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Australian Curriculum: Languages

Foundation to Year 10

Curriculum Design

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Advisory Group and ACARA Officers



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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to describe a common design and curriculum development process to help in developing language-specific curricula for Foundation to Year 10 as part of the Australian Curriculum. The document is also used in the development of the *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages*.

The document is intended for use by the language-specific writing teams and the Languages Advisory Groups established to contribute to the ACARA curriculum development process. Curriculum developers, pre-service and in-service teacher educators and teachers in the Languages learning area will also find it of interest and value.

The document is divided into four major sections:

Section 1: Context and orientation describes the context and conceptual framing of the curriculum design.

Section 2: Overview gives an overview of the design document: its key features, how it is to be used and the relationship between key elements. It lists important ACARA curriculum design policy documents that inform the development of curriculum for specific languages.

Section 3: Curriculum structure and design specifications sets out the overall structure and design features to be used in the development of each Languages curriculum, looking in detail at the organisation, structure and sequences of learning from Foundation to Year 10, and at the system of interrelated strands and sub-strands used to specify and elaborate curriculum content.

Section 4: Language-specific curriculum development sets out the sequence of steps and considerations to be followed in developing each language-specific curriculum. Although the steps are set out sequentially, the process of development is necessarily iterative.

Section 1: Context and orientation

Before curriculum writers can describe the nature and scope of language learning, they must first consider the 'categories' or 'units of analysis' they will use to set out the curriculum content. Grammar has traditionally been used as the unit of analysis, but in the 1970s there was a paradigm shift and 'communicative competence' replaced grammar at the centre of the language curriculum. Since then, other categories have been used, including 'situations', 'functions', 'notions', 'topics' and 'tasks'. Each has sought to capture our evolving understanding of what it means to know a language and use it to communicate. In recent years, however, communicative competence itself has been challenged. While communication remains central to curriculum design, curriculum writers should be aware of more recent ideas about language learning and take them into account in their work. The *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages* paper (the Shape Paper) addresses this question and invites a reframing of the languages curriculum beyond communicative language teaching.

When Hymes first introduced the notion of communicative competence in 1972 it became necessary to consider not only grammatical rules, but also the social rules of use (Leung 2005). This expansion to include the social dimension of language use brought with it a need to consider the context of communication – both the context of situation and the context of culture. Leung argues that what was initially a research concern has over time become a pedagogic doctrine. Communicative competence came to be seen not just as an approach to pedagogy, but as a goal. In some contexts, this goal has come to be seen mainly as 'transactional' communication in the target language, separate from social, historical and cultural contexts. In others, it has also come to be seen as separate from the grammatical understanding that underpins language use. These limitations of communicative language techniques are challenges that need to be addressed.

Byrnes (2006) offers a further challenge:

The profession is being challenged ... to find principled ways of linking foreign, heritage and native language instruction [in ACARA terms, second language, background language and first language learning] to suggest ways of engaging all language users in continued language development toward high functional multilingualism in diverse hybrid spaces.

For Byrnes the goal of learning languages is 'functional multilingualism'. All learners need to be able to effectively use all languages in their repertoire. At the same time, they also need to function 'in between' languages and cultures, interacting with monolingual native speakers and also, most importantly, with multilingual users of the target language.

Kramersch (2006) also critiques communicative language teaching and describes another dimension of the way in which it needs to be expanded:

Today it is not sufficient for learners to know how to communicate meanings; they have to understand the practice of meaning-making.

Kramersch sees learning a language within an intercultural orientation as a dual process: learners both exchange meaning and analyse the meaning-making process to discover how it works. Understanding the process of interpretation of meaning is central. Language learning is not only about learning to exchange words; it also involves appreciating that words carry particular meanings and resonances connected to prior experiences and memory, all of which are linguistically and culturally constructed.

Section 1: Context and orientation

Scarino (2010) believes that using and learning a language are acts that require learners to 'move between' linguistic and cultural systems, and in so doing they are transformed as language users, language learners and people. She proposes:

an orientation to teaching languages [that] seeks the transformation of students' identities in the act of learning. This is achieved through a constant referencing of the language being learned with their own language(s) and culture(s). In so doing, students decentre from their own linguistic and cultural world to consider their own situatedness from the perspective of another. They learn to move between their linguistic and cultural world and that of the users of the target language.

Students' need to 'move between' makes it clear that communication across languages and cultures is a bilingual or multilingual, rather than a monolingual, phenomenon. This process, therefore, is both an intercultural and intracultural one. The decentring focuses on reflecting on diverse perspectives, reactions and responses that learners experience and on their own identities.

These critiques and invitations to expand the conceptualisation of communicative competence give rise to the particular features of language use and language learning that are highlighted in the Shape Paper and further described in this paper, as well as in the curriculum content descriptions and achievement standards for specific languages that are based on these features.

In contemporary theory and practice, language use is seen as:

- personal, expressive and diverse (Shohamy 2001)
- inextricably connected to its social, cultural and historical context
- reciprocal (requiring students to reflect on their language learning experiences to make meaningful connections between their use of language and their lives in relation to others).

Language is used:

- to mediate between learning and knowing; that is, to learn how to make meaning (Halliday 1993)
- to exchange meanings and to understand the practice of meaning-making
- interculturally (in interacting with and interpreting others)
- intraculturally (in interpreting self)
- reciprocally (in contexts that involve social and intercultural exchange, interaction and reflection).

Language use and language learning are conceived as bilingual or multilingual acts, because for all second language/additional language learners there are always at least two languages in play.

Section 1: Context and orientation

The contemporary understanding of language learning is represented in summary form in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Reframing language, culture and learning

View of language			
Language as word; structural, grammatical system; code	↔	Language as social practice involving diverse contexts of use	↔
		Participants in a practice	↔
			Elaborate social practice to highlight not just the act or the practice itself, but people and their meaning-making.
			Elaborate participation as the reciprocal process of interpreting the language and culture, the person and the self, and of reflecting on the process of meaning-making, self and other.
View of culture			
Culture as facts, artefacts, information	↔	Culture as social practices; ways of doing things in diverse cultures	↔
			Elaborate to highlight not only diverse practices, but cultural practices as a lens through which people mutually interpret, create, and exchange meaning and reflecting on the cultural situatedness of self and other.
View of learning			
Acquisition of new knowledge	↔	Participation in use of knowledge/knowing how to use language	↔
			Elaborate to highlight how learning as a process of making sense or coming to understand, involves becoming aware of how learners reciprocally interpret knowledge to others and themselves through their language and culture, and its use with others, and reflect upon the process of learning.

(Scarino 2014)

As highlighted in the Shape Paper, new conceptualisations of communication and language, culture and learning do not replace earlier conceptualisations. Rather, they *expand* earlier conceptualisations to give salience to the interpretation, creation and exchange of meanings and to the personal/intracultural and intercultural dimensions of language learning.

For more information on the orientation of the curriculum, writers can refer to Scarino and Liddicoat (2009), *Teaching and Learning Languages: A guide*, at www.tllg.unisa.edu.au and Liddicoat, A.J. and Scarino, A. 2013 *Intercultural language teaching and learning*. Wiley-Blackwell: New York & Oxford.

Language, culture and learning

Language learning in the Australian Curriculum is organised around two broad elements: *Communicating* and *Understanding*. Each is informed by and elaborates the interrelationship of language, culture and learning, as students learn to communicate meaningfully across linguistic and cultural systems and different contexts. This is a reciprocal and dynamic process. It involves reflection and analysis, as students move between the new language being learnt and their existing language(s). It is not a 'one plus one' relationship between two languages and cultures, where each language and culture stays separate and self-contained. Comparison and referencing between languages and cultures build understanding of how languages 'work', how they relate to each other and how language and culture shape and reflect experience. The experience of being in two worlds at once involves noticing, questioning and developing awareness of how language and culture shape identity.

Communicating

The Communicating area of focus emphasises performance or use of the target language. The approach builds on current understandings of communication by highlighting the following points:

- Communication involves not only the exchange of words, but also the mutual or reciprocal exchange of meaning; people bring to interactions personal meanings, memories and resonances that are linguistically and culturally constructed.
- Communication in additional languages always involves comparison.
- Within this comparative orientation, the language learner becomes a linguistic and cultural mediator, learning to move between linguistic and cultural systems, developing understanding and an ability to explain different perspectives, reactions and responses to themselves and to others.
- There is a relationship between communication and identity formation. The experience of using different languages provides opportunities for learners to consider who they are and how they can be, as well as how they are perceived by others. This leads to reflection on their own identity in relation to the use of different languages. The relationship between communication and identity comes about because membership in society is established through shared cultural norms, values and beliefs expressed and shaped through language.
- Successful intercultural communication entails reflection on the act of communication itself:
 - on what is involved in the process of communication, both as language users and learners
 - on comparisons – between own interpretations, perspectives, reactions or responses and those of others; on respect for different linguistic and cultural worlds represented in the classroom; on why people see things as they do
 - on perspective – the experience of seeing through the eyes of others, which may lead to changes or adaptations in positions, perspectives and points of view.

Section 1: Context and orientation

Every communicative interaction involves conscious or unconscious reflection on others' opinions, remarks, judgments or references. One person may consider, for example, that language used by another is 'on the mark, very telling, totally accurate'; or 'inappropriate, irrelevant, out of place, rude'. They might reflect on how that person's ideas, opinions, values, beliefs or behaviours align or misalign with their own. Such reflections in turn trigger consideration of how the other person may be interpreting or responding to the interaction. This is the *reciprocal* nature of communication: people reflect, interpret, make judgments, comparisons and connections. Communication in first, second or additional languages always involves this two-way response and reflection on how language is being used.

Understanding

The Understanding area of focus relates to understanding the systems of the specific language in use and what is involved in the meaningful use of the language. This involves higher-order thinking processes associated with language and culture experience:

- noticing and perceiving
- conceptualising and interpreting
- analysing
- explaining observations, perceptions and analysis using metalanguage
- evaluating, elaborating, justifying and generalising perceptions and experiences

Section 2: Overview

The document is intended as a guide to the process of curriculum development. It does not address all possible curriculum development issues, or questions associated with curriculum implementation. The curriculum represents an essential resource in ensuring quality teaching and learning of languages, but local program planning, assessment practices and ongoing evaluation are equally necessary, as are resources, materials and the provision of continuing professional development opportunities for teachers. Although these matters are important, they are beyond the scope of this document.

This document should be read in conjunction with the current ACARA curriculum design documents, including:

- The Shape of the Australian Curriculum (version 4.0)
- Curriculum Design Paper (version 3.1)
- Curriculum Development Process (version 6)
- The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages.

