From its earliest beginnings the AMEP established modes of delivery to cater for the various needs of its clients. While course content and methodology changed over the years, as experience and research dictated, most modes of delivery put into place in these early years remained into the 1990s. Some of the early programs have grown in importance over time while others have become less important as the needs of migrants have changed, but on-arrival programs, continuation classes, correspondence courses, volunteer support, and even work-based learning programs, were all established before the mid-1960s. Of the provisions established in the very early days, only the shipboard classes no longer exist.

In 1946 the Director of the Commonwealth Office of Education developed a plan for the teaching of English as a way of meeting the Government’s objective of assimilation. The plan proposed that newcomers should be helped to learn English in four stages:
- in the country of origin;
- on the voyage to Australia;
- on arrival;
- after placement in employment.

The first to benefit from these new provisions was a group of over 800 Displaced Persons brought to Australia under an agreement with the International Refugee Organisation (IRO). They arrived in Australia early in December 1947 and were sent to the Reception and Training Centre at Bonegilla, near Albury, where a section had been set aside for a school.

Pictorial aids and other instructional material were prepared by the Commonwealth Office of Education while lesson notes and a reader were prepared by Dr R G Crossley of the Department of German at the University of Sydney, who had been engaged as a consultant and also acted as Chief Instructor. The school was staffed by 22 teachers from the New South Wales and Victorian Education Departments who volunteered to work during their summer vacation. English language instruction and practice were provided, together with tuition aimed at making the migrants familiar with Australian ways of living. Since 80 per cent of the migrants could not speak English, although most of them could speak a little German, the ‘direct method’ of instruction was used with German as an aid.

Thus, in 1948, the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) began, not with the title AMEP and not with a grand fanfare, but it began with the same enthusiasm and commitment that characterises the program today. It was a significant but relatively small beginning for what was to become an internationally renowned program, an acknowledged leader in the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

These developmental years are recorded by Lois Carrington in A real situation. Through anecdotes from early instructors in the program, Carrington captures the excitement of those who
were involved and demonstrates their commitment and dedication – qualities that have remained a trademark of teachers in the AMEP throughout its history. One such story (Carrington 1997: 55) demonstrates the goodwill, humour and focus of these early teachers, though there were perhaps not many who displayed quite the level of dedication in the face of adversity that Adrian Harmsen, teaching in Bathurst in the 1950s, did:

Teaching a class of people speaking up to 20 different languages required a totally different approach from the traditional method of teaching foreign languages to classes speaking one common language. A very lively approach was developed whereby all teaching was conducted out of created ‘situations’. Improvised use was made of unexpected occurrences, for instance during one of my lessons a horrified gasp from about 30 worried students alerted me to the fact that a large tarantula had appeared from behind the blackboard. I... remained outwardly calm, and reassured my nervous class by first saying and then writing ‘This is a spider’ followed by ‘It is harmless, not harmful, not dangerous’. (Well I hoped it was.)

The demand for instructors grew and advertisements were regularly placed in the press. Advertisements for teachers to work as instructors in the reception centres demonstrate that there was already a realisation that special skills were necessary for teaching English as a second language. Knowledge of a foreign language, preferably German, Russian, Italian or Dutch, was required and teachers were expected to be trained, and experienced in teaching either a foreign language to English speakers or English as a foreign language. In 1951 the salary rate for males was £416–£704 plus a cost of living allowance of £246. Female teachers were paid £354–£642 plus cost of living.

While the major thrust of the AMEP has always been on-shore instruction, in the early years the program was broader in its goals and endeavoured to provide access opportunities for intending migrants whenever and wherever possible. The comprehensive plan of 1946 looked...
at learning opportunities before embarkation, on the long voyage to Australia, on arrival and following employment placement.

**Instruction in the Country of Origin**

Instruction in the country of origin started in 1949 when, following discussions with the International Refugee Organisation (IRO), Australia appointed an Area Instructor and three Education Officers to organise pre-embarkation instruction in the Naples camps for intending New Australians. In March 1950 the activity was moved to the camps in Germany, and English-speaking Germans were appointed to assist existing staff. Most migrants received an average of 30 hours of instruction and from June to September 1950, some 5,000 students attended 175 classes.

Following the decline in numbers in the Displaced Persons scheme, Australian staff were withdrawn from the camps, although discussions continued with the Inter-governmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM) which had been established in 1952 when the IRO ceased to function. From this time pre-embarkation classes were organised by ICEM and were therefore no longer a part of the AMEP.

Paul Ashley, ICEM officer in Melbourne, summarised the work of ICEM as being involved in:

- assisting migrant refugees in all aspects of transport arrangements;
- working closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Council of Churches, the International Catholic Migration Committee, the Lutheran World Federation and the International Hebrew Aid Society;
- running language training classes in English, Spanish, Afrikaans and Portuguese;
- language training using the situational method developed in Australia.

**Pre-Embankation Material**

There was international recognition of Australia's work in the teaching of English and when ICEM produced pre-embarkation materials for prospective migrants – such as the 1969 publication *English for Migrants*, which included both teachers' manual and learners' book – they were based almost entirely on various Australian publications for migrants. The foreword for the ICEM students' book *English... My new language* stated:

> English... My new language has been prepared for ICEM under the direction of its Language Training Supervisor, Mr D.C. Miller, B.A. (University of Western Australia). The system adopted, technically referred to as the situational method, has given excellent results in the language training of migrants during recent years...

Vocabularies have been chosen bearing in mind the needs of migrants who will resettle in the United States and countries of the British Commonwealth... ICEM wishes to thank the Australian Department of Immigration for having furnished a wealth of useful material prepared by the Commonwealth Office of Education, and for making available the services of the Ships Education Officer, Miss Roma F. Graveur.
SHIPBOARD EDUCATION

Shipboard education officers were first appointed in May 1948. Most of the officers had had some experience as teachers in the Reception Centres in Bonegilla, Bathurst and Greylands, but a few places were reserved for State Education Department language teachers who were seconded for two round trips. Their duties were to organise instruction in English, manage a small library, answer questions asked by the passengers and to give talks about Australia and show documentary films.

In 1955, under the agreement with ICEM for the re-introduction of Australian Shipboard Education Officers, staff were placed on all ships chartered by ICEM. Lois Carrington described her experiences as a shipboard education officer (1997:86):

[I joined] Toscana, an elderly member of the Lloyd Triestino fleet ... in June 1955. ... a schoolroom [was set up] in their second best lounge [with room for sixty students]. The blackboards, on their easels, could be roped to the walls in rough weather. There was plenty of space for putting up charts and notices, or posters. A small adjacent room became our library; there was a Commonwealth Office of Education-provided crate of books about Australia, fiction, etc, as well as women’s magazines, Walkabout, etc, saved for me by my family and friends. These were read and re-read until they fell to pieces.

... On the first day at sea I introduced myself via loudspeaker, explaining who I was and why I was there. I told the passengers that they would be called up for a grading test and allocated to classes, which would start the following day and would continue the whole way to Australia. I was greeted with blank astonishment by at least half the passengers. Yes, they realised that English was the language of Australia, but it had not occurred to these multilinguals from one of Europe’s crossroads that Australians spoke no other language! Australians were not going to be able to understand them. They were not going to understand the Australians, in shops, in trains, the workplace, anywhere. So, they enrolled by the hundred. Then it was up to me to keep them at it. To be fair, they stuck to it - attendance was high throughout the voyage, except for days of seasickness.

... A speaker came down to be graded (the purser called them via loudspeaker). I picked out the ‘top 30’ who would form class 1, and the next batch who spoke a little English already as class 2. Everybody else was divided up pretty much as they came - they had little or no English, and would rub along nicely in groups of about 50 men and women.

Volunteer teachers from among the passengers themselves were also pressed into service. In a
conversation with the author of this book, Gill Ehrenberg, now at Dandenong AMES, recalled her teaching experiences on board Flavia in 1966:

I responded to the request over the loud speaker, ‘Would English-speaking teachers interested in work on board please report to the Purser’s office.’ On arrival at the office I was met by an officer from the Department of Immigration and a teacher who was in charge of English programs on the ship. After a brief interview I was handed course books and told to begin class in one of the lower lounges next day.

When I arrived the next morning I found a rather apprehensive group of Dutch, Yugoslav and German men and women waiting for me. With hands and all manner of gestures we established names and nationalities and without further ado our English class was up and running.

Classes were rather hilarious as we fumbled our way together through the course. There was heavy competition from the deck chairs on the upper deck on sunny days and I was history when a shoal of flying fish was spotted through a porthole. My most embarrassing moment was when the weather changed and the ship began to roll and I woke up feeling queasy.

With ‘The show must go on’ firmly stamped across my forehead, I reeled across the lounge, took up my position in front of the class, squeezed out ‘Good morning everyone’ through clenched teeth and then bolted for the nearest toilet all green and shaking.

As well as teaching the migrants, of course we dined and socialised together. I remember the daily dinners very clearly. Our elderly waiter spoke no English, we spoke no Italian, but my husband spoke some Spanish so we coped.

The voyage took seven weeks as we traipsed from England to the Caribbean, through Panama to Tahiti, on to New Zealand and then to Sydney and Melbourne. For me the time flew by, no doubt in part because of those migrant English classes.

EXTRACT FROM STUDENTS’ BOOK

This is a ship.

This is a flag.

This is a life-belt.

This is a sailor.

This is a cigarette.

This is a banana.

This is a handkerchief.

This is a bird.

This is a ship and that’s a flag.

This is a book and that’s a pencil.

26.

ENGLISH ON THE WAY MATERIALS WERE DEVELOPED IN 1955 FOR THE USE OF SHIPBOARD EDUCATION OFFICERS
THE HISTORY OF THE AMEP

Teaching materials
Special materials, English on the way, were developed for shipboard education and show the efforts made by the writers to use ‘real’ language. Accompanying the textbook was a set of equipment containing teaching and classroom material and aids. Contained in a suitcase of handy size was a teaching kit that included an assortment of objects of various colours, shapes and sizes to assist teachers in the presentation of class drill practice.

A series of supplementary readers in simple English was produced, with the first reader, I can read English, especially developed as an aid to shipboard education. Stories such as The Flying Doctor, On the Snowy Mountains job and Australia’s laughing bird were aimed at providing further information about the new country. In the foreword, students were instructed to read the book again and again. ‘Don’t use a dictionary too much. Try to read all the words in a sentence together.’

Film strips about life in Australia provided topics for conversation. A valuable documentary films included: Australian diary, Spotlight on Australian ballet, Christmas under the sun, Place for a village, and Lighthouse keepers.

The end of an era
Shipboard classes continued until 1977. During the life of the program six shipping lines were involved in carrying assisted migrants to Australia. The Australis, owned by the Greek shipping line Chandris and carrying 650 assisted migrants arrived in Melbourne in December 1977 – the last liner to carry assisted migrants to Australia. Shipboard classes had achieved the Government’s goal of providing an opportunity for intending migrants to learn English on the way to Australia and, for many students, the teachers had also provided the motivation for them to continue their English studies after arrival. Catherine Panich (1988:154) recalled a conversation she had with a migrant who had taken part in a shipboard program:

I attended classes on the ship. I learned by asking others. I made a point of writing down five new words a day. These words were pinned up on my wardrobe, and I practised them. After eighteen months I was still desperately trying to learn the language. I took a dictionary everywhere.
The teachers charged with introducing migrants to their new country and language, even before their feet touched Australian soil, were for the most part hardworking and enthusiastic. Many still count the experience as a high point in their careers, as Lois Carrington (1997:109) explained:

Was it all worthwhile, all the sweat and the worries? Of course it was. Several of us former SEOs [Shipboard Education Officers] have recently met, 40 years on, and we all say ‘It was the best job we ever had!’ This was certainly not in terms of payment (our salaries, especially if we were females, were rather basic), or of high living; we ‘worked our guts out’ as one of us wrote. We were, for the most part, completely dedicated to achieving results. And, as another SEO says ‘To us, foreigners were not foreigners, they were people.’ For us, there were tangible results - we watched our students acquiring English!
ON-ARRIVAL COURSES

We instructors made our own teaching aids by cutting out pictures from magazines and making posters and flashcards with them... I remember that I enjoyed our breaks in the staff room, where with coffee and biscuits we sat and exchanged experiences. I learned a lot from the other instructors in that way. (Carrington 1997:59)

The first classes for newly-arrived migrants were at Bonegilla, Victoria, on the site of what had been in World War I an Army Small Arms School. It was selected by the Government as a suitable location for initial reception and training because it could accommodate large numbers of people for an extended period of time. Similarly isolated but available sites were soon opened in other parts of Australia. By 1949 the migration program was well under way and between 1947 and 1949, 20,000 adult newcomers attended classes at Bonegilla and 15,000 at Bathurst.

One of the worst difficulties in these early days was the fluctuation of numbers attending classes:

What happened in Europe reverberated in Australia a few weeks later on. The school that had a thousand students one week might have a hundred or two the next. Sometimes two ships came simultaneously, both for the same port - everybody would be run off their feet for a fortnight until the natural attrition of job location moved masses out and led to class amalgamation. (Carrington 1997:53)

The size of the task confronting instructors in the early days was intimidating. While the Commonwealth Office of Education had developed a comprehensive plan, it was left to the instructors to work out how to implement the plan as quickly as possible through experimentation, aided by the materials that were developed - a situation recalled by Carrington (1997:12):

[T]he direct method required much pre-planning, even when it was all set down, step by step, in your English for newcomers to Australia teachers' handbook... Although it was intended largely for continuation class teachers, many of us used it as our teaching guide... It presented structures first of all, and you spent a good portion of the first hour of a lesson introducing and drilling structures... You demonstrated as you went, so that there was no misunderstanding. You repeated the structure two or three times, then left it to the students to say. You built it up on your blackboard (or used your kit objects as appropriate) so that drilling became a matter of indicating, for the instructor, and repeating, for the class.

Teachers did not confine themselves to classroom instruction, they realised the value of community interaction in language learning and organised out-of-class experiences. S Martin (1991:5) quotes Fred Elischer who taught at Bonegilla and for many years at AMES/Victoria:
For further practical work we took the whole group of about thirty to forty people in the so-called school bus to Mates, the largest department store in Albury, to get away from classroom English and be introduced to English in action.

The instructors' work was not made any easier by the transient nature of their pupils who were, after all, anxious to find work and to leave the reception centres for homes of their own. Sheila Lavery and Phillippa Dimakis recalled their days at Bonegilla for Interchange (1987:2):

Bonegilla was really a huge CES [Commonwealth Employment Service] office, with bus loads of people arriving at any hour of the day or night and bus loads departing. Half our lives were spent reorganising classes, creating new ones and you had to do it in five seconds flat!

