Report on the Evaluation of Language Immersion Programs in Education Queensland Schools 2011

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Introduction

This project is an evaluation of Queensland’s immersion education programs for languages in Queensland schools. This evaluation is being undertaken to ensure that maximum benefit and optimum learning outcomes are achieved from the available funding. The aim of the evaluation is to allow justified decisions to be made about the most appropriate use of available resources in terms of the relationship of funding to learning outcomes at each location.

Schools

The evaluation focuses on ten schools offering bilingual programs in Queensland schools. It includes eight schools receiving Education Queensland funding and two unfunded schools.

Funded schools

- Benowa State High School (Gold Coast), French immersion in Years 8 to 10
- Crescent Lagoon State School (Rockhampton), Japanese immersion in Years 5 to 7
- Ferny Grove State High School (Brisbane North), German immersion in Years 8 to 10
- Kenmore State High School (Brisbane), German immersion in Years 8 to 10
- Mansfield State High School (Brisbane), French immersion in Years 8 to 10
- North Lakes State College (Brisbane North), Italian immersion in Years 8 to 10
- Park Ridge State High School (Brisbane), Indonesian immersion in Years 8 to 10
- Varsity College (Gold Coast), Chinese immersion in Years 8 to 10

Unfunded schools

- Indooroopilly State High School (Brisbane), Spanish immersion in Years 8 to 10
- Robina State High School (Gold Coast), Japanese immersion in Years 8 to 10

Focus of the evaluation

The evaluation focuses on three main dimensions of immersion programs in line with Education Queensland criteria for funding immersion programs.

- Retention of immersion students in language programs in language programs to Year 12
- Level of achievement in language study by immersion students
- Other outcomes for students of immersion programs
- Features of sustainable immersion programs
Methodology

The evaluation consists of two main components a quantitative analysis and a qualitative analysis.

Quantitative analysis

The quantitative analysis used data on enrolment and Year 12 results supplied by schools and by Education Queensland and this data was used to determine information about retention and achievement in language study. This information also contributes to understanding the sustainability of immersion programs

Overall cautions on Retention and Achievement data

Retention data has been done on the basis of tracking particular groups through time (actual retention), not on the basis of apparent retention. This is necessary because, with such small groups of students, there are often quite substantial changes of numbers from one intake to the next. Any attempt to ignore the distinct cohorts and ‘average out’ across Years would be extremely inaccurate. However this means that the retention results (particularly those from Year 8 to higher Years) are often based on only one or two cohorts, which means that the decisions made by individual students to continue or discontinue language study can affect the results substantially.

Exit results are based on the total result given by the schools as exit data. This does not always exactly reflect the number of students who continued through the entire immersion program (for example, extra students may join, exit results may only be for the Year 11 syllabus not the Year 12 syllabus), but while approximate, the figures are reflective of the reality. Because of the relatively small data samples, only the averages across all Years have been given, as otherwise individual student results have too great an effect on the exit results for any single cohort. The Queensland averages are across all sectors of education.

Qualitative analysis

The qualitative analysis used data collected during visits to each of the schools during August 2011. The school visits involved a number of data collection components which were conducted in all schools:

- Interviews with school leaders – languages coordinators and principals
- Interviews with selected students – Year 10 and Year 12 students
- Interviews with teachers teaching in the immersion program
- Observations of teaching

The qualitative analysis focused on identify issues relating to practice in immersion programs which relate to the sustainability of such programs and the develop and understanding of how each program was structured and what overall teaching and learning approach was adopted in the program. This information also contributed to understanding outcomes of immersion programs in addition to formal educational measures, which are often less tangible and not easily captured by quantitative measures.
Organisation of the report

The report is structured as an evaluation of each school in its own terms. This evaluation is presented for each school in alphabetical order in the report, except for Crescent Lagoon State School, which being the only primarily school is treated separately.

This evaluation seeks to identify the strengths of particular programs and to identify issues which they face. It does not make a comparative evaluation of the programs as the contexts for each program and the different languages involved mean that such comparisons are of little use in understanding how the programs function. For each school, an overall description is given and then the strengths of the program and the issues facing it are outlined. Finally for each school, the report identifies future directions which indicate ways in which the program could be developed in the future.

The combined data for all schools is discussed to identify common features of programs and to provide for an evaluation of immersion programs in Queensland in more general terms.
Overall findings

General comments and issues

Quantitative analysis

Retention

We know generally speaking that retention rates for languages across Australia are very low. While exact figures are unclear, we know that the ‘best guess’ for the rates of participation, based on Year 8-12 figures, are very low, as given in the table below (data from Liddicoat et al., 2007).

Australian average retention (based on six sectors across Australia, 2001-2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 8 to Year 10:</th>
<th>28%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 8 to Year 11:</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 8 to Year 12:</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Queensland immersion school retention rates

| Year 8 to school Year 10 (Yr 11 syllabus): | 54%-93% |
| Year 8 to school Year 11 (Yr 12 syllabus):| 42%-76% |
| Year 8 to school Year 12 (Extension syllabus): | 26%-64% |

Given these figures, the retention rates in all of the immersion schools are extremely high, even in those schools which are at the lower end of these figures. The figures are startling enough comparing at the level of school Year, but comparing students across the levels, the Queensland immersion schools are retaining something like 40%-80% of students to the end of the standard Year 12 syllabus, while the Australian average to this point is a retention of around 8%. Even more impressive is the retention through to the Extension syllabus (where this exists), with rates around 30%-65%, between four and eight times the average Australian retention rate to the lower standard Year 12 syllabus, in addition to students achieving much stronger outcomes at a higher level.

The high levels of retention for most programs indicate that these programs are successful in providing an engaging program for their students and that they are sustainable. Retention rates varying within immersion programs and in programs with considerable attrition, there may be problems for long term viability if such problems are not addressed.

Achievement data

In the majority of cases, the Year 12 exit data for the Standard syllabus is better than the Queensland average, sometimes substantially better. Even where it is not better, it is still more strongly skewed towards higher results – the percentage of VHA results may be lower than average, but there are fewer SA, LA and VLA results. No students in the immersion programs receive a VLA, and very few receive LA. This indicates that, as a cohort in general, immersion students are more likely to gain higher exit results (VHA and HA), and consequently presumably higher OP scores, than non-immersion students.
The exit data for the Extended syllabus, where such a syllabus exists, is usually very similar between the immersion students and the Queensland average. In fact, this probably relates to the fact that the immersion students form a large percentage of those students who undertake the Extended syllabus. Unless they have participated in an immersion program, relatively few students in Queensland reach a high enough level to undertake the Extended syllabus, with the exception of those students who have a home background in the language. Thus relatively little can be said about the comparison of achievement results with the general cohort of students in the Extended syllabus.

The number of immersion students who do proceed to study at Year 12 level and those who then proceed to study the Extended syllabus or a tertiary subject is in itself an indication that immersion programs develop a high level of language knowledge. That immersion programs are successful as pathways for language study is also borne out by the good results that the students receive in their study, especially when it is considered that the immersion students study the Year 12 standard syllabus in Year 11 and are typically a year younger than other students.

**Quantitative analysis**

*Target language as subject*

Programs different in whether or not they offered the target language as a subject within the immersion program. Those programs that did seemed to have a more co-ordinated approach to language development than those that did not. Target language as a subject provided a way of developing structured language programs which concentrated on both academic and social-communicative language use allowing other subject areas to focus more on the specific language related to their teaching area. Programs without a target language subject seemed to be more ad hoc in their approach to language development and to have less place in their curricula for ‘everyday’ as opposed to subject-specific language use. It would appear that those programs which included target language as a subject were more successful in developing a range of language capabilities than those which were not.

*Expectations about target language use*

One of the aspects that varied across programs was the expectations that teachers had of target language use by students. All programs tolerated some use of English by students in the early stages of the program, and this is appropriate for beginner language learners dealing with complex content. Some programs however had a greater expectation of target language use beyond this stage and marked a point of transition for students to full use of the target language in the class while others had lower expectations of target language use. In classroom observations, it appeared that schools which had a greater expectation of target language were qualitatively different from those which did not and in such programs students tended to be more spontaneous and more fluent in their language use and also were more likely to use the target language in their own personal spoken and written language use.

*Teachers’ qualifications and professional learning*

The schools testified to a strong need for teachers to be qualified in the subject area that they were teaching and also have high levels of proficiency in the language. The strongest
programs were those in which teachers were qualified in both the subject area and in language education as these teachers seemed to best be able to structure a program of learning which integrated language and content learning.

In some schools and for some teachers there was evidence of a need to develop better understandings of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). This was seen both for teachers who were qualified in their content area but not in language education and for those who were. Teaching in an immersion program involves different pedagogies and different teaching and learning issues from other forms of teaching and these forms of teaching are not well covered in teacher education programs. Experienced teachers with both language and content education qualifications have usually developed strong pedagogies for integrating language and content, but for programs to be sustainable over time, it is important that in-service professional learning be provided for all staff, especially those who are new to immersion teaching and those staff who are not qualified in both language teaching and content area teaching.

**Early language development**

Some programs provide intensive language development prior to starting immersion proper. These programs seem to function well in developing good levels of language ability in the first year of the program which supports the development in content areas when they are introduced. Other programs recruit only students who have had some study of the language at primary level before beginning the immersion program and this also facilitates learning in the content subjects. Where this learning happens at primary schools which are separate from the secondary school there are however problems of different levels of learning which need to be overcome in the immersion program. The model of having some language preparation before starting immersion proper appears to be a very solid one.

**Students’ experience**

Overall these immersion programs provide a strong language learning experience for their students and all the students interviewed regarded their time in immersion as very positive. Students felt that they received a good education in these programs and valued the commitment and support of their teachers. Students in the programs had developed a strong interest in the languages they were study and had developed an interest in continuing study of the language. This was especially interesting in that very few of the students interviewed considered themselves to be “languages people” but rather saw their future studies and careers in other areas, such as science and technology, business, law or medicine.

One of the things that students most valued about immersion study was the sense of cohort that being in the immersion program generated. Students in all programs felt that the sense of belonging to a group which progressed together through the school years was very valuable. For those in large schools they felt that they were less anonymous than they would have been in mainstream classes, that they knew their teachers well and that they were know by their teachers. They also felt that their teachers were more committed to their students, in part because of the more personal relationships that were developed as a result of having the same teacher over a number of years.
Engagement of local communities

All of the programs had regular programs of engagement with target language communities which enhanced the immersion program, except where circumstances beyond the control of the school prevented this. These are a strength of the programs.

Most programs had some engagement with local target language communities but these were usually ad hoc and not sustained over time. Not all schools have equal access to target language communities in Australia, but where such communities are available there are many possibilities for extracurricular language experiences that can be provided for immersion students and others. To capitalise on these experiences schools need to establish regular relationships and activities to promote language learning. Such relationships are beneficial in themselves but become especially important for students who are not able to travel overseas for personal reasons or when circumstances prevent overseas travel.

Concluding comments

Overall Queensland’s immersion programs are working well. There is evidence of sustained, high quality language learning both during the immersion years and beyond. There is also evidence of strong student engagement with languages and other curriculum areas through immersion learning. These programs therefore represent a high quality educational experience for students in Queensland. The quality of individual programs is usually high but there is some variation in quality across programs which can be addressed by schools.

Most of the programs appear to be sustainable in the long term; however some programs do face challenges in terms of the number of students they recruit and the retention of students in the immersion program itself. Where such factors are present it is important that the school plan around improving recruitment and retention to ensure sustainability.
Benowa State High School French Immersion Program

Quantitative analysis

Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of students</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Intake of students at Year 8

In spite of some fluctuations in numbers, the intake of students into Year 8 has been very strong. Students are selected for the French immersion program through a selection process in which the expectations for participation are made clear. Immersion students in the French program are described as displaying high motivation, being hardworking, disciplined and able to self-manage the workload, and being risk takers. The benefits to the students of participating in the immersion program include developing their higher order thinking skills appreciating a competitive environment, expanding their world view, and setting and achieving high expectations of themselves, with home and school support.

Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention from</th>
<th>% retention</th>
<th>No. cohorts tracked</th>
<th>No. Yr 8 students tracked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 9</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 10 = to Yr 11 syllabus</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 11 = to Yr 12 syllabus</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 12 = to Extension syllabus</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Retention of students from Year 8

Benowa shows good retention from Year 8 to Year 9, but after Year 9 the retention rate falls quite significantly to Year 10, with just over half of all students commencing immersion continuing to the end of the program in Year 10. The school states it has a highly transient population, but also that it asks some students to leave the program at the end of Year 9 if they are not performing well. From Year 10 retention to the completion of the Year 12 syllabus is good, but there is again a significant fall in retention into Extension French in Year 12. The retention to Year 12 however is strong when compared to national averages (Liddicoat, et al., 2007).

Achievement data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior French exit results as %, 2006–10</th>
<th>VHA</th>
<th>HA</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>LA</th>
<th>VLA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard syllabus, Benowa</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard syllabus, Qld average</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension syllabus, Benowa</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension syllabus, Qld average</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Student achievement in Year 12

Exit results for the Standard senior French syllabus are relatively comparable at Benowa and the Queensland average. The rate of VHA is slightly lower, but the combined VHA
and HA exit result is slightly higher than average. The Extension French syllabus exit results are essentially identical.

