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Kodrah Kristang: The initiative to revitalize the Kristang language in Singapore

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Abstract

Kristang is the critically endangered heritage language of the Portuguese-Eurasian community in Singapore and the wider Malayan region, and is spoken by an estimated less than 100 fluent speakers in Singapore. In Singapore, especially, up to 2015, there was almost no known documentation of Kristang, and a declining awareness of its existence, even among the Portuguese-Eurasian community. However, efforts to revitalize Kristang in Singapore under the auspices of the community-based non-profit, multiracial and intergenerational Kodrah Kristang ('Awaken, Kristang') initiative since March 2016 appear to have successfully reinvigorated community and public interest in the language; more than 400 individuals, including heritage speakers, children and many people outside the Portuguese-Eurasian community, have joined ongoing free Kodrah Kristang classes, while another 1,400 participated in the inaugural Kristang Language Festival in May 2017, including Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister and the Portuguese Ambassador to Singapore. Unique features of the initiative include the initiative and its associated Portuguese-Eurasian community being situated in the highly urbanized setting of Singapore, a relatively low reliance on financial support, visible, if cautious positive interest from the Singapore state, a multiracial orientation and set of aims that embrace and move beyond the language's original community of mainly Portuguese-Eurasian speakers, and, by design, a multiracial youth-led core team.

This article documents the Kodrah Kristang initiative from its inception in March 2016 to July 2018. After a consideration of my perspective as Kodrah Kristang founder and director and a review of the literature, I outline Singapore's sociolinguistic situation and a first attempt at a history of Kristang in Singapore, then continue on into the Kodrah Kristang initiative proper, describing the evolution of the initiative from pilot classes in March 2016 to its present state and outlining the *Kaminyu di Kodramintu* (Revitalization Plan) that guides the community. I then discuss key features of the initiative, and close

with a discussion of the long-term challenges that face Kodrah as it enters Phase 3 of the revitalization effort.

1. On perspective and positionality[1]

This paper seeks to describe the initiative known as Kodrah Kristang ('Awaken, Kristang', henceforth referred to as Kodrah), the grassroots effort to revitalize the Kristang language in Singapore, from its inception in March 2016 to its present state in July 2018, approximately 2 years and 4 months later. It will do so from a unique perspective, in that in addition to my role as author of this paper, I am also the founder, director and main architect of Kodrah – a 25-year-old Singaporean male of mixed Chinese and Portuguese-Eurasian descent. I am therefore not completely an *insider*, in that I was not raised as a Kristang speaker, nor a "full" or "pure" Eurasian, a distinction that is important to some members of the community. However, I am also not completely an *outsider*, in that I was raised conscious of my status as being of Eurasian descent, and that much of the design of Kodrah – the plans, the syllabus for adult classes, the aims and objectives of the initiative – is mine. This is a delicate balance to walk, as an insider linguist must "play many roles – researcher, activist, spokesperson, language teacher, language learner, and politician – in the community and in academia", and the responsibilities of these roles may often conflict with each other (Gerdts 2017: 617). Hence, my best efforts notwithstanding, my window into Kodrah and Kristang in Singapore will be an inherently biased one, and that I remain uneasy about attempting to objectively describe something I still contribute substantially to, while also recognizing that I am "epistemologically privileged" (Nicholas 2009: 325) and well-placed to offer this particular perspective.

2. Introduction to Singapore, the Eurasians and Kristang

Modern Singapore is an island city-state in Southeast Asia with four official languages: English, Mandarin Chinese, Malay and Tamil. English is the "former colonial language" (Lim 2009: 53), Singapore having been a British colony between 1819 and 1963, as well as the "common language" (Bolton & Ng 2014: 309), an "inter-ethnic lingua

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franca" that "facilitates economic competitiveness" (Jain & Wee 2015: 73). Mandarin, Malay and Tamil correspond to three main ethnic categories that the Singaporean government sorts the population into – Chinese, Malay and Indian (Wee 2002: 286–287) – and are referred to within Singapore government discourse and Singapore society as the "mother tongue languages" (MTLs) of these three ethnic categories (Chong 2011: 887). Officially, the mother tongue is "intended to serve as a cultural anchor for all the members of its associated ethnic group, to ensure that Singaporeans remain rooted to their Asian heritage even as they compete globally" (Jain & Wee 2015: 73). The fourth main state-delineated ethnic category, Others, has no "mother tongue" (Wee 2002: 287), and the entire ethnic categorization system together is known as the CMIO (Chinese-Malay-Indian-Others) model (Walid Jumblatt Abdullah 2015: 492; Velayutham 2016: 455).

In addition to English, Mandarin, Malay and Tamil, a large number of other languages and varieties have long documented histories on the island, many extending much farther back than the arrival of the British in 1819, as Singapore, likely occupied since the second century CE, has "for centuries…served as a meeting place for Arabs, Chinese, Malays, traders from the Indonesian islands and elsewhere in Southeast Asia" (Bolton & Ng 2014: 308). Indeed, Singapore's sociolinguistic history "reveals a complex range of language practices that encompasses several languages, including different varieties of the same language, multiple modalities and various social contexts" (Chew 2012: 88), even into the colonial period, where Bolton & Ng (2014: 308) report "striking ethnic and linguistic diversity" complementing Singapore's "multicultural cosmopolitanism". Some of the other languages and varieties making up this diverse sociolinguistic milieu include Baba Malay, Banjarese, Bazaar Malay, Bengali, Boyanese, Bugis, Chetty Malay, Cantonese, Foochow, Gujarati, Hainanese, Hakka, Hindi, Hokkien, Javanese, Kristang, Malayalam, Minangkabau, Punjabi, Selat, Seletar and possibly other (Orang Laut-related) dialects of Riau Malay, Singapore Sign Language, Singlish, Teochew, Telugu and Urdu (Tan 1990; Lim 2009, Noriah Mohamed 2009: 57; Anderbeck 2012, Chew 2012; Bolton & Ng 2014; Juma'at Misman 2017: 9–10), as well as a number of other languages and varieties with smaller numbers of speakers.

Unfortunately, with the exception of Singlish (a discussion of which is beyond the scope of this paper), where many Singaporeans once spoke these languages at home, the consensus is now clear: many of these varieties face "imminent endangerment" in Singapore (Bolton & Ng 2014: 314) due to "an increasing shift to English [or Mandarin] as the only vernacular and identity marker" (Lim 2016: 297) and a general lack of interest in and prestige for the vernacular languages (Brampy & Kandiah 1996; Li Wei; Saravanan & Ng 1997; Kaur 2003, Pillai 2009; Morita 2015) – a language shift that has been going on for decades (Gupta & Yeok 1995, Dixon 2005). Following the government's mandate in 1966 that the four official languages would be the only languages of instruction permitted in schools (Bolton & Ng 2014: 309), and thereafter

in 1987 that "English would be taught at the 'first language' level, and MTLs at the 'second language' level" (Kuo & Chan 2016: 19), most younger Singaporeans, including myself, will learn English and our state-sanctioned MTL in school (Ng 2014: 364), with no formal instruction in any other language that we might claim as part of our heritage, unless we seek private external tutelage or qualify to study a third language – which even then is restricted to German, French, Japanese, Spanish, Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Mandarin or Malay, languages that "meet Singapore's economic and diplomatic needs" (Chan 2014: 14). Although in recent years the government has allowed for other languages, especially the so-called Non-Tamil Indian Languages (NTILs) Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu, to serve as "semiofficial" MTLs (Jain & Wee 2018: 99), and also considering that the situation is more complex in some speech communities, such as in the Malay- (Cavallaro & Serwe 2010) and Tamil-speaking communities (Vaish 2007), the majority of most younger Singaporeans nevertheless now use Singlish, English and/or their state-mandated mother tongue in place of the vernacular languages in almost all domains (Bolton & Ng 2014; Siemund, Schulz & Schweinberger 2014) – the state's language policies, together with "economic forces", have "created a sweeping momentum in favour of English and at the expense of the other languages of Singapore" (Cavallaro & Serwe 2010: 163).

Kristang (iso 639-3: mcm) is one of these critically endangered "other" languages. It is spoken primarily in Singapore and Melaka, Malaysia, with additional diaspora communities in Kuala Lumpur and Penang in Malaysia (Baxter 1988: 1, 1996, Gunn 2003: 257), Perth in Australia (Pillai 2015: 79–80), the United Kingdom and Canada (Baxter 1988: 17), and elsewhere[2]. Kristang itself is also closely related to (and is likely the progenitor of) Patuá or Makista, spoken in Macau (Pinharanda Nunes 2012: 315–316), Batavia and Tugu Creole, spoken in the Tugu suburb of Jakarta, Indonesia (Maurer 2011; Suratminto et al. 2016), and the now moribund Bidau Creole Portuguese (Baxter 1990; Baxter & Cardoso 2017) and varieties spoken in Timor, Ternate, Ambon, Sokor, Larantuka, Banda, Ugung Pandang, Martapura, Sumatra and in other former Portuguese holdings in the Malayan archipelago (Holm 1989: 294; Baxter 1996).

In Singapore and most of the other communities listed above, Kristang is associated with the community known as the Portuguese-Eurasians, who are mainly the descendants of mixed marriages between arriving Portuguese colonizers and mostly Malay residents of Melaka starting from the 16th century (Pereira 2006: 13). Together with Eurasians of other European stock, especially Dutch and British Eurasians, who together with the Portuguese Eurasians hold "particular significance" because of their longer historical presence (Braga-Blake & Ebert-Oehlers 1992: 33), the Eurasians currently make up between 0.4% to 0.43% of the population in Singapore (Braga-Blake 1992a: 11; Rappa 2000: 165), historically never having exceeded 2.2% (Braga-Blake

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[2] It should be noted that the status of Singapore, Seremban, Perth and many of the other locations mentioned as possessing "communities of speakers" is often contested, as well as the language's "endangered" status (Boo 2017).

1992a: 15). In the CMIO model outlined above, although Eurasians have been able to list themselves as 'Eurasian' on their National Registration Identity Cards from 1990 (as opposed to "Other") (Pereira 2017: 394), Eurasians are still classified as 'Others' in other aspects of government (e.g. Mathews 2018), meaning that within the realms of language policy and education, Eurasians have no official state-sanctioned MTL, and must study either Mandarin, Malay or Tamil as their MTL in school in addition to English – even if they do not speak the MTL at home (Wee 2002: 289).

I myself was raised in a monolingual English household, but studied English and Mandarin, the latter being a choice my parents made for me when I was a child. My paternal (Chinese) grandparents speak English, Hakka and Baba Malay, while my maternal (Eurasian) grandparents speak English and a very small bit of Kristang. My parents only speak English, so I never acquired Hakka and Baba Malay, and I had no knowledge of Kristang's existence until I was 22 (further detailed in Section 3.2).

Different perspectives on the state of the language from both extant speakers and speech communities mean that a number of elements of Kristang's contemporary situation remain contentious. Below, I elaborate on the current debates over Kristang's status as a creole, its name, and the number of speakers it possesses. Each in itself remains an intractable problem, but their insolvability still illuminates important facts about Kristang and its historical and contemporary context.

2.1. The language as a creole

Within linguistics, modern-day Kristang is considered a Portuguese-based creole with "contributions from Malay and several other languages" (Baxter & de Silva 2004: vii). Much of the vocabulary is Portuguese-derived, but also includes loanwords from Dutch, English, Cantonese, Hakka, Hokkien, Hindi, Konkani, Malayalam and Sanskrit (Baxter & de Silva 2004: xvii). Meanwhile, varieties of Malay, especially Bazaar Malay and Baba Malay, have served as the basis for much of the language's current grammar and phonology (Surin 1994, Baxter & de Silva 2004: vii, Baxter & Bastos 2012), although it has also been subject to increasing influence from English (Rappa & Gupta 1995; Baxter 2005; Pillai, Soh & Kajita 2014) and may possibly also have some influence from Hokkien (Southern Min) (Baxter & Bastos 2012: 52).

Claims that Kristang is "sixteenth-century Portuguese" (Baxter & de Silva 2004: vii), "an ancient form of the Portuguese language" (Braddell 1933), "crude Portuguese" (Shelley 1984: 13:04–13:38), a "long-stymied medieval dialect" (Rappa 2013: 193), a "potpourri of vulgarisms and expletives" (Rappa 2013: 144), or that it is just "synonymous with Portuguese" (Boss & Nunis 2016: 13) are therefore all inaccurate. The language possesses its own unique phonology, grammar and syntactic structure that are the result of contact between these and other languages, and has evolved over time, just as all languages do (Baxter & de Silva 2004: vii). Like DeGraff (2003),

Ansaldo & Matthews (2007) and others, I do not consider creoles as "special or abnormal linguistic creations" that merit either prejudice or an exceptional method of inquiry; they are simply languages that happen to be "products of high-contact environments in specific historical settings" (Ansaldo & Matthews 2007: 4), a category that does not imply different, divergent or abnormal varieties when compared to so-called 'regular' languages.

2.2. The name of the language

In addition to Kristang, other names for the language include Papia Kristang, Papiá Cristang, Cristang, Papia, Papia Cristão, Serani, Bahasa Serani, Portugis, Português de Melaka, Portugis di Melaka, Melakan Portuguese, Melaka Creole, Melaka Creole Portuguese, Seranor Melaka Creole Portuguese, Bahasa Geragau, Luso-Malay, Melakan, Malaqueiro, Malaquenho, Malaquense, Malaquês or Malayo-Portuguese (Hancock 2009: 296–297; Baxter 2012: 137). Speakers, community members who do not speak the language and non-Portuguese-Eurasian researchers and linguists in Singapore and elsewhere all prefer (and reject) different names for various historical, ethnic and political reasons (O'Neill & Féblot-Augustins 1999; Rosa 2015: 119). In this paper, without prejudice to any party, the language will be referred to as *Kristang* for the reader's convenience; while the other names listed above, and others that may not have been listed, may be recognizable to the majority of the community of speakers in Singapore, *Kristang* is easily the most recognizable name in that community, and has been widely used both within and outside that community to refer to the language in Singapore since the early twentieth century (e.g. Pereira 2006: 23; Chew 2012: 120).

2.3 The number of speakers of the language

Estimates of the remaining number of Kristang speakers vary considerably, with almost no institutional statistical data collected in either Melaka or Singapore (Baxter 2005: 15–16), nor in any of the other communities. Up to 2014, a current combined speaker population of about 1,000 individuals or less was accepted by most linguists working on the language, with less than 750 speakers in Melaka, less than 100 speakers in Singapore, and a small number of speakers in the diaspora communities (Baxter 2005: 16, 2010: 121, 2012: 121–123; Pillai, Soh & Kajita 2014: 75). Since 2015, the figures reported for Melaka have significantly increased, with "more than 1,000 speakers in Melaka [and] another 2,000 in the rest of the country" (Boo 2017) in April 2017; and then as many as "4,000 to 5,000 who can speak Melaka Portuguese to varying degrees of fluency" in November 2017, with "30 percent […] in the upper brackets of fluency, another 30 percent […] in the middle brackets, and the remaining 40 percent […] least

fluent." (Lim 2017), which equates to 1,200 to 1,500 speakers in the "upper brackets of fluency", 1,200 to 1,500 in the middle, and 1,600 to 2,000 under "least fluent". The most recent estimate, by Spolsky (2018: 71), again reduces the number of speakers in Melaka to "fewer than 500 people".

In Singapore, at the commencement of the initiative in March 2016, Kodrah recognized the numerous issues that attempting to count speakers of a language poses (e.g. Heller & Duchêne 2007: 3, Moore; Pietikäinen & Blommaert 2010); simultaneously, we also reluctantly acknowledge that such enumeration still carries a great deal of currency in the public sphere (e.g. Muehlmann 2012: 163–164). Kodrah thus continues to report an estimate of 100 speakers to grant agencies and media features, and does not include learners as speakers in this count[3]. In all our interviews, we stress that this is an estimate; it is appreciated that these 'concrete' numbers allow for access to institutional support and publicity, but for the reasons listed above and others below, it is genuinely difficult to make qualified estimates about the number of Kristang speakers in Singapore.

Numbers aside, it is acknowledged almost universally that in both Melaka (Baxter 2005: 16) and Singapore (K. M. Wong 2017: 369), intergenerational transmission of the language appears to have declined precipitously, if not ceased entirely in the latter, and most remaining fluent speakers are believed to be over 50 years of age. Recognition of the language's critically endangered status in both locales is also almost undisputed and has been described as such for over twenty years (Baxter 1988: 13–14; Rappa & Gupta 1995: 6; Baxter 2005: 1; Hancock 2009: 302; Lee 2011: 79–80; Pillai, Soh & Kajita 2014: 13–14; Carvalho & Lucchesi 2016: 48; Pillai, Chan & Baxter 2016: 249; Lee 2018: 70; Spolsky 2018: 71). The decline in Melaka, particularly in the Portuguese Settlement, where most Kristang speakers are concentrated, appears to be gentler, with Kristang apparently "still widely used in the Settlement especially among fishermen, middle-aged and older residents" (Pillai 2015: 93) and "in the family domain where there are still fluent older speakers" (Pillai, Soh & Kajita 2014: 83). Nonetheless, almost all authors characterize ongoing shifts in the Settlement away from Kristang toward English and Malay as "alarming" (Baxter 2005: 21; Pillai, Soh & Kajita 2014: 76).

3. Overview of Kristang's history and current sociolinguistic situation

3.1. Kristang's Genesis in Melaka

It is generally agreed that Kristang's "roots lie in the Portuguese conquest of Melaka in 1511" (Baxter 2010: 121); though most authors avoid speculating exactly when

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[3] We also sometimes advise, in response to follow-up questions, that there are approximately 50 to 100 *fluent* elderly speakers (so the unfortunate distinction between 'fluent' and 'non-fluent') in Singapore, based on the number of heritage speakers who have joined Kodrah Kristang.

