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First-Language Reading & the Role of Public Libraries

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Executive Summary

This final report to the State Library of New South Wales describes the research project 'First-language Reading and the Role of Public Libraries' and its findings. The project sought to understand the experience of reading in first-language and the role played by public libraries in supporting that experience. This report describes the participant responses to each facet of the project and draws heavily on verbatim comments from participants to ensure their voices and experiences are featured. Each research question is answered, and a set of recommendations based on participants' experiences and suggestions are included for consideration by the State Library of New South Wales.

In summary, the research found that reading in a first language is a deeply emotional experience for all of the participants. Reading in their first language facilitated feelings of pride in their culture and gave them an opportunity to stay connected with that culture and to also pass it on to their children. The experience of reading in their first language was characterised by feelings of relief, relaxation, and refreshment. This experience related to the ease of understanding of their first language, particularly in contrast to the mental effort required to live and work in a language environment that was not their own. The opportunity to read in their first language was also seen by participants as evidence that they were welcome in Australia. They saw the fact that our public libraries choose to provide resources in languages other than English as an element of a healthy multi-cultural society.

The research found that participants are sourcing their first-language reading from multiple sources. Participants often relied on the internet to provide them with access to news and readings in their first languages. However, most participants preferred to read in print, and again relied on multiple sources for their print reading material, including their public libraries and their social and cultural groups. The reliance on public library collections was less than the reliance on social and cultural networks.

Each of the participants was aware of the library resources in their first language but did not make great use of them. The reasons for this low level of use related to availability of time to visit the libraries, a perception that the collections available were out of date, limited in scope and no longer reflective of the changing community demographics. Some participants were aware of a service where books could be requested from other libraries, but this was seen as slow and difficult to use due to their limited capacity to use the catalogue effectively. Due to this inability to use the catalogue, most interactions with the collections were through browsing only, so the capacity to know what another library held and then to borrow from that library was not able to be taken advantage of.

The report ends with the following recommendations:

1. That libraries establish a group of users who can act as Library Ambassadors to connect cultural groups with their libraries
2. That libraries make greater use of 'Readers Advisory' resources in community languages
3. That libraries host community collections within library buildings
4. That libraries host cultural celebrations that focus on the culture but also raise awareness of collections in community languages
5. That libraries consider using crowdsourcing to develop textual and audio collections in community languages
6. Expand the use of the iBIMS service

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Project Background

This project has been generously funded by the State Library of New South Wales (SLNSW) and seeks to explore the experience of reading in first-language for migrant Australians, and the capacity for public libraries to support that experience. The project was established with the understanding that Australia is home for many people for whom the English language is not their first, and these people may have a desire to access reading in their first language and may be turning to their public library to support them with this. The SLNSW are interested to learn about the experiences of these communities as they seek reading in their first-language through their public libraries. This project was approved by the Charles Sturt University Human Research Ethics Committee and supported by Dr Sue Henczel who undertook some elements of the participant interview analysis.

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The Research Process

The research for this project was undertaken by Dr Jane Garner of the School of Information & Communication Studies at Charles Sturt University under the direction of Ellen Forsyth, Oriana Acevedo and Kate O'Grady from the SLNSW. In order to understand the experience of first-language reading and the role of public libraries in supporting that experience, the following research questions were developed:

RQ1: What is the experience of first-language reading for migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds?

RQ2: From where are migrant communities accessing reading in their first language?

RQ3: To what extent are migrant communities aware of public library resources in their first language?

RQ4: What barriers exist that limit the use of first-language public library resources?

In order to answer these questions, twelve participants were identified by the SLNSW to take part in semi-structured interviews with Dr Garner. The twelve participants represented the following eleven language groups:



Russian



Bangla



Bulgarian



Polish



Tamil (India)



Arabic



Korean



Spanish



Persian



Cantonese
Mandarin

Each participant was interviewed individually via a Zoom meeting. Each interview was based around an identical set of interview questions, and additional questions were used to ask participants to clarify or expand on their answers. The following questions were asked of all participants. The research question associated with each interview question is indicated.

