Aboriginal Languages, cultures and reclamation in Victorian schools:
standards P–10 and protocols

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Victoria
The Place To Be

Contents

Abbreviations used in this document

DEECD	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
ICIP	Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property
FATSIL	Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages
KE	Koorie Educator
KEDO	Koorie Education Development Officer
KHSLO	Koorie Home School Liaison Officer
KLO	Koorie Liaison Officer
LAECG	Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
LOTE	Languages Other Than English
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
VAEAI	Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated
VACL	Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education
VELS	Victorian Essential Learning Standards

Introduction

Currently in Australia, Aboriginal people are still working towards control over their own cultures, Languages, lands and community life. In addition, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are gradually seeing increased efforts to share the burden of this goal. The accreditation of a program for Aboriginal Language learning in Victorian schools supports this reclamation of self-determination through reclamation and revival of Language and culture. This in turn contributes to healing within Aboriginal communities and of the nation as a whole.

Background: Aboriginal Languages in Victoria

How many Languages?

Languages can be identified differently depending on whether you are talking about a social (community) or linguistic focus. The two views are complementary, allowing understanding of different aspects of language.

From a community perspective, a Language is identified with a particular area of land and group of people who traditionally own that land. In this view, around 38 Languages are identified for Victoria, many of which are further divided according to clan groups and their traditional lands. While many words are shared between groups of Languages identified in this way, there are important differences as well, which may also be reflected in choices such as spelling.

From a linguistic perspective, a language is identified by a distinctive set of core vocabulary and elements of grammar. This view focuses on which languages form part of the same group or family, sharing words and grammar. In this view, eleven distinct Languages are usually identified for Victoria, each of which can be further divided into dialects. The Languages as identified in this way are detailed in the *VCE Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation Study Design*: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/lote/ausindigenous/IndigenousSD.pdf

ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES OF VICTORIA

YUYU (Ngindadj)

NGARGAD

BINDJALI

JARI JARI

LADJI LADJI

DADI DADI

WEKI WEKI

Mildura

Ouyen

Lake Tyrrel

WERGAIA

Wudjubaluk

Bulbadjali

Djadjala

Lake Hindmarsh

Nundadjali

Wimmera River

Gengi Gengi

Mandadjali

JARDWADJALI

Jagwadjali

Horsham

Jardwadjali

Stawell

Knindwurn wurrung

Pirt Pirt wurrung

DHAUWURD WURRUNG

Dhauwurd wurrung

DJAB WURRUNG

Djab wurrung

Kee woorroong

Koorokopanoot

Peek woorroong

BUANDIG

Portland

Warrnambool

WATHAURONG

KEERRAY-WOORROONG

Keerray woorroong

Wirngilgnad dhalinanong

TJAKCORT WOORROONG

GULIDJAN

GADUBANUD

Ballarat

Maryborough

DJA DJA WURRUNG

Loddon River

Bendigo

Geelong

Melbourne

BOON WURRUNG

WOIWURRUNG

WADI WADI

Swan Hill

WEMBA WEMBA

BARABA BARABA

JABULA JABULA

YORTA YORTA

Echuca

BANGERANG

Yarrawonga

Albury

NGURAI-ILLAM WURRUNG

TAUNGURUNG

Benalla

WAYWURRU

DHUDHUROA

Mitta Mitta River

Ovens River

MOGULLUMBIDJ

GUDUBUNGERRE

Omeo

Goulburn River

Braiakaulung

Brabralung

GUNNAI

Mitchell River

Latrobe River

Tatungalung

Braiakaulung

Brataualung

Werragul

NGARIGU

Snowy River

Krauatungulung

Orbost

BIDAWAL

Bombala

THAWA

VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL CORPORATION FOR LANGUAGES

This map is not suitable for Native Title Claims and was produced from information available at the time of printing.
Used by permission, Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages.
Interactive map available at: www.vaclang.org.au/maps.aspx

Language reclamation initiatives

The last 15 years or so have seen a movement to reclaim Language across Victorian communities. Gunditjmara, Gunnai, Wathaurong, Yorta Yorta, Wergaia, Kulin groups and Waywurru/Dhudhuroa are just some of the Language groups which have made concerted efforts towards reconstructing and relearning their Languages, creating resources from calendars to dictionaries, and bringing the Languages into the public eye through speeches in Language, public noticeboards, informal classroom teaching, and other means.

It is on this wave of interest in Language reclamation that the new initiative to accredit Language in schools emerges. Schools should see themselves as implementing the work that communities are doing, providing a means to pass on the reclamation of Language to students in a more focused way than is possible with community-internal resources alone.

It will be important to present the programs to students in this way, particularly where non-Aboriginal students are involved. Ongoing community consultation, reference to community authority and practical input of Elders and others is one way in which this will be evident. Up-to-date information about Language revival work in communities can be accessed through the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (www.vaclang.org.au). It is also recommended that key people in the history of Language reclamation in the relevant region be recognised in the teaching of the subject, for example see the following interviews at: http://calisto.slv.vic.gov.au/latrobejournal/issue/latrobe-43/latrobe-43-002.html (Uncle Albert Mullet), www.abc.net.au/gnt/future/Transcripts/s1043199.htm (Uncle Max Solomon), or www.abc.net.au/missionvoices/cummeragunja/voices_of_cummerangunja/default.htm (Uncle Sandy Atkinson).

Aboriginal Languages for Victoria's Future

It has long been recognised that learning a second language and affirmation of the home or heritage language are key factors in positive and successful experiences of school-based language and literacy development (see, for example, www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/teachlearn/student/lem/linking.pdf). It is also recognised that for Aboriginal children, a school environment which positively reflects the cultural values learned at home is closely related to attendance and achievement. The Wannik strategy (www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/govrel/Policy/wannik.pdf) recognises the specific requirements of Aboriginal students, supporting the incorporation of Aboriginal Languages and culture in the school curriculum as well as in modes of teaching more generally.

Another broad realisation connected with this is the link between education of non-Aboriginal children and relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the school and community at large.

I think ultimately that sharing our Languages will further open doors of understanding and reconciliation between mainstream Australians and Indigenous Australians.
(Anonymous contributor to statewide consultations)

Teaching Aboriginal Languages in government, Catholic or independent schools is potentially a very significant part of this deeper picture of building positive communities for Victoria's future.

Teaching an Aboriginal revival Language is different from other LOTE teaching

Relations between learning and reviving a Language

The introduction of Language should follow and be driven by community initiatives and developments in Language. On this basis, students and teachers can then become an active and positive part of the Language reclamation process, building resources for future Language learning.

Because of the different stages of Language revival current in different communities, the school structures will need to be prepared for staged introduction of Language.

Emphases for learning an Aboriginal Language

Teaching an Aboriginal Language requires a particular focus on culture, as inextricably bound up with not only the Language itself, but also learning about the Language, its people and the land. This includes, for example, learning based at sites of cultural importance, involvement of students in significant cultural events, and embedding the Language in a wide range of cross-disciplinary contexts.

In addition, Aboriginal Languages need to be contextualised in ways of learning appropriate to Aboriginal people and culture. This will require, for example, a strong base of oral learning, an approach which understands that both teacher and student are learners, and an emphasis on deep learning and listening rather than on specific external goals and outcomes or a primary emphasis on intellectual achievement.

The role, responsibility and jurisdiction of Traditional Custodians and the local Aboriginal community

The teaching of an Aboriginal Language requires much higher levels of inbuilt community involvement than other languages. Actively recognising the authority and leadership of the local community and Traditional Custodians at all points is crucial to the purpose and success of the program. The development of Language programs in schools should be staged in order to flow from community Language research and development. Considerations such as these are detailed further in the Protocols (see page 14).

Choice of Language

The choice of Language/s to teach should be authorised by the local Aboriginal community and Traditional Custodians of the Languages and of the land the school is on. Usually this will be the Language of the land. Convenience and availability of Language resources is not sufficient by itself to overturn this priority. Rather, a program of Language learning in the school can be seen as part of the means to develop Language resources and support Language development in the community concerned. These issues are detailed further in the Protocols.

The Language revival process

Terminology

Terms such as language revival, reclamation, and revitalisation are all used in connection with Languages which are no longer spoken as everyday languages in their communities.

The different terms indicate the current status of Language knowledge and use. This has effects on how it can be revived in communities and taught in schools.

Language revival is a general term used to cover various statuses of language and methods of revival and teaching.

Language revitalisation means that the language is still known and used by the community, but only by a few people, usually the oldest members of the community. Languages of this status can be learned in part by listening to old people, and recording their speech.

Language reclamation usually means that relearning the language has to rely primarily on old records such as tapes and historical documents. People in the community may remember and use a few words, but to learn the language beyond this level will require more than referring to Elders' knowledge. Elders are still vital to this process due to their authority and their cultural knowledge.

Developing Language for the twenty-first century – community choices

While Languages are being revived in their communities, there are decisions and Language planning choices to be made which can only come from the communities and Traditional Custodians. This may require considerable flexibility, as various elements of a language often considered basic for other languages cannot be assumed, and must be waited for.

These may include decisions about:

- writing and spelling
- comprehensive lists of words and Language structures (possibly in the form of a dictionary and teaching grammar)

- new words for the new environments of Language, and/or to 'fill in the gaps' in known and recorded Language
- pronunciation, balancing old and new practices
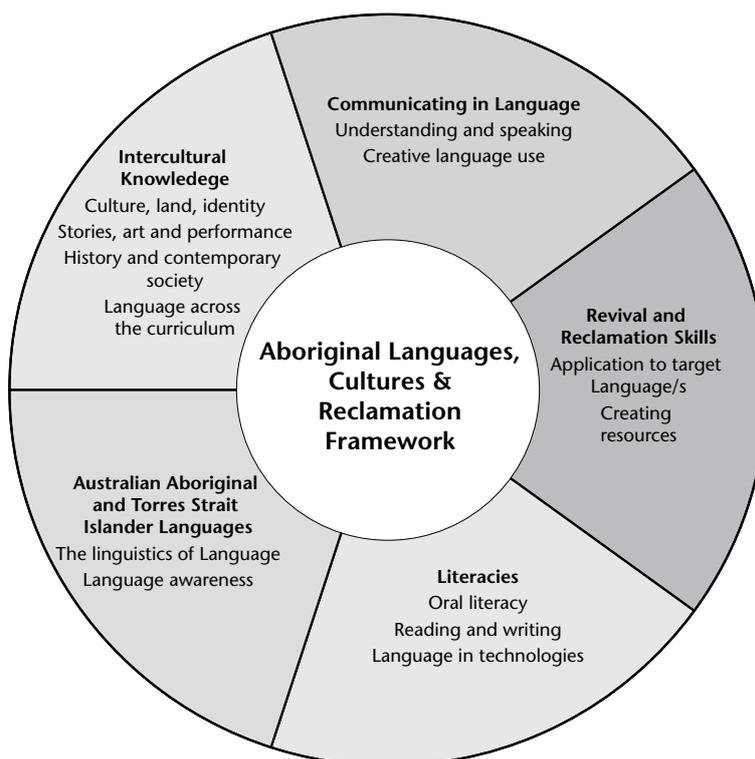- authorised sources of Language, including decisions as to use of sources for closely related Languages.