The next step: Continuation classes
Towards the end of 1949 the Government realised that the length of stay in Reception Centres was shorter than had been expected and that new strategies were required to supplement the original plan to teach migrants sufficient English to get by in their new country. Experienced instructors were appointed to the smaller 'holding centres' to provide an education program for those who were moved there. Sometimes the program was conducted for the wives and families, accommodated in such centres because their men were placed in isolated work locations that lacked family accommodation. The families of these men found the enforced separation extremely difficult, and this would certainly have lessened motivation to learn English.

Displaced persons were required to sign two-year work contracts and were sent to wherever their labour was needed. In their camps in isolated areas, away from their families, the men were often exhausted by the end of the day and many suffered the trauma of settling into a new way of life. However, life was possibly even harder for the women who were left with the responsibility of raising children in a strange setting. The experience of Hilda Edwards at Wacol, near Ipswich in Queensland, gives some insight into teaching in such circumstances (Carrington 1997:120):

The migrants came in great numbers – Poles, Latvians, Romanians, Estonians, Czechs, Lithuanians, White Russians, Hungarians, Austrians and Ukrainians. We quickly set up day classes for those who could attend and evening classes for the migrants who worked during the day. The centre had a Kindergarten and a Primary School... A Matron and two nurses were in charge of the sick bay; office staff were local. The migrants were on a two-year bond all worked hard and their one ambition was to save up for a block of land and later build for their family. It was hard but rewarding work. Staff were not spoilt and we all shared the Public Ablutions... and we all shared meals with migrants in the Mess.

The Government also supported the development of continuation classes for people in employment but not accommodated in the Reception Centres. These classes were designed to continue the education program that may have started in the country of origin, on the ships and/or in the Reception Centres. These classes were organised through the State Departments of
Education with buildings and staff provided by the States and the Commonwealth meeting the full costs and authorising the establishment and closure of classes. By the end of December 1949, 800 continuation classes had started. Classes became established wherever there were six or more potential students and a teacher who was prepared to teach them could be found.

State Education Departments made rooms available, in a local school if possible, and teachers were provided with a set of the current English for newcomers to Australia and sometimes posters, and instructions for assembling a teaching kit. They also received, every few months, a copy of English... A new language. Instructors were almost always primary school teachers and more likely to be male than female.

**Correspondence Courses**

As newcomers were allocated to employment locations, many found themselves in isolated rural areas where classes were not available. To meet their needs, the Office of Education prepared correspondence lessons and employed part-time tutors to carry out the instruction, maintain correspondence with the student and advise on any problems. Students were encouraged to find an English-speaking person to help them, which had the additional benefit of assisting the assimilation process.

Jim White was the officer from the Commonwealth Office of Education who initiated this action, assisted by a team that included Liesel Fuld as writer, Fred Bates as illustrator and Sally Ward as typesetter. The team was supported by experts like George Pittman, who was a strong force in adult migrant teaching in the formative years of the program.

The first lessons were distributed in mid-1949 and over the next 18 months Lessons 1–20 were prepared. Materials were continually revised and reprinted to meet the demands and needs of the students. Four preliminary lessons were published in Italian in 1953 at the request of migrant education officers. In 1954 a booklet in Greek, The letters and sounds of English, was prepared to assist Greek students to master the English alphabet and English pronunciation.

The correspondence course in its final form consisted of 30 lessons, each printed as a separate booklet. These were to be completed by learners and the answers sent to the tutor for feedback. An introductory leaflet accompanying the first lessons was available in seven languages (German, Italian, Dutch, Greek, Polish, Hungarian and Maltese).

Evelyn Fowler was in charge of the correspondence section run by the Commonwealth Office of Education Branch Office at the University of Sydney in 1953 and she recalled that (Carrington 1997: 128):

The booklets... were illustrated and covered various points of grammar. There were 90 or so teachers. They were allotted so many students each. We sent the booklet to the migrant, who answered the questions, filled in the exercises. The migrant sent it to the teacher. The teacher corrected it with suitable remarks in English and then the teacher sent them to us and I used to go through each teacher's work in turn to see how they were getting on. A large volume of work came in. They put the new book with the old one with the comment on it and sent them to the migrant. Teachers were expected to write a letter to their students and the students were to be coaxed into
writing a letter to their teacher. Many [became] fluent English speakers.

The first correspondence course was revised twice in the 1950s and again in 1963. Following a revision in the mid-1950s the booklets were designed so they could be written in rather than students having to write their answers on separate paper, and each lesson contained its own review page. The Annual Report of the Commonwealth Office of Education 1954 reported that these improvements were expected to help reduce ‘abandonments’, make for better performance of exercises by the students and more rapid correction by tutors.

The 1963 revision was to cater for the introduction of decimal currency. This version omitted the jokes and cartoon-like sketches of earlier versions and restricted the types of student response so that most became of the ‘fill in the blank’ type with little opportunity for free writing.

J. **Re-write these sentences, filling in "people" or "peoples"**: 

Example: The **people** in our street are very friendly.

1. The streets were crowded with .......
2. All the ....... of Europe speak different languages.
3. ....... without a ticket are not allowed to go in.
4. Those ....... who want to go, may leave now.
5. The ....... of Asia vary greatly in race and colour.
6. The ....... of the town like their new doctor.
7. These brave ......., the English and the Americans, have won the war together.

K. **Write these in words**: 

Example: ½ hour. Half an hour.

1. ½ yd. 4. ½ oz. 7. ½ gal. 10. 2½ lbs.
2. ½ in. 5. ½ mile 8. ½ stone 11. 1½ yds.
3. ½ pt. 6. ½ lb. 9. 1½ ft. 12. 1½ hrs.

L. **Re-write these sentences, filling in "of" or "from"**: 

Example: The house is made ...... timber.

1. An omelette is made ...... eggs, milk and flour.
2. A bottle is made ...... glass.
3. A book is made ...... paper and cardboard.
4. Wine is made ...... the juice of grapes.
5. The shelf is made ...... wood.
6. The watch is made ...... gold.
7. Steel is made ...... iron.
8. That bridge is made ...... steel.
The Correspondence Course for New Australians is designed to help assimilate the New Australian into the Australian community. The booklets are concerned primarily with the teaching of English. Information of the Australian way of life is imparted incidentally and according to the requirements of the individual student by means of personal correspondence carried on between the teacher and the student.

**Rule 1 Remember the General Aims**

The general aims of the course in descending order of importance are:

1. To teach the student to understand and speak the colloquial English used by the average Australian.
2. To give the student a reasonable command of written English.
3. To advise the student about the Australian way of life.

These aims are, in essence, the aims of the Continuation Class teacher. Your job is to do by correspondence the same job that is done in the classroom by the Continuation Class teacher.

This is not always easy. The primary aim is, of course, an oral aim. We want the student to understand when he is spoken to and to be able to speak himself, fluently and reasonably accurately, within a limited range of vocabulary and construction.

The course is an attempt to give essentially aural-oral instruction by means of the written word. Always bear this in mind. Guard against the temptation to emphasise the secondary aim of reading and writing at the expense of the all-important primary aim.

It is not your main aim to teach students to write English well, but to teach him to learn enough English to mix with Australians at work and at play and in the pub, and not be conspicuous.

The New Australian does not need grammatical niceties any more than the ‘Old’ Australian. He does need help in eliminating those little foreign differences of speech which single him out from the native born. He must not use broken English; that is why in the classroom the Continuation teacher stresses Sentence Patterns, Substitution Tables and the like. That is why you are asked to do the same within the limits of the correspondence education system.

You must avoid above all the secondary school grammatical and literary approach to language. Nor may you ‘talk down’ in the primary school manner. Concentrate on the aspects of the language that will help the student to use English orally, remembering the while that he has the extremely difficult job of having to use orally what he has only read on paper.
Early in 1949 the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) made time slots available on Saturday and Sunday mornings for the broadcast of a radio program designed to help learners in areas such as pronunciation and grammar. The radio lessons were intended to be used either as a self-contained course or as a supplement to class or correspondence instruction, and were expected to prove particularly useful for those learning English by correspondence.

Early scripts for the programs were recorded and trialled with classes at the Bathurst Camp and as a result of these trials it was decided that the program would target migrants with some basic knowledge of English whose main need was to cope with the language in everyday situations. Because of the fluctuating circumstances of many migrants, the programs were to be developed as self-contained units that listeners could pick up at any time. Eleanor Sim, the Commonwealth Office of Education representative to the project at the time, recalled that the characters were to be called John, Mary and Paul because these were names that were both internationally recognised and easily understood (Carrington 1997:150):

Content was mainly everyday phrases, spoken with normal intonation and elision, but considerably slowed down. Language drills like substitution tables were provided, with repetition and pauses to allow further repetition by listeners. Topics were taken from simple situations typical of Australian life.

Broadcasts began in June 1949 and were very popular, the monthly distribution of radio booklets to accompany the program reaching 20,000 copies by 1956. The radio course continued until 1962 when a new program was developed to align with the correspondence course.

In March 1957 a new radio program, Making Friends, was developed for women who had limited opportunities to access other forms of instruction. The five-minute, mid-morning broadcast became accepted as a serial as the characters went through real experiences.
Mrs Kelly (played by Muriel Steinbeck) had a newly married daughter, Pat (played by Jennifer Wykeham). When Pat moved into her new home she met her new neighbour, Stephanie (Maria Bank), who was a younger Australian with three children.

Volunteer Support Services - The Genesis of the Home Tutor Scheme

The value of volunteer support for the migration program was readily recognised by the Commonwealth Government. The establishment of the Good Neighbour Movement in 1949 led to the involvement of community groups in local activities for new immigrants. The Good Neighbour Newsletter informed individuals and community groups of Government actions and policies and encouraged Australians to assist their new neighbours to learn English. Each issue of the newsletter gave positive examples of how new migrants were settling successfully and contributing to the Australian society.

The churches also contributed to the volunteer efforts to support newly-arrived migrants. In writing about her work for The Missionary Chronicle in 1961, Deaconess van Tellingen recalled that she had been invited to come to Melbourne to work with Dutch migrants and to visit both the newly arrived and those who had been here for a few years. She encouraged the migrant women to learn English as soon as possible and sought support for them (Ritchie 1988:134) because:

[as] the wife and mother it is important that she be helped to learn English. We should bear in mind that often her migration experience cuts deeper into her life than that of her family.

In New South Wales the Smith Family, a local welfare organisation, took up an idea put forward by a student social worker and began a scheme which was called ‘Each One Teach One’.

The Good Neighbour, A Monthly Newsletter for New Migrants, Published by the Department of Immigration, Included Short English Lessons.

(Excerpt from the June 1955 edition)

**AND NOW FOR AN ENGLISH LESSON**

**WORD ORDER**

Watch where you put these words: always; never; often; sometimes; usually; generally. They go AFTER the following very common words: am (am not) was (was not) can (can’t) do (don’t) is (is not) were (were not) must (must not) does (does not) are (are not) will (won’t) did (didn’t).

E.g.: The air is always fresh and clean.

We are usually busy on Tuesdays.

I can usually lie in bed late.

They weren’t always so lazy.

Ted must never play football again.

They go BEFORE ALL other verbs e.g.

I always like the week-end.

I usually buy some fruit for the week-end.

I often work in the garden during the week.

I generally visit some friends on Sunday.

I sometimes have tea with them too.

WOULD YOU PLEASE . . .

This is a polite saying. We use it when we are asking for something or when we are asking for a favour. E.g.: Would you please send me a pair of garden shears? (= Send me a pair of garden shears, please.)

We often use would you with like.

E.g.: Would you like another cup of tea (= Do you want another cup of tea?). Would you like a piece of cake? (Yes, please.)
In Victoria, the Church of All Nations in Carlton developed a range of programs to minister to recently arrived migrants who were living in the nearby high-rise Housing Commission flats. The special needs of migrant women led to the establishment of a one-to-one home visiting scheme designed to help the learner gain confidence. It is unclear exactly when the scheme began, but a report written in 1968 indicated that 24 volunteers were then going into houses to teach English.

**Newsletters**

Another form of assistance for new migrants was a regular monthly newsletter published by the Department of Immigration. Originally published in January 1949 as *The New Australian*, it merged with *The Good Neighbour* in 1954. Each issue contained an easy English lesson which often included a dialogue on a grammatical structure within an Australian context.

**Workplace Programs**

When post-war migration started in 1947, the main aim was to move people into employment as soon as possible and, following an initial four-week period of English language training, they were encouraged to learn English in their own time through continuation classes or by correspondence. There was, however, an understanding of the need for specialised training in certain occupations, and employers sought to address this need in a variety of ways.

The March 1951 issue of the *Good Neighbour* Council newspaper reported on the Victorian Railways Training School. A total of 14,000 New Australians were employed by the Victorian Railways and those selected as porters attended a special school of instruction at the Railways Institute where they were taught their duties and instructed in safe working principles. In addition they were given lessons in the English language and in Australian geography. Most of them were housed near the railway workshops at Newport where there was a 400-man hostel.

In 1952 the State Government Railways and the Education Department combined to provide courses for German migrants. The eight-week courses combined training for work as well as English language. The Commonwealth Office of Education conducted a special school for instructors.

As Carrington (1997) notes, special classes were also set up in the camps where the workers were quartered. Where the management was cooperative, classes were held in the workplace, usually before or after work, but occasionally during working hours.

Courses for migrant employees were held in a wide variety of workplaces, such as Water Board camps in New South Wales, the nursing aides’ hostel in Melbourne and the long-range weapons experimental station at Woomera. In 1950 the management of General Motors Holden Ltd,
Melbourne, approached the University Branch Office of Migrant Education and classes were held between shifts on four afternoons a week. At the Myer Emporium a class, held for two hours a week, included students from Czechoslovakia, Holland, Hungary, Spain and Poland.

Conclusion
The early years of the AMEP saw an immense effort by all involved in the teaching and administration of the program. In the foreword to Situational English for newcomers to Australia, first published in 1965, recognition is given to the work done in the early years:

Situational English is based on more than a decade of study and experiment by the Commonwealth Office of Education through its Learning Teaching Section under the technical direction of Mr Neile Osman, M.A., Dip.Ed.

The shaping of early phases of the work for use in classes for adult migrants owed much also to the work of Dr R.G. Crossley, B.A., Ph.D., and Mr G.A. Pittman, B.A., Dip.Ed.

