Overview

What is the Framework?

The Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages (the Framework) is the first national curriculum document Foundation to Year 10 to provide a way forward for all schools in Australia to support the teaching and learning of the languages indigenous to this country. The Framework has been developed from the many individual responses to the experience of teaching Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages created by the education systems of each state and territory, and it draws particularly on the landmark *Australian Indigenous Languages Framework* (Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia, 1996).

The prime purpose of the Framework is to guide the development of teaching and learning curricula for particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. By providing a national framework it is intended that future educational development in Australia's Indigenous languages will result in curriculum development and school programs that are nationally commensurate in terms of teaching, learning and assessing. Also, the provision of a framework in preference to language-specific curriculum documents will allow for greater flexibility in developing programs for any Aboriginal language or Torres Strait Islander language.

Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages are unique within the languages learning area in the Australian Curriculum. There are at least 250 distinct Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages, many having several dialects. Each language has an intimate connection with 'Country' or 'Place', which is how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people refer to areas of land, water, sea and sky to which they belong. Each Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person inherits language as part of his or her birthright, along with membership of a particular group and attachment to Country/Place. In this way, people become owners and custodians of areas of land, water, sea, and of language. A crucial part of a person's identity, therefore, is sourced through language and Country or Place. All this has important implications for the framing of appropriate principles and protocols for the provision of school-based programs in Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages. It also emphasises the need for ongoing consultation with relevant language communities in developing school programs.

Since 1788, most of the traditional languages have ceased to be languages of everyday communication because many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were forced to stop speaking their languages as a result of government policies aimed at assimilating communities into the non-Indigenous population. However, communities across Australia are now working actively towards getting the languages back into everyday use, and schools can play a key role in helping communities achieve this aim. Where languages are used for everyday communication by whole communities across all generations, schools can provide opportunities to maintain and strengthen these languages.

Through helping to re-awaken Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages, students develop understanding of linguistic techniques and practices that apply to language revival and grow in their understanding of Australia's history and their own capacity to effect positive social change.

It is well demonstrated that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are strongly motivated to study their own and other Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages, and that enthusiasm for their language studies often increases their engagement at school more generally.

This Framework potentially caters for all Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages, irrespective of the ecology of each language, whether it be a language of everyday communication used by a community, a language at any point in the continuum of revival or one of the many creole languages that have evolved through the history of language contact in Australia. At present there are two major creole languages: Kriol and Torres Strait Creole.

To cater for differences between the ecologies of the languages and the communities who are owners and custodians of the languages, and to cater for students who come from a variety of learner backgrounds, the Framework has three pathways:

- First Language Learner Pathway (L1)
- Second Language Learner Pathway (L2)
- Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR).

The pathway approach recognises that the two key variables are 'the learner' and 'the nature of the language'.

The Framework is designed to be flexible. When developing language-specific curricula and programs, aspects of the content and achievement standards from across the pathways can be selected, adapted and modified in ways that best suit the particular language and its context and learners.

Structure

Pathways

To cater for differences between the ecologies of languages and the communities who are owners and custodians of those languages, and to cater for students who come from a variety of learner backgrounds, the Framework has three pathways:

- First Language Learner Pathway (L1)
- Second Language Learner Pathway (L2)
- Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR).

This approach recognises that the two key variables are 'the learner' and 'the nature of the language'.

The Framework is designed to be flexible in use for developing language-specific curricula and programs. Aspects of the content and achievement standards from the various learner pathways can be selected, adapted and modified in ways that best suit a particular language, to ensure that the curriculum and subsequent programs are appropriately pitched and to recognise the nature of the language, the nature of the learners and the context of learning.

First Language Learner Pathway (L1)

Languages studied in the First Language Learner Pathway (L1) are typically used in spoken form as the language of everyday communication by whole communities across all generations.

Typically, but not exclusively, L1 programs will occur on Country/Place and will have constant involvement from a variety of speakers from the community. A key expectation in the L1 pathway is that of students having opportunities to interact with Elders and particular places on Country/Place.

Learners are typically Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children who have learnt the language from their families as a first language and continue to use it naturally at home and play. Students may have varying skills in other languages, including varieties of English.

The First Language Learner Pathway provides students with an opportunity to study a first language at school. For these students, having the opportunity to learn their own language at school supports their cognitive development and signals recognition of the value and status of their language and ways of using and understanding language. Learning and using one's own language at school also meets a widely held community aim to strengthen students' identity and their connection between their families, community and Country/Place.

