

**MEETING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF
GIFTED AND TALENTED ENGLISH-LANGUAGE
LEARNERS IN AUSTRALIAN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS**

By

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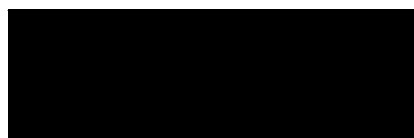
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CERTIFICATION

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis and all sources used have been acknowledged in this thesis.



Aranzazu Maria Blackburn

Narratives begin as living things created in the moment-to-moment action and interaction of particular people in a particular place, at a particular time, engaged in particular events. We shape stories to create them with beginnings, middles, and ends, but in the living the boundaries are less clear, more organic. ... Different ambiguities materialise when narrative inquirers live alongside the events, the lives, and the ideas they are attempting to understand.

(Pinnegar, 2007, p. 247)

ABSTRACT

Australia is the only OECD country where first- and second-generation refugee and migrant children score above the average on international PISA Reading test scores. These positive results have been explained not only by the socio-economic status of Australian immigrants but also by the teaching support that is provided in the Australian education system.

Students in Australian schools for whom English is an additional language or dialect are entitled to assistance in the form of ESL provisions. These provisions have gone some way towards providing support but often take a universal approach to meeting students' learning needs. The students themselves do not form a homogeneous group but rather come from a range of backgrounds and present with a wide range of abilities and experiences, and include gifted and talented students (referred to as gifted English-language learners, or gifted ELLs). Gifted ELLs have received sparse attention in the research, with the majority of studies focused on Latino populations in the United States. My inquiry expands the research by focusing on gifted ELLs from Australian secondary schools.

Based on Habermas's theory of communicative action and using narrative inquiry methodology, my study identifies the experiences and educational needs of gifted ELLs and explores how these needs are being met in Australian secondary schools. While there is consensus among all parties that students need proficiency in English to function in the Australian schooling system, my inquiry shows that the needs of students who are gifted must also be acknowledged. Diverse school offerings, support for English language learning, facilitation of self-directed learning, and quality of teachers and programs are identified as being paramount to meeting the educational needs of these students. School administrators and teachers, however, often feel caught between the competing demands of time, resources, and insufficient funding arrangements and their authentic desire to assist students to reach their full potential. Implications arising from these findings include the need to support and increase awareness of gifted ELLs' broader needs, for supplementary funding to ensure assistance is in place for as long as is needed, and for more teacher education in the fields of both gifted education and English as an additional language/dialect (EAL/D).

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CERTIFICATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
List of Tables	xv
List of Figures.....	xvi
List of Frames.....	xvii
Abbreviations and Acronyms	xviii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
Background.....	1
Aims and Rationale.....	3
Research Questions.....	5
Theoretical Framework.....	5
Critical theory.....	5
Habermas’s theory of communicative action.....	7
School Context of the Study	10
Definitions of Terms	10
Contribution to the Field of Research and Significance of the Study	12
Overview of Thesis	13
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW – PART A.....	14
Conceptualisations of Giftedness.....	14
Giftedness – the Australian Perspective	21
Characteristics of Gifted Students	23
Identification of Gifted Students.....	27
Special Provisions for Gifted Students	30
Teachers of Gifted Students.....	34
The Study of Particular Populations	34

Gifted Adolescents.....	37
Underachievement	39
Summary	40
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW – PART B	42
Who are Gifted ELLs?	42
Issues with Identification and Underrepresentation of Gifted ELLs	45
Special Provisions for Gifted ELLs	47
The Impact of Cultural Difference on Gifted ELLs.....	50
Acquisition of English	50
Underachievement of Gifted ELLs	51
Effects of Poverty and Low Socio-Economic Status on Gifted ELLs.....	53
Existing Research on Gifted ELLs	54
Summary	63
CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	64
A Qualitative Approach	64
Narrative Research.....	65
Limitations of using a narrative approach.....	68
Addressing Validity, Reliability, and Objectivity in the Data Collection Process	69
Research Design: Data Collection	73
Data collection procedures.....	73
<i>Sampling considerations: Sites</i>	76
<i>Sampling considerations: Participants</i>	79
Data Collection: Documents.	79
Data collection: Interviews.	81
Data collection: Reflective memos and field notes.....	87
Data collection: Cultural considerations.	88
Data Analysis.....	89

Data analysis procedures.....	89
Data analysis: Interviews	90
Data analysis: Documents	92
Research Design: Ethical Considerations	93
Ethics approval.....	95
Non-identification of participants	95
Informed consent.....	96
Positioning of the researcher	97
Conclusion	97
CHAPTER IV: DATA NARRATIVES	98
General Descriptions.....	98
Pen Portraits of Students.....	106
Pen Portraits of Teachers and Administrators	113
Pen Portraits of Schools	120
Summary.....	126
CHAPTER V: STUDENT NARRATIVES	127
Students sharing their stories	128
...about their home country	129
School journey	131
What is important to the students themselves (and to the researcher).....	134
Parental expectations.....	139
Characteristics of gifted ELLs	142
Attitudes towards school and learning	144
Seeking challenges	145
Learning English	146
Time management and underachievement.....	148
Psychosocial stressors	149

