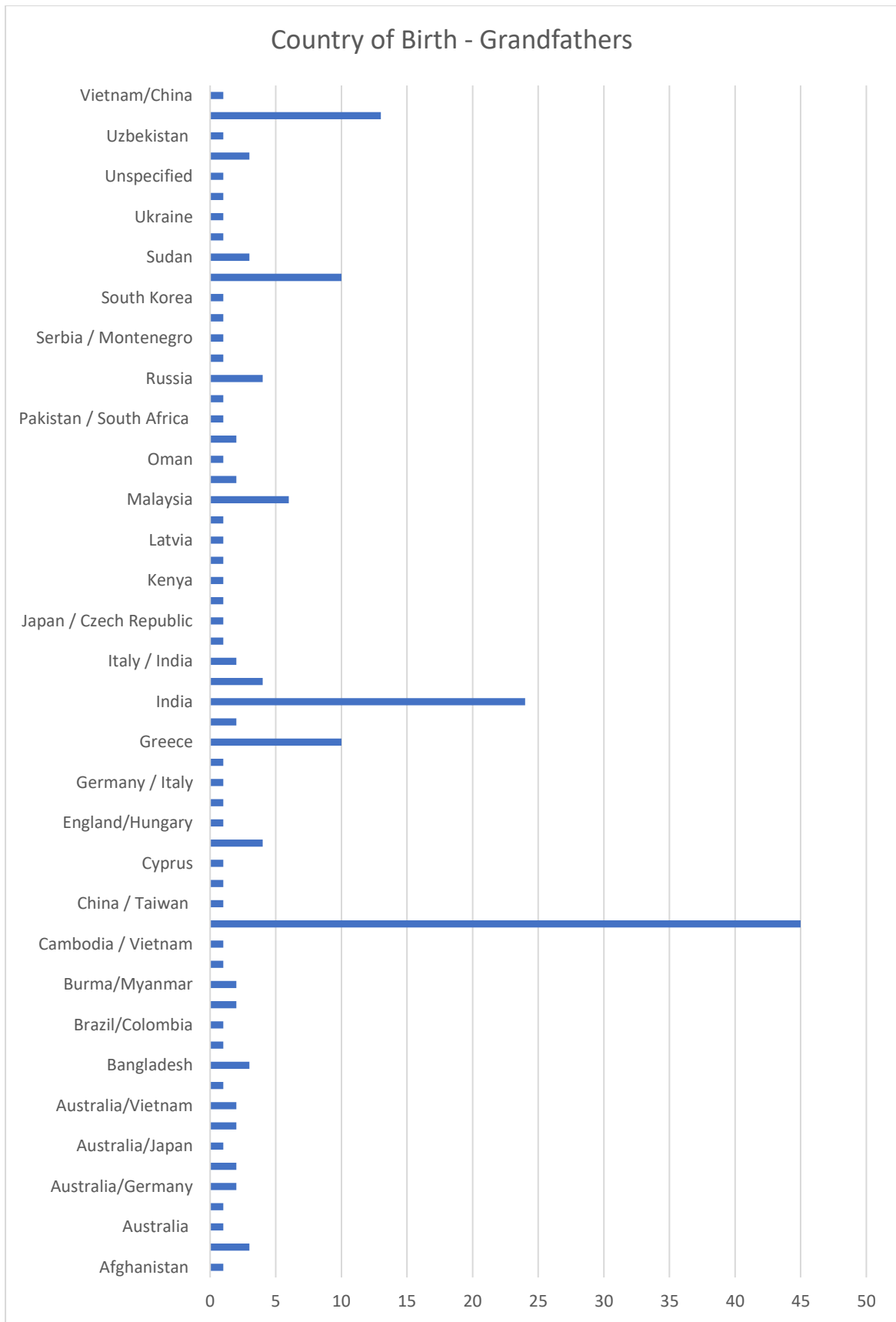


Figure 10. Country of birth – Grandfathers

Question 12: What are the countries of birth of your grandmothers?

As in the previous question, it was expected that the birthplaces of both paternal and maternal grandmothers would be recorded. Only 34 responses included 2 countries of birth. Only 19 respondents had at least one Australian grandmother, and as was the case with grandfathers, no responses indicated that both grandmothers were born in Australia.

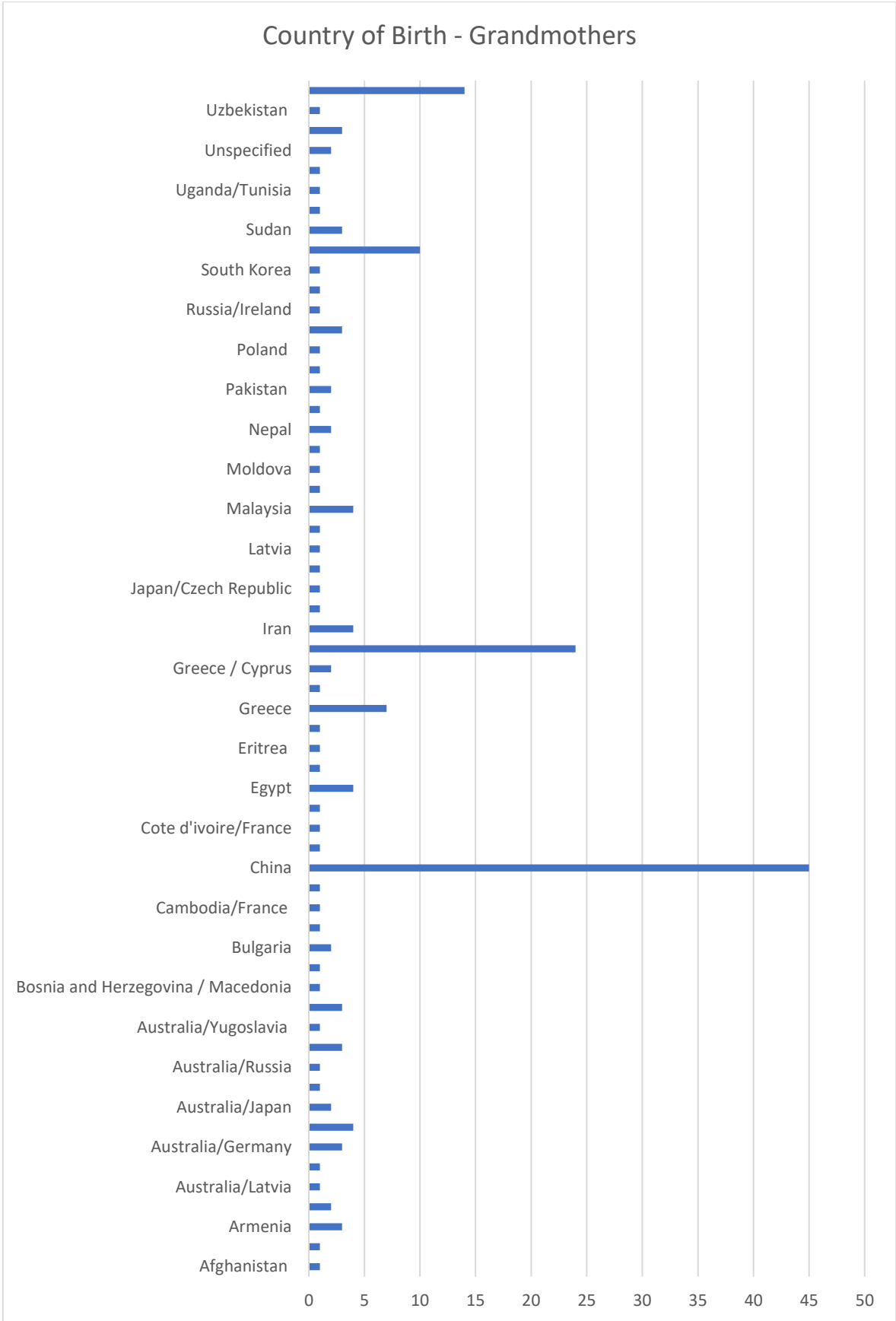


Figure 11. Country of birth - Grandmothers

IF YOU WERE BORN IN AUSTRALIA - answer Questions 13 and 14 and then go to Question 18

IF YOU WERE BORN OVERSEAS - skip Questions 13 and 14 then answer Questions 15-17

Question 13: Have you ever spent time living or going to school in a country where your community language is spoken?

The majority of respondents (61%) had never spent time living or going to school in a country where their community language is spoken, while 39 % had done so.

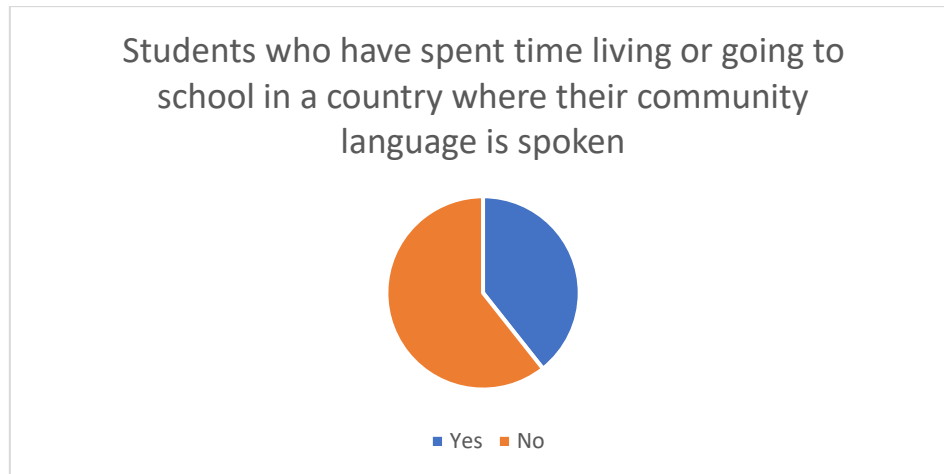


Figure 12. Students who have spent time living or going to school in a country where their community language is spoken

Question 14: If you were born in Australia and have spent time living or going to school in a country where your community language is spoken, how long have you spent there?

Of the 39% of respondents who had lived or attended school in a country where their community language is spoken, the majority of them had only spent between 1 and 6 months there. However, while 74 respondents answered 'no' to the previous question, 22 of these then specified an amount of time that they had, in fact spent living or going to school in a country where their community language is spoken. One possible explanation for this discrepancy is that respondents may have spent a short amount of time in the community language country but not considered this experience as 'living' or 'going to school'. However, one respondent answered no to question 13 and then claimed to have spent 6-7 years in China and another, who also answered no to question 13, claimed to have spent 5-6 years in Vietnam. These responses indicate that perhaps for a few younger students, there was some misinterpretation of some survey questions.

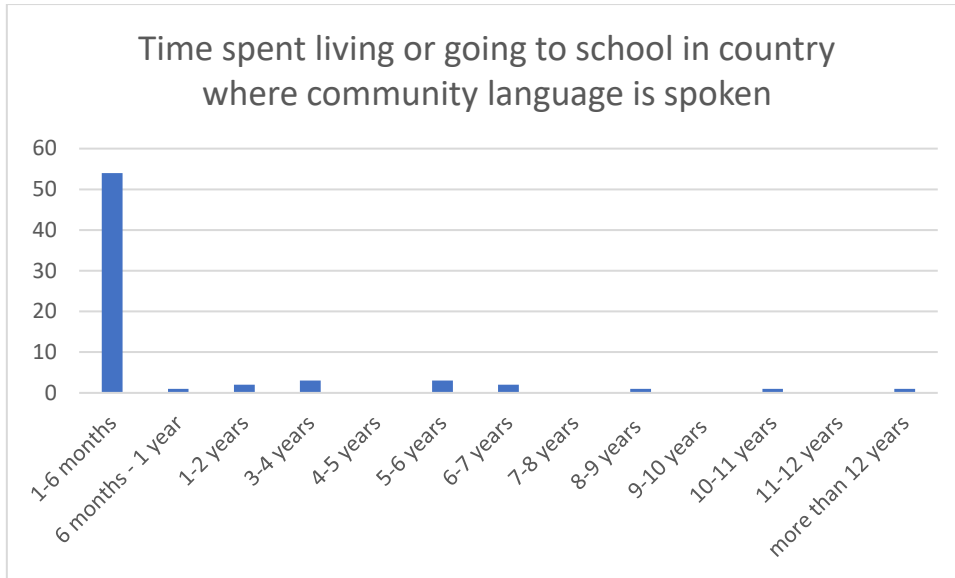


Figure 13. Time spent living or going to school in country where community language is spoken

IF YOU WERE BORN OVERSEAS - answer Questions 15-17

Question 15: In what year did you arrive in Australia?