These documents are required references and all curriculum writers and members of advisory groups will need to be thoroughly familiar with them. They are available on the ACARA website (www.acara.edu.au).

The Shape Paper was developed by ACARA to set the direction for all curriculum development in the languages learning area. It foreshadows the overall orientation of the teaching and learning of all languages, setting out key concepts as described in Section 1, and the organisational structure of:

- pathways in learning for different groups of learners from Foundation to Year 10
- curriculum content, through a set of related aims, strands and sub-strands
- sequences of learning; the two main sequences are Foundation – Year 10 and Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry).

Commonality and specificity in languages curriculum development

Like all learning areas in the Australian Curriculum, the Languages curriculum is described using the two key constructs of *curriculum content* and *achievement standards*.

The curriculum content and achievement standards are different for each specific language because of inherent differences in the languages themselves. Each language has its own distinctive structure, systems, conventions for use, related culture(s), place in Australian and international communities, and history in Australian education.

At the same time, it is possible to identify aspects common to all languages. The Shape Paper and this document taken together describe the use of shared key concepts in curriculum design and development across languages, and provide a basis for curriculum development that recognises these commonalities between languages and also respects differences between them.

This document gives as much consideration as possible to specific languages. Language-specific writing teams, the ACARA Languages Advisory Group and language-specific critical friends will contribute theoretical and practical language-specific considerations, resources and understandings derived through working in and with each language.

Section 3: Curriculum structure and design specifications

This section has two parts.

Part 1 describes the curriculum structure and organisation, including:

- the system of pathways and sequences of learning from Foundation to Year 10
- the structure for specifying curriculum content: the system of strands and sub-strands.

Part 2 describes the design specifications for developing Languages curricula in specific languages.

Part 1: Content structure and organisation

Learner background and time on task are two major variables that influence language learning. They provide the basis for the structure and organisation 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.

Historically, Australian schools have not offered continuous learning in specific languages from Foundation through to the senior secondary years. This means that most language classes include students with varying degrees of prior learning of the target language. Also, students often have diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, with varying degrees of home and community experience of the target language. In the case of some languages, second language learners frequently learn alongside background language learners and first language learners.

Pathways

In the Australian Curriculum: Languages, pathways for second language learners, background language learners and first language learners are developed as appropriate to cater for the dominant group(s) of students learning each specific language within the Australian context. For the majority of languages, one curriculum pathway will be developed for Foundation – Year 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 learners, revival language learners and second language learners.

Sequences of learning

The design of the Australian Curriculum: Languages takes account of different entry points into language learning across Foundation – Year 10 to reflect current practices in schools.

For the second language learner and the background language learner pathways 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.

Section 3: Curriculum structure and design specifications

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.

Time on task: indicative hours

Recognising that language learning is a cumulative process, the curriculum has been developed based on the relationship between indicative hours of learning, assumed for the purposes of curriculum writing, and content and achievement standards. It recognises that there will be different forms of provision and that local education authorities and schools will determine how best to organise programs in their particular context to maximise regularity and continuity in learning at primary and secondary level.

The indicative hours represent an assumption about time on task made only for the purposes of curriculum development. The provision of indicative hours is not designed to establish time allocations for teaching and learning in schools. Schools and school authorities will make policy decisions regarding time when implementing the curriculum.

Curriculum writers will use the following indicative allocation of hours as the basis for development of curriculum content and achievement standards:

- 350 hours of learning undertaken across Foundation to Year 6 (the equivalent of 5 per cent of the total teaching time per year)
- 160 hours of learning undertaken across Years 7 and 8 (the equivalent of 8 per cent of the total teaching time per year)
- a further 160 hours of learning undertaken across Years 9 and 10 (the equivalent of 8 per cent of the total teaching time per year).

This indicative allocation of time on task takes literacy development into account as a key consideration. For example, the Foundation – Year 2 content captures ‘initial literacy’ and the Years 3–4 content captures ‘developing literacy’.

The pathways and sequences do not pre-determine the administrative organisation of language programs in particular schools, as these decisions are made by local education authorities and schools.

The Australian Curriculum: Languages has been developed for language-as-subject programs (where a language is studied as a subject as part of the school curriculum). Schools and jurisdictions will allocate a larger number of hours in implementing content-based programs (where the content from another learning area is taught in the target language) and bilingual programs.

Strands and sub-strands

The content of the languages curriculum is organised through two interrelated strands:

- **Communicating:** using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning
- **Understanding:** analysing language and culture as resources for interpreting and creating meaning.

The strands reflect three important dimensions of language learning:

- communication
- analysis of aspects of language and culture
- reflection on the experience of communicating and on the comparative dimensions of different languages and experiences.

Sub-strands

A set of sub-strands is identified within each strand that reflect dimensions of language use and the related content to be taught and learnt. The relative contribution of each sub-strand differs for specific languages, pathways and bands of learning.

The strands and sub-strands do not operate in isolation but are integrated in relation to language use for different purposes in different contexts. They are intended to be relevant for all pathways from Foundation to Year 10 and for all languages, although there are likely to be differences in emphasis.

Section 3: Curriculum structure and design specifications

Table 2 provides a brief description of each of the strands and sub-strands.

Table 2: Relationship between strands and sub-strands

Strand	Sub-strand	Description
Communicating: <i>Using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning</i>	1.1 Socialising	Interacting orally and in writing to exchange ideas, opinions, experiences, thoughts and feelings; and participating in planning, negotiating, deciding and taking action
	1.2 Informing	Obtaining, processing, interpreting and conveying information through a range of oral, written and multimodal texts; developing and applying knowledge
	1.3 Creating	Engaging with imaginative experience by participating in, responding to and creating a range of texts such as stories, songs, drama and music
	1.4 Translating	Moving between languages and cultures orally and in writing, recognising different interpretations and explaining these to others
	1.5 Reflecting	Participating in intercultural exchange, questioning reactions and assumptions; and considering how interaction shapes communication and identity
Understanding: <i>Analysing and understanding language and culture as resources for interpreting and shaping meaning in intercultural exchange</i>	2.1 Systems of language	Understanding language as a system, including sound, writing, grammatical and textual conventions
	2.2 Language variation and change	Understanding how languages vary in use (register, style, standard and non-standard varieties) and change over time and place
	2.3 The role of language and culture	Analysing and understanding the role of language and culture in the exchange of meaning

Threads

The sub-strands are further differentiated according to a set of ‘threads’ that support the internal organisation of content in each sub-strand. These are designed to capture:

- range and variety in the scope of learning
- progression of content across the learning sequences.

The Communicating strand explores the use of language in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning. The five sub-strands focus on the *purposes* of communication. The emphasis on purposes of communication brings particular requirements. Each purpose or function involves concepts as *content*, involving processes and skills which combine listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as typical text types and grammar.

The Understanding strand examines language and culture as resources for interpreting and making meaning in intercultural exchange. The sub-strands focus on analysing how and why language is used in particular contexts and for particular purposes.

The two strands should not be seen as discrete, but rather as different elements of the same experience. The interrelationship of the strands and sub-strands can be understood as involving three facets of the experience of learning a language from an intercultural perspective. The first is that of performance and experience of communication. This is strengthened through the second: that of analysis of the various elements of language and culture involved in communication. This is further enriched by the third: that of reflection on the comparative, relational and reciprocal dimensions of language learning and use (for example, when learners analyse their first language in relation to their second language, or reflect on themselves as individuals in relation to others). In other words, when learning languages, communication involves performance, analysis and reflection.

The relative contribution of the two strands and the various sub-strands will differ for different languages, pathways and stages of learning.

Strands and sub-strands: examples of concepts, text types, processes and sequencing

A more detailed description of each of the strands and sub-strands follows. This section is intended to provide an overall sense of possible content related to each strand and sub-strand, giving examples of concepts, text types and processes. An example of sequencing is provided for each strand and sub-strand.

Concepts are the big ideas that students work with. The choice of the word ‘concept’ rather than ‘topic’ is deliberate: it marks a shift from description to conceptualisation. The curriculum should invite students not only to describe facts or features of phenomena, situations and events but also to consider how facts and features relate to concepts or principles. For example, a description of a house can lead to a consideration of the concept of ‘home’ or ‘space’. This shift is necessary because it is concepts that lend themselves most fruitfully to intercultural comparison and engage learners in personal reflection and more substantive learning.

Text types include oral, written, digital and multimodal texts. They are central to curriculum development as all work in language learning can be seen as textual work. The selection of texts is important: texts define and reflect past and present and linguistic and cultural identity, making the people and experiences of a particular culture distinctive; they also provide the opportunity for intercultural dialogue.

Processes include skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), as well as higher-order thinking processes (conceptualising, analysing, reasoning, explaining and comparing).

Section 3: Curriculum structure and design specifications

The descriptions of concepts, text types, processes and sequences given here are illustrative. They should be seen as neither comprehensive nor exhaustive.

For each of the sub-strands for communication an example of sequencing from early primary to upper primary to junior secondary is also provided. It is intended to describe some of the parameters of change that apply to language learning across the F-10 span.

Strand 1: Communicating

Using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning

Sub-strand 1.1: Socialising

Interacting orally and in writing to exchange ideas, opinions, experiences, thoughts and feelings; and participating in planning, negotiating, deciding and taking action

Students learn to socialise with others in the target language (orally and in writing); to interact with others to build relationships and to participate in shared activities; to negotiate, to make decisions and arrangements and to take individual and collective action.

Concepts

friendship (experiences, values, conflict, reconciliation)
relationships (family, generations)
leisure
celebration
neighbourhood (geography, distance, environment)
etiquette (greetings, politeness)
naming

attitude
education (learning, knowledge)
journey
community
time
space/place
negotiation
health/wellbeing
interconnection across concepts and actions

Text types

Conversation:

face-to-face interaction; telephone conversations; online/digital exchanges; participating in shared communicative activities, discussions, debates

Correspondence:

emails, text messages, class blog/chat forums, notes, invitations, greeting cards, letters, postcards

Processes

listening, speaking, reading and writing
expressing preferences and feelings
comparing
negotiating
making decisions and arrangements
giving and following instructions
inviting
accepting and declining
discussing
expressing
justifying

explaining
persuading
advising
commenting
describing
debating
transacting
thanking
planning and participating
connecting/relating

Sequencing

Content in this sub-strand will change from Foundation to Year 10, as students gain a broader range of experiences in different contexts, take on different roles and learn to interpret different kinds of texts.