The influence of peers	150
The educational needs of gifted ELLs (according to the students).....	151
The acquisition of English	151
A challenging curriculum.....	152
Self-management and support needs.....	153
Impediments to learning	153
Teaching and learning through English	154
Classroom management and teaching practices.....	155
Socio-cultural barriers	155
What students value	157
Their teachers	158
The school	160
Beyond schooling.....	161
Other important matters	162
Reflection.....	164
CHAPTER VI: SCHOOL NARRATIVES	165
Teachers sharing their stories.....	166
Professional stories.....	166
What teachers are doing to meet the needs of gifted ELLs	171
The complex role of the teacher	171
Pastoral support.....	172
Assistance with learning English	174
Student ownership of learning	175
Validation of culture	176
Teaching and learning strategies and approaches	177
Impediments to learning: the teachers' perspective.....	179

Underachievement.....	179
Resistance to acculturation.....	180
Socio-economic disadvantage.....	181
School resources and funding.....	183
The role of the school.....	186
Corporate action and knowledge.....	187
Policies and models.....	188
Identification.....	194
Accommodations.....	196
Differentiation.....	199
Priorities.....	200
Student voice.....	202
Acquisition and development of English.....	205
Creating opportunities for students.....	206
Teachers of gifted ELLs.....	211
Other considerations.....	214
Resources and funding needs.....	214
Suggestions for parents.....	215
Visions for the future.....	216
Reflection.....	218
CHAPTER VII: DISCUSSION.....	219
Students.....	219
Student diversity.....	220
Hallmarks of gifted ELLs: Motivational aspects.....	222
Hallmarks of gifted ELLs: Relational aspects.....	225
Hallmarks of gifted ELLs: Academic aspects.....	231

Turning points	235
Teachers	236
The teacher's role	236
Competing priorities for teachers of gifted ELLs	238
A call for increased inputs: funding, time, support, resources	240
Administrators	242
The rational path: The politicisation of the purpose of schooling.....	242
The emotions path: Teacher education and ongoing professional learning	244
The organisational path: Provisions for gifted students, including ELLs	246
The family path: dealing with disadvantage and cultural issues.....	251
Conclusion	253
CHAPTER VIII: CONCLUSION	255
Implications for Stakeholders — Schools	255
Policy, practice, and theory	256
Funding and equity.....	257
Implications for stakeholders —Teachers	259
Teacher–student relationship	260
Effective teachers of gifted ELLs	262
Developing student competency in English.....	263
Implications for stakeholders — Students	263
Reframing the attributes of gifted ELLs	264
Student voice	264
Reflection.....	266
Strengths and Limitations	266
Implications for Future Research.....	271
Reflections on the process	271
Final thoughts	273

References	274
Appendices	318
Appendix A: Gagné’s (2012) Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent 2.0	318
Appendix B: Principals’ information sheet and school consent form	319
Appendix C: Ethical clearance UNE	324
Appendix D: Ethical clearance SERAP	325
Appendix E: Student selection criteria sheet	326
Appendix F: Participants and parents of participants – information sheet and consent form ...	328
Appendix G: Students – information sheet and assent form	332
Appendix H: Teachers and administrators – information sheet and consent form.....	335
Appendix I: Pilot Study – Eagle Heights College	338
Appendix J: Interview questions.....	344
Appendix K: Sample coded transcript	345
Appendix L: Code book.....	349
Appendix M: Documentary analysis	350
Appendix N: Summary of student data.....	351

List of Tables

Table 2.1 Characteristics of gifted ELLs (United States).....	43-44
Table 2.2 Teaching tools for reaching gifted ELLs.....	49
Table 2.3: Protective factors contributing to the development of resilience in high achieving students.....	52
Table 2.4: Risk factors experienced by underachieving students.....	53
Table 3.1 Data collection stages and strategies.....	75
Table 3.2 Participating schools' data (2010).....	78
Table 3.3 Ethical considerations.....	94
Table 4.1 Administrators by school.....	99
Table 4.2 Teachers by school.....	99
Table 4.3 Students by school	100
Table 4.4 ESL learner phases.....	100
Table 5.1 Characteristics of gifted ELLs (Australia): Student perspectives.....	143
Table 5.2 Educational needs of gifted ELLs: Student perspectives.....	163
Table 6.1 Educational needs of gifted ELLs: Teacher perspectives.....	185
Table 6.2 Meeting the educational needs of gifted ELLs: School perspectives.....	201
Table 8.1 Key findings and implications: Schools.....	258
Table 8.2 Key findings and implications: Teachers.....	261
Table 8.3 Key findings and implications: Students.....	265