Of the 69 students not born in Australia, the majority arrived after 2011 (61). Only 6 students arrived in Australia between 2004 and 2011 and two respondents did not answer this question or question 16.

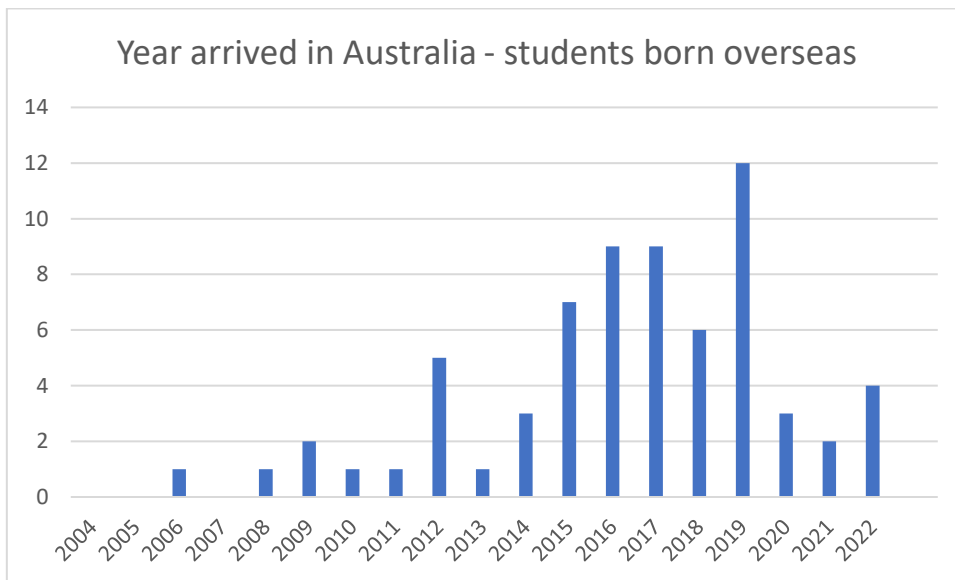


Figure 14. Year arrived in Australia – students born overseas



Question 16: How old were you when you arrived in Australia?

All respondents except for 1 indicated that they had arrived in Australia before the age of 18, with the vast majority arriving in Australia prior to the age of 12 (66).

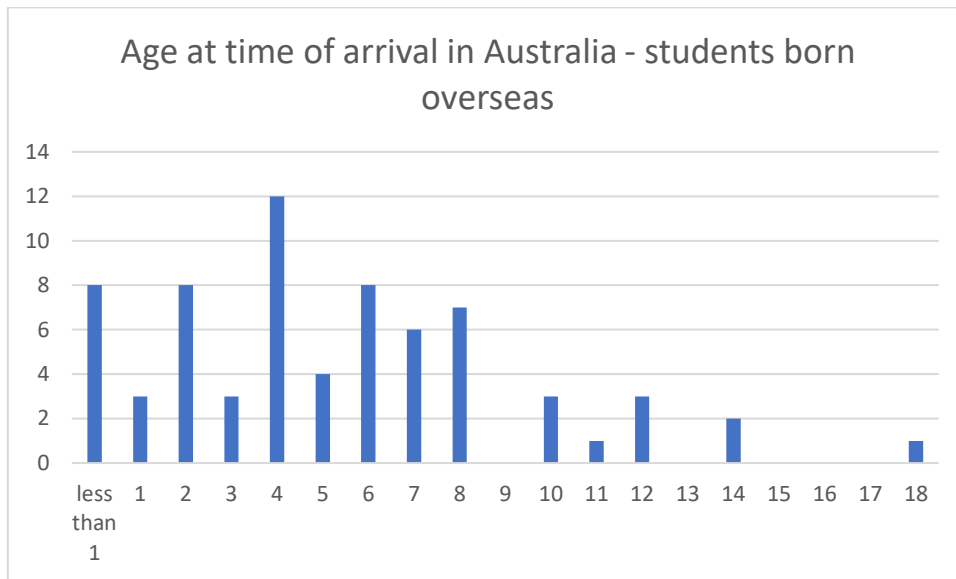


Figure 15. Age at time of arrival in Australia – students born overseas

Question 17: Which years of education did you complete at school overseas?

Figure 16 shows that 52 respondents indicated that they had completed some schooling in a country where their home language is spoken and of these the majority completed only the early years of schooling to Year 5. This correlates to the data collected in question 16 relating to the respondents age at time of arrival in Australia.

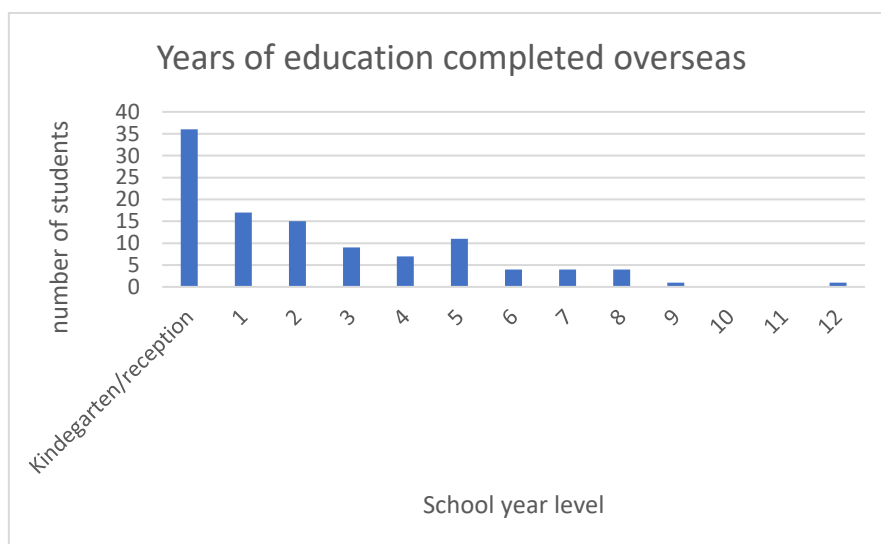


Figure 16. Years of education completed overseas

SECTION B - Language/s used at home and in communities

Question 18: List all the languages that you use at home (English/ community language/other/s)

There were 45 different languages recorded as responses to this question. 80 students spoke English and 1 or more additional language/s. 43 students listed 1 or more additional language, without listing English. Only 4 students recorded English only. Interestingly, there were 3 students who spoke 5 different languages.

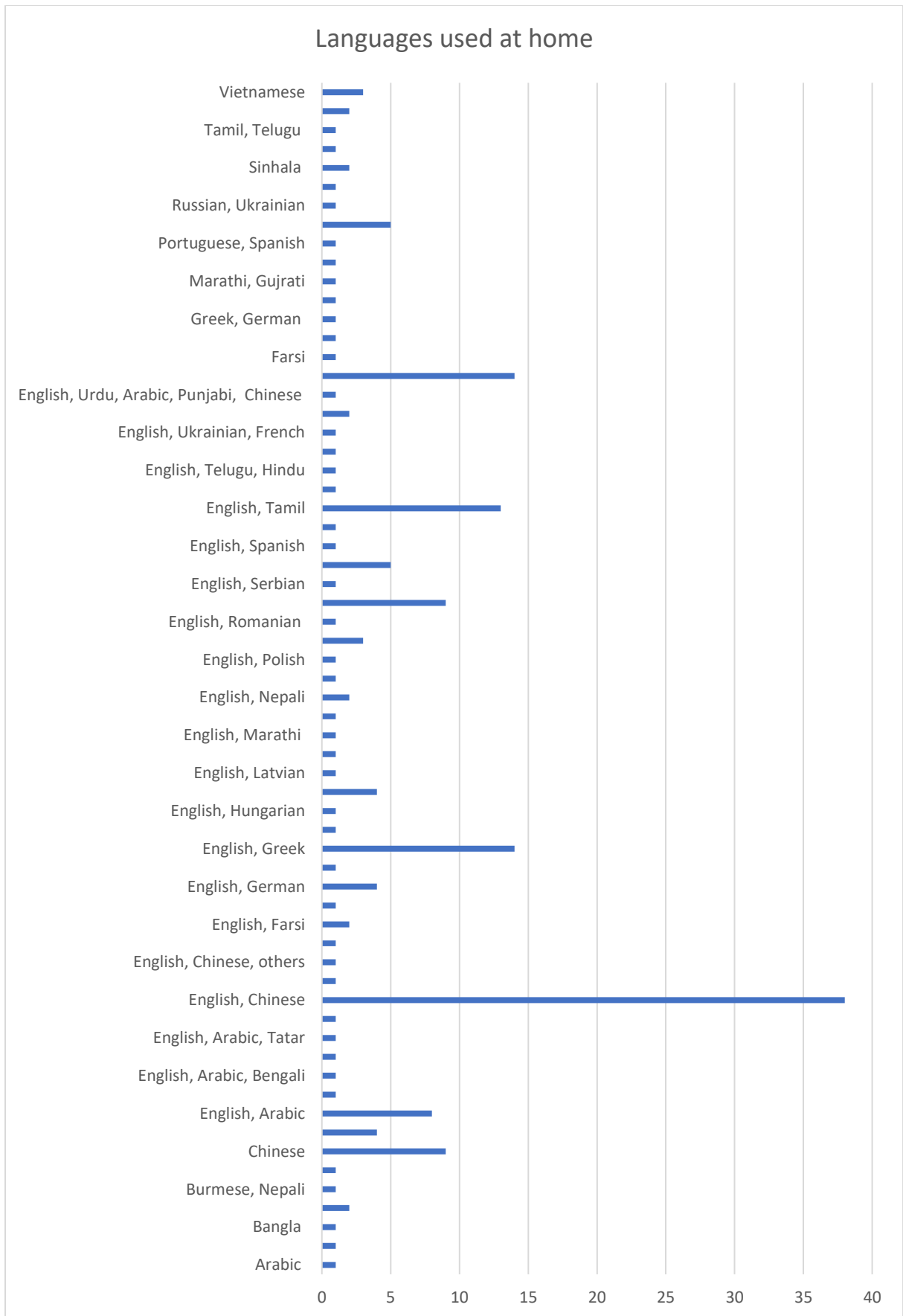


Figure 17. Languages used at home

Question 19: If you use your community language at home, with whom do you use it?

The majority of responses indicated that students use their community language with their entire family. There were 11 respondents who said that they only spoke their community language with their father and 5 responses that indicated that students only communicated in their community language with their mothers. Those who selected 'other' and provided more information indicated that they also spoke their community language with friends, family friends, community members, other extended family and one responded that the only person with whom they communicate using the community language is their Latvian grandmother.

