Heritage Language Maintenance and Japanese Identity Formation: What Role Can Schooling and Ethnic Community Contact Play?

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Abstract
This study examines the role of schooling and ethnic community contact in ethnolinguistic and cultural identity construction and heritage language maintenance through the surveys and narratives of three groups of Japanese-English bilingual youths and their parents in Sydney, Australia, as a part of a larger longitudinal study from childhood. The bilingual youths were either born in Australia or immigrated there at a young age, and one or both of their parents are Japanese. All youths attended local Japanese community (heritage) language schools on weekends for varying periods of time while receiving Australian education (one group received some Japanese education as well) during the week. The bilinguals were grouped by types of schooling and community contact. The results show that community schools foster positive Japanese inclusive identity and heritage language development, especially with home, community, and peer support. Contrary to previous studies, positive attitudes toward hybrid identities and Japanese maintenance were found, regardless of the levels of Japanese proficiency. The development of identity and heritage language appear to be influenced not only by schooling and community, but also by wider socio-cultural contexts.

Introduction
Walking in a public space in Sydney, the chances of overhearing someone speaking in a language other than English (LOTE) are very high. It is also likely that the languages heard will be different. According to the 2006 Australian Census, 36% of Sydney residents speak a LOTE at home, most commonly Arabic (3.9%), Cantonese (3.0%), Mandarin (2.3%), Greek (1.9%) and Vietnamese (1.8%). Australia-wide, around 240 LOTEs are spoken and 21.5% of the country speaks a LOTE at home (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006).

In the last decade, the number of Japanese people in Australia has increased from around 25,000 to nearly 60,000, making this group the 5th largest Japanese population in the world (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan 2006). Most live in Sydney, where Japanese is the second most concentrated language with a mean concentration factor of 5.2 (Clyne, 2005, p. 18). The number of Japanese permanent residents in New South Wales (NSW) now amounts to nearly 12,000, an increase of more than five times since 1990 (MOFA, 2006). This number is reflected in a significant increase in the number of children of Japanese ancestry who were born in Australia over the last 15 years (MOFA, 2006). The large number of Japanese speakers in Sydney has also led parent volunteers to open weekend Japanese community language schools in NSW, and the number of children of Japanese heritage attending these language schools has also grown considerably: from 56 in 1993 to 755 in 2007. Parents who enroll their children in these community schools are keen to develop and maintain their children’s Japanese, yet few children attain fluency in oral Japanese, and even fewer attain high levels of Japanese literacy (Oriyama, 2000; Takeuchi, 2006). Despite the growth in this population, there has been no comprehensive study of the language maintenance of Japanese heritage learners in Australia.
In particular, the relationship of identity to language maintenance has not been explored either within the Japanese community in Sydney or internationally in relation to types of schooling and ethnic community. Since “language is a vital part of the development and expression of identity” (Clyne, 2005, p. 1), this relationship deserves investigation. According to Maguire & Curdt-Christiansen (2007), friendship is the foundation for children’s identities, and school is “strongly associated with friendship” (p.7). It can be assumed, then, that school-based friendships shape language use, attitudes, and cultural identity. In contrast, a number of studies have shown that there is a limit to home support for heritage language (henceforth HL) maintenance (e.g., Kondo-Brown, 2006; Okita, 2002). The present study thus examines the role of schooling and ethnic community contact in fostering ethnolinguistic and cultural identities and in influencing the development and maintenance of Japanese as an HL among youths of Japanese heritage in Sydney. Furthermore, the study aims to shed light on differences within a Japanese migrant community, which are usually overlooked in second language acquisition or bilingualism research. Previous studies of Japanese-English bilinguals outside Japan have tended to focus on a particular individual or group, and have mostly been conducted in Canada and the U.S. (cf. Cummins & Nakajima, 1987; Chinen & Tucker, 2005; Kanno, 2003; Kondo, 1998; Nagaoka, 1998; Oketani, 1997 Shibata, 2000), with only a few in Australia (cf. Muranaka, 1999; Nasu, 1997; Oriyama, 2000; Takeuchi, 2006; Yoshimitsu, 2001). The current study contributes to creating a fuller picture of Japanese heritage speakers by taking into account variation within the population of Japanese permanent residents. In addition, Sydney’s multilingual and multicultural context provide fresh insights into issues identified in current research conducted mainly in North America.

Language and the Construction of Identity

In this study, ‘identity’ refers to who we believe we are, a construct which is expressed in our attitudes and behaviors and which consists of ethnic, linguistic, and cultural identities. These are all components of ‘social identity’, which people develop as they interact and observe the world around them (Norton, 2000). Furthermore, identity develops when people become aware of the way they differ from others around them and is thus a dynamic process that is continuously being formed, negotiated, modified, and reconstructed (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2003; Hall, 1992). Identity is inconsistent and situational in space and time, and personal relations can influence and be influenced by others and by the socio-cultural context for all means of communication. It is also important to note that identities are both internal and external, involving both self-categorization and categorization by others. While “[o]ur sense of who we are depends crucially on what others think of us” (Kanno, 2000, p. 3), we may “resist, negotiate, change, and transform [our]selves and others” (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2003, p. 10). Therefore, internal and external identities influence each other, mutually strengthening or weakening, complementing or conflicting.

Language plays a major role in the process of this social and ideological construction. Viewed as discourse systems (Gee, 1988, p. 40), language and literacy are “the root of people’s identities” and “ultimately about the ways in which people situate themselves in the world.” Language is an emblem of groupness (Edwards, 1985, p. 17) and a carrier of culture. Therefore, group membership is an important factor that contributes to better learning of the group’s language (Tse, 2001a). Moreover, group membership is essential in shaping one’s identities (Kanno, 2003). Accordingly, language, as well as the forms of
communication used within a group, is key to studying process and change in identity formation and negotiation.

In line with Lemke’s (2002) view that identity is the verbal and nonverbal performance of attitudes, beliefs, and values, He (2006) believes that the identities of HL speakers are constructed mainly through their speech. Thus, HL speakers’ identities are manifested in the language they use, as well as in the situations, the purposes, the way they use the language, and with whom. For bilingual speakers of a minority HL and a majority language, language use reflects their need and desire to identify with both, or part of each, linguistic community. When considered as a collection of group memberships that are recognized by the self and others, identity is a process of external and internal ‘identification’.

Identity and identification are likely to influence bilinguals’ language ability because both factors affect the functions and degree of language use for each language spoken. For example, Japanese-English bilingual adolescents might choose to display their Japanese group membership or identify with the Japanese group by code-switching to Japanese when addressing Japanese speakers who speak English fluently. It is perhaps for this reason that, as mentioned earlier, group membership facilitates language learning (Tse, 2001a). Group membership includes peer group membership, and friendship, strongly associated with schooling, is the foundation for children’s identities (Maguire & Curdt-Christiansen, 2007). It is also at school age that a stronger desire to be included in a group develops (Jackson Nakazawa, 2003).

**Language Ideology at School**

Ideology consists of the commonly and unconsciously accepted notions rooted in a society and manifests itself in “how people structure their language to express themes, values, and a particular world view” (Gee, 1988, p. 31). The acceptance of ideology depends on the power structure of a society (Tollefson, 1991), and thus ideology is embedded in institutional frameworks. Schools are among the most significant institutions for the reproduction of a society’s ideologies.

Language ideology may be defined as “self-evident ideas and objectives a group holds concerning roles of language in the social experiences of members” and “the cultural system of ideas and social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests” (Wollard & Schieffelin, 1994, p. 57). Language ideology is concerned with who should learn which language and how, as well as when, where, why, by whom, and for what it is used. Heath (2000) questions the way ‘domain-based ideologies’ that exist in schools affect the shaping of individuals. According to Heath, in order to understand these ideologies, it is essential to study the choices speakers make in using language.