Communicating in Language
Understanding and speaking
Creative language use

Intercultural Knowledege
Culture, land, identity
Stories, art and performance
History and contemporary society
Language across the curriculum

Aboriginal Languages, Cultures & Reclamation Framework

Revival and Reclamation Skills
Application to target Language/s
Creating resources

Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages
The linguistics of Language
Language awareness

Literacies
Oral literacy
Reading and writing
Language in technologies

Diagram 1: Aboriginal Languages, Cultures and Reclamation learning areas.

There are significant differences between teaching Victorian Aboriginal Languages in schools and other language categories. No Aboriginal Language has continued to be fully used as an everyday language in Victoria. This means that teaching of these Languages involves the reclamation of the Language and consultation with the local Aboriginal communities. As the Language forms part of the identity of local communities, any teaching and reclamation of their Language requires the consent and support of the Aboriginal community.

Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation has been an accredited Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) study since 2004. During this time, and the earlier piloting stages, senior school students have been able to participate in the reclamation of Victorian Aboriginal Languages.

Further information about Aboriginal Languages of Victoria and their history is available from the *VCE Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation Study Design*: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/lote/ausindigenous/IndigenousSD.pdf

VELS LOTE Aboriginal Languages

The existing standards in the Languages Other Than English (LOTE) domain of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) are designed for the teaching of intact languages where teaching programs and resources are readily available. A new set of standards was required that would address the skills and knowledge unique to reclaiming a Language. These standards provide greater support and guidance to teach the reclamation of Aboriginal Languages due to the limited availability of support material.

The involvement of local Aboriginal communities is recommended in any program set up to teach their Languages. The standards contained in this booklet were written after extensive consultation with Aboriginal groups from around Victoria. A set of protocols accompany the standards. These protocols outline the steps that need to be followed to set up an Aboriginal Language program in a school and the consultation that should occur on an on-going basis to support the program.

The introduction of an Aboriginal Language may be in response to a request from Aboriginal people to include their Languages in the school curriculum or a request by other members of the school community to learn an Aboriginal Language, which is then fully negotiated with and supported by the local Aboriginal people.

The establishment of a successful Language program requires both schools and communities to understand the issues involved and work together to establish successful Aboriginal Language programs for Prep to Year 10. To assist schools and communities the learning focus statements included in this booklet for Levels 1 to 3 (where LOTE standards do not exist) provide specific information and examples that relate to Aboriginal Languages. This is done to support the development of resources and reclamation of the Language.

A successful program includes input from Traditional Custodian groups and the local Aboriginal community and the Language team.

The inclusion of Aboriginal children only, or all children in the school, is a sensitive matter. Many Aboriginal people feel strongly that their children must have the right to learn their own Language before other children begin to do so because:

• the Languages, along with culture and many other human rights, have been removed from communities as a part of colonisation

• the Languages belong to the communities in a way that does not apply to world languages such as English

• it is the right of the communities to claim their Language and determine what happens to it

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- Aboriginal children may feel shamed at their lack of knowledge of Language and risk falling behind if other children find themselves able to learn their Language more rapidly

- the *Wannik* strategy[1] calls for a clear focus on creating an environment where Aboriginal children can advance to new levels.

At the same time, many Aboriginal people are also aware that for non-Aboriginal children to learn about their Language and culture is potentially a very significant tool for raising cultural awareness and reducing racism in the broader community. Schools that have been trialling this, such as those in Gippsland, have reported benefits for all children and for group cohesion, and research into the subject yields consistently positive results for community harmony[2].

One suggestion is to introduce an Aboriginal Language into the school in three stages over a number of years:

1) Aboriginal children only

2) other children in the school community

3) options for participation of parents and other members of the broader community.

Whatever decision is made it is critical that the Language program is developed in consultation with Traditional Custodians and the local Aboriginal community. A partnership initiative, linking schools with other community organisations may assist the successful implementation of the Language program.

1. State of Victoria (2008), *Wannik: Learning Together – Journey to our Future. Education Strategy for Koorie Students*. Available at: www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/govrel/Policy/wannik.pdf

2. See Jade, S (1998), 'The Fourth R: Reconciliation and the Maintenance of Indigenous Language in Urban Secondary Schools', *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, vol. 26, no.1, and elsewhere.

Acknowledgments

The following works from other jurisdictions provided support for the development of this document.

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Protocols

Establishing a successful Aboriginal Language program

In establishing an Aboriginal Language program the school is required to consult with the local Aboriginal community including Traditional Custodian groups to discuss the following:

- the Language/s to be taught
- the composition of the Language team including one or more Aboriginal Language teachers able to teach the Language/s
- whether and when to teach Language to non-Aboriginal children
- development of resources
- selection of materials for classroom use such as historical records due to their potential for offence
- any revival and reclamation work needed for the Language before or as part of teaching
- copyright and Indigenous cultural and intellectual property
- provision of ongoing support for the program, including a linguist to support the Language/s to be taught
- the level of interest and support for the program.

It is strongly recommended that an advisory group be established to oversee the implementation of the Aboriginal Language program in each school or region. These groups will draw on representatives from the Traditional Custodian groups and existing community Language reference groups, Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups, Koorie units at Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions, parents and parent committees, Elders, Aboriginal students, former students of the VCE Indigenous Languages Revival and Reclamation study, Koorie Education and Development Officers and Koorie Educators, cultural officers, school principals and teachers, and representation from state bodies such as the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. The specific nature of the advisory groups will vary depending on the school and its local community.

Setting up the Program

All students and teachers involved in Language learning are necessarily involved in Language revival and reclamation. This is because to use Language at all in the current environment is to develop Language, raise awareness of Language, and create new settings, purposes and genres for its use.

It is recognised that a range of people will be vital to the success of the program. The preferred model is a Language team, similar to that implemented for the VCE study Indigenous Languages of Victoria Revival and Reclamation[3].

The Language team

The preference of all communities across the state is for Language to be taught by an Aboriginal person to demonstrate the importance of incorporating cultural knowledge and cultural styles in teaching and the need to ensure and demonstrate Aboriginal ownership and authority in Language.

The team would be expected to:
- participate in lesson planning
- ensure that members of the Language team are prepared adequately for lessons
- take a personal interest as a learner of the Language/s
- participate in Language team meetings.

Using the VCE model, the team would ideally include the following:
- Aboriginal Language specialist
- Aboriginal Language teacher
- Koorie Educator, Koorie Education Development Officer, Koorie Liaison Officer and/or Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group representative
- classroom teacher
- linguist.

Aboriginal Language specialist

The Aboriginal Language specialist is an authority in the culture and/or Language, who can provide direction to the Language team. The Aboriginal Language specialist is likely to be an Elder, a Traditional Custodian of that particular Language area, a community Language worker, or someone with comparable knowledge and standing in this area. There may be a number of Language specialists.

Elders are particularly important members of the Language team. In cases where the Aboriginal Language specialists do not include Elders, it will be important to seek out Elders (with cultural knowledge and/or knowledge of or interest in the chosen Language/s) to participate in the program from time to time. In addition, due to health issues for many Elders, a preference for working in groups, and high demand on their services, schools should seek to have more than one Elder listed in the potential pool.

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3   See VCAA (2004), *VCE Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation Study Design*. Available at: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/lote/ausindigenous/IndigenousSD.pdf

Aboriginal Language teacher

This is an Aboriginal person authorised by the community to teach the Language. In some cases they may also be an Aboriginal Language specialist.

In cases where the Aboriginal Language teachers are not Traditional Custodians of the Language/s to be taught, permission should be obtained from Traditional Custodians for them to teach in the Language/s.

Koorie Educator, Koorie Education Development Officer, Koorie Liaison Officer, Koorie Home School Liaison Officer and/or Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group representative

Schools with a significant number of Koorie students employ Koorie Educators to liaise between families and schools.

Regionally based Koorie Education Development Officers act in a support role and help to provide an Aboriginal perspective across the curriculum.

Koorie Liaison Officers and Koorie Home School Liaison Officers work with and support schools and families to improve the attendance and literacy levels of Koorie students.

Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group representative

Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (LAECG) are the first point of contact for matters concerning Aboriginal education and training at the local level. They are the vehicle through which parents and community members can have a say about all matters relating to their and their children's education. Membership in the LAECG is open to all members of the local Aboriginal community.

LAECGs are the constituent units of the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI), founding VAEAI in local community control. This is the means by which VAEAI can legitimately provide an advocate function for the Aboriginal community and provide advice and support to Language program.

www.vaeai.org.au/who/laecg.html

Classroom teacher

This is the person normally employed by the school to teach the class. If this is an Aboriginal person, they may or may not also be an Aboriginal Language teacher.

Linguist

This is a person with qualifications and experience in an appropriate area of linguistics, who is willing and able to support the Language team in areas such as grammar, relationships between languages, interpretation of historical Language sources (if used), and the linguistic characteristics of Aboriginal Languages (including the sounds).

Optional team members

The Language team may also include:

- community persons/parents with an interest in the Language/s
- others who may wish to be involved and support the teaching of Aboriginal Language/s and culture.

Roles of the Language team members

The role of the Aboriginal Language specialist is to:

- provide cultural direction to the Language team
- teach Language and/or culture from time to time
- act as a resource for knowledge about areas such as Language and pronunciation as appropriate
- monitor the Language and culture being taught to ensure its accuracy and appropriacy
- attend Language team meetings
- attend Language classes
- work with the linguist as required.

The role of the Aboriginal Language teacher is to:

- teach the Aboriginal Language program
- network with other teachers of Aboriginal Languages
- network with the peak body for Languages, the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages
- network with other teachers of LOTE both regionally and state-wide
- maintain links with the local Aboriginal community and the community or communities whose Languages are being taught
- attend Language team meetings
- learn basic teaching skills from the classroom teacher
- take up opportunities to maintain and extend their knowledge and use of Language
- participate in professional development opportunities
- work with the linguist as required.

The role of the Koorie Educator, Koorie Education Development Officer and/or Koorie Liaison Officer is to:

- assist school staff in communicating with the local Aboriginal community, including Traditional Custodian groups
- attend Language team meetings
- assist in the development of the Language program including the preparation of resources
- extend his/her knowledge of the chosen Language; for example, by learning the spelling system (orthography)
- learn basic teaching skills from the classroom teacher.