Students develop language skills to expand the domains of use in the language. This includes developing skills in registers and genres not normally encountered in their family and home community; in effect, this may involve the students in the creative development of new registers/genres, vocabulary and expressions in the language. As well as continuing to develop, extend and strengthen oracy, a key feature of the First Language Learner pathway is the development of written literacy.

The curriculum content and achievement standards in the First Language Learner Pathway are generalised in order to cater for the range of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages that may be learnt as a first language. The curriculum content and achievement standards will need to be adapted when developing language-specific curricula, and will need to be modified if the program occurs off-Country.

Summary of Key Features of the First language learner pathway:

First Language Learner Pathway	Spoken right through (full linguistic code)
	Substantial range of speakers across all generations
	Used as the language of community
	Learners are typically Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children who have learnt the language as a first language
	Curriculum written on the assumption that L1 programs will occur on Country/Place

Second Language Learner Pathway (L2)

Languages studied in the Second Language Learner Pathway (L2) are typically languages used in spoken form as the language of everyday communication by whole communities across all generations.

The second language learner pathway has been written on the assumption that learning will occur off-Country, involving students who are typically not from the language community and having little or no experience of the language and culture. They are introduced to learning the language at school as an additional, new language.

The language chosen for curriculum development should have a sizeable set of resources in a variety of media, such as local documentaries, bilingual narrative and descriptive texts, and educational materials in print and digital form. Learning is enriched and authenticated by interaction with visiting Elders and community speakers, and where possible visits to Country/Place. Information and communications technologies provide additional resources to support a range of language and culture experiences.

The Second Language Learning Pathway provides students with an opportunity to study a language that is structurally very different from English and from a culture quite distant from the English-speaking mainstream. This develops a deeper appreciation of the nature and diversity of languages and cultures, and supports the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary to learn and understand an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language and its cultural context.

For students who are from the language community but who did not grow up speaking the language, it is an opportunity to reaffirm their cultural identity through learning the language of their community.

The curriculum content and achievement standards in the Second Language Learner Pathway are generalised in order to cater for the range of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages that may be learnt as a second language. The content descriptions, content elaborations and achievement standards for the Second Language Learner Pathway will need to be adapted for use with the particular language being taught and will need to be modified if the program occurs on-Country or if the learners are from the language community.

Summary of Key Features of the Second language learner pathway

Second Language Learner Pathway	Spoken right through (full linguistic code)
	Substantial range of speakers across all generations
	Curriculum written on the assumption that L2 programs will occur off-Country/Place and learners are typically not from the language community

Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR)

The Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR) provides opportunities for students to study Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages that are being revived by their owners or custodians and are in various stages of revitalisation, renewal and reclamation.

LR covers a much broader range of language types and ecologies than either L1 or L2, and the vast majority of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages are included in the LR category.

Schools teaching the Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR) will most likely be located broadly within the geographical region of the language and culture, sometimes in towns and cities and other times in rural and remote regions. Classes will likely include students who relate closely to the language and culture as well as students with varying degrees of affiliation with the language and culture, including some with no connections to the language and culture. A key expectation in the LR pathway is that students have opportunities to interact with Elders and particular places on Country/Place.

The Language Revival Learner Pathway draws on the Australian Indigenous Languages Framework (AILF) and takes into account key variables such as: how much is known about and documented for the language; the extent to which languages are used or remembered, ranging from languages no longer spoken (owners often use the term 'sleeping') to those spoken fluently by members of the older generations; and the extent to which languages have been reintroduced into the community of owners and custodians.

These variables give rise to the following broad categories of language revival:

- **Language Revitalisation:** where there are fluent L1 speakers (typically members of the older generation) but intergenerational transmission of the language has been interrupted. In this case, younger generations may understand some of the language and may use some words and phrases but they do not speak it as their first language. Examples of revitalisation languages include: Walmajarri in the Kimberley, Yindjibarndi in the Pilbara, Meriam in the Torres Strait, Dyirbal in north-eastern Queensland, Wubuy (Nunggubuyu) in Arnhem Land, and Adnyamathanha (Yura Ngawarla) in the Flinders Ranges. .
- **Language Renewal:** where there are a number of adult speakers who use the language to varying degrees in the community, but not 'right through', and where other language resources are drawn upon. Examples of languages being renewed include: Noongar in south-west Western Australia, Gumbaynggirr on the north coast of New South Wales, Ngarrindjeri on the Lower Murray Lakes in South Australia, Djabugay in the Atherton Tablelands in northern Queensland and Yugambeh in southern Queensland. .
- **Language Reclamation:** where language revival by necessity relies primarily on historical documentation of the language in the absence of active community knowledge of it. Examples of reclamation languages include: Kaurna from Adelaide, Narungga from the Yorke Peninsula, Dharuk or Eora (Iyora) from Sydney, Yuwibara from central Queensland, Wemba-Wemba and Woiwurrung from Victoria, and Awabakal from the Newcastle area in New South Wales.

A number of factors and variables need to be considered when developing a language revival curriculum:

Summary of Key Features of the Language Revival Learner Pathway

Language Revival Learner Pathway	Languages being revived by their owners and in various stages of revitalisation, renewal and reclamation
	Language learners who relate closely to the language and culture, as well as learners with varying degrees of connection to the language and culture and some with no connections
	Curriculum written on the assumption that LR programs will typically occur broadly within the geographical region of the language and culture
	Curriculum pitched approximately at middle-of-the-range revival languages

What is known and documented about the language

Many languages may only be known from wordlists, which are typically of widely varying quality. Some may have sketchy grammars; others may have recorded texts from which some grammar may be extracted; some, which have slipped from everyday use, may have audio and film resources. In the case of poorly documented languages where speakers no longer exist and sound or film resources were never made there will be many gaps to fill. Source materials will need to be interpreted through comparison with each other and with closely related languages, if indeed documentation of such languages exists.

Where there are still speakers of the revival language, fewer gaps will need to be filled and fewer assumptions will need to be made, because the remaining speakers will be the arbiters of what is correct or not. It is not unusual in such cases to have widely differing opinions about what is right, which may simply reflect underlying dialect differences or language change. Where a language is only known from written, historical records, there will be more need for interpretation and the application of historical and comparative linguistics in rebuilding the language, with the understanding that the revived language will most likely never match precisely the original language in structure, vocabulary and usage.

The extent to which languages are used or remembered

Revival languages also differ in relation to the extent to which they have been re-introduced into the community of owners and custodians, for example:

- the range of functions for which the language is now used (for example, private conversations, written communication, digital messaging, social media)
- the extent of its use in the public domain (for example, public speeches, Welcomes to Country, Acknowledgements of Country, naming various public entities and institutions)
- its use in educational programs (for example, at school or post-school level, in community schools, involvement of non-Indigenous as well as Indigenous people)
- the degree of development of contemporary resources (for example, alphabet books, dictionaries, grammars, learner's guides, readers, animations, radio shows, television shows, websites with online language lessons, phone apps).

Some languages have only just begun their journey of revival, while others have advanced to a point where initial generations of new first language speakers are beginning to emerge as parents use the revived languages with their children.

For languages with limited documentation, English or another community language might be used in a complementary fashion in school programs, for example, to fill in for missing words or expressions. Alternatively, language owners and the general community may decide to sidestep these gaps altogether and entirely avoid the use of English or other languages for these purposes.

Implications for developing language specific curricula and language programs

The curriculum content and achievement standards in the Language Revival Learner Pathway are generalised in order to cater for the range of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages that may be learnt within this pathway.

The Language Revival Learner Pathway is pitched approximately at middle-of-the-range revival languages; that is, those that no longer have fluent first language speakers but have sufficient resources, including a grammar and dictionary, to enable a comprehensive, cumulative, rigorous and meaningful teaching program to be developed. Where there are major gaps in knowledge or documentation relating to a language, consideration needs to be given to how far the curriculum content and achievement standards can be realised and sustained for long-term, cumulative learning. An Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural studies program may be a better option under circumstances of severe constraint.

Many teaching and learning programs will use the LR pathway for languages that have few, if any, speakers and associated language community. It is conceivable that over time a language functioning well in revival mode could develop a sufficiently substantial speech community across all generation levels for it to be taught in either the L1 or L2 pathway. Until a revival language achieves this critical mass, however, the recommended learning pathway is LR.