Bourdieu’s (1991) concept of ‘the linguistic market place’ is also useful in such an analysis. Schools are typically places where a certain type of language is preferred and valued over another. Students from minority language backgrounds will perceive that the majority language has a higher status in terms of use and value at school, and start using the language preferred and valued by their peers and teachers. At the same time, they learn to see things in a certain way, behave like others around them, and believe in messages communicated to them, both verbally and non-verbally, through the socially dominant language. They tend to adopt, to varying degrees, the cultural and linguistic beliefs, values, and practices of the
socially dominant group. These beliefs and practices in turn are taken for granted as a norm by the majority. Such a state of control by one group over another is what Bourdieu (1991) calls ‘symbolic domination’. According to Bourdieu, symbolic domination is at work in government-run schools, which are vehicles used to maintain the status quo and the power structure of the society through linguistic legitimacy. Linguistic legitimacy is built upon ‘the laws of the linguistic market’, where people with more legitimate ‘linguistic capital’ – “the ability to produce linguistic expressions about, and for, a particular market or field” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 18) - can dominate those with less. Worse, “[s]peakers lacking the legitimate competence are de facto excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required, or are condemned to silence” (ibid, p. 55). This exclusion can have grave consequences, especially for school children who have a strong desire to be included in a group (Jackson Nakazawa, 2003). On the other hand, for the unwritten ‘laws of language’ to exercise such ‘symbolic power’, the dominated must see certain linguistic (and cultural) norms as having more value than theirs and believe the imposition of such norms to be legitimate. Bourdieu claims that through the acquisition and use of symbolic capital, the dominant group ensures the legitimacy and reproduction of society’s power relationships between the dominating and the dominated groups. The more discrete and accepted the process of symbolic domination is, the more powerful it becomes in ensuring the continuation of its legitimacy and dominance. Bourdieu also relates the system of linguistic differences to that of economic and social differences. Hence, in order to save the value of endangered linguistic capital, one needs to save the market, or the entire social condition, that produces such capital. How the educational system values different languages and cultures will have significant consequences since it monopolizes the mass production of ‘producers/consumers’ of a certain linguistic capital, and consequently, “the reproduction of the market” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 57).

Methodology

Background

Many bilingual children in Australia attend English-medium schools on weekdays and community language schools on weekends or after school, usually at the request of their parents, to maintain their HL. In spite of these attempts, many retain only basic skills in their HL (Clyne, Fernandez, Chen, & Summo-O’Connell, 1997; Gibbons & Lascar, 2004; Oriyama, 2000), or shift to English after entering mainstream school (Takeuchi, 2006). Children of Japanese heritage in Sydney are no exception, but some continue to maintain and develop their Japanese into adolescence and beyond. These Japanese heritage children, like many of our research participants, maintain and develop their Japanese to a greater degree through 1) community language schools or 2) a combination of a community language school and a full-time Japanese school.

Most of these children attend only Japanese community schools on weekend mornings. Currently, there are six community schools in different parts of Sydney, but when most of our participants were in primary school, only three of these community schools existed. Community school A operates at a local school in the south-western suburbs of Sydney. Students at Community school A represent a model for ‘individual bilingualism,’ as they are widely dispersed in a predominantly English-speaking community. Community school B, on the other hand, is distinct from other schools in that it is located in the North shore of Sydney where the Japanese- and Cantonese-speaking populations are large, while other ethnic minority populations are small, and students live in the area and/or are closely tied to the
Japanese community through their ‘dense social networks’ (Milroy & Gordon, 2003). According to Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor (1977), the demographic concentration of an ethnic community affects its language maintenance. Moreover, three socio-demographic factors, ‘status’ relationships among social groups and their attributes, the functions of social ‘institutions’, and the characteristics of national ‘demography,’ are considered to be the major determinants of ‘ethnolinguistic vitality’ (Giles & Johnson, 1987), relevant to the strength of a community in maintaining distinctive and active characteristics, including language, as an ethnolinguistic group in contact situations. It is claimed that language use and collective identity are either supported or undermined, depending on the perceived vitality of one’s ethnolinguistic group. Community school B was thus distinguished from Community school A in order to examine the role of ethnic community in the development of heritage language and identity. Both schools were established in the early 90’s and are managed by parental volunteers. Reflecting the size of the North shore Japanese community, enrollment in Community school B was more than three times larger (160) than in Community school A (50) in 1995 and expanded to 280 by 1999, unlike that of Community school A (60).

In addition to attending a community school, some Japanese heritage language (JHL) speakers attend either the ‘International Division’ or the ‘Japanese Division’ of a full-time private Japanese school [nihonjin gakko] recognised by the NSW government. In the Japanese division, students are educated entirely in Japanese pursuant to the curriculum developed by the Japanese government (except for their daily English class). In the ‘International Division’, classes conform to the Australian curriculum and are taught in English, except for the daily Japanese class. All non-academic subjects such as music, physical education and visual arts, as well as club activities, school events, and playtime takes place with the ‘Japanese Division,’ allowing linguistic, cultural, and ideological contact to occur every day. Since the whole school promotes Japanese language, culture, values, and behaviors daily, even if one goes to the international division of the school, Japanese-inclusive identities may be reinforced, as Japanese is dominant in terms of language, culture, and ethnicity, and the student is immersed in school culture and ideology through teachers, friends, and the overall environment. Some JHL speakers attend the Japanese division either before switching to English-medium Australian schools (e.g., after attending the Japanese division until Year 4) or after attending English-medium Australian schools (e.g., until Year 11). While only English is used at mainstream Australian schools, both Japanese and English are spoken at community schools and the full-time Japanese school.

Our participants are drawn from these various types of Japanese language maintenance schooling described above. Thus, they are exposed to both English and Japanese, along with Australian/Japanese cultures and values to differing degrees depending on their combinations of schooling. How do the participants’ different experiences in terms of ideology, language use, and community contact affect their development of identity and HL? This study is a part of a larger longitudinal study on Japanese HL maintenance from childhood to young adulthood. Many participants had taken part in an earlier study during childhood (Oriyama, 2000).
Participants

A total of 19 Japanese heritage youths (8 males and 11 females, aged between 15 and 22) and their mothers participated in this study. Student participants were born in Australia or immigrated there before the age of six, on average at one year old, and all mothers who participated were Japanese. Reflecting the high intermarriage rate in the Japanese migrant population, 13 were from exogamous families and six were from endogamous families. Using contacts of key persons established during the previous project (Oriyama, 2000), the researcher asked former research subjects and their schoolmates for their cooperation in the present study. The bilinguals were grouped by types of community school and weekday school that they attended. This classification allowed distinctions to be made among these socio-cultural contexts of bilingual development. The study’s participants fall into the following categories:

(1) six Individual bilinguals -- these participants resided outside of and were loosely tied to the Japanese community. They attended Community school A in the south-west of Sydney on weekends and an Australian school on weekdays;

(2) six Community bilinguals -- these participants resided in and/or are closely tied to the Japanese community through their ‘dense social networks’ (Milroy & Gordon, 2003). The community is active and Japanese is used in many institutional activities, such as businesses, community clubs and public services. Participants attended Community school B on the north shore of Sydney on weekends and an Australian school on weekdays;

(3) seven Community Contact bilinguals -- these participants resided in and/or are closely tied to the Japanese community. They attended Community school B on weekends and the international or the Japanese division at the full-time Japanese school.

Individual bilinguals are dispersed around multicultural suburbs in the south-west of Sydney, while Community bilinguals and Community Contact bilinguals are geographically concentrated in Sydney’s North Shore areas. The socio-economic status of the participants is medium to high, but housing prices are much higher in areas where Community bilinguals and Community Contact bilinguals live.

Procedures

Data on individual and socio-psychological factors such as family and educational background, language use and environment, identity, beliefs, and language proficiency were collected through individual interviews and surveys from all participants. The participants filled out the surveys (see Appendix B) before or after their interviews, which were conducted in Japanese (except for some rephrasing in English if necessary) and lasted from 30 to 80 minutes (see Appendix C). Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed for later analysis. The participants’ levels of Japanese proficiency were assessed by degrees of their Japanese media use and literacy from the surveys (see Appendix B), oral proficiency demonstrated in the interviews (see Appendix C), and final scores of Higher School Certificate (HSC) Japanese and examples of their recent writing, if available. In order to
assess each participant’s identity, identity accounts were elicited during interviews and survey questions were analyzed qualitatively, and were categorized by identity assessments, schooling, and community contact.

Considering the possibility that factors other than schooling and community contact may also affect identity formation and Japanese language maintenance, the data on backgrounds and language use were also analyzed, and the three groups were compared in terms of identity and Japanese proficiency to examine the effects of schooling and ethnic community on these variables. While age, gender, parentage, and length of schooling at Community school were comparable across each of the three groups (see Table 1), only individual comparisons were possible for the effects of home language use due to a wide range of variation in patterns of language use.