**Qualitative analysis**

French was selected as the immersion language to differentiate the school from the range of Asian language offerings at other state high schools, and to attract families interested in a European language. The school sees the key feature of its French immersion program to be the authenticity of language input by using French native speaking staff and maintaining strong links with France. The immersion program is timetabled outside the main structure to ensure the French immersion program can run as a cohesive entity (meaning students study together both within and outside the immersion subjects). The immersion program teaches SOSE, Math and Science through French. There is no dedicated French class for the immersion stream, with content area teachers responsible for language and content learning, but with Teacher assistants available in Year 8 and 9 to support French language development.

The key factors for success in the French immersion program are considered to be the strong collegiality of the student group, the strength of teacher-student relationships in supporting students to progress, and the solidarity of the teacher group involved in the immersion program. The strength and success of the program is evidenced through the better or sustained outcomes for learners across learning areas (with no negative impact on outcomes post Year 10).

Extracurricular activities are limited as few local links with the French community are available, but all students are encouraged to participate in the in country experience program to France in Year 9. This is apparently the only excursion that is permitted to occur during term time. Some visits to New Caledonia have been organised in the past as well.

There were a few issues raised by the administration in relation to the French immersion program. The first of these was ‘succession planning’, a sense that the French immersion program had been run by the same set of experienced teachers for many years, and that there would be a time when the program would require some change in both leadership and approach to immersion education, suggesting that at present the program might not necessarily reflect contemporary methodologies, but be relying on a familiar set of practices that had worked well over time. The second and related issue was the application of digital technologies (or E-learning) within the immersion program. While the whole school was undertaking professional learning in ways to engage learners in the 21st century, in developing ways of promoting learners as ‘online collaborators’ and accessing resources online to advantage learning, there was some concern as to the extent to which the teachers in immersion were prepared for this transition. This raised the question as to whether the content and methodological knowledge of the immersion teachers was consistent with the mainstream teachers, and how they would cope with change - including national curriculum and more e-learning opportunities in the near future.

Some issues were raised by staff in terms of managing the immersion program. A key concern referred to be teachers was the lack of time allocation available for the task of translation and maintaining a common curriculum with the mainstream classes. The
running of in country tours was also seen as a high workload issue, with rules and procedures for running such tours creating a level of inflexibility that made it difficult to envisage running tours on a regular basis in the future.

Teachers also expressed some concern over negative staff perceptions such as that ‘the good kids do immersion’ (are attracted away from mainstream), and concern over management decision making often impacting on teacher tasks within the immersion program, (i.e. by not realising the impact on time and resources of changes to the curriculum). A third issue of concern among teachers was the difficulties experienced by students as they returned to mainstream classes at Year 11, with adjustment to English language delivery and a different ‘culture of learning’ creating a difficult period of adjustment for the immersion students.

Teachers expressed a view that access to ICT resources was limited (though improving) but there were real issues with real time communication with classes in France, for example, given the time differential, and the potential for issues to arise in terms of providing appropriate guidance and scaffolding during online interactions between students in class time. Other issues of concern that were raised were the limited university pathways available for French immersion students, and issues that arise when new staff are appointed in terms of building their capabilities and integrating them into the immersion teaching team.

**Classroom observations**

*Year 8 Maths (geometry)*

The classroom is quiet and studious, with the teacher conducting an introductory lesson of new concepts in geometry using a Power Point display and the white board. The teacher conducts the entire lesson in French, seeking input from students by asking questions in French, and soliciting responses from them in French. If students raise their hand to seek clarification the question is usually asked in English, but is recast in French when requested by the teacher. Student note taking in their books is notably neat and tidy, with both French and English being used to add commentary to their math drawings. The classroom is teacher-centred, learning focussed and students do not appear to be struggling with either content or language input, though some concepts do need revisiting and further explanation as students attempt to apply new learning.

*Year 8 Science (biology – cells)*

The teacher is reviewing concepts and terms related to cell biology as part of an assignment to describe features of a cell identified under a microscope and drawn previously in their books. A vocabulary list of new terms is created relying on the French word being associated with an image – thus no English terms are employed on the vocabulary list. Student comprehension of each new term is enhanced by further discussion of the functions or characteristics of each term/image, in French. The teacher is committed to using French throughout the lesson, but falls back to English questions when no response is forthcoming to a request in French. Questions from students about the concepts or assignment (process) are generally asked in English, though responses are in French. Sufficient sample sentence structures and a model response for the assignment are available to assist students to
complete their assignment successfully. The class runs smoothly though with low intensity, with students remaining on task most of the time.

**Year 10 SOSE (History)**

The Teacher leads a discussion of a text in French about WWII in France; students are in the process of completing an assignment requiring the reading of the text and completion of a table outlining a set of issues arising from German occupation and the consequences for France. The teacher leads the discussion of the content of the text using French delivered at a natural pace. Students appear to be comfortable with the rate of teacher talk and the conceptual matter under discussion. Student responses are however limited to short factual responses of issues or consequences as noted in their workbooks. The teacher creates a collaborative supportive environment filled with French language and a clear focus on the subject matter. The class appears to enjoy and engage with the task. The materials being used for this module were dated 1995.

**Students’ perceptions**

The students expressed strong satisfaction with their experiences in the French immersion program. They were appreciative of the opportunity to work with a group of like-minded students who were willing to work collaboratively towards a common goal. The group identified a set of work practices and skills that were necessary for their success in responding to the task of immersion education. The students were particularly supportive of the in-country experience component of the program, as it provided the real life opportunity to build their everyday proficiency and better understand the culture of France, something the classroom could not offer. They also noted that the in-country experience highlighted their weaknesses in social interaction. One student reflected that only when in France staying with her host family did she realise that she could study science in French but not ‘ask where to put her dirty washing’. The students felt this highlighted the content driven but not communication focussed nature of their French immersion experience.

Another issue that arose in discussion with students was the transition to Year 11. This was not an easy experience in their view; they needed to ‘relearn – in English’ many of the concepts and terms that they felt they had understood in French, which slowed down their progress. They also found their use of French language declined significantly once back in English medium contexts.

**Strengths**

- The program is a successful, established program which is meeting its primary objectives. It has a good reputation within the school and community.

- The program is attracting an appropriate number of students to sustain the program in the longer term.

- The program has a stable staff profile and has been able to retain staff well.

**Issues**

- There needs to be a high expectation of target language use by students in the classroom, particularly in the early years. There needs to be a clear transition point at
which French becomes the normal and required language for all communication in the classroom.

- The extra work entailed in translation and in-country study and travel experiences needs clear recognition in workload allocations for immersion teachers.

- The study of French language needs to be included as a core subject in the immersion program, to both actively support students language development and capabilities in both learning through and expressing that learning in French, and also to provide opportunities to develop communicative competence in more social aspects of language use.

- The use of ICT and e-learning opportunities did not appear strong in this program. A strategy may be needed in the next few years to consider how to improve the use of ICT in classroom learning across learning areas, and how such technologies can enhance links with and promote social interaction between students in the school and other French communities internationally.

- It was apparent that methods within the French program were fairly traditional in terms of teacher-student interaction and responsibility, and in terms of the resource base being used to promote learning. Some measures to ensure resources are up to date, and methods are appropriate to contemporary understandings of both Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programs and general classroom practices may be advisable.

- Retention into Year 10 is low at around 50% of students over five cohorts.

**Future directions**

- There is a need for planning for the implementation of the Australian curriculum in 2013. The school needs to have clear strategies in place to address the changes the new curriculum will entail. The school needs to consider how the work involved in developing French material will be supported.

- The school needs to plan for the inclusion of Year 7 in the secondary program in 2014 and consider how this will impact on immersion. If the school decides to implement immersion from Year 7, it needs to finalise its decision soon in order to allow for adequate planning time for developing a new Year 7 curriculum in French.

- The school should investigate professional learning opportunities to develop teacher knowledge of contemporary approaches to and methods of CLIL.
Ferny Grove State High School German Immersion Program

Quantitative analysis

Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of students</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Intake of students at Year 8

The enrolments in this program are relatively stable and remains above twenty students providing a single immersion. The fluctuations in numbers would seem to indicate that this enrolment represents the maximum achievable enrolment for the program. Students are recruited into the program through a promotion campaign and selection process. The school actively engages with local primary feeder schools to promote the immersion program, and then selects students based on their literacy and numeracy NAPLAN results, their overall performance, their general work ethic and attitude as described in their report card.

Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention from</th>
<th>% retention</th>
<th>No. cohorts tracked</th>
<th>No. Yr 8 students tracked</th>
<th>Cf. Qld average to this school year</th>
<th>Cf. Qld average to this syllabus level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 9</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 10</td>
<td>= to Yr 11 syllabus</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 11</td>
<td>= to Yr 12 syllabus</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 12</td>
<td>= to Extension syllabus</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Retention of students from Year 8

Retention in this program is strong, with 80% of students completing the program and good retention to Year 11 and the standard Year 12 syllabus. The retention to Year 12 Extension study is also strong.

Achievement data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior German exit results as %, 2007–10</th>
<th>VHA</th>
<th>HA</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>LA</th>
<th>VLA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard syllabus, Ferny Grove</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard syllabus, Qld average</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension syllabus, Ferny Grove</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension syllabus, Qld average</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Student achievement in Year 12

Ferny Grove achievement data for the Standard senior syllabus shows very strong results, with a far higher than average number of students receiving VHA and HA than the Queensland average, and no students receive LA or VLA.
Qualitative analysis

The German immersion program is seen as a means of recognising languages as a serious part of the school curriculum. The German program is viewed as an attractive signature program that appeals particularly to ‘higher aspiration’ families. The program is viewed as a respected part of the schools offering with stable participation rates and good outcomes in terms of student achievements and attitudes to learning. The success of the program depends on the commitment of all levels of the school – administration, staff, parents and feeder schools, and good management on the part of administration, and adequate resourcing in terms of time allocations. There is a Languages parent’s support group and the PASCH global German network that has provided some scholarship opportunities in the past. The annual exchange study tour to Germany involving taking classes at a school in Germany is seen as an important part of the program, but this opportunity is open to both Immersion and mainstream German students.

The immersion program begins with 6 months of ‘direct immersion’ in the study of German before the study of other learning areas as well as German. Learning areas included in the immersion program are maths, science and SOSE.

The strengths of the program were perceived to be the quality of the teaching staff (current staff have been in place since 2007), in particular their German proficiency and professional knowledge, and the fact that as a team they provide both native speaker input supported by second language learner teachers with high levels of methodology knowledge. The teaching staff is supported by teaching assistants from Germany who are funded by a ‘German immersion levy’ on parents.

Outcomes for students are seen as overwhelmingly positive, based on the quality of results the numbers continuing German through to Year 12, and the nature of parent feedback on the impact the program has on their children. The benefits of the program are seen to extend beyond proficiency, showing up in many areas of achievement within the school community.

A number of issues are identified with the German immersion program by the administration. These are mostly based around adequate resourcing for the program, in recognition of the significant workload that the immersion program requires, particularly with articulation with the mainstream content and the translation tasks resulting from that articulation. The school feels it cannot give more time allocation for this task, but does fund a language assistant to help students with their language development. A second major issue is the transition back into mainstream at Year 11 level. Reintegration into English medium classrooms where attitudes towards learning may not be as strong and where collegial learning may not be as well developed cause some issues for post-immersion students. A final issue of concern touched upon is the variable attitude towards or understanding of the immersion program by mainstream staff which can engender some negativity and lack of support for what the immersion teachers are trying to achieve.

The main challenges to the program from the teachers perspective include the difficulty in maintaining numbers as the range of special interest options continues to grow, the ‘lack of funding support for release time’ for translation, which means the Teaching Assistants need to assist or teachers need to do translation tasks in their own time and the attitude to
or acceptance of the immersion program by learning areas who would prefer high achievers to remain in their mainstream programs.

**Students’ perceptions**

For students the immersion experience was very positive, providing more challenges, a closer community and stronger friendships than they imagine would have been the case in mainstream. They no longer see themselves as ‘normal’. The experience, in their eyes has opened up doors to other languages and cultures and to a wider range of world views. They also describe the immersion experience as ‘the only way to learn a language’. They describe the ideal immersion student as one who is hardworking, accepting of diversity and purposeful in their approach to learning. On reflection, these students would recommend a number of changes to the immersion program. They felt that while their capabilities in comprehending German were well developed, the immersion program did not promote their oral language capabilities sufficiently; they weren’t ‘forced to speak German enough’. They also expressed some concerns about teacher’s skills and experience, with their competence in German not necessarily being matched by their content knowledge, nor their general classroom management skills. They also were emphatic in their concern about the fact that Year 12 German extension was not timetabled. They were required to take the course ‘off line’ which seemed discriminatory from their perspective. In relation to the in country experience, all students reflected positively on the experience but thought that Year 10 was probably the appropriate time to spend time in country, when their language proficiency and personal development / maturity were such that they could gain the most from the experience.

**Class observations**

*Year 9 maths (volumes and shapes)*

The students are engaging with new content and vocabulary in a well-structured and resourced lesson that provides plenty of opportunity for inferencing and collaborative learning. There is a high level of teacher language input and a clear focus on the learning content. The students are provided with opportunities to engage in collaborative activity with occasional requests for clarification in English. There are mostly active listening opportunities with limited requirements for students to use their German productively. There is little evidence of writing or note taking despite the introduction of new content. Students have significant opportunity to be off task, with class participation lead by one or two more active individuals. During the main activity of the lesson most student conversation or negotiation is conducted in English, with only the teacher appearing committed to speaking German at all times in class. The lesson concludes with a review of learning with students responding in German to teacher’s questions.