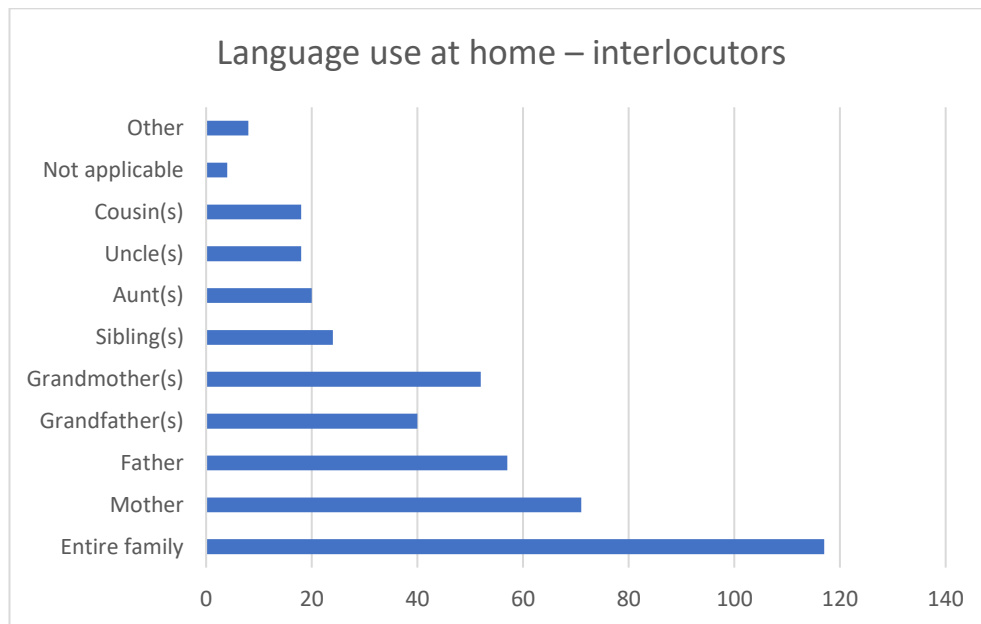


Figure 18. Language use at home – interlocutors

Question 20: If you use your community language at home, for what purpose/s do you use this language?

The most common domain of community language use was communicating with family members. Watching TV and reading books were the next most common domains of use, while listening to music, YouTube, the internet and chatting online also featured as significant domains of community language use. Only 5 respondents selected 'not applicable' and 'other' purposes included 'evangelism', 'religious', 'helping translate', '[communicating with] family from overseas', 'shopping and working', 'practice with grandmother online', 'to not forget the family's language', 'everything' and a student who gets to 'stay up late on Friday and Saturday nights' if s/he speaks his community language.

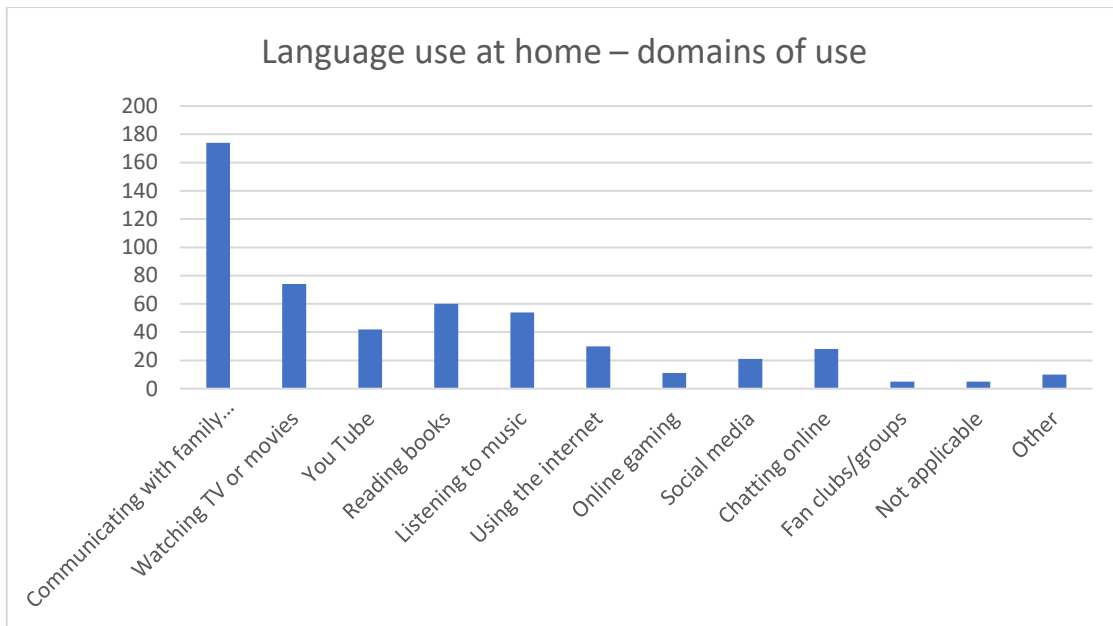


Figure 19. Language use at home – domains of use

Question 21: If you use *another* language at home, in addition to your community language and English, with whom do you use this language?

This question was included to ascertain with whom respondents spoke a third or subsequent language, in addition to English and the community language they are learning at a community language school. There were 106 respondents who selected 'not applicable' to indicate that they did not speak any other languages beyond English and their main community language. Of the 41 respondents who indicated that they spoke a third (or subsequent) language with their entire family, only 7 listed more than 2 languages at question 18. This indicates that there may have been some misinterpretation of this question by respondents.

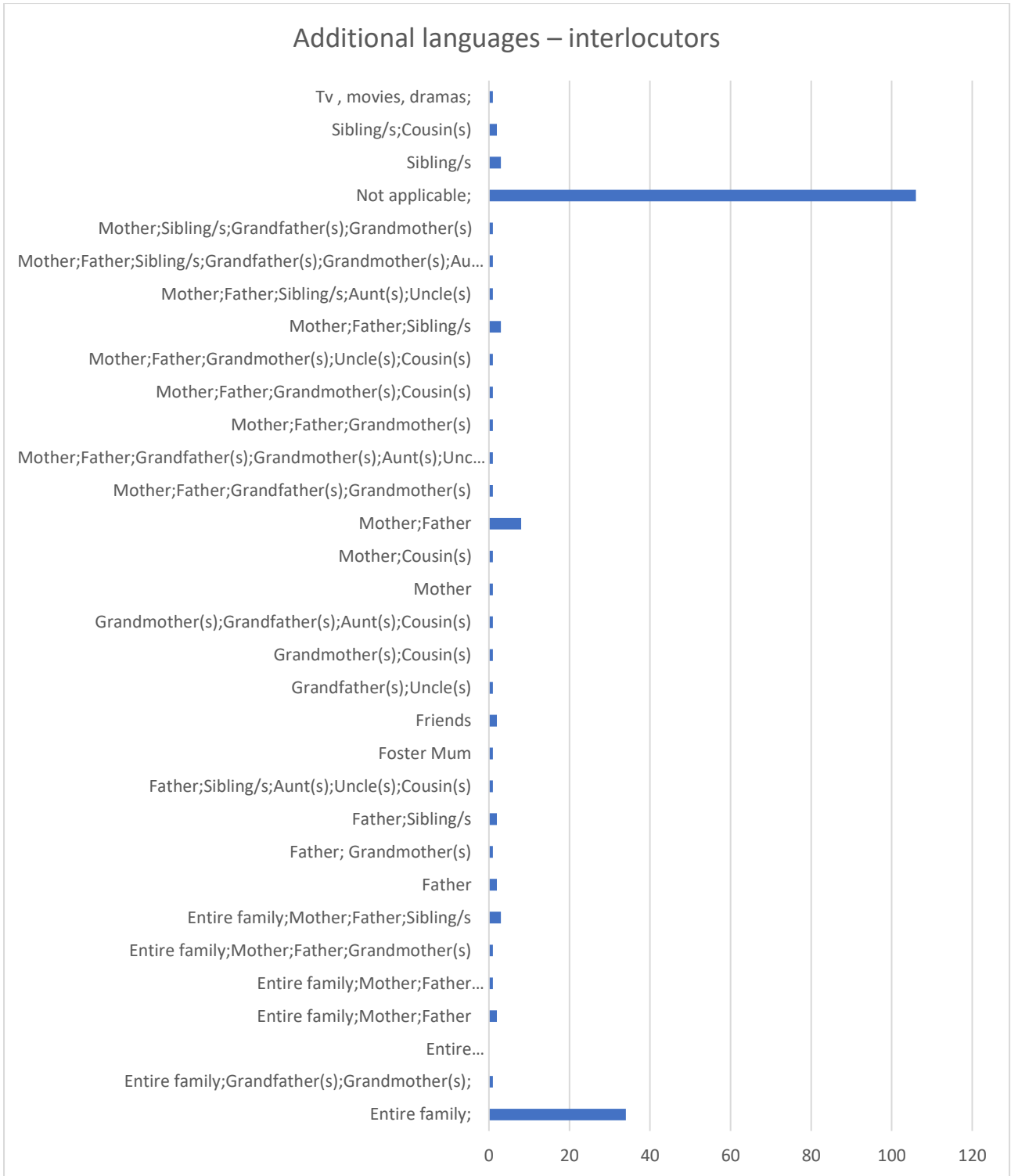


Figure 20. Additional languages – Interlocutors

SECTION C - Community language use at day school and community language school

Question 22: Do you use your community language at your day school?

Only 23% of respondents use their community language in their day school while 77% do not.

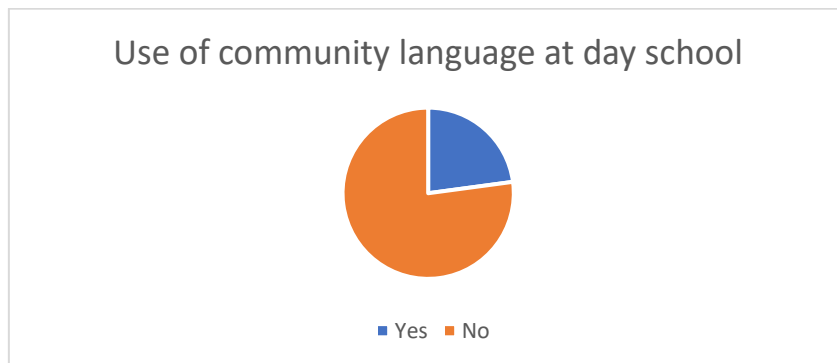


Figure 21. Use of community language at day school

Question 23: If you do use your community language at your day school, with whom do you use it?

Of those 43 respondents who use their community language during time spent at their day school, the majority use the language with their friends. 11% selected parents as interlocutors and this may indicate communication that takes place between parent and child at the beginning and end of the school day, special events such as excursions or parent-teacher conferences.

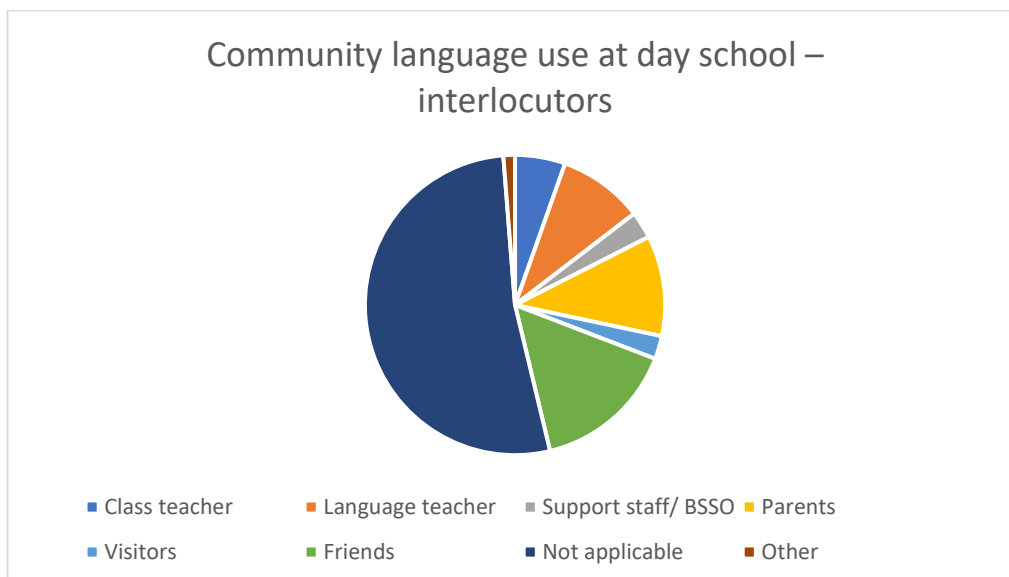


Figure 22. Community language use at day school – interlocutors

Question 24: When do you use your community language in your day school?

Respondents said that they mostly used their community language during class time but given the responses to question 23 above, it might be that community language use takes place among peers

rather than with teachers or in any formal or teaching and learning context. The second most common domain of community language use was the playground, again indicating per to peer communication.