Table 3: Examples of sequencing in broad terms (predominantly for second language learning)

Early primary years (pre-literacy/ early literacy)	→	Upper primary (developing literacy)	→	Junior secondary (expanding literacy)
interacting/socialising is guided; often occurs as a whole-class response; is based on the learner’s own experience	→	interacting/socialising to give, share, role-play; to articulate and exchange ideas, feelings, preferences	→	interacting/socialising to state and exchange thoughts, feelings, plans; beginning to discuss/debate; taking social/community action; expressing opinion; reflecting on and comparing self with others; understanding reciprocally
interacting/socialising takes place within the context of the classroom with some connections to the home and local environment	→	interacting/socialising takes place within the neighbourhood and local community; beginning to take community action	→	interacting/socialising takes place in diverse contexts, local and global, in real and virtual time; taking group action; understanding consequences; communicating with parents/others
students as participants with teacher; participate by naming, pointing, miming, participating in games and action-related talk	→	peer to peer; student to teacher; student to known people; as one of multiple participants	→	interacting in different types of groups, contexts and situations
repeated language; active listening	→	accessing resources, including digital resources; finding out/researching/ comparing; supported writing	→	varying their language according to age and gender; socialising through a range of texts, including narratives, diaries, digital texts such as blogs or emails; intercultural exchange

Sub-strand 1.2: Informing

Obtaining, processing, interpreting and conveying information through a range of oral, written and multimodal texts; developing and applying knowledge.

Students read, listen to and view a range of texts from a variety of sources in the target language to obtain, select, process, interpret and use information in different and interconnected ways. This sub-strand also involves students organising, presenting and using information drawn from their own experiences and prior knowledge (including from other learning areas), for example, by ordering, classifying, tabulating and presenting it in different oral, written and multimodal formats.

Section 3: Curriculum structure and design specifications

Concepts

sustainability (environment, habitat, ecology)
representation (media, public/private life,
representations/images)
time (routine)
past (history, figures)

discovery (science, travel, adventure, frontiers,
danger)
evaluation
interconnection across concepts and actions

Text types

A wide variety of informative texts in a range of modes and media, including announcements, surveys/interviews, documentaries, podcasts, talks, speeches, YouTube clips, documentary-style videos, tables, maps, brochures, advertisements, notices, blogs, web articles, newspaper articles, magazines, reports, instructions.

Processes

listening, speaking, reading and writing
locating
recording/noting
classifying, tabulating, matching
sequencing and ordering
transposing
comparing
summarising
applying
relating

using
presenting
persuading
reporting
describing
interpreting
representing
understanding
connecting/relating

Sequencing

Table 4: Examples of sequencing in broad terms (predominantly for second language learning)

Early primary years (pre-literacy/ early literacy)	→	Upper primary (developing literacy)	→	Junior secondary (expanding literacy)
obtaining information that is scaffolded by the teacher and related to the immediate learning environment (e.g. charts, displays, images, maps, clips)	→	obtaining information increasingly independently from a range of digital and print media	→	obtaining information from a range of different sources; self-direction; connecting information from different sources
processing is mediated by teacher’s use of questions inviting students to notice and make connections; asking questions (mainly in English)	→	processing includes matching, identifying key items, processing visual information, transposing, responding to and asking questions in English and in the target language	→	processing without understanding every word; responding to and asking questions in English and the target language
interpreting information based on teacher’s questioning/talk; using information to describe, name, listen, draw, trace	→	representing information in different forms; sequencing, ordering and identifying connections	→	selecting information for own use, with or without support; comparing, contrasting, connecting

Sub-strand 1.3: Creating

Engaging with imaginative experience by participating in, responding to and creating a range of texts such as stories, songs, drama and music

Students respond to and create imaginative texts.

Concepts

imagination (fact, fiction, inner/private world, social/public world)
 emotion (romance, love/affection, suffering, fear, pain)
 beauty (admiration, people, places, ideas)
 power (law, rules, opposition, reform)
 journey (challenge, struggle, adventure)

freedom (expression, liberty, activism, opportunity)
 morality
 character
 experience (sequence; lifeworld)
 interconnection across concepts and actions

Text types

song/rap
 rhymes
 poetry
 film
 literature
 cartoons

stories
 dramatic representations
 narratives
 descriptions
 recounts

Section 3: Curriculum structure and design specifications

Processes

listening, speaking, reading and writing	experimenting
creating	interpreting
performing	clarifying
expressing	participating in shared reading
describing	re-creating
recounting	responding
captioning	elaborating
labelling	connecting/relating
responding	teaching

Sequencing

Table 5: Examples of sequencing in broad terms (predominantly for second language learning)

Early primary years (pre-literacy/ early literacy)	→	Upper primary (developing literacy)	→	Junior secondary (expanding literacy)
participating in performance of songs, raps and rhymes guided by the teacher; shared reading	→	participating in shared reading, choral reading or guided reading of a range of stories, rhymes and poems; singing songs, chants and rhymes	→	participating in group and independent reading, listening and viewing
responding to texts through movement and actions, drawing, clapping to show appreciation	→	responding by re-creating stories in different forms; responding to teacher's questioning about characters, places, events and ideas in texts; comparing with own experiences and making connections	→	comparing, reflecting, continuing to interconnect; expressing opinions about messages in stories and songs; discussing characters, plots and themes
participating in preliminary and early literacy activities	→	creating stories, books, poems, chants and raps, based on models provided	→	creating stories, biographies, autobiographies, short films and video clips, and presenting them in a range of modes and media

Sub-strand 1.4: Translating

Moving between languages and cultures orally and in writing, recognising different interpretations and explaining these to others

Students learn to 'move between' languages and the meaning systems they construct. This includes literal translation and interpretation, 'encoding' and 'decoding', and also more complex forms of interpreting and creating meaning; for example, 'reading between the lines' for evidence of values, attitudes and assumptions, and then explaining these ideas to others in ways that are accessible and non-judgmental.

Concepts

equivalence	linguistic landscape (language in the environment)
representation (words, icons, symbols)	

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individual (character, values, relationship)
 nation (origins, social order, politics, religion)
 taboo (transgression, respect, conformity)
 translatability/non-translatability

sensitivity and empathy (values and beliefs, respect, tolerance)
 interconnection across concepts and actions

Text types

translation (written)
 interpretation (oral)
 explanation (oral and written)

Processes

translating
 interpreting
 explaining
 comparing translations
 comparing bilingual texts

analysing
 judging adequacy/evaluating
 considering the validity of different meanings
 connecting/relating interculturally
 re-contextualising

Sequencing

Table 6: Examples of sequencing in broad terms (predominantly for second language learning)

Early primary years (pre-literacy/ early literacy)	→	Upper primary (developing literacy)	→	Junior secondary (expanding literacy)
students know that some people use different codes in communicating; they can identify different codes, give equivalence, match real objects and words, interpret some gestures, and begin to navigate between the known and unknown at code level	→	students are aware of languages in the environment; they recognise cultural ways of behaving, can make comparisons, explain to others, and note the lack of word-for-word equivalence	→	students are able to compare and explain concepts, processes, views and experiences in culturally responsive and reciprocal ways; they understand that meaning can be 'lost in translation'

Sub-strand 1.5: Reflecting

Participating in intercultural exchange, questioning reactions and assumptions; and considering how interaction shapes communication and identity

Students reflect on their interactions with others and on themselves as communicators through the lens of the target language and culture, recognising that the exchange of meaning is mutual, and considering how others may interpret or view their own linguistic, social and cultural practices. In questioning and discussing their responses, reactions, interpretations and assumptions in an intercultural context, students learn how language use constructs their personal, social and cultural identity in relation to others.

Concepts

communication (participants, context, purpose, negotiation, effect)
 position in space and time (history, trajectory of experience)
 comfort/discomfort (agreement, disagreement,

identity (bilingual/plurilingual, world view, values)
 face (sensitivity, respect)
 complexity
 multiplicity

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conflict, resolution, challenge)
 empathy (invitation, evaluation, acceptance, approval)
 membership
 memory
 judgment

reflective literacy
 interconnection across concepts and actions

Text types

discussion
 dialogue
 autobiography/biography
 narrative
 recount

intercultural reflective journal
 interviews
 questionnaires

Processes

reflecting
 noticing
 ‘decentring’, or looking beyond the ‘first’ or primary language and culture
 questioning assumptions
 eliciting and analysing responses/reactions
 experimenting
 clarifying
 responding

finding connections between diverse experiences, knowledge and ways of seeing the world
 adjusting performance and perspective relative to others and carrying this understanding forward to subsequent experiences
 explaining
 connecting/relating

Sequencing

Table 7: Examples of sequencing in broad terms (predominantly for second language learning)

Early primary years (pre-literacy/ early literacy)	→ Upper primary (developing literacy)	→ Junior secondary (expanding literacy)
students notice, recall and respond to teacher prompts; recognise differences and similarities; react to others; seek to fit in with peers; self-awareness is not developed at this level	→ students begin to decentre; notice differences; give guided explanations; respond to difference; reflect on and explain why something they have noticed matters; respect and understand difference; notice the behaviour of others and compare and contrast it with their own	→ students decentre from self independently; reflect on differences and their own reactions and responses; reflect on the basis for their own responses; consider alternative ways of seeing/acting and interpret these alternative ways in a culturally responsive and reciprocal manner; engage with each other's responses

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Strand 2: Understanding

Analysing and understanding language and culture as resources for interpreting and shaping meaning in intercultural exchange

Sub-strand 2.1: Systems of language

Understanding language as a system, including sound, writing, grammatical and textual conventions

This sub-strand involves students in understanding the systematic nature of language and language use; that is, learning the rules, systems and patterns which characterise the target language use (from sentence to whole-text level) and comparing these with English and other languages in their repertoire.

Concepts

systems	textual conventions (genres, register)
sound systems	comparison
writing systems (characters, scripts, alphabets, punctuation)	grammatical systems (syntax, verb forms, gender variation, vocabulary, units of meaning)
application	

Processes

noticing	applying
analysing	explaining
comparing	

Sequencing

Sequencing will depend on the specific features of the target language and its complexity for different groups of learners.

Sub-strand 2.2: Language variation and change

Understanding how languages vary in use (register, style, standard and non-standard varieties) and change over time and place

Students learn to recognise how language use changes in specific contexts, depending on purpose, setting and participants and on participants' relationships and roles; and how languages change over time in response to different influences and factors. They recognise regional variations in language use and the impact of phenomena such as globalisation, technology and popular culture on language use and communicative behaviour. They explore culturally specific ways in which people interact, and examine cultural assumptions that influence the ways meanings are expressed or interpreted. They incorporate this learning into their interactions with others, making deliberate and informed choices about what they say and how they communicate depending on context.