*Year 8 HPE (advertisements)*

Students are involved in a group task of making a mind map display for a health poster. All resources students employed are in German, but all negotiation and discussion between students in each group is in English, including questions and requests to the teacher. At the end of the lesson student groups presenting their mind map displays to the class – in German, which usually requires reading aloud items listed under each topic heading in their
mind map. German ability varied from students to student – with one student asking ‘do I have to say it in German?’ before presenting. Generally the class appears to be low intensity and low demand in terms of German learning and use with a culture of English use still pervasive in all interactions, except teachers utterances.

*Year 8 SOSE (geography)*

Students are engaged in the study of Australian deserts using a German atlas and a unit workbook in German and English. The teacher is instructing in German, the general classroom chatter is largely in English. The general demeanour is positive. Most students appear engaged but with time off task available as the lesson proceeds at a slow pace; without close checking of student progress/work done. When the teacher engages learners in question – answer sessions student responses in German are hesitant but effective. Requests for clarification in English result in the teacher requesting students speak in German, which they appear to be able to do effectively.

**Strengths**

- The program is a successful, established program which is meeting its primary objectives. It has a good reputation within the school and community.
- The program is attracting an appropriate number of students to sustain the program in the longer term.
- The program has a stable staff profile and has been able to retain staff well.

**Issues**

- While the study of German language is included as a core subject in the immersion program, its objective in actively supporting students language development and capabilities in both learning through and expressing that learning in German needs to be promoted more explicitly.
- There needs to be a high expectation of target language use by students in the classroom, particularly in the early years. There needs to be a clear transition point at which German becomes the normal and required language for all communication in the classroom.
- The extra work entailed in translation and in-country study and travel experiences needs clear recognition in workload allocations for immersion teachers.
- The use of ICT and e-learning opportunities did not appear strong in this program. A strategy may be needed in the next few years to consider how to improve the use of ICT in immersion classroom learning across learning areas, and how such technologies can enhance links with and promote social interaction between students in the school and other German-speaking communities internationally.
- It was apparent that methods within the German program were fairly traditional in terms of teacher-student interaction and responsibility, and in terms of the resource base being used to promote learning. Some measures to ensure resources are up to date, and methods are appropriate to contemporary understandings of both Content and
Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programs and general classroom practices may be advisable.

Future directions

- There is a need for planning for the implementation of the Australian curriculum in 2012. The school needs to have clear strategies in place to address the changes the new curriculum will entail. The school needs to consider how the work involved in developing German material will be supported.

- The school needs to plan for the inclusion of Year 7 in the secondary program in 2014 and consider how this will impact on immersion. If the school decides to implement immersion from Year 7, it needs to finalise its decision soon in order to allow for adequate planning time for developing a new Year 7 curriculum in German.

- The school should investigate professional learning opportunities to develop teacher knowledge of contemporary approaches to and methods of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in German.
Indooroopilly State High School Spanish Immersion Program

Quantitative analysis

Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of students</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Intake of students at Year 8

The program has a quota of 25 students for the immersion program. This is a new program with relatively stable enrolments which should be maintained as the program establishes itself and its reputation. Students are recruited into the immersion program through a highly proactive approach which includes after school introductory lessons at the local primary school, an information evening, and ‘word of mouth’ from current students. Over 70 applications are received for the current 25 positions available. Applicants are interviewed to clarify exceptions and responsibilities, and decisions made based on performance in primary school, and habits, interests and attitude based on questionnaire responses.

Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention from</th>
<th>% retention</th>
<th>No. cohorts tracked</th>
<th>No. Yr 8 students tracked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 9</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 10 = to Yr 11 syllabus</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 11 = to Yr 12 syllabus</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Retention of students from Year 8

The retention data here is only indicative as the program is only newly established. The retention into Years 9 and 10 could be stronger, but this may represent problems relating to expectations about and understanding of a new program type. This is something that the school needs to monitor in the future development of the program.

Achievement data

As the first Indooroopilly immersion students will be completing Year 12 in 2012, there are as yet no exit results.

Qualitative analysis

Spanish was chosen for the immersion program as part of the CIS accreditation process. There is strong support for the Spanish program from administration, and the professionalism of the staff is respected, but the program must demonstrate its ongoing sustainability if it is to survive. The Spanish Ministry of education provides 6 hours teacher assistant support per week, and bases its mother tongue maintenance program at the school.

The Spanish Immersion program includes Maths, Science, SOSE and Spanish, and begins with 6 weeks intensive Spanish before learning area studies begin. Three staff members are involved in the program. The Spanish immersion program is supported by a 5 week in
country program to Spain. The program will not run in 2011 as it is too time consuming to organise, so both Year 9 and 10 students will be offered the opportunity in 2012.

The strengths of the program are seen to be the quality of the teachers involved, their qualifications across learning areas and high (native) proficiency in Spanish, as well as their overall competence as teachers, displaying the necessary energy and enthusiasm to motivate learners. Another key strength is the quality of resources, using an authentic Spanish textbook which provides quality input for language learning, the quality of translated booklets for learning areas, enhanced by increasing E-learning opportunities as laptops are becoming available and satellite access provides real time exposure to Spanish television. The ongoing positive relationship and support from the principal is seen as a key strength.

The key challenges in maintaining the Spanish immersion program include teacher quality and qualifications, in particular finding teachers with both language proficiency and learning area qualifications, and the capabilities at managing the (Australian, immersion) classroom setting. Finding time for resource development (translation and authentic materials) remains an ongoing issue for staff. The staff perceive there to be some ‘ongoing issues’ with heads of departments in terms of access to timely advice on changes in curriculum etc. This reflects heads of departments understanding of what it takes to run an immersion program, in particular in implementing change. There is also concern that the mainstream teachers harbour some resentment due to the fact that quality students are attracted to the immersion program which is housed in quality buildings with up to date facilities, and yet the mainstream teachers need to deal with issues in reabsorbing ‘immersion dropouts’ into their mainstream classes.

Other challenges include reassuring parents that performance in learning areas will not be diminished by immersion learning, dealing with occasional losses to Queensland Academy schools, and ensuring quality future learning pathways for students at university. The constant changes in Learning area content and assessment requirements adds to the immersion teachers workload in translation and adjustments to teaching and assessment in immersion also.

Students’ perceptions

The students involved in immersion are positive about the value of the immersion program to their education and believe their immersion experience creates a higher level learning opportunity than what they would have received in mainstream, describing the transition back into mainstream at Year 11 as ‘a jump down’ in standard from their immersion classes. This is largely due to the focussed, diligent, collegial nature of their immersion community; something which they feel is lost on returning to the mainstream. The other issue they feel they face on returning to mainstream is the transition from Spanish to English terminology in their learning areas which takes some time for adjustment. They feel that the Spanish in country experience in Year 9 is a special experience which has a huge impact on both their proficiency and maturity but believe they would be better prepared and achieve more from the trip if it were held in Year 10.
Class observations

Year 9 history (Spanish civil war)

The teacher is presenting insights into the Spanish civil war using Spanish language video documentary footage to support the learning, noting key terms and events on the board as the video proceeds. All interaction in the class is in Spanish, with the teacher summarising and highlighting aspects of the information under discussion and soliciting learner’s contributions. Students respond readily in Spanish, the conversation maintains a natural flow of questions, responses and feedback, with occasional interjections and humour. Students are actively involved in the conversation and with the content, displaying complete attention and engagement. Students occasionally seek clarification of content, not language, and speak with a fluency and spontaneity that is most impressive.

Year 8 maths (geometry)

The teacher is using Power Point to present new concepts (angles and shapes) with all instructions in Spanish with the teacher taking care to ensure understanding of concepts and language before proceeding through comprehension checks. The students the engage in an activity involving new ideas, the teacher assisting students seeking responses and drawing out their reasoning in Spanish, with some students making requests for clarification of ideas as required. Students generally seem in control of their learning, though as a new concept is under discussion some uncertainty remains.

Year 8 science (biology – photosynthesis)

The teacher is using the data projector to present material from their work book. Much teacher talk, though students are required to read aloud the texts as displayed on screen. The lesson largely requires a lot of listening and not much doing, but student’s responses to questions and occasional humour in the class highlights their ongoing engagement and comprehension of language.

Year 10 SOSE

The teacher is using the current edition of the Spanish morning news received by satellite to look at Spanish perspectives on current events (USA budget crisis). The program proceeds, the teacher notes key words/concepts on the board the draws students into discussion about what was seen and heard. Students are actively involved in listening and viewing, then discuss with extended responses their views, or summarise the key points using terms from the board. The class runs smoothly, with students occasionally interjecting on each other to clarify points or put forward alternatives, with a collaborative and supportive learning environment very much in evidence.

Strengths

- The program is a successful, established program which is meeting its primary objectives. It has a good reputation within the school and community.

- The program is attracting an appropriate number of students to sustain the program in the longer term.
• The program has a stable staff profile and has been able to retain staff well.

• There is a high expectation of target language use by students in the classroom, supported by an intensive Spanish course at the beginning of the immersion program.

• The use of ICT and e-learning opportunities is apparent in this program.

Issues

• The extra work entailed in translation and in-country study and travel experiences needs clear recognition in workload allocations for immersion teachers.

• Providing the resources to extend the program to a second Year 8 class will be necessary in the immediate future.

Future directions

• There is a need for planning for the implementation of the Australian curriculum in 2012. The school needs to have clear strategies in place to address the changes the new curriculum will entail. The school needs to consider how the work involved in developing Spanish material will be supported.

• The school needs to plan for the inclusion of Year 7 in the secondary program in 2014 and consider how this will impact on immersion. If the school decides to implement immersion from Year 7, it needs to finalise its decision soon in order to allow for adequate planning time for developing a new Year 7 curriculum in Spanish.

• The school should investigate professional learning opportunities to develop teacher knowledge of contemporary approaches to and methods of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).
Kenmore State High School German Immersion Program

**Quantitative analysis**

**Recruitment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of students</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 9: Intake of students at Year 8*

The school has two immersion classes with a quota of 58 students, although numbers fluctuate below the quota level. Recruitment levels appear to be able to sustain an enrolment at about quota level as there is considerable recruitment work done for the immersion program by the school and there is also recruitment from outside the usual catchment area. Students are chosen on the basis of:

- General academic ability in primary school
- Language ability – in English and other language study
- Engagement in learning

**Retention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention from</th>
<th>% retention</th>
<th>No. cohorts tracked</th>
<th>No. Yr 8 students tracked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 9</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 10 = to Yr 11 syllabus</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 11 = to Yr 12 syllabus</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 12 = to Extension syllabus</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 10: Retention of students from Year 8*

The retention in this program is strong throughout and the retention of approximately two thirds of students into Year 12 Extension German is particularly notable.

**Achievement data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior German exit results as %, 2006–10</th>
<th>VHA</th>
<th>HA</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>LA</th>
<th>VLA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extension syllabus, Kenmore</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension syllabus, Qld average</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 11: Student achievement in Year 12*

Exit results for the results of immersion-only students studying the Standard German syllabus at Kenmore were not available separate from the overall students (including a substantial number of non-immersion students). Thus only the Extension German exit results are reported here. They are essentially identical with the Queensland average.
Qualitative analysis

Kenmore SHS offers a well-established immersion program in German which now has a strong reputation in the community and attracts students to the school. The Curriculum Areas taught in German: Mathematics, Science, HPE, SOSE and German language. Immersion students given the same curriculum in German as the mainstream students with material used in mainstream translated and adapted in German and assessment tasks are taken from the mainstream areas and translated. There is no time allocation for this work in regular workloads. Students begin immersion in all curriculum areas from the beginning of Year 8.

The teachers primarily teaching the German immersion program and do not teach content areas across the school. Some of the teachers have qualifications in language teaching and another curriculum area, others have qualifications only in the curriculum area taught through German.

The school has an annual study tour to Germany and the majority of immersion students participate. This is open to all students in the school, not just the immersion students. Participation in the study tour is determined by the family. The students also have the opportunity to participate in some local activities relating to German language and culture, however, these tend to be ad hoc arrangements rather than established programs.

Students’ perceptions

Students had a strong sense of being part of a tight knit group including students and teachers. They believed this was one of the main advantages of the immersion program and felt this was especially beneficial in a large school. The sense of cohort seems to be a factor for students deciding to continue with German after the end of immersion as they wish to maintain friendship groups into senior secondary level.

Students were enthusiastic about language learning and had a developed a strong commitment to continuing language learning after immersion, although some students believed that other subject areas were more important than German for their university preparation or future career. Students who were planning to discontinue German said that they had enjoyed the program and appreciated to opportunity to do immersion but felt they needed to do other subjects more.

One of the reasons for retention in German after the immersion program was that students had a strong sense that their German learning in immersion was an investment that they wanted to develop further in order to increase the benefits knowing German would bring.