Question	
What is your first language?	Background information
Where are you currently finding things to read in your first language?	RQ2
Do you know if your public library can supply you with things to read in your first language?	RQ3
If you have tried to access readings in your first language from your public library, what was that experience like for you?	RQ4
How useful did you find the library catalogue when you were looking for something to read in your first language?	RQ4
What do you like to read in your first language? – Fiction, non-fiction, newspapers, poetry, etc.	RQ1
What do you enjoy about reading in your first language?	RQ1
What words would you use to describe how reading in your first language makes you feel?	RQ1
What else would you like to read in your first language that you can't find right now?	RQ1
How important is it to you to be able to access reading in your first language?	RQ1
How would you feel if you were not able to find things to read in your first language?	RQ1
Do you have anything else you would like to tell me about your experiences of reading in your first language, or about the how your public library supports your first language reading?	Extending opportunity to contribute information that is important to the participant

Each interview lasted for approximately 25 minutes and all questions were answered by all participants. An audio recording of each interview was sent to a professional academic transcription service. This service returned a typed transcript of each interview that was then read through and checked for accuracy against the original audio recording.

Comments from the interviews were then split from each transcript and allocated to each research question as appropriate. The verbatim comments were kept intact to ensure the participants' voices would be heard in all analysis and reporting. Summaries of the collected comments for research Questions Two, Three & Four were then written. The comments allocated to research Question One underwent a thematic analysis. The textual analysis software NVivo was used to assist in this step. The data for this research question related to deeply personal experiences and memories, rather than practices and activities undertaken by participants, and were therefore treated differently. A thematic analysis enables a deeper exploration of these experiences of first-language reading. The summaries and the thematic analysis, along with illustrative verbatim comments are the basis for the findings contained in this report.

One extra section has been included in the findings. This section is a reporting of ideas from participants regarding how public libraries and the State Library of New South Wales could improve the services and collections made available to users of non-English speaking backgrounds. For the most part, these suggestions were given in answer to the final interview question: "Do you have anything else you would like to tell me about your experiences of reading in your first language, or about how your public library supports your first-language reading?", but some suggestions were included in the answers to other interview questions.

Findings

Research Question One: What is the experience of first-language reading for migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds?

The experience of reading in a first language is deeply personal and highly valuable for all participants. Their experiences can be described using four themes:

1. An emotional experience
2. A cultural experience
3. A relaxing, refreshing, and relieving experience
4. A welcoming experience

Each of these themes will be explained here along with a selection of verbatim quotes to allow the participants' voices to be heard.

An Emotional Experience

Every participant in the study explained how reading in their first language was a deeply emotional experience. They described how their first-language reading sustained their energy, made them feel good, warm, proud, nostalgic, and comfortable. A common response to the question of how reading in their own language made them feel related to how this activity was life-sustaining and so important to them that their lives would suffer greatly without it. One participant described reading in her own language was 'like oxygen' for her:

Simply reading in Korea[n] in my old language provides a great entertainment, as well as just thought-provoking information [and] energy, that really – I don't know what it is, it's just like oxygen... I would say it is important, as [when] we talk about oxygen, it's just very important.

Many participants used the words 'mother tongue' to stress their relationship with their language being an integral part of who they are and how they need it for their survival. This idea of the emotional experience of a 'mother tongue' was described by one participant in this way:

When I read in my own language of course it's the mother tongue – because I was born in Bulgaria and I came to Australia when I was 30/31, so I went there to university and to school, and the friends that – it's just still – it's very hard always...that's why they say the mother tongue. It is this warm feeling that just cannot be substituted with anything else.

Another participant used similar language to describe this idea:

In Bengali people say your mother language is sort of breastfeed – like milk from your mother. Your own language, your mother tongue, is like the milk from your mother. So that's how I can explain.

And another also mentioned the connection between reading in a first language and an emotional connection to a mother:

You go back and – it's kind of a feeling – how do I express it – it's like, someday getting back home and going back to mum's lap to take a little nap, that's always special. Yes, with all language we read, but going back to first language always it's just warm, closer to heart.