The role of the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group is to:

- provide advice on all education and training matters that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- monitor the current trends in education that impact on all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- provide an advocacy role for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families in respect of education matters
- provide representation to local and regional committees and forums in relation to education and training
- provide representation to all Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated forums.

The role of the classroom teacher is to:

- facilitate delivery of the program
- promote Language and encourage a positive attitude to Language learning
- in the event of temporary absence of the Aboriginal Language teacher, to provide activities which reinforce the Language learnt
- create an atmosphere to encourage Elders and the Language specialist/s to be actively involved in the program
- assist with classroom management, particularly when the need is indicated by the Language specialist or the Koorie educator
- attend Language team meetings
- attend Language and cultural awareness training.

The role of the linguist is to:

- act as a consultant to the Language team when necessary
- work with the local Aboriginal community and the Traditional Custodian groups and assist with linguistic matters as required
- assist school and staff to liaise with the local Aboriginal community and Traditional Custodian groups in determining the Language/s to be taught

- assist in identifying potential Language specialists and Aboriginal Language teachers where appropriate
- assist in the provision of specific Language data as needed by the Language team
- seek guidance from the peak body for Languages, the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages
- attend Language team meetings when needed
- attend Language classes when invited.

Choice of Aboriginal Language/s

The first preference of Aboriginal communities across the state is to choose the Language of the land. This is seen as:

- a matter of respect to the land, its ancestors, and Traditional Custodians
- recognition that Victoria is home to not one but many Aboriginal Languages and peoples
- educationally appropriate for non-Aboriginal people, to learn about the Language and culture where they are living
- in keeping with cultural standards across Australia, in which Language and land are closely connected. In multilingual Aboriginal societies of Australia, both past and present, it is normal and respectful to communicate in the Language of the land you are on.

It is also recognised that there can be additional factors to consider when deciding which Language to teach:

- the Aboriginal children at the school may be living away from the land of their own heritage
- the question of whose land it is may be uncertain or under negotiation
- the Language of the land may be currently lacking in resources – human or written.

It is crucial that the local Aboriginal community and Elders are included in the choice of Aboriginal Language/s to teach to ensure support from the community and to show respect to Aboriginal people and heritage in general.

In the first years of the Language program, it is expected that sufficient resources will not be available for many of the Languages.

These may be developed as part of the community's own Language reclamation process. Release of these materials will be guided by community timelines.

From Level 4 it is expected that the students themselves can generate resources for younger students as part of their studies. Multi-age relationships can then be encouraged as older students introduce their resources to younger students (for example, teaching them a game or song, reading them a story).

Maintaining the Language program

Ongoing success of the Language program depends on a number of factors including:

- community involvement
- the teacher facilitating the program
- support mechanisms in place throughout the school
- regular timetabling of class and preparation time, making it easier for Aboriginal Language teachers and specialists to feel more comfortable attending regularly
- sensitivity of school and staff to the Language reclamation situation, the processes, cultures and persons involved, and the potential of the program for gains in the area of reconciliation.

Training and support of the Language team

The training of the Aboriginal Language teacher and other team members is essential to the success of maintaining the Language program. As the confidence of the Aboriginal Language teacher builds, responsibility can shift from the classroom teacher to the Aboriginal Language teacher. The training should also provide the Aboriginal Language teacher with appropriate credentials to move between schools.

The Language specialist and other team members may require ongoing support and training in Aboriginal Language revival, learning the Language to be taught, teaching a Language, and classroom teaching.

It is highly recommended that the Language team meet on a regular basis to support those teaching, to evaluate and plan teaching sessions, and to plan and/or develop resources.

Professional development for the classroom teacher should include ongoing training specific to this subject; in both cultural and Language awareness.

Resourcing of the Language team

It is recommended that the following resources be provided to support the program:

- Aboriginal people employed as Language specialists and teachers
- travel expenses to enable Language specialist/s and/or local Elder/s to be involved in Language classes
- a welcoming environment for Aboriginal Elders

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- intensive development of resources in consultation with the relevant local Aboriginal community, as the development of resources for revival Languages is a form of Language development.

Maintaining a record of the Language program

It is important to keep a record of the teaching and learning program including classroom activities, assessment tasks and resources that have been used. An annual summary of the implementation and achievements of the Language program could be prepared and distributed to the community.

Languages Other Than English

Aboriginal Languages is one of the six language categories that are part of the Languages Other Than English (LOTE) domain. This booklet contains only the standards and learning focus statements that relate specifically to Aboriginal Languages.

The standards and learning focus statements for the other language categories can be found in the *Victorian Essential Learning Standards: Languages Other Than English* booklet or on the LOTE domain section of the VELS website (http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/lote/).

The information contained in this booklet should be read in conjunction with the above booklet/website.

Introduction

Languages Other Than English (LOTE) contribute materially to the universal purposes of schooling and to the development of skills in thinking and reflection. They support the moral, social and economic initiation of young people into the culture and wider civilisation that surrounds them. Learning a language nurtures reflective, deep and creative thinking in specific ways, cultivates culturally distinctive fields of knowledge, and stimulates awareness of intellectual functioning. In unique ways, languages require learners to engage in self-reflection because effective communication in a new language requires the learner to move outside the norms, practices and acquired behaviours of their first language.

Languages infuse the entire curriculum with both taught and incidental insights into how knowledge is organised by different sociocultural communities, and introduce awareness of important distinctions in meaning, sound, and sound patterns, social arrangements, order and sequencing of information, categories and relations. These skills can directly enhance the general intellectual development of young people.

In learning a language, students develop communication skills and knowledge and come to understand social, historical, familial relationships and other aspects of the specific language and culture of the speakers of the language they are studying. Learners are also provided with the tools, through comparison and reflection, to understand language, culture and humanity in a broad sense. In this way, language learning contributes to the development of interculturally aware citizens, of increasing importance at a time of rapid and deep globalisation.

Structure of the domain

The LOTE domain is organised into two pathways, the first consisting of six levels and the second of two levels. Each level includes a learning focus statement and, from Level 4 onwards, a set of standards organised by dimension.

Pathways

As students may begin their LOTE studies at different stages, learning focus statements and standards are offered for two pathways which recognise the student's point of entry into the study:

Pathway 1: for students who begin learning a language in primary school and continue to study the same language to Year 10 (see page 26).

Pathway 2: for students who begin learning a language in Year 7 (see page 49).

Learning focus

Teaching a reclamation Language is different in many ways to teaching other languages. Detailed learning focus statements are written for each level to assist teachers to develop units of work that include an acknowledgment of country and relate Aboriginal cultures to the shared history of Australia. These outline the learning that students need to focus on if they are to progress in the domain and achieve the standards at the levels where they apply. They suggest appropriate learning experiences from which teachers can draw to develop relevant teaching and learning activities.

Standards

Standards define what students should know and be able to do at different levels and are written for each dimension.

In LOTE standards are introduced for assessment and reporting at Level 4. While it is clear that students gain most benefit from the study of another language when they begin this study in the early years, it is acknowledged that some schools choose to maximise the effect of their resources by introducing LOTE programs at different year levels with appropriate time allocations. In recognition of the cumulative nature of language learning, the LOTE domain includes progression measures which provide a typical sequence of second language development leading to Level 4. Regardless of the level at which the study of a language other than English is introduced, students will need to develop the knowledge and skills described in the progression measures before they attempt the learning associated with the Level 4 standards. These progression measures also assist schools that provide LOTE programs prior to Years 5 and 6 to assess and report effectively on student achievement.

Dimensions

The following dimension descriptions differ from those for the other language categories of the Languages Other Than English domain. This reflects the different approach required in Language reclamation from traditional language courses.

The standards and learning focus statements for the other language categories can be found in the *Victorian Essential Learning Standards: Languages Other Than English* booklet or on the LOTE domain section of the VELS website (http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/lote/index.html).

The two dimensions of the LOTE domain are intimately linked. *Communicating in a language other than English* allows learners to reflect on language and gain cultural knowledge. In turn, *Intercultural knowledge and language awareness* can provide cultural guidelines for effective communication.

Communicating in a language other than English

In *Communicating in a language other than English*, students learn the knowledge, and skills relevant to the specific language being studied. The skills of this dimension include developing skills for revival and reclamation mainly by practising listening, speaking, then reading, writing, the use of body language, visual cues and sign language. The application of these skills requires knowledge of Aboriginal identity, culture, history, land and Language, including vocabulary and grammar. This dimension requires the use of a wide range of texts in spoken, print, video and electronic form.

Intercultural knowledge and language awareness

Communication skills in an Aboriginal Language foster intercultural knowledge and awareness of the Language. The *Intercultural knowledge and language awareness* dimension develops students' knowledge of the connections between Language, identity, culture, history and land, and how culture is embedded throughout their communication. Progress through this dimension is demonstrated through performance in the Aboriginal Language being studied. The understandings are universal and are gained through comparisons with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages. It is very important to learn the history of the area and its people in which the Aboriginal Language is being revived and reclaimed.

Students gain an awareness of the influence of culture in the learner's own life and first language; also of Koorie English. Different languages and language communities organise social relationships and information in different ways and values differ from one community to another. Through cultural self-awareness, the ability to rationally discuss and compare cultural differences is developed. This dimension involves developing curiosity about the variety of values and practices, as well as acquiring in-depth knowledge of the diverse cultural traditions of the source societies.

All Aboriginal Language teaching material needs to make strong links between Language, identity, culture, history and land as the prime reason for learning an Aboriginal Language. These important links make it possible to learn a Victorian Aboriginal Language in the revival and reclamation approach.

Students with an Aboriginal Language and culture background

Many students bring an in-depth knowledge of an Aboriginal Language and/or culture to the classroom. Aboriginal children are likely to live in an environment where a contemporary Aboriginal culture is the norm and they may have grown up hearing some Aboriginal Language and/or Koorie English around them. The knowledge, understanding and Language use of the students should be respected and used to encourage their active participation in mutual learning in the school context.

Pathway 1

Introduction

The language curriculum is organised through themes and topics which are arranged to provide progressive and cumulative opportunities for students to develop language and cultural understandings. Themes and topics form the main organising principle for language study. The sequencing of activities and language content allows learners to build new skills, knowledge and attitudes on the levels they have already attained. This cumulative process supplies continuity and sequence to the learner and coherence for the teacher.

Four principles should guide the selection of topics:

1) Topics that are culturally, socially or linguistically distinctive to the particular language concerned. This will vary for different languages.

2) Topics that extend or reinforce or complement topics already covered and that permit an extension of the language expectations.

3) Topics that are relevant and of interest to the students.