The content descriptions, content elaborations and achievement standards for the Language Revival Learner Pathway will need to be adapted when developing a language-specific curriculum.

Language-specific curriculum development for languages that are being revived, still have first languages speakers, are regaining fluent speakers, or have substantial resources, could consider some aspects of the content and achievement standards from the First Language Learner or Second Language Learner Pathways . The L2 pathway could be used as a basis for curriculum development. In these instances, content descriptions, elaborations and achievement standards would need to be adapted and modified to ensure that the curriculum is appropriately pitched and to reflect the nature of the language, the nature of the learners, and the context of learning.

The following table provides a summary of the three learner pathways.

Table 1: Summary of the three learner pathways

First Language Learner Pathway	• Language spoken right through — full linguistic code • Substantial range of speakers across all generations • Language used as the language of community • Learners typically Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children who have learnt the language as a first language • Curriculum written on the assumption that L1 programs will occur on-Country/Place
Second Language Learner Pathway	• Language spoken right through — full linguistic code, • Substantial range of speakers across all generations • Curriculum written on the assumption that L2 programs will occur off-Country/Place and learners are typically not from the target language community
Language Revival Learner Pathway	• Languages being revived by their owners and in various stages of revitalisation, renewal and reclamation • Learners who relate closely to the language and culture as well as learners with varying degrees of connection to the language and culture and some with no connections • Curriculum written on the assumption that LR programs will typically occur broadly within the geographical region of the language and culture • Curriculum pitched approximately at middle-of-the-range revival languages

Sequences of learning

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

Strands, sub-strands and threads

The content of the Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages is organised through two interrelated strands that realise the four aims. The two strands are:

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

The strands reflect three important aspects of language learning:

- communication
- analysis of aspects of language and culture
- reflection that involves, for example,
    - reflection on the experience of communicating
    - reflection on comparative dimensions of the different languages used by students (for example, the first language in relation to the second language and self in relation to others).

A set of sub-strands has been identified within each strand, which reflects dimensions of language use and the related content to be taught and learned. The strands and sub-strands do not operate in isolation, but are integrated in relation to language use for different purposes in different contexts. The relative contribution of each sub-strand differs for described languages, pathways and bands of learning.

The following table provides a brief description of each of the strands and sub-strands.

Table 2: Relationship between strands and sub-strands

Strand	Sub-strand	Description
Communicating: *Using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning.*	1.1 Socialising	Interacting orally and in writing to exchange ideas, opinions, experiences, thoughts and feelings; participating in planning, negotiating, deciding and taking action.
	1.2 Informing	Obtaining, processing, interpreting and conveying information through a range of oral, written and multimodal texts; developing and applying knowledge.
	1.3 Creating	Engaging with real and imagined experience by participating in, responding to and creating a range of texts, such as stories, songs, dances and paintings and visual designs.
	1.4 Translating	Moving between languages and cultures orally and in writing, recognising different interpretations and explaining these to others.
	1.5 Identity	Exploring and expressing their sense of identity as individuals and as members of particular speech communities and cultures.
	1.6 Reflecting	Participating in intercultural exchange, questioning reactions and assumptions; considering how interaction shapes communication and identity.
Understanding: *Analysing and understanding language and culture as resources for interpreting and shaping meaning in intercultural exchange.*	2.1 Systems of language	Understanding the language system, including sound, writing, grammar and text.
	2.2 Language variation and change	Understanding how languages vary in use (register, style, standard and non-standard varieties) and change over time and place.
	2.3 Language awareness	Analysing and understanding the general nature and function of language and culture, focusing on areas such as the changing relationship of languages and cultures over time, and the ability of new media and technologies to shape communication.
	2.4 The role of language and culture	Analysing and understanding the role of language and culture in the exchange of meaning.

		2.5 Role of language building	Analysing and understanding language building as a means to extend the potential of the language in the areas of vocabulary, expression and discourse, and developing knowledge of linguistic techniques such as collecting, describing and recording language.

The sub-strands are further differentiated according to a set of 'threads' that support the internal organisation of content in each sub-strand. These 'threads' are designed to capture: (1) range and variety in the scope of learning; and (2) a means of expressing progression of content across the learning sequences.

The following table provides a brief description of each of the strands and sub-strands.