The strongest language that was used to describe the emotional experience of reading in a first language came when participants were asked how they would feel if they were not able to access reading materials in their own language. Participants used words such as 'disconnected', 'sad', 'disappointed', 'isolated', 'frustrated', 'losing our oxygen', and 'dead'. One participant described how he would feel with these words:

Look that will be – how can I explain – say when you chop off a root from a tree, it will be something like that. Simply, like that. The Bengali books, these thoughts actually keeping me alive. So even though this is my home, still my intellectual and my emotional and my nostalgic supply is coming from my mother language – is coming from Bangla. Though this is my home, this is my country, I understand – I feel it. I feel this land, I feel this dust, I feel this nature. But I think that our energy is coming from Bengali books, so, yes, we need those Bengali books that supply our energy.

Another participant similarly described the link between language and identity:

I would be very upset. Because it is part of my identity, it is what I grew up with, it's what I took at school. It's very important, yes.

That reading in a first language is of vital importance to people living in Australia is clear from the experiences of the participants. First-language reading has been described as a deeply emotional experience and one highly valued by all participants. It is of such fundamental importance to them they believe it sustains them and keeps them alive. To imagine a life without access to reading in their first language evokes a great sense of loss, sadness, and disconnection with something they believe makes their life in Australia possible.

A cultural experience

Reading in a first language was experienced by the participants as a connection to their cultural past, and as a means of keeping their culture alive in the lives of their children. Participants also found reading in their first language to be the most effective way of staying in touch with current affairs in the countries they had left.

The desire to keep a culture alive in the children of participants was strong. It was important to them that their children would know their parents' language and to be connected to their parents' cultures. One participant explained this with these words:

I see that also for our children, for them to remember their heritage, the kids' books to maintain... And I can see that the kids and the parents are really keen to maintain that the kids to learn the language, and to speak, to practice it... so we continue doing it, and it is very, very important, I think, for – in order to keep the heritage and to preserve it.

Another used these words to describe the same experience:

Now [reading] these books because of my children, and then trying to read books for them again for my kids, that's kind of really shown me how important it is – especially to have resources for the kids. So, yes, I think it's really important for me to read in Tamil, and for my kids to have access to those things, and to be able to read as well.

Participants often spoke of the feelings of connection to 'home' through reading in their first language and equated that connection with their identity and a pride in their culture:

I guess happy, home, like I said comfort, and it's a bit of identity. So, yes, those are the words that I would use to describe... It is very important. I think I kind of lost that a little bit when I first came here – for the first 10 years, I think. And now doing these books because of my children, and then trying to read books for them again for my kids, that's kind of really shown me how important it is.

A relaxing, refreshing, and relieving experience

A common experience for people reading in their first language was one of relief and relaxation. The word 'refreshing' was used a lot. This experience was related to the level of effort and work required daily to live in a society that is based on a second language. Even though each of the participants spoke English very well, the opportunity to read in their first language came as a relief as there was no need to undertake mental translations. The opportunity to read in their first language removed the barrier of translation and allowed them to read with a fluency they cannot experience in English. One participant explained this with these words:

...feels home, feels good feeling if I'm reading in Persian. Because I – eight hours working in my workplace speaking English all the time, when I see book as a Persian it feels good, you can just calm down, not think about it. Because all the time I'm thinking about what word I should say, what grammar I should – but this one is much easier for me.

The experience of relief was also related to the depth of understanding of a text that could be achieved by reading in a first language, compared to reading in English:

Because it's my first language so I really – very relaxed when it come to the book, I know every word meaning, I know ever sentence's meaning, and I don't need to guess. I don't need to read the dictionary.

The same experience is described here by another participant:

It makes me really feel better because if I read an English book, I understand word by word, it is translated. For me, my brain does the translation. But in doing that translation process, I don't get 100 percent, you know what I mean?