4) Topics that integrate with themes, topics, or key areas being addressed in other domains.

All topic selection should be governed by its potential to contribute to systematic acquisition of the language and cultural understandings in one or both of the dimensions.

Opportunities must be provided for students to demonstrate not only their communicative competence, but also their intercultural understandings and language awareness, through practical applications of the language.

Within each theme and topic, time is devoted to the acquisition of new language, structures, communication conventions, ways of thinking about the topic/s and their expression, as well as comparisons between languages and cultures.

Years Prep to 4

Students study language through themes and topics that introduce the key idea of the language domain: that many societies and many people within Australia normally use languages other than English for communication.

The dimensions are integrated to provide opportunities for students to exchange information and ideas based on the theme and topic, and the individual student's language competence at this level.

Activities that are appropriate at these levels may vary. The status of reclamation in the language being studied will affect the emphasis of the activities.

Years 5 to 8

Students build language cumulatively by expanding language and cultural understandings they already have. The awareness that languages other than English are the normal means of communication for many societies and people is reinforced.

Themes and topics are selected and sequenced to allow learners to build new skills, knowledge and attitudes and are culturally, socially and linguistically appropriate for the particular language being taught. The topics contribute to systematic acquisition of the language and cultural understandings in both dimensions in an integrated way. Topics should be of interest to students at these levels and most topics should be familiar to them. They may be productively integrated with themes, topics, or key areas being addressed in other areas of the curriculum.

Teaching activities are diverse and aim to consolidate language and cultural understandings, and use a diverse range of materials and genres, texts and media in defined contexts.

Some students change languages in the transition between primary and secondary schooling. For information about the stages of learning for students in this situation, please refer to the information for Pathway 2 (see page 49).

Years 9 to 10

Students participate in communication forums as competent members of the target-language-speaking community.

Themes and topics are selected because of their potential to contribute to systematic acquisition of the language and cultural understandings in both dimensions. Most topics will be familiar to students, should relate to their interests, and provide opportunities for deep investigation of issues, drawing on skills and knowledge acquired in other areas of the curriculum.

Students are encouraged to research and create their own contexts for demonstrating their language and cultural understandings. They use a range of learning tools, including multimedia tools, to encounter a wide range of language and cultural forms and practices. Both directed and independent learning is focused on acquisition of new language, structures, communication conventions, ways of thinking about the topic/s and their expression, as well as comparisons between languages and societies.

Teaching activities are diverse and consolidate language and cultural understandings, encourage risk-taking, and use many materials and genres, texts and media.

Pathway 1 Level 1

Learning focus

The learning focus for this Level, as for all Levels in the study of Aboriginal Languages, is guided by the five key learning areas outlined in the diagram on page 10.

As students work towards the achievement of standards in LOTE at Pathway 1 Level 4, they develop an understanding of the speakers of the Language and the regions and communities that the Language belongs to. In preparation for Level 4 standards, students need to develop the knowledge, understandings and skills described in the progression measures (see page 35).

Students are given opportunities to learn about Aboriginal Language and culture through culturally relevant experiences, such as excursions to cultural sites, visiting Elders, participation in cultural events such as NAIDOC week and Reconciliation week, and begin to learn the significance of these events and places.

Students are encouraged to increase their knowledge of the area in which they live, visiting culturally important places in their area with an appropriate Aboriginal guide.

They learn about cultural aspects of the chosen Language such as information about traditional foods, medicines, music and musical instruments, men's and women's implements, and dance, and begin to use the Language of the chosen area to name items. They develop an awareness of art and craft practices such as baskets and their weaving, by viewing traditional and contemporary pieces and also working with artists of the area.

Students explore their families and communities. The family or community member/s share their stories including stories about themselves when they were young and significant events in their lives.

Students listen to stories and view videos and various digital media about Aboriginal Languages and the chosen Language and their environment.

They develop an understanding that the Language is used for communication, identity and cultural maintenance, and that it is an important part of the lives of people outside their classroom. They begin to understand that there are differences between Aboriginal Languages and cultures and the English language. They become aware that there are various ways of doing things and that things are important for different reasons such as various special festivals at different times of the year, and that traditional ways of obtaining food are largely determined by geography, climate and season.

Students participate in cooking, physical education, role-play games, painting, drawing, finger painting, puppet making and similar activities which locate

the Language in real communication contexts, hearing the Language and gradually using it themselves.

Students begin to use and respond to the Language in the classroom, relating the Language to what they see, hear and touch, and to topics associated with the breadth of other parts of the curriculum.

Through greetings, introductions, songs and other simple routines, students become familiar with the sounds of the Language, and practise using the Language. From the beginning, they hear words and basic phrases in use such as greetings. Students are introduced to concrete Language with repetitive patterns and visual cues. They start to interpret gesture and facial expressions, and use some of the non-verbal behaviour that is part of the Language.

Level 1 focuses on developing the students' capacities to communicate orally. They are encouraged to repeat words and phrases in context. They participate in activities such as using greetings, naming animals and kinship terms. Students begin to learn how to talk about themselves and others.

Teachers provide models of the chosen Language for the students to repeat in meaningful and culturally appropriate ways. Students are encouraged to repeat words and phrases in context of culture, paying attention to intonation and rhythm. They interact with Language teachers and peers in structured and informal classroom activities, responding to questions and instructions, and using familiar topics in an environment of games, song and creativity.

Students begin to develop writing skills in the Language being studied. They trace over, copy or write symbols or words to make items such as labels and signs which convey meaning. They also engage in group activities to produce class books, wall stories, or posters along with the teacher.

Students are involved in Language reclamation by participating in public performances and events which include Language in posters, song and/or cultural displays.

Standards

In LOTE Pathway 1, standards for assessing and reporting achievement are introduced at Level 4. Schools that provide language programs prior to Level 4 should refer to the LOTE progression measures (see page 35) which provide a typical sequence of second language development. The Levels 1, 2 and 3 learning focus statements provide advice for teachers about learning experiences that will assist students to work towards the achievement of the standards at Level 4.

Pathway 1 Level 2

Learning focus

The learning focus for this Level, as for all Levels in the study of Aboriginal Languages, is guided by the five key learning areas outlined in the diagram on page 10.

As students work towards the achievement of standards in LOTE at Pathway 1 Level 4, they learn about culture in context from stimulus materials. They learn that there are different ways of doing things, and to identify what is familiar and what is different in various cultures. In preparation for Level 4 standards, students need to develop the knowledge and skills described in the progression measures (see page 35).

Level 2 focuses on the roles of people and cultural groups: in families, at school and in the community. Students participate in a class project to create a collage of the people in the class, their families, and surrounding communities. Teachers and Language specialists assist them to use culturally appropriate Language terms, building on 'me, you and others', recognising also that other groups exist in Australia. Students become aware of the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, viewing Language maps of Victoria and the whole of Australia.

Students start to understand and use an Aboriginal Language in structured situations and activities relating to their local environment. Most Language heard and produced is around themes of the natural and social environment in which they live: self, family, home, classroom, friends, community, animals and local land features. They hear the Language as much as possible in the classroom, and begin to use sets of words and sentences frequently.

Opportunities to learn about Aboriginal Language and culture through culturally relevant experiences expand, through excursions to cultural sites, Aboriginal co-ops and/or keeping places, visiting Elders, and participation in cultural events such as NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week.

Students experiment with the Aboriginal Language using words, phrases and basic sentences to express themselves. They begin to demonstrate understanding; for example, by using pictures, body language or gesture, performing actions or writing in the Language. They retell stories heard and fill in missing Language words. They learn to count from one to five (or further if the Language accommodates this).

Students focus on developing their ability to identify and repeat words, phrases, and sentences heard. They continue to communicate, modelling the Language with ongoing support and scaffolding, and experiment with written

or signed language to express themselves. They engage in real or simulated activities such as role plays, building conversations by imitating and adapting. They participate in rehearsed models of Language use including familiar situations and genres such as songs, paying attention to intonation.

Students begin to identify patterns and common elements in the Language that differ from, or are similar to, English and other languages with which they may be familiar.

Materials such as stories and readings, activities and games, multimedia resources, visual and graphic displays and internet sites encourage students to understand that the Language is used normally for communication in these settings. Students are given opportunities to observe differences in the way the Language sounds when used by different speakers, of different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages.

Students encounter the different relationships recognised by different cultures between individuals, families, and communities for forming identity. They begin to understand systems of family relationships in Aboriginal culture through Koorie English and relate this system to their own families; for example, in Koorie way there are different Language terms for different grandparents: your mother's sisters are also classed as your mother.

Students learn to recognise the printed form of familiar words. They begin to use these words in writing, for picture stories, cards, labels or big books, produced individually or as a class project.

Students are involved in Language reclamation by participating in public performances and events which include Language in posters, song and/or cultural displays. They build Language by contributing to the development of songs and simple stories built on repeating and patterns.

Standards

In LOTE Pathway 1, standards for assessing and reporting achievement are introduced at Level 4. Schools that provide language programs prior to Level 4 should refer to the LOTE progression measures (see page 35) which provide a typical sequence of second language development. The Levels 1, 2 and 3 learning focus statements provide advice for teachers about learning experiences that will assist students to work towards the achievement of the standards at Level 4.

Pathway 1 Level 3

Learning focus

The learning focus for this Level, as for all Levels in the study of Aboriginal Languages, is guided by the five key learning areas outlined in the diagram on page 10.

As students work towards the achievement of standards in LOTE at Pathway 1 Level 4, they begin to consolidate their understanding of Aboriginal Languages in relation to their personal world and the country they are living in. They learn about the history of Language and displacement in their local area, in Victoria and in the country as a whole. Working together, they develop a short 'welcome to country' and/or 'acknowledgment of country' (depending on the mix of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students) to use at formal school functions. They begin to understand the importance of this practice through the guidance of an Elder. In preparation for Level 4 standards, students need to develop the knowledge and skills described in the progression measures (see page 35).

Students are encouraged to identify a range of natural contexts for the use of the Language, and the specific features of communication in these contexts. They make links between their understanding of the Language and its use, and knowledge about relevant geography and history, as well as ways of thinking about specific topics/issues (for example, number systems, the influence of social relationships, kinship systems). Students demonstrate understanding of the importance of caring for country and the environment and the role of Aboriginal Languages and cultures in this context. In this way the students develop a greater awareness and understanding of Aboriginal/ Torres Strait Islander peoples and the importance of their traditional way of life. They recognise connections between identity and cultural values, and the expressions of these in an Aboriginal Language.

Culturally relevant experiences include introduction to local Dreaming trails with appropriately authorised guides, visiting Elders, and participation in local cultural festivals, and events such as NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week.