Table 3: Summary of threads across the three learner pathways

Strand	Sub-strand	Thread		
		L1	L2	LR
Communicating	1.1 Socialising	Socialising/interacting	Socialising/interacting	Socialising/interacting
		Taking action/collaborating	Taking action/collaborating	Taking action/collaborating
		Developing the language of schooling	Developing language for classroom interaction	Developing language for classroom interaction
	1.2 Informing	Obtaining and using information	Obtaining and using information	Obtaining and using information
		Conveying information	Conveying information	Conveying information
	1.3 Creating	Participating in and responding to stories, song, dance and visual design	Participating in and responding to stories, song, dance and visual design	Participating in and responding to stories, song, dance and visual design
		Creating and performing	Creating and performing	Creating and performing
	1.4 Translating	Translating/interpreting, transcribing and explaining	Translating/interpreting and explaining	Translating/interpreting and explaining
		Creating bilingual/multilingual texts	Creating bilingual texts	Creating bilingual texts

	1.5 Identity	People, kinship and community	Expressing identity	Expressing identity
		Country/Place		
		History/Story		
	1.6 Reflecting	Reflecting on intercultural experience	Reflecting on intercultural experience	Reflecting on intercultural experience
Understanding	2.1 Systems of language	Sound and writing systems	Sound and writing systems	Sound and writing systems
		Grammar and vocabulary knowledge	Grammar and vocabulary knowledge	Grammar and vocabulary knowledge
		Ways of communicating and creating text	Ways of communicating and creating text	Ways of communicating and creating text
			Links between language, kin and land	Links between language, kin and land
	2.2 Language variation and change	Variability in language use according to social and cultural context	Variability in language use according to social and cultural context	Variability in language use according to social and cultural context
		The dynamic nature of language	The dynamic nature of language	The dynamic nature of language
	2.3 Language awareness	Linguistic landscape and ecology	Linguistic landscape and ecology	Linguistic landscape and ecology
		Protocols for working with Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages	Protocols for working with Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages	Protocols for working with Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages
	2.3 The role of language and culture	The relationship of language culture	The relationship of language culture	The relationship of language culture

	2.4 Role of language building	Maintaining and strengthening language	Maintaining and strengthening language	Processes and protocols of language building
				Techniques of language building

Concepts, processes and text -types

Concepts

Concepts are the big ideas that students work with. The choice of the word 'concept' rather than 'topic' is deliberate: it marks a shift from description to conceptualisation. The curriculum invites students not only to describe facts or features of phenomena, situations and events but also to consider how facts and features relate to concepts or principles. For example, a description of a house can lead to a consideration of the concept of 'home' or 'space/place'; a description of a landmark or waterway can lead to a consideration of the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander concept of 'Country/Place' or 'Kinship'. This shift is necessary because concepts lend themselves more fruitfully to intercultural comparison and they engage students in personal reflection and more substantive learning.

The key concepts for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait islander languages and knowledge include:

- Country/Place: links to land, water, sea, sky
- Identity: individual, social, cultural
- Relationships: family and kinship, skin, totem, moiety, sections
- History/Story/Journey
- Community life: past and present
- Ecology: management of natural resources, land-care
- Natural environment: seasons and cycles, topigraphical features of the region, land-forms, plants and animals, category systems, fire, water, night sky and stars, meteorological phenomena, tides and the moon, bush tucker
- Built environment: artefacts, tools, shelters/houses and urban environments
- Artistic expression: story-telling, music and dance, visual design
- Health and well-being: physical, spiritual, mental; cultural safety, body parts, age, change and growth (social, emotional)
- Language as system: sound, grammar, orthography, conventions in speaking, writing and signing, ways of communicating
- Register, variation and structure: age-, gender-, and relationship-appropriate language use; regional variation; loans and cognates; creoles and young people's talk; structural relatedness
- Language ecology: language diversity, growth, endangerment
- Language and cultural revival: language building, reconstruction, maintenance and development, advocacy
- Cultural protocols: values, respect, reciprocity.

Processes

Processes include skills (for example, listening, speaking, reading, viewing, signing, writing, performing, classifying, noticing), as well as higher-order thinking processes (such as, conceptualising, interpreting, reasoning, analysing, explaining, comparing, reflecting) and the processes of collecting, describing and recording language.

Text-types

Text-types include oral, written, visual and multimodal texts. Country/Place, sea and sky are also considered by Communities to be texts. The selection of texts is important because they define and reflect past and present, and linguistic and cultural identity, helping to make the people and experiences of a particular culture distinctive. They also provide opportunities for intercultural dialogue.