Students felt that the benefits of immersion went beyond language learning itself. They cited the development of a “good work ethic” had been particularly beneficial. They felt confident in the ability as learners and in their ability to be self-direct and to organise their own learning. They felt that the challenges of immersion led to significant individual growth. They also felt that learning German had contributed significantly to their knowledge of English and to their ability to communicate more generally. The program gave them a very strong sense of achievement.
Students felt that immersion gave them a good insight into German language and culture. They appreciated the regular connections that were made with Germany in the content of their learning and also the opportunity to develop their knowledge better through their time in-country.

The students had begun to use social technologies to extend their interaction with German speakers – especially through Facebook, Skype and e-mail. This was something which developed for them in Year 10, largely as a result of contact with young German speakers through school exchanges.

**Classroom Observations**

*Year 8 German language (Grammar)*

The teaching style in the class was largely teacher centred. The focus was on the use of the accusative case in each of the three genders using substitutions in structures of the type: *Wir können (Nominative Article Noun) schützen, indem wir (Accusative pronoun) in Gefangenschaft züchten.* Teacher talk and all instructions were in German and students seemed to understand the lesson well. Students used a combination of English and German for talking to the teacher and English for talking with each other.

*Year 11 Extension German (Vocabulary)*

Students were working on an acrostic finding synonyms in a text for words in German. The vocabulary involved was quite sophisticated. The teacher used German extensively but all student interaction was in English, except when supplying German vocabulary items in response to the teacher’s questions.

*Year 8 SOSE (typical German, typical Australian)*

Students worked on a worksheet which involves selecting the correct answer from three possible answers in response to a stimulus question. Questions focus on facts about Germany. At the end of the task, the teacher elicits answers by getting students to read the question and supplying the correct answer. Reading is relatively fluent. This was followed by a brain storm tasks in which students drew images on the board of things that were typically Australian or German. There was little language use by the students in this task. There was evidence of good receptive language but few opportunities for production.

Teacher talk is exclusively in German, student responses usually in German but may be in English. Students are prompted to repeat English answers in German. In group work students initiate questions in German, English or code-mixed English and German. Students use English with each other.

**Strengths**

- The program is a successful, established program which is functioning well and meeting its objectives. It has established a good reputation and is attracting and selecting appropriate students.
- The program is available to a significant number of students and the school appears to have the ability to attract to the program.
- The program has a stable staff profile and has been able to retain staff well.
Issues

- The program is not rigorous about German language use by students and tolerates a large amount of English. Initially, English has an important role however there does not seem to be a clear transition point when German becomes the normal language of all communication in the classroom. There needs to be a higher expectation of target language use.
- The extra work entailed in translation, etc. for immersion teachers is not recognised in workload allocations.
- The school teaches German to mainstream students, however this program is rather weak and it appears that senior German will be discontinued. The weakness of German in the mainstream may have the potential to undermine good work being done in the immersion program and there is a need for the school to consider ways of maintaining a strong German language program across the school to complement and support the immersion program.

Future directions

- There is a need for planning for the implementation of the Australian curriculum in 2012. The school does not appear to have strategies in place to address the changes the new curriculum will entail. The school does not seem to have considered how the work involved in developing German material will be supported.
- The school has begun considering the change to Year 7 in 2014 and how this will impact on immersion. If the school decides to implement immersion from Year 7, it needs to finalise its decision soon in order to allow for adequate planning time for developing a new Year 7 curriculum in German.
- The school should investigate professional learning to develop stronger knowledge of approaches to and methods of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) for teachers without a languages qualification.
Mansfield State High School French Immersion Program

Quantitative Analysis

Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of students</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 12: Intake of students at Year 8*

The program has a quota of 30 places for immersion students. Students come from outside the usual catchment area for this program. Students are chosen on the basis of:

- academic record in Years 6 and 7
- confidential report on the students’ performance in English and Mathematics and also on attitudes and behaviour
- academic results are not the sole consideration for selection, motivation and attitude are considered important.

The figures show very consistent recruitment and there seems to be no difficulty for the school in meeting the quota, which suggests there may be more demand in the area for this program than is currently being met.

Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention from</th>
<th>% retention</th>
<th>No. cohorts tracked</th>
<th>No. Yr 8 students tracked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 9</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 10</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 11</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 12</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 13: Retention of students from Year 8*

The program has excellent retention rates into Year 10 which shows that most students commencing the program complete it. The continuation into Year 11 and Year 12 Extension French is also strong.

Achievement data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior French exit results as %, 2006–10</th>
<th>VHA</th>
<th>HA</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>LA</th>
<th>VLA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard syllabus, Mansfield</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard syllabus, Qld average</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension syllabus, Mansfield</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension syllabus, Qld average</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 14: Student achievement in Year 12*

The exit results in the Standard syllabus at Mansfield are higher than the Queensland average – the percentage of VHA is identical with the average, but there is a substantially higher percentage of students receiving HA, with many fewer SA and LA results. The
Extension syllabus results are relatively similar, with slightly higher rates of VHA and lower rates of HA.

**Qualitative analysis**

Mansfield SHS is a well-established program offering immersion in French which now has a strong reputation in the community and attracts students to the school. The majority of students taken into the program have had no previous study of French and the program is designed as immersion for *ab initio* learners of the language. The program devotes the first 5 weeks of Term 1 to intensive language learning and begins immersion in other content areas after the completion of this period of language learning.

The curriculum areas taught in French: Mathematics, Science, SOSE and French language. The school has a deliberate policy that teachers in immersion also teach into the mainstream curriculum as a strategy of ensuring that the immersion program is well integrated into the school. The curriculum for Mathematics, Science and SOSE was based on the curriculum in the mainstream and all materials used in the mainstream classes, including the textbook, were translated by the teachers for use in the immersion classes. The translations involved adaptation of the material to support the language learning needs of the students (e.g. additional pedagogical support). Students in Mathematics and Science undertaken the same assessment tasks as the mainstream students and all tests/assignments are translated into French using language of a similar level of complexity. Students received extra time for doing assessment in French. In Science, students were supported in answering test questions by use of modelling of answers and guided practice of sample answers in their classroom preparation of the topic. In addition, in Mathematics, students were able to answer linguistically complex questions in English and where the wording of a question in the English version of the test was too complex to be understood in French the question was left in English. The SOSE curriculum was more flexible as there was variation across the school in the topics taught by particular teachers. The immersion SOSE curriculum began with topics with less language focus from among the options in Year 8 and developed more linguistically complex topics later. Students initially required very scaffolded support to produce assessment texts – for example essays were written using a large number of guide questions rather than just the topic question, however, by Year 10 assignments were equivalent to mainstream assessment.

The school organises regular and occasional overseas study programs in French. The main activity is an annual three week visit to Rouen. In addition there are possibilities for students to be involved in

- two month exchanges in Strasbourg at a Lycée or Gymnasium
- summer visits to Tahiti, involving 3 weeks in school and 1 week tourism
- ad hoc arrangements with particular schools

These activities are open to all students in the school, not just the immersion students, but most immersion students participate in a study tour. Participation in these is determined by the family. The school estimates that between one quarter and one third of immersion students are not able to participate in an in-country activity.
The students also have the opportunity to participate in some local activities relating to French language and culture, however, these tend to be ad hoc arrangements rather than established programs.

**Students’ perceptions**

Students value the sense of belonging that participation in immersion develops. They feel a strong sense of being part of a cohesive and mutually supportive cohort of students and feel they have close relationships with their teachers, which have developed as a result of having the same teachers over the time in immersion. One student described the program as “a massive family”. The sense of cohort seems to be a factor for students deciding to continue with French beyond immersion as they wish to maintain friendship groups into senior secondary level.

Students valued being part of a committed group of likeminded people. They commented positively on the interest the class had in learning, their engagement and the lack of disruptive behaviour and other problems in the classes. They had a perception that students in mainstream classes were less engaged in learning and less serious about study. They believed that the level of engagement of immersion students meant that they could move faster in their learning, and this was something they valued.

Students were enthusiastic about language learning and had developed a strong commitment to continuing language learning after immersion, although some students recognised that for some students other subject areas were more important than French for their university preparation or future career and that they had decided to discontinue French because of this.

Students’ felt that using French quickly became natural, although they found the initial weeks challenging. They felt that the support they were given by teachers was important in getting them through the early stages of immersion. They felt that the program required them to use French as much as possible in their own communication and although this increased pressure on the students, they believed it was an important part of their language learning.

They felt that the program was useful for developing good study habits and ways of working that carried over into other areas, and were especially good preparation for senior secondary study.

They felt that the transition back into learning through English in Year 11 was relatively unproblematic, although they felt it was a challenging learning the subject specific vocabulary at the start of their study. They felt there was less pressure to speak French in their language classes than there had been in the immersion class. They felt that the extra electives in Year 10 were important for their transition into Year 11 as they helped to make connections with students outside the immersion program.

**Classroom observations**

*Year 9 SOSE (Chinese society, ethnic minorities, history)*

The teaching style in the class was largely teacher centred. The tasks involved a lecture style presentation by the teacher, reading aloud from the textbook followed by questions
about the text, language work on vocabulary, finding synonyms in French for new vocabulary items in the text, pair work answering comprehension questions about the text.

Students appeared to be using the language fluently and creatively. French was clearly the main language of communication with students using French to initiate interactions with the teacher, although much of the student to student interaction happened in English or code-mixed English and French.

*Year 10 Mathematics (coordinate geometry)*

Class was largely teacher centred. The teacher gave a short lecture on the topic and then worked through examples of calculations on the board, providing relevant formulae. Students were asked to define terms, provide examples of formulae and to put numbers into formulae and calculate equations. Answers were chosen widely from the group and answers were fluent although usually linguistically relatively simple.

*Year 10 Science (Chemical formulae)*

The teacher elicited chemical formulae for various compounds presented in French. The linguistic component was relatively small – names of elements, numbers – but highly technical. The teacher corrected students’ errors in producing formulae in French and gave explanations in French.

**Strengths**

- The program is a successful, established program which is functioning well and meeting its objectives. It has established a strong reputation and is attracting and selecting appropriate students.
- The program has a stable staff profile and has been able to retain staff well.
- The intensive language development in Year 8 is a useful strategy for dealing with *ab initio* learners
- Strong strategies in place to ensure that curriculum is matched across the mainstream and immersion areas.
- Additional time and resources allocated to immersion teachers for preparation of materials/translations.

**Issues**

- The program is relatively small and limited to a cohort of 30 students. There has been no expansion of the program during its existence, although the principal did mention this as a possible future direction.

**Future directions**

- The program is provided to a very small cohort (30 students). The school could consider expanding the number of students being accepted and introducing a second immersion class.
- There is a need for further planning for the implementation of the Australian curriculum in 2012. The school has some strategies in place to develop translations, etc. and has allocated some funding to support translation and materials development.
• The school has begun considering the change to Year 7 in 2014 and how this will impact on immersion. If the school decides to implement immersion from Year 7, it needs to finalise its decision soon in order to allow for adequate planning time for developing a new Year 7 curriculum in French.
North Lakes State College Italian immersion program

Quantitative analysis

Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of students</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15: Intake of students at Year 8

This is a new program and the intake level of this program has yet to be established. For a new program these statistics are hard to interpret as they may reflect initial problems relating to awareness of the program in the community or they may indicate that there is a limited demand for the program. Enrolments therefore need to be monitored and the school needs to work more on recruitment to ensure the viability of the program in the long term.

Students are selected based on their academic performance and recommendations from their Year 7 teacher. The Italian Schools Committee provides support for two unregistered native speakers to teach Italian (teacher present) for 30 minutes a week in Years P to 5, then 90 minutes a week in Years 6 and 7. However in 2011 only 12 students were recruited into the IIP in Year 8. The reason for the decline in enrolments in 2011 has been attributed to the introduction of a competing Honours program at the school, which attracted students who had already committed to Italian, but withdrew and took up the Honours alternative. This problem has been overcome somewhat for 2012 with ‘at least 16 enrolments and another 15 possible students registered for the IIP in 2012. The numbers on 2010 were also quite low. The Year 8 class began with 18 but 6 withdrew due to ‘lack of personal effort or parental support’ according to the school.

Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention from</th>
<th>% retention</th>
<th>No. cohorts tracked</th>
<th>No. Yr 8 students tracked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 9</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 10 = to Yr 11 syllabus</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 11 = to Yr 12 syllabus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 12 = to Extension syllabus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16: Retention of students from Year 8

The North Lakes immersion program finishes in Year 10. The retention rates seem good, but there is currently little data for this as the program is so new.

Achievement data

The North Lakes immersion program finishes in Year 10. The first students to complete Year 12 (having participated in the immersion program) will finish in 2012. There is thus no achievement data.


Qualitative analysis

The Italian immersion program (IIP) began in 2008 and includes the study of Maths, Science SOSE and Italian. The IIP is promoted through an information night and application process in which the ‘high expectations’ of the program are highlighted.

The administration recognises that the success of the program depends upon the quality and passion of the staff, most of whom are overseas trained native speakers, but some classroom management issues do arise due to their lower English language proficiency. The staff are considered to be qualified in both Italian language and subject matter knowledge, but it was stated that ‘some up-skilling in learning area knowledge’ was required and the assertion that everyone has a languages qualification from an Australian University did not seem to be supported by comments from teachers themselves. The staff involved in the immersion program are not dedicated to that program alone, they are required to teach the learning areas in the mainstream program as well in order to enhance content awareness, improve moderation and standards setting between the two programs and overcome fears by parents of lower level outcomes in the IIP. IIP teachers are recognised as part of the decision making process, attend faculty meetings and receive support from the Heads of Department for their work in the IIP.