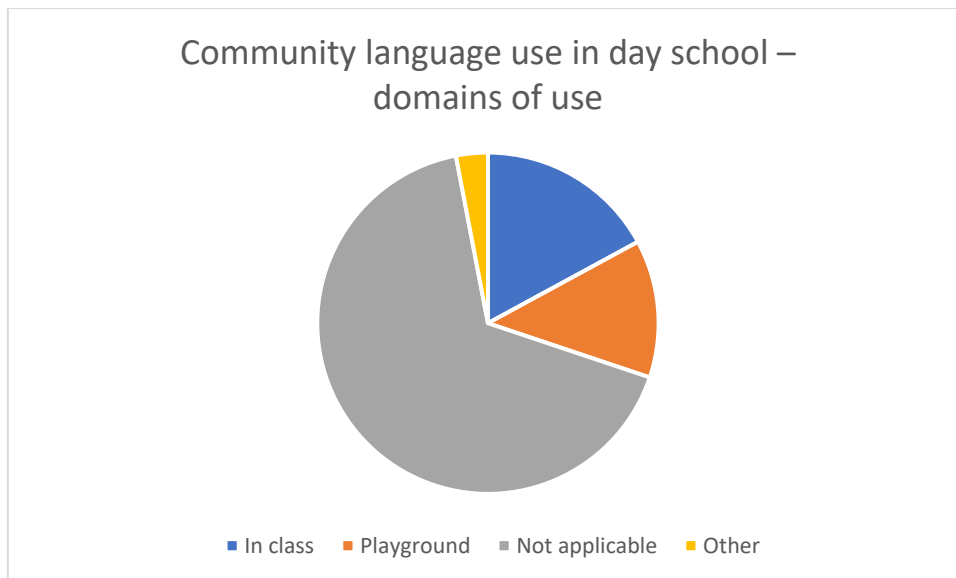


Figure 23. Community language use in day school – domains of use

Question 25: If you have studied your community language at a day school in Australia, select all the year levels that apply. If you have not studied your community language at your day school, select 'not applicable'.

147 responses indicated that respondents had not studied their community language at their day school. The remaining 41 responses were spread across year levels from kindergarten/reception to year 9. Respondents only selected one year level each, so it is not possible to ascertain whether any respondents were able to study their community language in their day school for more than 1 year.

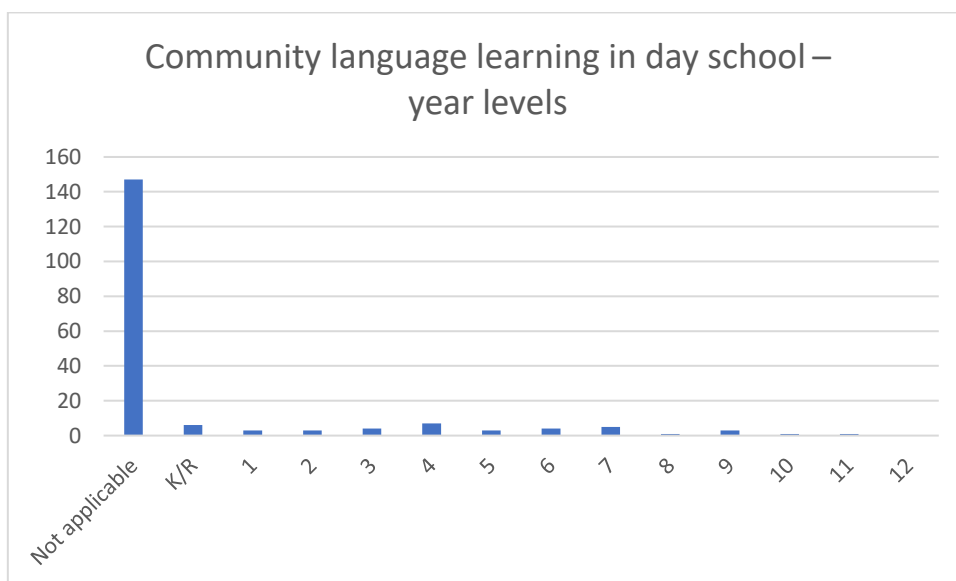


Figure 24. Community language learning in day school – year levels



Question 26: How many hours per week do you study your community language at your day school?

There are some discrepancies between responses to this question in relation to previous questions. In question 25, 147 students said that they did not study their community language in their day school, but the data received for this question indicates that only 109 students spend 0 hours studying their community language in their day school and 79 students spend between less than 1 hour to more than 5 hours studying their community language in their day school. Furthermore, Figure 6 reported that 150 of the 188 respondents did not study their community language in their day school at the time of survey.

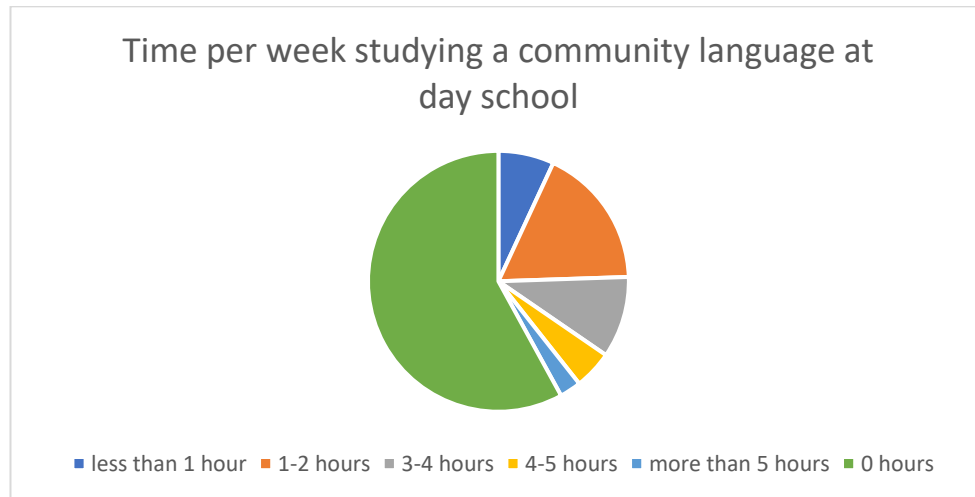


Figure 25. Time per week studying a community language at day school

Question 27: Write 4 or 5 sentences about a time when you used all of your languages (English and your community language) to participate in an exchange, conversation, interaction with another person or people. How did it make you feel?

This question was designed to encourage respondents to reflect on the experience of using all of the languages in their linguistic repertoire. 47 respondents did not answer this question and a further 40 simply reported an episode of community language use, without reflection. 8 responses were not related to the questions asked. 78 responses indicated multilingual language use was an overwhelmingly positive experience, using words such as 'happy', 'proud', 'confident', 'connected' and 'comfortable. Some responses were as follows:

*I used Mandarin to talk with my family and sometimes said words in English. It made me feel happy because I was able to fluently speak both languages.*

*I have used both Tamil and English while discussing a Tamil movie with my family, it gives me satisfaction that I know my community language and English, it helps me to understand the cultural background of my parents. Whenever I go back to Sri Lanka, I can communicate with all my relatives in Tamil.*

*Talking English to my friends makes me feel happy. Using Polish with my cousin makes me really happy. Being able to speak Polish makes me proud.*

*I use my community language mostly when I'm talking to my grandparents. They only understand less complex words in English so I use small words in English within a sentence. My grandmother likes this approach very much as in this way she says that she can learn new English words which makes me so happy.*

*I feel helpful when I use Vietnamese to remind my grandfather to take his medicines, and comfortable and close to greet my grandparents in Vietnamese.*

*I use Arabic in conversation with my family, particularly mother and father. I also use it to converse with my grandma, aunts, uncles and cousins. When my family friends come over, I generally talk to them in Arabic as well. The ability to speak Arabic gives me a sense of belonging and inclusion.*

*It made me feel capable and confident but best of all it made me feel included in all the small groups functioning within the large group. Misunderstandings are avoided on this way and other people visiting or interacting with our community feels understanding and inclusiveness as well. This way they see and experience our community traits without feeling threatened or left out. It helps the younger generation on the community keep in touch with the older members in harmony.*

A small number of students (4) reported feelings of confusion, difficulty and nervousness in relation to the use of multiple languages. Some responses follow:

*Confused to switch between languages and know when to speak English and when to speak German.*

*It is tricky to use Korean.*

*...I get a bit nervous because I am scared that I won't be able to pronounce some Vietnamese words right.*

A further 11 students reported that multilingual language use was simply a normal part of communication, as per the following response:

*The English language helped me listen to conversations and chat with friends and communicate with other people. This made me feel normal since I know the English language. The Russian language is used to speak with my family. This made me feel normal because I know the language.*

The final two questions were included as part of the recruitment process for Stages 2 and 3 of the data collection.

Question 28: Do you wish to be considered for Stages 2 (an individual interview with the researchers) and 3 (youth forum) of the project? The Project Information Sheet describes what's involved.

Question 29: If you would like to be considered for an interview, please provide your email address so that we can contact you.

## Discussion

As indicated above, despite efforts made by the research team and officers of CLSSA to increase participation in the survey, it remained low. For this reason, it is difficult to draw conclusions that are meaningful more broadly across the student population. It would be highly desirable that the survey be opened again, particularly in language-specific groupings. This would also enable community languages teachers to invite whole class groups of students to participate, thereby strengthening recruitment of participants. With a stronger response rate, it would be possible to establish patterns that would provide CLSSA with a profile of the students within the community languages program as a whole. The possibility of capturing survey data from language-specific groups would provide profiling of groups of students learning specific languages. This is in line with the principle of differentiation established in the Review of Ethnic Schools (currently, community language schools) (Scarino, Kohler with Loechel, 2018), that recognises the history and stage of provision of each community language offered in South Australia.

Based on the data captured in response to the survey, it is evident that most of the participants were born in Australia. Overwhelmingly, they are learning community languages to maintain their home language and culture. They have strong family ties in their home countries and engage with diverse media in their specific languages. In other words, the participants live their language and culture actively in their home and community, both in South Australia and in their home countries.

Also evident is the limited opportunities for these students to use their language and cultural knowledge in their mainstream school learning environment. Furthermore, the students appear not to be used to being asked about their multilingual capability, even though it is a rich personal, intellectual and experiential resource.

In summary, it remains highly valuable to survey community language students both in general and in specific groupings. As such, it would be desirable to review the survey instrument based on its use in the present project, and to use it in a revised form to capture the profiles of community language learners. It is vital that all stakeholders and providers in the community languages environments begin their consideration of any aspect of provision with a strong understanding of who the students are and how they perceive their experience of learning and living their community languages and cultures, and of being multilingual.

## Analysis of the qualitative data

The analysis of the qualitative data ranged across the in-depth interviews and the workshop and panel discussions that formed the youth forum. From the thematic analysis five themes were identified:

1. That the multilingual students manage multiple social contexts and move between them with ease, affording possibilities of multiple memberships and belonging and strategic use of their multilingual repertoires.
2. That the multilingual students develop and have available expanded domains of knowledge and knowing
3. That the students' multilingual capability is integral to their identities, affiliations and feelings of belonging and inclusion, and are a source of pride.
4. That the multilingual students have heightened meta-awareness and are able to decentre, notice multiple perspectives, see themselves *in relation to* others, with questioning and some criticality.
5. That the multilingual experiences and capabilities of these students is invisible to the mainstream.

Each theme is discussed and illustrated with extensive quotations from participating students. The treatment of the themes was designed to reflect the aim throughout the study; to give maximum voice to the students. Each theme is discussed in turn.

### **Theme 1: That the multilingual students manage multiple social contexts and move between them with ease, affording possibilities of multiple memberships and belonging and strategic use of their multilingual repertoires.**

All students, at both primary and secondary levels appreciate that their multilingual capability expands their social horizons; they have opportunities to interact and exchange meanings with a wider range of people. To do so they have learnt how to *manage multiple and diverse social contexts*. Context matters in communication for the exchange of genuine meanings. The context of communication includes the participants, their diverse histories of experiences, their roles and relationships to one another, the setting in which communication takes place, the concepts/ideas discussed and their positioning in the interaction.