Kristang appeared as a distinct variety, it is likely that it happened during the subsequent Portuguese occupation of Melaka up till 1641. Baxter (2005) suggests that Kristang most likely came about as a result of "the creation of a *casado* class (European Portuguese officially married to local women)" in the city which "produced stable bi- and multi-lingual *mestiço* populations loyal to Portugal" (10). However, he also acknowledges that, as a result of observed similarities between Kristang and other Portuguese creoles, especially Afro-Portuguese creoles, "that a pidgin originating in Africa could also have been present is possible," and that Kristang may have then germinated from this pidgin rather than it being a completely new variety as a result of contact between Melakan inhabitants and the arriving Portuguese (Baxter 1988: 4). He also suggests that Kristang's close resemblance to its "offshoots" Makista (in Macau) and Tugu Creole (in Batavia) in particular may mean that the language had already assumed its current "analytical form" before 1642, as the fall of Portuguese Melaka to the Dutch in 1641 put an end to the close relationship between Melaka, Macau and Batavia that must have engendered such similarities between these three closely-related varieties of Creole Portuguese (Baxter 2010: 122–123). Nonetheless, detailed information about Kristang through Portuguese Melaka (1511–1641) and then Dutch Melaka (1641–1795, 1818–1823) up till the early nineteenth century remains scarce due to a paucity of data from both eras, although surviving Dutch records do allow a number of assumptions to be made about the size, constitution and position of the Kristang-speaking community within colonial Dutch society (see, for example, Baxter (1988)'s treatment of the time period).

An early mention of the Melakan variety of Kristang is in an 1827 census of Melaka, where the "Siranies or native Portugueze […] speak a language peculiar to themselves which may be denominated as Creole Portuguese as the original has been greatly corrupted" (Dickinson 1941: 260–261). Further research since then has facilitated the charting of Kristang's gradual decline in Melaka under the British administration of Melaka (1795–1818, 1823–1957) and Malaysia's subsequent independence from the United Kingdom in 1957 to the present day, with milestone work by Rêgo (1938), Hancock (1969), Baxter (1988) and Baxter & de Silva (2004) providing an understanding of the Melakan variety's linguistic evolution in terms of grammar and lexicon over the last seventy years, while research already mentioned has determined the language to have something "in the vicinity of 750 fluent functional speakers" in Melaka (Baxter 2012: 130). The majority of these speakers are today concentrated in Melaka's Portuguese Settlement, a situation that has remained largely the same since the 1933 resettlement of the majority of Kristang speakers in Melaka to this area and the resulting creation of this "large Kristang speech community" (Baxter 2005: 15). The Portuguese Settlement continues to be "the core of Kristang culture and activities" (Lee 2004: 78), and recent efforts to revitalize the language have led to, for example, the development of a CD of Kristang songs and prayers (Pillai & Singho 2014), the development of a textbook (Singho et al. 2017), and a general increase in

awareness of the existence of Kristang in the wider public sphere, especially online (e.g. Lohan 2011; Boo 2017; Lim 2017). A fuller account of the revitalization effort based in the Settlement is detailed in Pillai, Phillip & Soh (2017).

Kristang is also undergoing a relative renaissance in terms of literature, music, and published material beyond academic work. Outside of the Portuguese Settlement in Melaka, Eurasian writer Joan Margaret Marbeck, now based in Seremban, Malaysia, has also produced two collections of short texts, poems and stories, the latter with an accompanying CD (Marbeck 1995, 2004b), two Kristang-English phrasebooks (Marbeck 2004a, 2012), a Kristang-English dictionary (Marbeck 2011b), a Kristang-Russian phrasebook (Marbeck & Pogadaev 2016), a book of Kristang songs and poetry (Marbeck 2011a), a Kristang monodrama, *Seng Marianne*, submitted for the Lusophone Festival in Macau in 2006 and 2009 (Marbeck 2009), and a Kristang musical, *Kazamintu na Praya*, performed in Melaka in November 2007 (Marbeck 2007). Kristang cooking is very much alive, with heritage cookbooks such as Marbeck, Ee & Ḍayas (1998), Nunis (2015), Nunis (2018) and Sta. Maria (2017) providing snippets of and anecdotes about the language alongside Kristang recipes, and establishments such as kumi in Kuala Lumpur and The Majestic Malacca promoting the language alongside the cuisine (Augustin 2017; Gopinath 2017). Also still vibrant is music in Kristang, with Melaka-based bands such as Tres Cambrados producing CDs for commercial sale (Tres Cambrados 2014), a thriving tradition of performance in the Settlement itself (see Sarkissian 2000 for a full description), and the revival of less well-known forms of musical expression such as the Serani Teng Teng (Putri Zanina 2016).

3.2. Kristang in Singapore

The differences between contemporary varieties of Kristang in Singapore and Melaka remain unclear: Baxter (1996), for example, notes that while Kristang in Singapore "is essentially the same as that of Malacca", it is "more conservative, resembling the speech of elderly Malacca Creoles" (Baxter 1996: 309), and the situation is further complicated because many families in both cities remain closely linked. However, it is all but certain that the Singapore Kristang-speaking community possesses its own distinct history, a sketch of which is presented below.

The Singapore Kristang-speaking community likely began as an 'offshoot' of the Melaka community (Holm 1989: 292; de Silva Jayasuriya 2008: 4), originating in the 1820s from an "exodus of Kristangs to areas of growth" (Baxter 2012: 118) such as Singapore from Melaka in the nineteenth century, as it became difficult to locate suitable opportunities for employment and upward social movement in the latter (Teixeira 1987: 10; Braga-Blake 1992a: 15; Boss & Nunis 2016: 28; Monteiro 1984: 01:02–01:42; Baxter 1996: 309; 2005: 15). By the latter half of the nineteenth century, this Portuguese-Eurasian community had coalesced around the Catholic Portuguese

Mission initiated by the priest Francisco da Silva Pinto e Maia in 1825, and its two main institutions of St Joseph's Church at Victoria St (founded 1850) and St Anthony's School (founded 1879) (Boss & Nunis 2016). Kristang was maintained and transmitted both in these institutions and at the Eurasian homes around these institutions along Middle Rd and Victoria St (Clarke 1992: 73; Chandy 1979), coexisting with other languages in the nascent Portuguese-Eurasian community, notably Bazaar Malay, while Standard Portuguese and English were mostly absent from Portuguese-Eurasian homes, even until the 1880s (K. M. Wong forthcoming). The first direct attestation of Singapore Kristang in academic literature appears to be Coelho (1886: 718-23), who provides a glossary and word-list of "Singapore Indo-Portuguese" based on his interactions with the Kristang-speaking founder of St Anthony's School Father Santa Anna de Cunha; according to Coelho, the latter calls the language "Kristang".

By the 1890s, priests at the Portuguese Mission were expected to be able to preach in Kristang to cater to the congregation at the Church (K. M. Wong forthcoming), while starting from 1892, troupes began to stage Kristang-language versions of popular plays at theatres around the Victoria St area, a hitherto-forgotten tradition that would last more than 40 years across more than 50 documented performances (K. M. Wong forthcoming). Parallel to this flourishing of 'local Portuguese' theatre was the growth of additional Eurasian enclaves at Selegie Rd, Serangoon Rd and Katong starting from the early 1900s (Clarke 1992); of these, Katong has often been characterized as strongly Kristang-speaking since its early days by collaborators and Kristang speakers alive today, and remains strongly associated with Portuguese-Eurasian culture in the present-day memory of the community (Tessensohn 2001). Together, the outward growth of the community in these ways may have contributed to at least a fair amount of public knowledge about the existence of this 'local version of Portuguese': by 1924, *The Straits Times* was characterizing the 4,000 Portuguese Eurasians in Singapore as speaking "a kind of Portuguese patois" in its coverage of the visit of the Archbishop of Goa (*The Straits Times* 1924), and a decade later, *The Straits Times* column 'Notes of the Day', written by the anonymous Anak Singapura (Malay: 'Child of Singapore') observed in 1937 that "everybody knows that an archaic patois is still spoken by the Portuguese Eurasians of Malacca and Singapore" (Anak Singapura 1937).

However, the same column observes that Kristang sermons at St Joseph's Church had already died out in 1939:

> The Portuguese Mission still recruits its priests from Portugal (although their language is quite different from the local patois), and St Joseph's Church in Victoria Street […] is still in the old diocese of Macao, but sermons are no longer preached in that church in the "Lingua de Christao". This custom has come to an end in the last decade (Anak Singapura 1939).

It also characterizes the vitality of Kristang in Singapore as declining:

> Let us consider a typical family of the Portuguese Eurasian community of Singapore. A member of this community who is in his early fifties tells me that his mother, although borne and bred in the Colony, does not know English at all, but only the local Portuguese patois; he himself and his wife know both English and the patois; but their children know only English. Accordingly it is evident that a generation of Singapore Portuguese is growing up which knows not the tongue of its sturdy forebears, who ruled Malacca for more than a hundred years (Anak Singapura 1939).

This dovetails with the personal sociolinguistic history of my maternal grandmother, Maureen Martens née Danker, who was born in 1935: her parents, likely the same generation as children of the member of the community mentioned above, spoke mostly English, though they could understand Kristang, while her maternal grandmother, likely the same generation as the member of the community, spoke Kristang exclusively. It also matches other accounts of the same time period: Mathews (2002), who studied at St Joseph's Institution along Bras Basah Rd in the early 1930s, observes that "there were quite a number of boys in school whose parents spoke […] Kristang" but that most Eurasian students themselves spoke only English, including Mathews himself (18:35–19:25). Meanwhile, Danker (2003)'s mother "was not very good at English" and preferred to speak Kristang, while he himself is the reverse, "not really" fluent in Kristang and more comfortable in English (08:01–08:46). These accounts also corroborate the wider Singapore Eurasian community's documented shift to the use of English and a more British, middle-class identity (Pereira 2016) throughout the first half of the twentieth century (further detailed in Section 9.1), supported by schooling in English (Monteiro 1984: 27:19–27:38). It also suggests that in 1939, this community-wide shift from Kristang to English for Portuguese-Eurasians was already well underway with religious domain loss for Kristang, a shift that was yet to happen in the then-nascent Portuguese Settlement in Melaka.

This decline was likely then cemented following the Second World War and decolonization, when Eurasians were resettled to avoid "the formation of ghettos" and promote "spatial integration" (Henderson 2014: 69) starting from the 1960s during Singapore's transition to independence and industrialization (Daus 1989: 67; Clarke 1992: 95; Rocha 2012: 107–108; Heng & Yeo 2017: 24, 7), and the aforementioned language policies promoting English and the MTLs came into effect. With the ongoing language shift to English, these together had the effect of breaking up the Eurasian Kristang-speaking enclaves and further reducing the prestige of Kristang, such that Hancock (1971) writes that Singapore Kristang speakers are "not centered in any one area of the city" (Hancock 1971: 522) in the way that speakers in Melaka are. Although a visible community of Kristang speakers was evidently still holding out in Katong and the surrounding areas in the early 1970s (Braga-Blake 1973: 8), by the late 1980s, Daus (1989), outlining the Singapore Portuguese Eurasian community, was so motivated to describe the sociolinguistic situation as follows:

> Cristão, the Portuguese Eurasian language, has not survived in Singapore. Gone are the days when [the Portuguese Eurasians] communicated with each other in Creole and when those in Singapore spoke their own English dialect derived from Cristão and with Creole phonetics and the typical sing-song intonation […] The second generation only knows a few phrases of Cristão (Daus 1989: 75–76)[4].

Meanwhile, on Christmas Day 1988, *The Straits Times* described Kristang as "going the way of Latin" (Lee & Murugan 1988). Featured in the same article, the paper presented the situation of Kristang within the family of retired Eurasian customs officer, Francis Rodrigues, as such:

> With a tinge of regret, Mr Francis Rodrigues, 79, a retired customs officer, said: "As children, we always spoke to our parents in English. I know a smattering of Cristao, but my children hardly know a word."…Today, he is resigned to the fact that his four children and his grandchildren will never learn to speak Cristao or identify with it. (Lee & Murugan 1988)

The Ethnic Integration Policy of 1989, which "ensures that there is a balanced mix of the various ethnic communities in HDB towns" (Housing Development Board 2015), meant any remaining Kristang speech community was now permanently fragmented and diffused across the island, making it much more difficult to understand the size and nature of the contemporary Kristang speech community in Singapore compared to the Portuguese Settlement in Melaka.

Within the Eurasian community, attempts at reigniting interest in Kristang were frequent following a revival of attention to Eurasian culture precipitated by the EA in the early 1990s (see Section 9.1 and Pereira (2016)), including classes from 1994 to 2004 organized by a group of Eurasian women led by Kathleen Woodford, Ivy Bohn and Ruth Carroll, and the launch of the Scully & Zuzarte (2004) dictionary, written by two other women in the group, Valerie Scully and Catherine Zuzarte. The dictionary sparked renewed interest in the question of Kristang as a MTL for Eurasians in Singapore schools, leading to two letters to *The Straits Times* from community members who wished to see Kristang gain this status. Pereira & Carroll (2004) argued that "Eurasians have been obliged to choose mother tongue languages which are not their own […] but we are not Malays, nor are we Chinese or Indians", while De Silva (2004) further noted that "it is not only an issue of fairness […] but also a matter of being far-sighted about preserving the culture and traditions of Portuguese-Eurasians". However, then-EA president Bryan Davenport's reply, also in *The Straits Times*, made it clear that the while the EA was invested in preserving Kristang, it would not be able to support making Kristang a MTL:

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[4] It presently remains unclear what Daus is referring to with his mention of an "English dialect derived from Cristão".

> In Singapore, [Kristang] is spoken by only a minority of Eurasians who have roots in Malacca and who form about one-third of the Eurasians here […] Eurasians of other European descent, for example, Dutch and English, do not speak Kristang […] While the Eurasian Association encourages the preservation and use of Kristang from a cultural and heritage point of view, we do not see it useful and feasible as a mother tongue to be taught in schools here (Davenport 2004).

Interest in Kristang waned again following this exchange, with no more classes at the EA after 2010 due to "low participation" (The Eurasian Association Singapore 2017: 10). By this time, the language itself was in a tenuous state: Scully (2000: 00:43–00:49) asserts that there were no more than "only about a couple of speakers" left in Singapore. Nevertheless, she, Catherine Zuzarte and others in the original 1994 group continued to promote the language and Kristang culture through the Kristang Cultural Performance Troupe, which Scully established in 1991 as the Eurasian Song & Dance Troupe (S2006 Organising Committee 2006) and which continued to perform regularly in conjunction with the EA and Siglap South Community Centre at community and national events (The New Eurasian 2009b, 2012; The Eurasian Association Singapore 2017: 10). The EA, too, continued to promote Kristang through a column called 'Kristang Corner' in its magazine *The New Eurasian* (e.g. The New Eurasian 2014) and other collateral like a music video of the well-known Kristang song *Jingkli Nona* (The New Eurasian 2009a), a Kristang section in the Eurasian Showcase gallery at the Eurasian Community House (The New Eurasian 2010) and profiles of prominent Kristang speakers, such as former Member of Parliament Joseph "Joe" Conceicao (The New Eurasian 2011).

Despite these efforts, Kristang remains mostly unknown in Singapore compared to Melaka and Malaysia at large. Within academia, Singapore Kristang has been generally visible enough to attract passing mentions from scholarly work (Teixeira 1987: 44–46; Braga-Blake 1973: 8; Hancock 1975: 212; Wexler 1983: 346; Holm 1989: 292; Gunn 2003: 257; Rosa 2015: 92), the Singaporean press, which occasionally mentions it in relation to the Eurasian community, culture and/or cuisine (e.g. Henderson 1936; Theseira 1954; Williams 1955; Oon 1981; Lee & Murugan 1988), and guests officiating at Eurasian-related events (e.g. Lee 2006; Lee 2007). However, most Singaporeans' recognition of the term 'Kristang', if at all, is likely limited to food[5], and even most younger Eurasians, and "even some adults, might not even be aware of the Kristang language's existence" (Jerald Francisco, cited in The New Eurasian 2015b: 12) – the term Kristang is likely to "draw blank stares" (De Silva 2017: 10). There is

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[5] As with the Melaka-based community, Kristang cookbooks featuring various aspects of the Kristang language, such as Noronha & Noronha (2015) and Pereira (2009), remain popular, and together with restaurants showcasing Eurasian cuisine such as Quentin's, Folklore and Mary's Kafe, arguably often provide the most 'visible' (if not the only) point of reference for non-Eurasian Singaporeans who have not encountered Eurasians and the Kristang culture and language before (Lam 2017; V. Lee 2017).

also little discussion of Kristang in the public sphere, and no use of it in schools, churches, and other traditional domains that have maintained a longer presence in Melaka. This is likely tied to low public awareness of the Eurasian community at large (The New Eurasian 2015b; Cheng 2017), with a significant number of Singaporeans unaware of the community's now "elusive" existence and history on the island (Lam 2017) – to say nothing of Kristang.

Today, aside from Coelho (1886)'s grammatical sketch, short profiles in the media and periodicals by Bhalla (1997), Waas (2002) and de Rozario (2006), and glossaries in Tessensohn (2001) and Tessensohn (2003), the fullest treatment of the Singapore variety of Kristang is Scully & Zuzarte (2004, 2017)'s *The Most Comprehensive Eurasian Heritage Dictionary*. Meanwhile, in the intervening 118 years, there appear to have been few to no attempts to determine the rough size of the Singapore Kristang-speaking community, or the language's domains of use in Singapore. Even in official domains, neither the British government of the Straits Settlement or the government of independent Singapore since 1965 have ever collected documentation of or statistics on Kristang speakers (although this situation is the same for other vernacular languages in the country); neither has the Singapore Eurasian Association (EA) since its inception in 1919.