Results
Identity and Heritage Language Maintenance
Table 1 summarises the data on background, Japanese proficiency, language use, and identity for each participant by group. Table 2 shows the percentage of Japanese-inclusive identities, the average proficiency level, and the percentage of Japanese use with their Japanese parent(s) for each group.
### Table 1

**Participant Background, Language Use, Japanese Proficiency, and Identity by Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Parentage</th>
<th>Length of Schooling</th>
<th>Lang Use</th>
<th>Prof.</th>
<th>Identity</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Takeshi</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>JJ</td>
<td>ComB Y1-9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>JA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naoyuki</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>CAJ</td>
<td>ComB YK-9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>JA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>CXJ</td>
<td>ComB Y1-3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>JX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayumi</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>JJ</td>
<td>ComB YK-9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>22</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>CXJ</td>
<td>ComB Y1-8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>JX</td>
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<tr>
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<td>18</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>JJ</td>
<td>ComB YK-9</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>ComA Y2-7</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
<td>J</td>
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<td>Yoji</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>CAJ</td>
<td>ComA Y1-8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>JA</td>
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<td>CAJ</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>ComA YK-9</td>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>AXJ</td>
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<td>5.5</td>
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<td>SJ Inter Y1-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>CXJ</td>
<td>SJ Inter Y6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>CXJ</td>
<td>SJ Inter Y1-3\textsuperscript{c}</td>
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<td>JX</td>
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<td>7 (ComB)</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>4.29</td>
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</table>

\textsuperscript{a}JJ = Japanese only, CAJ = Caucasian Australian and Japanese, CXJ = Caucasian immigrant and Japanese, AXJ = Asian immigrant and Japanese.  
\textsuperscript{b}ComA = Community school A, ComB = Community school B, SJ = Sydney Japanese weekday (full-time) school, Inter = International section, Japa = Japanese section; Y = School Year, K = Kindergarten. Average in years.  
\textsuperscript{c}2 terms in Y3 in the Japanese section.  
\textsuperscript{d}Language spoken to Japanese parent(s): 10 = Japanese only, 8 = Mostly Japanese, 5 = Japanese and English to the same degree, 3 = Mostly English, 0 = English only.  
\textsuperscript{e}A 5 point-scale was used to rate proficiency, with an exception of 5.5 = native level, ranging from 5 = near native to 1 = mostly incomprehensible.  
\textsuperscript{f}Identity (J: Japanese, JA: Japanese and Australian, JX: Japanese and X (Non-Australian), A: Australian).  
\textsuperscript{g}Identified as ‘Asian’ Australian.
Table 2

Percentage of Japanese Inclusive Identity, Proficiency Average, and Percentage of Japanese Use with their Japanese Parent(s) by Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Parentagea</th>
<th>J-Identityb</th>
<th>Prof. Av. c</th>
<th>LangUsee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>%</td>
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<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community bilinguals</td>
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<td>F  3</td>
<td>End 3</td>
<td>Exs 3</td>
<td>End 100</td>
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<td>Total 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual bilinguals</td>
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<td>1 End 5</td>
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<td>End 2</td>
<td>Exs 5</td>
<td>End 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bilinguals</td>
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<td>Exs (100)</td>
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<td>Total (100)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4.29 (4.66)d</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80 (100)d</td>
<td>85.8 (100)d</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a End = Endogamous, Exs = Exogamous. b Japanese inclusive identity (J: Japanese, JA: Japanese and Australian, JX: Japanese and X (Non-Australian)). c Proficiency Average, ranging from 5.5 (native level) to 1 (mostly incomprehensible). d Figure when single deviant case is excluded. e Speaking Japanese to Japanese parent(s) (only or mostly Japanese).

On the basis of the participants’ identity accounts as elicited by the interview and survey questions, four types of identity emerged:

1. J: Japanese
2. JA: Japanese and Australian
3. JX: Japanese and X (father’s ethnicity other than Australian)
4. A: Australian

J, JA, and JX are considered as ‘Japanese-inclusive’ identities, that is, a type of identity that recognises and includes Japanese heritage and ethnolinguistic and cultural group membership.

It is clear from Table 2 that while all Community bilinguals and most Community Contact bilinguals speak only or mostly Japanese to their Japanese parent(s), less than half the Individual bilinguals do so. The levels of Japanese proficiency were relative to the type of schooling and the degree of community contact; proficiency levels of Community Contact bilinguals were the highest and those of Individual bilinguals were the lowest. Types of identity, on the other hand, did not relate to the differences in the degree of community contact, home language use, or the levels of proficiency, but seem to reflect the differences in the type of formal schooling (Japanese or Australian); an equally high percentage of Community bilinguals and Individual bilinguals expressed Japanese-inclusive identities. In contrast, the majority of Community Contact bilinguals identified as Australian.

Below are presented identity accounts of participants who are representative of the four identity types and of each group (sorted in the order of identity types listed above) to describe this trend at a personal level. These accounts illustrate how participants identify themselves and represent themselves to others, how they relate to the Japanese language, and whether they wish to pass Japanese down to their children. A brief profile of each representative participant (age, proficiency level, parentage, schooling) is provided after the name. The participants’ quotes in original Japanese are found in Appendix A.
(1) Community Bilinguals

   a) JA (Japanese and Australian):

   i) Takeshi (Age 18, Proficiency level 5)

   Takeshi’s parents are both Japanese, and he attended Community school B from Year 1 to 9.

       Japanese, eh, ethnic, how do you say, isn’t it ethnic? That [ethnicity] is Japanese, but I grew up here so…well, it is both [Japanese and Australian].

   Takeshi’s older siblings attended the Japanese section of the full-time Japanese school until Year 4, but he and his younger sister went to an Australian school. He speaks Japanese with his older siblings but English with the younger one. His comments below reveal his belief that Japanese language proficiency is necessary if one is to become a legitimate member of Japanese society. They further evidence his sense of obligation about passing Japanese heritage on to the future generation:

       Well, that’s because they [my children] have Japanese blood after all, so…A [n ethnically] Japanese person who can’t speak Japanese is not Japanese…If they’re going to learn it anyway, I want them to become completely proficient. You know, quite often, there’re people who are half Japanese or those who’ve grown up here, and speak like a five-year-old child…well, I don’t want them to become like that, when you become an adult, well, that’s a bit, you know.

   Takeshi’s strong belief in the legitimate connection between Japanese language and being Japanese substantiates Tse’s (2000, p. 195) claims that language is “a sign of group membership” and that acceptance from the group depends on language ability. The high value he places on Japanese and the responsibility he feels to pass his HL to the next generation are not surprising given that his parents played a prominent role in the local Japanese community and given his own close friendships with peers of Japanese heritage. He is grateful for his Japanese ability; being able to read books and newspapers broadens his knowledge, and his oral fluency expands his professional opportunities. His pride in his Japanese is also evident in his views of others with Japanese heritage who do not have ‘proper’ Japanese ability. He perceives the social status of the Japanese in Australia to be higher than Australians in general, which may reflect the status of those in his family’s Japanese social network, and which may, in turn, be reflected in his attitudes toward the Japanese and Japanese language.

   ii) Naoyuki (Age 18, Proficiency level 4.5)

   Naoyuki’s father is Caucasian Australian and his mother is Japanese. He attended Community school B from Kindergarten to Year 9.

       Well, I am proud of my heritage in my own way, you know. After all, how can I say, it is a good thing that it is not just one nationality, isn’t it? In fact, eh, sometimes when I say, like, I am ‘half’, it’s like ‘exotic’, things like
that, so it is kind of nice somehow...I was saying that with my brother before but, when people ask things like that, it is best to say I am ‘fusion’ rather than ‘half’. Also, somehow, that sounds better than ‘half’. Despite his positive Japanese-Australian identity and fluency in Japanese, it was not until he entered junior high school that he thought of himself as Japanese. Until then, he did not think he was different from others, including his friends. Like other biracial participants, he is often asked “what are you?”, as he does not look “either Asian or ordinary Australian”. Naoyuki is a good friend of Takeshi, and he uses Japanese with Japanese speakers because he can get closer to and develop more intimate relationships with them. According to Naoyuki, some words or expressions in Japanese cannot convey the same meaning or express the same emotions when translated in English. He likes Japanese as a language and believes that Japanese often has better expressions, though he finds it easier to speak and write in English. He believes that his way of thinking is closer to Japanese but his behaviors are more Australian. Like Takeshi, he speaks to his mother and brothers in Japanese, which is unusual for children in an exogamous family. Especially unusual in this family is the fact that the siblings speak to each other in Japanese. Yet, this could partly be because of role models in his family; his older brother has native-level Japanese proficiency, his mother is a fluent Japanese-English bilingual and, according to Naoyuki and his mother, his father is very supportive of his children’s Japanese maintenance and does not mind if he does not understand when others speak in Japanese. Naoyuki would like his children to learn Japanese if possible or if they want to learn it because he thinks it is unlikely that he would marry a Japanese person and whether they learn Japanese or not would be their choice.

b) JX (Japanese and X):

i) Robert (Age 16, Proficiency level 3)

Robert’s father is a Caucasian immigrant and his mother is Japanese. He attended Community school B from Year 1 to 3.

According to Robert’s family, he used to say “I’m Japanese” when he was younger and get upset when told that he was an Australian. He still does, though he now thinks that he is “Japanese and British”, acknowledging both sides of his heritage. He said (in English), “I hate [being neither] English nor Japanese” and then when his mother told him, “but you can say ‘I’m Australian’”, he disagreed quite emotionally with a perfect Australian accent: “But I don’t have Australian blood in me. I don’t care if I’m an Australian citizen or not. I don’t have Australian blood in me.”