Similarly, another participant explains this experience with these words:

The feeling of reading the same thing in Spanish and in English, is not the same. Reading in English to me is like passing over. You know when you scan things? You see it, OK – that's sort of like what happen with the English version. But when I read it in the Spanish, is just you immerse yourself in the literature, in the reading. Is like being there. Is like being part of everything.

A welcoming experience

The final element of the participants' experience of reading in a first language was that of feeling supported and welcomed into their new country. It was common for participants to see the offering of reading materials in their first language as a sign that they and their culture were valued by Australia. Having a library service that offers reading materials in languages other than English is seen as a sign that we are a multicultural society that welcomes and wishes to support people from all cultures as they live their lives in their new country:

Well I would like to say my past experience of reading materials in my first language in Australia, have given me support and comfort and relaxation, and greatly helped me to settle well in an Australian community – so far. I believe that our public library support for multicultural language materials have been outstanding, thus we users extremely lucky to be part of it.

Another participant also explained this experience:

Very important, because you'd live in a faraway – if you can find something that you can connect and make you feel comfortable in other countries, I'm sure there is a lot of people live here in Australia, they are the most kind and open people I ever, ever seen, and I really appreciate that. They allow us to do this. State Library offer this. You're a part of too. This is such an honourable way to prosper our multiculturalism. I'm very appreciate what you're doing actually.

One participant recognised the benefits to her offered by library collections in her language extend beyond just herself and to all of our communities:

But if we can have, why not? Not only make us feel happy, if I happy we make energy, spread a good energy to society, that helps everybody. It's just not only us. It's a win-win.

From these four themes: an emotional experience; a cultural experience; a relaxing, refreshing, and relieving experience; and a welcoming experience, we can see the importance and value of first-language reading in the lives of people from non-English speaking backgrounds, and what an important service our public libraries are offering to support these experiences.

Research Question Two: From where are migrant communities accessing reading in their first language?

All participants said that they were aware of library services, however only some used the library for reading material in their first language. Their responses differentiated between leisure reading, for which some used the library, and accessing current information such as news and politics which most accessed online through global platforms, including social media, newspaper websites, or other specialist websites from their former home country.

The participants accessed material in their first language in both print and digital formats, however most expressed a strong desire for print material, particularly for leisure reading. One participant said that he felt he had to settle for digital material in his first language due to a lack of print resources available to him, while others said that they relied on online sources for current world news, particularly relating to politics, environmental issues, and new technologies.

Some participants used libraries less since COVID lockdowns and had begun to self-source print material via websites and direct purchase through family and friends in their former home country. While some used libraries less for print material some continued to access ebooks and audiobooks through libraries. Some used the library to identify material that was then borrowed, or requested from another library, or self-sourced online. One participant used the library for materials in English, but not for materials in her first language, which she sourced through online websites that specialise in the type of material she needed.

Many of the participants self-sourced material in their first language through specialist language bookshops, online purchasing, bringing material from their home country or having others bring it for them. The books were then shared with friends and the community, or they established personal libraries that became local community libraries as they shared through community networks, and in one case their social and cultural association. The sharing of books maintained contact between community members and facilitated discussion of the book which became an extension of the other cultural aspects that were shared such as day-to-day living and cooking etc. Social media was used to source items within their extended communities and also to discuss the books they had read. As well as the personal and community libraries, used books were donated to schools and libraries, and in one case to their Embassy in Canberra where they were loaned out, free of charge, through the Embassy library's website.

The participants described how the sourcing of material changes with the needs of the family and the demands of modern-day life. One participant described how she used the library for children's books and videos when her children were younger. Another described how time constraints prevented him using the library due to its location being distant from where he worked and shopped. He also extolled the benefit of a local community library housed in a grocery store that was visited regularly by borrowers from his cultural community.

Some participants acknowledged the difficulties that libraries faced in obtaining suitable print material in their first language. One described how the dramatic reduction in publishing in his home country made it difficult to find suitable material to purchase, while another has written her own books for her children in her first language to fill a gap in what was available to her from her library.

Research Question Three: To what extent are migrant communities aware of public library resources in their first language?