Concepts

register (relationships, context, status, formality, authority)	time (day, generation, change over time, influence of past on present)
variation based on purpose, gender, social class, age, culture	place (geographical/virtual setting, proximity, distance)
constraints and possibilities (respect and disrespect, silence and speech)	activity (actor, actions, responsibility)
	languages ecology

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Processes

noticing
comparing

analysing
explaining

Sequencing

Sequencing will depend on the specific features of the target language and its complexity for different groups of learners.

Sub-strand 2.3: The role of language and culture

Analysing and understanding the role of language and culture in the exchange of meaning

Students learn how to analyse the systems and functions of language and culture – how each ‘works’ individually and how each connects with and shapes the other – recognising that language and culture are interrelated systems for meaning-making. They develop metalanguage to discuss and reflect on the role of language and culture in intercultural language use.

Concepts

‘norms’ (normative assumptions and attitudes, social norms)
sameness and difference (personal, social, cultural)

stereotypes (generalisation, assumption, judgment)
attitudes, values, beliefs
behaviours, practices

Processes

noticing
comparing
analysing
reflecting
explaining

elaborating
‘reading’ text through a cultural lens
developing metacognitive awareness
developing metalanguage to talk about intercultural communication

Sequencing

Table 8: Examples of sequencing in broad terms (predominantly for second language learning)

Early primary years (pre-literacy/ early literacy)	→	Upper primary (developing literacy)	→	Junior secondary (expanding literacy)
students recognise differences and similarities in language use across cultures	→	students respond to differences/similarities in linguistic choices and note varying interpretations; reflect on and explain how respecting variations in communication across cultures connects us with one another	→	students develop metalanguage to discuss varying interpretations in culturally responsive and reciprocal ways; engage with each other’s linguistic choices, demonstrating intercultural sensitivity; elicit and analyse responses from discussions/debates

Part 2: Design specifications

The specifications for each section of the Australian Curriculum: Languages are described below. These descriptions have been drawn from the current ACARA curriculum design documents and then tailored specifically to the Languages learning area.

Rationale

The ACARA Curriculum Design Paper (version 3.1) specifies that the curriculum for each learning area should include a rationale, providing teachers with a clear sense of the place of the learning area within the whole school curriculum.

The Rationale is common to all languages. It describes the nature of the learning area and provides an outline of how learning in this area relates to the contemporary world and current educational practice. It explains the place and purpose of the learning area in the school curriculum and how it contributes to meeting the goals set out in the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (2008).

The rationale for learning languages, as outlined in paragraphs 13–17 of the Shape Paper, takes into account the diversity of learners and the span of learning across the Foundation – Year 10 continuum.

Through learning languages students acquire:

- communication skills in the language
- 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 languages gives students the opportunity 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. It broadens students' horizons in relation to personal, social, cultural and employment opportunities presented by an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world in which people in all spheres of life need 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.

More specifically, learning languages:

- extends the capability to communicate and expands 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 world views
- extends learners' understanding of themselves, their heritage, values, culture and identity
- strengthens intellectual, analytical and reflective capabilities, and enhances creative and critical thinking.

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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 contributes to reconciliation.

Aims

The ACARA Curriculum Design Paper (version 3.1) specifies that the curriculum for each learning area will include a statement of aims. The statement of aims will identify the major learning that students will be able to demonstrate as a result of being taught the curriculum.

The statement of aims is common to all languages. It comprises the three interrelated aims set out in the Shape Paper (paragraphs 62–5):

Students will develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to:

- 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 interrelated aims are common to all languages. They provide the basis for the two organising strands: Communicating and Understanding.

Context statement

A context statement will be written for curricula for each language to describe the situation of the language in the Australian community and in Australian education, and to describe the nature of learning the specific language. The context statement will describe:

- the place of the language and culture in Australia and in the world
- the place of the language in Australian education
- the nature of learning the language
- the diversity of learners of the language.

Band descriptions

The band descriptions will give a general description of language learning that is typical at particular year levels along the F–10 continuum. They will be developed to correspond to learning in the following bands: Foundation – Year 2, Years 3–4, Years 5–6, Years 7–8 and Years 9–10. Each band description includes discussion of:

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- the nature of the learner
- language learning and use
- contexts of interaction
- texts and resources
- features of target language use
- level of support
- the role of English.

Writers developing a curriculum for languages with non-alphabetic scripts such as Chinese or Japanese will include a statement that describes the learning of the scripts as well as the use and function of romanised scripts such as Pinyin.

Content descriptions

The content of learning in each language in the Australian Curriculum: Languages is described through a set of content descriptions for each band. These are intended to describe the knowledge, understanding, skills, concepts, processes and text types that teachers are expected to teach and students are expected to develop at each band level.

The descriptions will include the general capabilities, as appropriate, for each language curriculum. These statements will be linked to present a scope and sequence of learning across bands of schooling. Content descriptions specify content to be taught in a holistic and integrated way. They do not provide prescriptive directions for teaching.

Content descriptions will be:

- developed in accordance with the concepts elaborated in the Shape Paper
- arranged through the strands, sub-strands and threads
- written for each band of schooling (Foundation – Year 2, Years 3–4, Years 5–6, Years 7–8 and Years 9–10) and for each sequence of learning, as appropriate (Foundation – Year 10 and Year 7–10 (Year 7 Entry))
- designed so that they can be taught within the indicative time frame
- written to facilitate rigorous, substantive learning, with an emphasis on depth as well as breadth
- developed to ensure that learning is appropriately ordered and that unnecessary repetition is avoided
- able to provide the basis for the learning described in the achievement standards
- written to follow the stem: ‘Students will be taught ...’

Content descriptions for the Languages learning area will be based on the structure of the two interrelated strands Communicating and Understanding, and of the set of sub-strands and threads that elaborate the different dimensions of language learning within each strand. These are described in Section 3, Part 1.

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The Communicating strand will include content descriptions which relate to receptive communication (listening, reading, viewing) and productive communication (speaking, writing).

In non-alphabetic languages the distinction between oral and written language use will be more marked.

Content elaborations

Content elaborations provide elaborations of aspects of each content description: illustrations, descriptions or examples to indicate possibilities for teaching. They are intended as complementary support material. They are neither comprehensive nor exhaustive. They follow an implicit stem ('This may involve students ...') and start with a verb in the present continuous tense (for example, 'identifying', 'exploring', 'describing').

Content elaborations may include:

- contexts of language use
- further detail on dimensions of the content description
- aspects of relevant linguistic and cultural knowledge
- key language
- possible tasks and experiences
- connections across concepts.

Achievement standards

In the Australian Curriculum, achievement standards describe what students are typically able to understand and do. Achievement standards will describe the learning (understanding and skills) expected of students at each band level from F–10.

Achievement standards are language-specific and pathway-specific. The achievement standards for the end of Year 8 and the end of Year 10 in the Foundation – Year 10 sequence are not equivalent to the achievement standards at the end of Year 8 and the end of Year 10 in the Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence.

It is recognised that student achievement differs according to the specific language, and the particular pathway and entry point to language learning. Language-specific exemplification is used to capture the expected level of performance in language use and understanding.

Across F–10, the set of achievement standards describe a broad sequence of expected learning. The sequence of achievement standards provides teachers with a framework of growth and development in a curriculum area. This will help teachers plan and monitor learning and make judgments about student achievement.

Achievement standards can support formative and summative assessment practices and aid consistency of assessment and reporting across states and territories. The achievement standards will be accompanied by portfolios of annotated work samples that illustrate the expected learning.

Achievement standards in Languages emphasise sophistication of language use in communication and depth of conceptual understanding.

The content descriptions and achievement standards are not independent; they should be read together. Each achievement standard should be read as a whole (that is, the performance, understanding and

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processes elements are read together) to gain a sense of the overall nature and quality of learner achievements.

Developing achievement standards

In developing achievement standards, writers will:

- draft the achievement standard statements concurrently with the writing of the curriculum content, although work on achievement standards will be preceded by a draft scope and sequence of curriculum content
- identify as the focus of achievement standards the key concepts, skills and understandings that describe a sequence of fundamental learning across the years of schooling
- not repeat the content descriptions – the assumption is that the achievement standard is read in the context of what is to be taught but characterises the quality of achievement.

In writing achievement standards, writers will ensure that:

- the quality of achievement is appropriately captured by the descriptions; one important test of this will occur when viewing the standards across a number of year levels
- they emphasise skills and understandings by using two separate paragraphs; in describing understandings, writers should include an active/performance component (that is, the 'how', not just the 'what')
- each description addresses the question of 'how you would know' that a standard had been achieved; that is, how the achievement can be represented effectively in evidence.

Achievement standards:

- begin, 'By the end of Year x ...'
- use direct language and do not use phrases such as 'is able to'
- are written in whole sentences with no dot points (dot points would not be consistent with the holistic purpose and intended use of achievement standards)
- do not use headings/titles (thus providing a more holistic sense of the expected performance).

Further features of Languages achievement standards

In applied linguistics an important distinction is made between 'proficiency' and 'achievement': the former refers to language capability irrespective of the context in which it is acquired, and is depicted as a freestanding, absolute scale; the latter refers to a curriculum-related capability that is sensitive to the context of learning.

Descriptions of achievement standards take into account the ongoing development of the learner as well as growth in sophistication of language use.

In developing achievement standards for the Languages area, curriculum writers will need to consider:

- research on progression in student learning available for the specific language
- descriptions of achievement currently available for the target language.

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In reviewing existing descriptions, it will be important to bear in mind the original context. For example, were the descriptions of achievement intended to be used for school-age or adult learners? How were the descriptions intended to be used?

The Student Achievement in Asian Languages Education (SAALE) study (Scarino et al. 2011), which focused on student achievement in school language programs in Australia, is likely to be of value, particularly for Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian and Korean, but also for other languages.

The ACARA achievement standards for languages have several important features:

- They pertain to learner action (that is, performance and understanding).
- They only capture the typicality of student learning; this means that generalisation across learners is inevitable.
- They depict a progression or sequence linked to growth and development of learners and their language learning.
- They focus on the depth of conceptual understanding and the sophistication of skills and application. In the Languages learning area this includes the ability to use the target language, incorporating conceptual understanding and skills.
- They focus on the nature and scope of performance in using the target language across the four macro skills and on the depth of conceptual understanding and the sophistication of skills.