List of Figures

Figure 1.1 Existing distribution of power within the education system.....	4
Figure 1.2 More equitable distribution of power within the education system.....	4
Figure 2.1 Renzulli’s Three-ring Conception of Giftedness.....	17
Figure 2.2 Sternberg’s Triarchic Theory of Intelligence.....	18
Figure 2.3 Gifted ELL research.....	57
Figure 3.1 Number of students with language background other than English by region - 2012.....	77
Figure 4.1 Number of participants by type of DEC school.....	101
Figure 4.2 Number of participants by type of class.....	102
Figure 4.3 Age of participants.....	102
Figure 4.4 Participants by year level.....	103
Figure 4.5 Length of time in Australian schooling.....	103
Figure 4.6 Identification of participants (students) as gifted and/or talented.....	105
Figure 7.1 People aged 20-24 years, level of highest educational attainment/current study by CALD status – 2009.....	234
Figure 7.2 People aged 20-64 years, attainment/study towards a Bachelor degree or higher qualification by proficiency in spoken English – 2009.....	234

List of Frames

Frame 5.1 Nattapong’s story.....	133
Frame 5.2 Nina’s story.....	134
Frame 5.3 Harold’s story.....	138
Frame 5.4 Stella’s challenges.....	140
Frame 5.5 Sopheak’s motivation.....	145
Frame 5.6 Hattie’s concerns.....	156
Frame 6.1 Margaret’s reflections.....	170
Frame 6.2 Benjamin’s story.....	182-183
Frame 6.3 Marcus’s dilemma.....	184
Frame 6.4 Robert’s plans.....	195
Frame 6.5 Robert’s venture.....	197
Frame 6.6 Robert’s course.....	198
Frame 6.7 Sanjeev’s practices.....	200
Frame 6.8 Doreen’s concerns.....	204
Frame 6.9 Caroline’s approach.....	206
Frame 6.10 Caroline’s resourcefulness.....	207
Frame 6.11 Doreen’s resourcefulness.....	208
Frame 6.12 Marcus’s recommendations.....	213
Frame 6.13 Caroline’s reflections.....	217

Abbreviations and Acronyms

2e: Twice exceptional

ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics

ACARA: Australian Curriculum, Assessment, and Reporting Authority

ACER: Australian Council for Educational Research

AITSL: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

AP: Advanced Placement

ATAR: Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank

BFLPE: Big Fish Little Pond Effect

BICS: Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

CALD: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

CALP: Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

CGHS: Colonial Girls High School

CLO: Community Liaison Officer

DBHS: Dickens Boys High School

DISCOVER Project: Discovering Intellectual Strengths and Capabilities while Observing Varied Ethnic Responses

DMGT 2.0: Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (version 2.0)

DMNA: Developmental Model for Natural Abilities

EAL/D: English as an Additional Language / Dialect

ELL: English Language Learner

EMTD: Expanded Model of Talent Development

ESL: English as a Second Language

GERRIC: Gifted Education Research, Resource, and Information Centre

GFC: Global Financial Crisis

GLBTI: Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and Intersex

HSC: Higher School Certificate

- HSIE:** Human Society and Its Environment
- IB:** International Baccalaureate
- ICSEA:** Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage
- IEC:** Intensive English Centre
- IEHS:** Intensive English High School
- L₁:** First language
- L₂:** Second language
- LBOTE:** Language Background other than English
- MBA:** Master of Business Administration
- MCEETYA:** Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training, and Youth Affairs
- MGHS:** Minerva Girls High School
- MHS:** McMahon High School
- MI theory:** Multiple Intelligences theory
- NAPLAN:** National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy
- NSW DEC:** New South Wales Department of Education and Communities (2011-current)
- NSW DET:** New South Wales Department of Education and Training (1997-2011)
- NSW DoSE:** New South Wales Department of School Education (1989-1997)
- OCs:** Opportunity Classes
- OECD:** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- OP:** Overall Position (Queensland statewide ranking at the completion of Year 12)
- PBL:** Project Based Learning
- PDHPE:** Personal Development, Health, and Physical Education
- PISA:** Program for International Student Assessment
- Project GOTCHA:** Galaxies of Thinking and Creative Heights of Achievement
- RAM:** Resource Allocation Model
- RSC:** Riverview Secondary College

SAE: Standard Australian English

SAT: Scholastic Aptitude Test

SERAP: State Education Research Approval Process

SMPY: Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth

SOLO Taxonomy: Structure of the Observed Learning Outcome Taxonomy

TAFE: Technical and Further Education

TIS: Translating and Interpreting Services

UNE: University of New England

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

VET: Vocational Education Training