

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.

Language learning 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 negotiate experiences 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
- develops 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 own 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 recognises 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 and 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 systems, 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 language use within intercultural dimensions of learning experiences. It is not a 'one plus one' relationship between two languages and cultures, where each language and culture stay separate and self-contained. Comparison and referencing between (at least) two languages and cultures build understanding of how languages 'work', how they relate to each other and how language and culture shape and reflect experience; that is, the experience of language using and language learning. The experience of being in two worlds at once involves noticing, questioning and developing awareness of how language and culture shape identity.

Structure

Learner 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 F–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
- revival language learner pathway
- second language learner pathway.

Sequences of learning

The design of the Australian Curriculum: Languages takes account of different entry points into language learning across Foundation – Year 10, which reflects current practice in languages.

For the second language learner pathway and the background language learner pathway, there are two learning sequences:

- Foundation–Year 10 sequence
- Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence.

For the first language learner pathway, there is one learning sequence:

- Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence.

Content and achievement standards are described initially in a three-year band for Foundation–Year 2 followed by two-year bands of learning: Years 3–4; Years 5–6, Years 7–8 and Years 9–10.

The Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages is written in the bands Foundation – Year 2, Years 3–6 and Years 7–10. In the absence of pedagogical evidence across the country for all these languages, the broader band distinctions provide maximum local flexibility in curriculum development.

Year 9 and 10 (Year 7 Entry) Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 10, students use spoken and written Chinese to initiate and sustain extended interactions with others in their social world and in the Chinese-speaking community, for example, 我的学校生活, 澳大利亚的运动, 我最喜欢的春节活动. They ask questions (for example, 你真的认为...吗? 请想一想...) and adapt language use for a range of contexts and roles. They identify and evaluate key points of information from different spoken, written and multimodal authentic sources and use this information to develop a position and to inform and convince others. They move between Chinese and English to create simple bilingual texts. Students interpret, interact with and create a range of texts for imaginative, informative and persuasive purposes and for different audiences. Sentences include a range of structures, including formal expressions to connect ideas, for example, 除此之外, 尽管这样, 因此, 无论...都... They also use relative and attributive clauses, conditionality and indefinite pronouns. Students compare information and ideas, and explain or justify opinions, for example, 有人说... 还有人认为... 所以...而且... 因此... They apply knowledge of metaphor and 成语 in their own writing.

Students map characters against familiar sounds and apply their knowledge of character form and function to predict the meaning and sound of unfamiliar characters. They independently use digital resources to communicate with others, and utilise online and print dictionaries to assist in reading Chinese texts. They explain how the purpose and use of stylistic devices, textual features and language features change across contexts, genres and traditions. Students explain the cultural assumptions that influence participants' responses and identify ways in which understanding could be enhanced in communication. They reflect on the roles both Chinese and Australian cultures play in their own communicative practices and use these reflections to improve their Chinese language use.

Strands and sub-strands

A set of sub-strands 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-strands 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-strand differs for described languages, pathways and bands of learning. The sub-strands 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 learning and (2) a means for expressing the progression of content across the learning sequences.

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 the 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).

Year 9 and 10 (Year 7 Entry) Level Description**The nature of the learners**

Students extend their knowledge of language structures and text organisation through reading and viewing authentic material and discussing how to apply new learning to their own communication. They explore the nature of their dual identities and bilingual capabilities.

Chinese language learning and use

Students are immersed in Chinese language, exploring issues related to youth culture and topics of educational and social relevance. They begin to make connections and comparisons with the experiences of other young Chinese speakers and with those of other cultural groups in Australia. They also consider their own place in Australia and the nature of the relationship between Australia and the Chinese-speaking world.

Contexts of interaction

Contexts for interaction extend beyond the school and home environments to include increased engagement with students' local communities, in particular with older generations.

Texts and resources

Students engage with a variety of texts, including dictionaries and online translation tools, local print and digital media, and abridged bilingual versions of classic and contemporary literature and their film and TV adaptations.

Features of Chinese language use

Students participate in discussions, debates and presentations on local and global issues and initiate inquiry into topics of interest. They extend their writing skills to include more informative and objective language and write in more formal genres, such as articles and reports. They develop their skills in analysing characters and recognising word and clause boundaries in extended text. Students explore the influence of English on their own communication in Chinese, both in pronunciation and in linguistic structures, and the role of code-switching in their daily language use. They share ideas about how they can contribute to Australian society through maintaining their bilingualism and through establishing a more stable identity where they are interculturally and intraculturally aware.

Level of support

Correct Chinese language use continues to be modelled by the teacher to support students' Chinese oracy and literacy development. Glossaries, vocabulary lists, dictionaries and online translation tools are used to support comprehension.

The role of English

Classroom interaction occurs in Chinese. English is used when required for comparison or to explore complex ideas related to language, culture and concepts from other learning areas.

Year 9 and 10 (Year 7 Entry) Content Descriptions**Communicating****Socialising**

Interact with peers and others in familiar and unfamiliar contexts to exchange alternative ideas and perspectives, and to express preferences and opinions.

[Key concepts: ritual, relationships, generations, values, identity, ancestry; Key processes: negotiating, participating]

Participate in planning and presenting a social or cultural event, negotiating options and solving problems.

[Key concepts: community, emotion, multiplicity, power Key concepts: participating, negotiating]

Informing

Summarise and compare factual information about people, places and lifestyles drawn from a range of sources, including multimodal sources.

[Key concepts: information, values, judgment, bias; Key processes: selecting, comparing]

Develop and present a position on an issue based on information drawn from different perspectives and sources and provide advice and guidance.

[Key concepts: information, advice, media; Key processes: classifying, evaluating, advising, guiding]

Creating

Explore and express opinions on themes and emotions revealed in modified texts from classical and contemporary Chinese literature.

[Key concepts: classical, contemporary, literature; Key processes: evaluating, expressing]

Create narratives to describe experiences involving imagined people and places.

[Key concepts: fact and fiction, challenge, morality, human experience; Key processes: adapting, creating, imagining]

Translating

Translate a range of simple Chinese texts and identify how some concepts can be mediated readily between Chinese and English and some cannot.

[Key concept: equivalence; Key processes: comparing, translating, explaining]

Create texts in Chinese and English, explaining the linguistic and cultural challenges of achieving equivalence of meaning.

[Key concepts: audience, context, social distance, bilingualism; Key processes: identifying, translating, interpreting]

Reflecting

Reflect on how conventions of speech and particular Chinese cultural concepts can influence communication style when using both English and Chinese.

[Key concepts: face, public, private; Key processes: adjusting, analysing]

Understanding**Systems of Language**

Compare features of speech of speakers from diverse regions to standard Chinese including pronunciation and prosody (for example, intonation and stress).

Explore and apply the principles of character form and function, including knowledge of semantic and phonetic radicals, to predict associate sound and meaning of new characters encountered in texts.

Organise and express complex ideas in Chinese, for example, analysing and comparing active and passive sentence constructions.

Analyse textual features of formal genres and apply these in their own speech and writing.

Language variation and change

Recognise how gender, social class and age impact on language use in formal and informal contexts.

Explore the significance of tradition in 名人名言 and 经典 and examine contemporary influences on language use.

Role of language and culture

Explain how languages shape the communicative practices of individuals and groups and identify ways to enhance understanding across cultures.