Students are encouraged to identify and research a prominent Aboriginal person and their contribution to contemporary Australia (for example, Mandawuy Yunupingu, Sally Morgan, Cathy Freeman, Herb Patten, Ruby Hunter, Ernie Dingo).

Students experiment with Language and express themselves by approximating meaning. They consolidate and build on Language already learnt, and extend their vocabulary and knowledge of simple Language structures, relying on models and with ongoing teacher support and scaffolding. Dictionaries or printed wordlists are introduced as an additional way of expanding vocabulary.

The communication focus for this Level is on extending students' capacity to take part in conversations involving a number of speakers. There are regular opportunities to rehearse and participate in conversations, sending, receiving and responding to messages. Students participate in greetings and develop ways to talk about themselves and daily life, being able to say who they are, where they are from and how they feel. They engage in question and answer routines. They use a variety of communication strategies to maintain simple oral interactions in a culturally appropriate way, selecting socially and culturally appropriate greetings, leave takings and forms of address for use with adults, family members and guests. They develop their capacity to interact with familiar situations, using familiar Language for people, animals and the natural environment. They listen for items of information for use in activities, and identify and record or pass on the main message of the information they hear.

Students participate in simple story telling, performances of poems and songs using words and phrases learnt, paying attention to pronunciation, rhythm and intonation. They experience a wide range of voices and settings relevant to the Language, both historical and contemporary. Dreaming stories from the chosen Language are studied.

They recognise the use of the Language in information and communications technology applications and experience it in multimedia computer texts. They use simple software applications to demonstrate understanding of known vocabulary and structures.

Students begin to build written stories, linking several sentences and using some Language words. They contribute to group writing activities which allow them to experiment with different ways of telling a story such as oral, painting, drawing in the sand, cave paintings, tracks in the sand and/or dirt, gestures and sign language. They explore the use of graphics to support their writing and assist in developing games for use in class and for younger students.

Language is used in public communication settings such as cards, postcards and invitations to family and friends, creating labels, messages and notes, and signs on school doors.

The beliefs, values and lifestyles of people from various Aboriginal communities and the Torres Strait Islands are explored. Through this and other stimulus material, students are encouraged to reflect on life in these communities, as well as their own.

Students investigate the ways people communicate orally, visually, and through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sign Languages. They explore questions about communication: Why do we communicate? How do we communicate? What are the different purposes of communication? How has the way we communicate changed?

Awareness is developed about the patterns and rules of sentence construction in Koorie English, standard Australian English and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, and these are compared to their own speech. Students develop an awareness that the chosen Language does not translate directly into or from English.

They study efforts to maintain and revive cultures and Language in past, present and future contexts, and understand the importance of this process in the context of the history of colonisation and present goals of identity, cultural reclamation, and reconciliation.

Standards

In LOTE Pathway 1, standards for assessing and reporting achievement are introduced at Level 4. Schools that provide language programs prior to Level 4 should refer to the LOTE progression measures (see page 35) which provide a typical sequence of second language development. The Levels 1, 2 and 3 learning focus statements provide advice for teachers about learning experiences that will assist students to work towards the achievement of the standards at Level 4.

Pathway 1 Level 4

Progression measures

In recognition of the cumulative nature of language learning, the following progression measures provide a typical sequence of development leading to Level 4. Students will need to develop the knowledge and skills described in the progression measures before they attempt the learning associated with the Level 4 standards.

Progression measures reflect the five key learning areas outlined in the diagram on page 10, organised into the two dimensions of the LOTE domain. For an Aboriginal Language, the dimension *Intercultural knowledge and language awareness* is particularly emphasised, and the relevance of the chosen Aboriginal Language to all areas of the curriculum begins to emerge.

Part A

Communicating in a language other than English

On completion of an initial period of learning, students of an Aboriginal Language should be able to:

- repeat teacher-modelled use of the Language
- identify the names of visible items and/or pictures from aural/visual cues
- greet and farewell the teacher
- follow simple classroom directions
- recognise and use some culture-specific gestures and body language
- play games and join in songs and class creative activities using the Language
- copy or trace words for familiar items
- engage with various forms of media concerned with Language
- associate the spoken word with meaning, identifying individual words and building awareness of sound patterns and the rhythm of the Language
- relate the Language to various aspects of the daily life of the class.

Intercultural knowledge and language awareness

On completion of this period of learning, students of an Aboriginal Language should be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of some of the differences in how people eat, make things, sign and gesture, say things

- display an awareness of different ways of doing things in particular situations
- identify a geographic feature and/or practice of cultural importance and make a simple statement about it using the Language
- show a developing acquaintance with the Aboriginal communities, Languages and sites associated with their local environment
- participate in Language awareness activities such as public performance.

Part B

Communicating in a language other than English

On completion of a second period of learning, students of an Aboriginal Language should be able to:

- repeat teacher-modelled use of the Language
- greet and farewell the teacher
- respond appropriately to Language heard in the classroom
- respond to simple questions about short songs, stories and rhymes and participate in building Language in these and other genres
- use and understand words on the theme of 'me, you and others' in written and spoken contexts
- name some animals and places associated with the land of the Language
- participate in a range of communicative genres including rehearsed models of Language use
- write words in context and in modelled sentences
- recognise some culture-specific gestures and body language and integrate them into their own oral communications
- recognise the use of the Language in several media and information and communications technologies, and produce simple multimedia texts in the Language
- identify letter–sound relationships in the Language of study and practise pronunciation.

Intercultural knowledge and language awareness

On completion of this period of learning, students of an Aboriginal Language should be able to:

- demonstrate awareness of Language diversity in Aboriginal Australia and within Victoria
- show initial understanding of the systems of family relationships in Aboriginal cultures in relation to their own family and in comparison with the English language system

- demonstrate an understanding of variation in Language use, depending on the speaker, audience and context
- recognise variations in how people respond in daily situations and describe the values underpinning these responses
- identify two or more places, features, famous landmarks or cultural practices in Aboriginal cultures, and describe some aspect of these using the Language
- recognise variations in how people respond in daily situations and describe the values underpinning these responses
- participate in the creation and maintenance of the Language and cultural ambience in the classroom
- participate in Language awareness activities such as public performance.

Part C

Communicating in a language other than English

On completion of a third period of learning, students of an Aboriginal Language should be able to:

- independently produce words in writing and produce original variations on modelled written sentences
- introduce themselves and begin to communicate meaning for their own purposes in the Language
- greet and address different people in culturally appropriate ways
- contribute to a 'welcome to country' or 'acknowledgment of country', depending on the mix of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students
- generate simple original sentences using substitution strategies
- use basic modelled structures in conversations, responding to simple questions and constructing questions themselves
- appropriately integrate culture-specific gestures into their oral communication
- listen to short, simple texts and show understanding by passing on or making use of items of information
- participate in building games and songs, and retelling simple stories, using various media
- identify some of the relationships between selected letters in the Language compared to English or other familiar languages
- write simple sentences based on modelled examples
- use a dictionary in guided situations to find the meaning of simple words and to expand their vocabulary resources
- use simple software applications to demonstrate understanding of known vocabulary and structures.

Intercultural knowledge and language awareness

On completion of this period of learning, students of an Aboriginal Language should be able to:

- show initial understanding of the impact of colonisation on Aboriginal people, Language and culture
- show awareness of the importance of Languages and Language revival and make meaningful statements about the current status of the Language being studied
- demonstrate an understanding of culturally appropriate values, responses and patterns of behaviour in particular situations related to the topics being studied
- notice and discuss the different writing system, and practise relating individual letters or letter-pairs to the sounds of words
- discuss and participate in various available forms of meaningful non-verbal communication such as art
- compare and contrast like events in cultures which use different languages
- discuss or display their exploration of a topic of interest and significance to Aboriginal culture
- present researched information about a prominent Aboriginal person
- recognise similarities and differences between languages; for example, in sentence structures
- participate in Language awareness activities such as through public performances involving story-telling in various forms, songs, poems and/or role-plays.

Learning focus

As students work towards the achievement of standards in LOTE at Pathway 1 Level 4, the wider curriculum is further integrated into language learning in order to establish and maintain the relevance of the language to all areas of life and learning. Aspects of the various themes and topics studied are complemented and extended through the language.

Students share information and ideas about self and group identity. They begin to understand and use the Language within the world of their own experience and imagination, with some topics drawn from other domains. While their communication continues to be based on a range of implicit and explicit models, they now begin to function in open-ended situations, allowing variation and extension of Language applications. They learn to speak effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, approximating meaning and authentic Language use with defined topics and a variety of situations such as asking for food or directions, or writing an email. They develop understanding

in listening to spoken texts and reading short written texts. They begin to be aware of the differences in structure between English and Aboriginal Languages.

Students use a variety of communication strategies to gather, sort and present information. They also learn strategies for retaining Language information for later use in new applications.

Through studying the past, students learn about change and its impact on people's lives. They learn about the relationship between events in the history of colonisation and up to the present, and people's actions and intentions. They discover how aspects of traditional culture and society have been preserved, and discuss the importance of maintaining the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, including its importance for all Australians.

Students develop an understanding of how the shared history of colonisation in Australia contributes to national identity. They examine the impact on and involvement of Aboriginal peoples in key events such as the 1850s gold rushes, the development of the beef and wool industries, and Australia's involvement in various wars. They make links and appropriate comparisons with contemporary Australia, and learn about the contributions of Aboriginal people, past and present. A range of sources are included in their learning, such as personal interview, the anthology *Aboriginal Elders' Voices – Stories of the 'tide of history'*, Internet research, the DVD *Buried Alive*, or the *First Australians* television series. They understand that Australian life and culture are influenced by the different types of knowledge and ways of life evident through Aboriginal Languages.

Students recognise that culture and Language are tightly linked and influence the development of personal and group identity. They recognise the importance of cultural values and beliefs in the chosen Language. They research and raise awareness of Language and cultural knowledge in the surrounding community. They conduct an interview and report on the information gathered. They develop a family or community Language record through discussion with the Aboriginal members of the Language team and/or their own families.

They present a point of view on a significant current issue or issues which has been discussed with Aboriginal members of the Language team, and include recommendations about the actions that individuals and governments can take to resolve issues.

Individually and collaboratively, students explore works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and craftspeople from different historical and cultural contexts. They experiment with and apply a range of skills, techniques and processes and a range of media, materials, equipment and technologies suggested by this exploration.

Students retell a short story chosen through consultation with the Aboriginal Languages specialist, such as the Gippsland story of *Boran and Tuk*, the first man and woman, using the chosen Language as far as possible. They begin to appreciate the relationship between such stories and the land around them by visiting Dreaming trails with an appropriate guide. They contribute to group writing activities which allow them to experiment with different ways of telling a story including oral, painting, drawing in the sand, cave paintings, tracks in the sand or dirt, gestures and sign language.

