



DISNEY'S MOANA: A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL FOR EDUCATORS TO ZOOM INTO PACIFIC LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

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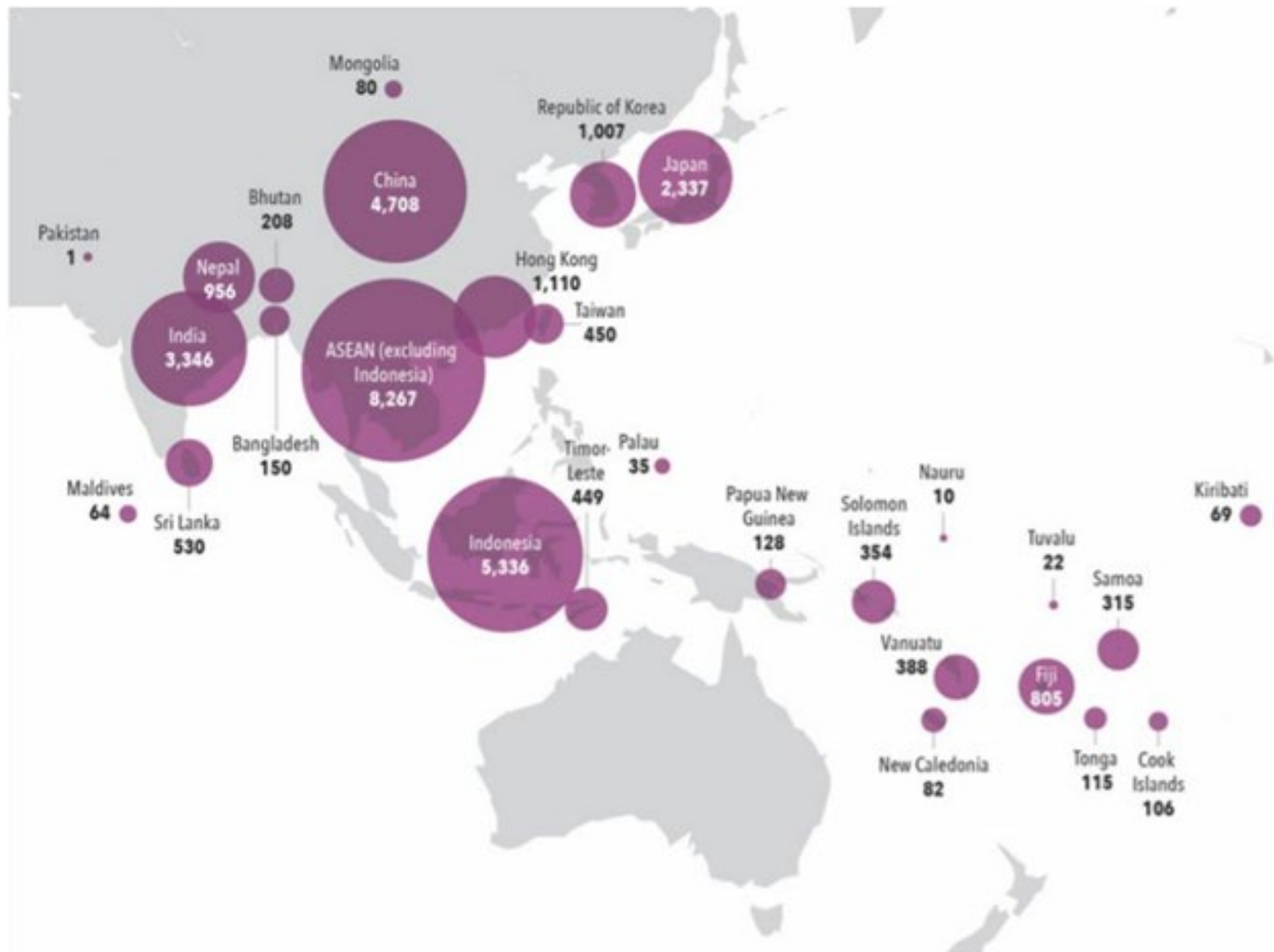
Pacific Islands

- What comes to your mind when you read these words: "**Pacific Islands**"?

