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Languages in school policy & curriculum

A whole of school approach



# The Task

To

- develop a **Languages statement** for your local school
- find an acceptable way to place **Languages** at the centre of school policy and practice
  - NOT upset the *English Learning Area*
- Strengthen the place of Languages in curriculum, esp in the *Languages Learning Area*

# A sample

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## A School Language Curriculum Statement

### Rationale

#### Rationale for language learning

Learning additional languages is one of the most challenging and rewarding learning experiences which may equip individual learner a better understanding of the world, the local community, the personal identity and the connections in between.

Learning to communicate in another language or other languages provides the opportunity for learners to participate in and engage with our linguistically and culturally diverse and interconnected world, understand different ways of beings as well as to explore their own understanding of the experience and way of being in the world.

Through learning additional languages, students may

- acquire communication skills and ability to access information and interact in contemporary ways in target languages.
- develop an intercultural capability in terms of an understanding of roles of languages and cultures, both their own and additional ones, and their relationships in communication and interaction. This may help students to improve linguistic and cultural flexibility and communicate across cultures.
- increase the capability for reflection on their first language and additional languages in terms of the nature of language systems, the structures and functions of languages, using languages in authentic interaction and understanding implied cultures in communication as well as reflecting on their own language learning experience.

#### Rationale for learning Chinese

Different from English as an alphabetic language, Chinese (Mandarin) is a tonal, character-based language. In comparison to English, although the range of syllables in Chinese is limited, it includes sounds which are unfamiliar to English speakers. Furthermore, the Chinese spoken language is characterised by tone-syllables which are used to represent more than one particular characters. With regard to the distinctiveness of Chinese written language, Chinese characters are constructed with strokes, which compose into one or more components following a particular order in a square. And sometimes text in Chinese characters may be written vertically and read from right to left down the page. Additionally, the Pinyin system, which is the alphabetic form to represent the sounds of Chinese characters, assists to learn the correct sounds of Chinese spoken language and create texts in characters when using digital media. Allied to these, the grammatical and vocabulary systems are different from that of English language as well as Chinese culture is quite distinct from western cultural traditions.

The distance and distinctiveness makes learning Chinese a challenging educational experience with unique opportunities to engage in a different language experience, develop a deeper understanding of the nature and diversity of language and promote the capability to understand and communicate across cultures. Learning Chinese may encourage the development of knowledge and skills in learning and using, both Chinese and their own languages and cultures, in communication. Chinese language learning may engage students with the contemporary experience to extend understanding and appreciation of languages as systems and variability within and across systems as well as their view of the world and themselves.

# A statement = policy

- 1) A policy – rationale - one page only
  - Why Language matters (in education / curriculum)
  - How the language learning area contributes to
    - Overall language & literacy development
    - Improved inter-lingual inter-cultural appreciation in community
  - How YOUR language contributes to that learning
  - .....AND .....

# A Statement = policy

## 2) a scope of learning

- for your learning area
- for the first two consecutive years of learning
- Outlining what learners will
  - learn about
  - learn to do
- In each year of the Languages program

# Aim of policy

- A whole-of-school policy has to
  - put ***Languages*** at the centre of school policy & practice
    - frame ***Languages*** as an integral part of schooling – education
    - move Languages from the periphery to the core of curriculum
  - look beyond the ***specific*** language(s) taught at school
  - overcome the marginalisation & monolingualism of the Languages learning area

## A whole-of-school policy has to

- Recognise learner diversity (own languages cultures and identities), including HL and L1 learners
- Accept that Language learning is a short term proposition for the MAJORITY of learners,
- Promote a more humanistic (non-instrumental) orientation
  - Focus on the personal, social, educational benefits
- Address entrenched monolingualism in society

# Framing language policy

## Assumptions

- Languages are ***integral*** to education
- Language learning is ***inclusive*** (of all languages and identities in the classroom)
- Additional Language learning enhances ***literacy*** development
- Home language learning enhances ***educational progress***
- Language learning is a Bi- Multi- Pluri-lingual process



# So what of a school languages policy?

How can we frame Languages ...

- as an integral part of a well-rounded education
- as a means to promote inclusion and acceptance of L&C diversity in the community (within the school community)
- as a learning area that contributes beyond its own curriculum, that reinforces and builds upon the school's core **literacy practices**

Candice

According to the World Economic Forum (2023) Australia is the 6<sup>th</sup> most multilingual country on the planet, with 312 languages spoken, both local languages and immigrant languages. Nationally, 22.3% of Australians speak a language other than English at home (ID Community, 2021). In the Northern Territory, ~~that statistic is much higher with~~ 32.4% of Territorians speaking a language other than English at home. ~~There are a very diverse set of~~ the range of community languages and cultures in the Northern Territory, you only need to visit the Palmerston or Rapid Creek Markets to know this is true.

Our community is inclusive and celebrates the diversity that our students bring ~~come~~ to school with (Many of our students are learning a third language at when they are coming to school, making them

School?

is very diverse;

appreciate the diversity

move down

① • trilingual. By learning a language, our students have the immediate benefits of improved literacy as literacy skills are transferable between languages, which improves their use of any language.