The main issue that staff members feel imposes a particular burden is the task of translating mainstream booklets for use in the IPP, including at present ‘re-writing an entire new unit of work’. They describe this task as very time consuming, though not a difficult task. For the students the teachers view the transition back into mainstream as the major issue for students, though they also describe students as unfazed by completing Year 12 Italian in Year 11 mainstream and going on to Griffith University head start program one day a week in Year 12.

The immersion teachers view the IIP as a program of excellence, in which the students need to be pushed harder, be made to work for it (comprehension) with high information flow and only limited translation or reliance on English in the classroom. The teachers do acknowledge that at times there is a need to give them less (learning area content) information, or to be ‘less expansive’ in the IIP than in the mainstream classroom, given the delivery of information and ideas in Italian. Teachers also recognise the need for particular strategies to enhance and improve Italian language use in learning areas. One teacher described the fact that student essays in Year 8 and 9 were often presented as word for word translations from English to Italian (i.e. displaying planning in English and translation in English word order). The immersion teachers addressed this by investigating literacy practices in English classes and developing a booklet outlining a steps for drafting and editing booklet specifically for the IIP program which resulted in significant improvements in Italian essay writing. Teachers acknowledge a clear relationship also between accuracy of Italian use and content knowledge in students work / achievement.

Italian is taught as dedicated subject within immersion and the overall IPP begins with an intensive language focus before beginning learning areas content study. The introductory Italian program uses resources developed by the teachers ‘to suit our students’, the later Years Italian program is taught using ‘la lingua italiana per stranieri’ published in Italy in 1985, which is particularly grammar focussed, and not designed for school aged learners.
Students’ perceptions (Year 10)

The students displayed a strong sense of belonging and satisfaction from their Italian immersion experience. They saw their membership of the IIP, belonging to a special group learning how to work together, as a unique experience that they were glad they were part of. They view immersion as a great challenge, and an opportunity to immerse themselves in another culture, and ‘learn all the good bits’ about Italy as they see it. They feel a strong sense of success for ‘doing it (their studies) in another language’. They view a good immersion student as one who is willing to work hard, be organised, listen actively, and revise and study consistently. They see the key challenges of Italian immersion as learning to think in Italian, noting that at the beginning of their immersion experience they were accustomed to translating from one language to another, a habit they discovered they needed to break in order to succeed. They feel also that while they can read and write (and listen) in Italian, they haven’t had enough experience or opportunity to develop their speaking skills, a shortcoming that they would have liked to address earlier.

If they could change their early immersion experience, or recommend changes, they would learn to stop doing everything twice – in Italian and English, to revise more, and would request more extensive study of the Italian language to better support their comprehension and use of Italian in their learning areas. They found immersion science to be the hardest subject to deal with, and maths the easiest, but they feel that they don’t ‘cover everything in the maths and science curriculum’ that the mainstream classes do – and that they do need to address this once back in the mainstream.

Class observations

Year 9 SOSE (legal studies – Australian parliament)

The class is reviewing content in a series of texts on the nature of the Australian political system. The texts are displayed on a data projector with key vocab items written on a whiteboard as they are encountered in the text. Students keep their own vocab lists in their books, displaying a heavy reliance on these vocabulary lists to maintain an understanding of the texts they are engaged with. Teacher talk is entirely in Italian, and students tend to respond or interact in English unless they are responding to a question directed at them by the teacher about the content of the text. Students often display uncertainty, responding ‘I can’t remember how to say the word’ or ‘I always forget …’ as they respond.

Student exercise books do not seem to contain a lot of evidence of work, and unit workbooks containing texts, questions etc. require little more than short comprehension responses, as a means of making sense of the content of the texts rather than using the information for more interpretive purposes or as a stimulus to more extended responses in Italian.

Year 10 history (WW1)

The students are studying a module on WW1 using a unit book translated from English. The students at Year 10 have laptops available and may access the digital versions of the unit book. There appears to be little additional interactivity available to students despite the presence of laptops. Students working with paper versions create vocab lists in their
exercise books; those with laptops cut and paste translations from online dictionaries to create their own vocab lists.

The teacher talk is entirely in Italian using audio-visual resources to support the study of the topic. The students read aloud the texts from the unit book paragraph by paragraph then engage in question and answer sessions led by the teacher. Students do not appear very active or engaged with little evidence of student generated discussion of the texts or issues arising from the texts occurring. There is some informal interaction between students in English for their own purposes, but the class appears comfortable with the content of the lesson delivered in Italian.

*Year 9 science (the web of life)*

Students are doing revision from their unit book, the lesson involves a passive question and answer activity, not everyone is on task, and there appears to be low expectations in terms of student involvement in class activity. Student responses to questions are delivered in competent, confident Italian. When the topic shifts to Australian eating habits the students become more interested and active, with animated discussion and opinion sharing in English, with the teacher also ‘falling into’ English to share in the discussion, before calling the class to order and returning to the content of the work book and the use of Italian.

**Strengths**

- The program is a developing program which is meeting its primary objective of providing a sound immersion program to its students. It has a good reputation within the school and community.

**Issues**

- The program continues to face issues with attractive staff with high proficiency in Italian, and qualifications and experience in specific learning areas and in Italian language teaching.

- The program is not attracting or retaining an appropriate number of students to sustain the program in the longer term. The management of the immersion program is focussed on finding ways of increasing numbers enrolling in the program, but there do not appear to be sufficient strategies to ensure the quality of teaching and learning within the Italian immersion program itself as a way of ensuring its ongoing success.

- There is a general air of complacency that teacher’s proficiency in the language provides a suitable basis for immersion teaching. The nature of the qualifications of the staff was not well understood by the head of department, and there appeared to be no standards or expectations in terms of teacher qualifications or practices within the immersion program. Some measures to ensure qualifications and methods are appropriate to contemporary understandings of both CLIL programs and general classroom practices are advisable.

- While the study of Italian language is included as an introduction to and a core subject within the immersion program, its objective in actively supporting students language
development and capabilities in both learning through and expressing that learning in Italian needs to be more explicitly articulated in the program.

- It was apparent that resources within the Italian language program were fairly traditional in terms of curriculum design. Some measures to ensure resources are up to date, and appropriate to contemporary understandings of both CLIL programs and general classroom practices is advisable.

- There needs to be a greater expectation of target language use by students in the classroom, particularly in the early years. There needs to be a clear transition point at which Italian becomes the normal and required language for all communication in the classroom.

- The extra work entailed in translation and in-country study and travel experiences needs clear recognition in workload allocations for immersion teachers.

- The use of ICT and e-learning opportunities did not appear strong in this program. A strategy may be needed in the next few years to consider how to improve the use of ICT in classroom learning across learning areas, and how such technologies can enhance links with and promote social interaction between students in the school and other Italian communities internationally.

**Future directions**

- There is a need for planning for the implementation of the Australian curriculum in 2012. The school needs to have clear strategies in place to address the changes the new curriculum will entail. The school needs to consider how the work involved in developing Italian material will be supported.

- The school needs to plan for the inclusion of Year 7 in the secondary program in 2014 and consider how this will impact on immersion. If the school decides to implement immersion from Year 7, it needs to finalise its decision soon in order to allow for adequate planning time for developing a new Year 7 curriculum in Italian.

- The school should investigate professional learning opportunities to develop teacher knowledge of contemporary approaches to and methods of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).
Park Ridge State High School Indonesian immersion program

Quantitative Analysis

Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of students</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17: Intake of students at Year 8

Recruitment has been a problem and numbers for the program have been small. In part the problem is influenced by the relative isolation of the school and resulting problems for attracting students from outside their natural catchment. This may perhaps change now that there is a bus interchange located near the school as the school is now more accessible. Since the Bali bombings and the introduction of travel advisories for Indonesia, the numbers of students have fallen consistently. There has at the same time been pressure to increase enrolments. School leaders believe that this led to a relaxing of the recruitment criteria to increase numbers and as a result many students taken into the program were not suited to immersion student and this exacerbated retention problems. Recruitment was largely left to the Indonesian program and there does not seem to have been good monitoring of processes by school leaders. The current Head of Department has established better monitoring of recruitment/admission. Recruitment levels need to be monitored in the future.

Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention from</th>
<th>% retention</th>
<th>No. cohorts tracked</th>
<th>No. Yr 8 students tracked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 9</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>94</td>
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<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 10 = to Yr 11 syllabus</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 11 = to Yr 12 syllabus</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 12 = to Extension syllabus</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18: Retention of students from Year 8

The retention figures for this program are problematic with only around two thirds of commencing students completing the program and with relatively small enrolments, averaging fewer than 20 commencing students per year over five years. The retention beyond Year 10 is also low, although much better than national averages (Liddicoat, et al., 2007).

Achievement data

The achievement data for the Extension Indonesian syllabus across all of Queensland would appear to be based entirely on the Park Ridge results, so no comparison can be made.
**Table 19: Student achievement in Year 12**

The exit results for Indonesian at Park Ridge are much stronger than the Queensland averages, with 50% of students receiving a VHA, contrasting with the Queensland average of 32%. There are substantially fewer SA, and fewer LA and VLA results than average. The Extension syllabus results are identical, and refer to the same set of students.

**Qualitative Analysis**

Park Ridge SHS offers an immersion program in Indonesian. It is an established program, but has been vulnerable, especially in the last year and this has led to some modifications of the program which mean that the program is functioning less well than it has previously. This program is in a very difficult position in 2011 with the loss of 3 of the 4 staff who had been teaching in the immersion program. These staff losses have not been resignations but various forms of leave of absence which means that the school has not been able to replace them with on-going appointments. The school currently has only two staff teaching in Indonesian immersion. One of these teachers was originally employed on a one term contract but has been extended. This teacher has had no previous experience or training in immersion teaching. The staffing problems have led to a reduction in the content of the immersion program, which is currently providing fewer than the required hours of immersion. It has also created other problems of organisation and delivery. The current situation is therefore not representative of the long term conditions at the school, but represents a situation which must be overcome if the program is to be viable. The remaining teacher is qualified as a teacher of Science but not as a teacher of language.

The Curriculum Areas taught in Indonesian have changed in the light of the difficulties described above. In 2010 the immersion program focused on Science, SOSE, Mathematics and Indonesian language, while in 2011 it was reduced to Science, SOSE and Indonesian language. This means that there was a reduction in the proportion of the curriculum offered in Indonesian. The Science curriculum is supposed to be the same work program as for the mainstream students and students did the same tests and assignments with an extra time allocation. It was noted however that students did not believe they received the same curriculum. The teacher translated material from English or used Indonesian textbooks for teaching Science. English materials were also used where equivalent resources were not available in Indonesian, e.g. DVDs. The SOSE curriculum also uses the mainstream work and the teacher translates material into Indonesian or modifies and simplifies resources to the students’ level in language. Immersion students are required to do their SOSE assessment in English as a policy of the SOSE department to ensure that the level is the same. Students do additional assessment in Indonesian after completing the English assessment. Mathematics is not currently offered in immersion as there is no available teacher. The school had received complaints about the Mathematics curriculum from parents when the curriculum was offered.

One of the problems facing this program is that there is a lack of suitable material for supporting the Indonesian curriculum and teachers need to develop much material themselves or use English language resources to support their teaching in Indonesian. There is no time allocation for translation work and other preparation work in teachers’ workloads and this appears to exacerbate the problem for resource development.
There have been difficulties for the school in establishing some of the extra-curricular experiences which are associated with other immersion programs. In particular, the school has not been able to offer study tours to Indonesia because of travel advisories. To compensate, the school has organised some local events to offset in some way the lack of opportunities for travel to Indonesia:

- immersion camp
- visits to the school by Indonesian students for a month. There were two visits in 2010, but none were organised for 2011.
- visits to an Indonesian restaurant

There have also been ad hoc visits by Indonesian visitors and other occasional cultural activities.

**Students’ perceptions**

The students overall felt that the experience of Indonesian immersion had been positive. They felt were part of a close group which included both students and teachers. They believed this was one of the main advantages of the immersion program and felt this was especially beneficial in a large school. The sense of cohort seems to be a factor for students deciding to continue with Indonesian after the end of immersion as they wish to maintain friendship groups into senior secondary level. They appreciated the fact that the classes were small and that they received individual attention from their teachers and this contrasted with other classes taught in English.

The students found the program challenging but felt that once they had developed the study habits required they were able to follow the program without difficulty in most subject areas. They felt that much of the attrition in the program was related to the amount of work involved in immersion learning. They believed that students who did not have a commitment to hard work were likely to drop out because they quickly fell behind.

The students did not feel that they received the same curriculum as the mainstream in all subject areas. They reported that in when the transferred into Year 11 Science, they had not covered some of the topics that the teachers had expected them to. The also reported that there were problems with studying Mathematics in Indonesian and that this had not worked for them. They felt that moving to teaching mathematics in English in 2011 was a positive move. The students commented that in Mathematics and Science it was important to have good teachers and they felt that, although they liked their teachers, the teaching in these subject areas had not been good. They did however feel that Indonesian language and SOSE had worked well. Students also commented that because the immersion program had fewer electives than the mainstream, some senior secondary options were closed to immersion students.

