# ILTAC 1st MINI CONFERENCE

**22-23 September 2018**

RMIT University, Melbourne, City Campus

VENUE: Corner of Russell St & Victoria St - Building 13, Level 3, Rooms 07 & 09

**Programme**

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| 8.30 - 9.00 | Arrival and Registration |
| 9.00 - 9.30 | Introduction to the day's working format with Adriana/Chantal/Joe |
| 9.30 - 10.30 | *Facilitating collaboration across boundaries*<br>**Lorely Aponte Ortiz - University of Technology Sydney** |
| | *Intercultural Dialogics*<br>**Alistair Welsh - Deakin University** |
| 10.30 -11.00 | Morning Tea |
| 11.30 - 1.30 | *Practical pedagogical strategies to integrate a decolonial perspective in Spanish language courses*<br>**Adriana Diaz - University of Queensland** |
| | *Teaching Language and Culture through Video Exchanges*<br>**Graham Squires - University of Newcastle & Paul Wicking - Meijo University** |
| | *Embedding intercultural learning in foreign language education - a comparative analysis of two cohorts of tertiary foreign language students*<br>**Hui Ling Xu - Macquarie University** |
| | *Adopting WeChat for out-of-class intercultural understanding : developing a handbook of intercultural learning and teaching activities*<br>**Grace Yue Qi & Yuping Wang - Griffith University** |
| 1.30 - 2.30 | Lunch & Networking |
| 2.30 - 3.30 | *Learner participation, agency and identity construction in an L2 French study abroad context*<br>**Kerry Mullan - RMIT University & Diane de Saint Léger - University of Melbourne** |
| | *Transcultural doctoral education: Networked hutong siwei for knowledge construction*<br>**Jing Qi - RMIT University** |
| 3.30 - 5.30 | Final session with Joe with a break for afternoon tea |

# ABSTRACTS

### *Facilitating collaboration across boundaries*

Lorely Aponte Ortiz - University of Technology Sydney          lorely.aponteortiz@uts.edu.au

Due to an increasingly mobile world and rapid technological change, there is a growing need for individuals to participate in diverse teams to address the complex societal problems of today. Taking into consideration diversity in students' population this paper suggests that Language and Culture Programs in Higher Education can be used as a platform for the promotion of collaboration across boundaries, in an attempt to foster awareness of different social practices, values and norms, and support the development of transferable skills in graduates. It also suggests that pedagogical interventions that explore collaboration among students from different backgrounds and disciplines can support graduates' awareness of the world and today's societal needs. It proposes that collaboration across boundaries creates opportunities for learners to participate in an interdependent process, through iterative interactions, in which they can share knowledge, maximise their potential and support their peer's learning. Furthermore, the integration of technology equips graduates with important skills to operate in today's changing workplace and address 'messy situations' as a community.

### *Intercultural Dialogics*

Alistair Welsh - Deakin University          alistair.welsh@deakin.edu.au

This presentation is based on a research project that explores links between critical thinking and interculturalism. The collaborative project includes researchers from Indonesia and Australia to examine different school settings – Christian school campuses in Australia and Islamic schools in Indonesia. Select primary schools participated on the basis that they explicitly aimed to apply critical thinking as an approach to teaching and learning.

To explore critical thinking dimensions of interculturalism, we draw from Bahktinian concepts of dialogism, relationality and outsidedness. We argue that critical thinking is necessarily dialogic and inherently intercultural in nature. Research findings show that intercultural dimensions were evident in teachers' questions, as reflected initially by reflectivity and then to more complex dialogic thinking, where views of the self and other were critically considered. We argue that critical thinking should involve intercultural dialogism that reflects a relational orientation towards others. This has resonance for critical thinking, in terms of interpreting how 'culture' is enacted and mediated through dialogic relations with others.