The AMEP program evolved as it grew and, thanks to the quality and expertise of the leaders, the commitment and abilities of the teachers, and the enthusiasm and response of the students, a unique Australian approach was developed.

Correspondence and radio programs, for example, developed out of a need to provide access to migrants in rural areas. Many migrants, under contract to the Government, were sent to work in isolated areas where Australian industries were beginning to develop. The provision of face-to-face teaching to such a scattered population was difficult and so other modes of delivery evolved.

By the mid-60s the delivery of the AMEP was fully operational and aligned to the migrant intakes. Both Commonwealth and State Annual Education reports recognised the continued interest of students in the program. Opportunities for learning English through shipboard instruction, by attendance at classes, through a correspondence course and by means of radio broadcasts, were available throughout Australia. Officers in charge had endeavoured to develop new strategies to meet the changes to the original plan and the Federal Government provided financial support for the initiatives. There were 1120 continuation classes operating in 1962 with an average monthly enrolment of 16,478 students. Average enrolments in the correspondence course were 10,252 in 1961 and 7,857...
in 1963. While statistics on how many listened to the radio program were not possible, the average monthly circulation of the booklets to accompany the broadcasts reached 14,284 in 1963.

During these early years the Language Teaching Unit of the Commonwealth Office of Education played a vital role in ensuring that materials were available across Australia for all program delivery modes, and that teachers were kept informed of the developments through the publication of English... A new language.

In 1965 a new course, **Situational English for Newcomers to Australia**, was launched. It was based on the wisdom and experience gained over almost 20 years of providing English language classes for migrants to Australia.
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The author also wishes to acknowledge the contributions of Margaret Hunt and Gill Ehrenberg who recalled their experiences of the time for the author. Many thanks for your help.
Chapter 4  The teaching program – 1965 onwards

Expansion and diversification of Program Provision

From the mid-1960s the Federal Government widened its migrant selection criteria to increase migration. The AMEP grew to cater for this influx of non-English speaking background migrants, and along the way it adopted new strategies to meet the changing needs of its clients. In particular, the AMEP grew to service the need for ongoing learning opportunities after the initial settlement period. The great strength of the program was its flexibility, the dedication of its teachers and their willingness to review their work and to adapt to new conditions. Knowledge and experience gained in one State was quickly shared with services in other states so that provisions and methodology remained of a high standard and providers strove always to cater for the needs of the migrants they served.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s there was considerable expansion within the AMEP due to the high levels of migration. A number of new initiatives emerged and sections of the program became more specialised. The general program itself broadened as the demand for ongoing learning opportunities increased. Other factors contributing to the growth and development of the AMEP program included:

- the continued demand by students for instruction after the initial period of settlement;
- the growing realisation that learning a second language took a great deal of time and was dependent on the individual student’s educational background and needs;
- the increasing professionalisation of Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL);
- the increasing expectation of employers in regard to levels of English proficiency as the employment situation changed;
- the arrival of groups with special needs, such as refugees from Vietnam, Timor and Eastern Europe.

Federal and state responsibilities

The Government had initially envisaged that migrants’ language needs would be addressed in the early stages of settlement and that 12 months would be sufficient to meet all requirements for assistance with learning the English language. The Commonwealth Office of Education diligently provided advice to the various State Education Departments and the Office’s advisory teachers acted as liaison officers providing such services as visits to classes, advice and demonstrations of techniques, vacation and regional training schools, and the collection and dissemination of information on continuation classes, the correspondence course and radio lessons. The Commonwealth Office also undertook research and development work and...
provided materials through the Language Teaching Section.

The State Education Departments undertook the responsibility for the organisation and conduct of classes, recruiting teachers mainly from the ranks of the primary sector of the State Teaching Services. The program was delivered across a wide area as migrants had been sent to work over the entire continent. In Victoria, for example, in 1968–69 there were 314 continuation classes in the metropolitan regions, 21 in the Geelong district, 11 in the Latrobe Valley, 19 in Mildura, 6 in Myrtleford and 17 in other country areas, making a total of 388 classes with an effective enrolment of 5413.

THE IMPACT OF RESEARCH

As described in Chapter 1, the further growth of the program was also a result of the increasing numbers of research studies, such as the Galbally (1978) and the Campbell (1985) reports, that provided justification for increased funding allocations. The increased funding also brought more accountability requirements as the Government sought to identify outcome measures.

The need for comprehensive and timely information about the AMEP had been the subject of comment in the Review of Post Arrival Programs and by the Commonwealth Auditor General in 1982, and the Government agreed that a computer-based information system should be developed. Providers were asked for advice on the definition, collection and maintenance of managerially oriented data to be collected on a uniform or comparable basis. A Data Management Committee was established under the Joint Commonwealth/States Committee and a computerised information system – the AMEP Management Information System (AMIS) – was implemented in the mid-1980s.

PROGRAM DELIVERY MODES

To cater for the diverse English language needs of migrants, programs developed in the early years were expanded and developed, taking into account available research on language acquisition, the changing needs of migrants and the various Government studies. The main program areas were:

- continuation classes (known as part-time courses);
- full-time or intensive courses;
- correspondence or distance learning provisions;
- Home Tutor Scheme;
- workplace programs;
- Individual/Independent Learning Centres (ILC).

As the program expanded and endeavoured to become more accountable in defining student contact hours, the term ‘formal courses’ was developed to describe classroom-based and distance learning courses as opposed to ‘informal provision’ such as tutor support programs. During the late 1980s the difference between full-time and part-time courses became less relevant as the focus, in the words of the AMEP National Plan 1990-92, moved to:

ensure that clients had access to a planned sequence of learning arrangements to enable them to reach proficiency levels consistent with their educational, vocational and social goals.
Through the work of the Professional Development Sub-Committee (PDSC), established by the Joint Commonwealth/States Committee to overview all professional aspects of the program, a number of initiatives were developed. One such initiative was the engagement of educational counsellors to assist students in setting their short- and long-term goals and planning learning pathways beyond the AMEP, which might include both part-time and full-time study.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEEDS-BASED PROVISIONS

In 1987 the Department of Immigration commissioned a study, Setting priorities: measuring need in the AMEP, which surveyed New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria and sought views from teachers and managers. The conclusion identified some crucial issues relating to funding levels and decision-making responsibilities (Miltenyi: 1988 50–51):

The notion of priorities implies inclusion and exclusion, and the responsibility for inclusion or exclusion needs to be appropriately located...

A significant number of AMES teachers and DILGEA (Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs) officers believe that, given the limited resources, enough English should be given to a limited number of students to enable them to participate in mainstream society rather than all students being given a little English. This issue is key to the aims of the AMEP: there is considerable debate over whether the ‘giving of a little to all’

Through the research on which this study was based teachers often referred to themselves as ‘the meat in the sandwich’ when it came to choosing who is to be given access to classes.

The development of a methodology based on a needs-based, learner-centred educational philosophy led to teachers considering learner requests for better sequencing and greater

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**Learning Pathways**

This chart was prepared by staff at Enterprise AMES Centre, Springvale to illustrate the potential links between learning pathways for AMEP clients.
continuity of learning provision. A survey of data related to the purpose/needs codes on the AMEP Management Information System identified three major categories – Community Access, Social/Employment-related and Further Education.

In 1986 AMES WA developed a continuous learning program that guaranteed students entering the program three or more consecutive courses, or the attainment of level A SLPR 1+ (see Chapter 5 for a SLPR rating explanation).

In 1989 NSW AMES introduced a curriculum model, known as Learner pathways, that aimed to provide sequenced English language and literacy courses for adult migrants. In order to achieve continuity of courses it was necessary to describe course outcomes at various points within the curriculum framework and to prepare courses for accreditation. The original Certificate of Spoken and Written English (CSWE) was developed in 1992 in order to make these course outcomes clear to students, teachers and other participants in the adult ESL context.

The CSWE was accredited by the New South Wales Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board in June 1992 and was placed on the National Training Board’s interim national Register of Courses in September 1992.

**Continuation, part-time and community classes**

Until 1969, when full-time courses were introduced, AMEP provisions consisted entirely of part-time continuation classes, held mainly in the evening, plus a basic correspondence course. Part-time classes were organised to suit the needs of students with regard to time, location, intensity and course content. Initially the classes were established to continue the work that had begun in Training and Reception Centres, but classes were later established wherever a group of students was located and a teacher available.

In larger centres, classes were organised according to students’ language proficiency, taking account of other characteristics such as years of education and age. In smaller venues classes often had to accommodate all applicants in one or two classes of disparate levels and backgrounds. The classes in smaller venues became known as ‘community classes’ and were frequently located in community property such as church halls, libraries, childcare centres and schools. Increasingly, attention was given to the needs of migrant women. Eeya Gleboff, a teacher with NSW AMES, recalled her teaching days in the late 1960s (Profile: Eeya Gleboff 1986:12):

> I started teaching community classes in Granville. We only had a tape-recorder and a piece of chalk – that was our equipment – and wonderful enthusiasm and a great belief in the method we used...
Evaluation of Continuation Classes
During 1976–77 an evaluation of continuation classes was undertaken by Professor King from the University of Wollongong, and an evaluation of non-typical classes, Day class teaching of English to migrant women (published in 1979) was undertaken in New South Wales by W Bruen. The reports recommended multi-class centres as opposed to single-class centres and emphasised the importance of the social aspect of the program.

During the early 1980s a number of community-based and demographic studies were undertaken as part of Recommendation 10 of the Galbally Report (see Chapter 1):

- A community-based study undertaken in Wollongong by Morrisey and Palser (1981) found that attitudes towards class attendance were very positive, but the study also raised a number of concerns including the need for a flexible approach to cater for diverse needs of student groups; the lack of appropriate resources to cater for these needs; and the lack of security of employment for staff. The recommendations of this study were taken up by NSW AMES and resulted in positive changes to the program.

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Creative ways had to be found to cater for the English language needs of migrant mothers, in one Perth primary school mothers attended classes in the afternoon at their children’s school (from The Good Neighbour October 1967).
A another community-based study in Debney Park, Victoria, reported that many students ‘felt fearful of formal teaching arrangements; several had attended classes but found they could not cope. As their work fell behind, they became daunted and less confident of learning to speak English’ (Parer 1981: 12). The report went on to recommend that the teaching of English language programs via cable television be considered, the aim being to integrate the use of television with community needs.

A further study, by the Department of Immigration in 1983 (English language learning needs of adult migrants in the Western suburbs of Melbourne), also recommended that, while the traditional classroom teaching of English did have a role to play in certain circumstances, it was not particularly effective because the work and family commitments of most people made attendance at classes difficult. The study also highlighted the need for cooperation with other programs, such as TAFE and Adult Education courses, to provide combined language and skills-oriented programs.

**PROGRAM ARRANGEMENTS IN DIFFERENT STATES**

Program arrangements developed along different lines in different States. For example, the AMEP in Western Australia was characterised by the necessity to provide a large range of services over a vast geographical area. This resulted from time to time in the implementation of specific strategies to meet the needs of isolated individuals and groups, such as six Vietnamese employed at the Fitzroy Crossing Hotel situated 2,600 kilometres from Perth.

In Queensland, where distance and numbers of students were important considerations, provision was based on the belief that effective delivery is best achieved through a close working relationship with mainstream professional activity and services. As a result, local educational institutions were contracted to provide English classes where feasible. Distance learning and the Home Tutor Scheme were heavily supported by Queensland AMEP.

In New South Wales and Victoria, on the other hand, the size of the AMEP meant that the AMES offices developed greater independence from mainstream services.

**SPECIFIC NEEDS COURSES**

From the 1970s AMEP teachers in all States developed programs to meet the needs of particular student groups. For example, in January 1978, pilot full-time vacation classes were conducted in Victoria, New South Wales and Western Australia. These were attended by...
320 migrants who would otherwise have had to wait for the school term to resume. Reports indicated significant language gain and many students continued to study English. Other providers adopted vacation classes from time to time where a need was perceived.

Following the development of AMIS in the mid-1980s, it became possible to identify groups of students with specific needs. Prior to this, some students had gone from location to location, attending two or three different classes in their efforts to learn English as quickly as possible. The findings from the research studies and the accurate data from the information system allowed program managers to rationalise the numbers and provide appropriate services on a more equitable basis. In many cases this meant the closure of a number of single-class centres in suburban areas, but every effort was made to maintain access to classes, particularly for women. The issue of childcare for students in community venues was discussed at State level consultative meetings with varying degrees of success.

Staff responded to the particular needs of students in community classes by developing new courses to meet specific needs. The following examples of innovative programs from different parts of the country demonstrate the breadth of the development through the years:

- In the 1980s a language of childbirth course was developed by NSW AMES for use throughout Australia to help pregnant migrant women communicate with doctors and hospital staff.
- In 1984 the Young Adults Program (YAP) was initiated in Collingwood, Victoria, for young, unaccompanied refugee men and women living alone in Australia. This program attempted to address the emotional, social, linguistic, cultural, vocational and recreational needs of the students. It was followed by the Collingwood Refugee Program (CRYP) which was developed jointly by AMES Victoria and Collingwood TAFE College. The course included opportunities for the students to consider previously unknown options for further study or employment.
- Seniors classes, running in Western Australia since 1985, taught English to older migrants and helped them adjust to their new community. Seniors classes, staffed by teachers and conversation volunteers, offer support and friendship. For older migrants who often have special settlement difficulties, these seniors classes give participants encouragement to lead as independent and productive lives as they did in their former countries.
- The Somali Family Literacy project was established in 1994 at Debney Meadows Language Centre, Victoria, assisting Somali women, not only to speak English, but also to participate in their children's schooling. The women were taught separately from their children for some classes and with them for others so they could continue to be educators of their own children.
- In 1988 courses for young unemployed migrants, jointly sponsored by NSW AMES, TAFE, and the Commonwealth Employment Service, were developed. The National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research developed curriculum frameworks to support teachers in these courses.
INTENSIVE COURSES
Full-time courses, introduced into the AMEP in 1969, were known as intensive courses and were initially designed to equip educated migrants with adequate English to enter appropriate employment. The first course was held in Sydney for a group of professionally qualified Czech migrants, and other courses soon began elsewhere in NSW and in Victoria the same year. A number of organisations were contracted to conduct the courses including the University of NSW, Sydney Technical College, Alliance Française (Sydney), Newcastle Technical College, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Migrant Education Centre (Melbourne), Monash University, University of Queensland, Migrant Centre (Brisbane), South Australian Institute of Technology, Perth Technical College, Migrant Education Centre (Perth), A dult Education Centre (Hobart) and the Canberra College of Advanced Education. Student numbers were 432 in 1969–70 and grew to 1821 by 1973–74.