Paragraph 1 will describe what students can ‘do’ or perform in the target language, both oral and written.

Paragraph 2 will describe students’ understanding related to the performance/doing.

Examples of actual target language use should be included to capture the level of sophistication expected in performance and understanding.

Differentiating standards from Foundation to Year 10

As they move through the curriculum, students’ use, analysis and reflection on language becomes more elaborate, as does their intercultural understanding. The achievement standards should reflect this. Table 9 gives examples of how this increasing complexity can be described across the F–10 continuum.

Table 9: Describing increasing complexity in language use

Early primary years (pre-literacy/ early literacy)	→	Upper primary (developing literacy)	→	Junior secondary (expanding literacy)
concrete, personal	→	social	→	public dimensions
focus on self	→	self and others in interaction	→	some reciprocity in exchange
responding	→	interacting	→	initiating
sentence level writing	→	beginning to elaborate/ formulating paragraph-long responses	→	providing argument, justification

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Early primary years (pre-literacy/ early literacy)	→	Upper primary (developing literacy)	→	Junior secondary (expanding literacy)
use of formulaic, routine phrases	→	beginning to extend basic structure and manipulate linguistic resources	→	using linguistic resources to provide own personal meanings
reliance on keywords, models, support; some coordination (and, but); simple description	→	use of coordination and subordination; use of relative clauses, adverbial phrases	→	conditional clauses, mood, tense
no awareness of register	→	awareness of register	→	range of register

(Scarino et al. 2011, p. 113)

Relationship between content descriptions and achievement standards

The content descriptions and achievement standards will be developed and ultimately used in tandem. However, they differ in their focus.

In developing content descriptions, curriculum writers should address the question: ‘What do students need to learn and know when learning a language?’ Or, from the teacher’s point of view: ‘What content are students to be taught when learning a language?’ Content descriptions deal with the *nature* and *scope* of the curriculum content from Foundation to Year 10.

In developing achievement standards, the question is: ‘What is an appropriate standard of learning at each stage along the Foundation to Year 10 continuum?’ Achievement standards make clear the level of achievement expected by characterising the quality of performance and understanding.

Languages learning area overview

The ACARA Curriculum Design Paper (version 3.1) specifies that the section on organisation of the curriculum will include at least the following elements:

- content structure: a description of the strands, sub-strands and ‘threads’ that describe the content of learning and their relationship
- achievement standards: a description of learner achievements
- diversity of learners: a description of how the Australian Curriculum addresses the learning needs of all students, including students with disability and those learning English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D)
- general capabilities: a description of each general capability, incorporating generic text and text specific to the curriculum area; that is, a brief summary of the general capabilities explicitly included in the content of the curriculum area
- cross-curriculum priorities: a description of each cross-curriculum priority, incorporating generic text and text specific to each curriculum area; that is, a brief summary of where and how each of the three priorities has been explicitly included in the content of the curriculum area

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- links to other learning areas: a list of substantive links to other Australian Curriculum learning areas to assist teachers to make connections in their planning for student learning
- implications for teaching and assessment: a brief overview of how the curriculum can accommodate particular approaches to teaching and assessment; some of the text will be generic, while some will be specific to the learning area.

In the Languages learning area, this section will also include an outline of the orientation, design and organisation (see Section 3, Part 1).

Section 4: Language specific curriculum development

This section describes the development of a language-specific curriculum using the structure and design specifications described in Section 3. Although the steps of the process are set out in a linear manner, curriculum writers will inevitably move backwards and forwards as they work through each step, continuously refining their work as feedback is sought and incorporated.

From a generic to a language-specific curriculum

Curriculum development in languages education in Australia has been largely generic for almost the past three decades, with a single description of content and achievement standards developed for and applied to all languages. Syllabuses developed for specific languages have also tended to follow a generic framework and curriculum design template. The value of this approach has been to achieve a certain degree of commonality across languages and this will remain a feature of the Australian Curriculum: Languages. However, the generic approach has underplayed the distinctiveness of each specific language and its learning; it has also created difficulties, particularly in describing the content of learning and student achievements expected in a way that meaningfully reflects the distinctiveness of each language.

Given this context, it is important for each writing team to write a statement about what is particular about their specific language for the purpose of curriculum development. This statement is an integral part of the preparation for language-specific curriculum development. Writers also need to take into account the distinctive contemporary profile of learners learning the target language in Australia, now and in the immediate future.

Working within the writing team

The development of each language-specific curriculum will take place following the processes and within the timelines set out by ACARA. Each writing team will need to establish an agreed work plan that ensures that the work can be accomplished successfully in a way that capitalises on the different knowledge and experience that individual writers bring to the team. The work plan will need to provide for the development of common understandings as writers from different states and territories of Australia come together as a writing team. It will normally be the case that each writer takes responsibility for a particular writing task, with all other team members providing feedback. All members of the team will contribute to ensuring the coherence of the work as a whole. All work will be submitted to the ACARA Languages Advisory Group, language-specific experts and the Languages National Panel for developmental feedback before the formal consultation processes established by ACARA.

Developing a work plan

Develop a work plan that sets out tasks and sub-tasks, processes, outcomes, responsibilities and timelines in line with the ACARA Work Plan and Schedule. This plan will be developed with ACARA staff.

Preliminary scoping

In the first stage of curriculum development, writers will need to prepare three preliminary scoping documents that will be used as a reference throughout the development process. To write these three documents, writers will need to:

- understand the design features of the Australian Curriculum (as described in Section 3) and the Shape Paper
- identify language-specific considerations

Section 4: Language specific curriculum development

- identify pathway-specific considerations (if relevant to the specific language)
- identify key teaching and learning resources that will inform language-specific curriculum development.

Identifying language-specific considerations

Because of the language-specific nature of the curriculum development work, writers will prepare a statement that describes the distinctiveness of the target language.

In identifying and describing features specific to the target language, writers should consider:

- the nature of the language and culture, including, for example:
 - its lexicogrammatical and textual features
 - its writing system (for example, alphabetic/non-alphabetic)
 - features of the culture(s) that influence language use (for example, politeness)
- its language use in communities in different parts of the world, including Australia
- its history in Australian education, and in particular how the target language has been framed in Australian education, the impact of this framing, and how the language is best framed in contemporary times
- features of its 'learnability' in the Australian educational context (that is, those features that are 'difficult to learn' for learners who, for example, are speakers of English, or for whom the target language is distant from their first language).

Preliminary document 1

Following the outline above, prepare a brief statement that conceptualises and expresses the specificity of the particular language for the purposes of developing the content descriptions and achievement standards. Formulate the statement *from the learner's point of view*. This statement will inform all steps in the curriculum development process.

Identifying pathway-specific considerations

Pathways for second language learners, background language learners and first language learners will be developed as appropriate to cater for the dominant cohort(s) learning each language. For the majority of languages, one curriculum pathway will be developed for F–10, catering for the dominant cohort of learners of that language in the current Australian context. For Chinese, pathways will be developed for three learner groups: first language learners, background language learners and second language learners.

Once the pathway(s) have been identified for the target language, and using the descriptions of the learners provided in the Shape Paper, writers will need to consider and set out the characteristics of the learner group(s) for each pathway, and the implications for curriculum development. All pathways will cater for a range of learners. In languages where only one pathway is to be developed, it will be particularly important to bear in mind the diversity of learners.

Preliminary document 2

Prepare a brief statement that sets out the characteristics of the learners for each pathway. In languages where more than one pathway is being developed, consider and document the major differences in characteristics of learners in each pathway. Document the implications of these differences for development of the content descriptions and achievement standards. This statement will inform all steps in the development process.

Identifying key teaching and learning resources

Curriculum development processes always build on what has been developed previously. This is especially important when a curriculum is being developed at a national level. It is useful to consider the current curriculum frameworks, syllabuses and key resources used by teachers in different states and territories and to note how they are framed structurally, and in their depiction of language and culture learning.

Preliminary document 3

Assemble, analyse and map key resources being used for each pathway and sequence for each of the bands of schooling. Consider the structure of these resources and their content.

Structural considerations include:

- assumptions made about hours of instruction/levels of schooling (for example, year levels, bands of schooling)
- the ways in which pathways for diverse learners are distinguished (or are not distinguished).

Curriculum content considerations include:

- the way in which each resource frames curriculum content (for example, strands/sub-strands)
- the dimensions of language and culture that are captured
- the degree of generality or specificity.

Build up a list of references for the target language, pathway and sequence of learning. For each resource, note features that are particularly useful and that might be incorporated in the content descriptions and achievement standards.

Section 4: Language specific curriculum development

Developing the context statement

The context statement describes the situation of the particular language in terms of its use in the world, in the Australian community and in Australian education, and the nature of learning the language.

Context statement

Using the design specifications in Section 3 and bearing in mind the material in Preliminary document 1, write a context statement for the specific language that includes discussion of:

- the distinctiveness of the specific language and its use in Australia and in the world
- the place of the target language in Australian education
- the nature of learning the target language
- the diversity of learners and the span of learning, Foundation – Year 10

Note that too much detail in a context statement may lead to a sense of trivialisation, and that the statement is not an advocacy statement for the learning of a particular language.

All members of the team give feedback on the context statement.

Developing band descriptions

The band descriptions provide a general description of language learning that is typical at particular year levels along the F–10 continuum. They are to be developed to correspond to learning in the following bands: Foundation – Year 2, Years 3–4, Years 5–6, Years 7–8, Years 9–10. Each band description includes discussion of:

- the nature of the learner
- language learning and use
- contexts of interaction
- texts and resources
- features of target language use
- level of support
- the role of English.

Band descriptions

Using the design specifications in Section 3, develop band descriptions for Foundation – Year 2, Years 3–4, Years 5–6, Years 7–8 and Years 9–10, following the structure outlined above.

Section 4: Language specific curriculum development

Developing curriculum content

To develop the curriculum content, writers should follow these steps:

1. Map the scope and sequence of content within existing resources
2. Develop the scope and sequence of curriculum content, using the key concepts in the Shape Paper and the structure and design specifications in Section 3 of this document
3. Draft a broad outline of curriculum content.

These three steps are discussed in detail in the following sections.

Mapping the scope and sequence of content within existing resources

Mapping provides a broad picture of the content of the taught curriculum. It sets out the various dimensions of content and establishes a picture of learning as a whole, including:

- the nature of valued language and culture content
- the scope and sequence of the content of learning from Foundation to Year 10, and for each of the learning pathways and sequences.