All of the participants were aware that libraries have print collections in their first languages, and some were regular borrowers of items from those collections.

Some participants used the first language library collections by both searching the catalogue and browsing either online or in person. However, browsing was the preferred way to find items to read as some did not know what they were looking for and some found the catalogue too difficult to use. When necessary they requested items via inter-library loan. One participant was able to use the catalogue in her first language as it could be viewed using the iBIMS service (<https://www.ibims.com.au/about>) which allows the catalogue to display in Chinese characters. She was then able to borrow items easily, however since COVID she has only been borrowing ebooks. Another had not considered that the libraries might provide access to first language ebooks and so had not looked for them.

Some participants were very familiar with the first language collections due to their volunteer work or employment within libraries. This enabled them to use the catalogue easily and to find what they needed. Despite this they had not used the collections themselves. One participant, however, used her experience and knowledge to inform her community members about the collections and how to access them.

Despite their awareness of the collections, some participants had not used the collections for various reasons including disappointment with the size, content (type and currency), and the physical location of the libraries that held collections in their first language being at a distance from their homes.

In terms of size and content, the collections were considered to be old and not regularly updated compared with the English collections. The participants mentioned that as well as insufficient newer publications there were too few copies of the new books which meant long wait times. One participant said that finding material was easy, but it was time consuming to get the item. There was too long a wait for books to be sent from other libraries, and a limit of ten books was a problem for fast readers. This caused some participants to register with different libraries in order to access what they considered to be better collections, and others to self-source their reading material. One participant was aware that the library held recreational reading material in her first language, however she needed specialist academic material and did not consider that it would be held by the library.

The proximity of the library to the community was mentioned by two participants with one acknowledging that the collection at his library was a good one as it is located in a community with many speaking the language. Another said that not much was available due to not many people with that first language living in his community which was particularly disappointing for those who wish to pass on their language to their children.

Research Question Four: What barriers exist that limit the use of first-language public library resources?

Participants mentioned various barriers that either prevented or made it more difficult for them to access the first language collections. They included a lack of promotion, difficulty using the catalogue, limitations in terms of the collections themselves and cultural aspects that make the collections less relevant. One participant explained that members of his culture are not readers and that they would be unlikely to make good use of a library collection in their first language.

While all participants were aware that libraries had first language collections, some had not thought to look for their own first language collection in their library, and many including those who were aware of it, had not used it. One participant mentioned the difficulty identifying which library held material in their first language. Another explained how she had used first language material at her library in the past but now it was not there, discarded she suspects due to low usage. She felt that this could have been avoided by promoting the collection to the relevant communities. The timing of the development of the collections with the stages of change within the demographics was highlighted by two participants who explained that new arrivals were busy settling in and learning English and that it was the next generations that needed the first language material in order to learn and maintain their language skills. She remembered having material available for her children but now that she has grandchildren it was no longer there.

Limitations to the content within the collection were expressed as a barrier to accessing first language collections. Participants explained that this could possibly be due to the difficulties in sourcing books in certain languages due to political sanctions, and due to low levels of publishing in certain countries.

While one participant said that using the catalogue was easy, other participants described the difficulties they faced when using the library catalogue, saying that the catalogue was only useful if you knew what you were looking for and poor English often prevented effective searching, for example not getting the name of the author or the title correct would lead to no, or incorrect results. Where a language used a non-Roman alphabet, for example Cyrillic or Chinese, the books had often been catalogued phonetically. Along with the additional limitation of characters that do not have an English equivalent, the searcher is unlikely to find what they were looking for. How Chinese and Pinyin variations have been applied also caused confusion for two participants. One participant described the inability to filter searches by genre after applying a language filter. So she was able to list all the books in the library catalogue in her language but was unable to sort them in any way and had to scroll through the records for the whole collection to find something she might like to read. Being faced with these difficulties often resulted in the participants giving up and visiting their library in person to browse, thereby missing any items not housed at the branch they visited, and any items currently on loan.