I myself, too, had no idea that Kristang existed until January 2015. Although my mother and maternal grandparents did know of Kristang, with my grandmother actually able to understand it, growing up, I was completely unaware of the language's existence because of the Eurasian community's overall shift to English, with no one in my immediate family almost ever using the language, and because members of the older generation still refer to Kristang as 'Portuguese', which meant that I was never aware of Kristang's existence as a separate variety. It was only after beginning research for a popular linguistics publication on endangered languages in January 2015 (K.M. Wong 2015) that I realized that the language was in fact still spoken in Singapore. I began fieldwork on Kristang proper in May 2015 under the aegis of the *Peskisa di Papia Kristang na Singapura* (*the Kristang Language in Singapore Documentation Project* (KLSDP), henceforth referred to as 'Peskisa') to address what I perceived as significant gaps in the understanding of the current status of Kristang in the country, and also to consider how it might possibly be revitalized. I also began learning the language from KLSDP collaborators and from the extant material available such as Baxter (1988) and Scully & Zuzarte (2004).

4. Korsang di Kristang / "Heart of Kristang" (March to May 2015)

In March 2015, after two months of intensive study of the language and while doing research on the elements of a successful revitalization program, I came across the words

of Kipp (2000b), which were to have a longstanding influence on my work with Kristang:

> Don't ask permission. Go ahead and get started, don't wait even five minutes. Don't wait for a grant. Don't wait, even if you can't speak the language. Even if you have only ten words. Get started. Teach those ten words to someone who knows another ten words. (Kipp 2000b: 8)

Although at the time, in addition to my undergraduate linguistics training, I had already undergone some formal teacher training and apprenticeship in Singapore's public school system, and recognized the need for others to start learning the language as well, I questioned my own ability to teach Kristang, since I had only become recently acquainted with the language. Peskisa collaborators, moreover, were also not very invested in teaching the language to new speakers, believing such an endeavor was either not worth the energy and effort that would have to go into it, that they were not the right person for the job, or did not see why they should be concerned since the language has little instrumental or symbolic value in contemporary Singapore, a situation also faced by other endangered varieties in other locales such as Arbanasi (Meštrić & Šimičić 2017: 149). When I did encounter speakers who expressed positive emotions about knowing Kristang, I encountered almost the same situation that Gasser (2017: 522) described during her fieldwork on Wamesa in West Papua, where

> while speakers were proud of the existence of my project and excited to teach me their language, they showed no interest in guiding the research or becoming collaborators rather than teachers, and as there was no sense among speakers that the language might be endangered, there was no demand for a maintenance or revitalization programme.

Indeed, Peskisa collaborators were the ones who informed me of the previous rounds of Kristang classes. However, on both occasions, the classes had quickly fizzled out after interest declined, suggesting that the community itself was either not very interested in or still aware of the language's existence and its endangered status.

Kipp (2000b)'s work encouraged me to overcome some of my insecurities and to take up the challenge of spreading awareness about the language on my own, even teaching a little of the language, although on a small scale. My extension of his reasoning was that even if I ended up teaching something wrong, word would spread in the community that I was doing so, and I would be corrected by speakers who knew better than me – hopefully drawing them into revitalization efforts (an assumption that eventually would prove true).

From March to July 2015, I piloted the first iteration of a Kristang small-group course, then known as *Korsang di Kristang* ('Heart of Kristang', henceforth known as 'Korsang'), with a small group of friends – mainly language and linguistics enthusiasts,

most of whom were also involved in the publication, *Unravel*, that had originally sparked my interest in Kristang. Korsang sessions were held at my family home, and I developed the syllabus and all lessons, handouts and worksheets on my own based on the material I had previously referred to and in consultation with two speaker collaborators who were willing to vet these items. Figure 1 is a sample of a handout used in Korsang.


Figure 1. Korsang di Kristang handouts for Session 7

While running Korsang, I was able to develop a strong relationship with the EA. In particular, I found the administration, then under Benett Theseira, warmly receptive to my work on the language, both under the Peskisa and with Korsang. The EA invited me to remain in contact with them regarding my efforts – I was able to advertise in *The New Eurasian* that I was seeking speakers to interview for the Peskisa (The New Eurasian 2015a) and my work on Kristang was featured in a *New Eurasian* profile (The New Eurasian 2016).

5. Kodrah Kristang Phase 0 (February to July 2016)

With support from the EA for my work on Kristang, I then secured support from the residential college at the National University of Singapore (NUS) I resided in, the College of Alice and Peter Tan (CAPT), to hold a new round of classes in one of CAPT's seminar rooms on campus. This new round of classes was called *Kodrah Kristang* (referred to as 'Kodrah Group 1'), and was advertised to the public for the first time through the EA and CAPT (see Figure 2). Something important to me – against the advice of many of my collaborators – was that classes would be free of charge for as long as I could run them without running into financial difficulty myself (see Section 9.5). I see this as one of the ways in which I can "return something" to the community (Rice 2006: 139) and make the language as accessible to new learners as possible.

Also important to me was that classes would be open to everyone – as in Hawai'i, "tribal ownership of language or unique tribal rights to a language" (Cowell 2012: 175) are not concepts that are as prevalent in multiethnic Singapore as they are in, for example, the United States; moreover, as some of my collaborators and contacts at the EA advised, the dire situation of Kristang meant that new speakers, Eurasian or non-Eurasian, would be critical for the language's long-term survival. These two principles – keeping classes free-of-charge and open to everyone regardless of ethnicity or racial affiliation – have since become fundamental pillars of how Kodrah, as a larger initiative, operates (further detailed in Section 9.1).
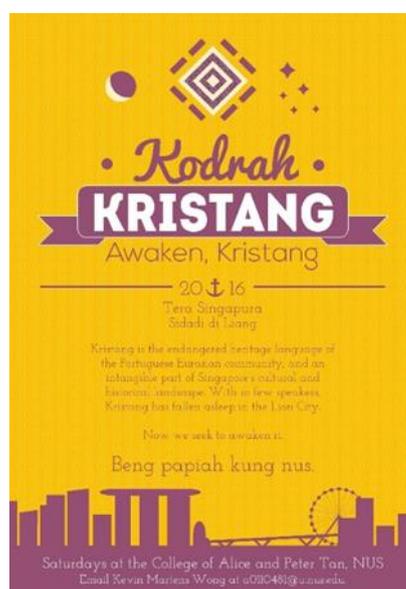
Figure 2. Poster advertising Kodrah Group 1

The primary reason I took this tremendous leap was because I was privileged to encounter a speaker of Kristang, Bernard Mesenas, a retired English teacher and the first speaker I met to encourage me to pursue revitalization efforts for the language. I first met Bernard in February 2016 after he and his brother, Clement, saw a call in *the New Eurasian* for Kristang speakers to participate in the Peskisa. Bernard was overcome with emotion when he heard that a new generation of speakers was interested in learning the language, which he had not spoken in years. Bernard, in his own words, now continues to be a passionate and energetic "seventy-nine years young" anchor of our current efforts with Kodrah, but it was he who first motivated me to think about how I might conduct classes for Kristang for the public. His rationale was that I was already undergoing training to be an English teacher in the Singapore public school system; why not port over my linguistics and English teacher training to Kristang?

I was still hesitant to lead public classes because of the issues of 'native' speakership and authenticity that I have already mentioned, but I agreed to a sort of dual-teacher system: I would teach from the "front" of class (i.e. as the main teacher) and focus on the more grammatical-functional aspects of the language – the bulk of

class. Meanwhile, Bernard, because of his age, could not teach from the front, but he would be in class helping to course-correct from the "back" of class (i.e. sitting with the students), and providing information about the socio-cultural aspects and traditions that went along with Kristang, such as food, stories, music and more. We refined this model further as this first iteration developed, settling on a division of class into two parts: the first with me teaching for about one and a half hours, and the second with Bernard talking about Kristang culture and tradition in a mix of Kristang and English for the remaining 30–45 minutes.
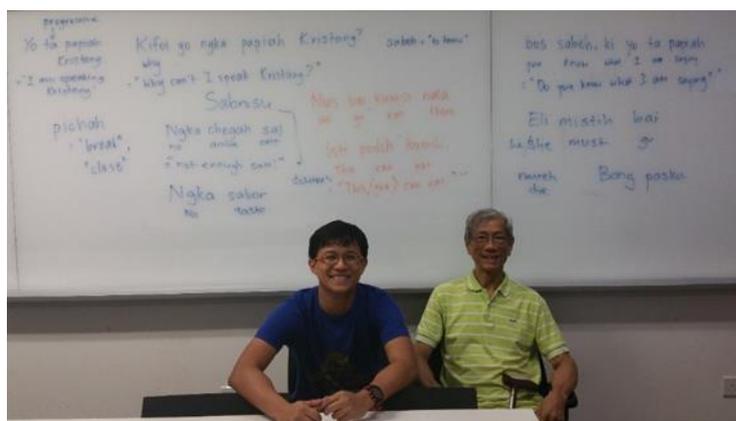

Figure 3. Bernard Mesenas (right) and the author in April 2016 after class

The first iteration of Kodrah classes under this format began on 12 March 2016, running for seven semi-weekly sessions with up to 14 students, including four undergraduates (including three who had previously participated in Korsang), a marketing administrator and her daughter, a primary school teacher, a then-editor at one of Singapore's major independent publisher companies, and a fulltime National Serviceman. Five students were non-Eurasian; most of the Eurasian students began class only able to recall Kristang phrases that were still used at home, but two students had previous experience with Standard Continental Portuguese and Standard Castilian Spanish, which meant that they picked up Kristang much faster due to a significant amount of cognate vocabulary.

Class was thus tailored to cater to this diverse range of learners, with varying activities, teaching methods and materials. However, a common thread across these was that minimal English be used, in alignment with Hinton (2002: 3)'s assertive suggestion that there should be "NO ENGLISH". An emphasis was also placed on making the language relevant to learners, which is crucial in developing long-term interest in the language (Green 2010: 184–185, Noori 2013: 128), by immediately developing learners' conversational ability in the language, rather than their reading and writing (Supahan & Supahan 2003: 195). This meant that many activities were multimodal and speech-oriented (e.g. involving learners solving a puzzle or filling an information gap by conversing and then taking notes, etc., rather than reading a passage or answering

questions about a written text). For consistency in how we displayed text on slides and in worksheets, we chose to use the orthography developed by Baxter & de Silva (2004), but also made it clear in the earlier sessions of class that students were free to spell words however they so wished.

Figure 4. Kodrah Kristang summary (revision) slides for Session 4, Kodrah Group 1

This first, experimental iteration of class ran for just seven sessions between March and May 2016, closing with our venue at CAPT for the NUS holiday period, which began in the second week of May. However, these seven sessions were critical in cementing Bernard's and my resolve to continue holding classes, because they demonstrated that there was significant public and individual interest in having more structured Kristang classes online and among various personal networks, especially among Eurasians. Key indicators of this for me were that this class was featured in local blogs and media, in articles that were shared across Facebook, despite running for just seven sessions; that CAPT, the EA and myself received a number of phone calls and emails asking for information about other classes (i.e. held at venues closer to the city, at different times in the week etc.); and that despite being free-of-charge, we maintained a core pool of seven to eight regular students out of the fourteen total that registered for class.

At this stage, the initiative was a small, one-off class, and had not become a full-fledged endeavor involving a large group of people; however, it already demonstrated many traits of a Kodrah Kristang class that have now, two years later, characterizes the Kodrah approach to Kristang language teaching:

- a wide variety of learners of very different ages, races and backgrounds, some of whom are non-Eurasian;
- a number of heritage speaker learners with varying degrees of background in Kristang, whose expertise is recognized and promoted in class alongside (and sometimes above that of) the main teacher's;
- a strong focus on interaction-based pedagogy that encourages the formation of new friendships and relationships between learners;

- an explicit acceptance of variation in spelling, and later in pronunciation and syntax;
- and classes being free-of-charge and led by volunteers.

The class would evolve into a larger initiative over June and July 2016, following my participation in the Institute on Collaborative Language Research (CoLang) at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. In December 2015, when my interests in Kristang did not yet include language revitalization, I applied to and was accepted to CoLang. After the modest success of the first Kodrah class in May 2016, I gained partial sponsorship for the trip to Fairbanks from CAPT and the EA with an understanding that I would also develop a more structured language revitalization programme for Kristang in Singapore.

CoLang was the tipping point for my interest in revitalizing Kristang, magnifying my small but firm hope that the language of Bernard and my grandparents (who were not yet regularly attending classes) could be kept alive in a sustainable fashion Singapore, that this vision was more than worth the effort that it would take to get there – and, echoing the words of Kipp, Hale, Hinton, and countless others, that bridging the immense gap would require not just passion, but a sustainable, catalyzing plan for action and change (Migge, Léglise & Bartens 2010). CoLang affirmed my belief that I could not singlehandedly try to revitalize Kristang, and could not try to do so merely through passion and energy. One class was not enough, nor was one teacher, nor was one generation:

> The goal of bringing an endangered language back into use again, to once more have native speakers using their language in a speech community, is a long-term goal and one that takes generations of people who continue to engage in language activism. (Hinton 2011: 310)

It would take a community of people not just speaking Kristang, but being invested in Kristang and each other enough to use Kristang with each other, to bring Kristang back in Singapore. Even more alien to the Singapore context was that Kristang would have to be brought back by the community: again, as so many others have already observed before, "there is no doubt that grassroots efforts are the only ones that have any hope of turning the tide on language loss" (Gerdts 2017: 609).

At CoLang, with feedback from instructors and other CoLang participants, and input from students in the first Kodrah class, community members and linguists back home, I drafted the first version of the Kaminyu di Kodramintu ("Path of Awakening"), or in English, the Kristang Revitalization Plan, which today guides the overall design of the Kodrah initiative, basing it on successful plans and guides for revitalization in other communities such as Hinton (2002) and First Peoples' Cultural Council (2013), while framing revitalization within the specific context of Singapore. As stated in the revitalization plan, the major objectives for Kodrah Kristang over the next 40 years are:

(1) By 2045, there exists a sizeable pool of 50–100 new adult speakers who have learned Kristang as adults, speaking the language alongside the remaining 75–100 elderly speakers. This is the basis for objective (2), as adult education and awareness must take place before children can start learning the language.

(2) By 2045, again based on Kodrah Kristang class size projections and declared learner intentions of teaching Kristang to their children, the language is used by 5 to 10 new bilingual young speakers of Kristang, meaning that

      a. some children have been raised in the language, and
      b. the language is spoken on a daily basis in some households.

The revival of intergenerational transmission of Kristang in families is crucial to ensuring the language does not become extinct.

As will be seen in subsequent sections, objective (1) was overestimated as it has already been achieved just two years later, in 2018. However, objective (2) has proven to be far more difficult to accomplish, for reasons that are also outlined in later sections. The 5 major phases in the Kaminyu di Kodramintu (Version 3) as they currently stand are displayed in Table 1 below. Elements that have been added since the first version are marked with an asterisk (*).

Table 1. The five phases in the Kodrah Kristang Kaminyu di Kodramintu (2015-2045)

	ONE 2016-2017	TWO 2017-2019	THREE 2019-2021	FOUR 2021-2035	FIVE 2035-2045
ADULT CLASSES	**KODRAH KRISTANG** Stage 1 of adult classes for L2, HL and RL learners **KONTAH KRISTANG** Audio course **KRISEH KRISTANG** Vocabulary course	**KODRAH KRISTANG** Stages 1-4 of adult classes for L2, HL and RL learners **KONTAH KRISTANG** **KRISEH KRISTANG**	**KODRAH KRISTANG** **All stages** **KONTAH KRISTANG** **KRISEH KRISTANG**	**KODRAH KRISTANG** **All stages** **KONTAH KRISTANG** **KRISEH KRISTANG**	**KODRAH KRISTANG** **All stages** **KONTAH KRISTANG** **KRISEH KRISTANG**

Table 1. The five phases in the Kodrah Kristang Kaminyu di Kodramintu (2015-2045) (cont.)

	ONE 2016-2017	TWO 2017-2019	THREE 2019-2021	FOUR 2021-2035	FIVE 2035-2045
EVENTS AND RESOURCES*	**1ST KRISTANG LANGUAGE FESTIVAL*** **KRISTANG ONLINE DICTIONARY*** **ILA-ILA DI SUL AND BISTA DI KRISTANG*** Board game and card deck	**LION CITY LANGUAGES*** Discussion and promotion of minority languages in Singapore **KRISTANG GRAPHIC NOVEL***			
KINDERGARTEN CLASSES*		**KAKAKIKIH KRISTANG*** Kindergarten classes for MT learners	**KAKAKIKIH KRISTANG***	**KAKAKIKIH KRISTANG***	**KAKAKIKIH KRISTANG***
		TEACHER TRAINING	**KARTAH KRISTANG** Teacher training course	**KARTAH KRISTANG**	**KARTAH KRISTANG**
			PRIMARY CLASSES	**Unnamed course** Private primary school-level classes for MT learners	**Unnamed course**
			SECONDARY CLASSES	**Unnamed course** Private secondary school-level classes for MT learners	**Unnamed course**
			TERTIARY CLASSES	**Unnamed course** Private junior college-level classes for MT learners	**Unnamed course**

The plan extends 40 years into the future from the time of its writing in June 2016, as this is approximately double the number of years that Hawaiian took to reach the same objectives (1) and (2) listed above, a number which community members and Kodrah students felt was achievable and realistic. Phase divisions were then inserted based on the estimated length of time it would take to achieve the objectives and milestones within each phase. These are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Objectives and milestones within the 5 phases of the Kaminyu di Kodramintu

Phase	Objective	Milestone	Status
1	increase the number of people who know of Kristang's existence and are learning Kristang in Singapore	Successful completion of 1st Kristang Language Festival	**Achieved May 2017** (Planned May 2017)
2	foster among Singaporeans and especially Kodrah learners enough interest in preserving Kristang in Singapore for future generations	Successful completion of first iteration of a stage 4 adult class	**To be achieved Dec 2018** (Planned May 2019)
3	develop long-term sustainability for initiative and adult classes	Successful completion of first iteration of teacher training course and 2 further iterations of stage 4 adult classes	Planned Dec 2021
4	develop long-term sustainability for children's classes	Successful completion of first iteration of primary, secondary and tertiary programmes	Planned Dec 2035
5	achieve long-term objectives of Kodrah Kristang	5 new bilingual young speakers of Kristang	Planned Dec 2045

As with all plans, the Revitalization Plan is not a complete or final document, and merely serves as a preliminary blueprint for the future of the initiative.