To Robert, being called Australian is like calling all Asian-looking people ‘Asians’, for example, regardless of their particular ethnic background. He also thinks that average Australians think of the Japanese as ‘just Asian’. His sentiment, however, is not unusual, as many Australians of different heritage say similar things about being ‘Australian’. It is also not unusual to hear native-born Australians of non Anglo-Celtic heritage say, “I’m Vietnamese”, “I’m Greek and Italian”, and so on, or to hear them described as such by others.

As a child, Robert liked Japanese animation and Japanese comic books. He also enjoyed attending a school in Japan from Year 1 to 6 during Australian school holidays. He became
good friends with his classmates in Japan, whom he met every year and still keeps in touch with. Yet he did not like the community school much and struggled with a Japanese correspondence course (developed for Japanese natives), though he continued with the help of his mother until the Year 5 level. He said that he surprises people if he speaks Japanese because he does not look like someone “with Japanese blood”. He feels special speaking Japanese, and he is “very proud of it”. Studying Japanese is important to him, as he can use it if he moves to Japan in the future. He “definitely” wants his future children to learn Japanese, “just to keep it going”.

c) A (Australian):

i) Ayumi (Age 17, Proficiency level 4.5)

Ayumi’s parents are both Japanese, and she attended Community school B from Kindergarten to Year 9.

Umm…well, it’s like ‘Aussie’ (Australian), I guess, yeah. Well, I may be Japanese in a way but, things like politeness, well, appropriate behaviors to be polite in Japan are different from here, you know. When I went to Japan before—here, if you sit cross-legged and umm like sit up straight, that’s umm, well, like polite, and I went to Japan and when I was sitting cross-legged, everyone was sitting correctly in a Japanese style (with legs folded on the floor) (laugh), so I was like, “oh, I’ve got to sit up correctly in a Japanese style”, so I felt a bit panicked.

Ayumi loved the community school and has more Japanese than Australian friends. She only listens to Japanese music and likes Japanese shops, magazines, and TV programs, and she is interested in Japan and Japanese culture generally. She “definitely” wants her future children to learn proper Japanese, including politeness, because she believes it will be convenient and open doors for future options. Her future dream used to be to work as a kindergarten teacher in Japan, but she now is considering teaching in Australia, although she would still like to try teaching in Japan for a few years. According to her mother, Ayumi sometimes asserts that she is Japanese but at other times says she is Australian after all, depending on the situation. When she is asked where she is from, she responds, “my parents are Japanese but I was born here”. Her identity is thus not clear-cut: she feels more Australian in some respects but more Japanese in others. This corresponds with her mother’s observation that Ayumi’s way of thinking and behaviors are 30 per cent Japanese. Children often aspire to what their parents expect of them, and this seems to be the case with Ayumi; her mother expects her to become a “global citizen” Japanese who contributes at an international level in the world. Ayumi’s criteria for considering herself Japanese include mastering appropriate socio-cultural behaviors. It is worth noting that this view seems to have been reinforced by her experience studying at a school in Japan during Australian school holidays. It was the first time she attended school in Japan. She joined a Year 6 class for three days and made many friends, but she did not understand the lessons at all. This experience shocked her, making her realise how different she is from her Japanese classmates in terms of academic language proficiency and socio-cultural behaviors.

(2) Individual Bilinguals
a) J (Japanese):

i) Takuya (Age 21, Proficiency level 2)

Takuya’s father is Caucasian Australian and his mother is Japanese. He attended Community school A from Year 2 to 7.

[If someone asks me,] I’ll say I’m Japanese because I don’t look like an Australian. I think I’m Japanese…because I watch Japanese TV, and I like the Japanese soccer team.”

Takuya was the only one out of the sample who has been picked on by some of his peers, although this happened only briefly in Year 2. He went to a small catholic school where students of Greek and Italian background were in the majority and where he was the only ‘Asian’ in the whole school. Older students made fun of him, calling him a ‘funny’ name (which sounded like Chinese), and, according to his Japanese mother, he was too embarrassed to even want to walk with her at one stage. Fortunately, his Anglo-Celtic Australian friends defended him, and he made many friends and became academically successful, so the bullying stopped in Year 3. This experience, however, might have influenced how Takuya perceives himself, or how he identifies with Japanese and Australian cultures and groups. He studied Japanese (Continuers course) for HSC and did very well, especially in listening and essay writing. His mother was also very careful not to criticize his Japanese, thinking that correcting his mistakes might discourage him from speaking. Takuya used to speak to her only in English, but now he speaks to her mostly in Japanese. He thinks his mother would be happy if his children visited her and could speak to her in Japanese. He also believes it would be good for them to learn Japanese because it creates professional opportunities. In fact, he is proud that his Japanese skills are appreciated by customers and colleagues at his current part-time job.

b) JA (Japanese and Australian):

i) Yoji (Age 21, Proficiency level 3.5)

Yoji’s father is Caucasian Australian and his mother is Japanese. He attended Community school A from Year 1 to 8.

I didn’t think that my mother was an Asian person that much when I was in primary school. I didn’t think I was ‘half” that much but I think, eh, thinking about, started to think since I was in Year 4. That is probably because I came [went] to Japan from around that time, I guess. And then when I entered secondary school, I made quite a lot of Asian friends, well, though they are Australian born, and I came to think, started to think more, that I am ‘half”.

Yoji attended a school in Japan for about two weeks from Year 4 to 6 during Australian school holidays. He made friends and enjoyed the experience but as he recounts, it made him gradually become aware of his mixed identity. Still, until he attended a secondary school in
Sydney with many Asian students, he did not think that he was different from others, and spending time with Asian schoolmates made him more aware of his own Asian identity. In fact, this lack of awareness of their ethnicity in childhood, or the ethnicity of the friends that they socialised with, was very common among the participants, regardless of schooling or the ethnicity of the friends whom they mainly socialised with. They either felt the same as everyone else or thought that everyone was different. Yoji also went through a period of uncertainty about his identity - whether he was Japanese or Australian - and even discussed this issue with other ‘half’ people in a discussion forum on the Internet. He has kept his Japanese connection through Japanese or Japanese-Australian friends and visits to Japan, and he even studied in Japan on exchange for about a year. He thinks his way of thinking is more Japanese than Australian because of influences from his Japanese mother. Like Takuya, he would like his future children to learn Japanese for the sake of his mother, to make her happy and to show his appreciation.

(3) Community Contact Bilinguals

As with Takuya, both cultural identification and the perceived image of self by others have influenced the identity of Ken, who is also biracial:

a) A (Australian):

i) Ken (Age 17, Proficiency level 4.5)

Ken’s father is Caucasian immigrant and his mother is Japanese. He attended the International Section at the full-time Japanese school as well as Community school B from Year 1 to 6.

I think it [my way of thinking or behavior] is Australian now, and was Japanese before. I think it was close to Japanese but most of all, especially when I started, eh, theatre, theatre, I’ve realised that I am, after all, it became [more like] Australian. The thing is, for theatre, if you don’t have your body and so on open, it is no good. If you don’t want to chat with a stranger [like a typical Japanese person, you can’t do it]…well I’ve learnt things like that in my class. Because it was fun, and I really liked doing it [, I realised that it suited me and that I am more like Australian]. [You can play various roles and become different characters], I like that, I really like it. As you know, you can’t do that in normal, eh, home or life.

From acting, Ken discovered his Australian side, which he did not have a chance to realize while immersed in the full-time Japanese school culture. He considers himself an Australian of mixed heritage and particularly likes the presence of multicultural people in Australia. His voluntary comments in the questionnaire highlight his positive identity as a biracial and bilingual individual:

[C]ontrary to some people’s belief that having mixed blood misplaces you in society, I believe having a blend of English and Japanese blood is great. I am so lucky [compared] with some others, to be able to speak, read and write both languages, and have a ‘mixed’ appearance. It certainly allows
me as an individual to be accepted in both the Asian and Caucasian communities.

Ken’s comment indicates that phenotypic (physical and behavioral) characteristics affect his self-image and how he is perceived by others. His other statement also shows how peer reactions have affected his identity; when he was at the weekday Japanese school, his peers from Japanese families always answered him in English (even if he talked to them in Japanese) because he looked Caucasian to them. This could later have led him to believe that he would not be accepted as Japanese, even if he spoke Japanese and thought of himself as Japanese. In addition, his class was very small, so he was always in the company of his male classmates in the International Section. Although he made some friends from the Japanese division, his social networks were limited mostly to classmates who had similar Japanese background, which seemed to have made him feel marginalised within the school. Perhaps because his social networks were limited to Japanese circles, after entering Australian secondary school, Ken was told by his peers that the way he spoke and behaved, including his hair style, was Japanese. It is likely that such peer attitudes and all-English school environment contributed to his identity shift. Although he still has some Japanese friends from secondary school and speaks to them mostly in Japanese, he hardly uses Japanese outside the home and even speaks English with his mother sometimes. He found the daily Japanese class at school too easy, as it did not target HL learners. He is more pragmatic about passing Japanese to the next generation: he would like to teach his children Japanese but it depends on his future wife or the country where he might live. Like other Community Contact bilinguals, he would not enroll his future offspring in Japanese weekday school, as he thinks English is more important than Japanese for their future.

ii) Mami (Age 21, Proficiency level 5.5)

Mami’s parents are both Japanese. She attended the Japanese Section at the full-time Japanese school from Year 1 to 4 and Community school B from Year 5 to 9.