Suggestions from Participants

A final question was asked of the participants: 'Do you have anything else you would like to tell me about your experiences of reading in your first language, or about the how your public library supports your first language reading?'. This question led to extensive and well-considered answers as all participants had ideas about how libraries could improve in their provision of materials in their first language. These suggestions fell into five categories. Each of these will be explained here with the help of the words of the participants.

Library Language Ambassadors

Many suggestions included the idea of volunteers from language communities to act as ambassadors for the library within their community. Library Language Ambassadors would act as volunteers in the library to help their cultural community members navigate to the LOTE collections, help use the catalogue, and help order in books from other libraries that were not on the shelves.

Inserting a human being between the bookshelf and the people who come through the door will definitely create that magic. It's like you create some sort of a happening or experience, and people will get excited.

Another way to benefit from Library Language Ambassadors identified by participants was as sources of advice for collection development. There was a belief that ambassadors would be able to canvas opinion from their language communities about what they would like to read, and this could inform purchasing decisions. The ambassadors would also act as advocates for the library and would be able to promote and raise awareness of LOTE collections amongst their cultural groups and societies. One participant suggested asking for volunteers from various language groups to assist in changing catalogue records for LOTE items to better reflect how users may search for them, or to correct transliteration errors in the catalogue records.

It was common for participants to state they would be very willing and honoured to take on a role such as they described:

If you take someone like me [who] does not have an opportunity to be doing this, even though I could say, "I understand this to my bone." But because I don't have the working experience within this thing – even though I think I show you, I can guarantee to bring you, for example, 50 customers. I know how the community works, and I know how you guys work. But I [could be], this missing link.

Greater Use of Languages other than English within the libraries

There were suggestions relating to a greater use of languages other than English within library buildings and throughout the collections. This participant mentioned the feeling of being welcome when she sees her own language in the library:

I would like to see, when I get into the library, instead of me going directly into the computer and try to find out something or going to the counter and ask them, is see something in here said, "OK, this way, go to Spanish," So like a signage. I think is really feeling welcome when you see your own language.

One participant suggested the inclusion of reviews or suggestions in languages other than English to act as a 'readers advisory' resource:

English books always have staff picks at the front – which is very handy – but Chinese, no. Maybe they can from time to time to have staff picks for Chinese language, and put it just in that section, so I know what to read and – yes because as I said, when I browse the shelf there's so many – so many, so it took a long time, and people don't have much patience and sometimes they just give up.

Similarly, another participant also mentioned readers advisory resources such as reviews or summaries in the languages of the LOTE items that were placed on the library shelves with the books to help users choose what to read.

Collection Development

Many participants recognised the excellent job being done by their libraries in providing resources in their first languages and were extremely grateful that these collections were offered:

I'm very, very grateful for what State Library's been doing and organising. And obviously on government or state government level, the support and the help for the small communities. And with regards to the reading, we need the books. We still need them like food and water.

There were also some suggestions on how those collections could be improved. One suggestion was to increase the number of non-print resources available in languages other than English:

Other than one interesting thing that I noticed yesterday when I went on the Northern Beaches Library, they actually had a DVD – it was a kids' programme – it's a movie in Tamil, and they actually had that available. And I was actually really happy to see that, because then I'm like, "Oh I'm going to get this for my kids and they can watch a kids' movie in Tamil." I mean apart from books and stuff, these sort of resources would be fantastic as well if the libraries could make them available.

There were also suggestions on how print collections could be improved by increasing the holdings of LOTE materials that are targeted at people older than pre-school age. There was a feeling that there is a gap in holdings for young adults in particular. Also there was a wish for libraries to collect more 'classics' in LOTE to enable these to be read in first languages. These should be classics published in their former home countries so migrant communities can keep in touch with what is being read in those countries, rather than only having access to translations of English language publications. Conversely, one participant wanted translations into her first language of popular English-language books. She felt these could be borrowed together to be read alongside one another as this would help her to improve her ability to read in English:

...so, for example, I would borrow a book by Danielle Steele in Polish, because it was available, and then I could obtain book of the same title, though in English. So for me, as a learner of English, because I had access to Polish and we could read Danielle Steele book, but in very simple kind of way, I could simply read this in English as well and learn [from] this book.

