

NATIONAL *Languages* PLAN & STRATEGY



Discussion Paper

*Altitude and Amplitude:
The case for a blue-sky blueprint for
Languages Education in Australia*

Prepared for National Summit, conducted on 25 June, 2021



Anne-Marie Morgan | Andrew Scrimgeour | Sherryl Saunders | Kylie Farmer

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introduction

Introduction

Project outline and purpose

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) has engaged the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association (AFMLTA) to conduct a project to develop a National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education in Australia, in consultation with key stakeholders.

The plan will inform future policy design at the national level, for a sustainable approach to planning and implementing languages education.

Objective

The objective of the project is to support the Australian Government effort to increase the uptake of languages learning in schools.

Research Projects

Two inter-related research projects inform development of the plan and strategy.

Research Project 1:

The state of languages education in Australia: Participation and provision

This research project began in 2020 and has involved collection of languages education provision and participation data nationally. Program provision, participation rates, program types, time allocations, teacher availability and experience, and university teacher education programs data have been collected for languages taught in school and out of school contexts, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, community languages and additional languages. Two surveys of teachers, nationally, available jurisdiction data, and available languages teacher education data have been included.

Research Project 2:

Towards a National Plan and Strategy

This research project commenced mid-2020 and has reviewed national and international languages education policies, plans, strategies and projects, as well as recent developments and achievements in languages education across the Australian states and territories. A third survey of teachers on resources used and desirable for quality languages programs has been included.

introduction

Discussion Paper

The collected data from the two projects and consultation processes have been used to inform development of a Discussion Paper for further national stakeholder consultation.

The Discussion Paper includes four key sections:

Part 1: Why do we need a National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education in Australia?

Part 2: What are the preliminary findings from the data?

Part 3: What might the National Plan and Strategy look like?

Part 4: What are the next steps and how can stakeholders be involved?

Consultation

Stakeholder input is included through a range of consultation opportunities including from a Project Advisory Group, teacher surveys, responses from jurisdictions, contributions to the National Summit to be held on 25 June 2021, and a number of Focus Groups to be held in each state and territory and with key interest groups, online, from August to October 2021. Preliminary reporting of findings from teacher surveys are being presented for collegial discussion at languages education conferences, including the 23rd AFMLTA International Languages Conference, held online, 5-6 July 2021.

Feedback and input from stakeholder consultation will be used to further expand the suggested actions in the Discussion Paper for a National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education in Australia, and to provide recommendations and strategies for increasing participation in languages learning in Australian schools in a final report to the Australian Government.

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Part 1: Why do we need a National Languages Education Plan and Strategy?

Why languages education matters in Australia

Australia has long championed itself as a tolerant multicultural nation, celebrating its rich history of diversity of cultures and origins, including our First Nations Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and waves of immigrants of Pacific, European, Asian, African, North and South American, and Middle Eastern origins. The 2016 Australian census indicated just under 50% of the population had themselves, or one or both of their parents, been born overseas. Based on immigration data since 2016, the new census, to be conducted in August 2021, will likely show further diversity of cultures and origins.

While we recognise that more than 300 different languages have been identified as spoken in Australian homes in the last census, our national recognition of our linguistic diversity, our *plurilingual* makeup and identity, is less acknowledged than our *multiculturalism*, and is not effectively provided for in our public and education systems, plans and policies. The complexity of our language and cultural landscape, as a reality of Australian life and as a national asset in a globalised world, needs formal recognition. We must support and provide for all levels of education, for first or mother tongue languages; for heritage, community and revival languages; and for the learning of additional languages, including those traditionally taught for academic purposes, those that are part of our region, and those that are increasingly part of our plurilingual landscape.

We know from extensive literature of the **benefits of plurilingualism**, which is the capacity to use, understand and relate to more than one language and its cultural contexts, and to be able to move across and between languages and their hybrid forms. Benefits include higher performance in national testing of literacy and numeracy across the years of schooling; improved English language literacy; measurable cognitive advantages including evidence from MRI scanning; better mental health and less likelihood of brain deterioration; increased intercultural engagement and understanding of others; increased interpersonal and community engagement and social harmony; improved self-worth and sense of identity; and enhanced job prospects.

Plurilingualism is an international norm, recognised as an entitlement throughout the world, and a key element of all education systems in nations both like and unlike Australia, all OECD nations, and in regions/nations which routinely perform at higher levels in international testing programs. Access to multiple additional languages, for engagement in a globalised world, must be central to any plan and strategy for languages education.

In Australia, we also need a National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education to **progress healing and reconciliation with First Nations peoples**, and others disadvantaged through past discriminatory policies and continuing racism and differential treatment across aspects of our society. **Increased access to and learning of languages, including our own heritage and historical languages**, and the recognition and celebration of our diversity, is a necessary step towards these outcomes.

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Our **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages** are among oldest continuously spoken languages on Earth, and the linking of language, culture and land is critical to their survival, expansion and use, providing opportunities for First Nations' people to engage with, learn, and teach their own languages on their own country, and for all Australians to have access to local languages and their communities throughout the nation. For those whose first languages are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages, access to bilingual education is a right that should be made possible throughout regions of Australia where these languages are used.

For **migrant communities and heritage languages**, which have played important roles in the forging of a plurilingual and pluricultural nation, recognising the contribution these languages have made and continue to make, and their continued use and dynamism, is a right for all who continue to use them, as first, heritage or additional languages, to maintain, and continue to enhance our nation.

To **provide young Australians with future-focused capabilities and capacity** to engage effectively with the world, an integrated and connected languages plan and strategy is needed. The plan and strategy must encompass consideration of needs from birth to senior years; all levels of education from pre-school to post-tertiary; suitable curricula, learning conditions and resources for diverse learners; 'buy-in' from providers including leadership teams in education jurisdictions, schools and universities; and necessarily include Aboriginal languages, Torres Strait Islander languages, community and heritage languages, and additional languages, as well as embracing the variety of pedagogies and ways in which languages are taught and learned effectively. The range of purposes of languages education and maintenance must be included, and aspirations to increase current low, and in many areas declining, levels of languages provision and participation in connected ways must also be addressed. Decline in provision and participation are nothing short of a continuing national emergency, as we remain mired in a doggedly monolingual mindset and as we fall further behind other nations in the world where plurilingualism and languages education are prioritised and resourced.

The plan also must include **ways to collect and consider data** on current and emerging provision and participation in languages education, draw on evidenced and new research and project and practice outcomes that provide directions as to connected future practice, look both within and beyond Australia for examples of successful planning, practice and research, and propose ways in which the states and territories can cooperate in establishing and enacting the plan and strategy, through central, national resources, as well as state and territory based approaches.