They begin to develop more independence in the use of resources such as dictionaries (CD or paper based) and the internet, and become more confident in writing at sentence and paragraph level. They use multimedia technologies in culturally appropriate ways, to communicate with known and unknown audiences and support knowledge-building among teams.

Students read and/or view and discuss work by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people such as Sally Morgan, Boori Pryor, Richard Franklin, and May L O'Brien.

Standards

Communicating in a language other than English

At Pathway 1 Level 4, students are able to summarise the main points of the message when listening to spoken texts.

Students demonstrate their ability to extend rehearsed and modelled Language within a range of defined topics, purposes and audiences.

Students point out word-endings and show awareness of other differences in structure between English and the Language being studied such as the absence of articles.

Students can use the Language being learnt to retell a short story significant to the local Aboriginal community. They understand different forms of storytelling including oral and visual.

Students show a level of independence in using resources such as dictionaries and the Internet.

Students start to locate items of information in short written texts and to write short paragraphs based on topics studied.

Intercultural knowledge and language awareness

At Pathway 1 Level 4, students demonstrate understanding of the relationship between the land and the oral literature of the Language and demonstrate an appreciation of significant sites in their local area.

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Students demonstrate awareness of the relevance of Aboriginal Language to areas of their learning beyond LOTE.

Students recognise the significance of continuity and appreciate the importance of maintaining Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, cultural values and beliefs in the communities most directly concerned, as well as their relevance for all Australians.

Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding about the role and involvement of Aboriginal peoples in Australia's history since colonisation. They demonstrate an understanding of the impacts on Aboriginal peoples since colonisation. Students can identify aspects of the influence of Aboriginal Languages and cultures on Australian life and culture. Students make links between their historical knowledge of Australia since colonisation and how this shapes their own cultural, political and social contexts in Australia for the present and future.

Students explore topics of interest within the surrounding community about Language and culture through research involving personal interviews, written texts, images and information and communication technology. They present a point of view and suggestions on the topics researched. They maintain records of the Language information they collect.

Students apply their understanding of art and craft techniques used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to their own work. They demonstrate their understanding of the issues presented in appropriate literary works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by participating in informed discussions.

Pathway 1 Level 5

Learning focus

As students work towards the achievement of standards in LOTE at Pathway 1 Level 5, they develop their understanding of cultural diversity and the variations in customs and traditions among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and over time. They investigate the important elements that make up a language system and the particular functions of grammatical concepts, and learn that words may not have a direct equivalent in another language.

Students reflect on culture and language, and the skills that can be acquired in intercultural understanding and language awareness. They begin to generalise and reflect on the relationship between languages and cultures beyond both English and the Language being studied. They consider deeper cultural knowledge through the medium of the Language, including concepts such as the cultural group's own names for its cultural and communicative practices. They describe key features of community life including Dreaming stories and the land they relate to, beliefs and practices, and cultural expressions such as art and drama, including excursions to significant sites, and art/culture events such as Banggara Dance Theatre.

Activities for this Level include a wide range of listening, speaking and literacy tasks, as well as tasks that integrate these macro skills with the students' increasing knowledge of cultural understandings, Language awareness, and the broader curriculum. Students are actively involved in creative use of the Language through collaboratively developing and performing scripts, role plays and songs in the chosen Language.

They identify and explore themes, ideas, information and cultural aspects in spoken text of the chosen Language. They listen and respond to texts using diverse media, noting vocabulary and sentence structures in songs, taped texts, videos and CD-ROMs.

At this Level, it is important for students to identify and discuss the effect of ethical issues on learning and working with others. They learn to negotiate on an equal basis when working in groups on class and community projects. They consider both their own and others' needs when making decisions about suitable learning processes and the creation of positive learning environments within and outside the classroom. Protocols for receiving, transferring and publishing ideas and information are researched through resources such as the *FATSIL Guide to Community Protocols for Indigenous Language Projects 2004* (www.fatsil.org.au/images/pdfs/fatsil_protocols_guide.pdf) and communication that respects intended audiences is encouraged and supported.

Students consolidate and advance their knowledge of the history of the Languages of Aboriginal Australia and the Torres Strait Islands, and in particular the chosen Language. They analyse change and continuity over time and compare key aspects of past and present societies; for example, aspects of daily life, social and political ideas and structures, and cultural values and beliefs.

They explore forms and usage and the history of creoles as an example of how Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities develop their own linguistic identities.

Students reflect on the role of languages, custodians and learners of languages in shaping the past, present and future. They record local Aboriginal community members', including Elders', experiences of living on the land, culture and reclaiming Language.

They evaluate historical sources for meaning, values and attitudes, and discuss their contexts and contents. They compare information in these sources with the views of the Aboriginal people around them and other contemporary sources. They begin to understand the reasons for differences in spelling in different records, and the orthographic choices of the contemporary community.

Students learn to use appropriate evidence to support points of view on contemporary issues in language and/or events of importance to Aboriginal people.

Students engage with other learners of Language to develop a broader sense of identity based on Language and culture. They begin to build a community of learner-speakers who use the chosen Language to achieve education goals, by teaching younger members of the school community and/or classes in local primary schools. They participate in community cultural events such as NAIDOC Week.

They gain insight into the process of independent language learning, and develop the capacity to monitor their own learning, identifying learning strengths and areas requiring improvement. Students use research to access information from written and oral sources about aspects of the chosen culture and Language. Developing their literacy skills, including information literacy, they locate and interpret information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, in particular the chosen Language.

Students learn to use databases and begin to compile a wordlist in this form. They compare other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages and similar words, and use appropriate presentation software to communicate their work.

Under the guidance of an Elder or Aboriginal Language specialist, students explore questions of making new words in an Aboriginal Language, and try out ways of making new words for terms like computer.

Students read and discuss text written by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people such as Sally Morgan, Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker) and view plays by Jack Davis.

Students research different art types of Aboriginal Australia and the Torres Strait Islands including traditional and contemporary art and artefact making. They extend their practical understanding of the materials and techniques involved.

They visit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art galleries and museums, such as at Bunjilaka or the Koorie Heritage Trust. They compare, analyse, evaluate, and interpret the content, meaning and qualities in arts works created in different cultural contexts, offering informed responses and opinions and learning the Language associated with various art and craft pieces.

Standards

Communicating in a language other than English

At Pathway 1 Level 5, students use their growing cultural understanding to inform self expression in oral and written communication. They participate effectively in interactions including role-plays and conversations on simple topics. Students use appropriate intonation and stress in the Language referring to the Language specialist and/or Elders. They adjust their use of the chosen Language to suit the purpose of communication and the needs and abilities of those they interact with. Students create simple original text for specific audiences and purposes in print and electronic form. They can repeat and/or read aloud prepared oral texts such as scripts and songs.

Students demonstrate understanding that words and grammatical structures may not have exact translation equivalents between languages. They identify and use specific grammatical functions such as case and tense. They discuss the relationship between language, culture and knowledge. Students investigate the Language, land of the Language and features of community life including Dreaming stories and various cultural expressions. They use texts, images and information and communications technology to locate, store and record information; interpret, analyse and compare information; and present their findings to various audiences.

Students locate and download information in the Language from a variety of print and electronic resources including dictionaries and other reference materials. They show familiarity with archival material, primary and secondary materials.

Students demonstrate understanding of issues in developing new words for the Language of study, and how these words might be developed. They make sense of diverse spelling evident in Language records and read and write using the current orthographic choices of the relevant community.

Intercultural knowledge and language awareness

At Pathway 1 Level 5, students actively participate in the creation and maintenance of the Language and cultural ambience in the classroom. They actively participate in and support the developing wider community of learner-speakers. They participate in community cultural events.

Students develop knowledge of protocols and skills of working ethically with each other and with Aboriginal communities.

Students develop their ability to monitor their own language learning, initiating strategies for self-improvement.

Students demonstrate the knowledge and ability to make meaningful comparisons between aspects of past and present societies. They demonstrate knowledge gained from local communities and Elders about their experiences of living on the land, culture and reclaiming Language and demonstrate this knowledge through written and/or oral reports. They effectively discuss different perspectives on contemporary issues.

Students research selected topics using resources in various media such as wordlists and dictionaries, archival tapes, reference books, CD-ROMs and websites. They identify the content, origin, purpose and context of historical sources on Language. They discuss the strengths and limitations of historical sources and begin to understand the meaning of apparent discrepancies between various sources.

Students demonstrate knowledge of Language revival and maintenance efforts and can discuss the importance of this process.

Students provide informed comment on and create their own works to demonstrate their increased familiarity with literature and art of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Pathway 1 Level 6

Learning focus

As students work towards the achievement of standards in LOTE at Pathway 1 Level 6, they compare and contrast aspects of life amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with life amongst other subgroups within Australia as well as other countries, and the impact of some of these aspects on the way people behave and use language.

Students become increasingly aware of the distinctive cultural, social and linguistic nature of the study of a language. They develop strategies for maximising and extending the skills, knowledge and cultural understanding they have acquired, and broadening their language awareness. They demonstrate an understanding that the Language is a complex system with rules, and engage with the differences between the Language of study and English. They realise that words and concepts may not have a direct equivalent in another language, and focus on producing spoken and written Language based on structures from pre-existing examples in the Language rather than relying on a direct translation model.

Activities for this Level include a wide range of listening, speaking and literacy tasks, as well as tasks that integrate these macro skills with intercultural understandings, language awareness, and the broader curriculum.

Students explore the extent and limitations of the Language that they have learnt, coming to a more mature understanding of the processes of Language loss and reclamation. They discuss potential avenues for expansion of the Language with the Language team and Elders.

Under the guidance of the Language team, students become involved in the Language learning of the community outside their own classroom, by such means as developing a variety of resources for younger and future students of the Language, or assisting with setting up ongoing opportunities for interactive Language use and development such as a newsletter, radio program or chat room.

Collaboratively, and in discussion with the Aboriginal Language specialist and/or Elders, students develop an action plan that demonstrates their knowledge of a social or environmental issue associated with Language, and apply their knowledge and skills to raise community awareness of it.

Students extend their capacity to read a broad range of text with understanding, and their knowledge of the Language as a system is consolidated. This will prepare them for the more technical knowledge required for parts of the VCE study Indigenous Languages of Victoria Revival and Reclamation.