MEETING SPECIFIC NEEDS
Many innovative programs have been developed within the AMEP to meet the specific needs of special migrant groups.

1. Seniors class run by WAAMES. Older migrants learning English and supporting each other in their new country.

2. Mothers-to-be at a language of childbirth class.

3. Refugee and humanitarian program entrants with special learning needs attending classes to prepare them for mainstream AMEP tuition.

4. Participants in the Somali family literacy project at Debney Meadows.
The curriculum was based on Situational English Parts 1, 2 and 3 and later extended to Part 4. Courses were conducted from 8 am or 9 am to 5 pm, five days a week. Initially for six weeks, courses were later extended to eight weeks. Students were selected from a pre-course test administered by officers of the Department of Immigration. A multiple-choice test, measuring areas of spoken and written English, was used and the same test was also given after the course. Successful students were notified of the results by the Department. While on the course the students received a living allowance, which was higher than unemployment benefits, paid to the students fortnightly by the Department of Immigration.

Widening of Provision
By 1974 the entrance level of students had changed and courses catered for a much wider group. Intakes of migrants from the Middle East included many people with lower levels of education, and the courses were modified. They were renamed ‘accelerated courses’ and ran for ten weeks, with language laboratories being used where possible.

Thelma Grant, teacher-in-charge of full-time courses at the Migrant Education Centre in Perth, wrote about the courses in the T E F L / T E S L Newsletter in 1977:

The Intensive Course is for students with a better knowledge of English, and the Accelerated Course for those with only a limited knowledge of the language. However, it must be understood that, of the five Intensive Courses we run in a period of a year, each one might be of a different level; and the four Accelerated Courses vary in the same way. A new program is prepared to suit the standard and needs of the students in each course.

For example, in one Intensive Class we might complete Situational English Book 1 in the first two days, Book 2 in a week and Book 3 during the next fortnight - three and a half weeks in all. Another Intensive Class might take six weeks to complete the three books; but this depends entirely on the standard of the class and the students' ability to learn.

When we have finished the three Situational English books we go on to other books and cover comprehension, advanced structures, vocabulary extension, essays, letters and so on. Once again the lesson content depends on the needs and abilities of the students.

Throughout the course we give dictations, pronunciation lessons and language laboratory sessions. Right from the beginning the class is divided into two groups for parts of the day so that special help may be given as required.

During the last three weeks of the Intensive Course, two hours every afternoon are devoted to discussion, with the students divided into small groups of six or seven. Non-teaching discussion group leaders are introduced whenever possible.
for instance a Health Education Council instructor, or perhaps a man with a typical Australian accent to start the group thinking and talking about such diverse topics as surf rescue, buying a second-hand car, State and local Government etc., always with the threefold objective of (a) getting the students to talk; (b) increasing and widening their knowledge of the nation, the State and the metropolitan area; and accustoming them to different types of voices—all speaking the same language but in widely different ways.

In many locations teachers worked in teams on full-time courses and this allowed for collegiate support for new teachers as well as providing a variety of presentation styles for the students. Small group tutorial sessions were popular with students as they gave further opportunity for individual practice and assistance. Because students were in class all day, teachers were able to offer extended opportunities and the daily teaching program reflected the changes. Teachers began to question the sequential order of Situational English and endeavoured to group lessons differently and to extend the available material.

**Research into Student Progress**

In a Commonwealth Department of Education survey undertaken by the Education Planning Group in 1978–79 (titled Survey of Intensive English Courses for Adult Migrants) various aspects of the courses were researched. In the survey sample, covering students enrolled during 1969–75, the majority of participants were of European nationality: 278 were Yugoslavs, 185 Chileans, 156 Czechs, 138 Greeks and 129 Egyptians. The proportion of the sample from North and South America, the Middle East and Asia increased over the years examined. Nearly 63 per cent in the sample attended an English course within two years of arrival and 41.7 per cent attended a course within one year of arrival.

The survey found that a substantial number of migrants filled jobs in Australia which did not use the training and experience they had gained in their country of origin. Migrants did, however, aspire to an eventual improvement in their actual occupational status in Australia. Attendance at Intensive English courses appeared to interfere with continuity of employment, and many who were in employment prior to the course did not expect that they would have a job after the course.

Examination of the pre- and post-course test results indicated marked improvement during the two months of the course, although it was recorded that in light of validation studies on the test used, the final scores did not represent a very high level of English compared with the initial scores of Australian students in first year at high school. Both student and teacher responses to a questionnaire considered that the courses were too short, although the majority of students considered that their level of conversational English had improved.

The survey concluded that the findings were in line with the recommendations of the Galbally report which sought to extend the availability and coverage of full-time courses, and recommended that a full-time course of up to six months be piloted in certain bilingual professions.
The arrival of large numbers of Indo-Chinese refugees in the late 1970s and early 1980s resulted in changes to intensive courses. The program was divided into on-arrival courses for newly arrived migrants and refugees and ongoing courses for longer term residents.

Sandra Economou recalls her experience as the influx of ‘boat people’ from Vietnam began:

It was a warm sunny morning in January 1978 with a predicted forecast of 44 degrees. I had been sent to Graylands hostel to escort 400 refugees across to the woolsheds at Clarendon showgrounds where the classes were to be held. The former occupants of the woolshed had not long gone and, as the temperature rose, the atmosphere became more oppressive. With only low acoustic screens between the classes, the students enthusiastically participated in the practice drills. Classes finished at twelve noon.

The Department of Immigration Annual Report for 1978–79 (Department of Immigration 1979:28) listed the problems experienced in the establishment of the new program, in particular:

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**INDO-CHINESE REFUGEES MOVE INTO TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION AT EASTBRIDGE HOSTEL IN THE MELBOURNE SUBURB OF NUNAWADING AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL FROM BANGKOK IN 1977.**
♦ a shortage of classroom accommodation;
♦ the need for revised English language teaching guidelines and material;
♦ the need for better provision of information about Australia, its institutions and services;
♦ difficulties in locating and placing in the program people who, on arrival, moved at once into private accommodation in the community.

**DISTANCE LEARNING**

In 1979, following the recommendation in the Galbally Report to consider the potential of major initiatives in ethnic radio and television in the teaching of English, the Department of Immigration undertook a partial review of the correspondence course. The radio sections of the course were discontinued and audiocassettes and records made available to students. As questions were being raised as to the appropriateness of the content and cultural values expressed in the text, the need for a complete revision of the course was accepted. The Joint Commonwealth/States Committee recommended the development of a new set of distance learning arrangements following appropriate research, development, piloting and evaluation.

Don Plimer, research officer of NSW AMES, prepared a report titled *Distance learning opportunities in the AMEP* which included views of students, teachers, administrators and specialists in the field of distance education. In his report Plimer made a number of recommendations regarding the need for new materials and administrative arrangements. He noted the desirability for feedback to students to be immediate, regular, concise and relevant, clear, supportive, and to include explanatory comments.

Plimer's research also included extensive data collected from AMEP providers. In her PhD thesis, Mavis Tassicker noted that this was the first time that a comprehensive profile of students was developed. In the past reports had merely referred to the total number of enrolments. Table 4.1, from Tassicker (1986:48), shows the data collected for Victoria.

| **Table 4.1: AME Victoria Students Enrolled in Distance Learning Based on 1979-81 Data** |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| **Number of students**          | 2446 (55% women and 45% men) |
| **Number of first languages**   | 38                         |
| **Place of residence**          | 98% in metropolitan area   |
| **Ages**                        | from 16–75                  |
| **Years of schooling**          |                            |
| primary                         | 27%                        |
| secondary                       | 54%                        |
| tertiary                        | 19%                        |
| **Length of residence**         |                            |
| less than five years            | 82%                        |
| **Occupation**                  |                            |
| professional                    | 2%                         |
| skilled                         | 16%                        |
| unskilled                       | 26%                        |
| home duties                     | 13%                        |
| unemployed                      | 43%                        |
| **Major countries of origin**   |                            |
| Vietnam                         | 33%                        |
| South America                   | 11%                        |
| USSR                            | 9%                         |
| Poland                          | 7%                         |
| Greece                          | 7%                         |
| Italy                           | 6%                         |
In 1983 a working party was formed to develop a new distance learning course for the AMEP, and a team was selected to develop a course in Adelaide in conjunction with the National Curriculum Resource Centre (NCRC). As reported by Kleist (1985:8), the objectives of the course were:

- to stimulate and develop learners’ language learning skills through the use of language that meets their own perceived needs and thus to help them eventually to become autonomous learners and users of English;
- to help learners to achieve a level of English language proficiency in all four skills at least equivalent to that described at level 1 of the ASLPR scale.

The first two stages of the course, It’s over to you (IOTY) had as its primary target learners who were unable to attend class or participate in any other face-to-face provisions offered by the AMEP, although it was accepted that many enrolled clients might also use the materials as a supplement to existing learning arrangements.

Stage 1 of It’s over to you was a preparatory stage, primarily concerned with the development of the operational skills needed to learn at a distance. Stage 2 followed this beginning with an integrated development of language and language learning skills. In Stage 1 students received a cassette for each of the five units. For each unit there were separate booklets for listening, speaking, reading and writing. These could be worked through in any order and booklets on skills requiring less attention could be omitted if desired. Students also received a course guide in their own language, a blank cassette for recording messages to the tutor, and a language reference handbook.

The IOTY materials were trialled in 1986 and in an evaluation report of the trial it was noted that learner acceptance of the materials was most encouraging. Feedback on the telephone tasks, which were an important part of the course as they provided for interaction with the teacher, was extremely positive. In 1987, following the trial, the program was introduced in most States and an evaluation of the implementation was undertaken by Betty Watts of the Department of Education, University of Queensland. Student comments demonstrate some of the strengths and weaknesses of the course (Watts 1989:54):

The teacher sometimes telephones me and asks me about my problems – it’s very helpful. I ask him about problems I have with the shop or tram and he tells me how I can ask.

This view contrasts with that of another student:

Because I am working I can ring only at lunchtime and the lines are busy then. Every time I ring her someone says she is sick or has gone somewhere or is at lunch. I had telephoned four times before I got Speaking 5 – it’s not worth it.

Teachers found the challenges of telephone communication daunting. Elizabeth Griffiths, an experienced ESL teacher, found the process of a three-way conversation involving a Vietnamese interpreter required new skills (G riffiths 1990:63):

The first two stages of the course, It’s over to you, (IOTY) had as its primary target learners who were unable to attend class or participate in any other face-to-face provisions offered by the AMEP.
Stages 1 and 2 of It’s Over to You. The books covered topics useful for everyday life. The activities shown here involved listening to the tape provided and completing exercises in the book.
The first part of the process was getting through the family to the student. Then the student had to be persuaded to bring books and correspondence to the phone, then find the exercise before we really started. After a nervous start I discovered that I did get there in the end, that laughter is a useful antidote to frustration, and that, though I might trip from time to time, both my student and I built up a set of strategies which helped us to get to the finishing line.

Students too had difficulties to overcome (Quested 1993:16):

Before Senay had her phone installed she used to phone her teacher from a public phone located on a busy road. Every week she would bring her books, dictionary, child and stroller with her and speak to the teacher for quite some time or until someone came to use the phone. The child behaved beautifully during the lessons. On Saturday mornings Senay would phone her Dial-A-Conversation tutor from the same booth while her husband looked after the baby.

In Queensland, Anne Beaverson found that one of the main messages of the course was that language was all around the student providing opportunities for continued learning (Beaverson 1988: 81):

The course materials convey this message via explanations, posters, cartoons; it is also implicit in the content and contexts used. For example, the first unit in Stage 2 deals with an enrolment in adult education classes such as [a] microwave cooking class. The sendback involves a real-life application; learners have to find an advertisement for a course they want to do and then read or ring up for further information. ... The message is persistent: look beyond books, cassettes and teachers to learn and practise English.

The development of Stage 3 of It's over to you followed allocation of special funding under the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia to NCELTR, Macquarie University. Dr David Nunan and Professor Chris Candlin drew up the specifications and the materials were developed during 1992-93 by Fran Byrnes, Rossalyn Moar, Jane Graham and David Knapp. The Stage 3 materials represented a new development in distance language teaching. Learner-centred, the materials focused as much on developing self-direction, language learning strategies and autonomy as they did on specific language outcomes. The course consisted of six books, each with an audiocassette, and a video. It covered a range of themes of interest to new migrants, such as health and lifestyle, money, and the law. Unlike the original Stage 1 and 2 course, listening, speaking, reading and writing were integrated in the same book. The success of Stage 3 led to a revision of Stages 1 and 2 along the same lines, and in 1995, over 1600 migrants (4.5 per cent of the AMEP’s students) were enrolled in the course.

The entire series of It’s over to you was launched by the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Philip Ruddock, on 19 July 1996 at the Language Expo in Brisbane. In his speech, Mr Ruddock said:

The Adult Migrant English Program’s It’s over to you package is a unique concept that enables English learners to overcome barriers imposed...
Making the meaning clear

Asking for clarification

In conversation we often need to check to make sure that we have understood the other person correctly. You can do this in different ways.

1. Ask the person to repeat what they said.
2. Listen to these ways of asking someone to repeat what they said.
   - I'm sorry, could you say that again, please?
   - Would you mind repeating that for me, please?
   - Could you say that again, please?
   - I'm sorry, I didn't quite catch that.
   - Practise saying them.

Speaking practice

You have listened to a medical consultation and looked at the language the doctor uses and the language the patient uses. Below is a consultation between a doctor and a patient. You take the part of the patient. Your teacher will take the part of the doctor. Before you practice it on the phone with your teacher, read the conversation. The doctor's questions are complete. What the patient says is not complete. What would you say if you were the patient?

Doctor: Now, what seems to be the trouble?
Patient: ...pain in the elbow...
Doctor: And when did you first notice it? How long have you had it?
Patient: ...three weeks...

Stage 3 of the distance learning course It's Over to You, was developed in 1992-3. The materials were learner-centred and focused, not only on specific language outcomes, but also on developing language learning strategies and self-direction.

Other distance learning provisions

Within the AMEP various approaches have been taken with regard to distance learning. In the late 1980s, for example, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), a tertiary AMEP provider, developed Australian profiles, a series of distance learning units for learners at intermediate and advanced levels of English. The units consist of a videocassette and student booklet with a section to be sent back to the tutor. The emphasis is on the development of independent learning strategies. The video consists of interviews conducted with various Australians, including a barmaid, a lawyer and an artist.