**Classroom observations**

*Year 9 Science (digestive system)*

This was a small class (9 students) in a Science laboratory. The main focus was setting up an experiment in which different food stuffs were treated with the same chemicals and reactions were observed. The teacher presented information about digestion in Indonesian
as a lecture using PowerPoint slides with Indonesian terminology. Students were asked to translate terms into English as a comprehension check. The teacher then modelled the experiment for the class and had them replicate it. Directions for the task were given in Indonesian, but students seemed to have difficulty following the instructions. The instructions were sometimes repeated by the teacher in English. There was trouble keeping students on task in the experiment, and the experiment wasn’t completed during the task. After the first chemical reaction, the teacher asked students to report their observations. Questions were asked in Indonesian and students replied in Indonesian with single word answers – the names of colours.

**Year 10 SOSE (Explorers)**

This class was actually a combined class of Year 10 SOSE and Year 11 extension Indonesian – the combination resulted from the staffing problems currently being experienced in the school. The class was not an immersion SOSE class as the main language used was English. Students were working on a word finding task on the topic of explorers. The teacher set up the tasks in Indonesian and the students began to work silently. During the task the teacher discussed the topic of Explorers in English and led students into a discussion about ethical issues relating to the topic. The answers given were often sophisticated, but there was no Indonesian language use. The students then watched a film in English about Columbus. At the conclusion the teacher explained the homework task, again in English.

**Year 12 Indonesian extension (Grammar)**

This was a grammar revision lesson looking at ways of expanding sentences into more complex structures. The language of instruction was English and very little Indonesian was used, except when students made up sentence as examples of grammatical structures. The lesson closed with reading from a novel. The teacher read aloud and translated problem words into English or prompted for translation of the text into English.

**Strengths**

- In spite of its difficulties the program has produced high achieving students.
- There is strong support in the school for the program.

**Issues and future directions**

**Teacher supply**

- Teacher supply is the most pressing problem confronting this program. The loss of so many staff and in ways which do not allow the school to replace them through a normal recruitment process is unprecedented, but it reveals a difficulty in staffing a program with qualified teachers who can teach in Indonesian.
- The school needs to recruit new teachers across all curriculum areas if the program is to be viable. The school is not in a position where it can currently do this because of the circumstances relating to the current staff absences.
Teacher quality

- There seem to have been ongoing problems of teacher quality in the program. There seems to have been limited understanding of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) among staff who are not qualified in language education and this seems to be the main reason for the problems around the delivery of Mathematics and Science.

- The school needs to ensure that all teachers teaching into Indonesian immersion are qualified in both Indonesian language teaching and other curriculum areas or professional learning program to develop stronger knowledge of approaches to and methods of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) for teachers without a languages qualification.

Teacher support

- The program does not currently recognise the additional workload involved in preparing Indonesian versions of English materials. The lack of resourcing for this may have a negative impact on the quality of teaching offered to students, especially in situations where much material needs to be prepared quickly.

Recruitment

- The number of students entering the program is a problem and numbers need to be stabilised at a viable level. It would appear that the school needs to attract more out of area students to sustain the program. The school seems to be less pro-active in recruitment than many of the other bilingual schools and could develop stronger relationships with primary schools both in and out of the area.

International connections

- The restrictions on travel to Indonesia pose a problem which cannot be solved by the school. The school has developed some good strategies to offset this and it would be valuable if they could establish more regular visits from Indonesia. The school seems to have had success in doing this, but these have lost momentum in 2011 and need to be re-established.

Projected policy changes

- There is a need for planning for the implementation of the Australian curriculum in 2012. The school does not appear to have strategies in place to address the changes the new curriculum will entail. The school does not seem to have considered how the work involved in developing Indonesian material will be supported.

- The school has begun considering the change to Year 7 in 2014 and how this will impact on immersion. If the school decides to implement immersion from Year 7, it needs to finalise its decision soon in order to allow for adequate planning time for developing a new Year 7 curriculum in Indonesian.
Robina State High School Japanese Immersion Program

Quantitative analysis

Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of students</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20: Intake of students at Year 8

Recruitment in this program has been good for a small program, but there has been a fall in 2011. This fall is difficult to interpret for a new program and may represent issues relating to establishing the program and developing community awareness. The school is doing intensive promotion work which may establish a more consistent level of enrolment.

In the first year of the program students self-nominated and this led to a problematic dropout rate and the program realised that a more rigorous process was needed for identifying eligible students. Students are currently selected according to:

- level of academic achievement in primary school (B and above results)
- their level of enjoyment of and motivation for learning Japanese
- behaviours and attitudes

Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention from</th>
<th>% retention</th>
<th>No. cohorts tracked</th>
<th>No. Yr 8 students tracked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 9</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 10</td>
<td>= to Yr 11 syllabus</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 11</td>
<td>= to Yr 12 syllabus</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 12</td>
<td>= to Extension syllabus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21: Retention of students from Year 8

There is no Japanese Extension syllabus. In 2011, the first cohort to complete the Year 12 syllabus in school Year 11 had the opportunity to undertake tertiary study through Griffith University in school Year 12. However these students had begun the immersion program in school Year 9, and consequently cannot be tracked from Year 8 through. The retention data here is only indicative as the program is only newly established. The retention into Years 9 and 10 could be stronger, but this may represent problems relating to expectations about and understanding of a new program type. There is evidence of retention problems especially in the first cohort. Retention is something that the school needs to monitor in the future development of the program, but it seems that more careful selection of participants is already having an impact..

Achievement data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Japanese exit results as %, 2010</th>
<th>VHA</th>
<th>HA</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>LA</th>
<th>VLA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard syllabus, Robina (2010 only)</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 22: Student achievement in Year 12

While based on a single cohort, the Robina Standard syllabus exit results are far stronger than the Queensland average, with 63% receiving VHA rather than the average of 37%. Results of HA, SA, LA and VLA are all lower than state averages.

Qualitative analysis

Robina SHS offers an immersion in Japanese and does not receive Education Queensland funding. The program is a recent development and builds on an existing Japanese language program. The first cohort – 2011’s Year 12 – has followed an immersion program which differs from other programs in Queensland in that they began immersion in Year 9 rather than Year 8. This means that there has not yet been a ‘typical’ cohort of immersion students progressing from Year 8 to Year 12.

The school is located in an area in which all feeder schools teach Japanese and so all students in the program will normally have had some exposure to Japanese at primary level. However, the quality and focus of primary programs varies and language learning prior to commencing immersion is not something that can be readily influenced by the school. The school has an active and highly developed recruitment strategy and works energetically to attract students into the program.

Curriculum Areas taught in Japanese are Mathematics, Science, Business Studies. The program does not include Japanese language as a subject until Year 10. The Mathematics and Science curricula are the same as the mainstream curriculum and the immersion teacher is involved in curriculum planning for Science. Materials are translated into Japanese, although in some cases, resources developed in Japanese are redeveloped in English for mainstream classes. Curriculum in Japanese is updated whenever the English curriculum is changed. Students in Mathematics and Science receive an additional 70 minute class in each subject compared to their mainstream peers to have more time for combined language and content learning in these subjects. Assessment task questions are translated into Japanese, although in Science, one high level question is always in English to allow for moderation. The answers may be in Japanese or English, English being used if the question involves higher level thinking. Stimulus questions use Kanji, but with furigana support. The Asian Business Studies subject is offered only for students in the immersion program. It is designed focus on business studies and the relevant Japanese for working in business and also to allow students from the immersion program to have a greater range of options in senior secondary studies. The school has a deliberate policy that teachers in immersion are located within their subject areas not in the immersion program itself as a strategy of ensuring that the immersion program in well integrated into the school. Teachers have additional preparation time for developing Japanese materials.

The school has developed a regular school visit to Okinawa and hosts Japanese students. The Okinawa visit was cancelled in 2010 due to parents’ concerns over problems in Japan following the Fukushima earthquake.
Students’ perceptions

Students in the program expressed a strong interest in Japanese language and culture developed through their primary school study of Japanese. Students recognised that the program involved hard work but felt that the effort was worthwhile. They felt that the immersion program was a high pressure environment but they valued what they achieved as a result of that pressure. They felt that to be a successful student in immersion required a commitment to working hard to achieve results.

The students valued the sense of belonging to a group and the friendships which developed within the immersion class. They felt this gave them a sense of identity in the school. They also felt that they received strong support from their teachers. Students appreciated the additional support teachers offered, especially regular after class tutorials in Mathematics and Science which helped them keep up with the material. They felt that such support was necessary for keeping up with the content.

The program was seen by students as important for developing self-confidence and knowledge of oneself as a learner. It developed good study skills which are useful for later study and are seen as good university preparation. They felt that the abilities they had learnt in the immersion program had allowed them to go further in their studies than they believe they would have if they had not been pushed in the way immersion had pushed them.

Students commented that the move from immersion into English in Year 11 was strange and that there was a lot less pressure than there was in the Japanese classes. They also felt that the pace of work slowed down in English as the students were less committed to their studies than the immersion students had been.

Classroom observations

Year 8 Mathematics (calculating the area of irregular shapes)

The class is teacher-centred with all of the teacher’s explanations, instructions, feedback, etc. given in Japanese. Student use English to ask questions and for student to student interactions, however students respond in Japanese to specific questions from the teacher. The teacher’s input uses Kanji but students write in kana in workbooks and on the board. Receptive language appears to be much in advance of productive language.

Year 9 Science (Atmospheric layers)

The format was largely teacher-centred. The teacher presented a description of the layers of the atmosphere in Japanese using a power point slide with relevant language. The teacher prompted the students for recall, often using translation of key terms into English. Students were reading from powerpoint slides written in kanji, but tended to reproduce information in hiragana. The teacher identified grammatical structures in the input and asked students to construct sentences using the constructions:

- より
- A が B まで C で D かかります。
- X を見る→X が見える
- X が Y を食べる→Y は X に食べられる。
Lesson included a lot of language practice, but language practice was not focused on content. Content provided a trigger for language practice. Thus, language development and content teaching appeared to be in conflict at some points in the class.

*Year 10 Asian Business (Accounting)*

The class began with a vocabulary revision activity with students reading key terms written in Kanji or hiragana and translating terms into English. Students then were scaffolded in working through an accounting problem using a spread sheet. Instructions were given in Japanese and spread sheets were completed in Japanese however much of the student talk was in English.

**Strengths**

- The program is very new and is working well to establish itself.
- The school has well developed recruitment strategies which are helping to increase numbers in the program.
- The school processes and administration are strongly supportive of the immersion program.

**Issues**

- Students’ receptive abilities appear to be well in advance of their productive language use and students’ productive language use could be developed further.
- The program is unusual as an immersion program in that it does not offer Japanese language as a subject until Year 10. There is evidence of good Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) pedagogy in the earlier Years but there seems to be a gap in the curriculum in terms of overall language development and non-subject specific language use. The lack of a language focus may contribute to the gap between reception and production noted above.
- The program is not rigorous about Japanese language use by students and tolerates a large amount of English. Initially, English has an important role however there does not seem to be a clear transition point when Japanese becomes the normal language of all communication in the classroom. There needs to be a higher expectation of target language use in later year classes.
- The extra work entailed in translation, etc. for immersion teachers is not recognised in workload allocations.

**Future directions**

- The school should consider introducing Japanese language as a subject in the immersion program in Years 8 and 9.
- There is a need for further planning for the implementation of the Australian curriculum in 2012. The school has some strategies in place to develop translations, etc. but needs to consider further the impact the changed curriculum will have on the immersion program.
- The school has begun considering the change to Year 7 in 2014 and how this will impact on immersion. If the school decides to implement immersion from Year 7, it
needs to finalise its decision soon in order to allow for adequate planning time for developing a new Year 7 curriculum in Japanese.
Varsity College Chinese Immersion Program

Quantitative analysis

Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of students</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 23: Intake of students at Year 8*

The program took its first intake at Year 8 in 2007 following a two year development of students through intensive Chinese and current levels of recruitment into the program appears to be stable over time.

The school has a recruitment policy for the pre-immersion program, basing acceptance on Year 5 achievements. The program aims to attract ‘the best kids’ but excludes Mandarin native speakers from the program. As the school presents itself as a high achieving school with a good public image, it expects students in immersion to understand the high expectations that participation entails in such a high intensity program as Chinese immersion. The dedication of students in the program is reflected in the fact that most students still maintain a busy extracurricular load even while involved in the immersion program.

Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention from</th>
<th>% retention</th>
<th>No. cohorts tracked</th>
<th>No. Yr 8 students tracked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 9</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 10 = to Yr 11 syllabus</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 11 = to Yr 12 syllabus</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 8 to school Yr 12 = to Extension syllabus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 24: Retention of students from Year 8*

The immersion program at Varsity begins at Year 6. However to enable comparison, the Year 8 figures are taken as the baseline here, and retention is examined only from Year 8 on. At primary school level, participation in Japanese is usually not optional, but dependent on the school, and the Year levels provided by the school. An extension syllabus has not previously been available for Chinese and so there has been no possibility of retention through to this level until 2012. Retention rates are quite good within the program, with some loss during pre-immersion due to coping issues, and some losses in Years 8-10 due to the transient nature of some parts of the school community.

Achievement data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Chinese exit results as %, 2010</th>
<th>VHA</th>
<th>HA</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>LA</th>
<th>VLA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard syllabus, Varsity (2010 only)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard syllabus, Qld average (2010 only)</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 25: Student achievement in Year 12*
Based on the results of a single year, the Varsity College Standard syllabus exit results have fewer VHA results than the Queensland average. The Qld standard syllabus currently includes Chinese heritage and background speaker students which the Varsity immersion cohort does not have. However, the combined VHA and HA results are above average, with fewer lower results (SA, LA and VLA) than the state averages.