Context

Pacific Islands and Australian Curriculum

- Australia's national curriculum provides evidence that its content continues to offer limited opportunities to develop knowledge about who our "family" is (ACARA, 2020). The Pacific region is minimally represented in the national curriculum despite Australia's metamorphoses in political discourses with a change in focus from being Asian-centric to Pacific-orientated.
- A search by keyword or content using the word "Pacific" on the Australian curriculum website returned 60 results compared to 332 for the word "Asia". There are three cross-curriculum priorities in the Australian curriculum: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures, Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia, and Sustainability.
- There is a need for these priorities to be reviewed and for the Pacific to also be included across the curriculum.



◦ **Figure: New Colombo Plan University Students (2014-2018)**

◦ Source: Australian Government 2017 p.113
<https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/2017-foreign-policy-white-paper.pdf>

Disney fairy tales

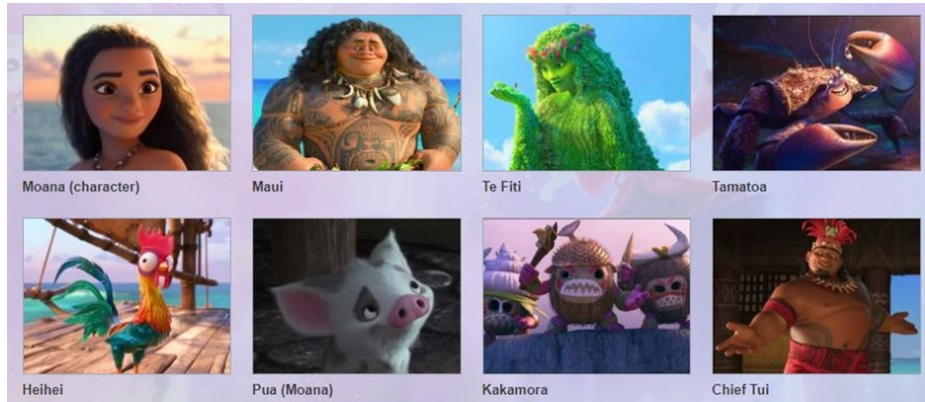
- This position paper aims to identify the potential of Disney's fairy tale media, in particular the recent production Moana (2016), an animated film set in the Pacific, to teach young Australians about the Pacific islands and its people. Scholars in film and cultural studies have explained that Disney films provide a rich resource for teachers and offer opportunities to engage in critical thinking (Wormer and Juby, 2016). In particular, Garlen and Sandlin (2016) argued that Disney can be used as a pedagogical force to explore the world in which we live in and help shape how one thinks, learn and live. In this paper we argue that Moana can be used a tool by teachers to zoom onto the Pacific region.
- **Disney "Transformative Machine"**

Moana, Vaiana and Oceania

- This blockbuster tells the story of a young Pacific Islander girl who lives in Polynesia and needs to save her village from the dying natural environment. The heroine, chosen by the spirit of the ocean, embarks on an adventure throughout the Pacific Ocean on board of a traditional Polynesian called a wa'a kaulua. She meets the legendary semigod named Maui. Once together, their aim is to return an enchanted heart stone to Te Fiti, a goddess which in the film is being represented as a bountiful island.

Theme 1

- What's in a Name? Disney's Moana, Vaiana and Oceania



Australia before climate change



Australia after climate change



Image source: <https://ahseeit.com/australia/?qa=176/australia-before-and-after-climate-change-meme>

Theme 2

- The Environment and Climate Change

Theme 3

- The Music and Songs



Image source: <https://www.loopvanuatu.com/content/making-moana%e2%80%99s-music-interview-composer-opetaia-foa%e2%80%99i-te-vaka>

Theme 4

- Pacific Voyaging History and Gender Equality in the Pacific



Image source: <https://www.pinterest.com.au/pin/554083560392399892/>



Image source:
<https://www.pinterest.com.au/pin/479633429062875867/>

Theme 5

- Ancestors and the Power of Story Telling



Image source: <https://www.bustle.com/articles/196388-all-of-mauis-tattoos-in-moana-show-how-culturally-important-the-demigod-is>