Note that the set of strands, sub-strands and threads is intended to address the question of the nature of the valued language and culture content.

As such, the mapping is both horizontal, in relation to the dimensions of valued content in language learning (that is, the nature, the 'what'), and vertical, in relation to the scope of these dimensions and to sequencing over time ('to what extent'; 'to what depth'; 'how complex').

Mapping the scope and sequence of content is necessary because it provides the writing team with a clear indication of:

- sequences of learning (for example, a longitudinal picture of the content of learning specific languages, Foundation – Year 10).

Using the resources identified in Preliminary document 3, writers will begin to map the nature, scope and sequence of learning from Foundation to Year 10. At this stage, the major purpose is to identify and document useful content in existing resources; it will be refined later in the process.

For each band of the Foundation – Year 10 continuum (Foundation – Year 2, Years 3– 4, Years 5–6, Years 7–8 and Years 9–10), map the following:

- concepts
- text types
- processes
- key aspects of the linguistic system.

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Concepts

Concepts form the content or substance of language use (what it is that students communicate about) as well as concepts that pertain to language in use. During the initial mapping process, concepts should be gathered and grouped for each of the different learning bands (Foundation – Year 2, Years 3–4, Years 5–6, Years 7–8 and Years 9–10) and for each pathway. These concepts will be refined and reordered later in the process.

Concepts can be drawn from all areas of the curriculum; for example, science, history or geography (in languages where this kind of content-based curriculum is available). This will also help to develop cross-curricular/interdisciplinary connections. Examples of concepts are provided for each of the sub-strands in Section 3. Concepts should be chosen for their specific intercultural relevance and potential, that is, the opportunities they provide for comparison between different languages and cultures, and their suitability for the multilingual and multicultural context of Australian education. These choices include selection of relevant texts (literature, film, popular culture) that contribute to defining linguistic and cultural identity

Text types

Text types include oral, written and digital or multimodal texts. Text types are central to curriculum development because all work in language learning is textual work. Examples of text types are provided for each of the sub-strands in Section 3.

Processes

Processes refer to the development of the macro skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) used for communicative interactions such as negotiating, giving instructions, classifying, transacting, describing, comparing, performing, expressing. They also support the development of higher order thinking skills such as reflecting, analysing, mediating and interpreting

Examples of processes are provided for each of the sub-strands in Section 3.

Key aspects of the linguistic system

Note the way in which existing curriculum resources describe the linguistic system. This might include:

- basic word order, the verb group, verb markers and main phrase relationships
- grammatical elements used to express notions of cause, effect, change and sequence
- sentence construction in speech and in writing
- cohesive devices (for example, conjunctions, references, substitutions)
- markers indicating modality (for example, possibility, likelihood)
- culturally based conventions of speech and writing.

It is essential that language-specific writing teams source a contemporary reference grammar for the target language that covers all the characteristics of the system of a particular language. This reference grammar will be used throughout the development process. The publisher Routledge has a good series of such grammars available. *Collins Cobuild English Grammar* is another useful reference, because it looks specifically at the sequencing of grammatical concepts within a functional orientation.

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Mapping the scope of content

Using Preliminary document 3 and the descriptions of concepts, text types and processes outlined above, develop an initial map of the scope of language learning for each band and for each sequence and pathway.

Focus on concepts particular to the target language that lend themselves to rich intercultural comparisons between the target language and culture and English language and culture.

Include actual language examples in the target language to capture the scope and level as sensitively as possible.

As a group, discuss and document any observations about the draft document you are creating, such as emphases, omissions or the depiction of relationships among dimensions.

Note: This initial map of the scope of content is only a draft and is likely to be incomplete. It will be developed further in the next step.

Developing the scope and sequence of curriculum content

Scoping

The initial mapping of content from existing resources will most likely have yielded content relating to different elements of the language and language use; that is, the four macro skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), other skills, text types and task types.

However, the initial mapping is unlikely to have addressed how these elements interact, and how language learners develop an intercultural perspective over time. This interaction and development must also be incorporated in the curriculum content, so that it gives a holistic understanding of language use and language learning. The elements support the whole, but are not sufficient on their own.

The curriculum writer's next task is to order this content in a meaningful way. The concepts, text types and processes will be grouped into the two interrelated strands, Communicating and Understanding, and then into sub-strands and threads as described in the Shape Paper and in Section 3 of this document.

Writers can alter the extent and depth of content in each strand and sub-strand. This will be useful in developing content for different bands along the Foundation – Year 10 continuum and for different pathways for specific languages. For example, the 'reflecting' strand is likely to be less elaborated in the F–2 band than it will be in later bands.

Establishing the 'threads' for each sub-strand

The next step is to determine the threads for each sub-strand that support the internal organisation of content. These are designed to capture:

- range and variety in the scope of learning
- progression of content across the learning sequences.

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The following table shows how the threads were organised in the Italian curriculum.

Table 10: Examples of threads for each sub-strand in the Italian curriculum

Strand	Sub-strand	Examples of 'threads' in the Indonesian curriculum	
Communicating: <i>Using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning</i>	1.1 Socialising	Socialising/exchanging	
		Taking action	
		Transacting	
		Building language for classroom interaction	
	1.2 Informing	Obtaining and using information	
		Conveying and presenting information	
	1.3 Creating	Participating in and responding to imaginative experience	
		Creating and expressing imaginative experience	
	1.4 Translating	Translating/interpreting	
		Creating bilingual texts	
	1.5 Reflecting	Intercultural experience	
		Identity in intercultural interaction	
	Understanding: <i>Analysing and understanding language and culture as resources for interpreting and shaping meaning in intercultural exchange</i>	2.1 Systems of language	Sound and letter knowledge
			Grammatical and vocabulary knowledge
Text structure and organisation			
2.2 Language variation and change		The variation of language in use	
		The dynamic and influential nature of language	
2.3 The role of language and culture		The relationship of language culture	

Developing content descriptions

The next step is to create content descriptions. The specifications for content descriptions are set out in Section 3, Part 2, of this document. The content description is an integrated statement describing what students will be taught in each of the strands and sub-strands, and lists the related concepts, text types and processes.

The examples in tables 11 and 12 show the development of draft content descriptions for Italian for the sub-strands 'Socialising' and 'Informing'. The 'considerations' illustrate what it is that is taken into account in drafting each content description to ensure that dimensions of the content and the level at which it is to be pitched are both captured. Threads have been used to give the content a clear structure.

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Table 11: Development of draft content descriptions for Italian Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence – Years 7–8 for the sub-strand ‘Socialising’

Strand: Communicating Sub-strand 1.1: Socialising	Considerations
<p>Thread: Socialising/exchanging</p> <p>Socialise with peers and adults to exchange greetings, good wishes, factual information and opinions about self, family and friends, routines, shared events, leisure activities, interests, likes and dislikes</p> <p>[Key concepts: naming, friendship, family, celebration, leisure, neighbourhood; key processes: interacting, exchanging, describing]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ← <i>socialising as a dimension of this sub-strand</i> ← <i>what students do in communication</i> ← <i>focus on interpersonal interaction as integral to socialising ‘with whom?’ as a means of depicting scope</i> ← <i>domains of socialising, also as a means of depicting scope</i> ← <i>key concepts that lend themselves to intercultural comparison in this sub-strand</i>
<p>Thread: Taking action</p> <p>Participate in individual or collective action both orally and in writing by making arrangements, inviting, planning, deciding, and responding</p> <p>[Key concepts: activity, rules, politeness; Key processes: arranging, negotiating alternatives, deciding, responding]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ← <i>taking action as a dimension of the sub-strand</i> ← <i>kinds of ‘taking action’ appropriate to this band; what taking action involves</i> ← <i>concepts that lead themselves to intercultural comparison</i>
<p>Thread: Transacting</p> <p>Participate in spoken and written transactions, including purchasing goods and services, and give and follow directions and instructions</p> <p>[Key concepts: social exchange, etiquette; Key processes: negotiating, describing, transacting, ordering]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ← <i>transacting as a dimension of this sub-strand</i> ← <i>kinds of transactions appropriate to this band</i> ← <i>concepts that lead themselves to intercultural comparison</i>
<p>Thread: Building language for classroom interaction</p> <p>Develop language to interact in classroom routines, for example, posing questions, asking for repetition, rephrasing, explaining, asking how to say something in Italian, expressing opinion, giving and giving and following instructions</p> <p>[Key concepts: class routine, responsibility, community; Key processes: questioning, negotiating]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ← <i>interaction in class as a dimension of this sub-strand</i> ← <i>how students interact and express themselves in the classroom; in subsequent bands this will include developing the language of reflection</i> ← <i>key processes that are salient in this sub-strand</i>

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Table 12: Development of draft content descriptions for Italian Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence – Years 7–8 for the sub-strand ‘Informing’

Strand: Communicating Sub-strand 1.2: Informing	Considerations
<p>Thread: <i>Obtaining and using information</i></p> <p>Identify factual information from a range of spoken, written, and multimodal texts, and process and represent meaning, for example, classifying, sequencing and summarising</p> <p>[Key concepts: concepts drawn from selected texts and from learning areas across the curriculum; Key processes: ordering, classifying, comparing, tabulating]</p>	<p>← <i>obtaining information as a dimension of this sub-strand</i></p> <p>← <i>the fact that it is factual information suggests the appropriate level</i></p> <p>← <i>key processes here give a sense of the level of information giving</i></p>
<p>Thread: <i>Conveying and presenting information</i></p> <p>Convey factual information and ideas through a range of spoken, written, and multimodal texts using information from a range of sources</p> <p>[Key concepts: society, event, fact, opinion; Key processes: describing, comparing, presenting]</p>	<p>← <i>giving information as a dimension of the sub-strand</i></p> <p>← <i>the fact that it is factual information suggests the appropriate level</i></p> <p>← <i>key processes here give a sense of the level of information giving.</i></p>

Developing the draft broad outline of curriculum content

This work can only be an initial draft at this point. In this draft there are likely to be gaps and omissions, overlapping content across strands; inconsistencies in the nature and detail of specification, and differences in the degree of generality and specificity among items included. The draft outline will be developed further in the next step.

Draft broad outline

To develop a draft broad outline of the curriculum content, use the design specifications for the development of content descriptions and the description of the strands and sub-strands set out in Section 3.

Develop content descriptions for each of the bands from Foundation to Year 10 and for each pathway and sequence, grouping content descriptions into strands and sub-strands and the related ‘threads’ as indicated in the examples for Italian (tables 11 and 12).