I can read, write, and speak Japanese because I’ve studied it, but as I didn’t have that much opportunity to experience Japanese culture, and like, in terms of things like Australian-ness or Japanese-ness, I think my characteristics apply more to Australian… My friends are Australian, and I have more friends here…and it’s easier, to be with them. Well after all, I’ll answer I’m an Australian if people ask me.

Mami has native-level oral and written Japanese proficiency, though she hardly speaks Japanese outside the home nowadays; she reads in Japanese widely, including newspapers and blogs on the Internet, and prefers Japanese books to English ones. Her choice of friends reflects her identity; she used to have more Japanese friends but now has more Australian friends. Her best friend is Australian of Korean descent, but according to her Asian friends, Mami is not very Asian in her character or behavior. Despite Mami’s high Japanese proficiency, she does not particularly wish to utilize Japanese in her future occupation. In fact, she would like to become a housewife after marriage. She is not keen on passing on Japanese to the next generation, either; it depends on whom she marries. If he is Australian, she plans to make her children learn Japanese so that they can talk to her parents. She hopes to enroll them in the community school she attended if possible, but not the full-time Japanese school.
If her husband is from another language background, she expects to resolve these issues together with him.

Discussion

The effects of schooling and ethnic community on identity and HL maintenance

Previous studies have identified a positive correlation between ethnic identity and HL proficiency (c.f. Chinen & Tucker, 2005; Cho, 2000). However, as Mami and Takuya’s cases suggest, HL proficiency does not always correspond to the degree of identification with the HL group and culture. Especially surprising is that this lack of correlation between Japanese language proficiency and identity applies to many of the Community Contact bilinguals in this study, although they excelled in Japanese proficiency and also exhibited appropriate sociolinguistic behavior. Despite attending the full-time Japanese school and achieving the highest proficiency of all groups, five out of seven Community Contact bilinguals like Mami identified exclusively as Australian. This was rather unexpected, as the opposite was true with other groups; ten out of twelve expressed their identity as including Japanese despite differences in the degree of community support, home language use, and Japanese proficiency. Since Community bilinguals and Individual bilinguals both attend community schools, their sense of identity suggests that these schools contribute to fostering Japanese identity. Moreover, even siblings with the same patterns of home language use have different identities and levels of proficiency, depending on their schooling experiences. Mami’s brother Takeshi attended the same community school as Mami but went to Australian school throughout. Unlike Mami, he identified himself as Japanese and Australian. The same is true with Robert and his sister Lisa; Lisa attended full-time Japanese school for a year and identified herself as Australian, while Robert claimed he was Japanese and British. As for proficiency, Mami and Lisa’s levels were higher than those of their brothers who never attended the full-time Japanese school. Formal schooling (Japanese or Australian), therefore, seems to have more influence on identity and HL proficiency than parentage or home background.

According to Johri (1998, p. 19), “language is positively related to identity so that language shift leads to shift in identity too.” Language shift and identity shift, however, can be bidirectional, as seen in our data. Studies on identity development of ethnic minorities (c.f. Kondo, 1998; Tse, 2000) have shown that many initially identify with the majority culture and group, but shift identification to their minority culture and group later in life. In the case of Community Contact bilinguals, the process was the opposite. On the basis of earlier research (Oriyama, 2000), it is clear that they used to have a stronger identification with the Japanese culture and group, but shifted to exclusively Australian identity unlike other groups, mainly after entering Australian schools and befriending more Australians. While the sample size is small, this trend is noteworthy because it appeared across gender, parentage, home background, and even within the same family. One possible explanation is that since Community Contact bilinguals have gained deeper knowledge of ‘Japanese-ness’, they became more aware of both their differences from the Japanese and their similarities with Australians after leaving the full-time Japanese school. It is also possible, however, that some are still exploring the Australian side of their identity. It remains to be seen whether they will shift back to a more Japanese identity or a more integrated one in the future. Nonetheless, it is likely that types of schooling influence ethnolinguistic and cultural identity construction.
Participants differ in their interpretation of group identity and the requirements for group membership. Some believed that being Japanese required fluent spoken Japanese, while others felt that they were Japanese because of ‘Japanese blood’ (e.g., Takeshi). Those who had close or frequent contact with the Japanese community and Japanese native speakers from/in Japan through formal schooling were more aware of their linguistic and cultural differences from Japanese natives, as Ayumi’s and Ken’s cases show. With the exception of Community bilingual Ayumi, who came to recognise her differences at school in Japan, those who believed that fluent spoken Japanese was necessary to claim Japanese identity were mostly Community Contact bilinguals (4 out of 5), but all identified as Australian. They were also more critical of or less confident about their Japanese proficiency despite having fairly good to excellent command of Japanese. Perhaps for this reason, they felt more comfortable socializing with Australians, especially those of Asian or other minority backgrounds who share similar cultural backgrounds or an understanding of common cross-cultural challenges. Close contact with the Japanese community and Japanese natives via formal Japanese education, therefore, seems likely to raise awareness of one’s differences from the Japanese, which may affect a view that one has a legitimate claim to Japanese membership. On the other hand, those who had only limited contact with Japanese language and people maintained a positive Japanese self-image and identity, regardless of their levels of Japanese proficiency. Five out of six are Individual bilinguals like Takuya and Yoji, who have studied Japanese with non-native speakers at Australian schools, which increased their confidence in Japanese; they seek out opportunities to use Japanese and to explore their Japanese identity through friendships, part-time jobs, study abroad, and working holidays in Japan. This expands their Japanese social networks and boosts their confidence in their knowledge of Japanese, as they tend to receive positive feedback from their peers or Japanese natives, especially if they do not look very Japanese. Accordingly, for those who lack community support, learning one’s HL as a school subject has an important influence on HL maintenance and positive ethnic identity formation. The findings also show that living in a multicultural community whose attitudes toward the Japanese are generally positive, and their unawareness of how they differ from the Japanese, allow them to express their ethnic identity.

Positive HL learning experiences may contribute to positive attitudes toward an HL, but very few studies (c.f. Chinen & Tucker, 2005) have reported such experiences at HL schools. Among our participants, Community bilinguals seemed to most enjoy attending a community school, and all mentioned good rapport with a teacher and close friendships with classmates as motivating reasons. They also socialized with their classmates outside the school, and often shared a passionate interest in Japanese comic books and celebrities, which they could not share with their Australian schoolmates. As one of their parents put it, they are like siblings since they were often classmates from kindergarten age. Those who did not like the community school, mainly Individual bilinguals, found learning Japanese boring/difficult and irrelevant in their childhood lives. This attitude is reflected in Individual bilinguals’ lower levels of Japanese proficiency and home language use than those of Community bilinguals (see Table 1). These findings suggest that lack of a Japanese community and social networks had a negative effect on their motivation, attitudes toward the school, and HL maintenance. For many, however, community school was a once-a-week opportunity to socialize with like-minded friends who share an ethnic background and problems at local schools, etc. For some, it was the only occasion to meet friends with Japanese heritage. Community schools provided “an opportunity for ethnic group membership” (Chinen & Tucker, 2005, p. 3) and a place to affirm their identity. In particular, since children’s identities are formed through friendship
(Maguire & Curdt-Christiansen, 2007), community schools offered a place to belong as ‘Japanese’ and feel positive about Japanese identity. Overall, even for those who did not enjoy learning Japanese in their childhood, our participants’ attitudes toward Japanese language maintenance were positive; most felt proud and glad to have some knowledge of Japanese regardless of their levels of proficiency and wished to transmit the HL to their children. Therefore, while positive HL learning experiences and their relationship to attitudes toward HL may be important, the research described above indicates that attendance at community schools also contribute to positive identity formation and HL maintenance in the long term.