Theme 6

- Art, Fashion and Tattoos

Summary

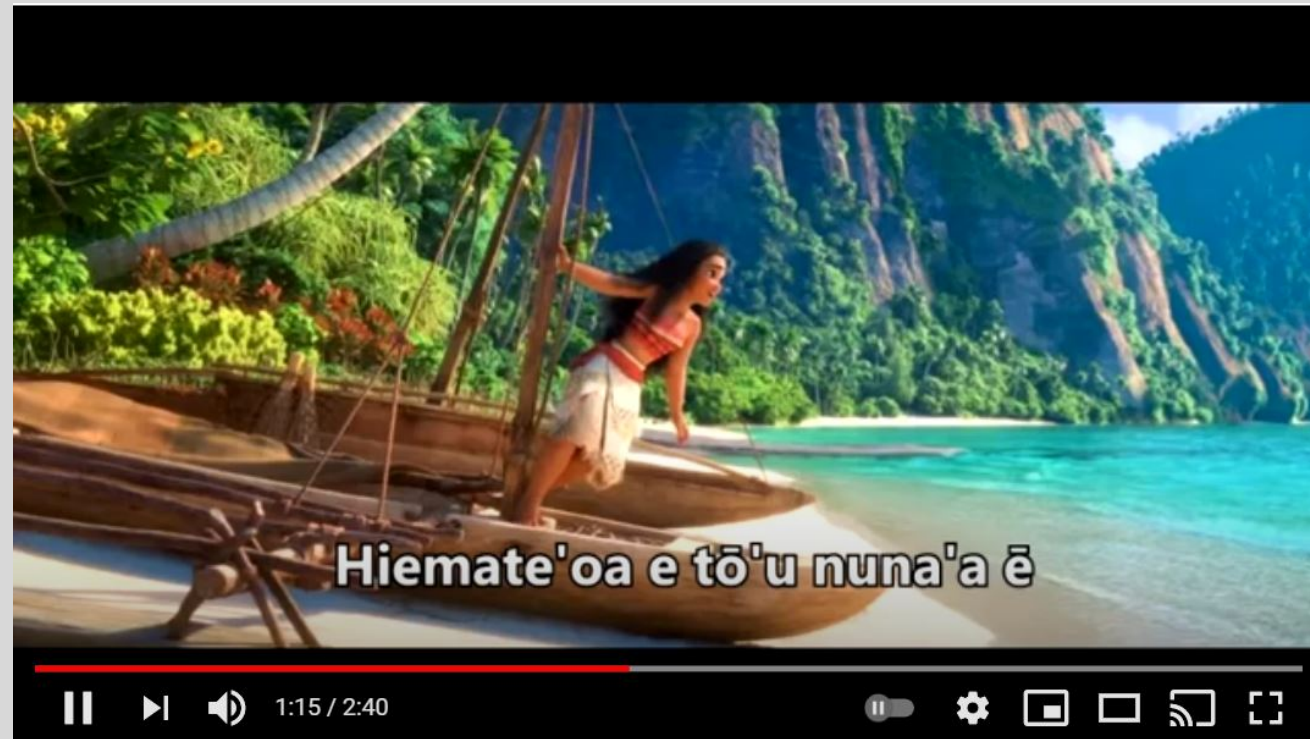
According to Belgin (2007), the use of foreign language films in language teaching provide engaging, authentic and rich linguistic materials for all language learners. In 2016, the animated film 'Moana' (also know as Vaiana and Oceania in some countries) was released, which tells the story of a young Pacific Islander girl who lives in Polynesia and needs to save her village from the dying natural environment.

Moana is also the first Disney film to be translated in Pacific languages including Tahitian. While opportunities to learn about Pacific nations are limited within the current Australian curriculum, there are many elements within 'Moana' that can be used by teachers (particularly French language teachers) in schools to increase knowledge of indigenous cultures and languages.

We argue that the recent success of this particular Disney production could offer language teachers in Australia an ideal starting point to engage students in meaningful learning which could help to challenge and deconstruct the various hegemonic dimensions associated with Pacific cultures, languages and people.

Conclusion

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6DBK_Xo4aQ



Research Participation

The Use of Disney in the Language Classroom



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THANKS

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Questions & Comments

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