Finally, **sustainability of a plan and strategy** which responds to the distinctive characteristics of our history of languages education provision and the language and cultural dynamics within our diverse and dynamic society must underpin the plan. It must encompass and continue to respond, reflexively, to the overall complex ecology of languages education in Australia, with opportunities for evaluation and re-visioning. **To aim higher, and to expand languages education must be primary goals.** A plan framed in this way has both increased 'altitude' and 'amplitude'. The opportunity to contribute collaboratively to this blue-sky thinking process through the national summit and focus groups, is the invitation to all stakeholders extended through this discussion paper.

part 1

What has come before? Policy, plans, strategies and projects: An overview of the past four decades

National Policy on Languages Lo Bianco 1987

The 1987 Lo Bianco *National Policy on Languages* reminded us that ‘language is the most sophisticated and fundamental form of human communication’, ‘central to the intellectual development and socialisation of children’, a ‘source of individual and group identity’, an ‘instrument of power’, and the ‘product of cultural, artistic, economic and intellectual endeavours’. Across the diversity and differences of human groups, language is central to all that we do. As such, development of a single, inclusive, national languages policy, plan, and strategy is both ‘exceedingly complex’ and ‘of the utmost importance.’ The 1987 policy was instrumental in establishing the agenda for languages education planning in Australia for the ensuing years, and in particular for the two decades following its release (into the 1990s and 2000s). The core plan for languages education outlined in that policy was:

- **English for all**- as a first or additional language across all life stages, and including translation and interpretation services, migrant English programs, adult learning, and English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) in schools.
- **First languages/mother tongue** maintenance and teaching wherever possible- for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and community/migrant languages, and including bilingual and bicultural programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, bilingual community schools, and language preservation and reclamation where serious declines and extinction or near extinction is imminent and/or communities have been separated from their languages and cultures.
- **Additional languages** teaching and learning- with **all students learning at least one language other than English**, which may include ‘wider’ languages [listed at this time as Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish], classical languages [Classical Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, etc], community languages, Aboriginal languages, Torres Strait Islander languages, and Auslan.
- **Language awareness**- of all languages and language use, including computer and artificial intelligence languages, and embedded in initial and continuing teacher education, goals of schooling, school curricula and social policy.

Further, the 1987 policy declared as educationally and culturally sound the teaching of **any language desired by a school or community** responding to local contextual circumstances and where there was support for such a program; and that there should be **Year 12 offerings of as many languages as possible**. At a tertiary level, there should be all of the languages of ‘wider’ teaching available in all the larger states; and cooperative teaching of community and minority languages across the states’ and territories’ universities and other higher education providers; as well as developed programs of teacher education for languages and other teachers; and ongoing language ‘training’ for professionals (in-service teachers, teaching aspirants, professions requiring bi/plurilingual language skills).

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The policy also drew attention to the critical point around exposure and use times for learning languages- with **duration and frequency needs** to be recognised in **several language lessons per week of a reasonable duration** (minimally 3 x 1 hour lessons per week, and considerably more in immersion and other bilingual programs). These regular 'time on task' practices should be supplemented by **additional opportunities for sustained interactive use of language**, with communities of speakers of the languages- in and out of Australia- and at school camps and the like, to overcome the 'forgetting process' which evidences the need for three sessions a week to retain around 80% of learned content, rather than only 20- 25% if there is only one lesson a week (see Figure 1 in Appendix A); to activate and exploit memory function; to increase self and guided correction for improved accuracy; and for engaged and meaningful occasions for use of language, relevant to the lives of learners.

Program types espoused in the 1987 policy were represented on a continuum from 'language awareness' to 'full bilingual' programs, with best results (predictably) coming from the bilingual end of the continuum, and noting that '**awareness**' was important for all, but **not as the only access** to languages education - it should be additional to English, first language, and additional language learning opportunities.

Actions arising from the 1987 policy

The Lo Bianco 1987 policy provided a benchmark for action, and many recommendations of this fully costed (for the immediate budget periods), bipartisan model were adopted or influenced subsequent Australian Government and state and territory government and education jurisdiction initiatives and activities, including:

- **Australian Language and Literacy Policy (1992)**, which somewhat shifted the emphasis to English literacy, while attempting to retain the other languages elements of the 1987 languages policy.
- **National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools (NALSAS) project (1994-2002)** which included an increased focus on the Asian languages Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean and a generic 'studies of Asia' cross-curricular focus, with \$200 million applied to programs across the years of the project.
- **National Statement and Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools (2005-2008)** which reiterated many of the aspects of the 1987 policy, focused on goals for Teaching and Learning, Teacher Supply and Retention, Professional Learning, Program Development, Quality Assurance, and Advocacy and Promotion of Languages Learning.
- **National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP) project (2008-2013)** which continued the work of NALSAS and aspired to 12% of Year 12 students undertaking the four focus Asian languages to higher levels of proficiency- a target never achieved.

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Running alongside these developments were the Coalition of Australian Governments' (COAG) Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs' (MCEETYA) declarations of the national goals of schooling, so-named after the locations in which the committees met- Hobart (1989), Adelaide (1999), Melbourne (2008), and most recently Alice Springs/Mparntwe (2019).

All these declarations attest to the critical importance of languages learning (some with Asian languages emphasis) and understanding of our geographical and global interests, *as well as to social and individual benefits.*

All the declarations include Languages as one of (usually) eight key learning areas.

Second languages and Australian schooling report Lo Bianco and Slaughter 2009

Lo Bianco and Slaughter, in 2009, produced an updated analysis of additional languages education in Australia, ***Second languages and Australian schooling***, which reiterated key points and provisions from the 1987 policy within the framing of a changing national landscape some 22 years after the 1987 policy. They suggested a number of ways forward, including listening and attending to student voices, including their desire to be in differentiated classes related to background and motivation to learn and participate, and to address students' perceived disregard for languages in school systems; attending to the 'perilous' state of languages in universities (which has continued to worsen since a 2007 report by the Group of Eight universities declared a 'crisis' in languages education); risks in linking languages education strategy only to economic and political considerations, and the need for it to be linked to humanistic and intellectual legitimization.

Four broad components of future strategy in the 2009 report:

- **Cultivating existing languages competencies**, with a focus on language skills that exist in the community, described as the 'enormous reservoir of latent bilingualism'.
- **Learning how to learn languages**, with an **early years' focus** beginning in pre-school and concentrated through the primary years, including an increased number of bilingual programs with a 'starting young' emphasis.
- **Articulated learning and teaching of languages**, focused on secondary and tertiary contexts, transition points, reducing attrition, and quality language teacher education initiatives including education in content based and immersion approaches.
- **Language education for commercial purposes**, focused on economic needs, in trade, diplomacy, and recreational pursuits, and largely provided by universities, TAFEs, and special interest schools (e.g. Australian Defence Force Academy).