Curricula developed from the Framework for particular Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages may draw upon a variety of historical and contemporary types of text. Individual language teaching programs will benefit from incorporating a diversity of support and enrichment materials and experiences, community knowledge and individual expertise, all of which serve as texts.

Oral texts provide the rich experience and engagement characteristic of live performance, and may range from the relatively free forms of informal story-telling and yarning to the more canonically fixed forms of song and associated dance and ceremony. The performance of oral texts encourages interactive learning at all stages and for all orientations of language learning; they are the forms of expression in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures excel and which are intrinsic to their communicative structures and styles.

Visual texts are also key texts to guide learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. These may include ephemeral works, such as ground paintings, tracks left by ceremonial dancers, body painting as well as visual design in more permanent forms worked onto stone, wood, canvas or sporting guernseys. These texts are often collaborative in origin, identifying specific knowledge of Country/Place, linking groups of people and transmitting knowledge to community, and, increasingly, to wider Australian and international audiences. Ground paintings, for example, are traditional expressions of the interactions between humans, History, ancestors, and the environment.

Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are known virtually only through written texts, usually in the form of archival material dating from previous generations when the language was more widely known and used. Present-day owners of these languages may choose to research the texts to retrieve what can be known about them. By so doing they seek to bring them back to a life and culture in which performance once more assumes its central role, and in which everyday forms of the spoken language can be adapted for contemporary life. For these programs in revival languages, historical texts form a crucial starting point for developing new language forms and uses, even though available written texts may vary greatly in detail and accuracy.

Archival material for revival languages, however, may be skewed by the interests, intentions and biases of original recorders and writers; for example, a language may have a substantial grammar recorded for it but large areas of missing lexicon, because it was not of interest to the original recorders. On the other hand, early literacy work with first-language speaker communities may have spawned a flourishing vernacular literacy rich in socialising and informing styles, for example, letter-writing, but little material describing the language structure.

Some languages may be spoken fluently only by the older generation, who therefore become the referenced authors of new texts that reflect changing social and educational conditions and needs, and where the purpose is to re-engage younger generations in acquiring their language, thus ensuring its survival. The role of Elders in these situations is fundamental.

Revival pathways developed for different languages will therefore potentially have access to a wide variety of texts on which programs can be based: some fixed in the archives and some living and ever-changing; some comprehensively descriptive of the internal structure and resources of the language but needing to be enlivened with conversational detail; and some voluble but masking underlying structures needed to generate new language for young learners.

Multimodal and digital media texts have assisted greatly in the transmission of Indigenous knowledge and taxonomies and in the artistic expression of contemporary personal and cultural identity, with a responsiveness often approaching the living nature of traditional oral transmission. There are interactive maps and seasonal calendars describing Country, digital animations depicting Story and Journey, and hyperlinked texts integrating several text-types, all available on personal digital devices small enough to travel with the learner. By engaging in these enhanced texts, learners develop a set of multiple literacies that support not only the learning and transmission of Australia's precious linguistic heritage but the acquisition of techniques and attitudes to learning that boost learners' achievements across the whole curriculum.

Language learning and literacy development

Languages play a crucial role in the educational experience of students and in the curriculum as a whole. Given the diversity of students in Australian schools, it is important to recognise that a range of languages is used either as part of the formal curriculum or as part of learners' socialisation and experience in and out of school.

Learners bring to school their experience of their first language(s), the one(s) they use for initial socialisation in family or community. For the majority, this is English. For many others, it can be a range of different languages. Learners also encounter the language or languages of instruction at school. For most learners in Australian schools, this is English. For many students, this language of instruction is not the same as their first language. These students may learn through *English as an additional language or dialect (EALD)* programs.

In contemporary understandings of language acquisition and learning, importance is placed on the role of the languages through which individual learners socialise and learn. All learners have their own repertoires of linguistic and cultural experience and capabilities. These are variously developed by both the experience of schooling and broader social community experience. These repertoires are an integral part of each learner's identity, of what they bring to the experience of learning an additional language as part of their school curriculum.