Other studies (Kanno, 2003; Maguire & Curdt-Christiansen, 2007) have found that the attitudes of peers at school seem to affect identity formation. A high percentage (80%) of bilinguals of Japanese-Caucasian heritage has Japanese-inclusive identity. The only exceptions were found among Community Contact bilinguals; this may reflect their difficulty in being accepted by their Japanese peers at the full-time Japanese school, as Ken’s case demonstrates. As their friendship patterns at the Japanese school and elsewhere show, they were more accepted as Australian by their Australian multicultural peers than as Japanese by their Japanese peers. In contrast, most bilinguals of Japanese-Caucasian heritage who went to mainstream Australian schools and community schools positively recognized their Japanese heritage. Their school friends had similar attitudes. These biracial participants’ Japanese-inclusive identities could be considered an expression of “symbolic ethnicity” (Waters, 1990 as cited in Root, 2001, p. 66) due to their relative isolation from ethnic communities and “phenotypic ambiguity” (Root, 2001, p. 66). That is, the choice to identify with an ethnic minority group is voluntary with positive gain rather than being forced on them by rejection from the majority or pressure from the minority. This type of identity stems from a desire to belong and to be unique, and is possible if they believe that their looks allow them to belong to both the majority and the minority groups. Takuya and Naoyuki, for example, were often mistaken for Lebanese, and they have close Lebanese friends. However, they believed that a Japanese identity would be perceived more positively than a Lebanese, and so emphasised their Japanese-ness. Naoyuki even dresses like a Japanese youth, which may prevent him being identified as Lebanese and help him to be more accepted as Japanese by his Japanese social circle.

The percentage of all mixed heritage bilinguals identifying partly or wholly as Japanese was also higher (61%) than those who identified themselves as Australian. Moreover, quite a high percentage (73.3%) of mixed heritage bilinguals spoke to their Japanese parent(s) only or mostly in Japanese. Although the rate was much lower for Individual bilinguals (40%) than other groups (see Table 2), indicating that lack of community affects home language maintenance, it is still much higher than that of Nasu’s (1997, p. 12) findings (16.6%). Among Japanese mixed-heritage youths in Melbourne. This difference is significant since Nasu’s study subjects were receiving Japanese formal education at the full-time Japanese school or hoshukoo on Saturdays with children of expatriates. Hence, despite the frequent contact of Nasu’s subjects with Japanese natives and Japanese schooling, their home language had mainly shifted to English. Our subjects, in contrast, all attended community schools for children of permanent residents and mixed heritage like themselves, enabling them to learn and use Japanese without being compared to Japanese natives and to feel accepted, despite their differences from the Japan-born. Their generally positive Japanese-inclusive identity and relatively long period of community school attendance regardless of
their levels of Japanese proficiency, community contact, and home language use also suggest that community schools played a part in fostering and affirming ethnonlinguistic and cultural identity. Moreover, in all but two cases (85%) Japanese parents in an exogamous marriage always or mostly spoke Japanese to their children, even when their children answered them in English. In Nasu’s (1997) study, only 58.3% of Japanese parents in exogamous marriages spoke Japanese to their children. These findings suggest that exogamous marriage does not necessarily lead to a shift in HL and identity in the second generation, if home, school, and community remain supportive.

Also notable is that solely Australian identity was found predominantly among females (71.4%), and mostly among Community Contact bilinguals (60%). Moreover, all males who identified as Australian were Community Contact bilinguals. That is, no male in other groups claimed Australian identity. This research thus suggests that among other possible factors, schooling has a stronger influence than gender.

Minority language maintenance can be significantly affected by the attitudes and behaviors of the linguistic majority group (May, 2000) which are communicated mainly via education and peer attitudes to children. In the USA, for example, Portes and Hao (1998, quoted in Tse, 2001b, p. 678) claim that the “pressure exerted by native-born Americans on the children and grandchildren of immigrants to speak not just English, but only English is commonly seen as the key factor accounting for loss [of HL].” While there are the other influences on language loss, such as living in a society where the dominant language is English and not receiving a full education in the heritage language, the current study suggests that majority attitudes toward the Japanese and Japanese language are more tolerant in Australia. Unlike their U.S. counterparts (c.f. Hinton, 2001; Tse, 2000), our participants were not ashamed to speak their HL in public, nor did they feel strong peer pressure to conform (Jackson Nakazawa, 2003). Rather, many felt proud to be able to speak Japanese and commented that their peers are impressed with or envious of their Japanese ability. The participants’ perception of generally positive attitudes from their school friends and the wider community may have helped them to form a positive sense of identity and positive attitudes toward the Japanese language and group.

Finally, language policy and its ideology can have a great influence on the formation of attitudes toward a certain language and group through schooling. Our participants were schooled during a time when the learning of Japanese language was being promoted by the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy (NALSAS) for a 10-year period starting in 1994 but cut short in 2002. This strategy may have contributed to the positive attitudes toward their HL and group. Unfortunately, this trend may be shifting due to a recent policy change; since 2005, Japanese heritage speakers have been prohibited from studying Japanese for HSC with students of non-Japanese backgrounds. The only course they can take is the ‘Background Speakers’ course whose targeted level is native Japanese speakers who have completed at least nine years of formal schooling in Japan.11 For this reason, many had to give up studying Japanese against their wishes and lost an important opportunity to further develop their HL and explore their identity. Importantly, all the participants who took the ‘Background Speakers’ course alongside native speakers were Community Contact bilinguals; they identified as Australian and did not consider Japanese to be very useful or valued in Sydney, despite achieving the highest levels of Japanese proficiency among the participants.
JHL speakers have a great potential to achieve high levels of proficiency in Japanese, to acquire sociolinguistic skills and cultural understanding, and to contribute to improving economic, political, and human relationships between the nations. Considering that such advanced levels of proficiency are difficult to achieve for non- HL students under the present language-learning provisions (Pauwels, 2005), Australia stands to lose valuable human resources if it does not support them. A failure to value heritage language knowledge would be a grave loss to the individual, the community, and the nation.

**Conclusion**

This study investigated the role of schooling and community contact in identity construction and JHL maintenance in three groups of Japanese heritage youths (categorized by types of schooling and community contact), and explored their differences and similarities. The results suggest that types of schooling may influence the development of identity and HL. In particular, they suggest the efficacy of community schools for fostering positive Japaneseeclusive identity and JHL development, especially when they are supported by community, peers, and home. Unlike previous studies (c.f. Hinton, 2001; Tse, 2000, 2001b), the Japanese bilinguals in this study were positive overall about their hybrid identities and their HL maintenance and have not felt the stigma of being a minority. The level of JHL proficiency, however, is not always relative to the degree of identification with the Japanese people. The factor that seems to affect identity most is a perceived legitimacy in identifying oneself with the Japanese resulting from schooling and contact with the Japanese community. Moreover, the study sheds light on how identity and HL maintenance are influenced by wider sociocultural factors, such as language policies that determine access to HL study at school and the majority’s attitudes toward ethnolinguistic minorities.

This study has analyzed identity development and HL maintenance in relation to schooling and community contact longitudinally, and has provided a more balanced qualitative picture by following up former students at community schools and a full-time Japanese school, including those who did not finish these schools. Its limitations lie in its scope; the findings can only be suggestive due to the small number of participants. While the study focused on the types of schooling that most Japanese heritage children in Sydney receive, further research focusing on a group of Japanese HL speakers who attended only mainstream Australian schools might further clarify the role of HL schooling and ethnic community in identity construction and HL maintenance. Nonetheless, in an increasingly globalized world where rising numbers of mobile citizens live outside their home countries, and the world’s major cities are becoming more multilingual and multicultural, this study has potentially useful implications for planning the education of linguistic minority children.

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References


Appendix A (back)
Participants’ Original Quotes in Japanese

Annotations are provided in a square bracket. Mistakes are underlined and corrected in a subsequent bracket.

Takeshi
日本人、えっと、ethnic、何ていうのかな、人種じゃない？それは日本人でー、でも育ちはこっちだからー、ま、両方ですね。

んー、まあやっぱそれは日本人の血が流れてるわけですからー。日本語しゃべれない日本人って日本人じゃないですよね。どうせやるなら完璧にしてほしいですね。よくそのハーフとか、こっちに住んでる子でなんか5歳くらいの日本語話す人っていうんじゃないですか。ああいうのはまあやっぱちょっとやめてほしいですね。大人になったらやっぱあれはちょっとね。

Naoyuki
まあ、それなりにプライドがありますよね。やっぱりなんか、ひとつの国だけじゃないっていうのはいいことですよね。実際なんか、たまになんかハーフ人、ハーフだっていうとなんか、「エキゾチック」みたいに、てのもあるんで、なんかいいなと思うし。。。兄貴と前言ってたんですけど、そうゆうの聞く時、「ハーフ」っていうより自分は「フュージョン」なんですかって言うのが一番いいかな、みたいな。なんか、その方がハーフより感じはいいし。

Ayumi
うーん、まあオージーって感じですね、はい。まあ日本人は日本人かも知れないんですけど、ま礼儀、とか、あのこっちと礼儀の正しさとか違うんですよね。前日本に行った時、こっちはあぐらして、あの正、sit up straight みたいな感じで、それがあの、えっとー、礼儀が正しいみたいな感じで、そして日本行ってあぐらかけてたら、みんな正座してたから(笑)「あ、正座しなくちゃいけない」、みたいな感じでー、ちょっとあせりましたね。

