Rationale

Through learning languages, students acquire:

- communication skills in the language being learnt
- an intercultural capability, and an understanding of the role of language and culture in communication
- a capability for reflection on language use and language learning.

Learning a second language provides the opportunity for students to engage with the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world and its peoples, to reflect on their understanding of experience in various aspects of social life, and on their own participation and ways of being in the world.

Learning languages broadens students’ horizons in relation to the personal, social, cultural, and employment opportunities that an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world presents. The interdependence of countries and communities means people in all spheres of life are required to deal with diverse languages and meanings across languages and cultures. Despite its status as a world language, a capability in English only is no longer sufficient. A bilingual or plurilingual capability is the norm in most parts of the world.

Learning languages:

- extends the capability to communicate and extends literacy repertoires
- strengthens understanding of the nature of language, of culture, and of the processes of communication
- develops intercultural capability
- deepens understanding of and respect for diversity and difference, and an openness to different experiences and perspectives
- develops understanding of how culture shapes worldviews and extends learners’ understanding of themselves, their heritage, values, culture and identity
- strengthens intellectual, analytical and reflective capabilities, and enhances creative and critical thinking.

Learning languages also contributes to strengthening the community’s social, economic and international development capabilities. Language capabilities represent linguistic and cultural resources through which the community can engage socially, culturally and economically, in domains which include business, trade, science, law, education, tourism, diplomacy, international relations, health and communications.

Learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages meets the needs and rights of young people to learn their own languages and recognizes their significance in the language ecology of Australia. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, learning their own languages is crucial to overall learning and achievements, to developing a sense of identity and recognition of understanding of language, culture, Country and Place. For all students, learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages provides a distinctive means of understanding the country in which they live, including the relationship between land, the environment and people. The ongoing and necessary reclamation and revitalisation of these languages also contribute to reconciliation.

Aims

The Australian Curriculum: Languages aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure students:

- communicate in the target language
- understand language, culture, and learning and their relationship, and thereby develop an intercultural capability in communication
- understand themselves as communicators.

These three aims are interrelated and provide the basis for the two organising strands: Communicating and Understanding. The three aims are common to all languages.

Key ideas

Language and culture

The interrelationship of language, culture and learning provides the foundation for the Australian Curriculum: Languages.

In the languages learning area the focus is on both language and culture, as students learn to communicate meaningfully across linguistic and cultural contexts, and different contexts. This process involves reflection and analysis, as students move between the new language being learnt and their own existing language(s). It is a reciprocal and dynamic process which develops understanding of how languages ‘work’, how they relate to each other and language(s). It is a reciprocal and dynamic process which develops language use within intercultural dimensions of learning; it is a reciprocal and dynamic process which develops language use within intercultural dimensions of learning.

Content structure

The content of the Australian Curriculum: Languages is organised through two interrelated strands which realise the three aims. The two strands are:

- Communicating: using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning
- Understanding: analysing language and culture as a resource for interpreting and creating meaning

The strands reflect three important aspects of language learning:

1) communication
2) analysis of aspects of language and culture
3) reflection that involves
   - reflection on experience of communicating
   - reflection on comparative dimensions of the languages available in students’ repertoires (for example, the first language in relation to second language and self in relation to others).

Strands and sub-strands

A set of sub-standards has been identified within each strand, which reflects dimensions of language use and the related content to be taught and learned. The strands and sub-standards do not operate in isolation but are integrated in relation to language use for different purposes in different contexts. The relative contribution of each sub-standard varies for different languages, pathways and bands of learning. The sub-standards are further differentiated according to a set of ‘threads’ that support the internal organisation of content in each sub-strand. These ‘threads’ are designed to capture (1) range and variety in the scope of language and (2) a means for expressing the progression of content across the learning sequences.

Structure

Leaver background and time-on-task are two major variables that influence language learning and they provide the basis for the structure of the Australian Curriculum: Languages. These variables are addressed through the specification of content and the description of achievement standards according to pathways and learning sequences respectively.

Pathways

In the Australian Curriculum: Languages, pathways for second language learners, background language learners and first language learners have been developed as appropriate to cater for the dominant group(s) of students learning each specific language within the current Australian context. For the majority of languages, one curriculum pathway has been developed for Years 9–10, catering for the dominant cohort of learners for that language in the current Australian context. For Chinese, pathways have been developed for three learner groups: first language learners, background language learners and second language learners.

