

MGTAV 2015

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Developments, directions and distractions:
Modern Greek and language education policy

Australian language education policy has more stops, turns, shifts and changes the Journey of Odysseus from Troy to Ithaca.

This talk will trace some of these, especially the policy chopping and changing, and discuss what the prospects are for a more secure and enduring place for languages in the widest sense, community and heritage languages in general and Modern Greek in particular.

Outline of Talk

Developments, directions and distractions

Some personal notes: train trip and the dispute of 1981

Modern Greek and LP

The many faces of Modern Greek

HL and COD

Australian LP and some challenges for the future

My interest in Greek personal and professional

- Language policy “the Greeks and the Italians”
- Personal identity “Magna Graecia”
- Australian identity: the “torn” country
- Cosmo-Polis, the new way of the entire world

1981
Ca'Foscari and a train trip



The Three Crowns

Dante (+ Boccaccio & Petrarca) and Italian national identity

Lecturer:

“but that is all in the north, the south is another story, as you can see with the dispute about the statues”

The newspapers: Bronzes are
‘returning home’

The same place I was headed

Full-size Greek bronzes of naked bearded warriors, ca 460–450 BC found 1972. Sent to Florence for conservation, finished end 1980.

Struggle between Calabria and Florence about where they would be housed permanently.

Mayor or Governor

“they are ours, after all we are Greek and they are from Magna Graecia”



Μεγάλη Ἑλλάς/*Megálē Hellás*

Coastal areas of S Italy + Sicily. Tarentum, Elea (pre Socratics), Croton (school of Pythagoras), Syracuse (Archimedes) and further north, Cumae and Neapolis from C 9 BC.

Roman poet Ovid called the south of the Italian peninsula "Magna Graecia" ...from my train window, just south of Salerno, I caught a glimpse of...Paestum

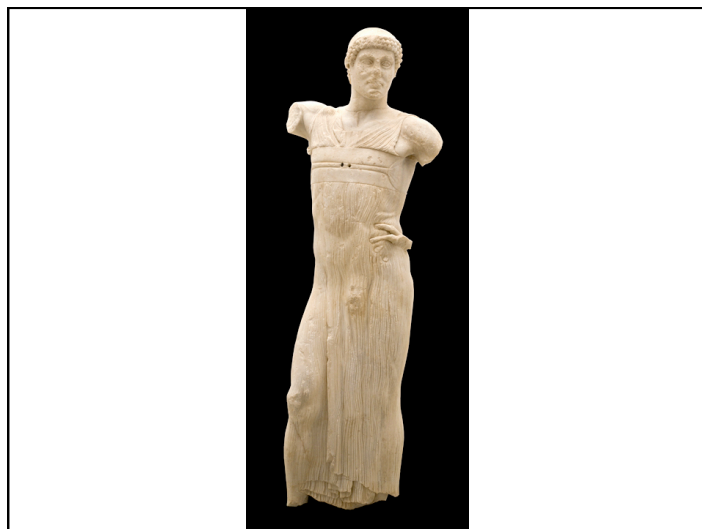


1979 unearthing more identity

One of the greatest and most mysterious marble statues. Sculpted 480 > 470 B.C (20 years before Parthenon frieze).

Stunning, freestanding, mysterious, not for a temple but to celebrate chariot race victory Olympia.

Unearthed during archaeological excavations, at Mīsozia island, west coast of Sicily.

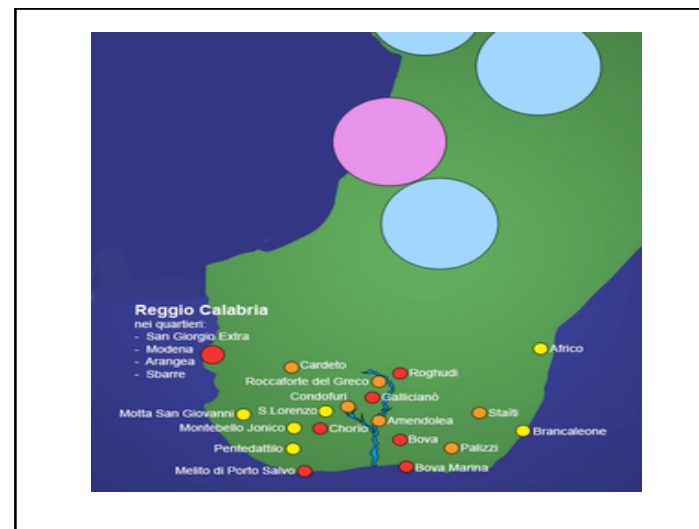


Plus living language: Italiot Greek varieties

Griko (Γκρίκο) and **Greccanico** (Γραικάνικα)

Katoitaliotikà

Κατωιταλιωτικά



Legal Protection

Public and official recognition of Italiot Greek, has status of “official language minority”.