In New South Wales and Western Australia teachers developed a regular newsletter for distance learning with articles from both students and teachers.

The Home Tutor Scheme

In 1974 AL Grassby, the Minister for Immigration, launched the Home Tutor Scheme. The scheme had been developed by a small committee that included Verdon White, Assistant Director of the Immigration Department office in Melbourne; Jean Hunt, Supervisor, Migrant Education Branch, and...
Melbourne; and representatives from the YWCA and the Good Neighbour Council. A press release from the Department of Immigration on 22 April 1974 described the scheme:

The Home Tutor Scheme, which involves one-to-one tutoring on a voluntary basis, has great promise for breaking through the barrier of isolation which surrounds many non-English speaking migrant women.

The scheme originated with the Community Relations Commission in Britain and the tutor’s kit has been adapted for Australian conditions by the School of Education at the Canberra College of Advanced Education.

Tutors are selected from volunteers in the ranks of community organisations such as the Young Women’s Christian Association, the Country Women’s Association and the Good Neighbour Council.

They will, in an informal atmosphere, conduct migrant women who seek their help through a basic course of English. The emphasis of the course is on speaking and understanding the language in everyday situations.

Because the instruction can be given in the migrant’s own home either on her own or with friends, it helps to overcome the shyness and lack of confidence which make many reluctant to attend the regular classes in English.

State Coordinators appointed

In August 1976 the program was regionalised with the appointment of nine local State Coordinators who were placed with the Department of Immigration offices in some States and with the Migrant Education Services in others. Due to these different organisational arrangements, the management of the tutor support schemes differed from State to State, but the State Coordinators developed a network amongst themselves which was strengthened by the convening of a national seminar in 1985 in Tasmania. The network continues through regular teleconferences and exchanges of information, materials and newsletters.

Coordinators’ duties included recruitment and appropriate matching of students and tutors.

Tutor training

As the program expanded, recruitment campaigns were undertaken to enlist the assistance of more and more volunteers. A training kit had been developed prior to the official launch of the scheme and training of tutors was a priority. Training sessions were offered in three ways:

- a three-day course involving attendance for four or five hours, one day a week;
- a five-day or evening course, with sessions of approximately two hours a week;
- a short intensive course for teachers with considerable experience in language teaching.

Mr AL Grassby, Minister for Immigration, launched the Home Tutor Scheme on 22 April 1974.
In Melbourne in 1976 the State Coordinator, Joanna Waite, organised special sessions to provide information on the history and background of the students. In the first of the Ethnic Cultural Series, students from South East Asia spoke to the tutors about the customs and culture of their own countries. Other sessions included information on South American cultures, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Greece, Italy, Spain and the Middle East.

Promotion of the Home Tutor Scheme was a key factor in its success and managers were very astute in taking every opportunity to recruit volunteers. This included articles in local papers and women's magazines, interviews on radio and television and presentations to community groups.

INTEGRATION WITH AMES

In 1978 the Galbally Report on Migrant Services recommended that the Home Tutor Scheme should be integrated into the general program of the AMEP. The report recognised the value of the volunteer service and identified the two main purposes of the scheme as social contact and a bridging mechanism to formal courses, directed mainly at migrant women whose needs were specifically addressed in the report.

Following the Galbally recommendations, other volunteer support schemes were scrutinised. The Good Neighbour Council was disbanded nationally in June 1979. When this happened, other volunteer-supported schemes were set up to make initial contact with new residents. In Victoria, the Victorian Welcome Group, sponsored by the Victorian Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, organised trained volunteers to visit newly-arrived migrants in their local area.

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Schemes should continue broadly on its current basis. The administration of the scheme had in some States moved to the State AMES offices immediately after the Galbally recommendations had been accepted but changes in administration did not occur in Queensland, South Australia and ACT until 1981. The AIMA review (1979–80) found that 10,272 students were enrolled in the Scheme nationally and that there were 4,623 tutors.

In 1983 a special purpose tutor scheme for skilled migrants was developed by South Australia AMES in response to an identified need. Skilled volunteers were matched with students according to occupational backgrounds or other specific needs. Some small groups were formed but most matches were on a one-to-one basis. The aim was to provide technical language and assistance for a student needing specialised language for work or study as well as other general support.

The Campbell Report
In 1985, in their submission to the Campbell Report (see Chapter 1), AMES South Australia said of the Home Tutor Scheme:

Through... connection with such a sympathetic, supportive friend, students gain in confidence and self-esteem. Furthermore, through the encouragement and ongoing support, the student feels less alienated and more confident in venturing into the community, taking charge of his or her life, and becoming more involved in the community activities.

The report concluded that, although the AMEP should not have a monopoly on this type of settlement assistance, the Home Tutor Scheme was contributing to important outcomes and should continue as part of the services provided by the AMEP.

National Review of Support Schemes in the AMEP 1990
The Department of Immigration commissioned a detailed review of the tutor support schemes in operation in the AMEP in 1990. It considered the form, role and contribution of the schemes within the AMEP. This review was part of the ongoing evaluation of the AMEP as set out in the AMEP National Plan 1990–92. In its conclusion the review stated that the primary function of the tutor schemes was to help migrants to learn English and that secondary functions included helping with settlement and providing a bridge into the Australian community, offering friendship and contact with a native speaker at more than a superficial level, acting as a transition to other AMEP or mainstream services, and providing or organising welfare support in times of need. The report noted that...
the scheme also provided tutors with an opportunity for community service and expanded the understanding of multicultural issues of both tutors and their families.

As an integrated component of the AMEP, the review recommended that priority should be given to mothers with young children, people whose working hours made it difficult to attend classes, people who were seriously isolated, and people who lacked confidence to use other forms of English language tuition.

The review also attempted to develop a profile of tutors — the first time such a task had been undertaken. They found that:

- 80 per cent of tutors were female;
- 79 per cent of all tutors lived in metropolitan areas, with only Queensland and Tasmania having a significant proportion of tutors outside the metropolitan area;
- most tutors were over 45 years with 26 per cent over 60 years of age;
- the first language of 8 per cent of tutors was a language other than English.

**Internal Survey 1994**

In 1994 the Home Tutor Scheme in Victoria undertook a survey to explore ways that trained volunteers could support ‘current AMES class provision by adding to learning opportunities and outcomes for clients identified as potentially benefiting from additional assistance’. The survey was conducted through a series of questionnaires completed by clients in Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and South Australia. It identified the major barriers to accessing formal classes as lack of on-site childcare, low self-confidence in the more formal learning environments provided in major AMES centres, lack of options for less intensive programs for non-job seekers, lack of time and lack of transport options. The survey also found that clients and teachers in AMES centres were interested in tutor assistance in such areas as increased one-to-one support, and conversation practice in small groups during, before or after class. Distance learning students already receiving help from tutors found invaluable their practical assistance in such matters as learning to use a cassette...
player, providing a model for practice and assisting in course organisation, and their overall encouragement.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS
The Home Tutor Scheme has continued to grow through experience; its volunteers offer strong links to community networks and have added a valuable dimension to the AMEP services. In 1997 the Department of Immigration recognised this and provided funding to the States to undertake projects to enhance the Scheme in liaison with community providers of informal ESL tuition.

WORKPLACE PROGRAMS
Workplace programs have been, in comparison with other AMEP programs, fewer in number. On the other hand, they have been highly regarded and visible in the education sector because of their effectiveness in reducing marginalisation in the workplace and instilling an understanding that improved English language communication is important to migrant and non-migrant employers and employees alike.

In support of workplace programs, Plimer said (1987: 227):
The present teaching approach recognises the fact that there is linguistic segmentation in the workplace and that improving English language communication is a joint responsibility. There is no point in immigrant workers attempting to learn English at work if there is no support from or understanding by English speakers of the difficulties of learning a language and of the causes of and remedies for language-based breakdowns in communication.

Over the years workplace courses have been known as Courses in Industry, Industry Language Training Service/s (ILTS), Industry Education Services (IES), English in the Workplace (EIW P or EW P) and Workplace Communication Services (WORKCOM).

Part-time, accelerated courses began in 1971 in Wollongong, New South Wales, and in Whyalla, South Australia. The courses were six-weeks long and were partly in employers' time and partly after hours. It was not until 1973, however, that the Department of Immigration established a special six-week course and developed specific materials. The program became known as the Industrial Language Training Service (ILTS), which was the title of a similar program in the United Kingdom. Later the name was changed to English in the Workplace (EIW P or EW P) at the request of staff who considered that it more accurately reflected the language focus of the courses.

The ILTS course was designed to relate to the specific work areas of job safety, factory welfare and staff relations. Initially trialled in Victoria in 1972, these courses were generally provided in employer time and were conducted in three, two-hour sessions per week for a total of 36 hours. By 1973-74, 47 employers had accepted courses for 1500 employees.

The materials used in these workplace classes, English for migrants in industry, endeavoured to adapt the approach of Situational English to the workplace. For example, when teaching the numbers 1 to 12, teachers were encouraged to have a teaching kit that contained small objects from the industrial situation in which the students worked. To accompany the materials a language picture series was also available depicting appropriate objects and occupations from the industrial environment.

Officers in State AMES had the task of promoting the courses with assistance from regional office staff in the Department of Immigration. The officers held extensive meetings with representatives from employers followed by research into the specific work situations for the prospective students. It became apparent to teachers involved in program delivery that there was also a need to develop the cross-cultural awareness of managers. As a result, such information was incorporated into the promotional material, which included a film.
CHANGING ATTITUDES

In February 1978 a key conference on migrants in the workplace, titled ‘Who Does What, When and How?’, was held by the Victorian Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The opening address by the Minister of Immigration reflected changing attitudes towards migration and the beginnings of a policy of multiculturalism (see Chapter 1). He drew the attention of the participants to the fact that in some workplaces migrants, particularly of non-English speaking background, comprised 80 per cent or more of the workers, that just over 27 per cent of all working age Australians came from overseas, and that 52 per cent of all blue-collar manual workers Australia-wide were of overseas birth. He pointed out that for many years the wider community had been ignorant of the impact of large-scale migration to Australia and that it had little understanding of the personal problems of migrants new to the country. He said that if equality of opportunity for all people was to have a meaningful and practical reality in Australia, the whole community needed to make adjustments to ensure the integration of migrants into the community. He acknowledged that it was the joint responsibility of government, employer organisations and unions to create the climate and facilities to create an effective and harmonious multicultural workforce based on modern industrial concepts.

At the same conference a social worker graphically described the situation in some
workplaces (Ministry of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Victoria 1978:9):

The kind of problems [the workers] had were just enormous – they didn’t really understand much about where they were. They couldn’t because they had come from country areas and were suddenly thrown into a city. I went into the factory, there was something wrong with the structure of the company because it didn’t accommodate the ethnic groups – it was all done in English and the whole thing was an assumption that we were still dealing with the old workforce. The safety officer spoke in English, in a loud voice and expected the workers to understand. There was no way the workers could indicate what jobs they wanted, there could be no effective training.

In 1978 the Galbally Report recommended that more courses be made available to migrant workers. The report recognised that the period of instruction was very short; that courses were not always held at the best times (such as the beginning of a shift); and that both workers and employers were reluctant to accept courses that were held in their own time. The report also commented that there was considerable support among ethnic communities for increased provision for English on the job.

In a research study within the non-English speaking background workforce of the Transport Authorities in Victoria in 1983, statements from non-English speaking employees, teachers, supervisors, union representatives and higher levels of management identified problem areas associated with inadequate understanding of English in the workplace. The study found that non-English speaking background employees tend to:

♦ have high accident rates in certain industries;
♦ be concentrated in unskilled or semi-skilled positions;
♦ be working below the level of their skills and training gained in their country of origin;
♦ suffer from low self-esteem, low morale and a sense of isolation compounded by negative attitudes of fellow workers or supervisors, and lack of English.

The study found that the English in the Workplace Program suffered from:

♦ inadequate course length;
♦ inadequate number of courses per learner;
♦ occasional mismatches between management’s perceptions and learners’ perceptions of English needs.

In NSW the Labor Council appointed an ethnic affairs officer, George Miltenyi, who developed a strategy to implement previous Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and Labor Council policies for redefining EWP as a legitimate industrial right. The first step in this strategy was achieved in 1984 when the State award of the Water and Sewerage Employees Union (WSEU) was varied to include a statement about the right of employees to English language classes.

In describing the aims of the workplace program in New South Wales at the time, Plimer (1984:9) wrote:

AMES courses conducted in the workplace are designed to develop communication skills on the job, in informal contact with workmates and in the wider community... Some courses do deal with the language needed for on the job tests and assessments or for promotion purposes, butAMES courses are not trade training courses or bridging
courses for further technical education.

The other arm of the Industry Program is the provision of advice to management on minimising difficulties created by poor English language communication.

Thus the program caters for both non-English-speaking and native-English-speaking employees.

The philosophy behind this dual approach is a two-way process. There is no point in teaching English in the workplace if there is no understanding on the part of the supervisors or fellow workers of the difficulties in learning a new language and if they aren’t prepared to assist in reinforcing the language learnt by workers attending classes.

**New Directions**

Following a review of EWP by the Urban and Environmental Planning Group (UEPG), a seminar was held in June 1985 to discuss future directions for EWP. Views from the reviewers, unions and employers were sought. The following summaries of the views of some of the participants demonstrate the main concerns of different stakeholders:

- The reviewers found that 56 per cent of migrants in the manufacturing sector had poor language skills and considered that there was a need for objective data to be collected on the effectiveness of the program. They found that when courses were successful, native English speakers on the shop floor noticed immediate beneficial changes in the migrant worker in terms of increased confidence and participation.

- An ethnic liaison officer stated that no English course should be set up in a workplace without a tripartite administrative body, with representation from unions, management and the AMEP, to guide the course. He also spoke strongly of the need to provide special training for teachers working within EWP.

- A representative from the Confederation of Australian Industry argued that employers were not interested in running programs unless these resulted in significant contributions to productivity or efficiency. In his view courses should concentrate on a priority group of the most needy workers, that is, those with minimal English skills. Too many courses, he believed, were targeted at workers who already had adequate oral skills.

- A representative from the Department of Immigration spoke about the importance of EWP and its potential for the practical realisation of the philosophy of the AMEP and considered it to be imperative that data be made available to demonstrate the true value of the program.