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Three 'hard decisions' were identified as critical to the success of these strategies:

- **Discontinue programs which do not meet minimum standards**, including those of less than an hour a week or one lesson a week, or where one teacher is responsible for many classes for very short periods each. The reality is more harm than good is being done in these programs, which suggest to learners language learning is too difficult (as they do not retain 'learning' provided in this way) and none of the intended learning outcomes, let alone progress towards national plurilingualism goals, are achieved.
- **Make a significant national investment in teachers of languages**, including differential education programs for those to teach immersion/bilingual programs and 'language as subject' additional programs.
- **Focus on a core group of additional languages**, while allowing local programs and community and Aboriginal language and Torres Strait Islander language programs to remain supported, in a first/heritage languages category. Tier 1 of the core second or additional languages recommended were: Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish. Tier 2 core additional languages were: Arabic, Greek, Hindi, Korean, Russian and Vietnamese. These languages should be mainstream school priorities.

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The establishment of key structural bodies and provision of support to professional associations and languages organisations/centres, arising from the various policies, plans and reports, from the 1987 policy onwards, have been in the areas of community languages, First Languages, Asian languages, second/additional languages, EALD, and literacy.

Key national projects as Australian Government initiatives:

- A series of investigations into **Asian languages provision and participation** in the 1990s, followed by the **Asian languages professional learning project (ALPLP)**
- **Professional standards project (PSP)** (2005-2013), including development of aspirational standards and a complex professional learning program for thousands of Australian teachers of languages
- **Intercultural language teaching and learning in practice (ILTLP)** project (2005-2008), which reached many hundreds of teachers of languages across Australia
- **Indigenous language programs in Australian schools: A way forward** (2008), providing a snapshot of the time, as a basis for strengthening the quality of programs
- **Teaching and learning languages: A guide** project (2008-2011)
- **Student achievement in Asian languages education (SAALE)** project (2011)
- **Our land, our languages: Language learning in Indigenous communities** (2011-2012)
- **More leaps** project (2013-2015), providing professional learning for leadership in languages education
- **Year 12 senior secondary languages education** research project (2014), investigating why students stayed in or dropped out of senior secondary languages programs
- **Supporting community languages education project** (2015-2019), following on from prior support for community languages and state and territory based projects and funding
- **Priority languages support project** (2015- present) for support of 39 targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programs
- **Early learning languages Australia (ELLA)** project (2015-present) developing play-based apps for pre-schoolers and currently trialling in F-2 classes
- **Community languages national coordination and support** project (2015-2019)
- **Nintiringanyi: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages for teaching employment strategy** (2016-2018), identifying key actions for sustainable school and community collaborations
- **Global lessons: Indigenous languages and multilingualism in school programs** (2018)
- **Policy and practice: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teaching in Australian public schools** (2019)
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Program** (2019-2022), a current Australian Government program, aimed at conducting research into implementation of the Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages, professional learning resources, and a workforce strategy for teaching these languages
- **Community languages national coordination and support** project (2019-2022)
- **Community languages multicultural grants program** (2020-2021) supporting community language schools and projects.

part 1

Australian Curriculum: Languages

A critical development in the years 2010-2013 and beyond was the development of an Australian Curriculum, including an **Australian Curriculum: Languages (ACL)**, from Foundation Year to Year 10, by the relatively new Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). The ACL provided for the first time a national rationale and conceptual 'shaping' of languages education curriculum, recognising a plurilingual entitlement for all Australian students, and to learning languages for purposes ranging from supporting home and heritage languages and language maintenance, to equipping Australian students with critical communication and social skills in a globalised world.

The ACL was built around the key considerations of differentiated and specific curricula for each language, further differentiated for learners of diverse backgrounds (from full first language experience through heritage considerations to additional languages) and for two entry levels into languages education- Foundation Year, and Year 7, with necessarily different content and intellectual challenges for learners of different ages.

Currently there are 14 specialised, differentiated curricula (for Arabic, Auslan, Chinese, French, German, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese) and two frameworks- one for classical languages, and one for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages. The latter of these frameworks provides a flexible tool that schools and language custodians can use for development of curricula for and by community groups, for languages of everyday communication, languages being revived, and languages evolving through contact, including Kriol/Creole languages.

Recent moves to 'declutter' the curriculum indicate many of the gains of specificity fought so hard for appear to be lost in a return to a more generic curriculum- a one size fits all- which would be a backward step in curriculum design and change the international perception of our curricula as world-leading for its attention to specificity, and breadth and detail of available content.

Further developments and professional association activity

After the expiration of the 2005-2008 languages plan, a further languages plan was drafted, through MCEETYA, for 2011-2014, but was not publicly released. A focus element on supporting **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in Australian schools**, as one of six elements, was the main additional contribution of this plan, and followed the beginning of development of the framework for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages as part of the emerging curriculum for languages in the ACL.

Languages teacher associations and organisations including First Languages Australia, Community Languages Australia, and the AFMLTA have also initiated many of their own projects to support languages education and communities. The AFMLTA, for example, developed a series of professional learning programs centred on the Australian Curriculum: Languages (ACL): **Ready? Set? Go!** (2015), **Ready? Set? Plan!** (2016), **Ready? Set? Assess!** (2017). First Languages Australia has recently published its **Report on best practice implementation of the Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages** (2021). First Languages Australia and Community Languages Australia, as well as the AFMLTA, have more detailed information on their activities and historical and current projects on their respective websites.

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Data collection and current provision of languages education in Australia

Collection of provision and participation data for languages education in Australia has always been challenging, as states and territories, and the education sectors and jurisdictions within them, determine their own implementation and data collection approaches, and there is no national mechanism for gathering these data. The 2008 report on the **State and nature of languages education in Australian schools** provided the most coordinated effort to date, and still had large gaps in data. What could be seen through this report was the decline in language learning occurring, including in languages which had had a targeted focus, such as Indonesian. Four reports on the state of each of the **target Asian languages (Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean)** from the NALSAS and NALSSP projects were produced around 2010 to indicate outcomes of these projects and other initiatives at this stage. Indonesian was in a perilous and further declining state after very healthy numbers in the previous two decades, and Korean never had a high student uptake. Japanese was well subscribed, and Chinese had a mixed finding, showing increased participation, but with senior levels of schooling showing very few *additional* language learners. While there were rising numbers of students participating, most were heritage or first language speakers. It remained a challenge for additional learners of Chinese to compete with students who slipped through the ‘background’ criteria into second language learning cohorts and undertook senior level Chinese subjects alongside students with no background or community connection to Chinese languages or cultures.

Data available also indicate highly differentiated provision and participation rates in languages education and languages and years of learning, across states and territories. Part Two of this report provides initial insights into current provision and participation data from jurisdictions, as well as preliminary outcomes from teacher surveys. It provides further insights into language teacher working conditions and contexts, demand and supply issues, transience of work, and resourcing issues.