At CoLang, I also developed an additional document, the Curriculum Plan, which focused specifically on the adult classes, the immediate priority for Kodrah when I returned. My early use of interaction-focused tasks in Kodrah Group 1 had already proved to be successful in helping learners quickly develop basic capability in the language, and so I decided to continue to develop new classes based on a pedagogy drawing on both Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) to develop activities. Gor & Vatz (2009) assert that CLT is appropriate for Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCLT) because it not only "emphasizes the development of learners' ability to communicate, express themselves, get their meaning across, and engage in social interactions" but "produce[s] relatively quick results, empowering the student with a sense of gains made, and not just effort invested" (245). Meanwhile, TBLT's focus on tasks "provides learners with meaningful opportunities to explore […] practical, authentic and functional language uses in a systematic way" (Coronel-Molina & McCarty 2011: 357), provided tasks are premised upon intelligent sequencing that takes into account learner needs and development (Norris 2009: 581–582). Outside of pedagogy, M. K. Johnson (2017) also argues that endangered language curricula should "be designed to be taught by beginner speakers and raise them up to advanced through teaching…be easily replicated by new teachers, be easily trainable, and incorporate maximum levels of classroom safety" (116). Based

on these considerations and my experiences with Kodrah Group 1, I began developing a fuller set of Kristang classes moving beyond the first group of sessions, which we now called Kodrah Kristang level 1A. These were expanded into a full range of 8 levels of class, which are listed in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Overview of the Kodrah Kristang adult class curriculum

Level	Date first run	No of iterations	Topics
1A	12 Mar 2016	9	Introductions, demonstratives, occupations, family, declarative sentences, locations, movement, numbers 1–100, time
1B	30 Jul 2016	6	colors, adjectives, negation, food, the progressive, perfective and future aspects, numbers 101–10000, days of the week
ALKAS I summative assessment: Speaking, Reading and Writing			
2A	29 Jun 2017	2	permission and obligation, school, giving reasons, adverbs, transport, parts of the body, instrumentals, imperatives, around the home
2B	21 Sep 2017	2	ditransitives, benefactives, shopping, prepositions, the neighborhood, cardinal directions, negative perfective, negative future, adverbs of time
ALKAS II summative assessment: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing			
3A	04 Jan 2018	1	comparatives, superlatives, equatives, semblatives, similes, basic storytelling and narratives, feelings, opinions, adverbs of time, adverbs of frequency
3B	08 Mar 2018	1	hypotheticals, counterfactuals and if-statements, word-level and sentence-level conjunctions, storytelling, shopping, passives, restricting adverbs, making choices
ALKAS III summative assessment: Listening, Speaking and Reading Writing project: Book Review			
4A	Jul 2018	0	adverbs of measurement, modals, necessity, negative polarity items, music, sports and games, storytelling, article writing
4B	Sep 2018	0	nominal, verbal and adjectival reduplication, exclamations, hortatives, the past imperfect aspect, adjective order, verb serialization, advanced storytelling, article writing
ALKAS IV summative assessment: Listening and Reading Integrated Speaking and Writing project: Story or Article Writing and Presentation			

Each pair of A and B levels is followed by a summative assessment, the Asenu di Alkansadu na Linggu Kristang, Ardansa di Singapura ('Certificate of Achievement in the Kristang Language, Part of the Heritage of Singapore'), abbreviated as the ALKAS. Considering the rather excessive focus in Singapore on qualitative/numerical scores and attaining good grades (Koh 2014: 205) due to a culture of "high-stakes exams" (C. Tan

2017) that occasionally impinge on rather than support learning – with some learners in Kodrah reporting great anxiety just by the mere mention of a test – I was initially hesitant about including summative assessment. However, the Kodrah Core team who now lead the initiative also concur with Hobson (2010: 270) when he observes that

> the assumption that progress is being made as long as some teaching-like activity is taking place and people are engaged and feeling good, may be quite reassuring. But unless people are actually developing greater fluency, it seems to me that revitalization is not really happening.

As a compromise between these competing factors, the current summative assessment system is as follows:

- The ALKAS summative assessment only takes place at the end of every B class (1B, 2B, 3B and 4B). To proceed from an A class (1A, 2A, 3A, 4A) to a B class, the only requirement is that students attend at least 70% of the A class. Students who do not do so are discouraged from proceeding to the B class and are encouraged to repeat the A class.

- To proceed from a B class to the next higher A class (e.g. from 1B to 2A), students must clear the 70% rule mentioned above, and sit (but not pass) the respective ALKAS level. There is no minimum passing mark for the ALKAS; if students satisfy the attendance requirement, then to proceed to the higher A class, they simply need to sit for the assessment. Students who do not sit for the assessment cannot proceed to the higher A class.

- Students only receive their ALKAS scores if they explicitly express a wish to know them; otherwise, their exact results remain confidential and are only available to the Kodrah Core team. Students who wish to receive their exact scores go through them with a Core team member.

- Students who wish to 'skip' class levels (e.g. join 2A without having gone through 1A and 1B) and students in a B class who do not satisfy the attendance requirement must achieve a certain mark for the ALKAS to demonstrate their ability in Kristang.

6. Kodrah Kristang Phase 1 (July 2016 to May 2017)

While at CoLang, I successfully secured support from CAPT for a second round of Kodrah Kristang 1A class, this time in a larger classroom. Even before I returned home, the response for this second class, Kodrah Kristang Group 2 was considerably more

enthusiastic than it had been for Group 1, with publicity for the class again having widespread outreach via Facebook, personal networks and word-of-mouth from Group 1 students. Class commenced on 30 July 2016 with 42 students, including a significant number of non-Eurasians, my Eurasian grandparents, Maureen and Peter Martens, and alongside them and Bernard, 5 other speakers of Kristang, all of whom had been speaking the language since they were young.

The inclusion of this last group of Kristang speakers was to have lasting and extremely beneficial effects on Kodrah in terms of how the initiative would deal with variation in Singapore Kristang, because in addition to speakers providing valuable input on grammatical form and vocabulary, they also made the very significant variation in Singapore Kristang explicit for students, with speakers often disagreeing during class on syntax and phonology, and some speakers recalling certain vocabulary items and others not being able to do so. Subsequent classes have continued to feature and recognize speakers of such backgrounds, whose expertise and relationship with the language far outpace mine, and some elements of the language have become perennial features of debate that are often contested by these speakers, such as the following common examples:

- the stress on *pataka* 'money, dollar': speakers usually prefer either /ˈpatəkə/ or /pəˈtakə/ and explicitly reject the alternative pronunciation
- the pronunciation of *undi* 'where': speakers usually prefer either /ˈuːndiː/ or /ˈɔːndi/ and explicitly reject the alternative pronunciation
- the pronunciation of *kung* 'and, with, <human accusative marker>': speakers have variously preferred /kuːŋ/, /kuː/, /kɔn/, /kɔŋ/, etc.
- the form of the benefactive marker *pra*, which is variously realized as /prə/, /pə/, /padə/, /padi/, /parə/, etc.
- *teng* 'to have'-support for *fomi* 'hunger, hungry', *sonu* 'sleepiness, sleepy': speakers usually prefer either *yo teng fomi* 'I have hunger = I am hungry' or *yo fomi* 'I am hungry' and explicitly reject the alternative construction
- the transitivity of *kodrah* 'to awaken, to wake up': speakers often either prefer *kodrah* as intransitive (e.g. *Yo ja kodrah* "I woke up, I have woken up") or as transitive (e.g. *Yo ja kodrah kung eli* "I woke him up, I have woken him up") and explicitly reject the alternative construction

Such variation can be intimidating for any language learner, who often expects just one way of saying something, and is not usually prepared to have speakers explicitly disagreeing on the grammaticality of two sentences. However, I pre-empted this in the very first session of the Group 2 class, explaining that Kodrah recognized Singapore Kristang's nature as a polynomic variety (see Section 9.3), and that learners should be prepared to embrace such variation if they decided to learn Kristang with Kodrah.

Indeed, as expected, these sorts of debates became commonplace, and I allowed such conversations to take place in full, time-permitting, because it made the reality of Kristang's situation in Singapore very evident, and also avoided privileging one speaker over the others while valuing all speakers' input. Students in Group 2 responded positively to this, and I thus decided for future classes to teach as much of this variation as possible and to encourage students who already had background in Kristang to speak the way they had always spoken. After all, I was not (and am not) a native speaker of the language. Who was I to arbitrate between different speakers who have spoken the language all their lives?

The effect on our speakers was profound. As Counceller (2010) reports for a similar situation during Alutiiq language revitalization:

> Part of the healing that is occurring is a sense of relief felt by Elders that they will not be the last ones to speak this language. Not only do they feel that they are leaving a legacy of the language to future generations, they are now being recognized and respected for their important role in saving Alutiiq, despite experiencing prejudice for being a speaker earlier in life. (Counceller 2010: 150)

Bernard used to be hit with a belt for speaking Kristang. Now, he was our expert language consultant and Kristang teacher.

Figure 5. Kodrah Kristang Group 2 in September 2016

I made a similar decision regarding the orthography I would use in class at the start of Group 2, selecting an orthographic system based on Baxter & de Silva (2004)'s suggested system, which in turn was mostly based on prevailing Malay orthography. However, I also displayed the alternate and variant spellings I had encountered up to that point on all Kodrah slides and teaching materials as far as was possible without making the resources unwieldy, and stated explicitly at the start of Group 2 that students were free to ignore the Kodrah orthography and deploy one that was more familiar to them or which they felt more comfortable with, which many students have gone on to do. Again, following the spirit and principles of what I had learned at CoLang, I wanted to make Kodrah as welcoming as possible for all students, whether or not they had background in Kristang, while still being able to teach the language in a convenient and accessible way. Thus, because many students in class had experience with Malay, often having learnt it in school, and few, if any, in contrast, had experience with contemporary Portuguese, the selection of Baxter & de Silva (2004)'s orthography was one that I felt would make Kristang more accessible for students learning the language from scratch because it was more transparent, even though I myself had no experience with Malay and felt personally more comfortable with a Iberian language-based orthography.

Kodrah Group 2 was a great success, running for a full 10 sessions with at least 30 regular students, and proving to both CAPT and myself that there was enough demand for higher levels of class. I thus proceeded to develop materials for Kodrah 1B, and 35 students from Group 2 moved on to the pilot 1B class in September 2016. Meanwhile, interest from the EA in having classes at their Eurasian Community House translated into two new 1A classes in November 2016, Groups 3 and 4. Group 4, in particular, saw massive demand at its inception, with 85 students at the first session of class packing the Eurasian Community House's Multi-Purpose Hall, though numbers fell to a more manageable 40 people over the 2016 Christmas period. A fifth 1A class, Group 5, followed in January 2017 hosted at the National Library Building, whom we approached in December 2016 because of its central location in the city next to a major transit stop. Kodrah also began hosting one-off introductory Kristang workshops at events such as The Substation's The School of Uncommon Knowledge, held in November 2016, and public lecture series, such as the National Library Board's Friends of the Museum programme in March 2017 and TEDx NUS, also in March 2017.

Alongside the face-to-face adult classes, I also led the development of a pilot audio course, *Kontah Kristang* ('Recount Kristang') hosted on Soundcloud, and a pilot vocabulary course, *Kriseh Kristang* ('Expand Kristang'), hosted on Memrise, after Bernard and I received a number of phone calls and emails from interested (mainly Eurasian) individuals in Perth and other locations in Australia, and homebound individuals in Singapore who for reasons of mobility or health could not attend face-to-face classes. Although our priority remains the development of a community through face-to-face interaction, Kodrah recognized that such supplementary material could

complement our main classes by supporting "language learners with a variety of learning styles", and by providing "worthwhile activities to do whilst commuting, or whenever the listener accesses the podcasts on their portable media player" (Rosell-Aguilar 2007: 485) for students with busier schedules. On a broader scale, the gradual use of new media and new media environments also "offer the possibility for evolution of new identities, which challenge the way in which speakers of endangered languages have understood themselves and been understood in majority-language media" (Moriarty 2011: 446), especially in a country such as Singapore, where civil society is tightly controlled.

This expansion of the initiative to multiple modalities, classes and locations was made possible because of a new system of *judanti* 'helper, assistant' that began with Group 2, when two Group 1 students volunteered to take on greater roles within class as facilitators – helping to distribute materials, act as judges or referees for games, and answer questions during activities or interaction periods, where all of this was previously done by just me. Although I continued to be the sole frontal teacher, the *judanti* system enabled Kodrah to operate larger classes than before, since students could now get facilitators' attention instead of just mine; the massive Group 4 class, for example, was implemented with 7 *judanti*, all from Group 2. Most *judanti*, of course, usually did not have enough knowledge of Kristang to answer questions that only speakers and myself usually could answer (e.g. how one might say a very specific word, or use a very rare construction) but could otherwise answer questions about material that they had already learned. Certain *judanti* also had specialized knowledge of Kristang's source languages like Malay and Portuguese, which made them valuable additions in their own right to class, allowing students to discover more information about the sources of particular Kristang words and even constructions that had been borrowed from these languages.
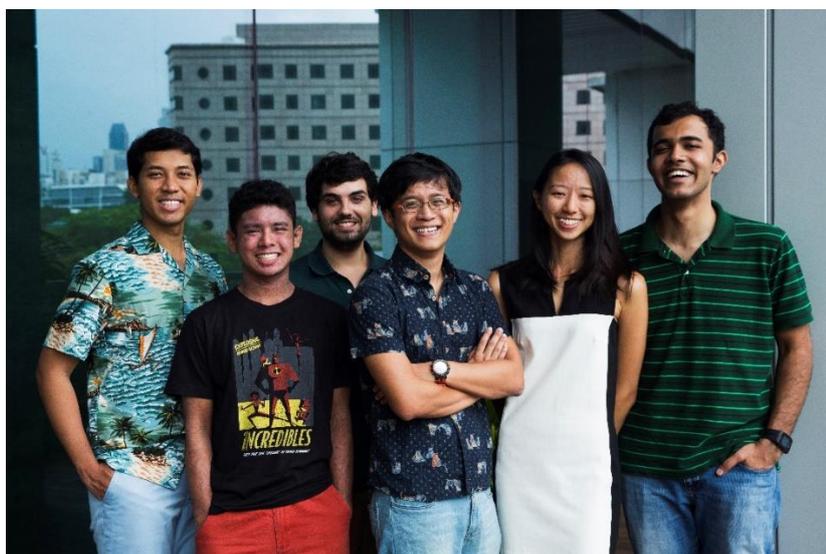
Figure 6. The Kodrah Kristang Core Team in April 2017

The introduction of the *judanti* system meant that some *judanti* became heavily invested in Kodrah alongside myself, assisting me in making initiative-level decisions such as whether we would work with certain partner organizations, and selecting activities and materials for lessons. In November 2016, we decided to formalize the contributions of these *judanti* to Kodrah by creating a Core team (hereafter referred to as 'Core') consisting of myself and the major *judanti* assisting with class at the time. Core is characterized by its youth, flat structure, and multi-ethnic makeup, with only two of us of Eurasian descent. Other 'circles' of the Kodrah structure, including a *Ardansa* ('Heritage') Circle for the Kristang speakers participating in Kodrah, and a separate *Judanti* Circle for other facilitators who are not in Core, now exist but are more informal.

7. The 1st Kristang Language Festival (20-21 May 2017)

Kodrah's rapid expansion and development, coupled with its relatively novel character, led to sustained media attention. In particular, seminal initial coverage of Group 4 in the major state-funded newspaper *The Straits Times* in print and online on 21 November 2016 (Zaccheus 2016) fueled further initiative growth and interest in Kristang, as demand for our classes grew. Seizing on this growth and simultaneously responding to internal student interest in promoting Kristang to the wider public, Core decided to develop and launch Singapore's first ever Festa di Papia Kristang 'Kristang Language Festival' in May 2017 (referred to as 'Festa'), to provide a space for Kristang to be recognized on the national stage.

The choice to run a festival in itself was not a difficult one. Many of our older students and speakers reported feeling "the assimilative pressures upon peoples who are embedded within a dominant culture" (Slater 2010: 148), and saw a larger, "public space" as a means of "assert[ing themselves] over and against the social construction of reality by the mainstream" (Slater 2010: 148). Meanwhile, we hoped that such a festival would provide "rich opportunities for intercultural negotiation and […] opportunities to cultivate understanding and sympathy with indigenous difference, histories and cultures" (Phipps 2016), allowing the greater Singaporean public to appreciate this little-known part of our shared heritage. Most importantly, we hoped that Festa would "provide a forum for community cohesion and celebration, while concomitantly strengthening and enhancing cultural knowledge" (Whitford & Ruhanen 2013: 50) – in other words, that it might act as a beacon drawing other Kristang speakers in Singapore together, strengthening their sense of community even as they celebrated Kristang's presence in Singapore.

Festa thus became the capstone event for Phase 1 of revitalization in Singapore, which by now was greatly exceeding my initial aims of reaching about 40 to 50 people in Phase 1. Nonetheless, we proceeded cautiously with the development of Festa: after all, Kristang still remained mostly unknown in Singapore despite the media coverage,

and we projected a modest turnout of around 200 people for the Festival. However, as media coverage of Kodrah continued to grow – including television appearances by myself and Bernard on major local news channel Channel NewsAsia, a seminal BBC article on 19 March 2017 (T. Wong 2017a; Wong, Lim & Sia 2017) that was also translated into Mandarin (T. Wong 2017c) and Portuguese (T. Wong 2017b), and a mention on Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's personal Facebook page on 9 April 2017 (H. L. Lee 2017) – so too did interest and excitement about Festa. By mid-May 2017, on the eve of Festa, Kodrah Kristang and Festa had appeared in over 40 major media features in just six months (e.g. Loo 2016; Yeoh 2016; Anonymity 2017; Iswaran 2017; Pinto 2017; Tay 2017; The New Eurasian 2017; 泥仔 2017).