**Qualitative analysis**

The Chinese immersion program has been running for seven years and is considered a high quality and attractive signature program of the schools educational offering. The Chinese immersion program is located in a dedicated building offering contemporary teaching-learning facilities. The overall Chinese immersion program begins with a two Year pre-immersion program in Years 6 and 7 where children accepted into the CIP receive one hour a day of intensive language learning, then enter the full immersion program, studying Maths, Science, SOSE and Chinese in Year 8 and 9, then Chinese, Maths and SOSE in Year 10. Immersion students complete Year 12 Chinese in Year 11, and this Year are trialling the new Chinese extension course with interested immersion students (and some Chinese background students) in Year 12.

The school measures the success of the program through detailed analysis of NAPLAN results, comparative achievements in immersion and mainstream in individual learning areas and results in Year 12 examinations (OPI scores). The evidence all points to the fact that the students in immersion are high achieving and talented students whose performance across all learning areas is not hindered by participation in learning through Chinese.

There is considerable concern about the fact the students OP scores in Chinese at Year 12 are not as high as they receive in other learning areas, despite their knowledge and skills in Chinese as a subject. This is attributed to the ‘scaling effect’ of high participation rates among Chinese native speakers in Year 12 Chinese programs across the state. The overwhelmingly high performance by this broader group impacts negatively on their OP scores given to all students of Chinese. The school is concerned that students in immersion will find it necessary to opt-out of Chinese Year 12 studies in order to achieve the very high OP scores they require to gain entry into high ranked courses at university. The school strongly believes that something must be done urgently to provide alternative pathways for Chinese native speakers (however defined) to ensure ‘true’ second language learners can have their efforts and achievements adequately rewarded, and consequently be attracted to continue their Chinese studies through to the end of Year 12.

The school recognises a number of issues in maintaining a successful Chinese immersion program at the school.

Foremost among these is of course the perceived difficulty of the language itself. The school recognises that despite the high achievements of its students in learning areas included in the immersion program, student’s actual proficiency in Chinese, particularly in the productive skills of speaking and writing still display weaknesses due to the tonal nature of the spoken language and the memory demands of the character-based writing system. These issues are discussed in more detail later.
The second issue of concern to the school is the issue of staffing which is described as ‘a nightmare’ in finding competent, qualified staff to replace staff losses over time. While staff enjoy belonging to the program, retention remains an issue due to staff leaving (temporarily or permanently) to raise a family. The school describes the ideal teacher to be ‘a westernised native-speaker’, comfortable in the local culture, with a strong character or personality to maintain leadership and control in the classroom. The school prefers a teacher qualified in languages education and learning areas at a local university, and often seeks support from local universities to identify appropriate trainee teachers as future staff prospects. The main issue the school finds with native speaker teachers, even if locally trained, remains issues with English language proficiency for general classroom management routines which can result in some disruption to learning. Another issue of lesser concern is the unrealistic expectations’ of parents in terms of provision (students not learning enough), demand (there’s too much work) and commitment (perhaps it’s all too hard after all). These issues are of course incidental and confined to particular individuals.

The school recognises the importance of quality staff for the success of the program and commits itself to providing staff with all support necessary to succeed. The school structures the program to assist teachers in their task, by timetabling Year 8 so that students spend 70% of their time with the one immersion teacher before moving into separate classes and teachers in individual learning areas in Year 9.

The school views the use of ICT including the use of smart boards and personal ‘tablets’ as a particular feature of the program. Tablets are now integral to teaching and learning, supporting students to access resources and self manage their learning. This ‘virtual integration’ initiative is currently underway and the school recognises the need to better understand how these resources are being used by teachers and what students actually do with the tablets to support their understanding. The school aspires to improving language proficiency outcomes by improving connections with Chinese speakers by creating ‘a dedicated line’ to sister schools in China to help build these relationships.

**Class observations**

*Year 10 Chinese*

The students are involved in pair activities preparing for and presenting ‘role plays’ of dialogues drawn from their text books (*Nihao* book 3). Students come to the front in pairs to perform, from memory, or from cue cards if preferred. Performances are ‘routine’, with little fluency or real awareness of prosody or tone. Teacher feedback is positive but not detailed or corrective. The students then move on to complete a worksheet. One student is questioned as to the nature and purpose of text memorisation (and performance). She believes that memorising texts is a useful learning skill, as there will be a listening text later in the week. She writes pinyin on her character text without tones, and explains this pinyin glossing helps her to memorise how to say it. She doesn’t add the tones to her pinyin, ‘we don’t know the tones for this she says, but ‘tones come naturally’, implying there is little attention to tone in learning new words and reading aloud texts. She reads the text aloud; her reading is quite competent, with clear word segmentation and generally good tone pronunciation of specific sounds, but tone knowledge isn’t strong. Generally the class was relaxed, informal and relatively slow paced. The teacher’s instructions are mostly in Chinese, but there is little detailed interaction taking place. The textbook unit is the same
as would be encountered in a mainstream Chinese class at Year 10 in other school programs.

**Year 9 maths (Cartesian coordinates)**

The students are listening to the teacher introduce concepts relating to Cartesian coordinates. Students have a tablet and can access the teacher’s word file that she is displaying and annotating on the smart board. All teacher instruction is in Chinese, though textual materials on the board include details in English. Students are provided with a vocab list (terminology list) in characters and pinyin (presented without tone marks). There does not appear to be any analysis of the characters on the word list. Students appear to rely on viewing and copying samples of new characters in order to learn them without any metalinguistic analysis of their structure and features. Students are expected to add the English meanings, and the tone marks if they wish but this does not seem to be a priority. As the teacher proceeds through the graphs with Chinese explanations students appear heavily reliant on the terminology list to comprehend the content. Using the tablets, students can also access online dictionary tools to convert characters to pinyin, and to English, as required. One student is asked to show his knowledge of new terms by saying the Chinese word for each English word which is offered. He is unable to recall most of the new terms, gradient, coordinate straight line etc and sometimes confuses syllable order. High frequency words; answer, calculator, minute are more familiar, but pronunciation is not strong. Students seem to do little talking in class, the lesson is passive listening, with visual supports to assist understanding. Students say they don’t speak much Chinese in Maths, apart from ‘dui!’ Correct, or ‘dong!’ I understand. Student abilities in Chinese are explored by asking some questions of students. One student is asked on Chinese ‘why do you like to learn Chinese. The student struggles to comprehend the whole sentence, and works his way through it word by word. His response ultimately rephrases the question to ‘I like Chinese maths because I think maths … ‘before failing to find the words in Chinese to express his thoughts, and sates in English.. it will be very useful in the future. Some words are poorly pronounced (in fact seems uncertain in terms of correct pronunciation, as if the word ‘maths’ had been heard previously, but seldom said). Another student is asked the same question and responds – ‘we don’t learn that sort of language’, in English. Another student is able to read aloud her notes in Chinese characters on her tablet quite effectively and make a sentence explaining the nature of their learning in maths at present.

Overall oral proficiency in the class varies considerably, and is surprisingly limited in terms of spontaneity and flexibility. Students are willing to try, and are honest in recognising their shortcomings, but overall standards are lower than expected at this level.

**Year 9 biology (cells)**

The class are involved in a teacher presentation in preparation for a work sheet on cells in the human body. The teacher conducts the lesson using a data show on the smart board while students follow the text and diagrams on their tablets or laptops. Students then begin the worksheet of selecting words from option provided to complete statements about cells in the body. Students work collaboratively and communicate with each other in English as a natural part of their work apparently. Comprehension of the texts in Chinese is not strong and students find ways of managing the task by accessing word meanings (or pinyin sounds) via online dictionary tools. The focus seems to be on task completing, finding the
right answers rather than any deeper understanding of the concepts behind the task, the language barrier creates a comprehension issue that is the main challenge for most students observed in this class. One student reads aloud her text in characters. Her character recognition is good but her tone recognition is poor with typical English stress patterns applying to the end of each word or phrase. Here fluency is good and in context the content of her oral performance may be understood, but in reality her read-aloud text is not really comprehensible to the native speaker out of context.

Year 7 pre-immersion. (Two classes)

The classes are in their home rooms, the classes are large and the room quite crowded. Students are participating in a unit on shopping. The class activity is teacher directed, with a sequence of pattern drills relating to (subject) family members, (location) shop types, and (action – object) items purchased, with some additional focus on differentiating between present and past tense. The lesson is conducted as a drill. The teacher reads aloud, the students follow, someone translates, and then all recite the words or sentence out loud a number of times before moving on. There is a sense of purpose and intensity, but the learners are relatively passive, responding as a group or occasionally individually as directed, they have very little personal input into the lesson besides read aloud or translate. There is no evidence of conversation about the language, about sentence patterns, about rules and structures; students learn by patterns and drills. The vocab is provided to students in characters – students are to add their own pinyin and English. At one point the teacher puts the wrong pinyin to the word 裙子 chúnzi instead of qúnzi. The error isn’t noted by the teacher and remains uncorrected. There is reference to tone as words are introduced, but student’s books contain inconsistent tone annotations on their own pinyin writing.

Students’ perceptions

Students who have completed Year 12 Chinese participate in the interview session. (Some students in Year 10 contributed additional reflections in class). The students reflect positively on their immersion experience, recalling their Years in the pre-immersion program as intensive and enjoyable with lots of practical language and sentence building practice. They particularly recall their teacher being highly effective in those Years. One student described the pre-immersion as good fun with lots of English explanation to help their understanding. They recall Year 8 as a challenge, with lots of homework and a heavy demand on their time and energy. They felt it took some time to adjust to Chinese medium of instruction with their performance in science in particular suffering or developing slowly due to the challenge of the language. They felt that maths and science did little to enhance their proficiency development and that while expectations on them were high, the realities (of their language knowledge and use) weren’t actually that good, with teachers needing to use more and more English towards the end of their immersion program as the work got harder, and ‘their focus’ declined. The transition back into mainstream was not that difficult, but some students felt they were ‘a bit behind’, ‘needed to catch up’, and ‘needed to relearn everything in English’, reflecting the fact there was a sense of adjustment and review necessary as they integrated into the English medium courses. Some students commented that they needed time to revert to thinking in English, but observations of classrooms where communication between students about course content was conducted almost entirely in English tend to contradict this statement. However the fact maths and
science terms were probably well known in Chinese and less familiar in English may be a reason for this view.

Overall the students enjoyed their immersion experience and felt their receptive language skills were good, but they were less able to interact socially or use their productive skills in a spontaneous and natural manner in Chinese. They recommended that more attention be given to teaching them practical language as part of the immersion experience.

The Year 12 students were asked to display their language abilities (after commenting on their limited productive skills. The students found it difficult to recall specific maths terms they had been taught in Year 9 (observed in Year 9 classes earlier in the day). When asked to write a sentence of their own choice in the board, one student in Year 12 (not undertaking Year 12 extension) took some time before writing a simple sentence ‘I am Australian’ in characters on the board. Another student volunteered to write ‘I really like attending Varsity College’ and did so reasonably well, though needing support with the high frequency character ‘to attend’ (上) and confusing the components in the character for school (校). A Cantonese speaker in the group wrote fluently and accurately. A Year 12 extension student struggled to copy a sentence from his current text ‘sight unseen’, but was able to complete the sentence with reference to the original. One year 12 student was shown the characters for gradient 斜率 as seen in the Year 9 maths class. Having viewed and discussed the characters, they were concealed and she was asked to write the characters herself. She was unable to recall the sequence of components in each of the 2 characters correctly after two attempts. This highlighted the underdeveloped metalinguistic awareness skills in these students after any years of immersion study.

Teacher interviews

Teachers in Immersion and pre-immersion participated in the interview. The two pre-immersion teachers are new to the school. They both were raised and educated in Taiwan where pinyin is not used to support language development. The purpose of the interview was to explore the nature of their teaching in both the pre immersion and immersion programs, and how immersion teaching differs from mainstream teaching – of both Chinese language and other learning areas. It was notable that the teachers despite their best intentions to provide relevant responses lacked a sense of CLIL methodology, and were unable to define or describe approaches to accelerated Chinese language learning. In particular they were not able to identify issues of learning Chinese as a second language in immersion contexts and identify strategies to overcome particular challenges such as mastering the features of Chinese phonology (syllable pronunciation and tone), or Chinese orthography (the structures and features of the character system) and the underlying metalinguistic awareness that enhances efficiency in character recognition and recall. Overall the teachers saw their role as providing intensive and extensive input, ‘true’ immersion in the language but without a clear set of pedagogical principles to assist learners in dealing with these demands.

Observation of lessons reinforced the impression that teachers were applying rather traditional practices of pattern drills and routine exercises to cover the content in pre-immersion, and in Immersion Chinese were similarly relying on text memorisation and recitation as a key approach to support ‘language learning and use’. In fact the standards
of language input and performance expectations in Year 10 Chinese did not appear to be much advanced on expectations in quality mainstream classrooms. In content classes it appears students develop their own coping strategies for dealing with high volumes of input, in order to comprehend the content matter, but did not appear to be in control of that same language once out of the context of that topic or classroom setting. This reliance on coping strategies reflects the lack of learning skills and strategies as the centrepiece of effective immersion, where energies are not focussed on short term language recall, but expended on deeper thinking about content and communicating those thoughts through the language. This did not appear to be occurring in the classes observed.