Takuya
オーストラリア人に見えないから「日本人」と言う。日本人だと思う。日本のテレビ見て、日本のサッカーチーム好きだし。

Yoji
小学校の時はあんまり僕のお母さんがアジア系の人とあんまり考えなかった。僕がハーフだとあんまり考えなかったけど小学4年生から、思え、あの、思うことが、思い始めた。それは多分その時から日本に来た(行った)からかな。それで中学校に入ったらまあオーストラリア生まれだけどアジア系の友達結構出来て、僕はハーフだともっと思えて、思い始めた。
Ken
[自分の考え方や行動の仕方は]今はオーストラリア人、前は日本人だと思います。日本人に近かったと思いますけどやっぱり特にあれを始めた、何その、theater、演劇とかを始めた時にやっぱりオーストラリア人、オーストラリア人だと、に[近く]なったと思います。劇、劇、劇っていうものは、やっぱり体とかが開いてないと、それはもうだめなんですね。もし大抵の日本人みたいにだれにも(だれとでも)話したくなかったら[できないんです]、それはまあ、クラスとかでそういうの習いましたね。楽しかったから、やるのがすごい好きだったから[自分に合ってる、自分はもっとオーストラリア人みたいだと気付いた]。[いろんな役をして違う人になれる]、それが好きだから、すごい好きです。やっぱり普通の、何、家庭とか生活ではできませんから。

Mami
日本語を勉強したから読み書きとか話すのは出来るけど、日本の文化にそんなに触れる機会もなかったし、なんか、オーストラリア人らしさとか日本人らしさとか、そういうものが自分はもっとオーストラリア人に当てはまると思うし、友達もオーストラリア人の子、こっちの方がもっといると思います。そして楽、いっしょにいるのは。やっぱ人に聞かれてオーストラリア人と答える。
Appendix B  (back)
Maintaining Heritage Language: Japanese–English Biliterate Adolescents in Sydney (Language Use Questionnaire)

Please answer all the applicable questions if possible. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Age:__________
   Gender: 1. Male  2. Female
   Number of Years at Community Japanese School (   ~   ) ex. YK~Y10
   Number of Years at full-time Japanese School (   ~   )
   Number of Years at School in Japan (   ~   )

2. Suburb you live now (ex. Chatswood)
   Suburb you have lived longest

3. Birthplace
   1. Japan  2. Australia  3. Other (Country name: )

4. Age when you came to Australia (if not born in Australia)

5. Length of residence in countries other than Australia
   Country1__________________ Period_____________ from Age_____
   Country2__________________ Period_____________ from Age_____
   Country3__________________ Period_____________ from Age_____

6. Siblings (Age)
   Older brother ( )  Younger brother ( )  Older sister ( )  Younger sister ( )

7. What language does your Japanese parent use to talk to you? Please circle the corresponding number.
   3. English only  4. Mostly English  5. Japanese and English to the same degree

8. In what language do you talk to your parents? Please circle the corresponding number.
   To your mother:
   3. English only  4. Mostly English  5. Japanese and English to the same degree
   6. Other ( )
To your father:
3. English only   4. Mostly English   5. Japanese and English to the same degree
6. Other ( )

9. What language does your parent use to talk to each other? Please circle the corresponding number.
   3. English only   4. Mostly English   5. Japanese and English to the same degree
   6. Other ( )

10. What language do you use to speak to your brothers & sisters? Please circle the corresponding number.
    3. English only   4. Mostly English   5. Japanese and English to the same degree
    6. Other ( )

    Your mother’s parents:  Your father’s parents:
a. Japan   a. Japan
   b. Australia   b. Australia
   c. Other (Please specify below)  c. Other (Please Specify below)

12. Do you visit Japan? How often? Please circle the corresponding number.
    1. Once a year  2. Twice a year  3. Three or more times a year
    4. Once in two years  5. Once in three years
    6. Other ( )

13. Why do you think your Japanese parent immigrated to Australia? Please circle the corresponding letter.
    a. Work
    b. Marriage
    c. Other ( )

14. Do you intend to stay in Australia?
    a. Yes
    b. No ➔ Which country would you like to live? ( )
       Why? ( )
    c. Uncertain

15. Do you read Japanese books, magazines, or newspaper other than the Japanese School materials?
    a. Newspapers (ex. )
    b. Books (ex. )
    c. Magazines (ex. )
    d. Internet (Please specify______________________________ )
    e. Other (Please specify)
16. How often do you read those resources mentioned above? Please circle the corresponding number:

1. Everyday
2. Every other day
3. 2 or 3 times per week
4. Once a week
5. Once a month
6. Other (Please specify)

17. Do you watch TV programs (including DVD/videos) in Japanese? Which one? How often? Please circle the names of the programs and the corresponding numbers.

a. NHK news
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( ) 1. Everyday
b. Animation
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( ) 2. 2 or 3 times per week
c. Soap Opera/Film
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( ) 3. Once a week
d. Pop music program
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( ) 4. Once in 2 weeks
e. Comedy/variety show
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( ) 5. Once a month
   6. Other (Please specify)

18. Do you have entertainment items that require Japanese in order to use them? How often do you use them? Please circle the items and the corresponding numbers.

a. Japanese website
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( ) 1. Everyday
b. Computer games
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( ) 2. 2 or 3 times per week
c. Comic books
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( ) 3. Once a week
d. Internet chat, email
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( ) 4. Once in 2 weeks
e. CD/DVDs (Song)
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( ) 5. Once a month
f. DVD/Video (Film)
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( ) 6. Other (Please specify)
g. YouTube video clips
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
h. Skype
   1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )

19. What difficulty do/did you face in developing your Japanese? Please circle applicable items.

a. People respond in English even when speaking to him/her in Japanese.
b. Your family members’ (other than you & your Japanese parent) Japanese proficiency are low or nil.
c. Conversations at home are mostly in English.
d. Vocabulary limited to home and immediate environment
e. Compared to speaking skills, reading and writing skills are weaker.
f. Reading and writing academic essays
g. Reading and writing kanji
h. Not interested in Japanese books
i. There were no Japanese books that are age appropriate and fun as a child.
j. As a child, I had no friend with whom I can play in Japanese.
k. Limited opportunities to socialise with families where both or one of the parents are Japanese
l. There are (almost) no Japanese neighbor
m. Limited opportunities to use Japanese outside home and Japanese classes
n. No satellite/cable TV to watch Japanese programs
o. Unable to go back to Japan often (only _____ times in ______ year(s))
p. Other (please specify)

20. Why do you think studying Japanese is important to you?
   1. I can communicate better in Japanese than in English with my Japanese parent and other Japanese family members.
   2. To understand Japanese people and culture, and to inherit this knowledge to my children in the future.
   3. I would like to better understand my Japanese parent and what she/he has learned in Japanese.
   4. Japanese proficiency is an advantage for employment in the future.
   5. Japanese proficiency will open the door to many opportunities and increase options in the future.
   6. Other (Please explain below)

21. Do you think that developing and maintaining your reading and writing skills in Japanese is important? Why do you think so?

22. Did you choose Japanese Continuers course for HSC?
   Yes ➞ Did you get accepted?
   Yes
   No ➞ Why not?
   No ➞ Why not?

23. Are you taking Background Speakers course for HSC?
   Yes
   No ➞ Why not?

24. Is there anything else you would like to add about you and Japanese (language, culture, people, HSC, etc)?

Thank you very much for your cooperation. (^V^)/

Appendix C (back)

Interview Questions to Bilingual Participants (English translation)

1. How is university/school? What do you like about it?
2. At university, what do you study other than Japanese? (if applicable)

3. Did you study Japanese at secondary school? For how long altogether? How about at primary school?

4. Why are you studying (did you study) Japanese?

5. How is (was) studying Japanese?

6. What is difficult? What would you like to improve?

7. Which course did you take for HSC Japanese? How did you study for it? (if applicable)

8. What was difficult in HSC Japanese exam? How was your mark?
   Above average  Average  Below average

9. Have you ever lived in Japan? When, where, for how long? How was it?

10. Have you ever attended a school in Japan? When, where, for how long? How was it?

11. How long did you attend the Japanese weekend school/ the Japanese weekday school?

12. How was the Japanese weekend school/ the Japanese weekday school? Why do you think so?

13. What did you find difficult while studying Japanese at the Japanese weekend school/ the Japanese weekday school?

14. Why do you think parents made the Japanese weekend school?

15. Do you speak to your friends in Japanese at the Japanese weekend school/ the Japanese weekday school?
   Always  ·  Mostly  ·  About a half  ·  A little  ·  Never

16. Do you still meet up with your friends from the Japanese weekend school/ the Japanese weekday school?

17. Do you have Japanese friends now? How many? Do you speak to them in Japanese?
   Always  ·  Mostly  ·  About a half  ·  A little  ·  Never