The Framework for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages includes three learner pathways:

- First language learner pathway
- Revital language learner pathway
- Second language learner pathway
The nature of the learners
Students who enter the background language learner pathway in Vietnamese in Year 7 may have strong connections to Vietnamese language and culture through family and community, and varying degrees of oracy in Vietnamese. Their textual knowledge developed through English literacy supports the development of literacy in Vietnamese. Skills in analysing, comparing and reflecting on language and culture in both languages are mutually supportive.

Vietnamese language learning and use
Learning to use the Vietnamese language is a systematic process, involving a multitude of concepts, processes and activities. It is important that all learners have working knowledge of the Vietnamese language and culture as much as possible while socialising and exchanging information. This will not necessarily be characterised by the fluent use of Vietnamese, but rather by the way they use their background knowledge of Vietnamese language and culture in communication. These interactions should be authentic in relation to the world of teenage experience, and performance based. Additional opportunities for interaction are provided through purposeful and integrated use of information and communications technologies (ICT), for example, videoconferencing and online activities such as e-mailing.

Texts and resources
Learning to work with a range of texts designed for language learning, such as textbooks, audio recordings, teacher-generated materials and online resources. They also use authentic materials such as blogs, newsletters, advertisements, magazines, video clips and apps. Their knowledge is extended through exploration of Vietnamese texts on the internet, and audiovisual materials (for example, documentaries, ca dao, ca tru, cải lương, cải lương nữ, cải lương mới, cải lương miền Tây, cải lương miền Nam). They make connections between texts and cultural contexts, investigating how values and perspectives are embedded in language and how language choices determine ways in which people, issues and circumstances are represented.

Features of Vietnamese language use
Learning to recognise and use features of the Vietnamese sound and writing systems, including tones and tone markers, and apply appropriate pronunciation and spelling rules in written and spoken texts. They apply elements of Vietnamese grammar to the production of texts, such as appropriate word order, common nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs and conjunctions, to describe people, actions and events (Tôi cao và đẹp. Tôi có mặt đen. Bạn Lan học giỏi và hát hay. Ngày Tết cô mải mê), express courtesy and opinions (Chào mừng bạn yêu quý. Cô ơi, cô đẹp, cô yêu thương, cô đáng yêu), and convey emotions (Tôi vui và hạnh phúc khi tôi được học cùng bạn. Tôi buồn, tôi quan tâm mỗi ngày). They notice and compare features of texts in different settings and contexts (Tôi thích nghe nhạc và xem phim. Tôi thích xem phim horror và phim hài. Tôi thích đọc sách và đọc truyện).

Contexts of interaction
Learning to use language related to personal, social and natural worlds in spoken, written, critical and digital media forms, using modelled language structures. [Key concepts: self, community, environment; Key processes: composing, presenting, informing] Creating
Engage with a range of imaginative texts, including multimodal and digital texts, such as cartoons, folk tales, picture books, comics, poems and songs, and identify and describe key elements such as theme, setting, characters and actions. [Key concepts: imagination, theme, characters; Key processes: identifying, describing, responding] Translating
Translate and interpret short texts from Vietnamese into English and vice versa, identifying aspects that are similar or different and words or phrases that translate easily or with difficulty. [Key concepts: equivalence, representation; Key processes: translating, interpreting] Reflecting
Compare personal responses and reactions during interactions in Vietnamese and English, noticing how interaction involves culture as well as language. [Key concepts: intercultural communication, impact of culture; Key processes: comparing, reflecting] Reflect
Reflect on own biography, including family origins, traditions and beliefs, considering how it impacts on identity and shapes intercultural communication. [Key concepts: bilingualism, biculturalism, significance; Key processes: reflecting, connecting] Systems of Language
Recognise the features of the Vietnamese sound and writing system, including tones and tone markers, and explore Vietnamese pronunciation and spelling rules. [Key concepts: sound and writing system, pronunciation; Key processes: recognising, comparing] Socialising
Socialise and interact with peers and the teacher to exchange information on topics relating to self, family, friends and interests, and to express opinions, likes and dislikes. [Key concepts: family, friendship, home; Key processes: interacting, socialising, describing] Participate in guided and shared activities, such as role-play, classroom debates and discussions. [Key concepts: routines, roles; Key processes: questioning, contributing, responding] Informing
Identify and use information about place, time and events. They identify and describe places and events in the classroom and the school community. [Key concepts: meaning, audience; Key processes: translating, interpreting]

Inform
Identify and use information about topic, main ideas and specific points in a range of spoken, written, critical and digital media forms, using modelled language structures. [Key concepts: self, community, environment; Key processes: composing, presenting, informing] Socialising
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