Teacher responses to questions comparing Immersion to LOTE Chinese included ‘giving them more vocab and sentence structure’, ‘more homework’, ‘keep pushing them to remember’, ‘getting advanced kids to help the slower ones’, ‘use multimedia to make learning more fun’. None of these statements reflected a clear set of common principles about how learners learn Chinese most effectively in this environment, nor displayed a clarity of understanding of how the specific challenges of developing ‘appropriate’ pronunciation skills and character reading and writing capabilities may be addressed. In fact learners at all levels displayed clear weaknesses in both speech and writing, but did not appear to have any metalinguistic skills to deal with these issues on their own (i.e. had not been taught how to use pinyin and tone to encode and decode the sound system effectively, and how to use that knowledge to improve their own pronunciation, nor how to develop and apply visual information processing skills when encountering new characters and use that information to relate the character to its particular sound and meaning. In fact the teacher vocabulary (terminology lists) include pinyin not as a tool for learning the accurate sound and tone of a new word, but purely as a guide to generating the character in a word program (using alpha-input methods) on their laptop or tablet. In summary the teachers are primarily teachers of content through the medium of Chinese. Their skills in teaching Chinese AS a second language are based on a set of first language assumptions and traditional second language practices that are questionable in this immersion and high intensity high stakes environment.

**Strengths**

- The program is a successful, well established program which is meeting its key objectives of attracting and retaining high quality students, and producing excellent results against all performance measures. It has a good reputation within the school and the wider community.

- The program has a reasonably stable staff profile and has been able to retain qualified staff to run the program.

**Issues**

- The expectation of target language use by students in the classroom, particularly in the early years appears to be low. This is reinforced by a rather passive receptive role for learners in class interactions. There needs to be a greater emphasis on providing students the skills and resources to interact more readily and effectively in their content classrooms in order to strengthen both their language and content knowledge and sense of control over the language itself.
The study of Chinese language is included as a core subject in the immersion program, but teachers understanding of strategies to maximise learners understanding of and abilities to apply these key learning strategies appears limited. In particular teachers need to be more aware of the core the role of pinyin in supporting listening and speaking development, and develop a more comprehensive and collaborative strategy for literacy development, providing a more systematic and sustainable approach to character learning, recognition and recall.

The use of ICT and e-learning opportunities appears to be strong in this program. A strategy however may be needed in the next few years to explore how these resources are being applied by teachers to strengthen learning outcomes, and what use learners are making of their tablets for example, not just for task completion but in terms of deepening their awareness of and abilities in the language.

It was apparent that methods within the Chinese program were fairly traditional in terms of teacher-student interaction and responsibility. Some measures to ensure teachers approaches to classroom interaction are appropriate to contemporary understandings of both CLIL programs and general student-centred language classroom practices are advisable.

Future directions

- There is a need for planning for the implementation of the Australian curriculum in 2012. The school needs to have clear strategies in place to address the changes the new curriculum will entail. The school needs to consider how the work involved in developing Chinese material will be supported.

- The school should investigate professional learning opportunities to develop teacher knowledge of contemporary approaches to and methods of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).
Crescent Lagoon Primary School Japanese Immersion Program (CLIP)

Quantitative analysis

Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of students</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 26: Intake of students at Year 8

The numbers in this program have fallen since 2006 and are now very low and there was no intake at Year 4 in 2011.

Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention from</th>
<th>% retention</th>
<th>No. cohorts tracked</th>
<th>No. Yr 4 students tracked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr 4 to school Yr 5</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 4 to school Yr 6</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 4 to school Yr 7</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 27: Retention of students from Year 4

While retention figures can be calculated for Crescent Lagoon over a variety of cohorts, there is no possible comparison figure. Primary school enrolments in languages (for which data across Queensland is available) do not show ‘retention’, in that students usually have no choice, and simply study a language in the year or years which the primary school provides. As many schools start in Years 5, 6 or 7, the Queensland-wide enrolment figures actually show an increase in enrolments each school Year from 1-7 (which is, obviously, not a retention figure). The figures represent a consistent erosion of students over the course of the program with a very small proportion of commencing students continuing to the end of the program. Given the very small enrolments this retention rate is problematic.

Achievement data

As Crescent Lagoon is a primary school, there are clearly no Year 12 exit results.

Qualitative analysis

The Crescent Lagoon Immersion Program (CLIP) takes place on two days per week per year level/class and covers the mainstream curriculum with the exception of SOSE and English. There is no dedicated Japanese class for students in the immersion program. The CLIP program is viewed as ‘an integral part of the Creso community with a long tradition’ and the school has a strong desire to maintain the program. The benefits of the program are seen to be in enriching the student’s education, providing them a valuable additional resource, a deep understanding of another language, culture and society, as well as extending their general cognitive and social skill, developing their learning flexibility, their independence and organisational skills, and general attentiveness. The school does however recognise there is a real issue of sustainability. While the students are keen and positive about the experience and are achieving good results, the numbers involved have been low and are not increasing in any substantial way. The program is in fact sustained
by additional students from CEO and AIS schools. These schools pay $600 per annum per student to attend two days of immersion classes each week.

The program teaches each class for two days a week, with Friday free for planning and preparation. At present only two classes are running, Year 5, and Years 6 and 7 composite. The Japanese immersion program initially ran from Years 3 to 8 with three full time positions. The program is currently running at Years 5 to 7 only with 1.4 positions available. Year 6 and 7 students are taught in a composite class. The 0.4 component of this load provided by Catholic education is currently not back-filled while the teacher is on parenting leave. The one full time teacher is teaching all year levels with the support of a student teacher.

The school provides support for the program in terms of resourcing and the CLIP teacher works closely with staff at each year level to plan collaboratively and ensure the CLIP program is consistent with the mainstream program. The mainstream teachers need to cater with ‘losing the CLIP students’ for two days a week, but this ‘disruption’ is seen as awkward but not insurmountable. Not all staff are seen as equally supportive of the program, but the students involved are responding well in both the immersion and mainstream classes.

Some consideration is being given to how the issue of sustainability might be overcome. The school recognises the ongoing success of the program depends on staff and parent support, and there is a need therefore to actively promote the program and raise its profile in the community. In particular there is a need to overcome ‘the fear factor’ among students (and parents) about the high expectations in the program, the additional work load and sustained effort that will be required to succeed. There is also a need to encourage staff to ‘respect CLIP’, and do more to actively promote it, despite the minor disruptions it creates. There are apparently some levels of review underway, with the district office and the Catholic Education office in terms of how to maintain or better support the program.

Apart from parental support and administrative backing, the success of the program does depend on the availability of qualified and competent staff. The current teacher was raised in Japan and gained tertiary qualifications and initial teaching experience in the USA, and presents herself well as a bilingual and bicultural person. She is primary education trained; not Languages Education trained, but appears to present a highly effective Immersion program. Her key strategies include a consistent approach to Japanese-only use in class – never speaking English with her students and only allowing students to speak English when they specifically request permission, with good reason. Students are permitted to assist each other in comprehending language and content but only under these clear rules of English use. The teacher only uses English with visitors and parents, and if students are present will request they interpret for her where possible. The teacher sets very high expectations on students in terms of language use and the students appear motivated to achieve those expectations, based on the strong and effective relationship the teacher has established with them. The teacher is best described as passionate, dedicated, very competent, but over-committed under present arrangements.
Knowledge of Japanese language

There is no dedicated Japanese class for students in the immersion program; all learning of Japanese is done in the context of their learning area content. While this leads to a general overall competence in comprehending inputs and general interaction in the classroom, there is recognition that student’s social uses of language may be limited due to the singular focus on vocabulary as appropriate to the specific learning areas only. The student teacher acknowledged that she wasn’t really aware of student’s likely ability to communicate in everyday contexts as this had not been the focus of teaching and learning during her time at the school. The student teacher had also noted that student leaning appeared to be highly context sensitive, and that in certain tests students occasionally were unable to connect what they had learned in Japanese back into English, or relate their learning in Japanese to an English example. In relation to their overall knowledge of Japanese, the students understood there were specific differences between word order in Japanese and English but were unable to express these differences in English, only by expressing a sentence pattern in English and then stating its Japanese equivalent. There Japanese knowledge is strong, but it is not able to be analysed effectively.

Observations on reading and writing

Learning to read and write is done in the context of learning new words, there is a strong focus on flash cards and visual memory, on keeping a vocab list of Japanese words and images of objects – with no English translation, but there is no evidence of a focus on developing basic visual information (kanji recognition) processing skills or writing skills at any year level. Teacher practices reflect what might occur in a first language context more than what might be most beneficial in a second language context.

Students at Year 5 level have all material presented in Japanese script. Students appear to be able to read text in kana script accurately and fluently without difficulty, but have little or no access to the sounds of kanji unless furigana glossing is provided.

Year 7 students’ recognition of high frequency kanji is generally good, but they are not necessarily aware of the meanings of individual kanji when viewed in isolation, but do recognise those same kanji in the context of familiar words. When writing kanji there is no real awareness of stroke order or direction, or ability to identify or analyse the structures and features of individual characters. The teacher acknowledges that writing skills are not given priority. This however leads students to develop habits and patterns of writing which are difficult to reconstruct at a later point in their learning.

Student perceptions

The four Year 7 students were positive about their experience in immersion, and believe they have benefited personally and educationally from the experience. In particular they feel that they learn more and enjoy the fact that every day is a challenge. They feel that to be a successful CLIP student you need to like Japanese and be willing to work hard. They feel many students do not enrol in Clip because they think it is likely to be too hard and too boring – just as they find LOTE in the mainstream classroom. However once enrolled in CLIP, students find learning Japanese and learning through Japanese a lot of fun. They agree that CLIP learning does require effort and commitment and recognise the efforts their
teachers goes to support their learning, including providing tutoring to finish off uncompleted work, additional afterschool activities, and a rewards system for good work that they all find appealing. The students help promote the CLIP program by presenting ‘what we do at CLIP’ at school assemblies, and contributing work in newsletter promotions to parents. They believe numbers may increase if a program of ‘come to CLIP for a day’ was introduced. Of these 4 students, 2 plan to attend Rockhampton High, one plans to attend TC, and one GGS. All expect their secondary school will somehow recognise their CLIP experience and place them in an appropriate level Japanese class.

Class observations

Year 5 only (entire day) the Year 5 class includes only one Crescent Lake student, 3 St Patricks, 4 St John’s, and 1 GGS student (some absent on the day).

The CLIP program has a large dedicated space of two classrooms, though at present one is sufficient. The classroom is will decorated with student work and language support materials. There is no data projector or interactive white board, but there are some computers in the corner which students accessed during a SOSE lesson later in the day. There is an OHP which is regularly used by the teacher.

PE Lesson

The day begins with a PE lesson conducted outside by the Japanese teacher and the student teacher. All interactions are in Japanese. The students are highly engaged and use their Japanese actively as they completed exercise drills and games.

Year 5 maths. (Frequency charts and graphs)

The students are attentive as the teacher reviews both the data set and the procedures for completing a bar graph of frequency figures (about Japanese film showings). The students listen attentively and without apparent difficulty and follow instructions to begin their task. The students seek clarification and engage in discussion readily. Once involved in individual work in their books students continue to chat informally among themselves and with the teacher, often involving humour. Their comfort and natural interaction is impressive, and their natural chatter does not distract them from their task. The teacher and student teacher monitor their activity but do not need to intervene or provide much additional support. The class appears to be relaxed, collaborative and work-focused throughout.

The overall impression is that the CLIP program is an extraordinary example of an immersion experience for students, which despite its limitations in terms of student numbers and future pathways does in fact represent a model for primary immersion that deserves ongoing consideration and support. The effort of the teacher to work under these conditions and produce these results deserves commendation.

Strengths

- The program is successful in meeting its primary objective of providing an effective and appropriate Japanese immersion experience for primary school students, but the numbers of students participating is particularly low.
• The program is rigorous about Japanese language use by students and this high expectation of target language use is reflected in the proficiency outcomes of the students.

• The program has a qualified and capable teacher who leads the program but staffing support is limited.

• The extra work entailed in planning and preparation for immersion classes is recognised in workload allocations.

• The presence of students from across sectors and school sites is an excellent example of collaboration and this feature has the potential to support the program in the longer term.

Issues

• The program is not attracting or retaining an appropriate number of students to sustain the program in the longer term. The management of the immersion program is focussed on finding ways of increasing numbers enrolling in the program, but there do not appear to be sufficient strategies to ensure its ongoing success.

• The student’s literacy skills in reading and writing are satisfactory in the surface, but metalinguistic awareness skills are less well developed when reading and writing skills are explored in more detail.

• Students are also limited in their ability to explain or express their understanding of the structures and features of the language itself, despite their capabilities in using the language in routine exchanges in class.

• The lack of a dedicated Japanese language class in which particular features of the language and developing an understanding of the processes of learning to learn a new orthography may be a factor in these issues.

Future directions

• The fundamental issue for the CLIP program is sustainability. The current numbers and staffing arrangements are not satisfactory.

• An ongoing documentation of the teachers practice and learners outcomes would be very beneficial for others considering a primary immersion program.
References