The overall aim is to describe the curriculum content in a way that will provide students with a rich and sufficient experience of learning the target language. As you work, focus on:

- the nature and range of the content (for example, making sure that the content is appropriate to the particular band level)
- the structure of the content (for example, deciding which threads to use to give the content a clear structure)
- the scope of the content (the content descriptions as specified should provide a holistic sense of content for a particular band)

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- the specificity of the description of the target language use
- the need to make connections across dimensions of content.

This work can only be an initial draft at this point. In this draft there are likely to be gaps and omissions, overlapping content across strands, inconsistencies in the nature and detail of specification, and differences in the degree of generality and specificity among items included. The draft outline will be developed further in the next step.

Sequencing

Sequencing curriculum content from Foundation to Year 10 is not something that can be done with 'scientific' precision. The principles set out in Table 13 are provided as a guide only. Writing teams can use these principles in sequencing the curriculum content within each strand and sub-strand, but they will also need to make judgments based on their experience.

Table 13: Principles of sequencing

General principles	Language-specific sequencing
Communicating strand	
<p>Sequencing for the Communicating strand is based on the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • content (concepts) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ concrete → abstract concepts ▪ personal → public domains ▪ familiar → unfamiliar ▪ specific information → generalisation ▪ single → multiple sources ▪ static (fixed) → dynamic (changing) • purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ simple (e.g. socialising, describing, informing) → complex (e.g. analysing, evaluating, persuading, arguing) • context (setting, time, place, participants) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ familiar → unfamiliar settings ▪ private → public settings ▪ close → distant ▪ few → many participants ▪ known → unknown participants ▪ here and now → past, present, future ▪ insider → outsider status • processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ receiving, stating information (e.g. noticing, ordering, identifying pattern, substituting) → transforming and using information (e.g. qualifying; expanding; elaborating; comparing and contrasting; describing cause and effect; supporting opinions; expressing perspective, position, stance, effect) • text types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ familiar → unfamiliar 	<p>Sequencing will also depend on features of a specific language. These might include aspects of grammar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple → complex clause/sentence structure • subject-verb-object → embedded sentences/ subordination • cohesion → coherence • time reference: present → movement across past, present, future

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General principles	Language-specific sequencing
Communicating strand	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ specific → general ▪ small number → expanding range ▪ working within a text → connecting intertextually (between texts) • simple understanding → complex reflection on communication • expression of own perspective, stance, position → monitoring mutual interpretation → acting on others' contributions → being able to manage situations of difference → mediating interpretation of meaning (e.g. over time, generational interpretations of cultural norms) 	
Understanding strand	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple → complex analyses of language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ within a language and culture ▪ across languages and cultures (including learner's own) • simple → complex understandings (e.g. of ecology of languages; the ability of new media and technologies to shape communication; the power of language; processes of learning languages; relationships between language, culture and identity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus on rules → focus on variability (e.g. how the specific language makes reference to gender, plurality, agency, time, modality)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple → complex analysis and reflection (e.g. noticing and identifying → critically analysing) • single → multiple connections • simple awareness → complex meta-awareness • awareness of linguistic and cultural variation → linguistic and cultural explication (explaining variation to others who may be unfamiliar with the language or culture) → linguistic and cultural negotiation (seeking clarification) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adjusting language use to context → making complex comparisons of such conventions in the target language/culture

The following example (Table 14) shows what a curriculum content sequence might look like for a specific language, band and pathway. In this instance, the language is Italian, and it builds on the description for 'socialising' as outlined in the previous step. The sequence is designed for second language learners in Years 9–10. It uses the principles outlined in Table 13 above and is modelled on the examples of sequencing provided in Section 3.

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Table 14: Curriculum content sequence for Italian

Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence – Years 9–10

Strand: Communicating Sub-strand 1.1: Socialising	Considerations
<p>Thread: <i>Socialising/exchanging</i></p> <p>Initiate and sustain interaction to develop relationships with peers and adults, and to exchange and compare ideas, experiences, opinions and feelings</p> <p>[Key concepts: naming, relationships, generational change, values; Key processes: exchanging, comparing]</p>	<p>← <i>sustain</i> suggests longer turns in interaction; <i>developing relationships</i> also suggests more elaborate communication and a greater sense of the interpersonal comparison introduces another aspect of complexity</p> <p>← <i>concepts are more abstract than those for Years 7–8</i></p>
<p>Thread: <i>Interacting (developing classroom language)</i></p> <p>Use classroom language to question, elicit and offer opinions, and compare and discuss ideas</p> <p>[Key concepts: compromise, debate; Key processes: expressing, questioning, presenting, representing]</p>	<p>← <i>greater emphasis on negotiation</i></p> <p>← <i>'compare ideas' signals greater complexity</i></p>
<p>Thread: <i>Taking action</i></p> <p>Participate in individual and collective action by deciding, explaining and justifying</p> <p>[Key concepts: environment, fairness, community; Key processes: discussing, debating, commenting, comparing]</p>	<p>← <i>'explaining' and 'justifying' signal greater complexity</i></p>
<p>Thread: <i>Transacting</i></p> <p>Participate in spoken and written transactions, including obtaining and negotiating different services and problem-solving</p> <p>[Key concept: value; Key processes: comparing, negotiating]</p>	<p>← <i>'negotiating' signals greater complexity</i></p> <p>← <i>'problem-solving' also signals complexity</i></p>

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Strand: Communicating Sub-strand 1.2: Informing	Considerations
<p>Thread: <i>Obtaining and using information</i></p> <p>Select and organise information from a range of spoken, written, and multimodal texts in Italian; process and analyse ideas; and represent meanings, opinions and perspectives as appropriate to particular audiences</p> <p>[Key concepts: visual images, media, representation, relationship; Key processes: identifying diverse perspectives, transposing, connecting, applying]</p>	<p>← <i>'select' implies individual choice/research, and as such goes beyond 'identify' in Years 7–8</i></p> <p>← <i>'multiple sources' is intended to present comparative/contrasting perspectives, it maintains focus on meanings but extends to meaning in diversity, that implies diverse audiences as another marker of more complex processes than in Years 7–8</i></p>
<p>Thread: <i>Conveying and presenting information</i></p> <p>Convey information and compare diverse perspectives from multiple sources in Italian</p> <p>[Key concepts: public perceptions, representation, globalisation; Key processes: reporting, relating, comparing]</p>	<p>← <i>research to mark some independence</i></p> <p>← <i>multiple as opposed to single texts/implying from diverse, contrasting and multiple perspectives, introduction of the notion of 'positioning'</i></p>

Sequencing occurs at different levels of curriculum design. Sequencing of content descriptions will remain quite broad but should still convey a good sense of the increasing complexity of language use as students progress through the curriculum.

The example below provides an illustration of sequencing of the text type 'narrative'. The sequencing is depicted as follows:

Sequencing: narrative

Consider (first person) who is telling the story and therefore from whose point of view it is told (especially with oral history):

- personal narrative → third person → history as narrative

Since time is a key feature of narrative, the shift might be from:

- present and immediate past → a greater span of time (e.g. immediate and distant past) → the relationship of events in time

Since 'complication' is another structural feature of narrative, it could be a shift from:

- a small complication → a more intricate complication (more participants, more events, more complex context)

At upper levels learners explore history as narrative, and more abstract issues of history as fact or fiction, or narrative 'truth' and objectivity, (for example, whose account of the story is being told?).

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Another example of sequencing is represented in the shift from description to conceptualisation; for example, a shift from a description of an actual place or phenomenon to a concept that creates the possibility of intercultural dialogue. Such a shift might look something like the following:

my house/home routines	→	home life	→	being 'at home' in diverse cultures; concept of being in a house does not equal being 'at home'; we carry our home with us; values related to 'home'; various conceptions of 'home', e.g. house, abode, residence
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This is just one example of a possible elaboration of the idea of home; it could also be elaborated in other ways.

Another approach might be to sequence content based on values, with the sophistication of the content mirroring the development of the students' reflective capacities. For example, the concept of 'home' could be linked to values such as family ties, respect for parents/children, collaboration and sharing. This shift might be represented as follows:

care for self/other	→	reciprocal care
giving/sharing	→	the consequences of giving/not giving; global contexts of giving (e.g. world aid)

The selection of content is inevitably arbitrary, and writers should accept this. The goal is to specify content and its scope and sequence in broad terms, with ample illustration. Users will make finer-grained choices as appropriate for their particular context as they use the curriculum to develop programs at the local level.

Developing content elaborations

Each content description will be followed by content elaborations. The purpose of the content elaborations is to illustrate or give greater meaning to the content description.

As outlined in Section 3, content elaborations may include:

- contexts of language use
- further detail on dimensions of the content description
- aspects of linguistic and cultural knowledge
- key language
- possible tasks and experiences
- connections across concepts.

Considerations in developing elaborations:

- Elaborations are intended to capture various dimensions of language use in the Communication strand and of analysis of language use in the Understanding strand; they exemplify different dimensions of language use in an authentic way.
- Given the multidimensional nature of language use, there are many dimensions that could be elaborated. It is important to exemplify a rich range of possible elaborations. At the same time it is recognised that the choice will always be somewhat arbitrary.

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- The elaborations are illustrative; they cannot be exhaustive.
- Although both strands (Communicating and Understanding) are important in their own right and are described as distinct for the purposes of curriculum design, it is recognised that they are always interconnected in language use and in teaching and learning and therefore they are also likely to be interrelated in some of the elaborations.
- Wherever possible, the elaborations should illustrate aspects that extend the commonly used repertoire of teaching and learning practices; this can be achieved by focusing on concepts, as well as other possibilities.

Table 15 gives an example that illustrates some possible elaborations related to the different dimensions of the sub-strand ‘Socialising’.