While the curriculum for languages primarily addresses the processes involved in learning languages, this learning cannot be separated from the development of learners' more general educational experience and communicative repertoires. A relational and holistic approach to languages education and to learning and using multiple languages ensures that learners develop their overall language capabilities and knowledge, which impacts on their overall conceptual and communicative development.

In various kinds of bilingual programs, students are afforded an opportunity to learn through the medium of English and another language (learners' first or additional language). These programs are of particular value in ensuring that learners continue to develop capabilities in at least two languages that are of value and relevance to them, in terms of conceptual development, communicative capabilities and identity formation.

Using the Framework

The Framework is general in its structure and approach because it needs to be applicable to all Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages in Australia, across the full range of language ecologies. As a consequence, curriculum content and achievement standards are pitched at a higher level of generality than in language-specific curricula in order to cater for the full range of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages that may potentially be learnt within a particular pathway.

The next stage of Australian Curriculum development for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages may lead to the development of some language-specific exemplars of content and achievement standards to be included in the Framework in order to support and guide the process of developing specific content and achievement standards for specific languages.

Developing language-specific curricula for particular Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages

It is intended that the Framework be used by state and territory education jurisdictions, schools and communities to develop language-specific curricula and programs. Any language-specific curriculum development must be undertaken with appropriate consultation with language owners or custodians and members of the relevant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities, as outlined in the Principles and Protocols section of this Framework. Consideration must be given to the availability of appropriate human resources to develop the curriculum and to the level of documentation and resources available for the particular language.

The curriculum development team will include members of the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community whose language is the focus, as well as curriculum specialists, language experts and language-teaching practitioners, as necessary.

Determining the appropriate pathway

In selecting the pathway that will be used as a base for development of language-specific curricula, consideration should be given to the nature of the language, the nature of the learners, and the context of learning, for example:

- the ecology of the language and the nature of the speech community
- the profile of learners and the degree of affiliation with the language
- the likelihood of the program occurring on or off Country/Place.

The Framework is designed to be flexible in use. When developing language-specific curricula and programs the curriculum development team can select, adapt and modify aspects of the content and achievement standards from across the pathways in ways that best suit the particular language, its context and its learners. For example, language-specific curriculum development for languages that are being revived, still have first language speakers, are regaining fluent speakers, or have substantial resources, could potentially adapt and modify some aspects of the content and achievement standards from the LR, L2 and L1 pathways.

Sequences of learning

The Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages is written as a Foundation – Year 10 learning sequence and presumes continuous learning of the same language across the bands Foundation – Year 2, Years 3–6, and Years 7–10.

The content and achievement standards will require modification if the language-specific curriculum is to be written for different entry points, for example, developing a curriculum for a Year 7 entry point.

Context Statement

A context statement will be developed for each specific language to describe the distinctiveness and nature of that language, including its use in the community, the place of the language in Australian education, the nature of learning the language, and the diversity of students who will be learning the language.

Content and Achievement Standards

In developing a language-specific curriculum, the generalised content and achievement standards within a particular pathway may need to be adapted and modified to reflect the nature of the language, the nature of the learners, and the context of learning. This includes adapting band descriptions, content descriptions, content elaborations, and achievement standards.

Language-specific examples such as concepts, key words and phrases should be included in the content and achievement standards. The use of language-specific examples provides teachers with a point of reference when developing programs and provides indications of pitch and expected levels of performance in language use and understanding.

Content elaborations develop aspects of each content description: illustrations, descriptions or examples to indicate opportunities for learning. They are intended as complementary support material. They are neither prescriptive nor comprehensive. The elaborations included for each pathway of the Framework allow for the various ecologies of languages, the various contexts of learning, and the diversity of learners within a particular pathway. This is particularly the case for the LR pathway.

Language-specific curriculum developers should select, adapt and modify elaborations in ways that best suit the particular language and its context and learners, or should create particular content elaborations to accompany the content descriptions for the specific language.

Developing teaching and learning programs

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

The Australian Curriculum: Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages is designed to achieve four aims that are realised through two interrelated strands: communicating and understanding. In developing teaching and learning programs, the two strands are integrated to ensure holistic learning and to attend to active language use and the development of related knowledge, understandings and reflective capabilities.