The Campbell Report supported the continued expansion of the EWP since ‘for many thousands of workers from non-English speaking backgrounds, and most notably women, these programs are the sole means by which equity in English language provision can be made available.’ (Campbell Report 1985: 103). The report recommended the establishment of a national, tripartite committee, the incorporation of EWP provisions into Federal industrial awards, and the provision of resource allocations within the Commonwealth and State Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) units as well as within labour market training initiatives.
The Role of EWP Teachers

Teachers in the workplace programs were first recruited from the general AMEP programs, but it was soon appreciated that such teachers required specialised skills in addition to those of classroom teachers in an AMEP Centre. Robert Bean, writing about the EWP in South Australia for Prospect, described the highly complex nature of the teaching environment in the manufacturing or services workplace. Both the lines of communication and the teachers’ duties are more varied than they are for classroom teachers in an AMEP classroom, as Figure 4.1 opposite illustrates.

Helen Joyce listed a number of differences between teaching in EWP and in other AMEP programs (Joyce 1988) including:

♦ course initiation which depended on management or unions, although AMEP marketed the program whenever possible;
♦ less contact time with the learners;
♦ feedback and evaluation involving other workplace personnel;
♦ liaison with workplace personnel;
♦ consultancy role particularly in the area of on-the-job, cross-cultural communication;
♦ coping with mixed levels and needs;
♦ accountability to management who provided workers with time release;
♦ teaching adults in their day-to-day environment.

An article appearing in Interchange (Boddington, Herring and Gill 1990) highlighted the multiplicity of demands placed on workplace teachers, and the implications this had for staff development. The article included a model (Figure 4.2 opposite) that demonstrated the nature of these complex demands.

A part from assessment of potential students and the provision of English classes, the English in the Workplace program provided a cultural communications consultancy to industry. Cross-cultural communications sessions were held for
middle management in all participating organisations. These aimed to foster an understanding of the linguistic and cultural misunderstanding that can lead to communication breakdown. NSW AMES produced a video on behalf of the National Curriculum Resource Centre, Department of Immigration, to highlight the potential for cross-cultural misunderstandings. The video, Working it out, concentrated on the areas of safety, instructions, unintentional rudeness, and communication networks within the workplace.

THE IMPERATIVES OF THE CHANGING WORKPLACE

In the early 1990s Australia was in a period of economic recession. In addition, the introduction of award restructuring in 1988, which was aimed at a total redefinition of the workforce, sought to transform each worker from a passive, obedient, narrowly skilled contributor to an assertive, critical, flexible, broadly skilled participant capable of evaluating processes, making suggestions, negotiating alternatives, integrating new concepts, planning new initiatives and operating effectively within a team. Training and retraining of the workforce became a major issue in education.

Such changes impacted on migrant workers, and research studies undertaken by the Bureau of Immigration Research served to highlight the differences between the early post-war migration when there was a full employment economy and the 1990s when the unemployment rate soared and the nature of industry changed. Unlike past eras, those without formal skills had much greater difficulty finding work and those with qualifications often experienced difficulty in gaining recognition for these.

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**Figure 4.1:** Complex lines of communication need to be established and maintained in a workplace teaching environment (Bean 1987: 246).

**Figure 4.2:** Model demonstrating the demands placed on the English in the workplace program at Wollongong (Boddington et al 1990:19). (Reproduced by permission of NSW AMES.)
EW P staff were aware that changes were needed within their programs to meet the changing conditions. In the Land Titles Office in Sydney, Catherine O’Grady developed and implemented a course which not only developed communication skills, but enabled employees of non-English speaking backgrounds to participate fully in total quality commitment teams. As O’Grady (1990:18) describes it:

The course included meetings addressing real workplace problems. Participants set agendas, and minutes were used in group constructions of reports to management. One meeting tackled the problem that clerical assistants do not have enough knowledge of the systems, procedures and overall work of the Land Titles Office. The class report detailed the effect of this on service and morale, and recommended training measures which were acknowledged by management and in part acted upon.

At a conference on award restructuring and English language training for AMES Victoria in 1989, Alan Matheson, ACTU’s ethnic liaison officer, stated:

AMES is now confronted with perhaps its greatest challenge ... Never before have the opportunities been greater. Never before has the Service been seen as such an integral part of industrial developments in education and training. Never before have the major industrial interests - employers, trade unions, institutions and governments - been more willing to enlist your services.

While it appeared that EW P was on the crest of a new wave of growth, other factors were being highlighted in research studies. Miltenyi had undertaken a commissioned study for the Department of Immigration and observed that (Miltenyi 1989):

although English in the Workplace was held in high repute by course participants, unions and employers [who] frequently remarked on the dedication of teachers and the notable changes for participants resulting from these classes, industry wanted a single communication service.

This demand came at a time when the Department of Immigration was reviewing its responsibilities and seeking to limit its priorities to settlement programs. It was therefore no surprise to AMES offices that, when changes were made to the Settlement Program, funding and responsibility for workplace education began to move to the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) and became known as the Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) Program. From 1992 to 1994 the ESL component of the program was funded by the Department of Immigration while the literacy component was funded by DEET. In 1995 the funding moved completely to DEET although the Department of Immigration continued to have representation on advisory committees.

Language audits conducted by English in the Workplace staff in Victoria between 1994 and 1996 showed that 40 per cent of employees from non-English speaking backgrounds had very limited speaking skills, 55 per cent had limited reading skills and approximately 77 per cent had writing skills limited to single words and a few familiar phrases. It is commonly felt in industry that basic education is the responsibility of the Government and the school system. While enterprises regard the specific industry training of their workers as their responsibility, they do not consider that preparing workers for such training is entirely theirs.
Lorraine Bradstock, a teacher at AMES Victoria, commenced working at Ford, Broadmeadows, in 1982 and has observed the significant changes in the workplace at first hand.

The focus in 1982 was on teaching new arrivals, with the emphasis on developing basic communication skills in such areas as Occupational Health and Safety and survival language for the workplace. As well as this, some literacy classes were held for longer-term residents.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s there were major changes in the automotive industry. The reduction of tariffs meant that the industry had to become more internationally competitive to survive through improved productivity and quality. Ford restructured the workplace and established new training programs for employees so that they could gain the knowledge and skills to enable them to be multi-skilled and more productive workers. In addition, Natural Work Groups (teams) were gradually introduced to allow employees more responsibility and authority for the management of their own working areas.

These changes had significant impact on the delivery and content of courses. With the introduction of competency-based accredited courses and Natural Work Groups, language and literacy training became essential to enable all employees to participate in the decision-making process and to access workplace training. In 1992 the transition from teaching traditional ESL courses presented many challenges for AMES teachers. In 1992 the Vehicle Industry Certificate (VIC) was introduced, a nationally recognised certificate for non-trades employees. A survey conducted in 1991 through the Automotive Industry Training Board identified that there was an extensive need for basic language and literacy skill development and that employees would need support to meet the requirements of the VIC.

The role of the AMES teachers became vital as Ford has a workforce of approximately 75 per cent NESB employees. Teachers responded and in 1992 AMES classes became integrated into mainstream training. Teachers commenced the delivery of VIC knowledge units, teaching a range of subjects including OHS, Working in Teams, Problem Solving, Quality Units incorporating charting and numeracy skills.

The successful integration led to a greater flexibility in modes of delivery and the timing of classes to ensure equity of access for all employees. Strategies were implemented to increase access, particularly among women, older employees and those employees unable to access classes at normal times. Classes were established to cater for all shifts, including a class commencing at 6.30 am, another class from 11.30 pm to 1.30 am. Saturday morning and women-only classes were also offered.

The language and literacy program became involved in the delivery and support of other accredited courses through team teaching. Support for groups was provided through teachers attending group meetings.

The success of the integrated program required a great deal of commitment and dedication from teachers who showed their professionalism in taking on new challenges and developing new skills and roles to meet the changing needs of the workplace. The program has received recognition from Ford management.
OTHER WORKPLACE ISSUES

Two further issues must be mentioned in relation to workplace programs. The first relates to the participation of women within the program. Statistics have consistently shown a smaller percentage of women in workplace programs. Storer (1976), in commenting on the high proportion of married migrant women of non-Anglo-Saxon background working in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs, noted that 80 per cent of the women factory workers interviewed had never received any English instruction. The same percentage said that they would attend English classes if they were held at work without loss of pay. The need to care for families after work precluded them from attending any other type of English class. In recent years efforts have been made to seriously identify ways of reaching women in the workforce.

Women outworkers, home-based sewing machinists working long hours for low wages, are one group that were readily recognised as being disadvantaged. In 1994 the Commonwealth Government funded a campaign aimed at providing these workers with information in their home languages about their rights and legal entitlements. AMES Victoria has had some success reaching these women through a bilingual radio program developed in partnership with SBS radio.

The second issue in workplace programs relates to the recognition, or lack of recognition, of overseas qualifications and experience. Population surveys showed that 23 per cent of migrant family heads were holding jobs inferior in status to those they had held in their country of origin. A Committee on Professional Qualifications (COPQ) was set up in 1969 but in 1984, at the First National Congress of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia, it recognised that Australia had no centralised system of occupational assessments. It estimated that over 200 organisations, made up of Federal and State Departments, statutory bodies, trade unions, professional associations and teaching institutions, had some influence in the field of recognition of qualifications. Although some little progress has been made in the area of recognition of overseas qualifications, it still remains a huge stumbling block for many migrants.

The National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) was established in 1989 with the aim of improving skills recognition processes. NOOSR's role, in addition to undertaking assessment of overseas qualifications in a range of occupations, is now to coordinate and facilitate the recognition of overseas skills by a range of bodies within and outside Australia, as well as to promote better international arrangements for the recognition of skills.

THE FUTURE OF EW P

The English in the Workplace Program has played an important role in identifying the skills and training needs of migrant workers. While the Department of Immigration played a significant role in the early development of the program, it is now the responsibility of the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA).
INDEPENDENT LEARNING

The early planning strategies for the AMEP by the Australian Government had always envisaged that the learning of English would, after some initial tuition, become a self-motivated activity. Migrants would want to learn English as quickly as possible in order to be fully assimilated into their new society. For monolingual, English speaking Australians this seemed the only appropriate action. Few had ever thought about how zealously they guarded their own cultural background and ties with their own Anglo-Celtic heritage.

Following post-War immigration a new Australia was slowly developing and each migrant group brought and held onto aspects of its old culture to mingle with the new. Learning English was not compulsory – such a course of action was never considered by the Government whose citizenry strongly upheld the freedom and rights of the individual.

It must be acknowledged that many migrants did teach themselves to speak English very well without undertaking language courses. Using a dictionary, listening to the radio, reading (from comics to classics), making conversation with as many people as possible and learning with friends – independent learning has always been an option.

Within the AMEP, the development of independent learning as an offered option began in the 1970s when NSW AMES initiated, as part of a specialist reading and writing centre, a study centre with materials that allowed students to move at their own pace in addition to attending classes.

The Galbally Report gave impetus to this development when, through the examination of the program and the reading of submissions, it recognised the transition that was taking place as teachers moved away from a ‘one approach for all’ philosophy. The report recommended that (Galbally 1978:17):

Services and Programs should be designed and operated in full consultation with clients, and self-help should be recognised as much as possible with a view to helping migrants to become self-reliant quickly.

Other AMEP providers soon took up the opportunity. Teachers with a learner-centred, needs-based approach to methodology were interested in developing options in program delivery that would allow students to choose further opportunities of self-paced learning.

Under the leadership of the Joint Commonwealth/States Committee a group of experienced teachers joined a ‘think tank’ in 1981 and reported on the need for the examination of a wider educational role of the AMEP and the initiation of more independent learning opportunities that would provide flexibility in meeting the specific needs of the clients.

The Department of Immigration nominated tagged funding for program development initiatives (Program Innovations) in the 1982–83 budget allocation, and many providers established individual, or self-access, centres with this support.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING, 1984

A national conference, ‘Self-directed learning and self access in Australia: From practice to theory’ was organised by the English Language...
Teaching Unit, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in 1984. In the opening address of the conference, the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, S.J. West, said (Mason 1984:viii):

In the past ten years the idea that we should tailor services to meet the needs of migrants has become the cornerstone of the Adult Migrant Education Program ... During this conference you will be examining one of the most important innovations in the AMEP in recent years - the development of self-directed learning and self-access arrangements in the AMEP. The arrangements are founded on two basic theories: that second language programs should provide for individual differences among learners, and that adult second language learners should be encouraged to develop responsibility for their own learning.

At the conference Elaine Race, who had been involved in establishing a centre at RMIT, described the development of the approach (Mason 1984:120):

When self-access was beginning in Australia, Canberra's policy was said to be, 'Let 1000 flowers bloom', that is, the development of self-access was to be a grass roots phenomenon, where teachers who were face to face with learners would respond to learners' needs, develop materials and create the models.

The conference was an important one and the list of papers and speakers in the report of the proceedings indicate the efforts made by all participants to gain both from current theory and practice in Australia and overseas. The conference program illustrated the range of topics of interest to teachers who were trying to come to terms with the concepts, and included presentations from local and international speakers on topics such as:

♦ self-directed learning and the acquisition of socio-cultural competence;
♦ the role of counselling in self-directed learning;
♦ learning strategies, cognitive style and the concept of self-direction;
♦ materials in self-access;
♦ the central alternative - self-access technology.

NSW AMES AND ITATE PILOT PROJECT

As a result of the conference discussions Maggie Gray, Superintendent of NSW AMES, and Dorothy Brown from the Institute of Technical and Adult Teacher Education (ITATE), Sydney, agreed to a pilot self-directed learning project. The pilot course had three main aims (Helmore 1984:11):

♦ to help the learner acquire the linguistic and communicative skills which the learner has defined for herself/himself;
♦ to help the learner acquire autonomy; that is, to help the learner learn how to learn so that she/he is capable of running her/his learning affairs;
♦ to develop further our skills as counsellors and gain more insight into the learning process.

The evaluation of the pilot course provided important insights for further development of the approach. Learners' comments clearly indicated the strengths and weaknesses of the provisions. Some students who had tried to learn English in an individual learning centre had not found the experience relevant to their needs; others, who felt they needed 'special' English, discovered that...
they were able to work on their own area of need by developing strategies and using resources in the community around them, as well as by using teacher-prepared materials; many students favoured self-directed learning for reasons such as ‘individual needs are not met in a class’, or ‘it is important that we learn to learn by ourselves’. Those learners who met with a native speaker for one hour a week related how the experience had assisted their language acquisition and given them more confidence and an insight into how native speakers could assist in their language learning in the future.

The teachers working on the course agreed that it was impossible to fully meet the individual needs of learners in a class setting and that the opportunity to have time with the learner to analyse the learner’s language, prepare materials and organise specific activities was valuable. The conclusion of the report highlighted the importance of inservice training for teachers to implement these new ideas successfully.