Another important finding is the 'expression' of silence as a 'response' that represented acceptance of different points of view without a binary superior/inferior judgement. We found this to be a strategy involved in engaging otherness in a third space, where common ground between self and other may be recognised. We argue that silence may also signify an acceptance of unresolvable differences. Silence was used by teachers through extended pauses while awaiting a response to a question and by students in classroom discussion whereby they demonstrated (n)either an agreeable (n)or disagreeable disposition to an issue.

This research forms the basis for the following forthcoming publication: Susanto, Rohmah, Indah, Welsh, 2018, 'Critical Thinking as Intercultural Dialogism', in F. Dervin and J. Byrd (Eds), *Criticality in Multilingual and Intercultural Education*, Information Age Publishing.

### *Practical pedagogical strategies to integrate a decolonial perspective in Spanish language courses*

Adriana Díaz - University of Queensland          a.diaz@uq.edu.au

Nearly two decades into the 21st Century, the voices from a number of scholars (cf. Crozet, 2017; Díaz & Dasli, 2017; Kramsch, 2014; Kramsch & Vinall, 2015, Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016; inter alia;) across the fields of languages education and intercultural communication have gradually gained momentum in their call to consider the critical, moral, ethical, political and ideological dimensions of our practice. In response to this call, I draw on postcolonial/decolonial theories and pluralist approaches to the conceptualisation of language (Train, 2011) as well as the postmethod condition (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, 2006) to address the hegemonic, epistemologically imbalanced, monolingualising ideologies underpinning much of the traditional pedagogical practices in language education. In this practical, hands-on session, I will present a framework – currently under development – aimed to integrate a decolonial perspective in beginner and intermediate university Spanish language courses. This presentation will include specific examples of classroom activities' design and implementation.

### *Teaching Language and Culture Through Video Exchanges*

Graham Squires - University of Newcastle University          graham.squires@newcastle.edu.au
& Paul Wicking - Meijo University

In this paper we will describe a joint teaching project being conducting by the University of Newcastle in Australia and Meijo University in Nagoya in Japan. As a part of their assessment, Japanese-language students at Newcastle are required to make a short video presentation in both Japanese and English which is shared with English-language-students at Meijo. The Meijo students then make a video response, once again in both English and Japanese. This exchange of videos allows students to practice their language skills in a realistic but controlled setting. More importantly, this format requires students to give greater consideration to the cultural context of both the personal interaction and the content of their presentation. This exchange began in 2017 and will discuss the pros and cons of using video exchange as a learning activity as well as describe some ways in which we hope to develop this project in the future.

### *Embedding intercultural learning in foreign language education - a comparative analysis of two cohorts of tertiary foreign language students*

Hui Ling Xu - Macquarie University          huiling.xu@mq.edu.au

The development of intercultural competence has become an increasingly important component in educational curriculum at all levels. The Graduate Capabilities Framework of Macquarie University, for example, recognizes it as an important capability for graduates. Foreign language education offers an opportunity to integrate interculturality for the development of critical and reflexive thinking about cultures and languages. As such, there is a growing body of studies theorizing the concepts, examining the significance and outlining practice in fostering intercultural learning in foreign language classrooms. This presentation reports findings of a teaching intervention which aimed at introducing intercultural learning tasks into the curriculum across two different language programs (Chinese and Spanish). The results show that there were overall benefits as well as certain disparities between the two cohorts in terms of their self-reported improvement in the area under examination.