Festa ran over the weekend of 20-21 May 2017 at Singapore's Asian Civilizations Museum (ACM). In addition to ACM, other partners included the National Heritage Board (NHB), Our Singapore Fund (OSF), the EA, CAPT, and a number of private enterprises including Quentin's: The Eurasian Restaurant. The signature festival event was a large Gala dinner at Hotel Fort Canning, where we announced the winners of the inaugural Kristang Poetry Competition and launched the Kristang Online Dictionary, a free online Wordnet-derived resource headed by a Core team member and under development since December 2016 (Morgado da Costa 2017; Morgado da Costa et al. forthcoming), and *Ila-Ila di Sul* ('The Southern Islands'), a game from Kodrah 1A that I had created to practice forming location constructions, which we had then turned into a full board game for the Festival. The Gala dinner featured Singapore's Deputy Prime

Figure 7. Performers from the 1511 O Maliao Maliao Dance Troupe at the 1st Kristang Language Festival Gala Dinner on 20 May 2017

Minister Teo Chee Hean as our Guest-of-Honour. Also invited were the two extant Eurasian Members of Parliament (MPs), the Ambassador of Portugal to Singapore, and members of the EA Management Committee, all of whom had taken an active interest in Kristang following the strong showing for the classes and the significant media coverage, as well as NUS and CAPT faculty, representatives from sister communities in Melaka and Macau, and a representative from the Singapore Heritage Society. Meanwhile, featured performers for the night were the 1511 O Maliao Maliao Dance Troupe, headed by guest speaker and teacher of Kristang, Sara Santa Maria, from the Melaka Portuguese community in Melaka.

　　　Due to the terms of our support from NHB and OSF, we were required to document the total number of participants and some of their key biodata from across all our events. We thus documented a total turnout of 1,456 participants, more than seven times the original 200 we had projected, and with more than 60% of these participants identifying as non-Eurasian – a unprecedented and unexpected success. Post-event survey responses (another requirement of our NHB and OSF support) were also very positive, as displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. Feedback for 1st Kristang Language Festival

S/N	Statement	**Total number of surveys returned = 367 (25.2% of 1,456 participants total)**						
		SA	A	D	SD	T-NA	% SA + A	NA
1.	I enjoyed the event.	255	112	0	0	367	100	0
2.	The event was well-organised.	221	137	5	0	363	98.6	4
3.	The event made me proud to be a Singaporean.	165	120	8	0	293	97.2	74
4.	The event made me proud to be Eurasian.	113	27	2	0	142	98.6	225
5.	The event suggested ways for me to contribute to my own or to other communities.	121	160	17	0	298	94.3	69
6.	I met people from diverse backgrounds at the event.	162	162	9	0	333	97.3	34
7.	I am inspired to learn more about my own heritage.	172	133	12	0	317	96.2	50
8.	I am inspired to do something more for my community in the future.	129	148	16	0	293	94.5	74

With just over a quarter of total participants surveyed, reactions to Festa were extremely positive: all 367 surveyed participants either agreed or strongly agreed that they had enjoyed the event, and an overwhelming majority took great pride in either Singapore or their own Eurasian community, met people from diverse backgrounds, and were inspired to learn more about their own heritage or do something for their own community through the event. Festa thus successfully demonstrated not only the appeal of Kristang to 'its own' community, the Eurasians, but to the wider nation at large, and prompted us to revisit our long-term aims for Kodrah following the end of Festa and Phase 1 of the initiative.

8. Kodrah Kristang Phase 2 (May 2017 to present)

At present in Phase 2, Kodrah has become recognized as "relatively popular" (Pereira 2018: 391), and Core has been able to focus on continuing to grow our pool of Kristang learners in Singapore, while advancing their abilities with the language in all four areas of language skill toward students becoming able to use the language at home on a daily basis with their children, teach the language, and develop a larger body of Kristang literature in Singapore. Since Festa, Kodrah has developed and run curricula for Kodrah levels 2A, 2B, 3A and 3B, together with the accompanying summative assessments ALKAS II and ALKAS III. The first classes for 4A started in July 2018 with the learners from Groups 1-5, who have been combined into a single class of 27 advanced learners. At present, learners in this combined Groups 1-5 class have been exposed to about 1,000 individual Kristang lexemes and about 120 hours of Kodrah instruction, and are being encouraged to explore how they can use and deploy Kristang in domains outside of class through stories, songs, new media and other means.

Meanwhile, as we increase the number of levels of class that Kodrah offers at the same time, we have further expanded our *judanti* pool to 15 individuals, including my maternal grandparents, while our *Ardansa* Circle has been enriched by the arrival of 5 more speakers. Most importantly, with a view toward more long-term sustainability and keeping in mind the relative speed at which the initiative has progressed, I have begun to train the rest of Core to become Kodrah teachers, originally a Phase 3 goal but also a "fundamental problem" (Grenoble & Whaley 1996: 215) that should be addressed sooner rather than later since, Kristang being a creole, "considerably more time and resources have to be devoted [to developing a training programme for teachers of a creole] than is usually the case" (Migge, Léglise & Bartens 2010: 29). Hence, 3 other Core team members co-taught their first level 1 classes from January 2018 to May 2018, and continue to lead 2A at the time of writing. Also initiated, though now on hold due to a lack of manpower and venue, were our first ever classes for children aged 3-6, known as Kakakikih Kristang ('Laugh and Chuckle, Kristang!'), which were developed

and led by a team of *Judanti* from July to November 2017 at Ang Mo Kio Public Library with 10 children of varying ages and backgrounds.

One final major new critical component of the initiative is the Jardinggu Lexical Incubator (known as 'Jardinggu', a portmanteau of the words *jarding* 'garden' and *linggu* 'language, tongue'), which we inaugurated in April 2017 in the final weeks before Festa. In my initial documentation efforts in 2015, I noted the recurrent perception among many collaborators that Kristang was inadequate for the modern world because it lacked the vocabulary for modern-day situations and issues that were now addressed by the family in English. Kristang thus lacked the contemporary relevance and/or utility that would be necessary for the language to regain currency in the home. Similar themes again pervaded the early Kodrah classes, when I was asked for Kristang words for "camera", "projector", "cartoon" and others, especially by younger learners, and could only respond with the English equivalents, something that these learners found insufficient. As Denzer-King (2008:33) observes,

> Borrowings cannot be said to degrade language in any way, but when borrowings come from a culturally dominant language (like English in the United States), younger speakers may feel pressure to simply use the dominant language instead of just borrowing words from it. The continued use of neologisms is thus a vital part of language preservation, because if people are going to continue to use a language, they must be able to say what they want to say. A language with no word for "cell phone" or "computer" is less likely to be used by younger generations than one which innovates.

Although "in many situations, the development of new vocabulary is rather incidental and can be done informally or individually" (Hinton 2003a: 15), if Kristang is ever to gain new and much-needed domains of use, it will likely have to deliberately develop the vocabulary to do so, either through borrowing or the development of new terms. Such a phenomenon is not as unusual as one might think; Lodge (2017), for example, writing about the possibility of Jamaican Creole being used to teach science to K-12 students, observes that "English speakers have often created scientific terms by inventing neologisms out of Latin and Greek roots". Hence, Kristang and Jamaican Creole, "like any other language[s], [have] the means to expand [their] science vocabulary as needed" (Lodge 2017: 673). Other revitalizing languages have indeed done this across a variety of domains in a systematic fashion, including Quichua (King 2004), Alutiiq (Kimura & Counceller 2009), Hawaiian (Kimura & Counceller 2009), Nahuatl (Olko & Sullivan 2016) and many of the other Mayan languages (Maxwell 2017).

Nevertheless, at the same time, Core was also cognizant of the tremendous sensitivities that surround the deliberate development of neologisms in endangered languages (Sallabank 2012: 118), to the extent that such activity can even divide the community, as in the cases of Basque (Urla 1993) and Breton (Hornsby & Quentel

2013), become concerned with purism to the extent that this "hinders the actual acquisition of the minority language by the younger and/or less secure speakers" (Schwalbe 2017: 29), as in the case of Tamil at large (Schiffman 2008) and Yupik (Schwalbe 2017), or create redundancy and inconsistency by "constantly tinkering with terminology" (Schiffmann 2003: 116), as in the case of Cornish (Dorian 1994) and Tamil in Singapore (Schiffman 2003). It was only with the permission and interest of the Kristang speakers involved in Kodrah, therefore, that we initiated Jardinggu, which aims to provide a safe place for the community to suggest and debate new words for the language. The current form of Jardinggu is as follows:

1. Jardinggu is a WhatsApp chat group that includes all speakers involved in Kodrah and students who have embarked on Kodrah level 2A and beyond (85 individuals as of time of writing).

2. Each week, the group debates new lexemes that have been suggested for three or four concepts through an open-access crowdsourced form known as Klaifalah ('how to say'), where anyone can suggest a new lexeme or request for the Kristang equivalent of an English concept. Core curates the Klaifalah concepts, ensuring that the concepts suggested are not already known by *Ardansa* speakers or are represented in the extant lexicographical material for Kristang, consisting of Baxter & de Silva (2004), Marbeck (2004a), Marbeck (2011b), Morgado da Costa (2017) and Scully & Zuzarte (2004, 2017). For concepts selected for Jardinggu debate, Core puts up all suggested lexemes for discussion, but further ensures that the lexemes for each concept are morphologically appropriate in terms of their source language (usually Portuguese, Malay, Dutch or English, but also Cantonese, Hokkien and, in rare instances Hindi, Malayalam or Tamil).

3. At the end of the week, the group votes on the preferred lexemes for the concepts; lexemes which pass the voting threshold of 7 vetoes or less are included in the open-access Kristang Online Dictionary and in future iterations of class, but are always identified as suggested new words so that speakers and learners can ignore them at their leisure.

4. Lexemes with more than 7 vetoes do not pass, and the concept is put up for discussion again, or removed from discussion if the general sentiment is that the concept should not be translated.

Suggested new words that have been widely taken up by Kodrah students and speakers following Jardinggu include:

- *barku pairah* "helicopter", phrasal compounding of *barku* "boat, ship" and *pairah* "to hover, to float", the latter a borrowing from Portuguese *pairar* "to hover, to "float", following the already existing *barku abuah* "airplane, lit. flying ship";
- *bruanggatu* "panda", blending of *bruang* "bear" and *gatu* "cat" following Mandarin 熊猫 *xióngmāo* "panda";
- *kamiung* "truck, lorry", borrowing from Portuguese *camião* "truck, lorry"
- *latidor/latidera* "trainer", affixation of the gendered occupation suffixes *-dor* and *-dera* to *latih* "to train, to practice", itself a borrowing from Malay *latih* "to train, to practice";
- the aforementioned *judanti* "assistant, helper", affixation of the derived gender-neutral occupation suffix *–nti* to the verb *judah* "to help".

Jardinggu is not intended to be a language authority. This is stressed to everyone involved in the initiative and to all other interested parties. We remind students that "all living languages are in flux with new words steadily being coined to reflect developments in medicine, leisure, fashion, food, and other regularly changing aspects of society" (O'Dell 2016: 98); however, students also have no obligation to take up even a suggested word that has made it through Jardinggu voting, and that they are free to completely ignore anything that comes out of Jardinggu. Although we acknowledge that "placing these [suggested] words in the dictionary", even if they are marked as 'new', has an "elevating status" that "encourages their proliferation and acceptance" (Anderson 2017: 59), we also encourage students to remember that language cannot truly be controlled by anyone – indeed, as Denzer-King (2008:34) observes, contrary to our enterprise, "neologisms often originate with a single person", such as Shakespeare or Prince Wan of Thailand (Diller 2007), and only later "catch on in the community" (Denzer-King 2008: 34) – and that whether or not new words will be taken up by the community is something that neither Jardinggu nor the Online Dictionary have control over. Jardinggu's purpose as a Lexical Incubator is solely to help catalyze the process of vocabulary development and refinement that exists in healthy languages.

9. Key characteristics of the Kodrah Kristang Initiative

In this section I document some of the key characteristics of the Kodrah initiative as it presently stands in Phase 2 of revitalization in July 2018. As Core observes among ourselves, we are a product of a series of fortunate coincidences, and many of the successful traits that characterize Kodrah can be seen as contextual and specific to Kristang in Singapore. However, a number of Kodrah's key characteristics are still the result of specific decisions made by myself and Core to align with various prevailing discourses, ideologies and ideas about language in Singapore. Thus, this section

describes each of these key characteristics in detail, while also providing insight into commonly asked questions about why we did not adopt certain other common language revitalization program features, including a Master-Apprentice Program (Section 9.2), standardization (Section 9.3), a more confrontational approach to language activism (Section 9.4), remuneration/for-profit classes (Section 9.5) and school-based classes (Section 9.5).

9.1. Kodrah: a multiethnic endeavor within Singapore

Kodrah has been a multiethnic enterprise by design since we began functioning as an initiative in 2016, and has been promoted as such, instead of as a specifically 'Eurasian' project. The most important reason for this is that, as with that other very successful revitalized variety, Hawaiian, "the idea of tribal ownership of language or unique tribal rights to a language" is more or less alien to the Singapore context (Cowell 2012: 175). Although there is a general sense in Singapore that ethnicity and language are strongly related, wherein "the ethnic language expresses the ethnic identity of the speaker" (Kamwangamalu 1992: 44), the idea that only those of a particular ethnicity are allowed or permitted to learn and speak the particular language associated with that ethnicity is not one that has gained currency in Singapore. Indeed, multilingualism and learning the languages of other cultures different from one's own is seen as a unique, if not quirky, aspect of Singaporean culture, to the extent that, for example, a video of an Indian man complaining in fluent Hokkien about the closure of a popular roadside market has been labelled "the most Singaporean video of all time" (Lay 2017).

The relationship of the Eurasian community in Singapore to Kristang is also complex, to the extent that if Kodrah was promoted as an endeavor 'by Eurasians for Eurasians', it would likely face more overt pushback. Like our counterparts in Melaka, Eurasians in Singapore often "do not have one and only one identity, nor do they *subjectively* view themselves, their culture, and their heritage uniformly via one and only one concept of self-identification" (O'Neill 2008: 62). Rappa (2013: 23) comments more wryly that "the idea of Eurasian identity seems to defy definition" and that "the strength of the Eurasian cultural history is in the fact that it is as diverse as it is variegated" (Rappa 2013: 40). This diversity extends to Kristang for those members of the community who recognize its existence. As Pereira (2018: 389) observes,

> Today, with the interest in Kristang among some within the Eurasian community in Singapore, it can serve as a source of identity for them; in other words, they feel that having a unique second language allows them to celebrate being Eurasian. At the same time, there are other Singaporean Eurasians that view Kristang as no more than another language; some might not have a direct lineage with Malacca, others might feel that Kristang serves no economic function.

Kristang is therefore not a marker of Eurasian identity for all Eurasians, "in the same way that Mandarin, Malay and Tamil are seen as being the language of the Chinese, Malays and Indians in Singapore" (Pereira 2018: 389). To some *younger* Eurasians, with little previous awareness of Kristang's existence, the language is a "unique second language [that] allows them to celebrate being Eurasian" (Pereira 2018: 389) and which helps them feel recognized vis-à-vis other ethnic groups in Singapore (Mathews 2018: 367), but may not be something that they identify fully with. Some older Eurasians and Kristang speakers may recognize Kristang's existence, and some (particularly older Portuguese-Eurasians) may consider it an important part of their identity. At the same time, many older Eurasians, and most younger Eurasians in general, do not identify with Kristang at all because of a lack of knowledge of its existence, a lack of perceived historical connection to the language through their heritage, the language's lack of economic utility, and/or the language's historical stigmatization, where it indexed a sub-Eurasian identity known as the 'Lower Sixes' or 'Portuguese', who were stigmatized as a "lower class, largely illiterate body of people…who mostly worked as fishermen or fishmongers" (Sarkissian 2005: 152). Even Pereira (2016), a Eurasian academic, appears to display some ambivalence about Kristang's current place within the community when he notes that Kristang was "at most, a language occasionally used by those with Portuguese descent" rather than a language used widely by the entire community, but "despite the lack of authenticity", that it has also helped "the Eurasian community to join other ethnic communities in the CMIO model" (Pereira 2016: 57)[6].

The appeal of English as 'the Eurasian language' or Eurasian MTL in Singapore must also be mentioned. English has often been identified as the more possible MTL of Eurasians, even by scholars. All of Wee (2002), for example, is rightly concerned with disentangling what the state-decided mother tongue of the Eurasians is, if one exists, and why it may or may not be English – but without even a single mention of Kristang, possibly the other relevant language in a consideration of language planning and policy vis-à-vis the Eurasian community. Wee (2014: 184) then – not unfairly, considering the lack of visibility Kristang had up to that point – argues that English is the "putative" Eurasian mother tongue, again without mention of Kristang. Meanwhile, Pereira (2018: 389) declares, "if pressed, the true mother language of Eurasians in Singapore is English", a sentiment echoed by Braga-Blake (1992a: 26), who claims that "the Portuguese-derived patois spoken by Malacca Eurasians has not been a viable means of communication for many years" in Singapore,[7] and Pereira (2016: 29), who asserts that

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[6] Further evidence of this is implicit in Pereira (2018: 389)'s careful noting that "from an *anthropological* sense, Kristang is not *technically* the language or the mother tongue of the *post-independence Singapore Eurasian* community" [emphasis mine].