With states and territories responsible for education provision and implementation, there is a chequered pattern of provision, and of ‘mandated’ years of learning languages, across the nation. While it is not the intention of this Discussion Paper to rehearse the full policy and provision approaches of each state and territory, nor their histories, it is useful to compare, at a glance, current languages education provision requirements and approaches of Australian states and territories. Recommendations and requirements for Foundation Year to Year 10 are summarised below in Tables 1 and 2.

part 1

Table 1: Languages provision guidelines, recommendations or requirements, Australian states and territories, Foundation Year to Year 6

Guidelines re provision		Guidelines re timing						
States and territories	year level							
	F	1	2	3	4	5	6	
	ACT							
	NSW							
	NT							
	QLD	strongly encouraged						
	SA							
	TAS							
	VIC							
	WA							
								Minimum 60 minutes/week
								Recommended 2 hours/ week
								Minimum 150 minutes/week, with a recommendation for lessons to be spread as evenly as possible across the week
								Notionally 2 hours/week

Table 2: Languages provision guidelines, recommendations or requirements, Australian states and territories, Year 7 to Year 10

Guidelines re provision					Guidelines re timing
States and territories	year level				
	7	8	9	10	
	ACT				Minimum 150 minutes/week
	NSW	*	*		* 100 hrs across 12 months (preferably Year 7 or Year 8)
	NT				Recommended 2 hours/week
	QLD		strongly encouraged		
	SA	Schools need to ensure that learners are given the opportunity to engage with and achieve in all eight learning areas of the Australian Curriculum at relevant year levels			
	TAS				
	VIC	Schools are required to offer a program to Year 10			Minimum 150 minutes/week, with a recommendation for lessons to be spread as evenly as possible across the week
	WA	By 2022	By 2023		Notionally 2 hours/week

Key for Tables 1 and 2:

	Required/Expected	Recommended/Encouraged	Not required	Information unavailable
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part 1

Years F-10 programs in all states and territories use the Australian Curriculum: Languages, a variant of the ACL adapted for their state context (Victorian Curriculum, Western Australian Curriculum) or syllabuses (developed as required by state legislation in NSW), which have been informed by the ACL and its development process. All states and territories were represented and contributed to the development of the ACL.

Senior secondary languages subject offerings in state and territory senior secondary certificate programs are available in all states and territories, managed through senior secondary curriculum authorities, and mostly assessed and examined within state or territory frameworks and guidelines. Learning time per week and across the two years is similar in jurisdictions, and is around 200-240 hours across the two senior secondary years. There is a very broad range of languages offered, including first languages, second or additional languages, community languages, Indigenous languages and classical languages. There are rules around first, heritage/background and additional language cohort eligibility, as there are for 'beginner' or 'continuer' status, with a number of variations to these across the nation.

Small candidature subjects are made possible in senior secondary programs through a long-running joint program, the **Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Languages (CCAFL)**, which provides a framework for curriculum development and assessment, so there is consistency across the nation. Development of a revised CCAFL framework is currently underway.

The **International Baccalaureate programs** (Primary Years Programme [PYP], Middle Years Programme [MYP], and Diploma Programme [DP]) are offered in many Australian schools. In the Diploma and Middle Years programs **students must study one additional language, and can study two or three in the Diploma program**, across the Language Acquisition, Studies in Language and Literature, and The Arts subject groups. There is provision for both beginner or *ab initio*, and continuer programs. The programs also provide some support for community/first/heritage languages across all three program levels.

Also of importance in moving towards a national plan and strategy is consideration of **program pedagogical approaches and program models**. As indicated in all the major policies and reports, from the 1987 policy onwards, **bilingual and immersion programs offer the greatest opportunities** for substantial contact hours, meaningful engagement with and opportunities to use additional or home/first/heritage languages, and hence lead to the highest proficiency outcomes. Recognising that bilingual programs may not be possible in all schools, **opportunities for content based programs also provide means for increasing learning and use time** in an additional language, and **quality 'language as subject' programs, well taught by qualified teachers, and with sufficient time for meaningful remembering and advancing language skills, also have significant benefits**.

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What happens elsewhere?

Like contexts to Australia, in particular, provide much useful information around policy and strategy development, outcomes of strategies, and current approaches. International policies and practices have been reviewed as part of Research Project 2, and the following (Table 3) is a summary of some like and geographically near national approaches, policies and outcomes of recent initiatives.

Some nations and regions frame their approaches in relation to how many languages are included in education programs, with L1 being the first language or mother tongue of learners (with recognition there are many L1 languages in all nations), and L2 and L3 and so on referring to subsequent languages learned. While this classification system is identified here for contexts in which it is used, this is not a recommended 'shorthand' for Australian approaches, because of the diversity of first languages and in recognising that many young people are brought up bilingual, trilingual or plurilingual, translanguage across multiple languages in hybrid forms, and hence a hierarchy of language naming is not appropriate.

Table 3: *International approaches to languages education, policy and planning*

Country/Region	Policy/Approach	Outcomes/Comments
United Kingdom (UK)	<p>The UK has different policies for languages education in each of its countries England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.</p> <p>England 'Foreign' language learning is compulsory for 7-14 year olds. Middle school years (GCSE O level) have a widely adopted EBacc (English Baccalaureate), in which an additional language is required. Many community languages including Punjabi, Portuguese, and Arabic are available throughout the school years.</p> <p>Scotland Following the EU example, and its continued affiliation with the EU despite Brexit, Scotland has a 1+2 approach to languages education (first language plus two others). English (or another L1 language) plus one other language (L2) are to be learned from the first year of school, with the third language (L3) from Year 5 at the latest (it may be offered earlier). Several lessons a week are</p>	<p>Despite the requirement for languages learning, participation rates have either leveled or declined over the last decade. Brexit is influencing social opinion and perceived 'need' for learning additional languages.</p> <p>Scotland's commitment to languages education has met with high levels of take-up, with most primary schools offering the requisite three languages.</p> <p>Deep commitment to support of programs from the university sector, external partners and education leaders in school districts has been important for this success.</p>