The notion of wider opportunities afforded by having a multilingual capability was expressed by students as follows:

*When I'm travelling and I meet people I can hold a meaningful conversation, you find the best interactions... one time me and mum were driving in the middle of nowhere; we were in Oman. Mum was driving and we got lost. We were looking for this one place and Google Maps is very weak in some places, and we couldn't find it. And we found these people and I was able, because I'd studied it and learnt how to speak a bit more widely and because I was quick to adapt to their version of speaking, I was able to ask them for help and the people took us to the place, drove us there. We were following behind and as we got there, they said: we'll take you back home for lunch. And we had to deny them three or four or five times before they*

*actually left it, because we felt it's not normal, but they kept inviting us to lunch, to come to the house – and it happens all the time because you're having these conversations with people, and you get to know them on a deeper level.*

[Secondary student of Arabic]

In this narrative account, the student's capability to interact in Arabic (and knowing the different varieties of Arabic language use) enabled him to problem solve and experience the kind of hospitality that occurs in this context and knowing how to accept or decline the invitation to lunch. He appreciates the greater depth of knowledge about people that comes from being multilingual.

Another student appreciated the distinctiveness of his language and feels a real sense of comfort and ease in using it especially at home; it is a part of 'being at home', a feeling that contrasts with being at school or in public:

*Me, personally, I use it at home, so when I come home, I basically never speak English. Almost my whole family is Hungarian, was raised in Australia (Sydney) but really here I try to use it ... as much as I can. At school it's like a kind of secret language. It's a unique language and not very many people know it at all and it's very under cover, but it's just like, you're not scared to speak Hungarian with someone like your sister, for example. If you're out in public, you won't ever meet many others here (who speak Hungarian). To be honest, I speak Hungarian all the time when I can; me, personally, I only speak English when I have to.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

This student relishes speaking Hungarian at home and appreciates the place of his Hungarian language at school and in public. He is able to maintain his circle of Hungarian speakers in exchanging with the wider family and friends in Hungary. At the same time, he is aware of the use of his languages in different contexts. As he stated:

*It totally depends on where I am and what kind of relationship I have with the person. If it is someone who has Hungarian background, then I'll say my name correctly and not how people say my name in English, but if someone is a stranger to me and doesn't know Hungarian, then I would just introduce myself in English, not how the Hungarians say it.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

The nuanced understanding of context enhances the exchange of meanings. The use of the multilingual capability of this student extends in a private way to the context of school:

*Sometimes in math classes when it's like there's a task to do like I can't do it, I do it in Hungarian; like, I count in my head because it's easier for me.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

The meaningfulness of developing home languages and learning to become multilingual is evident in the experience of a student who travels for five hours to attend Russian school. He feels comfortable and confident in the circle of friends he has at the community language school:

*I can see all my friends. I feel more comfortable with these friends. Maybe because everyone (at the community language school) knows Russian. It's a kind of comfortable place.*

[Primary student of Russian]

One of the students reflects, in a most expressive way, about the wider circle of communication that his multilingual capability affords; he stated:

*It makes me feel like superhuman in the way that I can speak two languages because learning one language, it's your own world, but learning another language is like you're travelling with your language on Mars or something they speak; like if you were trapped in our own planet that speaks that one language, you're never going to know what's outside... It allows me to communicate with more people in the world, in like different places; it allows me to speak to more people than someone who can only speak one language.*

[Primary student of Chinese]

He renders the idea of multiple linguistic and cultural contexts by travelling to another planet and acknowledging the capability to communicate with more people and in different contexts. The context of family is a prevalent one. As a student of Vietnamese reflected:

*I get to spend more time learning my language. So, when I get to go to Vietnam I can speak to my grandparents. They'd be pretty sad if their granddaughter can't speak to them in their language.*

[Primary student of Vietnamese]

Operating in expanded social contexts as noted by the students also requires them to assume different roles within the family and beyond, as they navigate or mediate the communication and exchange of meaning. Some examples are as follows:

*When my dad watches TV, sometimes I'll translate back to Chinese for him. Some things are lost in translation so it's quite hard to interpret.*

[Primary student of Chinese]

This Chinese student becomes the mediator between television in English and his father's Chinese. In the process, he comes to appreciate that translation can also bring a loss of meaning.

A student of Chin Falam (and a speaker of Mizo, Hindi and English) comments on her role in mediating meaning in the family; she stated:

*At home I would start in Falam, and if I don't know what I'm trying to say, I will use Hindi and then add English.*

[Secondary student of Falam]

She moves across all the languages in her repertoire to mediate meanings. She also plays the role of translator, as she explained:

*They use me as a translator in everything. I'm very careful in what I say. My parents trust me a lot with translating because they know I can speak that language. It's a very big responsibility.'*

[Secondary student of Falam]

She mediates meanings with apparent ease, but the experience also leads her to reflect on the enormous sense of responsibility that she must assume.

Beyond the context of family, she is also a mediator at school, using the Mizo language:

*As for Mizo, I have this little guy in my school; he calls me 'sister' so I look after him as like my brother, and so I would communicate with him in Mizo; if he needs something or if he needs help with something, or if he gets in trouble, or if he has a meeting, so the teacher would call me... I feel great. I feel so good to be able to like, you know, use different languages.*

[Secondary student of Falam]

There is a deep sense of satisfaction in mediating meaning across languages and cultures, but there is equally a deep sense of responsibility.

The role of grandparents and the extended family was frequently recognised by the students. They noted their relationship with them and as they reflected on the potential loss. One student commented as follows:

*The (language) that is at most risk is Gujarati. I've started trying to practice a bit more, trying to get mum to talk to me a bit more, because I've gone from being able to speak just that language and it is slowly lagging away, and the older generation, my great Aunts and grandparents, as they sort of pass away it gets less and less used because I live far away from my family; my family is in the UK... so that is the one that is at risk and that is the one I am trying to preserve now. I'll continue and try to teach my kids as much as I can.'*

[Secondary student of Arabic]

Worth noting also is the ease with which all the students discuss their ability to exchange, manage, navigate, mediate meanings in diverse contexts. They draw upon their multilingual capability in different ways. The contexts of use are actual (at home, day school, community language school, in sports, in travel) as well as virtual (in exchanges with family and friends). In all these exchanges in the different contexts, students experience a real sense of connection; they assume different roles and positionings, and it is the experiences of these exchanges that lead them to reflect, with nuance and sensitivity, on being multilingual.

Several students explained their sense of ease and connection in being multilingual:

*Just being multilingual, knowing the language makes me feel very connected to the country, to the culture and makes me feel proud...*

*Knowing that there's other people who relate to you (i.e. fellow community language students)... that's my Latvian school friend, and you can talk to them and they will understand... and whenever things are happening and people are talking in Latvian, and something happens, we just sort of look at each other, and if something funny happens, we can look at each other and laugh because we both understand it and it's like a connection.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

The sense of connection brings with it a sense of mutual understanding, without having to explain, because both participants know and understand the language and culture.

Another student expresses his satisfaction in being multilingual:

*...there's even a saying in Hungarian. I'll just translate it: that how many languages you can speak, that's how many personalities you are basically.*

*...And then there's also the sense that if you know how to communicate with people who are different and, you know, because you know the different languages, you are more empathetic; you understand more that there are different ways of speaking.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

There is a sense here of an expanded repertoire of communication as well as a deeper understanding of the processes of communication.

Another student appreciated the possibilities and flexibility that come from being multilingual. He commented that life without his language would be:

*...quite mundane; it would be very boring. I like to listen to music in those languages. I like to watch movies in those languages. I wouldn't be able to do that as well. I'd need subtitles all the time. My eyes would be glued to the subtitles whereas now I can have the subtitles, but I come in and out. I wouldn't be able to make connections with people as well. It would be a very one-way life. It wouldn't be very full. I would not be able to make as many connections and relationships.*

[Secondary student of Arabic]

The *direct* connection with meanings in the arts and with people are foregrounded here. His multilingual practices enable a stronger expression of self. He expands on the joy of connections in the description of an experience which he narrates, as captured in a photo:

*It's a weird photo. It's in Oman. It's at the top of a mountain. It's in an enclave, the UAE comes up and stretches out and there's an enclave at the top and it's Oman. We've been to Oman already and we fell in love with it and so were going to go back and we're going to go to a different part so we went and the people there are so nice, so lovely and because I'd been studying it, I'd studied it for a semester, I'd done stage one Arabic and we were stuck overseas at that point so we'd been for about 5 months there and I was doing online school and because I'd been practicing it so much I was able to make connections and talk to people and we took this boat ride which went through the Omani fjords ... we could see dolphins and everything... I was talking to the boat driver, and I started talking to him about everything and he was telling me about life in that place, he was telling me about life here, everything. When we had gone past previously, I found out that that was the home of frankincense and frankincense is a great smell... how much do you want? Do you want a kilo? I can get it for you. And I only want a little bit, I don't even know if I can take it back to Australia because of customs. I only want a little bit to take back and he says: leave it with me. And he says 'you know what' when we finally get back, because I've been speaking to him this whole time, he shows me everything and gives me an in depth tour ... in an hour come back, I'm going to take you to this place, I have no idea who this guy is, he's in his 40s, [mum gave permission to go but didn't go with me] he bought me tea and took me up to this beautiful view point. He didn't want anything, he had no expectation of anything, he bought me 3 whole bags of frankincense which we are still burning today at home; we make incense out of it. And that was all because I'd studied and practiced, and I was able to use that language and I was able to make a connection with someone which meant that that day was fantastic, and I got to do so much more than I expected, and it made that trip so much better.*

[Secondary student of Arabic]



For some of the students their multilingual capability gives them a wider set of memberships of groups that bring new interests, experiences, and well-being. For some, being a part of the community language program provides a distinctive membership:

*I feel like knowing the language quite well, it definitely makes me feel a bit more, like, included in a way... so I could understand what people were saying and, yeah, it makes me feel more included and it gives me a sense of belonging.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

The students use their multilingual capability, both authentically and strategically. The *lives* of these students are rich in multilingual and intercultural experiences and because they live multilingual lives, often accompanied by reflection on experiences, it becomes authentic to their everyday living. This authenticity may be at times complex and at other times satisfying. As one student noted:

*It's sometimes really hard and sometimes really fun (to be multilingual) because if someone is upset, you're like OK... just sometimes you talk about it in other languages and so you didn't get upset but like you also cool off... you're really mad at something because someone said something about you and then you just switch language... as it's just talking to myself; calm down and stuff, so that they don't know that I am mad, so I calm myself down and I come back to the situation. It can be really hard too being multilingual sometimes 'cause sometimes, it just doesn't translate everything in here, so it takes a lot of time.'*

[Secondary student of Falam]

She uses her language strategically to manage complex situations. If there is a difficult situation she switches to another language, taking time to calm down and trying to manage. Translation can be a solution in seeking to mediate meanings, however, she appreciates that not all ideas or thoughts are readily translatable.

In summary, being multilingual enables students to manage, often with heightened sensitivity, authentic experiences in a range of contexts. They mediate the exchange of meanings, be this in complex or fun situations. They value this capability and use it in strategic ways. They appreciate the possibilities that open up for them – additional experiences in diverse contexts, additional relationships, additional understandings and additional perspectives that strengthen both their communication and their sensitivity towards what is entailed in communicating across languages and cultures. Many of the students are themselves mediators of meanings. As one of the students recognised, reflecting on seeing himself as multilingual:

*...it means you can say whatever you want whenever you want because you can always switch languages, so you can be quite frank about your opinions. It also means I can speak to so many more people, and that's the biggest thing. It opens so many more pathways because no matter who it is, it could be someone who's come to visit their family in Australia and they're very old and only speak their language. If I can speak more languages, I can speak to them; even if it's basic, I can gain that relationship with them, and it builds relationships and connections with people.*

Are you proud of this?

Yes!