The set of strands and sub-strands capture a range of dimensions of language use. As such, they are designed to capture the scope; that is, the range and variety of content to be experienced and learned by students. Teachers will need to design teaching and learning programs by drawing on the content descriptions from a number of sub-strands, and integrate these to create meaningful learning experiences for their particular

learners. The emphases across the strands and sub-strands may vary for different languages, bands and pathways, and for different program contexts. Since the content descriptions indicate the nature and scope of the learning over several-year spans, teachers will need to make decisions about what aspects of the content descriptions will be taught in what year of their program. Year by year, programs can then be used to inform the development of short-term programs (that is, one term/several weeks).

Taken together, band descriptions, content descriptions, content elaborations, and achievement standards provide an overall sense of 'level' of, or expectations about, language teaching and learning at a given moment in time and over time. They give a sense of the level of complexity at which student learning can be pitched, and in relation to assessment they provide a reference point for making judgments about students' progress in learning. Teachers will make decisions about pedagogies that best meet the learning needs of their particular students and that best reflect the context of their particular program.

What is known and documented about the language:

Many languages may only be known from wordlists, which are typically of widely varying quality. Some may have sketchy grammars. Others may have recorded texts from which some grammar may be extracted. Others, which have slipped from everyday use, may have audio and film resources. In the case of poorly documented languages, where speakers no longer exist and sound or film resources were never made, there will be many gaps to fill. Source materials will need to be interpreted through comparison with each other and with closely related languages, if documentation of these languages exists.

Where there are still speakers of the revival language, fewer gaps will need to be filled and fewer assumptions will need to be made. The remaining speakers of the language will be the arbiters of what is correct or not. In such cases, it is not unusual to have widely differing opinions about what is right, which may simply reflect underlying dialect differences or processes of language change. Where a language is only known from written, historical records, there will be more need for interpretation and the support of historical and comparative linguistics in rebuilding the language, with the understanding that the revived language will most likely never precisely match the original language in structure, vocabulary or usage.

The extent to which the language is used or remembered

Revival languages also differ in the extent to which they have been re-introduced into the community of owners and custodians, for example:

- the range of functions for which the language is now used (for example, private conversations, written communication, digital messaging, social media)
- the extent of its use in the public domain (for example, public speeches, Welcomes to Country, Acknowledgements of Country, naming of public entities and institutions)
- its use in educational programs (for example, at school or post-school level, in community schools, involving both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people)
- the degree of development of contemporary resources (for example, alphabet books, dictionaries, grammars, learner's guides, readers, animations, radio shows, television shows, websites with online language lessons, phone apps).

Some languages have only just begun their journey of revival, while others have advanced to a point where initial generations of new first language speakers are emerging, as parents use the revived languages with their children.

For languages with limited documentation, English or another community language might be used in school programs in a complementary fashion, for example, to fill in for missing words or expressions. Alternatively, language owners and the community in general may decide to sidestep these gaps altogether, avoiding the use of English or other languages entirely.

Implications for developing language specific curricula and language programs

The curriculum content and achievement standards in the Language Revival Learner Pathway are generalised in order to cater for the range of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages that may be learnt within this pathway.

The Language Revival Learner Pathway is pitched approximately at middle-of-the-range revival languages; that is, those languages which no longer have fluent first language speakers but have sufficient resources, including a grammar and dictionary, to enable a comprehensive, cumulative, rigorous and meaningful teaching program to be developed. Where there are major gaps in knowledge or documentation relating to a particular language consideration needs to be given as to how far the curriculum content and achievement standards can be realised and sustained for long-term, cumulative learning. An Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural studies program may be the better option under circumstances of severe constraint.

Many programs will use the LR pathway for languages that have few, if any, speakers or associated language community. It is conceivable, however, that over time a language functioning well in revival mode could develop a sufficiently substantial speech community across all generations for it to be taught and learned in either the L1 or L2 pathway. Until a revival language achieves this critical mass, however, the recommended language learning pathway remains LR.

The content descriptions, content elaborations and achievement standards for the Language Revival Learner Pathway will need to be adapted when developing language-specific curricula.

Language-specific curriculum development for languages that are being revived, still have first languages speakers, are regaining fluent speakers, or have substantial resources, could consider incorporating some aspects of the content and achievement standards from the First Language Learner or Second Language Learner pathways; or using the L2 pathway as a base for curriculum development. In these instances content descriptions, elaborations and achievement standards will need to be adapted and modified to ensure that the curriculum is appropriately pitched and reflective of the nature of the language, the nature of the learners and the context of learning.