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Country/Region	Policy/Approach	Outcomes/Comments
	<p>required for each language, and Content based approaches and bilingual programs (with considerably more hours) are encouraged.</p> <p>Gaelic, Scots and other community languages are supported as both first and additional languages.</p> <p>All teacher education students in initial teacher education (ITE) programs undertake programs with embedded languages elements, based on a National Framework for Languages, which provides principles and standards for languages education in university and school programs.</p> <p>Wales Wales is deeply focused on Welsh-English bilingualism to counter the loss of Welsh during the 20th century.</p> <p>Welsh-English bilingualism is established in all schools.</p> <p>The government is focused on increasing the learning of additional languages, with policy to support increased take-up, with a 'Global Futures' plan.</p> <p>Northern Ireland With two official languages, English and Irish, there are intentions of increasing the numbers of learners with bilingual skills.</p> <p>Additional languages are supported through a <i>Languages for the future</i> policy, which aims to engage more with global communities, languages and cultures.</p>	<p>Community languages require further support to achieve targets.</p> <p>Gaelic and Scots have highest levels of learners in regions where there are concentrations of many first speakers of these languages.</p> <p>Welsh learning has dramatically increased, and Welsh-English bilingualism is common in schools.</p> <p>There has been less success with increasing enrolments and proficiency in additional 'world' languages.</p> <p>Historical circumstances in Northern Ireland mean there is some resistance to the learning of Irish in some parts of the population.</p> <p>Additional languages also struggle in terms of take-up and successful outcomes, despite government policy to engage more with international neighbours, including through languages learning, reflecting social conditions in the country.</p>

part 1

Country/Region	Policy/Approach	Outcomes/Comments
Republic of Ireland (Ireland)	<p>Ireland, as an independent nation, remains a firm member of the EU. Irish and English are compulsory languages in a bilingual nation, and the EU 1+2 policy is adopted for languages education.</p> <p>Its <i>Languages Connect</i> policy provides very strong support for languages education, including exceptional levels of resourcing and support for languages teaching and learning, teacher education, language assistants, study abroad, and ongoing professional learning for teachers.</p> <p>High participation targets have been set, including 100% of students learning an additional language at the end of primary school, 100% of schools offering two additional languages in the transition year to secondary school, increasing by 25% to 45% numbers of school leavers who have studied two languages, and 20% of Higher Education students learning languages.</p>	<p>The well-resourced Irish program is the envy of neighbouring UK nations, for its levels of commitment and support to additional (foreign) languages as well as Irish and English.</p> <p>Exceptional results have followed its latest policy introduction.</p> <p>Targets for improved ‘learner attitude’ are unique to Ireland, and yet to be fully articulated, but provide an important element in promoting language learning benefits as social policy.</p>

part 1

Country/Region	Policy/Approach	Outcomes/Comments
New Zealand	<p>Te reo Māori, New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL), and English are recognised as official languages in New Zealand.</p> <p>The New Zealand Languages policy (2006) supports all citizens having access to and support to achieve oral competency and literacy in English, including as English for Speakers of Other Languages.</p> <p>The policy also articulates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All New Zealanders should have the opportunity to learn te reo Māori as a unique Indigenous language, and part of NZ's national heritage and identity. • New Zealand Sign Language should be available to all deaf people, and others should have the opportunity to learn NZSL. • Pacific languages including Cook Island Māori, Niuean and Tokelauan should be available to all people living in New Zealand from these heritage language and culture regions. Other Pacific languages should be supported through public and community language programs. • Community and heritage languages should be supported through public and community provision. • All New Zealanders should be encouraged and given opportunities to learn 'international' languages. 	<p>New Zealand has a long history of support for English, and Indigenous languages.</p> <p>Support for 'international' languages has been in academic contexts, within more general learning areas, without a specific learning area for languages. International language learning was boosted by the introduction in 2014 of a languages learning area curriculum and participation targets.</p> <p>Three strands in the curriculum support learning: communication, language knowledge, and cultural knowledge. This approach is less integrated than the ACL, for example. Only the communication strand is directly assessed, from Levels 1- 8, based on the EU CEFR. Level 1 is equivalent to A1: basic user; and Level 8 is equivalent to Level B1: independent user.</p> <p>New Zealand continues to struggle to achieve high level provision, participation and proficiency outcomes in additional (international) languages, but provides good support for Indigenous and regional (Pacific) languages. Teacher education in languages is an area of focus, from a low base of currently qualified languages teachers.</p>

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Country/Region	Policy/Approach	Outcomes/Comments
United States of America (US)	<p>Each US state determines its own languages education policy, with limited federal policy, and hence there is great variation.</p> <p>There is a requirement in core national curriculum for languages learning in Years 4, 8 and 12, and legislation on Native American languages seeks to preserve and reclaim Native American languages.</p> <p>There is support for 'dual language' (bilingual) programs, especially in early years, in some states, such as California, with Chinese and Spanish the most usual partner languages with English.</p> <p>The American Council on the teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has developed languages teaching guidelines adopted by over 40 states.</p>	<p>Around 70 million Americans (approximately 25% of the population) speak a language other than English at home. While plurilingualism of the population is increasing, primary and middle years' enrolments in languages have been decreasing over several decades.</p> <p>States such as California have highest levels of engagement, with most pre-schools and elementary (primary) schools offering bilingual programs, which have in the past been mandated.</p>
Canada	<p>Canada has an Official Languages Act (1969) which recognises English and French as official languages and Canada as a bilingual nation. A 1982 amendment includes a right to minority-language education for first language speakers of that language (mostly Indigenous languages, but also other community languages).</p> <p>An official national policy, the <i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i> was introduced in 2003 to increase by 50% the number of high school graduates proficient in French and English.</p> <p>While French as a Second Language (FSL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) are the most taught additional languages, 6% of students nationally learn Spanish, 5% German, 2% Japanese and 5% 'other' languages.</p>	<p>Provincial differences in policies reflect historical and dominant language and cultural conditions.</p> <p>Western provinces, including British Columbia and Alberta, with a more English history, have predominantly English programs, but with legislated access to French, and also offer a wide range of additional and Indigenous languages.</p> <p>Mid-Canadian provinces, such as Manitoba, are officially bilingual, but with increasingly English dominance, and there are full policies for Indigenous languages.</p> <p>Eastern provinces have a bilingual or French-oriented approach. Ontario has a regionalised language policy with one part English-only and the rest bilingual, but all citizens have a right to French programs and services. In Quebec, French is the only official language, but there are rights for English and Indigenous languages speakers as well.</p>

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Country/Region	Policy/Approach	Outcomes/Comments
Europe (European Union [EU])	<p>Plurilingualism is at the core of the EU policy, with 1+2 approach (first language plus two others for all learners): ‘Every European citizen should master two other languages in addition to their mother tongue’.</p> <p>The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) provides an international standard for describing language ability on a 6-point scale, from A1 for beginner level to C3 for language ‘mastery’. The framework assumes a linear progression of language learning and levels are not calibrated for age of learners.</p>	<p>While the overarching EU policy varies in application across EU nations, there is a very strong commitment to three languages for all learners.</p> <p>Across all 27 countries of the EU, around 99% of students in junior secondary school learn an additional language, and around 60% learn two. Luxembourg, Finland, Italy, Estonia and Romania have virtually 100% of students learning two or more additional languages.</p> <p>Finland, for example, requires Finnish or Swedish or another first language, plus Swedish or Finnish as an additional language, plus English from the first year of school (three languages for all). An additional ‘foreign’ language is introduced in Year 5, and options for up to two more additional languages at the commencement of secondary schooling. It is possible to be learning, or be taught in, five languages at one time.</p> <p>Many European nations use Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) learning approaches, including as mandated policy in some nations, such as Italy.</p> <p>Language as subject programs often have mandated hours, from 1.5 hours/week upwards, 2-5 hours a week being typical, and with several lessons a week.</p>