EVALUATION STUDIES
The Campbell Report in 1985 was somewhat sceptical about the growth of self-access centres. The review committee had been concerned that the function of these centres and their target group had not been defined clearly (10.18). They also noted that self-access centres were only effective where students had already developed ‘high levels of skill in autonomous learning’, which had not been one of the AMEP’s major strengths (10.21). The review recommended that self-access centres should be ‘given a special brief to cater for the needs of relatively advanced learners who have the confidence to learn on their own’ (10.21).

Teachers working in the centres responded to this criticism with clear arguments. Edith Gardner, a teacher in NSW AMES, questioned the reviewers’ understanding of autonomous learning and gave examples of students using the Self-Access Centre (SAC) in Campbelltown, NSW AMES (Gardner 1986):

I can quote the man currently attending the SAC who has little education and had no English and had been two weeks in Australia when he began attending the SAC a month ago. He is making considerable and, to him, obviously immensely satisfying progress. I have also watched a woman, resident here for some years, with some degree of spoken English but unable to do more than copy print, work her way in the SAC to the level of literacy she needed. Equally, I have watched an educated man, fairly competent in English and determined to work his way back to the status he held in his own country, fidget around uncomfortably in the solo learning situation and disappear – never to be seen again.
In an article for *Prospect*, AMES South Australia teachers Helen Fraser and Anastasia Skibicki evaluated materials that could be used for developing self-directed learning strategies in adult Vietnamese learners. They were following on from the work of Jill Burton who had concluded that independent learning strategies had to be taught over some considerable time in order for learners to incorporate the strategies gradually into their personal learning theories. Fraser and Skibicki’s work with the students led them to conclude that appropriate bilingual materials could be prepared for low level learners, but they also noted that the learners who were more willing to learn and use new techniques were more independent learners in the first place; they had already accepted responsibility for their own learning.

In 1989 the Department of Immigration commissioned a survey, carried out by Technisearch, to review the role and efficiency of individual learning centres (ILCs) in the AMEP. The survey identified a number of models of individual learning centres in different States.

From solicited teachers’ opinions, the reviewers found that several key issues emerged. Teachers needed the skills to foster independent learning, while students needed the skills and motivation to work on their own. ILCs also needed to be pleasant environments which presented relevant, graded material.

The review concluded that effective ILCs: will produce clients who have acquired the confidence and skills to continue their own learning in other places. It is recommended that the AMEP renew its commitment to ILCs and expand its vision for them so that they can fully realise their potential.

The National Plan for the AMEP 1990–92 stated that the recommendations of the review would be implemented and that the performance indicators would be the proportion of clients who utilised the ILCs and the availability of ILC services at times convenient to students. Program managers were asked to work with data managers to develop methods for collecting this information on AMIS.

AMEP NETWORKS IN ACTION

The development of independent learning as exemplified in the establishment of ILCs demonstrates the way in which the AMEP continued to maintain quality standards of service which incorporated new ideas and approaches. Program innovations that began in one State were shared across the nation through the network of committees and personal contacts. Such a collaborative approach allowed new ideas to be piloted and drawn into mainstream AMEP arrangements as quickly and as smoothly as possible. The Department of Immigration was able to stay involved and informed, and therefore supported the emerging new directions – a team approach that has served the AMEP for 50 years.

CONCLUSION

The dynamic nature of the AMEP has been evident throughout its history. This chapter and the previous one have endeavoured to describe some of the developments within the AMEP. However this description falls far short of presenting the full picture. The success of the AMEP is demonstrated by its dynamism and diversity as it responds to the varied and changing needs of clients.
In August 1991, Interchange No. 18 focused on ILCs and self-directed learning. Articles described different aspects of individual learning from different viewpoints. Blacktown NSW AMES presented a 'Philosophical Statement' that provided guidelines for staff on the operation of their ILC. (Reproduced with the permission of NSW AMES.)
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A key aspect of curriculum in the AMEP has been the close involvement of practitioners at important stages of new developments. This has been possible because of:

♦ the collaborative approach taken by the Commonwealth and providers;
♦ the focus on a learner-centred curriculum in which the critical role of the teacher’s contact with the learner is recognised;
♦ the practice of establishing working parties and committees which include practitioners, managers and academic experts;
♦ the allocation and maintenance of funding for professional development;
♦ the commitment to quality of provision and the continued process of program research and development encouraged in the early years by the Language Teaching Branch and then by the National Curriculum and Resource Centre (NCRC) and, in the last decade, by the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR).

The role of the teacher has been the most significant factor in the development of curriculum in the AMEP and this has been acknowledged in many ways. At the launch of the AMEP 50th Anniversary in Melbourne in May 1998, Mai Ho, the former Mayor of Maribyrnong and a former student in the AMEP spoke about her initial experiences in Australia:

Within days of arriving we were taken out and introduced to our new country. There was so much space and light. We learned how to travel and how to shop. But most importantly we began the AMES English lessons – each day for two months. All of us knew that this was the key to the future. This was the key that would open the doors of opportunity, of friendship and of belonging. The AMES teachers were not just wonderful teachers, they were our friends. They were the most perfect ‘official welcome’ Australia could have given us.

In the editors’ preface to The learner-centred curriculum (Nunan 1988), David Nunan, Michael Long and Jack Richards wrote that Australia has one of the largest and most dynamic migrant education language programs in the world:

What makes the Australian Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP) unique is that although the program is coordinated at the national level, the process of curriculum development it embodies is bottom up rather than top down. A teach institution where migrant language programs are offered, learners are actively involved in setting their own goals and determining how they will learn.

By the mid 1980s every AMEP provider had nominated staff in charge
Curriculum units were developed to coordinate all aspects of curriculum development, the size of the unit being related to the size of the program. Classroom teachers played an important role in these curriculum units.

**Teaching Methodology – The Early Years**

As described in earlier chapters, the first efforts to provide language learning opportunities were carefully planned but the rapid rate in the arrival of migrants resulted in considerable pressure on resources in the implementation stages. In 1948 new arrivals spent a period of three, four or possibly five weeks at one of the three Reception Centres of Bonegilla, Bathurst and Graylands. This enabled the teaching effort to be concentrated at the centres, but as accommodation resources were overtaxed movement through the centres had to be expedited.

The basis of the language teaching was the direct method, which was demonstrated in a 1949 filmstrip from the London Institute of Education and which was provided to teachers as an introduction to the direct method. The filmstrip attempted to place simple sentence patterns in order of difficulty but made no reference to grammatical terminology. The role of the teacher was to lead the student in chorus drills by reading the captions under the line drawings. A number of publications followed which aimed to provide teachers with guidance in methodology. The publication of a revised edition of the textbook *English for newcomers to Australia* provided guidance for teachers of continuation classes who were largely untrained in the specific techniques of language teaching. Lessons were delivered in English, but this was restricted to a limited vocabulary of 2000 words. A recommended syllabus in English in three parts was produced and provided to all teachers of continuation classes in 1951. It began with pronouns, and immediate needs in social formulae and proceeded through 151 structures, ending with the infinitive as noun and ‘used to’ as an extension of use.

The Department of Education published a guide to teachers, *By way of introduction*, in 1953 which gave the following advice to teachers:

The teaching emphasis is, therefore, on ‘structural’ rather than ‘content’ words. You will notice, too, that some of these ‘structural’ words are very hard to teach. You can’t hold up something and say, ‘This is an “of”. As the acquisition of a second language depends so much on the learner understanding the concept, emphasis must be placed on presenting the new Functional Item in a number of realistic situations.

**Situational English**

The publication of *Situational English* introduced a new approach into AMEP classrooms. In *Education News* June 1957, an article described the situational method in some detail:

The material to be taught has been analysed into a number of sentence patterns which are used over and over again. For example, we have a formula for expressing a person’s occupation. The formula is:

\[ X \text{ is a } Y. \]

John is a mechanic.
She is a nurse.
You are a clerk.

Other sentence patterns which are variations of this pattern are: Is X a Y? or X isn't a Y. Such a group of related sentence patterns is called a structure.

Real situations are used to present and drill new sentence patterns. The method is a direct method in that it avoids the use of the learner's native language - of necessity, because of the number of languages which may be represented in any one class, but also because it is felt that faster and surer progress is achieved if the learner's language is excluded.

In the classroom, speed was seen as an important principle, both to 'avoid wasting precious time and to force the student to exercise his skill at a normal rate. No time should be wasted on (avoidable) explanations during the drill. Repetition should reach the point of saturation' (Mayer and O brecht 1956:14).

In the situational approach to teaching, the primary unit of language was the grammatical structure and learning was by rote. The methodology influenced contemporary views of language acquisition worldwide through the publication and dissemination of Situational English and the opportunities to present at international seminars experts such as Ralph Crossley and G eorge Pittman. G eorge Pittman readily acknowledged the important role of discussions among practising teachers (1963:v):

**UNIT 26. The preposition “of” in expressions of quantity.**

*Teaching Kit: Containers and suitable substances as in the Students' Book, or pictures.*

*Note: From the beginning use the weakened vowel form of “of”, and establish the rhythm to be kept throughout drilling, e.g.*

- A bottle of milk

**Imaginary Drill: Cut. Break.**

**PATTERN 1:** This is a glass of water.

**Presentation:**

Hold up an empty glass and say: “This is a glass.” Hold up a glass of water and say: “This is a glass of water.” Repeat with other objects, e.g., “box of matches”, “packet of cigarettes”, etc. Write them on the board, underlining “of”.

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**USING THE "DIRECT METHOD" ENGLISH FOR NEWCOMERS TO AUSTRALIA TEACHERS’ BOOK (1951) SET OUT THE RECOMMENDED SYLLABUS AND ATTEMPTED TO GUIDE TEACHERS IN EXPERIENCED IN THE TECHNIQUES OF LANGUAGE TEACHING.**
Before we try to teach a language, we must first be clear about what language is. Once our ideas about language are clear, we can try to think about the teaching of language and the place of structure in that teaching. Discussion among teachers can then become profitable and valuable by being more accurate and exact. For teachers know that one of the best ways of improving their work is to discuss it with others, especially other teachers.

Teachers at this time were trained to use gestures to encourage less ‘teacher speak’. Diane Zaviska recalled the use of gestures in the AMEP in the 1960s:

They were quite theatrical. We barked out one or two words and then waved our arms around in these set gestures and students reacted with Pavlov-like reflexes.

*Situation* *English introduced a new approach into the classroom.*
Another important aid for teachers using Situational English was the Language picture series published in 1960. These pictures replaced the filmstrip and the need for special equipment. They were clear and colourful, and suggestions for use were printed on the back of each picture.

Course materials and publications such as the bulletin for teachers, English... A new language, were in effect teacher-training instruments as well as the embodiment of the chosen curriculum model. Copies of the bulletins were sent to all teachers and provided new ideas, revised ways of presenting the prescribed lessons and offered solutions to teachers’ problems.

In these early years of growth, teaching in the AMEP was delivered by non-specialists. Continuation class teachers were often primary school teachers working part-time in the evening. The materials produced for the program represented a realistic approach to dealing with the needs of teachers who were teaching large numbers of learners without access to their first language and in what were often primitive conditions.

While the situational method was universally acclaimed, it was not without its detractors. For example, Eric Baker, who was in charge of pre-embarkation language training with the Inter-governmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM) in the early 1970s, spoke strongly against the method, which treated all students in the same way (Baker 1973:11):

Children, unskilled workers with little or no educational background, illiterates and inarticulates, university lecturers, musicians, conductors and nuclear physicists, all get the same treatment because the department is unshakeable in its belief that Situational English is the only one and true religion.

While he acknowledged that it had been revolutionary in its time, he considered that the method was now ‘hopelessly inadequate’ and that it was ‘presumptuous to demand of the highly qualified professional attending an intensive course to have to submit to this kind of educational Punch and Judy show’.

By the late 70s with the increased variety of client groups, teachers in all states were seeking to make changes to Situational English by combining units in different sequences, by adding new structures and deleting others. It had become increasingly obvious that a single curriculum model was not able to cater for the diverse groups of learners enrolling in the program. Changes in theories of language acquisition and learning also influenced teacher views. There was more attention to language acquisition as a social process and to the learners’ various roles in the use of language. Situational English ceased publication in 1978.
THE HISTORY OF THE AMEP

TEACHING METHODOLOGY – POST GALBALLY REPORT (1978)

The Government’s acceptance of the recommendations of the Galbally Report in 1978 (which reviewed post-arrival services for migrants) established the AMEP as a permanent service and Government funds were allocated to support the recommended initiatives. The review recommended an expansion of the AMEP with a clear delineation between the on-arrival initial settlement program and the variety of ongoing program activities for those who had been resident longer. The review also recommended the development of new curriculum resources. A Joint Commonwealth/States Committee developed a summary statement on methodology, proficiency ratings and language content.

The Joint Commonwealth/States Committee approach advocated a focus on the learner in the teaching-learning process. The central features of the methodology were to focus on the learner, language use rather than form, social interaction, and responding to the learner’s felt needs.

RATING SCALES

A working party, led by Dr David Ingram, developed a new ratings scale, first known as the Australian Language Proficiency Ratings (ALPR), and later known as the Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings Scale (ASLPR). The scale offered arrangements for:

♦ placement assessment;
♦ progress assessment;
♦ the setting of realistic objectives to guide the design and delivery of particular courses;
♦ the referral and guidance of individual clients through a range of learning activities;
♦ the setting of longer-term English language objectives for the program.

In 1978 a set of Speaking Proficiency Descriptions and dictations were produced in NSW and used as placement tools in that state. Other states used the ASLPR, and initial training was designed and delivered to all AMEP teaching staff. A range of support resources was developed, including videos, and an assessment kit, which ensured that the use of ASLPR became an integral part of all teachers’ work.

Teachers who successfully used the ASLPR for initial placement became critical of the use of the scale to demonstrate the progress of a student in a short course. They argued for more training and moderation. As Bottomley (1994) noted, although Ingram (1984) found reliability to be acceptable, Quinn and McNamara (1987) noted that reliability and validity of the scale were crucially dependent on the stimuli used to elicit the learner’s behaviour. However, as no other instrument was available the scale continued to be used. Data on student assessment was entered into the information system (AMIS) from 1985 using ASLPR ratings at the beginning and end of all courses. Student profiles, including individual histories and demographic data for all clients, were prepared for teachers’ use.

