

CHINESE

China is one of the world's oldest and richest continuous cultures, over 5000 years old;

China is the most populous nation in the world, with 1.28 billion people;

Mandarin Chinese is spoken by 873 million speakers, making it the most widely spoken first language in the world [Ethnologue list of most spoken languages];

Chinese could arguably be the *lingua franca* of Asia. In addition to the People's Republic of China and Taiwan, Mandarin Chinese is also spoken in the communities of Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, the Philippines and Mongolia. Also, one should consider the large diasporic Chinese population throughout the world;

China has now become the second largest economy in the world

[\[http://www.bu.edu/mlcl/about/why-study/chinese.html\]](http://www.bu.edu/mlcl/about/why-study/chinese.html)

- China is now Australia's largest two-way trading partner, overtaking Japan in 2007 [Asian Economic News, May 12, 2008];
- Many Australian companies do business in China and have long-term investments there:

'Australian companies had invested \$3 billion in China by the end of 2006, while Chinese investment in Australia reached \$3.4 billion. We're keen to expand the scale of investment flows in both directions as it is a key driver of closer economic engagement.' [Simon Crean, speech to the Australian Chamber of Commerce Shanghai, 18th April, 2008]

INDONESIAN

- Indonesia is a country rich in **cultural diversity** with hundreds of different ethnic groups. Each group has its own unique traditions and arts, making Indonesia a country of interest to students of anthropology, ethnomusicology, theater, and art;
- Each ethnic group also has its own local language, which they speak in addition to Bahasa Indonesia. On some islands such as Sulawesi and in the Moluccas, local languages often vary from village to village. Such **linguistic diversity**, along with language change make Indonesia a fascinating country for those interested in linguistics. Linguists interested in historical linguistics, morphology, sociolinguistics, language shift and language attrition will find Indonesia a land that provides them with much material to work with. There are also linguistic ties with Australian aboriginal dialects in Cape York Peninsula.
- Indonesia has the largest Moslem population of any country in the world. At the same time, it is a country that is **diverse in religion**. World religions include Hindu, Buddhist, Catholic and Protestant. In addition Kaharingan, the religion of the Dayak peoples of Kalimantan has gained official recognition as a religion. These religions and indigenous beliefs, their interrelationships and their syncretism provides fascinating study for students of religion;
- Indonesia is a developing nation **rich in natural and human resources** and promising **economic potential**, making it a country of interest to geographers, economists, international businessmen and women, and development workers.

- Indonesia has undergone tremendous **political change** in recent years, moving toward greater freedom and democracy for its citizens, making it a nation of intense interest for political scientists;

- Indonesian is initially easier to learn for English speakers due to its use of familiar text: Roman script.

[\[http://www.hawaii.edu/indolang/whyindo.html\]](http://www.hawaii.edu/indolang/whyindo.html)

- **Indonesian is a form of Malay** (generally, speakers of Indonesian can communicate with Malay speakers), **a language spoken in a number of other countries**. Malay is also the national language of Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam and Singapore. It is also spoken by minority communities in Southern Thailand and other areas of the world.

- **Indonesia is on Australia's doorstep**. As our nearest Asian neighbour, a major trading partner and crucial strategic ally, Indonesia is important for Australia's future. "When our Government released the landmark Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper in 1997 we identified the relationship with Indonesia as lying at the heart of Australian foreign policy." (Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer, in a speech before an ASIALINK Forum, 25 June 1999).

- As a travel destination, Indonesia is an enjoyable and affordable place to visit. These days thousands of Australians visit Indonesian regions such as Bali, Java, Sumatra and Sulawesi islands annually, and thousands more live happily in Indonesia despite the Australia Government travel advice.

[\[http://www.une.edu.au/study/indonesian/\]](http://www.une.edu.au/study/indonesian/)

JAPANESE

- Japan is Australia's **second largest trading partner**. Learning Japanese helps you to do business with Japanese people or with Japanese multinational companies. A knowledge of Japanese equips you for a job in Japan. Because learning Japanese will **enrich your life**. It gives insight into people with a long history and a complex culture.

- Japanese is the **most taught Asian language** in Australia. Japanese is a rich and fascinating language with a long history of borrowing from Chinese, Portuguese, Dutch and English.

- Japanese culture is now **popular** in much of Asia and Australia. Think of manga, animation (anime), computer games, and fashion. Japanese is the language of skilled poets, novelists, painters, and potters. It is the language of Zen.

- Japanese can help you in a **career**. People who speak Japanese are in demand as diplomats, teachers, translators, interpreters, and in business and tourism.

- Because Japan is one of the **seven most industrialized countries** in the world. Japan is an important player on the global diplomatic and business scene.

[\[http://www.asianlang.mq.edu.au/japanese/why010.htm\]](http://www.asianlang.mq.edu.au/japanese/why010.htm)