18. What is your best friend like?
19. Do you go to karaoke with your friends and sing in Japanese? How often?

20. Have you joined the Japanese association at university? How is it? (if applicable)

21. Were you a member of the Japan Club of Sydney (JCS), etc.? How was it?

22. Did you have Japanese friends when you were a child? In neighborhood? About how many?

23. When you visit your friends’ houses, did you normally go by yourself, or with your mother?

24. When you were a child, did you have more Japanese friends, or more Australian friends? How about now?

25. Did your mother have any Japanese friends? In neighborhood?

26. When you were a child, did you always speak to your mother in Japanese?

   Always • Mostly • About a half • A little • Never

27. Why did you stop talking to your mother in Japanese? (if applicable)

28. Since when did it become difficult to talk to your mother in Japanese? (if applicable)

29. Do you have brothers and sisters? Older? Younger? How many?

30. When you were a child, did you speak to your brothers and sisters in Japanese?

   Always • Mostly • About a half • A little • Never

31. Can any of your brothers and sisters speak Japanese? How well?

   Very well • Well • So so • A little • Not at all

32. Did your parents talk in Japanese?

   Always • Mostly • About a half • A little • Never

33. Can your father speak Japanese? How well? How about before?

   Very well • Well • So so • A little • Not at all

34. How well can your mother speak English?

   Very well • Well • So so • A little • Not at all
35. When you were a child, was your mother working? (Part-time?) Was she staying at home? How about now?

36. Do you have grandparents in Japan? Where about do they live?

37. Do you see your grandparents often? (How often?) Do you call them often? Do you always speak to them in Japanese? Do you like them?

38. When you were a child, how often did you visit Japan?

39. When was the last time you went to Japan?

40. Do you call, email, or chat on the internet with your friends and relatives in Japan? How often?

41. Apart from your home and Japanese classes, when and in what kind of situations, with whom do you speak Japanese? How often?

42. Do you read Japanese books, magazines, or newspaper other than the Japanese School materials? How often?
   1. Everyday
   2. 2 or 3 times per week
   3. Once a week
   4. Once in 2 weeks
   5. Once a month
   6. Other (Please specify)

43. Do you watch TV programs (including DVD/videos) in Japanese? Which one? How often? ‘Location’ TV?
   a. NHK news 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
   b. Animation 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
   c. Soap Opera/Film 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
   d. Pop music program 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
   e. Comedy/variet show 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )

44. Do you have entertainment items that require Japanese in order to use them? How often do you use them?
   a. Japanese website 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
   b. Computer games 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
   c. Comic books 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
   d. Internet chat, email 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
   e. CD/DVDs (Song) 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
   f. DVD/Video (Film) 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
   g. YouTube video clips 1 2 3 4 5 6 ( )
45. Are you glad that you can speak Japanese? Why?

46. Are you glad that you can read and write Japanese? Why?

47. Why do you think you become able to speak Japanese? What could have influenced your ability?

48. Why do you think you become able to read and write Japanese? What could have influenced your ability?

49. When you were a child, what did you think about speaking Japanese and studying Japanese?

50. When you were a child, were you ashamed of speaking Japanese in front of friends and strangers? (Yes ➞ why?)

51. Have you ever asked by a stranger, ‘Where are you from?’ or something like that?

52. Have you ever been told something or bullied at school because you are Japanese/’half’?

53. When you were a child, what did you think of the fact that you are Japanese/’half’? How about your friend? Since when did you think that you are different from other people?

54. How about now? What do you think about your identity?

55. What do you think of Japanese language? Do you think Japanese is more useful language compared to English?

56. Do you think that Japanese language and culture is promoted and valued in Sydney? How about other states?

57. Do you think that Japanese community in Sydney are more active than others?

58. Do you think that Japanese in Australia have a higher social status than average Australians?

59. In your opinion, what do Australians think of Japan and its people?

60. What do you think of Japan and Japanese culture? What do you like and dislike about it?

61. What do you think of Australia and Australian culture? What do you like and dislike about it?
62. How do Japanese and Australians differ in your opinion?

63. Can you understand the way of thinking and behaviors of both Japanese and Australians?

64. Do you think your way of thinking and behaviors are closer to Japanese or Australians?

65. What kind of job do you want to do in the future?

66. Would you like to work in Japan?

67. Do you want your future children to learn Japanese? Why?

68. Do you want them to go to the Japanese weekend school? Why?

69. If you are going to make your child learn Japanese, what do you need to do?

70. What is your dream for the future?
Notes
1. LOTE excludes indigenous languages of Australia.

2. After the abolition of the White Australia policy in 1973, Japanese immigration to Australia started slowly. Due to the strong economic ties between Japan and Australia, their numbers gradually increased in the 1980’s with Japan’s economic boom and increased opportunities to visit and work in Australia, including the Working Holiday program, which began in Australia in December, 1980. Australia remains the most popular destination for Japanese Working Holiday makers.

3. The formula Clyne used to calculate ‘a mean concentration factor’ takes into account four factors: “the number of users of the language in each municipality, the number of users in the metropolitan area, the population of the municipality and the population of the metropolitan area” based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001 Census (Clyne, 2005, p. 17). Accordingly, Tamil is the most concentrated (7.5) community language in Sydney, and German the least (1.3).

4. These Japanese community language schools are similar to Japanese heritage schools in the U.S., whose aim is to help children of Japanese migrants develop and maintain their Japanese language and culture. They are different from hoshuu koo, which caters to children of expatriates who intend to return to Japan eventually.

5. The participants’ names that appear in this article are pseudonyms.

6. Community Contact bilinguals who attended the full-time Japanese school [Nihonjinn gakkoo] were placed into one category regardless of their division (international or Japanese) since Japanese is the majority in terms of language, culture, and ethnicity, and the whole school promotes Japanese language, culture, values, and behaviors, through teachers, friends, and the overall environment. Nihon jinn gakkoo literally translates as ‘school for Japanese nationals’ established originally to provide children of expatriates Japanese compulsory education. These schools exist in major cities around the world. The international section is unique and it was established to 1) “realize educational objectives of the school”, 2) “to bring up human resources who have a good understanding of Japanese ways of thinking and behaviours, as well as Japanese culture”, and 3) “to foster children who are interested in both English and Japanese and who value languages” (Sydney Japanese School, 2007).

7. Levels of oral proficiency were measured by a 5 point-scale with an exception of 5.5 = native level, ranging from 5 = near native to 1 = mostly incomprehensible based on the following standard used by the Japanese program at the Victoria University of Wellington: Comprehension/Response & Body Language, Accuracy & Relevance, Variety of Vocabulary & Structure, Pronunciation & Intonation, Fluency & Readiness of Response. The degrees of literacy were assessed based on the levels of literacy related difficulty (see d, e, f, g, h for question 19 in the survey, Appendix B) and the variety and frequency of literacy practice reported in the survey (see questions 15, 16, and c, d, for question 18 in Appendix B). They were rated in a 5 point-scale ranging from 5 = near native to 1 = very low. The degrees of Japanese media use according to the survey (see questions 17 and 18 in Appendix B) were also evaluated on a scale of 1 (very low) to 5 (very high), as they
were found to affect literacy in Oriyama (2000). These results were combined and averaged as overall proficiency. Final scores of Higher School Certificate (HSC) Japanese and examples of recent writing were used to compare the levels of proficiency among the participants, but only for reference due to availability. The researcher is a lecturer in Japanese and experienced in the assessment of Japanese language proficiency.

8. Higher School Certificate (HSC) is a high school graduation exam in NSW. English is compulsory but other subjects are elective. Total marks from internal assessments and final exams determine which tertiary institution and School one can enter. HSC Japanese assesses four skills of language: speaking, listening, reading and writing, and the final exam assesses mainly reading and writing skills. Until 2005, Japanese heritage students were able to choose the HSC Japanese course from three choices: Continuers (prerequisite: 200-400 hours of previous study as Beginners), Extension (prerequisite: Continuers or equivalent level of previous study), and Background Speakers (for those who have a cultural and linguistic background in the language).

9. The participants were asked to describe their thoughts and opinions on their identity along a continuum of Japanese to Australian/other instead of choosing one type of identity over another (see Appendix C). However, all the participants gave themselves a certain type of identity.

10. The rates exclude those of ‘war brides’ (those who married Australian soldiers after the World War II) or their children in Nasu’s (1997) study to make the results comparable with those of the current study. Only English was used in the homes of ‘war brides.’

11. In 2010, after years of lobbying, a Heritage Japanese course was developed to be introduced in 2011, and eligibility criteria now place all students with Japanese background who ‘have had no formal education in a school where the language is the medium of instruction beyond the year in which the student turns ten years of age’ (Board of Studies, New South Wales, 2010) in the Heritage Japanese course. However, judging from its syllabus, suggested resources and character list, the Heritage Japanese course is still above the proficiency levels of many Japanese heritage students.