Republic also protects Albanian, Catalan, German, Greek, Slovene and Croatian, populations, as well as French, Provençal, Friulan, Ladin, Occitan and Sardinian language and cultures.

<Legge della repubblica italiana # 482 del 1999>

Narrative of Greek in Oz education ACARA

Three main reasons

Official language of Greece & Cyprus//World wide diaspora//Hellenic civilisation

Australian Presence

3 phases ~ 1820s, 1900s to World War II, 1950s -1970s.

Enrichment of Australian society

Greek in education

A/H community schools “HL maintenance”, 70s multiculturalism, Greek at all levels of education >> currently taught at all levels

Diversity of learners of Modern Greek

Raw beginners + background learners (2-4th gen)

Many with HL links but low linguistic ability.

Australian Curriculum: 2L focus w two pathways:

F to 10 Sequence

Year 7 Entry Sequence

Strong intercultural language learning orientation.

Flinders University

Welcome

...Modern Greek ...provides the individual with the key to understanding the importance of the hellenic tradition for the European intellectual development.

Hellenism is Europe's cultural heritage...a remarkable civilisation with an intellectual continuity of 3000 years. This heritage defines European ethos, its origins...

Modern Greek studies also at Univ of Adelaide and Uni SA through OUTREACH and Charles Darwin and Griffith.

‘HERITAGE’ LINKED TO CIVILISATION, NOT TO GREEK
AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY

The “Greeks and Italians” phase

The first manifesto of a multicultural lobby was the 1973 Statement on Immigrant Education, Cultures and Languages initiated within the Melbourne Greek community and signed by representatives from a range of ethnic communities, teachers, academics and teacher organisations in 4 states.

The 1950s and 1960s is the period that produced the population whose descendants in the 1970s overturned assimilationist English-only language policy and produced the multicultural language ideology in which Australia was an undisputed world leader.

The language ideologies

Language ideologies

Comfortably **British**

Assertively **Australian**

Ambitiously **multicultural**

Energetically **Asian**

Fundamentally **economic**

Language ideologies and language problems

Australian Language Problems

The 3-G problem

The Extinction Problem

The Teaching and Learning Problem

The Policy Problem

The Complacency Problem: English

Towards A Solution

COD

The 3-G problem

Nearly all immigrant languages are being slowly but steadily eroded according to the classic three generation attrition pattern.

Immigrant language loss varies between 3 and 20 % between 1st and 2nd generations and increases to between 40 and 60% between 2nd and 3rd generations

The Extinction Problem

“At one extreme more than 70% of languages are extinct or moribund in Australia, Canada, and the United States, but at the other extreme less than 10% of languages are extinct or moribund in sub-Saharan Africa.

Overall we find that 19% of the world’s living languages are no longer being learned by children.

(Simons & Lewis, 2012, p. 1).

The Teaching and Learning Problem

Only 10-14% complete HS with a language
(9% HSC in NSW compared to 22% VCE Victoria)

- provision in trouble at primary level
- shifting and contradictory priorities.

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Effect: bilingualism not taken seriously in public education

## Comparisons

Improved because VIC teaches more languages, both sides of politics have supported language education improvements, and VSL is effective: online, face to face and distance classes all over the state.

Combines what in NSW is split between the Saturday School of Community Languages and Open High School and related centres.

In NSW five out of six young people discontinue language study by Year 12.

Yet 350000 NSW students use a second language at home.

## The Policy Problem

No national language policy  
Lack of sectoral coordination

Policy often designed only in education settings, but, as COD will show, this will not reverse the 3-G problem, schooling can’t stop language extinctions.

Need comprehensive and “sociolinguistically informed” LP. CL schools and CL communities have a critical indispensable role to play.

### The Complacency Problem

Global English

ES country effect

NES country effect

*Bilingualism in ES countries concentrated among immigrant populations (3-G problem), indigenous groups (extinction problem) and professionals and elites (policy problem)*

### Towards A Solution

Better Language Policy and Planning

and

COD



### COD

COD is based on work done by Francois Grin, Francois Vaillancourt initially, and adapted/extended by Lo Bianco, in different parts of the world to isolate the necessary and sufficient conditions to reverse language shift and support language learning, use and maintenance

CAPACITY<<OPPORTUNITY>>DESIRE

*STUDYING A LANGUAGE IS NOT ENOUGH  
HAVING LANGUAGE LAWS IS NOT ENOUGH  
LANGUAGES ARE NOT LIKE OTHER SUBJECTS*

Lo Bianco and Peyton-Kreeft, (2013). Vitality of heritage languages in the United States, *Heritage Language Journal*, 10/3.