[Secondary student of Arabic]

## **Theme 2: That the multilingual students develop and have available expanded domains of knowledge and knowing.**

For most of the students, being multilingual means that they develop and have available to them expanded domains of knowledge and knowing. This is only natural because language is always used to interpret, create and exchange meanings about subject matter knowledge in other words, language is always used to language about something, and this is what we call 'knowledge'. Furthermore, as discussed in relation to Theme 1, because they belong to and move between multiple linguistic and cultural worlds, these worlds also offer distinctive knowledges. The expanded experiences of interpreting, creating and exchanging meanings in diverse contexts in their daily life at home, at school and in communities, enables them to become acute and knowing observers, participants, and analysers of these experiences, thereby expanding their knowledge and understanding, and the application or use or transfer of knowledge.

The domains of knowledge and knowing invoked by the students include cultural knowledge and practices, including knowledge of cultural and interactional norms; religion; history and politics; other disciplines such as Mathematics, literature, stories and especially moral tales, and knowledge of Language itself and language systems.

With respect to cultural knowledge and practices, it is not just a replication of practices that students become interested in. As one of the students explained:

*... it's kind of this past thing that's quite far off... but it's not really because even though these ancestors of mine aren't alive anymore, it (cultural knowledge) travels on with culture and things. I've got so many blankets and things, items, and cultural artefacts. My ancestors once used these things and had a connected meaning to it. And I wonder how that affects me. And like even, my last name's not Latvian and people kind of think: 'how are you Latvian?' And then you kind of explain that my dad and grandmother and my great grandparents. And I guess because I've learned about that and gone to Latvian schools.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

This student understands that the cultural practices that he has experienced are not just about the past, but rather they travel to the present, embodied in people. He appreciates the artefacts but, more importantly, knows that these artefacts held distinctive meaning or significance for their users. And he raises questions about the impact of this transmission over time on him. He has also learned the practice of weaving as new knowledge and skill. He also recognises that his Latvian culture has expanded his musical repertoire, as he described:

*My music wouldn't have taken off. I play lots of different instruments now. And before I went to Latvian school, I only really played piano.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

He appreciates that his knowledge extends well beyond culture *per se*. As he noted:

*Being Latvian is not just the culture and things. It's who we are as Latvians. We highly regard freedom... for us... if the occupation had never happened, we wouldn't cherish our culture as much. We had to fight for our culture to keep it alive. It's like in our brains that we have to keep culture going.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

His reflection on culture extends his cultural knowledge to an understanding the impact of history and the struggle for freedom as a marker of a people. He has learnt about the significance of culture and how it is tied to history. As such, with respect to cultural knowledge, it is not just a matter of maintenance, but also coming to understand the meaning and significance that this cultural knowledge holds for people.

The Hungarian students observed that they were able to consider Hungarian history and literature in their mainstream learning:

*... in subjects like history or English, for example, I remember once we had to choose a poem and write facts about it. I knew a Hungarian poem and of course we need it in English. I found an English version of it, and it was useful.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

Knowledge from one linguistic and cultural world is transferred to others in ways that can be most fruitful.

Naturally, students also develop broader knowledge of language and literacy and linguistic systems. They are able to make comparisons across languages, which in turn, expands their linguistic knowledge and their knowledge about how language and culture operate in meaning making. One of the student's comments on the process of learning and comparing languages, are as follows:

*I think I'm pretty aware that I can speak lots of different languages because I've learnt so many over the years through school and obviously learning Latvian, and English being my first language, so it is really interesting when a lot of those languages cross over like with similar words, similar sounding words, similar grammar rules. That really fascinates me to try and find out all the similarities between the different languages and that they're not really that different. Yeah, so I first learnt English as a first language, Greek through my first primary school, Chinese from my second primary school and French through high school and then I've heard a bit of Italian and I've tried to learn a bit through my family, (he has Latvian/Italian background) and then Latvian as well. So, it has really been fascinating to try and find out how all those languages are quite similar to each other and in different ways.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

This knowledge extends to a desire that students develop to *learn* more languages and to *learn about* diverse languages. As a young student commented:

*I would love for people, more people to learn about different languages, not only Spanish or French or Japanese. I would want people to learn, like, dying languages like Hawaiian, Navajo, Zulu, and stuff.*

[Primary student of Chinese]

It was less usual that the younger participants in the study were able to articulate dimensions of this theme. This does not mean necessarily that the process of knowledge expansion and transfer was not occurring, but rather, that being aware of this being the case requires sophisticated reflection that might not be as feasible for the younger students as it is for the older ones.

History, politics and religion are further domains in which students develop expanded knowledge. One student commented, for example, on how integral religion is to the Arabic language:

*... there's lots of phrases and just vernacular, some sort of ideas that come across better in Arabic, especially things like as part of my culture a lot of religious influence and it just doesn't translate as well in English; it translates but it just sounds a lot more stunted or harder... to explain than if I just say it in Arabic. And so there are ways in which I express myself much better in Arabic and there's times where I found myself like trying to say something to a friend that I can't say I'm like I wish you could speak Arabic 'cause I can tell you like that but I'm going to have to try and think of it in English and so there are times yeah that just English has been a bit limiting.*

[Secondary student of Arabic]

This reflection illustrates how the student appreciates the distinctive connection between language and religion in relation to Arabic. He also has come to know and understand how some knowledge is distinctive to a particular language and culture and that rendering it in English poses difficulties.

In summary, for the older students especially, there is an appreciation of the expansion of knowledge and knowing that comes from operating in multiple linguistic and cultural worlds. This occurs in many domains related particularly to language and literacy, cultural knowledge and practices, history, politics, religion and other disciplines. It is worth noting that this phenomenon is not surprising, given the role of language itself as a medium for learning – gaining, generating/creating, applying, using, transferring knowledge across languages and cultures. In this sense, the learning of community languages is not a process that matters simply for reasons of maintenance, but rather, it can be seen as a process of knowledge expansion and reframing. The language and culture and related knowledge of their heritage can be activated in novel ways in the communities of contemporary Australia. The students who *live* in the multiple worlds of their home languages and English in Australia are indeed learning their home languages and cultures but also developing knowledge and knowing well beyond just that.

**Theme 3: That the students' multilingual capability is integral to their identities, affiliations, and feelings of belonging and inclusion, and are a source of pride.**

This theme reflects a range of responses from students related to their sense that learning a community language holds particular importance for their sense of belonging and feelings of inclusion, within the immediate language-and-culture community and beyond. Furthermore, they reported a range of feelings associated with learning their community language; feelings of pride and connection, as well as feelings at times of inadequacy and boredom.

Almost all students indicated that the overwhelming impetus for studying a community language was that they, and their families, placed great value on continuing to learn the language of their family heritage. The expectation to learn the community language was largely attributed to parents, or at least in the first instance, as the drivers of students' participation, however beyond the initial stages, older students were particularly clear about the importance of learning their community language for a range of reasons.

A commonly held view across amongst the students was that learning their community language was particularly important for remaining connected to family, crucially grandparents and cousins, some of whom reside in Australia and others who remain in 'home' countries. Students made comments such as:

*It's pretty important [to have Chinese to speak with family]. I would barely manage [to interact with family if didn't speak Chinese].*

[Primary student of Chinese]

*It's really fun because I get to spend more time learning my language. So when I get to go to Vietnam I can speak to my grandparents. They'd be pretty sad if their granddaughter can't speak to them in their language.*

[Primary student of Vietnamese]

*I have to go [to Community Language School]. It's also important [to maintain heritage]. Some languages don't teach the new generation and the language dies away. So it's good to maintain the culture and heritage.'*

[Primary student of Vietnamese]

*It's like a very hard language too, and I don't want to forget like this Hungarian part of my life, ever.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

Almost all students commented on the value of learning their community language for their sense of identity and belonging. This was sometimes reported by students as part of their 'normal' way of being, that is, there was no sense that knowing and using their community language was anything exceptional or extraordinary, although this was often for students with some degree of proficiency already. For some students with sufficient proficiency to interact in the language, they also noted the sense of belonging that they experience when interacting with peers using the community language; noting that it provides a more comfortable place where they feel they belong. Several students reported such feelings:

*Sometimes I feel really confident. I can see all my friends and I can play with them. They all [speak in Russian]. I do actually [feel more comfortable with these friends.] Maybe because everyone knows Russian and I can just speak in Russian and everyone knows what I'm saying.*

[Primary student of Russian]

*It's more familiar to speak our mother language. We all know the language and it feels more familiar to us.*

[Secondary student of Chinese]

*Going there, it's just like a big family sort of...everyone's like very connected. It's like a big community. ...knowing that there's other people that relate to you in a way because there's definitely some people that I can relate to .. knowing that you have friends and you can talk to them and they will understand. I have one friend and*

*whenever things are happening and people are talking in Latvian, and something happens, we just sort of look at each other and if something funny happens we can look at each other and laugh because we both understand it, and it's like a connection.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

*For some people they say [being multilingual] is amazing and I mean for myself, who can speak like about three or four, it's just not really that amazing to me. I don't find it really special because if you have just been into different countries, you have to learn that language and know that language.*

[Secondary student of Falam]

*I'm proud of being a multilingual person because I feel like not that many people are nowadays. I just feel like a more interesting person to be honest, knowing more than one language and if I feel alone sometimes I can just go to a Hungarian community and just be with them in Hungarian and feel like home.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

*Since I got on to Latvian school, I learned a traditional Latvian instrument and that connected my music back to where it is now, and I play a whole lot of instruments now and I wouldn't have the friends either that I do now. Life would be very different if not for Latvian school.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

For some students, learning a community language made them feel different from other young people. In some cases, this was a feeling of being special, of being somehow unusual or even exceptional. As noted by several students,

*I like Greek school. I'm surrounded by like Greek people and it just feels good. I have a lot of friends there. These friends are Greek. The people at Greek school are more Greek. It feels like a family at Greek school. We learn more developed Greek. It's for the people who know better Greek. It makes me feel different. I like it. I'm not the same as everyone else. And that helps me.*

[Secondary student of Greek]

*It makes me feel normal but a bit special as well. Not many people in my school speak Vietnamese.*

[Primary student of Vietnamese]

*I think that like learning about a different language is very, very fun. That like you can learn about different cultures and how they like... like what secret do you have to be fluent in learning that language and knowing that makes you feel like you're the smartest person in the world.*

[Primary student of Chinese]

There were a small number of students who described how being multilingual gave them a sense of having multiple identities, or at least a range of possibilities for how they could act and express themselves. For example,

*I feel like I'm much nicer in my 'Hungarian me', like very much more passionate and I don't know almost...just that nicer way, and in English I'm just like... I don't know how I'd describe it...just totally kind of different.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

*I feel like Latvian is like a whole other side of my life. I think the English side is like the normal sort of side and like the Latvian side is something that's actually special to me and I feel like if I didn't have that then, I don't know I wouldn't feel the same.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

Almost all students indicated that learning and knowing multiple languages was important to them, and they generally felt proud of their multilingual capability and were not embarrassed or reluctant for others to know this about them. One student explained how she had initially not been interested in learning her community language but had later come to recognise the value of it, indicating that it had become a real source of pride for her, giving her '*something to brag about*'; reflecting a sense of distinctiveness in her identity as a result of her community language learning. As she described it:

*Being multilingual knowing the language and makes me feel very connected to the country to the culture and makes me feel proud.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

Older students described how their multilingual capability gave them greater options for connecting with others (see Themes 1 and 2) and that this often led to a sense of inclusion and belonging that was not evident for their monolingual English-speaking peers. For example, one student explained how he was able to relate to a diverse range of students, speaking Arabic, Hindi and some expressions in other Indian languages. He noted how his language resource, but also his desire to communicate with diverse people, enabled him to stretch his linguistic resource and use all of his communication repertoire to create a sense of inclusion amongst his peers in his mainstream school.