[7] Wee (2002) has a fuller discussion of the pragmatic concerns that English as the Eurasian mother tongue would address (and the problems it could compound); aside from the historical place of English within

> Singapore Eurasian culture was unlike those in other Eurasian communities in Malacca or Macau, where their Eurasian culture was still heavily influenced by Portuguese culture. Instead, the Singapore Eurasian culture was a mirror of the British middle class culture, in which the English language [was] primary.

Within the community, a "good command of the English language" remains a quality strongly characteristic of Eurasians (Tessensohn 2001: 133; Aeria et al. 2015: 7). Rappa (2013: 175) even calls English "the Eurasian security tool for its own cultural survival in late modernity".

Identifying Kodrah as a primarily Eurasian endeavor would have thus thrust the initiative into this complex and shifting arena of language and identity, would have possibly alienated some of the community who do not express such a strong link to Kristang, and would have immediately raised questions about the long-term aims of the initiative (i.e. to advocate for Kristang as the Eurasian mother tongue). Meanwhile, trying to restrict the revitalization effort to *Portuguese-Eurasians who once spoke Kristang* would have been quite frankly impossible. Leaving aside the already extremely sensitive question of what constitutes *a pure/legitimate Portuguese-Eurasian with Kristang heritage*, Eurasian identity today, Portuguese-Eurasian or otherwise, does not "display predictable sigs – most notably color and phenotype – as central markers of difference" (Lowe & Mac an Ghaill 2015: 239). Indeed,

> in relation to the populous Chinese society and other more visually distinctive minorities, such as the Indians and Malays, Eurasian ethnicity has not featured strongly as a marker of discrete cultural difference, but has been performed and mobilized through contingency, fluidity and indeterminacy within shifting cultural contexts. (Lowe & Mac an Ghaill 2015: 239)

Kodrah's inclusive 'open-door' policy and multiethnic bent thus avoids having to negotiate all of this difficult "fluidity and indeterminacy", while still embracing the

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the Upper Ten subculture, other justifications for English as the Eurasian mother tongue appear to be premised upon something similar to what Benjamin (1976: 127) argues:

> The Eurasians…objectively viewed […] already seem to have achieved a genuine Singaporeanness of culture – theirs, after all, is the only one of the four cultures to have evolved within Singapore. Unfortunately, the more that Singapore's national culture demands that each 'race' should have a respectably ancient and distinctive exogenous culture as well as a 'mother tongue' to serve as the second element of a Bilingual education, the more will the Eurasians come to feel that there is no proper place for them: they have neither an exogenous culture nor a 'racially' distinctive 'mother tongue'.

Thus, so the argument goes, because the Eurasians represent 'Singaporeanness', their mother tongue should also be the 'common tongue' to all Singaporeans, while also being 'theirs': English.

language's Eurasian roots and recognizing the distinct and divergent ways different people, whether Eurasian-aligned or not, have come to speak some Kristang, in allowing anyone who shows up for class to be part of class. We also wanted explicitly to avoid learners (and speakers too) being "inhibited and bullied by a critique of 'not being Native enough'" and thereby giving up on Kristang because they could not "negotiate painful identity issues" (King & Hermes 2014: 279). Meanwhile, keeping class open to everyone allows us to address a second more practically-minded issue – the relatively small size of the Eurasian community in Singapore. As mentioned earlier, the community forms "less than a percent of the total population" (Lowe & Mac an Ghaill 2015: 233), meaning that there would be a relatively small base from which to possibly nurture a new Kristang-speaking population if we restricted access to Kodrah to simply Portuguese Eurasians. As McPake et al. (2017: 81) point out,

> it has become clear that in many contexts where the minoritised language (ML) community is not sustaining speaker numbers by means of inter-generational transmission, successful language maintenance will also require children from families who do not use the ML at home to learn the language and to adopt this language as one of their own.

Though unlikely, the multiethnic, all-embracing character of Kodrah means that Kristang's future speaker base is now much wider and broader than it might have been if the initiative were only restricted to Portuguese-Eurasians, giving the language a better chance (however slight) at long-term survival. This is also recommended by Cowell (2012: 172–173), who argues that Hawaiian succeeded because the revitalization efforts there were open to "all individuals of all backgrounds", which "greatly increase[d] the population from which potential attendees [could] be drawn", also leading to other beneficial secondary effects such as reduced economies of scale for the development of classes and resources. The Hawaiian effort is

> inclusive in that it is welcoming of people regardless of their ethnic backgrounds and nationality. It is also not elitist in terms of social class paradigms […] Enthusiasm for Hawaiian and for its use in all contexts is the core requirement for being accepted as a member of the Hawaiian network (Brenzinger & Heinrich 2013: 310).

Other insider authors have championed the need for outreach and intercultural understanding in tandem with the increasing interconnectedness of global society (Keahi 2000: 56–57; Noori 2013: 131-2). However, Kodrah only succeeded in maintaining this multiethnic focus because the person heading the initiative has at least partial, if not occasionally full insider status as a *mixed Chinese*-Eurasian. Our stated aim to preserve Kodrah's openness to all notwithstanding, questions of authenticity occupy the core of every language revitalization movement, especially when it comes

to teaching the language, where "authenticity in language teaching often carries either implicit or direct reference to the culture(s) in which the target language is used as a first language, which gravitates towards 'native-speakers'"(Lowe & Pinner 2016: 32).

9.2. Kodrah: a partnership between heritage speakers and new learners, between old and young, between Eurasians and non-Eurasians

Kodrah is a mutual partnership between the elders, the youth and everyone else in between. We work together to keep our language going. The elders guide, because they have the knowledge, traditions, stories and memories of previous generations, and the respect that follows with those. The youth lead, because they have the energy, the shrewdness to maneuver in today's new contexts, and the future of the language in their hands. Both elders and youth have the initiative, passion and commitment necessary to keep revitalization going for generations to come.

On that note, it is worthwhile to understand Core's complex relationship with our *Ardansa* Circle – our elders, the individuals who we have identified or who have identified themselves as having grown up speaking and hearing Kristang, in contrast to the rest of us who are new learners and speakers of the language. It is absolutely true that Core has

> Position [ed ourselves] as important drivers of language revitalization efforts, and as a group who purposely and consciously act as agents of social change. [We] take on a more strongly activist role, showing a strong sense of responsibility towards ensuring the future survival of the language (McLeod & O'Rourke 2015: 169).

However, we, as new speakers, still defer and "look to the traditional native speaker as the ideal model and assess our own language against that benchmark" (McLeod & O'Rourke 2015: 157) – our *Ardansa* Circle.

All of our *Ardansa* speakers favor English, using it the majority of the time in their present lives. Almost all of them grew up in home environments where Kristang was present but not often used, usually by older relatives and grandparents, followed by a long period where Kristang fell into disuse in their adult life. Indeed, most *Ardansa* speakers evaluate the grammaticality of an utterance based on whether it is something this older relative or grandparent would say. All of them therefore have strong passive receptivity and a 'good ear' for Kristang, knowing when a sentence, a new Jardinggu suggested word or an accent *sounds grammatical* or *sounds Kristang*. They are also clearly conversant in Kristang about familiar topics such as the home and food. However, more specialized vocabulary or complex grammatical constructions that they

may not have encountered growing up often present challenges, which new speakers, who have access to various dictionaries and resources, occasionally surprise them with. This is likely because, as with the case of Maya, their "language development…was stunted by a general social disposition to see [the language] as a lesser language, one that holds people back, a language for private, not public use" (Whiteside 2009: 230).

Our *Ardansa* speakers therefore occupy a difficult position that echoes Dobrin & Berson (2011), who claim that

> people's assertions about their own speakerhood may respond to a host of political and interactional factors that complicate the notion that 'knowing the language' involves a native ability to produce a delimited range of sounds and structures, revealing how 'being a speaker' can be as much about performance as it is about knowledge (Dobrin & Berson 2011: 191).

Ardansa speakers do thus perform as experts in Kristang, a role that they more often than not relish – and rightfully so, I believe, since they have lived with the language far longer than all of us new speakers have – yet in themselves believe that the even truer experts were their older relatives and grandparents, who were the "true native speakers" or "true real speakers" of "deep" or "unblemished" Kristang. I believe that this tenuous space between "expert" and "rememberer of the real expert" was problematic for some of our *Ardansa* speakers, who attempted to co-construct their "perceived superiority…in the areas of accuracy, fluency, range of vocabulary and knowledge of cultural nuances of the language" (Kubota 2009: 234). Hence, when put on the spot in front of the class, *Ardansa* speakers often felt undue pressure to perform as the all-knowing "most vernacular speaker" (Bucholtz 2003: 406) despite the class emphasis on variation in Kristang, and felt embarrassed or ashamed when they were unable to, for example, recall a word or parse a difficult or complex sentence – a clearly undesirable direction for our work with speakers and for the initiative in general (Bowern 2008: 137). Some speakers also found it difficult to correct me during class, believing – despite my best efforts to assert otherwise – that I am the sole arbitrator of what makes Kristang in Singapore Kristang in Singapore. Up till now, there has also been occasionally strong friction between some of the speakers themselves, who may have biases or prejudices about other speakers – in certain cases a history with another speaker extending far beyond their involvement in Kodrah – and who may question each other's legitimacy and authenticity to be offering "advice" about the language as an expert, despite Kodrah's explicit focus on making our community aware of the variation inherent in Kristang. Some of these factors have negatively affected some speakers' involvement with Kodrah quite significantly, to the extent that they have quite obviously scaled back their participation (though they are reluctant to leave Kodrah entirely).

I am cognizant of how "new speakers can come to endow "native speakers" with a higher claim to linguistic authenticity and ownership by virtue of having acquired the

language through family transmission" (McLeod & O'Rourke 2015: 169), and how this can come to mean that the revitalization initiative becomes a highly charged arena for "one group against another to debate issues of cultural and social legitimacy" (Costa 2015: 11), already observed in other revitalizing varieties such as Catalan (Frekko 2009), Hawaiian (L. Wong 1999) and Irish (Fhlannchadha & Hickey 2016). In Kodrah, this is especially true because of the great and sometimes overly cautious respect that the non-Eurasian students have displayed for our *Ardansa* speakers. As with the revitalization of Lenape, which also involves learners from outside the community, many non-Eurasians are simply "pleased to be recognized as members" (Weinberg & De Korne 2016: 131) of Kodrah, a role that is unique, deeply fulfilling and, for almost everyone, fun. This means there is tremendous respect for "the boundaries of the […] ethnic community" (Weinberg & De Korne 2016: 131); non-Eurasian students are always careful to defer to individuals, whether students, speakers or both, who present more "legitimate" claims to Eurasianness. Again, this elevates our "native speakers" in a way that may not be desirable; "who decides what counts as competence, and against which yardstick is it measured?" (Whiteside 2009: 216).

However, it is also difficult for us to completely negotiate the 'native speaker' label away –besides the fact that "indigenous Elders and first language speakers offer important knowledge about the worldview expressed through their languages" (Rosborough, Rorick & Urbanczyk 2017: 427), and that Core are positioned as 'new speakers', there are clear and audible differences between someone who has spoken the language since young, and someone (like me) who has learned the language as an adult. Indeed, as Bucholtz (2003) argues, despite the problematic, "essentializing" nature of the term "native speaker", "we cannot and should not abandon the concept of the authentic speaker […] speakers and hearers rely on the notion of authenticity, not in the construction of their theories but in the construction of their identities" (Bucholtz 2003: 410). At least in Kodrah, the presence of an authentic 'native speaker' – even if the person is not teaching from the front – legitimizes the class, not just for students but crucially for the 'new speaker' teacher as well, as "L2 teachers tend to perceive their confidence as directly linked to their language expertise, most often in terms of its proximity to an NS standard, and as extending to their competency as teachers" (Wernicke 2017: 212).

Again, fortunately, following Kodrah Group 2, Core and the *Ardansa* Circle speakers have, through trial and error, found a new equilibrium where the latter position themselves as "*inheritors" of their relatives and grandparents*' knowledge, but also as Kodrah students – no longer speaking up alone for a section of the class, as Bernard alone used to do, but still maintaining the respect and authority to have the "new speaker" teacher yield to them if they have a query or a challenge. Now, the "new speaker" teacher is often able to rely on the *Ardansa* speaker(s) in class to manage their sense of competency and confidence while teaching in Kodrah, authenticating and legitimizing their teaching. Meanwhile, the *Ardansa* speaker is still respected and "held in high

regard for they are the source" of the new speaker teacher's knowledge (Keahi 2000: 59), providing authentication and critical support to the new speaker teacher, and legitimization and expertise to the class as a whole, but without facing the stress of being put on the spot and having their expertise and performance directly questioned. In this way, "the native speaker who remains a learner but who is able to balance that role with the proper authority role necessarily attained can only be a valued resource" (Davies 2003: 207). A similar relationship is reported for Wiradjuri by Anderson (2010: 68):

> I showed her respect and she gave me respect back. Without that from her we couldn't do the language […] On this journey I've learnt that Elders are essential as they are the knowledge-keepers, and […] teachers are the knowledge-givers.

The pressure our speakers feel to perform when put on the spot is partially why I was never able to start a Master-Apprentice programme for Kristang in Singapore, despite a substantial body of literature indicating its effectiveness with languages in a variety of other contexts and settings (Hinton 2003b; Olawsky 2013) – even when I began my initial Peskisa documentation in 2015, speakers would often exhibit a similar kind of embarrassment and discomfort upon not being able to address a query I had about Kristang, to the point where I was twice explicitly asked not to record anymore. The simple reason for this is summarized by Amery (2001: 205):

> People may feel insecure about the fact that they are not able to speak their own language. This is highlighted by the fact that some non-Aboriginal people, such as myself, have a much greater knowledge of their language than they have.

Based on our experiences, Core believes that a sustained Master-Apprentice Program or the original Kodrah model would put speakers on the spot, challenging them to perform to public expectations that may well exceed what they are capable of, and making them extremely uncomfortable if, for example, they are asked a word that is common enough to have appeared in a dictionary but which they do not know.

In contrast, by seeking a "local way of knowledge transmission and pedagogy" that was comfortable for our *Ardansa* speakers and helpful to our students and 'new speaker' teachers, our revitalization environment became more constructive and supportive for everyone: *Ardansa* Circle speaker, Core member, and 'new speaker' teacher (Olko & Wicherkiewicz 2016: 663). It is a partnership between all of us, in that "partnership efforts must recognize the inherent community strengths that exist" (Jacob 2012: 195) – and their weaknesses too, allowing us to support each other through our differences in knowledge, ability, identity and other aspects.

9.3. Teaching Kristang in Singapore as a polynomic language

As Makihara (2009: 251) observes:

> All speech communities are characterized by heterogeneity in terms of the structural characteristics of linguistic varieties, of individual competencies in multilingual and multidialectal repertoires, and of linguistic choices and behaviors. This is particularly so in situations of postcolonial multilingual communities under rapid social change and language shift to dominant languages.

An understanding of this, which summarizes Kristang's present situation in Singapore, in addition to my experience teaching Kristang Group 2 and validating different *Ardansa* speakers, were together what cemented the need for the community to find a way of championing Kristang's diversity and raising its status "without falling into prescriptive and hegemonic practices" (Sallabank 2010: 315). The polynomic model of language, first developed by Marcellesi (1986), was immediately appealing in how it treats linguistic variation as an "intrinsic good" and explicitly seeks to determine how linguistic diversity can be preserved and the vitality of the language in its present form can be maintained (Ó Murchadha 2016: 200). Based on the model adopted for Corsican language revitalization as described by Jaffe (2013), a language recognized and taught as polynomic is

> a language with an abstract unity, whose users recognize in multiple modes of existence, all of which are equally tolerated and are not distinguished hierarchically or by functional specialization. It is accompanied by tolerance of phonological and morphological variation by users, who also view lexical diversity as a form of wealth (Marcellesi 1989: 170); (cited in Jaffe 2013: 453 with translation)

Following Jaffe (2005), Corsican and Kodrah Kristang polynomic language teaching thus involves:

- commenting approvingly on the use of regional variants;
- pointing out that two alternative spellings are both correct, making it clear that neither is a mistake;
- explaining that a grapheme or a word-form can be pronounced in different ways;
- demonstrating alternate spellings and pronunciation;
- validating alternate pronunciation or spelling;
- using different forms from those in written materials (adapted from Jaffe 2005: 286–287); (cited in Sallabank 2010: 316–317 with translation);

- granting each individual idiolect that appears in class "equal and legitimate status" (Pietikäinen et al. 2016: 17), including all those of *Ardansa* Circle speakers and so-called "semi-speakers" (following Dorian (1977), speakers who have some knowledge of Kristang but "who are not fluent enough to be counted as a speaker" (Boltokova 2017: 13) or legitimized as such, especially by other *Ardansa* Circle speakers).

A polynomic system thus explicitly mandates that community members recognize and preserve sociolinguistic variation (Jaffe 2013: 454) instead of reducing it or eliminating it through standardization as would be the case under more traditional approaches to language planning and revitalization. Again, Core are positioned as 'new speakers', and we do not claim either the legitimacy or the authority to make decisions on the scale of standardization, for example, considering that such decisions often involve complex questions of identity and power (Jones 1995: 426; Lane 2015; Rutten 2016) which we are not positioned to answer (and which we may not want to answer, considering that just orthography alone can be "a lightning rod for all the personal, social, and political issues that wrack speech communities" (Hinton 2014: 140)).

A polynomic system also supports the way the current Kodrah teaching system includes our *Ardansa* Circle speakers, by avoiding the discomfort, "insecurity" and "disenfranchisement" speakers might feel when encountering other speakers deploying variation that in a traditional model would arguably threaten their own sense of legitimacy (Cipollone 2010: 176; Ó Murchadha 2016: 210). This ties in with standardization and related issues as well, in that selecting a standard form for the language as this would disprivilege many speakers and their own understandings of the language, which usually have evolved separately over the many years within each speaker's family. Ideologies related to standardization usually culminate in "render[ing] invisible some persons or activities that are inconsistent with the ideological scheme by making them go unnoticed, by transforming them to match the scheme, and/or by explaining them away" (Doerr 2009: 19). Seeking to avoid this, we actively encourage learners to accept such variation when we encounter it in class, and in doing so validate the experiences of our *Ardansa* speakers and their knowledge of Kristang.