Students read independently and are encouraged to use a variety of strategies to cope with occasional unfamiliar words, phrases and structures, referring to dictionaries and wordlists for essential details. Writing by other or former students should be considered for inclusion, to expand the number of written texts available in the Language. Students search a variety of print, electronic and audiovisual sources for material to use as a basis for their speaking and writing. They reorganise information to produce effective extended spoken and written discourses, adjusting their writing to their audiences. A variety of forms are explored, such as comic or animated cartoon, narrative, story or play, report or article, poster, calendar, card or invitation. Students work together on producing a magazine article about, and where possible including, the Language, targeted to an Aboriginal publication such as the newsletters of VACL, FATSIL, or the *Koori Mail*.

Students analyse events which contribute to Australia's social, political and cultural development. Using interview data, written (including online) sources, and information gained from site visits, they research Aboriginal and other perspectives on key events and themes such as the growth of the colonies, the establishment and history of the missions and Aboriginal Reserves, the 1967 referendum, and the National Apology. They evaluate the impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. They describe and comment on the complex interactions between Aboriginal people and the colonisers including violence, dispossession, documented massacres (for example, Boney Point, Myall Creek), and the fight for civil rights and land rights.

They develop knowledge and understanding of reports such as *Bringing them home* and *Deaths in Custody*, and appreciate the significance of public events such as Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week. They maintain awareness of current debates in the media and discuss the issues with the Aboriginal Language team.

Students further their study of traditional and contemporary arts practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In their own artwork, they effectively combine and manipulate selected arts elements, principles and/ or conventions to create the desired aesthetic and interpretive qualities, designing, creating and producing arts works influenced by particular artists or styles.

Standards

Communicating in a language other than English

At Pathway 1 Level 6, students demonstrate knowledge of the effect of word order and context on meaning, manipulating the free word order characteristics of Aboriginal Languages to create focus and emphasis. They identify, describe and make use of distinctive grammatical features such as dual and plural number, ergative and locative case, and pronouns as word-endings

on the verb. Students make use of the principle of modelled Language to avoid 'translation language' in both spoken and written use.

Students read selected passages independently referring to dictionaries and other reference tools for additional information where needed. They demonstrate understanding of the main ideas in a range of informational texts by selecting information during an activity such as listening to a speech.

Students research aspects of Language using printed texts, personal interviews, archival and current audio and video recordings, and information and communication technologies. They communicate their research using written, spoken and signed Language targeted at various audiences.

Students demonstrate understanding of the processes of Language loss and revival and the possibilities and issues for Language reclamation. They participate in reclamation by developing resources for younger and future students of the Language. Students plan ongoing opportunities for interactive use and development of the Language.

Intercultural knowledge and language awareness

At Pathway 1 Level 6, students show a detailed understanding of aspects of life amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the past and present, as well the ways in which the Language reflects the cultures and knowledge of the people.

Students research Aboriginal and other perspectives on key events and themes in Australia's social, political and cultural development. They describe and comment on the complex interactions between Aboriginal people and the colonisers including violence, dispossession, documented massacres, and the fight for civil rights and land rights. Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of milestone reports such as *Bringing them home* and appreciate the significance of public events such as Reconciliation Week. They show informed awareness of current relevant debates in the media.

Selecting their own topics and texts, students read, compare and contrast several texts about an issue of interest. Students recognise that there are multiple views on and partial explanations for events and issues. They critically evaluate historical and contemporary material from both community and academic sources and consider the context, content, reliability and perspective of the sources.

Students effectively combine and manipulate elements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art explored through their studies to create works in various styles.

Pathway 2

Introduction

Students beginning to formally learn an Aboriginal Language at Level 5 (Pathway 2) will need to focus on basic communications and an understanding of the issues in history, culture, land, and people associated with Language learning. In regard to literacies, while written and technological literacy skills will be involved, students will be encouraged to prioritise orality and oral literacy. At Level 6, students will focus more on revival and reclamation skills, including the linguistics of Language, and creating resources.

The language curriculum is organised through themes and topics which are arranged to provide progressive and cumulative opportunities for students to develop language and cultural understandings. Themes and topics form the main organising principle for languages. The sequencing of activities and language content allows learners to build new skills, knowledge and attitudes on the levels they have already attained. This cumulative process supplies continuity and sequence to the learner and coherence for the teacher.

Four principles should guide the selection of topics:

1) Topics that are culturally, socially or linguistically distinctive to the particular language concerned. This will vary for different languages.

2) Topics which extend, reinforce or complement topics already covered and that permit an extension of the language expectations.

3) Topics that are relevant and of interest to the students.

4) Topics that integrate with themes, topics, or key areas being addressed in other domains.

All topic selection should be governed by its potential to contribute to systematic acquisition of the language and cultural understandings in one or both of the dimensions.

Opportunities must be provided for students to demonstrate not only their communicative competence, but also their intercultural understandings and language awareness through practical applications of the language.

Within each topic, time is devoted to the acquisition of new language, structures, communication conventions, ways of thinking about the topic/s and its expression, as well as comparisons between languages and cultures.

While students will develop at different rates, generally students will aim to achieve Pathway 2 Level 5 standards by the end of Year 8 and Pathway 2 Level 6 standards by the end of Year 10.

Years 7 to 8

As students commence Year 7, they are expected to have studied another language other than English to Level 4 standard in both dimensions. Further development in the *Intercultural knowledge and language awareness* dimension is based on student familiarity with at least two languages, one of which is likely to be English, to the standard required by the Languages Other Than English domain at the end of primary schooling.

Students study language through themes and topics that introduce the key idea of the language domain: that many societies and many people within Australia normally use languages other than English for communication.

Language learning is organised around topics which provide opportunities for students to develop language and cultural understandings progressively. The topic/s are selected because of their importance in the systematic acquisition of the language and cultural understandings related to the specific target language, and may also relate to, or complement, aspects of study in other domains.

The dimensions are integrated and provide opportunities for students to exchange information and ideas based on the theme and topic and the individual student's language competence at this level.

Within each topic and between topics, time is dedicated to the acquisition of new language, structures, communication conventions, ways of thinking about the topic/s and its expression, cultural knowledge and language awareness.

A wide range of activities are included in the learning program to encourage risk-taking and consolidation of language and cultural understandings.

Activities that are appropriate at these levels may vary, depending on the status of reclamation in the language being studied.

Years 9 to 10

Students participate in communication forums as effective members of the target-language-speaking community.

Topics are selected because of their potential to contribute to systematic acquisition of the language and cultural understandings in both dimensions.

Most topics will be familiar to students, should relate to their interests, and provide opportunities for investigation of issues, drawing on skills and knowledge acquired in other areas of the curriculum.

Students demonstrate their language and cultural understandings by adapting their skills and knowledge to their own uses. They use a range of learning tools, including multimedia tools, to encounter a wide range of language and cultural forms and practices. Both directed and independent learning

is focused on acquisition of new language, structures, communication conventions, ways of thinking about the topic/s and their expression, as well as comparisons between languages and societies.

Activities that are appropriate at these levels may vary, depending on the status of reclamation in the Language being studied.

Teaching activities are diverse and consolidate language and cultural understandings, encourage risk-taking, and use many materials and genres, texts and media.

Pathway 2 Level 5

Learning focus

As students work towards the achievement of standards in LOTE at Pathway 2 Level 5, students start by introducing themselves using set phrases. They listen to a range of greetings in the chosen Language and practise saying and responding to them.

Reproducing and later extending Language models provided, they learn to exchange simple information on topics such as the environment, family and animals. They learn to respond in culturally appropriate ways in the classroom and in community interactions: talking about themselves in response to questions, asking questions in response, responding to visual cues and to instructions given in Language.

Students learn about Aboriginal Language and culture, with a particular focus on the area in which they live, through culturally relevant experiences such as excursions to cultural sites, Keeping Places, and visiting Elders. They are introduced to local Dreaming trails with appropriately authorised guides. They participate in local cultural festivals, and events such as NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week, learning about the significance of these events.

Students explore how different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages are defined, listening to guest speakers and the Aboriginal members of the Language team, and viewing Language maps of Victoria and Australia. They appreciate the roles of Language in culture and identity, and in maintaining knowledge such as sustainable care of the environment.

In group and team work, they engage in the chosen Language to learn concepts and ideas relating to themes such as location, colour and number. They relate their language learning to other learning areas such as health and environment. They begin to be aware of the strong emphasis on family ties and on country, and the richness of relationship and environmental vocabulary in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages. They make comparisons and connections between their own experience and the culture of the community where the Language is used, and develop greater awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the importance of their traditional way of life.

Students learn about the history of Language and displacement in their local area, in Victoria and in the country as a whole. They develop an understanding of how the shared history of colonisation in Australia contributes to national identity, to help them understand their present, and they begin to appreciate the role of Language learning in contributing to the future. They develop an understanding of the Language, cultural, social and political realities confronting Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders in the present day as First Peoples addressing issues of minority status in their own lands.

They appreciate that Australian life and culture are influenced by the different types of knowledge and ways of life evident through Aboriginal Languages.

They identify and research a prominent Aboriginal person and their contribution to contemporary Australia (for example, Mandawuy Yunupingu, Sally Morgan, Cathy Freeman, Gurrumul Yunupingu, Aden Ridgeway, Sir Doug Nicholls, Ernie Dingo).

Students begin to develop awareness about the patterns and rules of sentence construction in Koorie English, standard Australian English, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, and other languages with which they may be familiar. They appreciate some of the similarities and differences, and understand why translation between languages is not direct.

They interact in the Language with understanding, practising identifying items of information and acting on this information or passing it on as relevant to the class context. They try out various strategies to expand their vocabulary, accessing the Language team, other community members, and print or online resources as needed.

Working together with the Language team, students develop a short 'welcome to country' and/or 'acknowledgment of country' (depending on the mix of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students) to use at formal school functions. They understand the importance of this practice through the guidance of an Elder.

Students retell a short story chosen through consultation with the Aboriginal Languages Specialist, such as the Gippsland story of *Boran and Tuk* the first man and woman, using the chosen Language as far as possible. They begin to appreciate the relationship between such stories and the land around them. They contribute to group writing activities which allow them to experiment with different ways of telling a story including oral, painting, drawing in the sand, cave paintings, tracks in the sand or dirt, gestures and sign language.

They are introduced to the spelling used for the Language of study, and recognise the relationship between the letters chosen in the community spelling and the sounds of the Language. They learn to recognise the printed form of familiar words, and use these words in public communication settings such as cards, postcards, invitations to family and friends, creating labels, messages and notes, and signs on school doors.

Students read and/or view and discuss work by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, such as Sally Morgan, Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker) and Jack Davis.

Students appreciate the importance of maintaining the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages and why this is relevant to all Australians. They study efforts to maintain and revive cultures and Language in past, present and future contexts, and understand the importance of this process in

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the context of the history of colonisation and present goals of identity, cultural reclamation, and reconciliation.

