Preface to the Second Edition and Acknowledgements

When I completed the first edition of this book in 2003, I wrote the following acknowledgements.

The process of turning this volume into a finished product has been a long one. I am grateful to all the inspirational colleagues and students from my time living and teaching in Italy, Britain, Russia and Brazil, and to those I met elsewhere at seminars usually organised by Nick Wadham Smith of the British Council. A smaller number of scholars, colleagues and friends substantially influenced the final outcome; you will recognise yourselves in the pages that follow, and I am indebted to you all. I am also grateful to the Department of English Language at the University of Glasgow for sparing me for an academic session so that I could write the first full draft of the manuscript. Christian Kay, Alan Pulverness and Mike Byram generously read versions of the work in progress and made constructive comments. Alison Phipps spurred me to get the job done. Throughout, Augusta Alves has been a constant source of ideas, support and love – to her this work is dedicated. The errors that remain are, obviously, my own responsibility.

It has been an even longer process to complete a second edition and many more people have contributed to the development of my thinking on the subject of this book over the past two decades. To the names above, I must add Wendy Anderson, Andrea Assenti del Rio, Maria José Coperías-Aguilar, Hugo Dart, Beatriz Peña Dix, Manuela Guilherme, Prue Holmes, Clarissa Jordão, Li Li, Anthony Liddicoat, Bruno Lima, Peih-ying ‘Peggy’ Lu, Malcolm MacDonald and Martin Montgomery, the last of whom was kind enough to contribute a foreword to the first and second editions. Many others could be mentioned. I have particularly benefited from conversations with colleagues, friends and students in Macau, where I worked between 2011 and 2017, and, more recently, with fellow participants in the AHRC project, ‘Building an intercultural pedagogy for higher education in conditions of conflict and protracted crises: languages, identity, culture’. Anna Roderick of Multilingual Matters has
been infinitely patient and encouraging. Augusta Alves has remained a
constant support and continues to be a source of love and ideas – to her
this work is rededicated. Two anonymous reviewers were kind enough to
read the entire manuscript of this edition and they offered insightful and
constructive comments and critiques. Notwithstanding their best efforts,
errors and inadequacies no doubt remain and are very much my own.

To counter the utopian optimism that is sometimes associated with
intercultural language education, to the first and present edition of this
book I added an epigram by the Portuguese poet, Fernando Pessoa,
observing that the search for an international language is necessarily
imbued with a sense not only of gain, but of loss. It is an item of faith
in intercultural language studies that the encounter with otherness is
enriching, but, as it transforms us, there is also, inevitably, loss – and we
can witness, acknowledge and honour that fact, even as we step bravely
into the exciting, uncertain future. The cover image chosen for the first
edition showed one of Duane Hanson’s ironic, disturbingly hyper-real
sculptures of stereotypical tourists, both brash and vulnerable. It is one
of my favourite artworks, and, two decades ago, I thought it would be
in keeping with the book’s theme of cultural exploration. For the second
edition, I have replaced that image with a detail from Simon Patterson’s
equally wonderful ‘The Great Bear’, which turns a familiar, iconic image,
that of the London Underground map, into an autobiographical constel-
lation of personal connections. The idea of the network, both intensely
personal and recognisably social, seems to be appropriate to intercultural
language education as it moves into the future.