Again, Kodrah has been extremely fortunate to have embarked on revitalization at a point where Kristang has yet to have been standardized or "highly institutionalized" (Jaffe 2007: 72). As Jaffe (2007: 72), discussing a similar situation of fortune for Corsican, goes on to observe, it is likely to "be more difficult to recast the meaning of diversity in conditions of more advanced standardization/normalization" (Jaffe 2007: 72).

9.4. Kodrah within the language ecology of Singapore

The above characteristics have so far projected a view of Kodrah as an initiative that is strongly founded on the ideals of diversity and inclusivity. This is not only for the reasons listed in the sections above, but also for reasons that have to do with Kodrah's position within the context of Singapore.

Kodrah's single most important priority is ensuring the successful revitalization of Kristang in Singapore. We therefore make decisions toward this primary objective in terms of how we operate within the specific context of modern Singapore (Hermes 2012: 133) and within its attendant discourses, as well as within larger, international discourses that Kodrah is part of e.g. those relating to language endangerment and revitalization (the discourses of enumeration and polynomie having been mentioned above), and to a lesser extent the Lusophone and Eurasian diasporas. However, the discourses we operate within in Singapore are unique in that they require Kodrah to frequently calibrate to ensure that we match and 'stay' within those discourses, due to the rather tenuous situation of Singapore's still young civil society. Understanding how we construct and project Kodrah, aligning it with the dominant discourses in this context, is critical. After all, "the representation of any issue for a mass audience has implications for the way it is understood" (Cameron 2007: 268).

Until the beginning of this century, visible language revitalization and, on a broader scale, visible ground-up movements akin to ours were not common occurrences in Singapore, and indeed are a relatively new phenomenon (Ortmann 2015: 119). Contemporary Singapore also privileges CMIO multiculturalism and multiracialism as a means of encouraging social integration and reducing the possibility of inter-ethnic violence (Siddique 2017: 189). Thus, insular behavior and "any attempts by members of a specific cultural community to gain consideration for themselves have been treated as expressions of chauvinism by the government" (Trocki 2006: 140–141) and seen as "unjustified assertiveness", "a lack of empathy for other cultures", antagonistic, and overall counter-productive to the ongoing nation-building process (Gopinathan 1979: 293). Kodrah thus promotes Kristang as a vital part of Singapore's "shared heritage", while simultaneously also being an important part of the heritage of the Eurasian community, an important constituent community within the Singaporean nation. This aligns Kodrah well with the state's own interests in resolving the fundamental paradox at the heart of the CMIO multiracialism model as outlined by Hill & Lian (1995):

> On the one hand it may lead to a synthetic culture and identity which is uniquely Singaporean. On the other it exhorts individuals to identify more closely with their own ethnic group and culture. The danger of either extreme if taken to its logical conclusion…is that one is either rootless or chauvinist – neither of which is acceptable to the People's Action Party (PAP) government. The compromise, it can be argued, lies in a delicate balance between the two (Hill & Lian 1995: 104).

This delicate balance is thus a "dual ethnic and national identification" (Hill & Lian 1995: 104, Henderson 2003: 29), with the former subordinated to (and in the service of) the latter. Since Goh Chok Tong's premiership, which recognized the need to heighten ethnic consciousness while simultaneously "promoting the sense of a shared history" (Mauzy & Milne 2002: 102), Singaporeans have been simultaneously "encouraged to take pride in a common Singaporean heritage and destiny" (Henderson 2003: 29) but also "(re)discover their cultural heritage" and "traditional values" (Rocha 2012: 113). This has also been a useful discourse that Kodrah has deployed, framing Kristang similarly as a piece of both 'ethnic' intangible cultural heritage and 'national' intangible cultural heritage" (ICH), which locates the initiative within the appropriate interests and bounds of the state, and legitimizes and centers the initiative within mainstream Singaporean society by projecting Kristang as part of the 'common Singapore heritage'. In terms of ensuring long-term sustainability for the language and the initiative, this discourse has also dovetailed well with our multiethnic framing in attracting non-Eurasian Singaporeans who may be interested in discovering more about their "common Singaporean heritage", and contributing to an endeavor that might otherwise be seen as more peripheral and purely 'ethnic'.

A more general upswing in interest in Singapore's ICH in recent years means that this strategy has been a viable one: the state, for instance, has developed the Our SG Heritage Plan, with an associated budget of $666 million (Jalelah Abdul Baker 2018) that specifically seeks to conserve ICH. However, despite Ting (2015:28)'s vigorous assertion that intangible heritage includes "the many […] dialects and languages pertaining to the Chinese, Malays, Indians and other races such as the Eurasians and the Peranakans", as well as Singlish, continuing sensitivity around the treatment and status of many of the other heritage (vernacular) languages, especially the so-called Chinese "dialects" Cantonese, Foochow, Hainanese, Hakka, Hokkien, Teochew and others whose use has been discouraged since the late 1970s (Lim 2009: 54), means that the Heritage Plan stops short of naming these varieties themselves as aspects of Singapore's ICH. The closest the Plan in its current form gets to this is the category "Oral Traditions and Expressions", which is defined as

> Traditions that use language to transmit knowledge and express our cultural values. Oral traditions, such as folk tales and musical storytelling, are such forms of heritage. (National Heritage Board 2017)

Thus, only said oral traditions are considered ICH, not the languages they are expressed in. However, the ongoing "predominance of nostalgia" and interest in personal heritage (Blackburn 2013: 453, Ting 2015: 103-4) mean that a significant number of Singaporeans have become interested in learning these languages anyway as part of their broader interest in their personal ICH, a trend recently covered by both the *New York Times* (I. Johnson 2017) and AFP (Agence France-Presse 2017), and one that we

hope to continue to tap on in terms of attracting more learners to the initiative, since recognition in the public domain "will also reflect on [the language's] status within the (potential) speaker community" (Olawsky 2010a: 80).

Finally, we have made a concerted effort to highlight the youth-led intergenerational nature of the initiative in order to preserve ours and the community's ownership and control over it, and to again project Kodrah's legitimacy and currency within mainstream Singapore society. Anxiety over youth apathy is not unique to Singapore, but it remains a source of concern for the state, which makes "frequent references in the public discourse to youths as a national problem" to the apparent extent that "the public imagination has been dominated by accounts of youth apathy" (Tan 2007: 222, 8), with the youth derided for "being out of touch with politics and current affairs" (Tong Yee & Tay 2017: 229). The government thus seeks to "re-programme" and "re-activate" youth as a "force for good" that "correspond[s] with […] properly defined political interests" (Tan 2007: 229). Because Core already moves within the aforementioned discourses aligning with state interests, and is also working to build intergenerational bonds between *Ardansa* speakers and new learners – another new concern for a now-developed state with a rapidly ageing population (Ng 2005) – we are an excellent fit for this ideal, as youth who break the stereotype of the apathetically disengaged and who instead "energetically […] heed the nation's call to volunteer their services" within the boundaries of permissible civil engagement (Tan 2007: 229). Hence our recognition and support by numerous state entities, including my becoming the 2017 Youth recipient of the Singapore President's Volunteer and Philanthropy Award (National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre 2017).

Positioning the initiative as youth-led was extremely valuable in making our Festa and Phase 2 expansion possible, and continues to be as we move forward with more long-term objectives for Kristang in Singapore. More importantly, it has also been immensely useful in making the language "popular and significant for younger generations", hopefully in the long-term becoming a self-reinforcing way to attract more youth to the initiative (Sometimes & Kelly 2010: 87), and avoiding the obstacles that other languages in Singapore and the region such as Malayalam and Kelabit have long faced because of an inability to develop youth participation, and therefore long-term sustainability and community cohesion (Gomez 1997; Blanchet-Cohen & Urud 2017). Creating space for youth involvement, investment and leadership empowers youth "as informed, critical, and responsible agents" within the community and harnesses their energy, creativity and dynamism toward powerful, meaningful and necessary outcomes for perpetuation of the community (Phyak & Bui 2014: 114-5).

We are fortunate that our *Ardansa* speakers have recognized that "everything possible must be done to make young speakers feel a deep connection with their language" (Loether 2009: 254). Beyond permitting strong youth leadership, this has included encouraging other community members to develop content that will be relevant to the next generation of speakers. Such content has usually taken the form of

"global media resources that are taken up at the local level and indigenised to become more relevant" to the community (Moriarty & Pietikäinen 2011: 364):

- a Core team member is leading an all-youth team independent from Kodrah to develop a bilingual English-Kristang graphic novel based on *Ardansa* speakers' experiences and recollections across the time period of independent Singapore;
- a Group 1 student has been developing the first in what will hopefully become a series of children's books in Kristang known as *Bruang Barnaby* ('Barnaby the Bear');
- a Group 2 student developed a film featuring Kristang for her final-year project at Temasek Polytechnic known as *Nina Boboi,* which later was picked up by online aggregator Toggle;
- a Group 9 student is developing a Massive Multiplayer Online Role-playing Game (MMORPG) called *Tera Sanud* with flavor text in Kristang.

As Sometimes & Kelly (2010: 88) observe in the case of Pitjantjatjara language revitalization, which embraces a similar intergenerational paradigm,

> the creation of media by young people is a strong identity-building activity, which, when linked with language that is being revived or revitalized, results in a reinforcement of participants' association with that language and a relationship between self-worth and their language…Engaging young community members through language-based activities gives access to Elders who have the relevant cultural and life experience to understand the importance of language revitalization, while legitimizing the cultural form to which young people are attracted.

Such material simultaneously also helps improve the "possibility of increased minority language recovery" for Kristang by helping to generate possible new domains, "values and functions" for the language (Moriarty & Pietikäinen 2011: 364). This is critical in the context of Singapore, which despite attempts at reform has continued to be gripped by "a long-standing instrumentalist logic" regarding many aspects of quotidian daily life, including language (Albright & Kramer-Dahl 2009: 201); if we are to embark on wider long-term outreach within Singapore, therefore, Kristang must at least increase in socioeconomic value in some way (Tupas 2015) in addition to its cultural value (Silver 2005).

9.5. Capacity building and resource management

Although there have been a number of opportunities for us to become profit-making (e.g. by charging money for class), Kodrah has remained non-profit by design to avoid creating conflict over the language and the initiative. Although some scholars have observed the benefits of creating economic opportunities for minority language speakers, including "symbolic empowerment" resulting in a virtuous cycle of speaker population enlargement (Loether 2009: 251), Shaul (1999: 53) presciently warns that "the danger of commodification in retarding or nullifying language revitalization is a limiting factor on any project of language revitalization or revival", because monetization brings its own set of complex problems that can easily compound existing difficulties. Because of our context and where we currently are in the revitalization process, I believe that we presently align more with the latter set of views: Kodrah unfortunately is not currently in an advantageous position to support major economic development and restructuring for the Kristang-speaking community, though this may change in future.

To begin with, I am not positioned as a 'native speaker' of the language, nor is anyone in Core; charging money for class would seem unjustified in this regard, since we would be charging people for a service that we are not 'expert' providers of. With no proper system of accreditation for teaching the language currently in place – another major concern in credential-oriented Singapore – contestations over who counts as a "native speaker" of Kristang and is therefore qualified to teach the language could also greatly damage relationships between speakers who might otherwise have much to contribute, and fracture the relatively-unified Kristang-speaking community within Kodrah. Competitiveness "really destroys our sense of community. It destroys a family and it destroys cohesion" (Kipp 2000a: 64). Neither should anyone in the initiative be put in the uncomfortable position that a "money economy" in Kodrah would create, where a work-pay pattern encourages the employer to believe they are "in the position of power from which we can make all kinds of demands" – a position that often appears morally "incontestable" in Singapore, where "the work-pay pattern is so easily taken for granted" (Samarin 1967: 127, cited in Rice 2006: 126). Even well-intentioned commodification could end up reducing "the value of language, intentionally and unintentionally to a sales gimmick" where "the history and culture of a people is conditionally "othered" and the hard work of gaining knowledge circumvented in favor of immediacy" (Whitney-Squire, Wright & Alsop 2018: 187).

Kodrah has therefore also intentionally disavowed any interest in advocating for Kristang to join the public school system for this reason – aside from the sensitivities that exist in Singapore over language in education for the reasons listed above, we recognized that

the institutionalized nature of language instruction can transform the language into an artificial object, to be learned and used only within the schools, while the living, organic form of the language used in society is no longer existent (Austin & Sallabank 2011: 19)

Though there are positive examples of previously low-prestige languages entering formal schooling and gaining prestige and positive recognition (e.g. Smagulova 2017), prestige and positive attitudes have been shown to interact in complex and often unpredictable ways with actual use of the language in question. For many students, their contexts of use of the language in question may thus end up paralleling the situations for Irish (Carnie 1995), Tamil in Singapore (Mani & Gopinathan 1983, Saravanan, Lakshmi & Caleon 2007) and Welsh (Price & Tamburelli 2016), where there may be a "lack of social use of the minority language" outside of school (Smith-Christmas 2017: 33) thus causing the language to be abandoned beyond the school domains due to a limited presence in the family and other important areas, stifling revitalization efforts. Indeed, although Singaporean student responses to the existing mother tongues already on offer in school have been shown to be mostly though not uniformly positive (Bokhorst-Heng & Caleon 2009; Xie & Cavallaro 2016), very few to almost no families in Singapore currently use Kristang in the home, with most families outside of the initiative embracing the aforementioned beliefs about linguistic instrumentalism.

We have chosen instead for the initiative to remain based within the Kodrah community, meaning that the community is responsible for perpetuating itself. Such a model possesses the following advantages, already partially explained in earlier sections, that are characteristic of community-based language learning endeavors enumerated by Sallabank (2012: 116-7):

- the initiative "provides practice for learners who may have had passive exposure but have little productive competence", especially some of our *Ardansa* Circle and the majority of our Eurasian students; meanwhile,
- the initiative "helps elders to remain fluent and active", including most of our *Ardansa* Circle and my Eurasian grandparents;
- the initiative's "real-life task-based approach aims to preserve traditional knowledge as well as languages" by designing activities and tasks around real-life events;
- the initiative is "easy to implement, requiring little funding"; however, "a framework of ideas and activities is essential so that there is a progression and interest is maintained";
- the initiative's main activities, the face-to-face classes, can be easily supplemented by "internet-based courses", "social gatherings", "cultural activities" and other events, since there is high community investment.

Beyond these, placing the onus on the community ensures that the initiative retains a spirit of dynamism and energy. A number of Singaporeans remain "suspicious" of community-oriented top-down initiatives and campaigns that seek to develop civic involvement (Weninger & Kho 2014: 622), and considering that past experience has already shown that "overly aggressive government support for minority languages has encouraged speakers to become passive recipients of language planning rather than active participants" in other revitalization initiatives, resulting in "a lack of enthusiasm for language revitalization and maintenance" (Wilson, Johnson & Sallabank 2015: 260), it would therefore make even more sense that the impetus for revitalization remains located within the community, rather than in schools, which cannot carry the burden of revitalization alone (Suina 2004: 298), or with the state, so that our hard-won success does not dissipate overnight. As Wilson, Johnson & Sallabank (2015: 260) go on to explain, community support may be withdrawn

> due to misleading perceptions about the health or the future of the language among the general population, once the government starts to play a more official role in language planning. Another possible reason is that volunteers may see less need for their contributions if government agencies take over language planning and policy; or they may feel that voluntary efforts are less valued than those of paid officials.

By contrast, making the Kodrah community non-profit but responsible for its own growth and long-term survival means that agency is retained by the community for its own fate (and, by extension, for the fate of the language) (Lim, Ng & Chang 2017: 181). Meanwhile, through retention of agency, students and *Ardansa* speakers are simultaneously strongly encouraged to become "active contributors" to the community, without the complexities of motivation and power induced by monetization; this in turn "is more likely to increase their language competence than passive or isolated approaches to language learning" (Weinberg & De Korne 2016: 133). By "drawing in the different segments of the community" across the possible spectrums of age, background, race, gender, and experience with Kristang in Singapore, we emphasize "that the language revitalization project belongs to everyone and therefore all have a responsibility to its continuation" (Pecos & Blum-Martinez 2003: 82).

Kodrah has also shown that one does not always require a lot of money to get a language revitalization initiative up and running. Although "there are very few funds available for revitalization projects, especially at grass-roots level" (Sallabank 2012: 121), I concur with Walsh (2010: 31), who comments that although "financial support is very useful it is not what I would see as a primary ingredient for success". Our only attempt so far to secure major external funding in excess of S$5,000 was for Festa, a large, one-off event. Aside from two other micro-grants as part of our start-up in August 2016 from Awesome Foundation Singapore and the National Youth Council, Kodrah

currently operates on no financial support whatsoever. This has been achieved through management of the following components of the initiative:

- Venue**:** In Phases 1 and 2, all initiative activities besides Festa (partially discounted venue paid for through government grants), level 1B of Kodrah Group 4 (rental space at a private organization paid for by class members) and level 1A of Kodrah Group 8 (at a community centre, see bullet point below) took place at venues hosted by partner organizations CAPT, NUS, EA, the National Library Board, the Substation and the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre. Since February 2017, Kodrah classes have been accredited under the umbrella of the Singapore's People's Association (PA), which allows accredited PA trainers to run accredited classes at 120 community clubs, community centres and other community venues across the island (People's Association 2017) for no venue rental charge.