Table 15: Elaborations – Italian Years 7–10 (Year 7 Entry) sequence – Years 7–8

Strand: Communicating Sub-strand 1.1: Socialising Thread: Socialising/exchanging	
Content description Socialise with peers and adults to exchange greetings, good wishes, factual information and opinions about self, family and friends, routines, shared events, leisure activities, interests, likes and dislikes [Key concepts: naming, friendship, family, celebration, leisure, neighbourhood; key processes: interacting, exchanging, describing]	
Elaborations	Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greeting others, introducing themselves, expressing state of health and wellbeing, appreciation and good wishes, and leave-taking, using appropriate familiar or formal language, for example, <i>Mi chiamo ... e tu? Come ti chiami? Ho 12 anni. Sono Carla. Ciao Giorgio, come stai? (Sto) bene/male, e tu? Mi dispiace. Ci vediamo domani. A domani. Buongiorno, arrivederla. Come si chiama? Buongiorno professoressa, come sta?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ← <i>highlights ‘greetings’ as a major dimension of socialising</i> ← <i>highlights formality or informality</i> ← <i>Italian language example illustrates reciprocity (e tu? = what about you?) and gives a sense of the level of complexity of language use</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describing and comparing friends and family, for example, using [subject + verb + adjective]: <i>Il mio amico è simpatico</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ← <i>captures further dimensions of ‘socialising’</i> ← <i>reflects understanding of grammatical agreements (connections to systems of language)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describing routines, events and leisure activities (for example, <i>Ogni weekend vado al cinema... Mi piace/non mi piace + [infinitive verb]. Gioco a/pratico il</i>), and comparing these to similar events for Italian peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ← <i>captures further dimensions of ‘socialising’</i> ← <i>Italian language example illustrates some typical language appropriate to the task and the level of complexity of language use</i> ← <i>involves comparison and intercultural reflection</i>

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Refining the sequence of content descriptions and drafting content elaborations

To refine the sequence of content descriptions and draft content elaborations, writers will return to the draft broad outline. There are likely to be inconsistencies in the content sequences. The writer(s) for each of the bands should obtain specific feedback from the whole team on the sequence of content and make revisions based on this feedback.

Writers should then draft content elaborations for each content description using the specifications provided in Section 3. The content descriptions and elaborations will then be reviewed and refined in relation to each other.

The content descriptions and elaborations for the various bands and pathways should be compared as part of this process, to ensure that the sequence from Foundation to Year 10 is coherent.

This process of review and refinement is ongoing and may continue through several drafts.

General capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities

In The Australian Curriculum, general capabilities encompass knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that, together with curriculum content in each learning area and the cross-curriculum priorities, will enable students to live and work successfully in the 21st century.

The document General capabilities in the Australian Curriculum elaborates on each capability in detail, describing how each capability develops over time from Foundation to Year 10. This document is an excellent resource for Languages curriculum writers. The 'intercultural understanding' capability is particularly closely aligned with the aims of the languages learning area, and the description and elaboration of this capability can be used to strengthen the content descriptions and elaborations in the Languages curriculum.

The description of the cross-curriculum priorities provides further explanation of each priority area (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures; Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia; Sustainability).

Incorporating general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities

Using the descriptions of general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities in the Australian Curriculum and the Shape Paper, reconsider the broad outline of content as a whole and integrate the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities. This should not be a forced process but rather one that highlights important connections that can be made.

Developing achievement standards

The design specifications for achievement standards in the languages curriculum are set out in Section 3.

Language-specific examples should be used as often as possible to demonstrate the expected level of sophistication in language use and performance and in understanding.

The initial draft of the achievement standards will be based on:

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- the specifications for the structure and descriptions of achievement standards outlined in Section 3
- the analysis of any existing descriptions of achievement standards (particularly those relating to the target language)
- an analysis of any data/student work that is made available to the developers.

Developing an initial draft of the achievement standards

Bearing in mind the broad outline of the content, curriculum writers should develop an initial description of student achievement for each band level and each pathway.

At this stage, this can only be a preliminary draft, which, just like the content descriptions and elaborations, will need to be refined. The initial draft will be revised to incorporate feedback from the writing team, the ACARA Languages Advisory Group, language-specific experts and the Languages National Panel. Throughout the process, writers will continue to refine the descriptions for each band and pathway. Key review questions include:

- Is the detail included appropriate?
- Are the standards for each band level and pathway sufficiently distinct?
- Do the descriptions adequately convey the level of sophistication/complexity in language use and understanding?
- Are the examples appropriate and sufficient?
- What dimensions of student achievement are not captured in the descriptions?

Table 14 gives an example of an achievement standard that has been written for the F–10 sequence, Years 7–8 Indonesian.

It has been written following the two-paragraph structure. The first paragraph focuses on communicating. It captures:

- listening and speaking in relation to relevant domains of language use and text types
- reading and writing in relation to relevant domains of language use and text types
- communication strategies
- translating and interpreting
- reflecting on intercultural language use.

The second paragraph focuses on understanding. It captures:

- knowledge of the language system
- variability in language use
- reflection on language and culture.

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Throughout the description there is a degree of exemplification that reflects the nature and extent of language use that is appropriate for the level. It is worth noting that this is a way of characterising the performance, rather than stating an unqualified 'can do'. Importantly, there is no relative language ('more', 'greater', etc.). In developing the set of descriptions across year levels, bearing in mind that they are to be read holistically, it is important to characterise progress at each set of year levels as far as it is possible to do so.

Table 16: An example of an achievement standard

Indonesian F–10 sequence Years 7–8	
<p>Communicating</p> <p>By the end of Year 8, students use Indonesian to interact and exchange ideas, experiences and interests with teachers, peers and others. They pronounce polysyllabic words such as <i>mendengarkan</i>, <i>pekerjaan</i> and <i>menyiapkan</i>, stressing the penultimate syllable with some accuracy. When interacting, they ask questions (<i>Apakah?</i>, <i>Di mana?</i>, <i>Kapan?</i>, <i>Berapa?</i>), respond to questions such as <i>Setuju tidak? Benar/Salah, Kapan? Bagaimana? Mengapa?</i> and clarify their answers such as using <i>karena...</i>, <i>supaya</i>. Students give opinions (<i>Pada pendapat saya, saya kira, setuju/tidak setuju</i>), make comparisons (<i>lebih ... daripada ...</i>) and state preferences using <i>saya lebih suka, yang paling baik ...</i> They locate and evaluate factual information in texts and create informational and imaginative texts (such as forms of correspondence, stories, reports) using models. They vary their sentence construction, for example, <i>rambut saya hitam/Ibu berambut coklat/Bapak mempunyai rambut pirang</i> to create interest for the audience. Students use cohesive devices, for example, time markers (<i>Besok, sebelum</i>), adverbs of frequency (<i>biasanya, jarang, belum pernah</i>) and conjunctions (<i>lalu, untuk</i>). They use a range of personal pronouns (<i>dia, mereka, kami, kita</i>); <i>ber-</i> verbs (<i>bersekolah, berselancar</i>); and simple <i>me-</i> verbs (<i>memasak, memakai, menjadi, mengunjungi</i>). Students use prepositions of people, time and place (<i>dalam keluarga, pada liburan, di hutan</i>), and describe qualities using colours (<i>biru tua, merah muda</i>) and adjectives (<i>sombong, murah hati</i>). They translate across languages, noticing where equivalence is not possible, for example, <i>gotong royong, jam karet</i> or ‘daylight saving’. They comment on their reactions to intercultural experiences, describing aspects that do or do not fit with their own identity and considering why.</p>	<p>← <i>statement of expected learning in the socialising and interacting sub-strand</i></p> <p>← <i>specification of capability in pronunciation – drawn from Systems of language sub-strand in the understanding strand</i></p> <p>← <i>examples of expected level of language used by students when interacting and socialising</i></p> <p>← <i>statement of expected learning in the informing and creating sub-strands</i></p> <p>← <i>expected grammar and vocabulary use drawn from Systems of language sub-strand in the understanding strand</i></p> <p>← <i>age-appropriate examples to convey level of language use when students are creating texts</i></p> <p>← <i>statement of expected learning in the translating sub-strand with examples as appropriate</i></p> <p>← <i>focus on the intercultural language use and how language and culture shape identity as appropriate at this level (drawn from reflecting sub-strand)</i></p>
<p>Understanding</p> <p>Students understand that Indonesian has a base word system that works with prefixes and suffixes to create verbs and nouns such as <i>-an, ber-</i> and <i>me-</i> words. They differentiate between similar sounding words and how they are written such as <i>suka/sukar, muda/mudah</i> and apply correct spelling conventions such as ‘<i>ngg</i>’ (<i>tinggal</i>) and final ‘<i>h</i>’ (<i>terima kasih</i>). They recognise how possessive word order differs from English and have a metalanguage to identify common features such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and subject-verb-object construction. Students identify and reproduce features in familiar texts such as emails, stories and dialogue. They understand that Indonesian is a national language that, for the majority of Indonesians, may be one of a number of known languages. They notice how languages and cultures influence each other, particularly noticing borrowings from other languages. Students understand that cultural values and ideas are embedded in language use, including their own, and consider where these may have come from and how they may be seen from another cultural perspective.</p>	<p>← <i>examples of scope of grammar to render level of language understanding (Systems of language sub-strand)</i></p> <p>← <i>statement of expected learning in sound and letter understanding with specific examples to convey level of understanding</i></p> <p>← <i>examples of text types used to show the expected level of textual understanding</i></p> <p>← <i>statement of expected understanding in the Language variation and change sub-strand</i></p> <p>← <i>description of the extent of reflection to render the expected level of understanding in the Role of language and culture sub-strand</i></p>

Ongoing refinement of the curriculum content and achievement standards

ACARA's formal consultation processes make it possible to continue to refine the descriptions of the curriculum content and achievement standards throughout the development and verification processes.

Refining the curriculum content and achievement standards

The draft curriculum should be reviewed and refined as a whole. This step is designed to ensure coherence between the curriculum content descriptions and the achievement standards:

- within each band/level
- across the bands, Foundation to Year 10 and sequences
- across different pathways.

Curriculum content review questions

- How well do the content descriptions reflect the key concepts and aims of the Shape Paper (that is, a contemporary orientation towards language, culture and learning)?
- Do the content descriptions provide clear and unambiguous statements of the specific intended learning ('what' teachers are expected to teach and students are expected to learn)?
- Is the sequence/progression of content descriptions clear and appropriate?
- Are the content descriptions sufficiently language-specific to guide teacher programming?
- Do the content elaborations provide useful illustration and/or examples of the content descriptions?
- Do the content descriptions and elaborations provide a clear sense of the intent of each sub-strand?
- How well do the content descriptions and elaborations attend to concepts, text types, task types, processes, and linguistic structures and features as described in Section 3?

Achievement standards review questions

- Do the achievement standards provide a clear characterisation of the 'level' or 'quality' of expected learning at each band level ('how well' students have learnt)?
- Does each set of achievement standards describe a clear and appropriate sequence of increasing complexity, in terms of 'understanding' and 'skills'?
- Are the achievement standards appropriately aligned with the corresponding content?
- Are the achievement standards sufficiently language-specific in their expectations of student achievement?

References

This section provides selected references to support curriculum development.

Further references are included in the Shape Paper. They should be supplemented with references for specific languages and pathways.

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