part 1

Country/Region	Policy/Approach	Outcomes/Comments
Singapore	<p>Singapore has four official languages: English, Malay, Chinese (Mandarin), and Tamil.</p> <p>English is the medium of instruction (MOI) in primary and secondary schools. All students must sit national examinations at primary and secondary level in English and at least one other language.</p> <p>English is studied in primary school as a first language, and mother tongue languages (Chinese, Malay or Tamil) are studied as second languages. The same languages extend into secondary years, with additional options for higher level languages learning (competitive entry), including in Chinese, Malay, French, German and Japanese. Recently more languages have been added as Third Language courses, including in Malay, Chinese, Indonesian, Arabic, French, German, Japanese and Spanish.</p>	<p>Bilingual education- English and a first language- is well supported in Singapore.</p> <p>An interesting development, however, is that increasingly English is becoming the 'first' language of Singaporeans, and more commonly used at home, even with previous Chinese, Malay and Tamil speaking and ethnic origin families. This has had the unexpected consequence of making the 'second' language examinations more difficult for those who are not using the language at home yet are identified in this ethnic stream, and is seen as detrimentally separating students from their ethnic origin language.</p>

From this scan of international contexts of languages education and provision, we see **consistent commitment to plurilingual approaches**, focusing first on **local needs**, such as bilingual and trilingual official policies, and responding to **first and community languages** in each nation; then extending to **international and global connection**, with additional languages. Every nation sees its role in the wider world, and preparation of learners for global futures as critical.

Australia's uniqueness, against this profile, provides important context for development of a national plan and strategy for languages education. **What are our own languages? How do we make these available to all Australians? How do we support community languages and additional languages for local and global purposes?** These, and other questions, frame stakeholder consultation and considerations as we move towards the national plan and strategy.

Summary

The timely introduction of this current project to work towards developing a National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education provides the opportunity to reflect on past and current practice, to evaluate successful approaches, and to plan for that which Lo Bianco identified as of 'the utmost importance' for Australia. The following sections explicate initial data findings from the research projects, and begin to frame suggestions for the national plan and strategy.

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Part 2: What are the preliminary findings from the data?

What the preliminary data reveal: Implications for the future

Research projects 1 and 2 collected and analysed a range of data from documentary and historical and current practice policies, projects, programs, plans and strategies. Findings from documentary and policy analysis have been discussed in Part 1 of this paper, and inform Part 3, on what a National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education might encompass. In this section, Part 2, data from teacher surveys, education jurisdictions and of university programs are considered.

Data gathering was undertaken through three processes:

1. **Nation-wide teacher surveys**
 - a. *Teacher Survey 1 - Program provision and student participation*
 - b. *Teacher Survey 2 - Teacher qualifications and experience*
 - c. *Teacher Survey 3 – Teaching and learning resources.*
2. **Requests for data from education jurisdictions** in all states and territories across Australia, on languages program provision and student participation in schools.
3. **Review of Languages Education Initial Teacher Education (ITE)** provision in universities via a scan of websites.

Section 1: Nation-wide teacher survey data

Two teacher surveys, one focusing on program provision and student participation (Teacher Survey 1 [TS1]), the other focusing on teacher background, qualifications and experience (Teacher Survey 2 [TS2]) were distributed nationwide through social media links shared through state and territory language teachers' associations, state and territory single language associations, and through Community Languages Australia and First Languages Australia. The aim of these surveys was to provide a snapshot of the state of languages **teaching and learning** across Australia, and an indicative profile of the language teaching **profession** across all states and territories, all jurisdictions, and all languages offered in schools, and in community languages programs.

Teacher participation data (for TS1 and TS2)

A total of 2188 teachers participated in TS1, and a total of 1107 teachers participated in TS2. Response rates to TS1 were much higher than for TS2.

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Table 4: Participation rates (responses per survey) TS1 and TS2

	Additional languages school teachers	Community languages teachers	First Language teachers	Totals
TS1	1564	557	67	2188
TS2	756	328	23	1107
TS3	389	188	34	611

Approximately 27% of respondents to the additional languages school teacher survey teach in Victoria, 20 % in NSW and Queensland, 12% each in WA and SA, and under 5% in Tasmania, ACT and the Northern Territory. Participation rates to TS2 were higher in Queensland (26%) and WA (17%), and lower in NSW and Victoria. Overall, 50% of respondents taught in secondary schools, over 25% in primary schools, and under 25% in F-12 or other year level sites. Over 56% of respondents teach in government schools, 27% in the independent sector, and over 17% in the Catholic sector. Respondents taught across all year levels with Years 7, 8 and 9 having the largest representation.

27% of respondents to TS1 teach Japanese, around 15% teach Italian, French and Chinese, under 10% teach German and Indonesian and under 5% Spanish. Responses were higher for French in TS2, and lower for Italian and Chinese. All these seven languages were represented across Primary, Secondary and F-12 sites and across the three sectors. Other languages represented in teacher responses were Auslan (22 respondents), Arabic (12), Korean (8), Greek (3) and Vietnamese (3).

The data gathered from TS1 and TS2 additional languages school teachers are discussed in relation to six major themes:

- 1. Program provision**
- 2. Student participation**
- 3. Teacher profiles**
- 4. Teacher education and qualifications**
- 5. Teaching experience**
- 6. Resourcing language learning**

Data gathered from community languages and First Languages teachers are summarised separately.