- Class materials**:** Kodrah lessons are slides-centered, with all slides freely available on the Kodrah Kristang website; learners have the option of printing hardcopy slides if they wish, but they do so on their own. Additional game materials are usually printed on normal black-and-white A4 or A3 paper, sourced from recycled material, or borrowed from existing game sets owned by community members (e.g. one game uses tokens from my grandfather's set of RISK); materials printed in colour or bought (e.g. LEGO) are made to be reusable as long-term capital for multiple iterations of a level of class. Supplementary resources such as Baxter & de Silva (2004), Morgado da Costa (2017), the audio course and the vocabulary course are all freely available online.

- Additional funding sources**:** Where needed to defray printing costs (otherwise absorbed by Core) or one-off venue rentals, additional funds are presently sourced from donations in exchange for leftover copies of the *Ila-Ila di Sul* board game and *Bista di Kristang* flashcard deck produced as limited runs for Festa (under a Festa NHB grant), as well as leftover copies of Marbeck (2011b) gifted to us by the author in 2016. Some students also contribute to a separate, private taxi fund meant to defray the cost of getting to and from class for older and less mobile *Ardansa* speakers.

Again, this model is not possible for all language communities. We are extremely fortunate in that almost all of Core also presently hold full-time, decently-paying jobs with superiors whose attitudes range from tolerant to supportive of our involvement with the initiative. We also live in Singapore, a tiny city-state with a highly urbanized environment where infrastructure and transport are well developed. For communities

in other contexts, where language revitalization may be inextricably linked to livelihoods and the economic survival of the community, the situation will unfortunately be very different in many cases (Grounds & Grounds 2013: 53).

However, the inherently resourceful and frugal nature of Kodrah is arguably far more universally applicable. Again, we do our best to make our context work for us, seeking resources that may not immediately present themselves, and leveraging on existing networks of support, sometimes in conjunction with the state (but only where necessary). Meanwhile, in the areas we cannot develop capacity and capital in, we recycle, reuse and repurpose what capacity and capital we have.

9.6. Relationships at the heart of language revitalization

This leads me to the final characteristic that Kodrah often takes pride in: our recognition that indeed, language revitalization is, at its heart, all about forming genuine and supportive relationships not just with the language, but with other people who speak the language, whether they are learners or *Ardansa* speakers. As Dorian (1994: 132) asserts,

> A common theme underlying some of the problems mentioned so far is lack of understanding of the social nature of human language. Without awareness of the facts that […] social reinforcement is essential to normal acquisition and then also to maintenance of active language skills, the efforts of parents or community planners to bolster language retention or revival are likely to be misplaced and relatively unsuccessful.

As has been argued elsewhere on countless occasions, there can be no revitalization of a language without a community that provides meaningful and relevant contexts of use for that language. However, Kodrah has also recognized the importance of not just building a community, but a cohesive and cooperative community which places "the greater good" of revitalizing the language as the "primary value" over other issues (Fenelon & Hall 2008: 1881). Countless examples have shown that "if the community cannot reach consensus often enough on even small issues, then the success of language revitalization […] will be put in jeopardy" (Walsh 2010: 28); conversely, a sense of shared objectives has had a snowballing effect for more successful movements like Hawaiian, as new domains are established and the attraction and prestige of the language increases (Brenzinger & Heinrich 2013: 310).

What is also less often recognized is that the development of a community also means the nurturing and thriving of the relationships between individuals involved in the revitalization effort. Strong, cohesive communities are premised on the recognition "that one has a relationship with – not just to – the […] language" (Ferguson 2016: 107), but importantly also on the idea that the language can only live and thrive if the human

relationships that carry the language are also living and thriving – that the individuals involved genuinely like each other, respect each other, and enjoy each other's company in addition to (and apart from) their love for the language. Hence, one does not just have a relationship to the Kodrah community, but many relationships and friendships and bonds with and within the Kodrah community. Pittaka, Bielenberg & Bielenberg Pittaka (2013: 176), writing about Kypriaka, observe that

> speaking a heritage language means more than being able to form correct sentences and phrases or use isolated vocabulary – often this is all that is learned in community – and church-sponsored language classes and schools. More importantly it means being able to communicate effectively and intimately across generations, with cousins, friends, parents, and grandparents, to feel comfortable in both worlds, to understand the nuances of how the language is used and the feelings that accompany certain sounds and expressions.

Helping learners and speakers alike to develop sincere appreciation for one another vastly increases the opportunities for that effective and intimate communication to take place, for authentic speaker talk that will include said conversational nuances and feelings, and most importantly, for learners to feel comfortable. It also solidifies trust, a "key indicator of social cohesion and community wellbeing" (Lowe & Howard 2010: 205), and, for learners without any language background, cements the reality of the initiative: there are people who still speak this language in Singapore, who still care about this language, who talk in it and pray in it and dream in it, and it matters so much to them that Kristang stays alive in our homes and our streets and our island. As Noori (2013) describes in relation to Anishinaabemowin language revitalization efforts:

> We don't hesitate to teach nonnative friends the language, and we don't save Anishinaabemowin for when people leave. We welcome everyone into the family. Adults are encouraged to use Anishinaabemowin if they know it, and asked to try saying a few words if they don't. This practice of counting friends as family and allowing the community to define connections can be extraordinarily empowering [...] It is important to keep the habits of language use close to the heart, but it is also important to bring everyone who is part of the family circle into the project. Otherwise the language becomes a barrier between the home and the "real world", and using the language becomes a burden that divides relatives and friends (Noori 2013: 122).

The effect of this has been nothing short of profound, and is the main reason consistently described by the vast majority of learners as to why they keep coming back for a class that is free, for a language that is effectively moribund. It is for the friends they have made, the experiences and the fun they have shared, and the shared sense of purpose that they are now bound up in as a result of that. Their strong sense of trust and

affective commitment to and from other members of the community supports them as they continue their journeys with Kristang (Anderson 2010; Reid 2010).

De Silva (2017) was one of our pioneer students in Kodrah, and writes about her time in Kodrah Group 1 in her collection *Others Is Not A Race*. Her experiences summarize the relationships Kodrah engenders between individuals and the language, with each other, and with their heritage:

> For the first time since primary school, I have made a group of Eurasian friends […] My friends' reasons for learning Kristang overlap with mine. [One] thinks of it as "his grandmother's tongue" and [another] wants to speak it to her own family one day. It makes [a third] feel more connected to her ancestors. […] We Eurasians do not have many visible, tangible traits to point at and go "Ta da! Culture!" We cannot boast of having unique beaded slippers, say, like the Peranakans, or a legacy of dynastic culture like the Chinese, or a wealth of literature, art and song like those from the Indian subcontinent. But what we do have, besides our awesome Eurasian cuisine, is this language, which is truly ours (De Silva 2017: 74–75).

10. Major Challenges

In large part to the new community who has made this possible, therefore, the initiative presently stands at a critical juncture. Our unexpected series of achievements have greatly outweighed our failures and setbacks over the last two years, allowing Core to successfully overcome, mitigate or otherwise pre-empt a number of crucial issues that may have otherwise stifled Kodrah at a more embryonic state. Nonetheless, overconfidence at this stage (or at any stage in revitalization) is premature: some problems apparently evaded may yet prove recurrent, while what large challenges remain are those that are far broader, more systemic, far-reaching and difficult to address, and in some cases represent enormous or even intractable obstacles toward long-term sustainable linguistic health for Kristang in Singapore. This section outlines three of the most major challenges facing Kodrah, each bookending one of the remaining phases of the *Kaminyu di Kodramintu*.

10.1. Building Individual Investment

In Phase 3 in the near future, the biggest gap the initiative currently faces is specialized manpower capable of teaching all four levels of the adult Kodrah classes – currently 3 members of Core – and the children's Kakakikih classes – currently just one person outside of Core. Ideally, "as the number and intensity of activities that assist learners in recognizing the value of traditional language correlates to increased language

awareness in young people, it is critical that these efforts be multiplied" (Olawsky 2010b: 152). However, due to limited manpower, we can only offer up to 3 adult classes a week, Kakakikih classes on an irregular basis whenever Brenda's schedule is clear, and other more socially-oriented events similarly on an occasional, infrequent basis. This is the biggest gap presently facing the initiative, and one that cannot be solved easily.

This is because developing individual long-term commitment to a language does not happen overnight. Despite the positivity that Kodrah engenders in community members, it still takes a combination of genuine interest in not just the language but in learning how to teach it, a strong love of both the language and the community, a decently flexible work-life balance that permits time off in the evenings (when classes are usually held), and humility enough to acknowledge that "i will be learning to speak for the rest of my life" (Baird 2013: 21) before an individual is ready to invest their time and energy into Kodrah on the level that Core do – a mix that can take years to develop. On top of this, Singaporeans also face additional contextual barriers: it is difficult for older Singaporeans, who were brought up in a post-independence education system that privileged the four official languages (and for Eurasians, especially English) and linguistic instrumentalism, to develop a sustained commitment to Kristang, which for them is absolutely useless as a small language with no utilitarian value. Meanwhile, younger Singaporeans face either the pressure imposed by the demanding education system or the pressure of locating a job in an increasingly competitive economy (or both). In terms of priorities, devoting nearly all of one's free time to revitalizing a small language – and for no money! – is therefore still far from the top of the lists of most Singaporean and Eurasian youth, and perhaps most Singaporeans and Eurasians in Singapore in general.

Scholars describing other revitalization initiatives have noted the propensity for revitalization activities to "revolve around a handful of people" (Amery 2001: 205), such as with Kaurna, Cornish (Sayers & Renkó-Michelsén 2015: 18) and Kawaiisu (Grant & Turner 2013: 191).

Indeed, "few programs have any hope of succeeding without an individual or individuals who are willing to sacrifice greatly over many years' time […] nascent programs must be nurtured by individuals who not only have a personal stake in the outcome but also have the time, health, and energy to do so" (Grenoble & Whaley 2006: 98). Up till now, that this has been the case for Kodrah has meant that the initiative has remained centralized, focused and relatively unified in purpose. The challenge going forward is maintaining those characteristics while at the same time expanding the initiative's capacity to perpetuate and sustain itself beyond just the efforts of Core.

"It takes one person to take the first step in order to inspire others to revitalize a language that is no longer fully spoken" (Dixon & Deak 2010: 127). However, it takes far more than a few people to ensure that the rest of the journey continues, and at present,

it remains to be seen how Kodrah will attract enough interest from invested individuals to continue to expand at the rate that it has over the last two years.

10.2. Building Family and Community Investment

Assuming that the problem of developing more specialized manpower is at least somewhat resolved, Phase 4 of the initiative presents an even greater challenge: developing a community of families immersing their children in Kristang in various domains, including in the home and in language classes.

The literature is resoundingly clear on the dual importance of the family and immersion in successful language revitalization. Hinton (2003c: 181) offers no room for alternatives when she asserts "that [an immersion program] is the best way to jump-start the production of a new generation of fluent speakers for an endangered language. There is no other system of language revitalization that has such complete access to so many members of the younger generation (who are the best language learners) for so many hours per day". "Establishing immersion programs is the most crucial measure a community can execute if they are truly serious about saving even a portion of their language through their children" (Peters & Peters 2013: 75), and "stopping at primary-school level is clearly not going to be sufficient" (Hopkins 2016: 101); systematic scaffolding and support will be necessary at higher levels of education as well, to ensure that both linguistic competence and affective interest and motivation are maintained. Meanwhile, the family is equally critical in ensuring that there is support for the language continuing to be used at home: Lee (2018: 60) "intergenerational transmission has been recognized to be so vital to the continuity of any language that it is specifically targeted by revitalization programs", while Mac Póilin (2013: 145–146) argues that "the development of linguistic communities, and in particular, intergenerational transmission through the family, is the most effective way of maintaining a threatened language". Pittaka, Bielenberg & Bielenberg Pittaka (2013: 180) sum these up more emotionally:

> Maintenance of a heritage language is more, much more, than going to Saturday classes and putting together grammatically correct sentences; it is feeling the living language to such a degree that a child has become one with the language and all that is shared through it. Annual festivals, language classes, and summer holidays as a visitor support the process but are insufficient. What is required is to become a contributing, sharing member of the linguistic community".

However, current trends in Singapore society do not portent well for the successful development of immersion-style Kristang learning. The "ubiquity" of tuition culture in Singapore, with 7 out of 10 parents enrolling their children in some form of additional non-school based tutoring for subjects with perceived higher instrumental value (C. Tan

2017: 322; Yuen Sin 2017), means that such immersion classes would be difficult to sustain without some instrumental rationalization for learning Kristang; indeed, with some tutoring ending as late as 8pm or 9pm at night (Jelita 2017), some children would likely simply have no time for Kristang on top of all their other commitments. When coupled together with "the reality […] that the day-to-day routines of life while living in English-speaking environments often meant that to stay in the language required conscious effort, and at times became quite exhausting" (Pittaka, Bielenberg & Bielenberg Pittaka 2013: 174), the barriers to the successful, stabilized adoption of Kristang within enough families to form a critical mass for successful revitalization remain, unfortunately, daunting at best.

10.3. Long-Term Sustainability

As for Phase 5, the final projected phase of the *Kaminyu di Kodramintu*, Core concurred that the situation for Kristang in Singapore was analogous to that for contemporary Myaamia (Miami-Illinois), where

> […] complete fluency is not for this generation. There is no complete and total immersive environment that one can experience in our language […] This is the generation of reintroduction to the language and its unique way of thinking, and rebuilding cultural context for a future fluent environment…This is our reality without fluent conversational speakers. (D. Baldwin, in Baldwin et al. 2013: 7–8).

Thus, especially for languages like Kristang and Myaamia, revitalization will not happen in a single generation, or even two, or three. It will be a long-term, multi-generational endeavor that "will take an enormous amount of time and energy" (Anderson 2010: 69) across decades. It will also demand "a high level of conscious efforts on the part of the speech community to restore the sociolinguistic vitality of the language, by making it again a language of the everyday life of living relationships in situations where intergenerational transmission has been weakened" (Makihara 2009: 251), in conjunction with the aforementioned intergenerational family language transmission and sustained language immersion. The new speech community being formed by Kodrah, in 2018 still nascent, adventurous and fresh-faced, will have to have achieved some level of maturity and self-awareness by 2040-2045, taking conscious ownership of the need to preserve Kristang within their own lives and homes and children.

   How likely is this for Kristang? Until long-term sustainable capacity can be developed for the language – in other words, until the resolution of the other challenges in Sections 10.1 and 10.2 – a truly healthy status for the language is likely to remain out of reach, even possibly in 20 to 30 years' time, considering the unique characteristics of contemporary Singaporean society make it difficult to develop an

instrumentalist persuasion that would make learning Kristang either more profitable or more prestigious. Additionally, Hawaiian, possibly one of the few successful examples of revitalized languages in recent times to have made it to this stage, did so with eventual (and significant) legal and legislative support (Cowell 2012). Considering the context of Singapore, legal and legislative support is not likely to be forthcoming, meaning that Kodrah and Kristang in Singapore will have to press on in the foreseeable future, without a single, permanent venue, legislative protection, and/or legal security, and with the ongoing need for deft maneuvering within the quickly-evolving civil society landscape.

Moreover, although I have earlier detailed Core's reluctance to monetize Kodrah, we have faced some recurrent difficulties in maintaining long-term learner and *judanti* investment as classes remain free – we will likely face similar, if not more even more challenging obstacles in maintaining family and parental commitment toward fulfilling our language immersion plans for Phase 4 and beyond of revitalization. Expanding the initiative in such fashion, coupled with the continuing prevailing attitude of linguistic instrumentalism in Singapore, all mean that sizeable and sustained financial support, accompanied by some form of commodification and/or monetization (or even turning Kodrah into a company of some form), will likely be required if the initiative is to overcome these barriers.

11. Conclusion

The challenges that Kodrah will face in the years to come will be beyond anything that we have seen before, and will require far more time, energy and collective purpose to solve than what we have already accomplished. Yet that does not mean we should not continue to revitalize Kristang; certainly not now, when against all odds the language has experienced what is arguably a meteoric renaissance in Singapore thanks to the efforts of a unique ensemble of passionate youth, a circle of progressive and collaborative elders and, most of all a willing, eager community of learners who have come forward to learn this language that very few of them even knew about prior to 2015.

Despite our successes and our efforts to be inclusive, as with all revitalization initiatives, "there are still people who would rather criticize the efforts of my and others' learning than value the language which we have" (Green 2010: 185). Some have even ventured into challenging and questioning my credentials and motivations for shaping the initiative in the way that it has been. This article has sought to elaborate on why Kodrah is run the way it is, emphasizing the contexts and constraints within which we operate. As Bernard, Brenda and all our *Ardansa* speakers must have asked themselves when choosing to be part of Kodrah: "Is it right to leave one's heritage language to chance in a time of unprecedented global language decline?" (O'Regan 2013: 97). In

2016, when Bernard and I first met, it seemed to us that Kristang in Singapore had been left very much to chance. Today, the fate of the language still very much rest on the whims of fate; but working together, we have pulled it back that little bit further from the precipice. Even though "we will continue to witness a degree of loss", as time moves on and people leave, I believe in what D. Baldwin calls "the creative human spirit that has the potential to bring new meaning and purpose to the language we speak today" (Baldwin et al. 2013: 7–8). I believe that the foundations we have laid, shaky and improvised as they are, may yet prove firm.

I close this article with the words of one of the *Ardansa* speakers, a teacher to me in so many ways, and more importantly, a friend who I respect and cherish for everything that she has brought to my life, despite our differences in age and experience.

> Kodrah Kristang in many ways has impacted my life. I am from the pioneer group in CAPT. I have made many new like-minded friends. We converse in Kristang; it is so fun. Before this I only spoke Kristang with my family because I wanted to keep my Kristang heritage alive. After each session I look forward to the next one. Our trip to Melaka and our occasional get togethers have bonded us as a family which is extremely encouraging. The power of language brings people like us together. I am happy, thankful and proud to belong to this group.

Language revitalization can "begin with a single individual's vision and commitment" (Hinton 2002: 5), but it takes a community to see it through.

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