A few senior students observed the experience of belonging to multiple language and cultural communities at once, noting the need to maintain heritage while also participating in and belonging to their immediate society. This dual membership was described as being more effortful but valuable, as noted by the following student,

*For people who are born here, we can sometimes forget about our culture and our heritage; having the programs helps preserve who we are and where we come from. I think it's important to preserve our language and our culture here. It's important to learn English and integrate into Australian society... Learning multiple languages is confusing sometimes almost double the work but it's worth it.*

[Secondary student of Chinese]

Sometimes this 'dual membership' also creates challenges for students such as when interacting with mainstream peers, as differing norms intersect. As one student explained:

*I feel sometimes my friends will be joking around and it's fun. Like it's not meant to be negative or hurt anyone in any way but I'll kind of be sitting there and that I don't really get the joke because it's like disrespectful but like in a joking way. So it's not bad but I'm kind of like, well, why? I just feel bad doing a lot of things because I feel that it's not respectful even if it is a joke.... It might be like a bit confusing I don't know what I should say...if I should bring out the more respectful side or if I go out and be like all joking.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

There were also feelings, primarily related to some students' experiences of the program content and pedagogy, of frustration and disengagement at times. Students reported that they often found the content rather repetitive and somewhat traditional, focusing on grammatical forms, writing practice (particularly in script-based languages), and content that was not overly meaningful in students' worlds. They remarked,

*It's ok but it's kind of boring sometimes. It's like you have to keep writing the same thing and repeating and stuff. And I don't really like repeating and stuff. I would like prefer it if it wasn't copying and stuff.*

[Primary student of Chinese]

*'I don't love it, but I don't hate it as well. It is kind of boring, but I understand it's important. The teachers are ok and how they teach is also all right but it's just the language in general. We have to write a lot and it tires my hand and I just find it really annoying. The teachers hand out papers and there's like a paragraph and like we have to read it and answer questions.'*

[Primary student of Vietnamese]

*Falam is a beautiful language and has a lot of deep meanings that I don't always understand. And I wanted to understand more. I kind of stopped half-way because I didn't really feel like I was learning anything new. [It was the] same thing again and again each year. It can be very boring. I don't think I'm learning anything new and I'm not improving in any way. I think they are starting to take it seriously and hiring qualified teachers. I would [study it to the SACE level] because Falam is my mother language.'*

[Secondary student of Falam]

*It is a bit dry, I must admit, but again that's because it is meant to be about the formal side of it, they assume you can speak it already, so when you get there and they are teaching you ok this is how to write an essay, this is how you write a report, here's the grammar that you're going to need. Look at this text analyse it and there's literature form [the] 1500s, it's a poem ... I can barely read poems that are from now and you want me to read this one from years and years ago, and that is hard, it's really tough ... I'm there but I'm not there. It's tough, it's good but it's less applicable.*



[Secondary student of Arabic]

In relation to their language learning gains, a few students expressed some unease or feelings of inadequacy about not being highly proficient in the community language. This was particularly noticeable for them when interacting with older relatives or more proficient community members, with comments such as,

*When it's not that great, is usually when I cannot understand at all and you can't formulate the response that you want, and you can't really explain yourself because there might be some missing gaps in your vocabulary or grammar rules.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

*My parents speak Tamil and I reply in English. I'm used to it. It's a little bit of both, mostly English. I try to use as much as I can.*

[Primary student of Tamil]

*Falam is like my mother language. I use it to speak with the elders mainly. I love Falam but it's really hard to understand sometimes. It's quite hard to communicate with the kids. When I communicate with the elders, it's like um, I don't understand what you're saying.'*

[Secondary student of Falam]

*When I'm talking to my parents, I can't think of a word in Vietnamese, I just have to use English and my parents don't understand. I don't like mixing the two languages. I've been learning Vietnamese and I'm still using English.*

[Primary student of Vietnamese]

*...a few times when I was talking with my friends from Hungary, they would hear that I'm pronouncing some words differently and I feel like I feel a bit ashamed that my Hungarian after nine months is already fading.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

These students were generally not aware of the phenomenon of blending languages, also known as translanguaging or code-meshing, that is common amongst multilinguals and is increasingly recognised as integral to the process of additional language learning and use (Garcia & Li Wei 2014). Some expressed feelings of being confused when operating with multiple languages, noting that the languages can work together seamlessly at times and yet lack fluency at other times. In one case, a student indicated that he consciously chooses to keep the languages quite separate:

*I don't I don't like mixing them and I consciously don't even mix them... I mainly always think in Hungarian, even like with Maths. I count in my head in Hungarian not English, even if the question is in English. But mixing the languages, I don't do that. I feel like when I'm speaking English, I am thinking in English, and when I am speaking Hungarian, my thoughts are in Hungarian.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

*...having two languages is confusing sometimes and sometimes it's fluent. I can speak fluent and then sometimes like I can't. And sometimes I just mix English and Vietnamese together.*

[Primary student of Vietnamese]

Overall, students learning their community language report positive feelings and a sense of pride and belonging in relation to their experiences and their sense of the value of these in their lives, both in their immediate worlds, particularly when communicating with family and the language--and-culture community, and also for the future. Many are aware of the processes involved in being multilingual and acting multilingually with others, and they are quite proud of this capability, and feel that it enhances their sense of belonging and personal identity. As one student, who had decided as a teenager to study the language of his family heritage and whose parents did not speak the language, commented:

*Even though we are a tiny little country, we are culturally rich, which really amazes and fascinates me. It's really infected my life and now Latvian culture is everything to me – it's who I am.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

**Theme 4: That the multilingual students have heightened meta-awareness and are able to decentre, notice multiple perspectives, see themselves in relation to others, with questioning and some criticality.**

A further theme that emerged from the data gathered during this study was that of the heightened awareness to language, language learning, language use, and multilingual language use that students of community languages have developed.

In speaking about their multilingual realities, many of the students, particularly junior and senior secondary students, expressed various kinds of awareness and meta-understandings about aspects of language, language learning and use. For some, particularly younger students, such awareness was expressed through more concrete examples about language form, such as aspects of pronunciation or differences in sentence structure/syntax. Examples included:

*I was thinking about how the differences between the two languages are and maybe there is a very big difference, not only between how we pronounce our letters and the alphabet itself, Hungarians added 20 more letters in the alphabet, but the way the grammar is different. It is just very interesting that we are on the same planet, Earth, but we speak different languages and it's very different even though we are like close-ish enough to each other.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

*When you translate an English sentence into Vietnamese, it's sort of all mixed up. So, it doesn't go right in order. You have the signs that make it high pitched or low pitched.*

[Primary student of Vietnamese]

*There's a lot of Latvian words, maybe like two words that are really similar but they mean completely different things. So there's probably been a few times where in a conversation, I've said one word and I meant the other and it just completely changes the meaning.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

A number of students noted similarities across languages that they had found beneficial in learning additional languages, including but not limited to their community language. They had varying degrees to which they were conscious of making sense of new language in texts or in interacting with others, through making connections between languages. As students explained:

*I was always really, really good in French but my teacher didn't realise that in my head I had the Italian, and the French was very close. So, I made meaning not because I knew the meaning in French but because I had the word in Italian so it was always a lot easier.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

*it really helps to understand like you know other languages sometimes you can pick up some similarities in those languages like let's take one for example Urdu is very similar to Hindi.*

[Secondary student of Hindi]

*[My languages] do interrelate quite a bit. Like French has the verb endings and things and Italian does as well. And some words, you think, ah, I know that word in Italian and French. It really reinforces it... and now with Latvian even more so, we are learning about all the different languages and the roots, and I have got an understanding of that. And it also helps with pronunciation with all languages. I have a better grip on that than other people. Because I've learned x, y, z.... They are all different mouth shapes and it's a little bit easier to understand other languages and you can relate a lot better...*

*I'm pretty aware that I can speak lots of different languages because I've learned so many over the years through school and obviously learning Latvian and English being my first language. So, it is really interesting when a lot of those languages crossover like with similar words, similar grammar rules. That really fascinates me to try and find out all the similarities between the different languages and that they're not really that different. I first learned English as a first language, Greek through my first primary school, Chinese from my second primary school, and French through high school. Then I've heard a bit of Italian and I've tried to learn a bit through my family, and then Latvian as well. So it's really been fascinating to try and find how all those languages are quite similar to each other and in different ways.*

[Secondary student of Latvian]

*...with Arabic being so dialectal to understand something that's quite standard and then when someone else is speaking from a country and I've never met people from that country before and I don't know how to talk to them and their dialect. I can be like, oh so I can see the connection and I can sort of make out what they are saying.*

[Secondary student of Arabic]

Two students articulated sophisticated understandings of their multilingual experiences, explaining their consciousness of the process of *thinking* multilingually, and the sensation it causes:

*I'll be like speaking Hindi saying... 'can you give me the cup'. So, I'm just using one word change or I could be like [Hindi sentence with a Falam word] like as in... is like my own language and then I'm saying that in Hindi 'do you want to eat food?' Then sometimes I'll just add like a bunch of different words such as 'do you wanna go to like... last week ... with mama and papa'. It sounds weird to people but like in my head it makes perfect sense. It's like a normal language to me but like some people think it's just full of trash... it just makes sense in [my head]. it is really weird but it does make sense.*

[Secondary student of Falam]

*Most of the time I think in English, everything comes to me in English; jokes, work, anything is in English however I notice that sometimes I'll come into Arabic. And I sort of pick up on it after I've done it for a while, and then I'm thinking to myself 'how do I know what I'm saying in Arabic?' and so then I have all these things in my head, and I'm trying to translate everything I was thinking into English to make sure that I'm actually knowing what I'm saying. It's a really weird process of being conscious of what was previously unconscious and then trying to dissect that. It's weird.*

[Secondary student of Arabic]

Several older students expressed having a strong awareness of using their community language as a means to create an 'inner' or secret world. Two students commented on how they use their language to certain effect, with the awareness that it won't be widely understood:

*I use it at home. So when I come home, I basically never speak English. Almost my whole family is Hungarian and was raised as well in Australia, Sydney. But here I try to use it with my brother, my twin brothers as much as I can as well, like in school it's like a kind of secret language.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

*When we are out, me and my brother, we speak Hungarian. As he said, it is like a secret language that not many people can understand and it's really nice.*

[Secondary student of Hungarian]

Another student noted her frustration about being multilingual at times, due to the need to 'translate' meanings across languages. She was especially conscious of this process during more vulnerable or heightened moments of interaction. She explained it as follows:

*like when you are just really mad at something because someone said something about you and stuff, then you just switch language. So you cannot get it and need take some time off like as in just talking to myself calm down and stuff so that they don't know that I'm mad or pissed. So I calm myself down and I come back the situation like it can be really hard too being multilingual sometimes, 'cause sometimes it just doesn't translate everything in here [points to head] so it takes a lot of time.*

[Secondary student of Falam]

Some of the students explained how they had developed a meta-awareness of the context-sensitive nature of language and communication, and recognising the implications for their own interaction in new contexts:

*Probably the biggest thing is how others operate and how others work. The way that you talk to other people, the knowledge of understanding well, these people are from here, so they'll be like this, they'll be like that or they'll prefer it if you do this or that.*

[Senior secondary student of Arabic]

Furthermore, this student explained his heightened sense of the dynamic nature of language, how it changes over people, place and time, carrying ideas with it. He expressed it as:

*Being multilingual gives you the knowledge of the connections as well. I'm fascinated by etymology ... having multiple languages allows you to understand language a bit better and know more about how people have connected and traded and shared their ideas.*

[Secondary student of Arabic]

In summary, the students of community languages in this study revealed that they generally have a heightened capacity to make connections across diverse languages, particularly comparing aspects of form and meaning. They are also able to distance themselves from their interactions and observe how language works, and of their own positioning in relation to others. Furthermore, they are largely aware of how their multilingual capability works, and what they are like as communicators. Typically, older students have a greater awareness of this process, and are more attuned to how it operates, and are often able to invoke their languages resources to achieve certain effects.

## **Theme 5: That the multilingual experiences and capabilities of these students is invisible to the mainstream**

In discussing Themes 1-4, we have foregrounded the rich and distinctive multilingual capabilities of students, their expanded knowledge and knowing, their identity formation, affiliations, and sense of belonging and their meta-awareness. These capabilities are not equally developed in all students; for example, there are differences between younger and older students. Furthermore, they do not emerge in the same ways in the learning of the different languages. It is also acknowledged that students themselves self-selected to participate in this study, and it is likely, therefore, that those students who have the strongest interest in community languages are the ones who have chosen to participate. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that all students in the research study have demonstrated some distinctive and highly valuable knowledge, understandings, capabilities and dispositions/sensitivities that are derived from their learning of their community language.