## What does this mean for MGTAV & Greek in Oz?

Greek has survived almost 3 centuries in S Italy.

Recovery of a potentially lost CL requires more than just teaching it in schools. What is needed is action on three fronts simultaneously:

- increase young people's linguistic ability or capacity (C)
- create and reward opportunities for use of the language (O)
- foster positive desire to use the language (D)

Language revival can occur and increased use of minority languages can be fostered when **capacity, opportunity** and **desire** are present.

## Capacity

Capacity is needed for language learning and maintenance because more proficient speakers tend to use the target language, those with less proficiency, do not.

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Capacity is developed in 2 ways:

Informally, in homes and families and other intimate relationships
(INTIMACY)

Formally, in the education system with teachers and lecturers
(INSTRUCTION)

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Intimacy and instruction are often sufficient to produce knowledge and use of a mother tongue. But on its own capacity is not enough to lead to frequent usage of a second language, or to maintain a migrant language, or to revive an indigenous language.

## Opportunity

Opportunities to use a language are critical to success. Opportunities to use a second language, or a revived minority language, need special domains. These are social settings in which the use of the language is expected, normal, required.

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Without domains in which the target language is the expected form of communication then no amount of formal teaching or informal learning in intimacy will break the 3-G pattern.

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However, even when we do foster opportunities for natural use of the language learners will not do so unless there is a personal desire from them to do so.

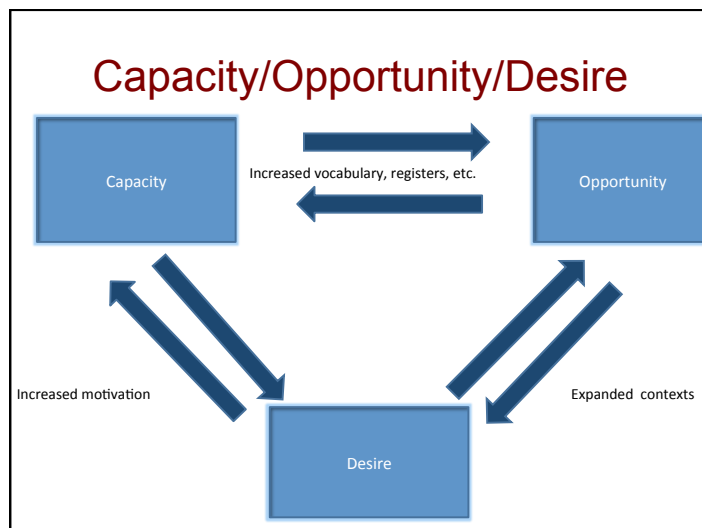
## Desire

How do we convert language ability (capacity) and opportunity (domains) into desire?

Desire must be nurtured alongside capacity (through intimacy or instruction) and provision of opportunities in social and economic environments.

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To convert capacity and opportunity into actual language use we need to cultivate and foster identification and investment in the usage of the target language from the learner. Their personal identification with the community of speakers, their personal self image as a successful future speaker, and an investment in communicating.

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Taken together capacity, opportunities and desire have been shown to convert a learned language into practical use of the language



## Implications

To succeed in language teaching and learning, in revival efforts, and to solve Australia's great language problems we must work on all three components **simultaneously**. Migrant community schools, foreign governments, education departments, all focus too much on formal teaching. Teaching is necessary but insufficient on its own for successful learning and continued use of a language.

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Transmission: learning/teaching/using languages...building capacity  
 Creating real possibilities & domains for genuine use...making Australian society truly multilingual

Stimulate individual & collective identity motivation to use the language...  
 making Australian children identify with the languages they learn

Lo Bianco, J. (2013). Vitality of heritage languages in the United States: The role of capacity, opportunity and desire, *Heritage Language Journal*, 10/3, 1-viii<sup>8</sup>

## Cosmo-Polis

The new way of the entire world

Globalisation  
 Local groundedness  
 Mobility  
 Urban Life  
 Instantaneous connections  
 Communication and network technologies  
 Hybrid identities

In my view Greek language advocacy in Oz today needs a new narrative, linked to the immense changes we will confront, and their huge possibilities

## Sources

DOWNLOADABLE FREE of CHARGE

Lo Bianco and Slaughter (2009)

**Second Languages and Australian Schooling: Review and Proposals**

AER 54, Australian Council for Education Research

<http://research.acer.edu.au/aer/8/>

Lo Bianco and Peyton Kreeft (2013)

**Special Issue: Language Vitality in the US. vol 10/no.3**

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Lo Bianco and Aliani (2013)

**Language Planning and Student Experiences**

Multilingual Matters: Bristol UK