part 2

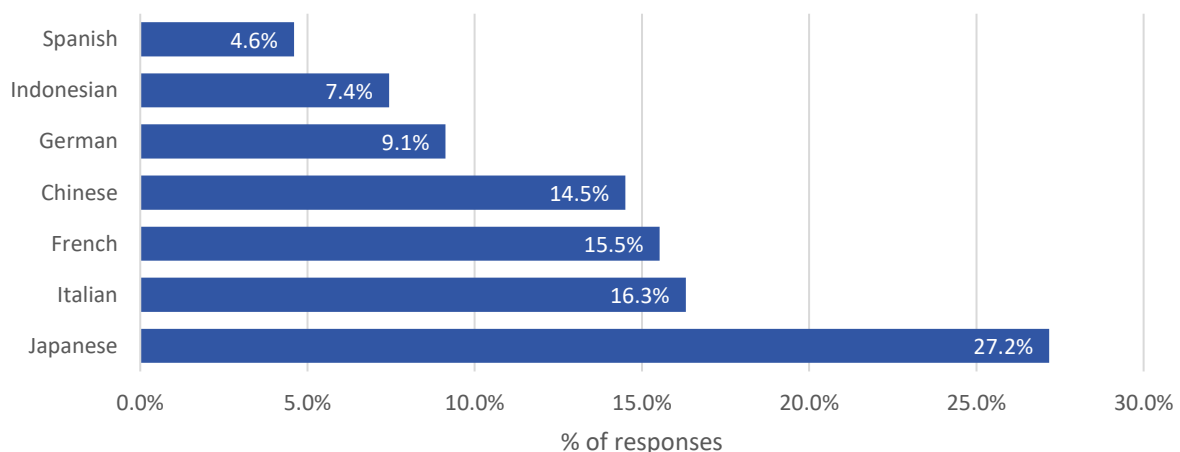
Additional languages data

Theme 1: Program provision

1.1 Statistical data on program provision

Based on the responses to the two surveys, an indicative profile of languages education in schools is provided. Japanese is by far the most taught language of respondents, representing nearly one third of all programs in the primary and secondary years. Italian, French, and Chinese each constitute approximately 15% of program provision, German and Indonesian each representing under 10%, and Spanish 5% (see Figure 1, below). These seven languages represent the vast majority of programs on offer in Australian schools. Other languages taught in schools include Auslan, Greek, Vietnamese, Arabic and Korean. Responses from teachers of other languages are incorporated into the data analysis but not addressed separately here.

Figure 1: Survey 1: Language taught by respondents, as percentages of responses



Individual language provision is not equally spread across all states and territories or jurisdictions of the respondents. The majority of Japanese programs are in Queensland (30%) and Victoria (over 20%); Italian programs are stronger in Victoria (nearly 35%), and in WA (nearly 35%); French programs are strongest in Victoria (over 30%), and in NSW (nearly 25%); Chinese programs are strong in Victoria, NSW and Queensland (over 20% each).

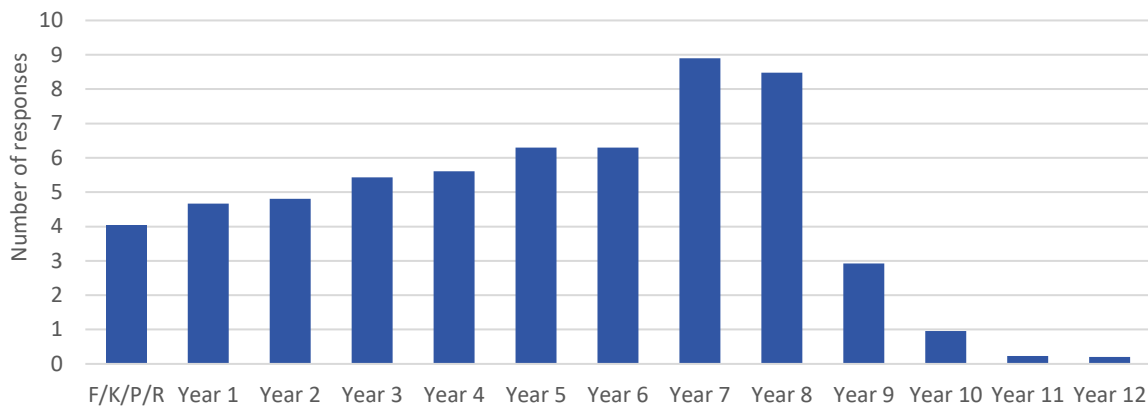
Over 60% of Japanese programs are in government schools, French programs are common in both government (over 45%) and independent schools (under 35%), Italian programs are available in both government and Catholic schools (over 40% each), over 50% of Chinese programs are in the independent sector, and nearly 40 % in the government sector.

Language programs are typically compulsory in the primary years and are available in an increasing number of sites from the Foundation Year through to Year 6. In the secondary years compulsory

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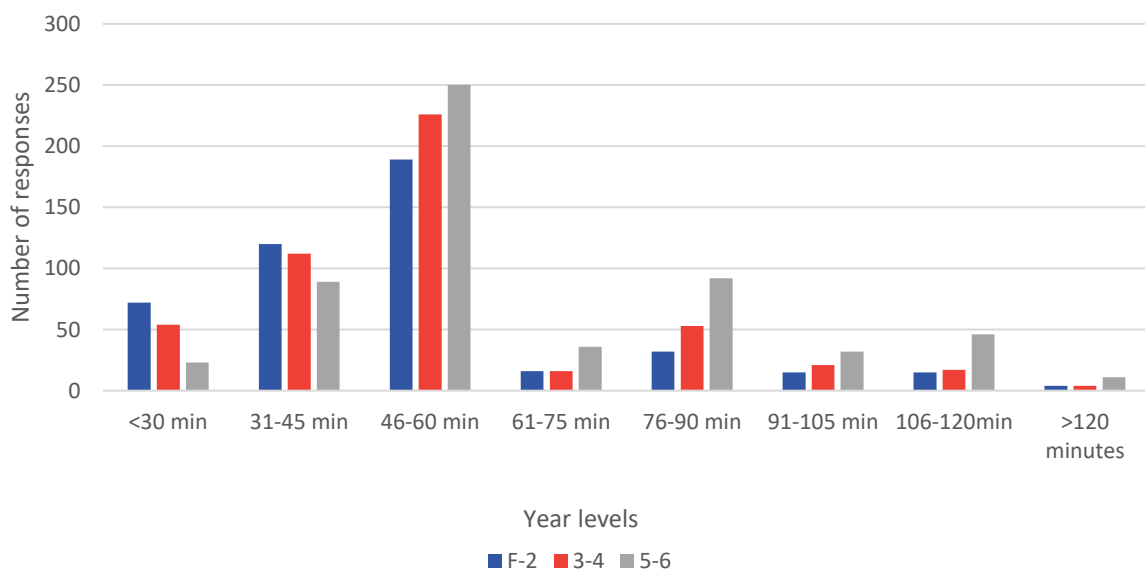
programs drop rapidly after Years 7 and 8, reducing significantly from Year 9 and through to Year 10 (see Figure 2, below). Compulsory programs in the senior secondary years are typically International Baccalaureate (IB) programs.