They begin a family or community Language record through discussion with the Aboriginal members of the Language team and/or their own families, documenting the Language they learn using appropriate software packages.

Standards

Communicating in a language other than English

At Pathway 2 Level 5, students reproduce and extend Language models provided. In culturally appropriate ways, they introduce themselves, exchange information on prepared topics, participate in greetings and question-answer routines, and respond to instructions and visual cues.

Students can describe and compare features of the structures in languages such as Koorie English, standard Australian English and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, and begin to explain the issues for translation between languages.

Students identify, record and/or pass on the key ideas from spoken passages. They demonstrate reclamation skills through various strategies including direct learning from the Language team and investigation of dictionaries and wordlists.

Students research and document the Language being studied through personal interview and other strategies including the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT).

Students contribute to developing a 'welcome to country' or 'acknowledgment of land', depending on the mix of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the class and can explain the significance of this practice.

Students demonstrate understanding of the process by which the sounds of the Language are represented in community spellings. They adapt familiar written words for use in spoken communication in a variety of settings. Students use the Language to retell a short story significant to the local Aboriginal community.

Intercultural knowledge and language awareness

At Pathway 2, Level 5, students identify Aboriginal Languages in their region and present an overview of the diversity of languages and cultures within Victoria and Australia. They appreciate the roles of language in maintaining culture, identity and knowledge. They explain how the Language and culture help promote the sustainable care of the environment.

Students develop knowledge of protocols and skills of working ethically with each other and with Aboriginal communities.

Students relate their language learning to other areas of the curriculum.

Students demonstrate knowledge of the richness of vocabulary concerned with family ties and country in Aboriginal Languages. They understand the importance of maintaining the cultural values, beliefs and knowledge associated with the chosen Language by comparing and contrasting various ways of life including their own.

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Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the impact on and involvement of Aboriginal peoples in the history of Australia from the time of colonisation onwards. They discuss the influence of Aboriginal Languages and cultures on Australian life and culture in general and analyse how the shared history of colonisation in Australia helps Australians to understand their present and shape their future. They participate in culturally relevant events and experiences and articulate the meanings of this participation and learning.

They demonstrate an awareness of Language revival and maintenance efforts and can discuss the importance of this process.

They demonstrate understanding of local stories contained in oral passages, artworks and literature by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the production of responses in oral, artistic and literary forms.

Pathway 2 Level 6

Learning focus

As students work towards the achievement of standards in LOTE at Pathway 2 Level 6, they learn in a structured and supportive language environment that encourages experimentation. They develop competence and confidence in using the chosen Language with others, both inside and outside of school. They engage firstly with student and teacher generated text, later adding in community Language (for example, in speeches, on interpretive signage) and historical text from archive sources.

Students begin to prepare for the more technical knowledge required for parts of the VCE Indigenous Languages of Victoria Revival and Reclamation study by extending their capacity to read a broad range of texts with understanding, and expanding their knowledge of the Language as a system. They understand that words, concepts, language genres and structures may not have direct equivalents in another language, and focus on producing spoken and written language based on pre-existing examples in the Language rather than relying on a translation model. They further their grasp of grammatical features such as dual and plural number, ergative and locative case, and pronouns as word-endings on the verb.

They gain insight into the process of independent language learning, and develop the capacity to monitor their own learning.

Activities include a wide range of listening, speaking and literacy tasks, as well as tasks that integrate these macro skills with intercultural understandings, language awareness, and the broader curriculum.

While communication continues to be based on a range of implicit and explicit models, students now begin to explore more open-ended situations, facilitating variation and extension of Language applications, including conversations with multiple participants. They read and/or listen to short passages on prepared topics or themes, applying the information gained to class tasks.

Students generalise and reflect on the relationship between languages and cultures beyond both English and the Language being studied. They consider deeper cultural knowledge through the medium of the Language, including concepts such as the cultural group's own names for its cultural and communicative practices. They explore the number of names for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language groups and the meaning of this diversity. They discuss key features of community life, beliefs and practices and make guided visits to sites such as middens and scar trees. They use this expanding cultural knowledge to inform self expression in oral and written communication.

It is important for students to identify and discuss the effect of ethical issues on learning and working with others. Students learn to negotiate on an equal basis when working in groups on class and community projects. They consider both their own and others' needs when making decisions about suitable learning processes and the creation of positive learning environments within and outside the classroom. Protocols for receiving, transferring and publishing ideas and information are researched through resources such as the *FATSIL Guide to Community Protocols for Indigenous Language Projects 2004* (www. fatsil.org.au/images/pdfs /fatsil_protocols_guide.pdf) and communication that respects intended audiences is encouraged and supported.

Visits to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art galleries and museums are arranged, such as Bunjilaka or the Koorie Heritage Trust, and/or art events such as Banggara Dance Theatre. Students learn the language associated with various art and craft pieces, and discuss their meanings and qualities.

Students reflect on the role of languages, custodians and learners of languages in shaping the past, present and future. They record local Aboriginal community members', including Elders', experiences of living on the land, culture and reclaiming Language. Incorporating the use of databases, they further develop the family or community Language record begun during Level 5, using this to make comparisons with other languages and to develop presentations using software such as PowerPoint or Publisher.

Using sources such as interview data, DVDs, written and online sources, students evaluate the impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. They are aware of the complex interactions between Aboriginal people and the colonisers including violence, dispossession, documented massacres (for example, Boney Point, Myall Creek), and the fight for civil rights and land rights.

They research Aboriginal and other perspectives on key events and themes such as the establishment and history of the missions and Aboriginal Reserves, the 1967 referendum, the Freedom Rides, the Intervention, the National Apology, and milestone reports such as *Bringing them home* and *Deaths in Custody*. They participate in public events such as Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week.

They identify the content, origin, purpose and context of historical sources on Language, evaluating them for reliability, perspective, values and attitudes. They compare information in these sources with the views of the Aboriginal people around them, and begin to understand the meaning of apparent discrepancies between various sources, historical and contemporary. They maintain an awareness of recent and current debates in the media, including through publications such as the *Koori Mail*, land rights magazines, and VACL and FATSIL newsletters. Through discussion with Aboriginal members of the Language team, a significant current issue or issues for Language and cultural knowledge is selected and researched.

A variety of text genres are explored for creative Language use, such as animation, narrative, story or play, report or article, poster, calendar, card or invitation. Students participate in storytelling, using the Language where possible. They write, perform and record songs and music, both their own and that of existing artists, as a resource for the wider school and external community. They prepare a script and present a role play with peers. In a group project, they work on a magazine article about, and where possible including, the Language, targeted to an Aboriginal publication such as the newsletters of VACL, FATSIL, or the *Koori Mail.*

Selecting their own topics and texts, students explore an issue of interest through several genres, reading a story or preparing a story for a play. They view a range of fictional contemporary and earlier writing and film, and discuss the portrayal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (for example, *Jedda*, *Women of the Sun*, *Australian Rules*, *Radiance*, *Tracker*).

They read traditional stories featuring as much Language as possible, and discuss the differences between written and oral versions of the same story. They are aware of the role of such stories in areas such as the recording and interpretation of land features and in teaching law.

Language learning and use is supported through a focus on developing skills in accessing, storing and retrieving information. Students experience a wide range of voices and settings, both historical (including through archival tapes) and contemporary. They review dictionaries, word lists and other digital resources in search of Language information such as the number of words for 'fish', and survey local and other libraries for further resources. They read independently, using reference tools to seek assistance and/or essential details about occasional unfamiliar words and phrases.

Under the guidance of the Language team, students become involved in the Language learning of the community outside their own classroom, by such means as developing a variety of resources for younger and future students of the Language, or assisting with setting up ongoing opportunities for interactive Language use and development, such as a newsletter, radio program or chat room.

Students explore the extent and limitations of the Language that they have learnt, coming to a more mature understanding of the processes of Language loss and reclamation. They begin to understand the reasons for differences in spelling in different sources, and can read and write in the orthography of the contemporary local Aboriginal community. They discuss avenues for expansion of the Language with the Language team and Elders and come to understand some of the issues involved.

Standards

Communicating in a language other than English

At Pathway 2 Level 6, students consolidate and build on Language already learnt, and extend their vocabulary and knowledge of simple Language structure and function in more open-ended situations. They take part in conversations involving a number of speakers, adjusting their use of the chosen Language with defined topics and a variety of situations, and considering the audience, purpose and appropriate Language for communication tasks. They read and/or listen to short passages, extracting information on prepared topics or themes.

Students proofread their own writing in the chosen Language and constructively assess their own and each other's speaking, for accuracy in grammar and spelling. They can explain the current orthographic choices of the relevant community in relation to the sounds of the Language and other spelling practices found in various sources, and use the community spelling in their own work.

Students read selected passages independently, referring to dictionaries and other reference tools for additional information where needed. They read traditional stories featuring as much Language as possible, and demonstrate understanding of the role of these stories in areas including the recording and interpretation of land features or teaching law.

Students demonstrate knowledge of the effect of word order and context on meaning, manipulating the free word order characteristics of Aboriginal Languages to create focus and emphasis. They understand that language is a complex system with rules, and differences from English, and produce spoken and written Language based on extending pre-existing examples in the Language rather than relying on a translation model. They identify, describe and make conscious use of distinctive grammatical features such as dual and plural number, ergative and locative case, and pronouns as word-endings on the verb.

Students use various media including ICT applications and archival sources including tapes for research, recording, and communicating in written, spoken and signed language, and explore a variety of forms for writing targeted to various audiences.

Students demonstrate awareness of the processes of Language loss and revival. They demonstrate an understanding of the possibilities for Language reclamation and participate in opportunities for interactive use and development of the Language. They develop resources for younger and future students of the Language.

Intercultural knowledge and language awareness

At Pathway 2 Level 6, students discuss the relationship between language, culture and knowledge. Students use research, literacy and ICT skills to locate, store, database, compare, interpret and present knowledge about the Language, the land of the Language and features of community life, including Dreaming stories and cultural expressions.

Students research Aboriginal and other perspectives on key events and themes in Australia's social, political and cultural development. They are aware of the complex interactions between Aboriginal people and the colonisers including violence, dispossession, documented massacres, and the fight for civil rights and land rights.

They demonstrate knowledge and understanding of milestone reports such as *Bringing them home* and appreciate the significance of public events such as Reconciliation Week. They maintain awareness of current relevant debates in the media. They critically discuss and evaluate perspectives and sources on both historical and contemporary themes, offering recommendations about the actions that individuals and governments can take on the issues raised. They discuss the contexts, strengths and limitations of historical sources of the Language, and compare information in these sources with the views of the Aboriginal people around them and from other contemporary sources.

Students provide informed comment on and create their own works to demonstrate their increased familiarity with literature and art of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

References and Further Reading

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