Language learning also builds our students interlingual and intercultural appreciation (AFMLTA, 2021), which is a benefit to our NT community, local language communities and opens doors for our students into the future.

Language learning is integral to education! Language learning is a core requirement for our future global citizens (our young people) to be successful. Language is a code as well a practice involving cognitive activity and is the means by which people make sense of themselves and the world around them. When learning a language, our students improve their communication skills and ability to interact with others (AFMLTA, 2021).

At [Enter School Name Here], students have the choice of learning [enter language(s) here]



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At [Enter School Name Here], students have the choice of learning [enter language(s) here].

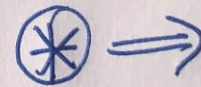
[Language] is written in [enter info from AC 8.4 context statement, for example:]

by population-

Indonesia is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest nation on the planet. It is a unified nation within which there are multiple languages; cultural, religious and ethnic groups; and geographical and political regions. The sense of diversity is reflected in the national motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* ('Unity in Diversity') (ACARA, 2021).

Indonesian is written using the Roman alphabet, and there is a clear correlation and a degree of consistency between its sound and its written form. This feature generally makes it easy for speakers of English as a first language to predict how to say, read or write Indonesian words, which middle schoolers find helpful. In Year 7 and 8 Indonesian, students will learn a number of sounds, such as the trilled *r*, the *ch* sound of the letter *c*, and the glottal stop *k* when it is a final syllable (ACARA,

2021). Students will learn to introduce themselves in Indonesian, they will *read and write* basic phrases. They will engage in their learning when they find out about the various *cultural practices* that take place in Indonesia and they will be able to make connections between these practices and



P2

- 1) large ppn of ozziies are monolingual, but are introduced to an add'l lang at school - making them potentially bilingual
- 2) a ~~ppn~~ significant ppn of our students are bilingual - and are learning a 3rd language at school. . . .

their own culture. These connections assist in our students better understanding themselves and their peers.

Ultimately, we aim to *have fun* in our [Language] class. Whilst compulsory language learning ends at the end of [year level], we hope that our students have enjoyed their language and culture journey and continue on this journey into their senior years of schooling and into their futures.

⊗ ⇒ tell me more about the language + how it contrasts to English.

esp... word forming ke-/be ... an prefix/suffix

... grammar rules

... <sup>development</sup> the ~~history~~ of B.I. - how it unifies a diverse community + allows NN speakers to communicate with anyone across that diversity

⊠ Don't get into the learn about + learn to do just yet. -

Focus on how teachers will use BI to explore diversity + L+C identity in your classroom. ..

OK - lets all for the mo...



## Whole School Languages Policy for NT Schools

Australia is the 6<sup>th</sup> most multilingual country on the planet, with 312 languages spoken, both local languages and immigrant languages. Nationally, 22.3% of Australians speak a language other than English at home, in the Northern Territory, 32.4% of Territorians speak a language other than English at home. The range of community languages and cultures in the Northern Territory is very diverse; you only need to visit the Palmerston or Rapid Creek Markets [Alice Springs market?] to appreciate the diversity.



Our [school name] community is inclusive and celebrates the diversity that our students bring to school with. By learning a language, our students have the immediate benefits of improved literacy as literacy skills are transferable between languages, which improves their use of any language. Language learning also builds our students interlingual and intercultural appreciation, which is a benefit to our NT community, local language communities and opens doors for our students into the future.

Language learning is integral to education! Language learning is a core requirement for our future global citizens (our young people) to be successful. Language is a code as well a practice involving cognitive activity and is the means by which people make sense of themselves and the world around them. When learning a language, our students improve their communication skills and ability to interact with others.

A large proportion of Australians are monolingual, but are introduced to an additional language at school, making them potentially bilingual. A significant proportion of our students are already bilingual and are learning a third language at school.

At [Enter School Name Here], students have the choice of learning [enter language(s) here]. [Language] is written in [enter info from AC 8.4 context statement, for example:]

Indonesia is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest nation by population on the planet. It is a unified nation within which there are multiple languages; cultural, religious and ethnic groups; and geographical and political regions. The sense of diversity is reflected in the national motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* ('Unity in Diversity'). The development of Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian language) has been a unifying influence in Indonesia as it has brought together people from various islands and cultures to work toward common goals and allows non-native



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Bahasa Indonesia has a clear correlation and a degree of consistency between its sound and its written form. This feature generally makes it easy for speakers of English as a first language to predict how to say, read or write Indonesian words, which middle schoolers find helpful. In Year 7 and 8 Indonesian, students will learn a number of sounds, such as the trilled *r*, the *ch* sound of the letter *c*, and the glottal stop *k* when it is a final syllable. They will learn about various prefixes and suffixes that are used in Indonesian grammar, in ways differing to English.

Through the learning of Bahasa Indonesia, students will further explore the diverse community the world is on a global scale and they will understand their own identity in their community and the classroom through the use of Bahasa Indonesia and Indonesian culture.

Ultimately, we aim to *have fun* in our [Language] class. Whilst compulsory language learning ends at the end of [year level], we hope that our students have enjoyed their language and culture journey and continue on this journey into their senior years of schooling and into their futures.