The students make clear that in the main, this extensive knowledge of languages, cultures and related knowing, capabilities and dispositions/sensitivities are invisible in their mainstream schooling. At best, where the mainstream schools are aware of the work of community language programs, these programs are seen as ancillary or complementary. The programs are seen as 'maintenance' of home languages and cultures. Many students are cognisant of this situation; for example, a Vietnamese student observed that he is never asked about his Vietnamese language and culture at school. On one occasion he did prepare a report about a trip to Vietnam, but he commented:

*I was a bit nervous when I used Vietnamese words because I was scared they wouldn't understand it.*

[Primary student of Vietnamese]

Another student commented:

*I think, you know, the teacher preferred if you speak English in class. Yeah, some teachers know that I speak multiple languages and some don't. Most of my teachers are aware and I use it in class to explain stuff to my other friends.*

[Secondary student of Falam]

Considering whether or not mainstream teachers ask about his knowledge that comes from knowing other languages, a secondary student explained:

*Very rarely. But I would say in my history class. I have a very good relationship with my history teacher. In my history class it sometimes comes up, and even if I am not asked, I'll say it. I'll give it and it is happily received. Not in many other classes; maybe slightly in French, but that's because ... my French teacher is married to a Moroccan man and so I've got that connection... so it's only those two.*

Asked if they should, he replied:

*Yeah, it probably should, and it could, to make more globalised citizens but then we've got so much to learn, and we haven't got the time or the capabilities to stop and look at things from different (cultural) perspectives.*

[Secondary student of Arabic]

This student is clearly pro-active, particularly in his history class and offers his extended knowledge and it is accepted, but it is not drawn upon as a matter of course. As he observes, this would also permit multiple perspectives in a global context. Interestingly, however, he has no expectation that the mainstream learning should connect with his learning that comes from his home language and culture. It is clear that mainstream classrooms are understood as monolingual environments where the focus is on one language only. The intellectual, linguistic and cultural knowledge of community language students could and should be leveraged, considering that multilingualism is a characteristic of their lifeworlds and is integral to their lives and to their learning. This would not only be a mark of acknowledgment of their knowledge and capabilities and of them as young people, but also a source of learning for all students. Furthermore, the absence of this acknowledgment means that the mainstream school fails to draw upon the everyday knowledge that students necessarily leverage in order to learn. When all the languages of community language students are normalised and leveraged, all students come to appreciate variability of perspectives and being and thinking otherwise.

It is of value to reflect on the impact of the monolingual framing of education in general, and where the absence of expectation on the part of community languages students in relation to the absence of recognition of their multilingualism comes from. It is also important to reflect upon how this absence might be addressed.

## Findings and implications

The discussion of the data analysis has yielded a set of findings with associated implications for community languages programs and their stakeholders. These findings and their implications are outlined below.

### Summary of findings

1. That community language students perceive their multilingual capability as valuable in expanding their overall learning, engagement with diverse people, and participation in life in diverse communities.
2. That through their community language learning students expand their multilingual repertoires and intercultural capabilities as they interpret, create and exchange meanings across their languages and cultures.
3. That through community language learning students develop and draw upon knowledge; they also expand literacy capabilities which they use actively to learn in all learning areas and beyond.
4. That community language learning is integral to students' evolving identity formation and sense of wellbeing and belonging.
5. That community language students develop a heightened meta-awareness about language and culture and their role in meaning-making and of themselves as communicators.
6. That community language students appreciate the value of learning community languages; however, they would wish to experience more engaging programs that take into consideration their contemporary multilingual realities, desires and aspirations.
7. That community language students' multilingual capabilities are not drawn upon and developed in mainstream teaching and learning, and that students wish for this to occur.

### Findings and implications

Findings	Implications
<p><b>Finding 1</b> That community language students perceive their multilingual capability as valuable in expanding their overall learning, engagement with diverse people, and participation in life in diverse communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· That programs foreground the development of multilingual rather than monolingual capabilities, taking into account the range of languages that students bring to their language learning</li> <li>· That programs foster opportunities for engagement with diverse people, in diverse contexts</li> <li>· That programs continue to create and expand students' participation in the life of communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Finding 2</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· That programs focus on experiential language learning that recognises the value</li> </ul>



<p>That through their community language learning students expand their multilingual repertoires and intercultural capabilities as they interpret, create and exchange meanings across their languages and cultures.</p>	<p>of both living, and reflecting on, the experience of community language learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· That programs are designed and enacted within a multilingual and intercultural orientation.</li> </ul>
<p>Finding 3 That through community language learning students develop and draw upon knowledge; they also expand literacy capabilities which they use actively to learn in all learning areas and beyond.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· That community languages programs are understood and enacted as moving beyond 'linguistic and cultural maintenance' towards the expansion and application of diverse knowledges, languages and cultures</li> <li>· That programs are designed to actually draw upon students' existing knowledges and develop these further through a strong focus on concepts and textual work</li> </ul>
<p>Finding 4 That community language learning is integral to students' evolving identity formation and sense of wellbeing and belonging.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· That community languages programs enable students to reflect critically on their experiences of using their languages and the ways in which languages and cultures come into play in their evolving identity formation, and sense of wellbeing and belonging.</li> </ul>
<p>Finding 5 That community language students develop a heightened meta-awareness about language and culture and their role in meaning-making, and of themselves as communicators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· That community languages programs invite students to reflect on the ways in which language and culture come into play in the interpretation, creation and exchange of meanings</li> <li>· That community language programs invite comparisons and draw connections across linguistic and cultural systems</li> <li>· That community languages programs provide opportunities for students to become savvy communicators and to reflect on themselves as participants in increasingly sophisticated communication.</li> </ul>
<p>Finding 6 That community language students appreciate the value of learning community languages; however, they wish to experience more engaging programs that take into consideration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· That teachers continue to engage with profiling their students and their lifeworlds in order to better understand and respond to students' interests, desires and aspirations</li> </ul>

<p>their contemporary multilingual realities, desires and aspirations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· That teachers seek to capture students' reactions and responses to better understand ways of engaging them</li> <li>· That teachers integrate into their programs contemporary media, texts and communication practices.</li> </ul>
<p>Finding 7 That community language students' multilingual capabilities are not drawn upon and developed in mainstream teaching and learning, and that students would wish for this to occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· That CLSSA establish forums and mechanisms for communicating actively and strongly with mainstream education systems; that the value of such reciprocal exchange be seen as valuable for <i>all</i> learners.</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

In education in contemporary times, where learning is per force international and where education itself is arguably more complex in terms of the diversity of learners, it is fundamental that learning begin with and draw upon the life worlds of students (Liddicoat & Scarino 2013 – all that they bring from their prior experiences of life and their home languages, their cultures and the knowledge that comes with these, and their prior learning experiences. These are not just a matter of 'background' of these students, but rather it is the knowledge and knowing that students draw upon to develop further learning. It is constitutive of their learning (MELC 2018; Gutiérrez et al 2009). If these lifeworlds are not drawn upon, and students are therefore seen as a limited version of who they are and who they can be, and how they could contribute to the learning of all students in diversity, then their learning and that of their peers is diminished. Ways need to be found that do justice to their learning, identity formation, and well-being.

The study reported here reflects efforts to do just that: to give voice to young people learning their community languages in South Australia. The report highlights the nature of their experiences as multilinguals, and their perceptions of their experiences in learning and using their community languages within their whole communicative repertoire. The findings reveal the rich, somewhat hidden, realities of how these young multilinguals use their languages and cultures resources, in complex and important ways, and how they are (to varying degrees) aware of their capability to operate as savvy communicators and mediators across diverse contexts and communities. Community languages learning clearly plays a vital role in the lives of these young people, expanding their communicative practices, knowledge and understandings; interactions as well as their well-being and belonging to their communities, the South Australian community, and the global community.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: STAGE 1: ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONS

#### Section A: Student profile

1. Name
2. Age
3. Current year level at your day school
4. Which community language are you learning at a community language school?
5. For how long have you been learning your community language at a community language school?
6. Select all of the day school year levels that you have studied your community language in a community language school. (What year levels were you in at your day school when you studied a community language?)
7. Do you study this community language in your day school?
8. What is your country of birth?
9. What is the country of birth of your mother/guardian?
10. What is the country of birth of your father/guardian?
11. What are the countries of birth of your grandfathers?
12. What are the countries of birth of your grandmothers?
13. Have you ever spent time living or going to school in a country where your community language is spoken? (if you were born in Australia, answer questions 13 and 14 and then go to question 18)
14. If you were born in Australia and have spent time living or going to school in a country where your community language is spoken, how long have you spent there?
15. In what year did you arrive in Australia? (if you were born overseas, answer questions 15-17)
16. How old were you when you arrived in Australia?
17. Which years of education did you complete at school overseas?
18. List all the languages that you use at home (English/ community language/other/s)
19. If you use your community language at home, with whom do you use it?
20. If you use your community language at home, for what purpose/s do you use this language?
21. If you use another language at home, in addition to your community language and English, with whom do you use this language?
22. Do you use your community language at your day school?
23. If you do use your community language at your day school, with whom do you use it?
24. When do you use your community language in your day school?
25. If you have studied your community language at a day school in Australia, select all the year levels that apply. If you have not studied your community language at your day school, select 'not applicable'.
26. How many hours per week do you study your community language at your day school?
27. Write 4 or 5 sentences about a time when you used all of your languages (English and your community language) to participate in an exchange, conversation, interaction with another person or people. How did it make you feel?
28. Do you wish to be considered for Stages 2 (an individual interview with the researchers) and 3 (youth forum) of the project? The Project Information Sheet describes what's involved
29. If you would like to be considered for an interview, please provide your email address so that we can contact you.

## Appendix 2: STAGE 2: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### A. **Languages profile**

1. What languages do you know?
2. How do you know them?
3. Why are you learning your community language?
4. How do you use your community language?

### B. **Experiences of being multilingual**

5. Do you see yourself as being multilingual? In what way/s, why?
6. What do your languages mean to you?
7. How do you use each of your languages?
8. Do you have a chance in your day/regular school to use your languages?
9. How do you feel when you use your community language?
10. Do you sometimes use your languages together?
11. Are there times when you choose to use your community language to achieve a particular impact on others? (e.g. to joke, share, include, exclude, help)
12. What would your life be like without one of your languages?
13. How would you describe your linguistic and cultural identity? (e.g. As Australian? As a member of another culture? As both?)
14. What would you tell others about what it is like to be multilingual? Is it of value? What does it give you/allow you to do that monolingual people may not have /be able to do?
15. What things do you know that come from a) knowing your language, b) being multi/bilingual?

### C. **Experiences of community languages learning**

16. Why do you participate in the Community Language School program in your language?
17. Tell us about your experience of learning your particular language in a Community Language School
18. Describe a moment when you found the experience to be highly valuable and another when it was less so
19. If you could make changes, what would they be?
20. Why do you think Community Language Schools programs matter, or not?
21. Do you think you will continue to use your languages into the future? If so, how? If not, why not?

### D. **Connectedness with language and culture**

22. Tell us about the object / picture you have brought to show us. Why have you chosen it? What makes it meaningful/ memorable? What is the connection with your language and culture?

### Appendix 3: STAGE 3: YOUTH FORUM QUESTION AND ANSWER PANEL PROMPTS

1. How does it feel to have two languages in your head?
2. Have you ever been caught out talking about someone in your language and then found out they could understand what you said? What happened?
3. If your first language is a community language, does English feel like something you have to do or you're forced to do?
4. Are you actually aware of having different languages or is it just how you think?
5. Are there times when English is not enough to say what you want to say?
6. Tell us about any awkward mistakes you've made in one of your languages
7. If English is not your first language, do you feel like you will never fit in in Australia?
8. Have you ever used your language to exclude someone? What happened?
9. How does it feel when someone says where are you from?
10. What do you wish you could tell your parents about community languages?
11. What do you wish Australian schools did differently?
12. What language do you think your swear words in? Why?