FOCUS ON THE LEARNER: THE LEARNER-CENTRED APPROACH

A nation-wide survey was undertaken by the Victorian Ethnic Education Services on behalf of the Joint Commonwealth/States Committee to establish priority themes areas to be covered by the English language components and the mother tongue information components of the
new on-arrival program. The survey sought suggestions from such bodies as the Good Neighbour Council, practitioners from the AMEP and the Department of Immigration and was also informed by the modern languages curriculum development work of the Council of Europe. Fifteen major themes were identified and developed as a collection of functions with their language components and were called ‘Frames’. The themes were:

♦ personal identification
♦ shopping
♦ transport
♦ orientation
♦ health
♦ safety
♦ housing
♦ the law
♦ socialising
♦ employment
♦ banking services
♦ childcare
♦ leisure and entertainment
♦ education
♦ postal and telecommunication services

Training for all teachers became a major focus for providers, and national and state workshops were held to introduce the new concept to staff. Teachers were expected to develop skills in needs analysis, course design and communicative methodology. For teachers, many of whom were part-time, coping with the changes was difficult. Obtaining information from teachers about the planning processes as part of the review leading to the Campbell Report in 1985, Butler and Bartlett (1986:28) concluded that:

changing from a teacher-centred to a learner-centred approach may involve enormous shifts in a teacher’s understanding, beliefs about teaching, values and role in the AMEP. Many effects of this huge change will take years to work through.

The changes took place at a time when teachers were looking for new ways and approaches. The vacuum left by the apparent discrediting of methods such as grammar-translation and audio-lingualism led to an interest in new approaches and a renewed interest in the affective factors in language learning. This led to the upsurge of such non-traditional approaches as Suggestopedia, Silent Way, Total Physical Response, All’s Well, Rassias, Dartmouth Method, and community language learning.

The All’s Well program, for example, was taken up enthusiastically by many teachers in the AMEP. These teachers considered that the approach offered advantages to students who were seeking to gain oral proficiency in a participative environment. The structuro-global
audio-visual (SG AV) methodology of A ll's Well implied a global approach to language which arose from the perception that speech in social situations could be considered as a total system of communication and expression. It took into account factors that help spontaneous participation and creativity by means of independent and controlled speech. It promoted the primacy of the spoken word and recognised the importance of rhythm, intonation, stress, time, pause, mime, gestures, positions and movements.

Total Physical Response (TPR) methodology was included by some teachers as part of an eclectic program for beginners. This approach focused on oral production through aural training and familiarisation with high frequency vocabulary. For students with little or no English it enabled simple expressions, such as ‘G o to the door’, ‘C ome to me’, to be learnt by doing.

Clearing house for the adult migrant education service (CHAMES)

In 1979 the Language Teaching Branch proposed the concept of a clearing house for Adult ESL materials (CHAMES), and South Australia AMES developed a proposal to establish such a facility as part of the 1980–81 budget estimates. The aim was to respond to the need expressed by teachers for some means of disseminating information about Australian adult ESL materials within the AMEP. The new learner-centred curriculum demanded authentic materials which teachers endeavoured to produce at local level and teachers were seeking assistance and information about the development of materials that focused on learner needs. The Clearing House was funded for a twelve-month trial in 1982. The aim of
CHAMES was to collect and distribute learning materials developed by teachers in the different states. CHAMES continued to operate from Adelaide for many years, providing a valuable service to AMEP teaching staff. Its functions were incorporated into the National Curriculum Resource Centre in 1983. However, the Clearing House was later disbanded because the quality of materials was not consistent and many materials were too specific in context and learner needs.

National Curriculum Resource Centre (NCRC)
In order to facilitate and assist locally based curriculum development, a teaching and research unit - the National Curriculum Resource Centre (NCRC) - was established by the Department of Immigration in 1984 and located within the Adelaide College of Technical and Further Education. At this time there were no relevant commercial curriculum packages for teachers and almost no Australian commercial textbooks on the teaching of ESL.

In the first of a series of curriculum development handbooks (Nunan 1985) the Director of NCRC, Dr David Nunan, provided a process model of syllabus design for teachers and a summary of the current thinking on the issues relating to the elements within the model. Teachers were encouraged to take part in all aspects of syllabus development and, in consultation with learners, were seen to have control of decision making in each of the areas identified in the model in Figure 5.1.

Program Innovations
Providers used Program Innovation funding from the Department of Immigration to focus on innovative approaches to learning arrangements, including non-classroom based arrangements. The budget strategy allowed for up to five percent of the tuition line to be allocated to innovations which aimed to improve program delivery. Regular reports were required, and the guidelines from the Department stated that they should 'cover the objectives and implementation of the project, any statistical analysis or results, evaluation and where the project is assessed as successful, an indication of how the innovation will be incorporated into the main program.'

While many of the projects were classroom-based action research, others looked at aspects of methodology. The 1985–86 report from AMES Western Australia has a list of projects which include:
- ESL hobby classes;
- English for tomato growers;
- socialisation processes for Khmer families in Australia;
- educational options for migrant youth;
- new opportunities for migrant women.
As discussed in Chapter 1, the Campbell Report was commissioned in 1985 to examine and assess:

♦ AMEP aims and objectives;
♦ the extent to which the AMEP met client needs;
♦ the appropriateness of the learning activities and curriculum resources;
♦ AMEP future directions.

The final report of the Committee, Towards active voice (DIEA 1986), endorsed the needs-based approach to curriculum but noted that teachers needed further assistance in implementing the learner-centred curriculum. The report recommended the establishment of a curriculum task force, the extension of specialist in-service training and the deployment of curriculum advisers throughout the program.

During the mid-1980s the AMEP teaching force became increasingly professionalised. Teachers were not only acknowledged to be deserving permanent positions, but were offered an increasing range of teaching options and were valued as being responsible for all aspects of language learning. Teachers were both exhilarated and overwhelmed.

As a result of the collaborative approach developed under the auspices of the NCP, 11 frameworks were written for a range of class/learner types by a group of teachers drawn from all States. The Frameworks were written to assist teachers in planning, monitoring and evaluating their teaching programs. The Frameworks were intended as guides and as teacher-development tools as much as curriculum planning tools – an approach that became a key factor in future materials development projects.

The Campbell Report had recommended the development and provision of curriculum advice, but the decision was made to appoint curriculum advisers in each State AMES and they were in charge of the actual implementation process.

The identification of learner groups and class types was not an easy task and the changing patterns of migrant intakes meant that teachers needed to continually adapt and change approaches. This served to strengthen the argument for expertise at the local level. The role of curriculum advisers facilitated continual discussion and development. The Frameworks...
were seen as tools which teachers could use alone or together to support and resource curriculum activity. While the frameworks continued to play a role in professional development, they were not the mainstay of a teacher’s repertoire; their intrinsic value lay in the established process for curriculum decision-making.

THE AMEP ‘COURSE’

Until the mid-1980s a ‘course’ was generally regarded within the AMEP as a unit of study for learners who were enrolled in a single class group for a given period of between ten to 20 weeks, corresponding to a term or semester. Depending on the pressure of student numbers, students could enrol in a continuous series of such courses or they might have breaks between separate enrolments. While the majority of these ‘courses’ concentrated on areas of English language communication, others had a more specific focus. In multi-class centres students could be grouped according to such characteristics as ethnic group, years of education or age.

In the 1987 survey of AMEP personnel concerning the implementation of the AMEP curriculum model undertaken by David Nunan, the issue of continuity in language programs emerged strongly. Continuity was seen as an administrative, management and organisational problem as well as a counselling and curriculum support problem. A meeting of teachers in Darwin stated (Nunan 1987:40):

We have failed to show our students that there is a progression. Students do not see it although it is there, and they need to be told, for example, ‘You’ll be doing health in three classes, but it will be learning three different sorts of language’.

A study by Dowsett and Shaw (1986) developed an approach to evaluating programs at the classroom level and recommended the establishment of planned, collegiate forums to provide support and leadership in planning. These directions came at a time when managers were able to obtain accurate information from the computerised information system (AMIS) about student characteristics, and the development of individual learner pathways became an issue for managers and teachers. The AMEP National Plan 1990–92 reflected this need for a more planned approach to program development. It sought to focus on pathways for learners from initial language development into mainstream education and training. ESL providers in all states endeavoured to collaboratively develop learning pathways which extended beyond the AMEP.

LITERACY

Spoken language was the major focus of ESL teaching in the early years when it was believed that communicating in English was the primary consideration for migrants in successfully assimilating into society. The skills of reading and writing were included in classroom activities but in a less systematic way than spoken language skills. In the 1980s teachers sought ways of integrating macroskills into language programs and, in 1986, the NCRC convened a working party on literacy to consider ways of supporting research and materials development for ESL.
literacy in the AMEP. One result of this was the development of a Framework document, *Beginning reading and writing*.

The establishment of the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR) at Macquarie University in 1989 provided a continued focus for professional activity within the AMEP. It placed the National Curriculum Resource Centre (NCRC) in a university setting and increased the brief to encompass leadership in research and professional development.

During International Literacy Year (1990) there was a national focus on developing strategies in the area of literacy. Rapid socio-economic changes in industrialised societies placed increasing emphasis on the need for well-developed literacy skills. AMES NSW established a Literacy Reference Group and an issue of *Interchange*, the journal of NSW AMES, was devoted to literacy. Titled ‘The literacy dimension of TESOL’, articles in this issue looked at action research in reading and writing classrooms, literacy activities for classroom use, literacy for industry restructuring and approaches to promote a meaning-centred view of literacy.

In 1992 the AMEP Literacy Strategy was published. This was the culmination of the outcomes of a series of national and State level AMEP research initiatives in the area of ESL literacy and included the NCELTR National Literacy Project which investigated classroom approaches to the teaching of literacy, drawing on systemic-functional linguistics for its theoretical base. The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (1991) definition of literacy was adopted for the AMEP strategy statement, and the need to integrate written and spoken language development as an integral part of AMEP provision for all learners was promoted. The definition adopted stated (Burns 1992:3):

> Literacy is the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately in a range of contexts. It is used to develop knowledge and understanding, to achieve personal growth and to function effectively in our society. Literacy also includes the recognition of numbers and basic mathematical signs and symbols within written texts.

> Literacy involves the integration of speaking, listening and critical thinking with reading and writing. Effective literacy is intrinsically purposeful, flexible and dynamic and continues to develop throughout a person’s life.

Linguistic studies during the 1980s and 1990s included a focus on systemic functional linguistics, discourse analysis, conversational analysis and pragmatics. These studies revealed characteristics of spoken language and its role in cultural and social roles previously unresearched. During this time many AMEP teachers were undertaking postgraduate and masters degree courses and became involved in the academic discussions and debates on developments in language teaching. At the same time, the continuing national AMEP projects offered teachers opportunities to work in teams that allowed them to further their professionalism.
Changes in the 1990s –
Competency-based curriculum
Dramatic policy and curriculum changes occurred in the early 1990s as changes in the economy, in the organisation of the workplace and in society provided the context for reform in vocational education and training in Australia. As Burns (1996:592) comments:

A major element for the AMEP, in addition to the changed funding base and the focus on migration settlement only, was the introduction of accredited competency-based training. Competency-based training focuses on what competencies learners can perform rather than on the time spent in learning and overall language proficiency.

Burns goes on to note that these changes had far-reaching effects on classroom practice and teachers which included:

- a move from decentralised curriculum and course planning to a process that was increasingly answerable to external accountability and reporting;
- the introduction of a Certificate in Spoken and Written English (CSWE) reflecting learner achievement and outcomes at defined stages and based on a functional and text-based theory of language;
- the expectation that all teachers would work within this competency-based certificate;
- the assessment of learning outcomes in terms of competency rather than language proficiency;
- a move from negotiated and classroom-centred course design to planning within the learner pathway defined by the organisation; and
- the pressure of course completion within the restricted entitlement of 510 hours.

Changes in education policy in the 1990s moved the emphasis from revenue inputs to educational outcomes, with the resulting focus on competency-based training. The Department of Employment and Training (DEET) took responsibility for all ESL learning arrangements other than the settlement program and introduced competitive tendering. This move led to a decrease in the diversity of curriculum within a broad communicative orientation and replaced it with the competency model.

The political impact on curriculum which accompanied this shift from the communicative approach to competencies was outcome oriented and led to the change to accredited courses. Research, including surveys of client satisfaction, had also demonstrated that students were wanting formal acknowledgment of their studies – the testing procedures and certificates of the earlier years had been replaced with statements of completion which gave no recognition of levels achieved. The competency-based approach addressed this issue.

Development of the Certificate in Spoken and Written English (CSWE)
In the tradition of the AMEP, AMES NSW responded to surveys of students which indicated a frustration with a lack of continuity within courses and across courses. The AMES Curriculum Unit NSW published a discussion paper on learner pathways (Colman 1991), the aim of which was to initiate discussion on possible ways of providing learners with continuous pathways of language learning within
the AMEP programs and beyond. This paper was followed by a series of workshops which brought teachers together to explore syllabus focus areas at different levels of language development and with different groups of learners. These workshops identified three major goals for students:

- community access;
- work;
- further study.

Workshops also revealed that there was a high degree of similarity in the themes, topics and language features teachers covered with various levels of students.

These workshops resulted in the development of the Certificate in Spoken and Written English which was trialled within AMES NSW by teachers with different groups of learners. The initial curriculum was modified in response to the trial and a three-level curriculum, the Certificates I, II and III, was developed. The language focus of the first two levels of curriculum was on general English development while the third level streamed students into three syllabus strands: community access, vocational, and further study. Later, a fourth certificate was developed in response to students who were studying under different arrangements at higher levels of language development.

The converging impact of policy and curriculum changes on AMEP programs led to strong departmental support for the implementation of the CSWE nationally. It was seen to represent a model of successful integration of current development in language description, language learning theory and proven classroom practice while acknowledging the unique characteristics of the AMEP clients.

The CSWE was adopted as the national curriculum and the implementation process was undertaken by AMEP providers in various time-frames and using different approaches. AMES NSW introduced intra- and interstate structures to support the process and to ensure practices were in place for the ongoing moderation of tasks and student assessments. In Victoria, AMES chose to re-focus its own Core Curriculum Project onto materials for the CSWE and abandoned the idea of an alternative certificate.

A two-day conference was held for Victorian management, principals, senior curriculum staff and teacher representatives and, at the conclusion of the conference, participants expressed a commitment to the introduction of accredited outcomes and the CSWE. A range of supporting strategies was then put into place at local and state level in order to ensure understanding and involvement by all staff.

The introduction of the CSWE came at a time of other extensive changes. For example, staff were coming to terms with the introduction of the DEET tendering process and the sweeping changes made by some State Governments to employment conditions. Despite the competing changes and the level of teachers’ anxiety and