Cultural Events

Events that celebrate a local cultural group could be held within the library spaces with the aim of bringing people from a specific culture into the library. The event would be about their culture, rather than about the books, but would bring the community into the library where the books could be featured to raise awareness of them within their language community.

Crowdsourcing of language resource creation

One participant explained that he has already begun a project where he is converting print resources in his own language into a digital format so it can be shared within his community electronically. He believed that there is an opportunity to expand this practice within his language community and for the libraries to host the resources that are created. He also felt that this activity could be expanded to include audio recordings of community members reading books aloud in their first language, and that these recordings could also be hosted and distributed by the libraries:

If a government body or a state library can help us to build up our digital collection, well I've got friends, I've got connections that if we start doing this typing – digital typing from the paper – within five years, we'll be able to actually capture the most efficient part of Bengali language in a digital format.... you can convert a paper material into a digital material. So that is a way I think we should approach to preserve the language, and to make the literature available for myself and for my children. And talking book is another option. Again it will be really easier to get the audio recording of a book, and it can be really easy to access, and people can enjoy it.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on what has been learned from the participant interviews and their own suggestions.

Library Language Ambassadors

There was a great love for libraries expressed by most participants, and a strong interest and willingness to work with their libraries to help them serve their communities better. There is a very real opportunity for libraries to capitalise on this willingness and expertise within migrant communities. One idea of how to do this is to establish a volunteer group of Library Language Ambassadors from each language group present in a community. Library Language Ambassadors could be involved in many activities and services provided by a library including the following:

- Promote LOTE collections to own cultural community
- Assist library staff in selecting LOTE materials that will be popular with the language community
- Creation of Readers Advisory resources (see below)
- Assist library staff in creating appropriate signage within the library
- Assist library staff to correct errors of transliteration and other errors in catalogue records
- Run cultural events within the library to attract community members and to raise awareness of LOTE collections
- Take over a library's social media accounts once a week/month to promote LOTE resources or events

Reader Advisory Resources

With the assistance of a Library Language Ambassador, create resources in community languages such as brief book reviews or synopsis cards tucked onto bookshelves, library displays to assist borrowers in their selection of reading resources, and welcome and directional signage in community languages within library buildings.

Become a host for community collections

Many participants mentioned they are part of book sharing networks within their own communities. These books have been purchased by the readers themselves, have been brought to Australia when they immigrated, or have been sent here by family from their former home country. There was an idea of asking libraries to host these collections within their buildings. Community members could donate their private collections, and these would then operate in the same way as a Little Free Library (<https://littlefreelibrary.org/>). People could come and take a book and leave a book in the same way as a Little Free Library, but it would happen under the roof of the public library. A Library Language Ambassador could be responsible for managing the collection in their language. Each collection would focus on a single language that was relevant to the community at the time, so you might have a 'Little Free Tamil Library' and 'A Little Free Russian Library' at the one site, depending on the communities living in the area. These little free libraries could also house weeded stock from the public library collection.

Targeted Cultural celebrations

Host cultural celebrations within the library to bring community members into the building. These could be literary events such as author readings, community members reading aloud in their own language, or book festivals that are delivered in the language of the community group, or non-literary events such as cultural food, dance or music-related celebrations. During these events, have library resources in the featured language available for discovery and to raise awareness of their presence in the library collections.

Crowdsourcing

If feasible and within Copyright permissions, consider making greater use of volunteers who can provide content creation through self-publishing of written and audio content in community languages that could then be made available via the State Library website.

Expand the use of the iBIMS service

The iBIMS service (<https://www.ibims.com.au/about>) allows a dual language display that enables users to search using their own language and language characters. It can be used on touch screen displays to remove the need for specialised language keyboards, and also supports these keyboards when used from outside the library. It appears this display is only available for Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese and Greek at this stage, but similar alternative services could be investigated.