### Adopting WeChat for out-of-class intercultural understanding: developing a handbook of intercultural learning and teaching activities

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The fundamental goal of language teaching is to develop learners' intercultural communicative competence in the target language (Byram, 1997, 2009; Díaz, 2013, Kramsch, 1993; Liddicoat, 2006, 2014; Liddicoat and Scarino, 2013). To achieve this goal, the first step is to raise learners' awareness of intercultural understanding while their learning a new language. This process involves learning of how to value learners' own cultures, languages and beliefs as well as how those of others are shaped and expressed. As defined in the Australian Curriculum, intercultural understanding is organised into three interrelated capabilities: "recognising culture and developing respect", "interacting and empathising with others", and "reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility" ([ACARA], 2014). These three key ideas of intercultural understanding form the basis of this proposal and has stimulated us to consider how they can be embedded in the process of language teaching and learning. The current situation of languages programs in Australian tertiary education is 'tougher than ever' – low retention rate and reduced contact hours seem common. In the case of Chinese program at Griffith University, for example, the first-year learners have only four contact hours weekly. They are required to acquire language in eight lessons based on a textbook within a 12 weeks trimester. As assumed, language proficiency is emphasised, and consequently the perspectives of intercultural understanding are minimised. To expand learning opportunities, we adopted WeChat, a multifunctional social media App, to help develop learners' intercultural understanding skills outside the class.

In this presentation, we will share a few online activities designed to raise learners' intercultural awareness and understand cross-cultural differences and commonalities during the out-of-class time. The accompanying challenges will also be discussed. We will then propose a project seeking cross-institutional and cross-languages collaborations to develop a handbook for teachers to embed intercultural understanding in practice.

### Learner participation, agency and identity construction in an L2 French study abroad context

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& Diane de Saint Léger - University of Melbourne
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This paper examines the concepts of situated learning and Community of Practice (thereafter CofP, Lave and Wenger 1991) in a tertiary short term study abroad context. In 2017, two L2 French teacher-researchers from two Australian universities organised and led a group of undergraduate students to New Caledonia for a two week intensive study abroad program. The aim was to examine the unique historic, economic, political and cultural trajectories of this French territory in the South Pacific as it offers opportunities for students to reflect on self and other, on La Francophonie, and post-colonialism more broadly. The intensive in-country part of the program followed twelve hours of preparatory lectures and workshops prior to departure; the entire program was delivered in French. While evidence suggests that the programs were well received by the students, a comparison of the 2015 and 2017 iterations suggests that each cohort of students experienced the respective study abroad programs quite differently. Building on Lave and Wenger's notion of CofP, situated learning and more dynamic models of the construct where agency and identity are seen as central, this paper will examine the interface between learner participation, identity construction and agency. In particular, it will show how participation is negotiated and construed by the members of the group and to what effect.

Data suggest that while the 2015 cohort primarily construed its identity collectively, that is, as peripheral participants collectively entering the host community, the 2017 cohort conceived of participation on a more individual, fragmented basis based on a range of heterogeneous needs, interest and one's own willingness to enter the 'third space' or 'cultural interstices' (Kramsch et al. 2007). We will examine the consequences and implications of such different experiences on the students' language learning and usage. These reflections will highlight some of the challenges faced by L2 French teachers today, and point to some useful areas for future research.

### Transcultural doctoral education: Networked hutong siwei for knowledge co-construction

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Intercultural doctoral education has become a space where theorists seek to create opportunities for Indigenous and non-Western doctoral candidates to construct knowledge that foregrounds Southern cultural, linguistic, and intellectual perspectives. The ideas of French philosopher Rancière about the ignorant schoolmaster and the role of dissensus, especially that created by fringe figures, émigrés and migrants in Western traditions have been deployed to create cosmopolitan pedagogies in doctoral education. However, few studies illustrate in-depth how personal, linguistic and intellectual histories of research students and supervisors impact upon research education and knowledge creation. This case study examines the transformative capacity of a research education that reimagines international research students as cultural and intellectual resources and networks. It uses the methodology of networked-hutong siwei to analyse participants' intellectual development at major 'nodal points' of their research circumstances. Participants' research journeys are contextualised in textual and visual maps at the intersections of their intercultural, multilingual and epistemological histories. This paper argues for a research education embedded in notions of intellectual equality and transcultural knowledge co-construction. It argues for greater intellectual mobility between supervisors and students through transcultural knowledge co-construction.