Figure 2: *Compulsory years of language study in respondents' schools, by number of responses (Survey 1)*



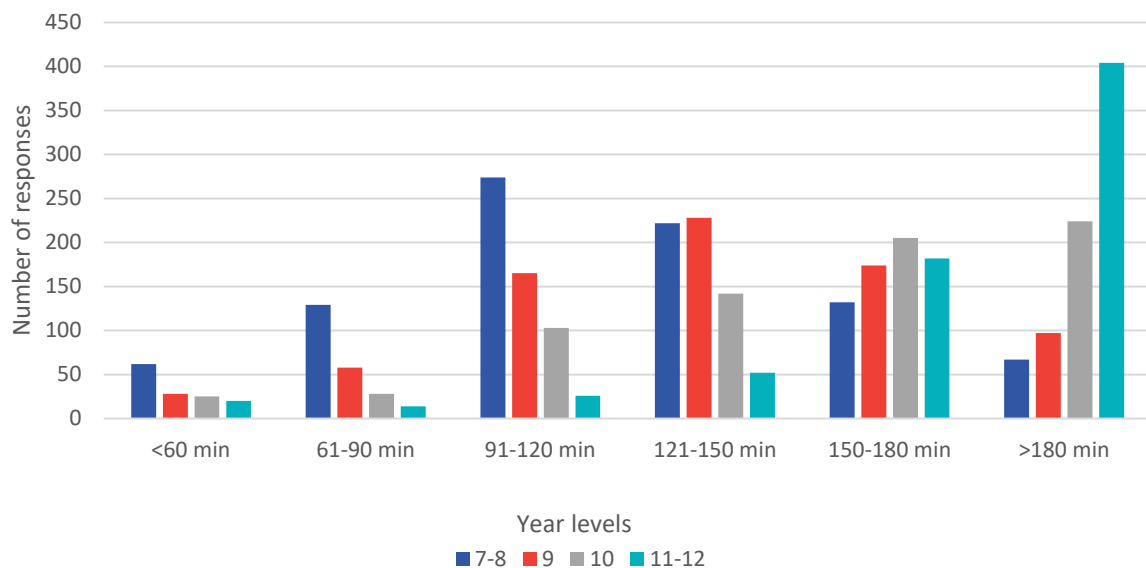
Time on task (learning time) in primary programs ranges from around 30 minutes to greater than 120 minutes a week, often increasing from 30 to 60 minutes from early years (F-2) through to the end of primary years (Years 5-6). The most common amount of time per week, across all primary years, is 45-60 minutes (see Figure 3, below). In secondary schools, the majority of programs in Year 7 and 8 are between 90 and 150 minutes a week, rising to over three hours a week in Years 11-12 (see Figure 4, below).

Figure 3: *Time on task per week across year levels, by number of responses: Primary years*



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Figure 4: Time on task per week across year levels, by number of responses: Secondary years



Composite classes (across two or more year levels) are a common experience for around 66% of teachers in the primary years, across all year levels, and for 23% of teachers in the secondary years, particularly in the senior years.

1.2 Qualitative data on program provision

Qualitative data in relation to program provision provide teacher responses to questions about the organisation and delivery of their language program and the challenges in teaching their particular language. These responses are discussed to identify issues arising in both primary and secondary programs. Four common themes emerge:

1.2.1 The challenge of teaching a language program in a context where resource allocation is limited

Teachers noted a general lack of appreciation of the educational importance or value of languages education in relation to overall language and literacy development. Teachers commented on the low value attributed to their program at all levels, in the community (including media), among school leadership, among other staff and by parents and students in particular. They spoke of the challenge of competition at school for scarce resources, particularly budgets, teaching space (a dedicated classroom) and sufficient time to achieve their curriculum goals. Competition often occurred between languages in sites where more than one language was offered. As a result, teachers spoke of the energy they, individually, needed to expend in both defending and promoting their program, particularly when they are the sole language teacher, and especially in a regional context.

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1.2.2 The challenge of meeting curriculum expectations in a context of low time allocation, especially in the primary years

Teachers, particularly primary school teachers, question how they can provide for the curriculum described in low time allocation situations, below that assumed in order to achieve the achievement standards described.

1.2.3 The challenge of teaching composite classes, for composite year levels or composite in terms of learner language background

Primary teachers commented that teaching composite, mixed year level classes was a challenge. They identified issues including the need for teaching content across year levels, and then assessing and reporting on individual students' progress. Secondary teachers in particular, with low enrolments in senior secondary years, are faced with the challenge of teaching across year levels and often across second language and background language syllabuses/curricula in the one classroom.

1.2.4 The challenge of teaching in complex classroom contexts that contain learners of diverse learning experiences and language background

While diversity of learners is unavoidable, the challenges for teachers are that developmental pathways for learners are difficult to establish, and resources to assist in providing meaningful learning experiences for all are very difficult to find or produce. Given these complexities, teachers are concerned there is a lack of locally produced, pedagogically useful materials which are contemporary and relevant to learners at each stage of learning. Teachers express a need for assistance in accessing materials that offer differentiated learning, recognising the diversity of learning experiences and language background of learners, and engaging learners with often limited motivation to engage with language learning as it is currently presented.

1.3 Considerations arising from program provision survey responses

1.3.1 Improving program provision, including time on task and curriculum expectations

There is a need to consider explicit (mandated) minimum time allocations for compulsory years of language learning at both primary, and junior secondary levels in particular, and to align curriculum more explicitly to these times. Such times must be connected to research on meaningful overall minimal time, and on frequency of lessons, for retention of information.

Given the additional challenges of composite classes in the primary years in particular, a curriculum model that does not assume a singular developmental pathway or progression in language learning and use, nor assume that one curriculum construct is valid and useful for all learners at all stages from the Foundation Year to Year 10 (or 12) may be desirable. Such a model could acknowledge that learners may begin (or change) languages at, in general, the Foundation Year, Year 3, or Year 7, and may exit a language at Year 6 (earlier if they change schools), and/or at a post compulsory point, typically the end of Year 8 or 9. Consequently (and as discussed later) the reality that learners continuing from primary school often find themselves in beginner classes in Year 7 can be acknowledged and responded to by changing the design of curriculum so that while past learning is not lost, learners understand they are

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approaching language learning from a new, different perspective with a different set of challenges and curriculum expectations.

1.3.2 Supporting teachers in providing quality languages programs

Language teachers require support to provide quality languages programs. They require community and school level strategies that enhance appreciation of the educational value of language learning within the school curriculum and within the community more broadly. A greater focus on the educational and social value of bi/plurilingualism, of the contribution of language learning to overall language and literacy development, of celebrating and valuing the diversity of languages that are already present in our languages classrooms are all important strategies to enhance and assist teachers in achieving these aims. This consideration should include the development of rationales that are specific to the educational benefits of language learning at different stages of learning – in the F-2 years, in Years 3-6, in Years 7-8 (as a compulsory program, typically) and in Years 9-10 and beyond. Such rationales should also focus on the social aspect of building understanding of linguistic and cultural diversity within the Australian community, and in the local community, including the school itself.

1.3.3 Developing a relevant, contemporary, learner-centred, differentiated and educationally challenging curriculum resource base for key languages at each stage of learning

Teachers require assistance in accessing materials that will facilitate learning and engagement in the complex contexts in which they teach. Changes in teaching technologies, in understandings of forms of meaningful engagement with language and culture, of means of social interaction and engagement with others beyond the classroom all require an immediate and coordinated response, aligned to changes in curriculum design and learning pathways. Investments in a coherent, language-specific set of curriculum resources are required to facilitate a renewed interest in language learning, while supporting teachers in making the often difficult transition to new learning technologies and modes of communication that most learners take for granted in their own lives.

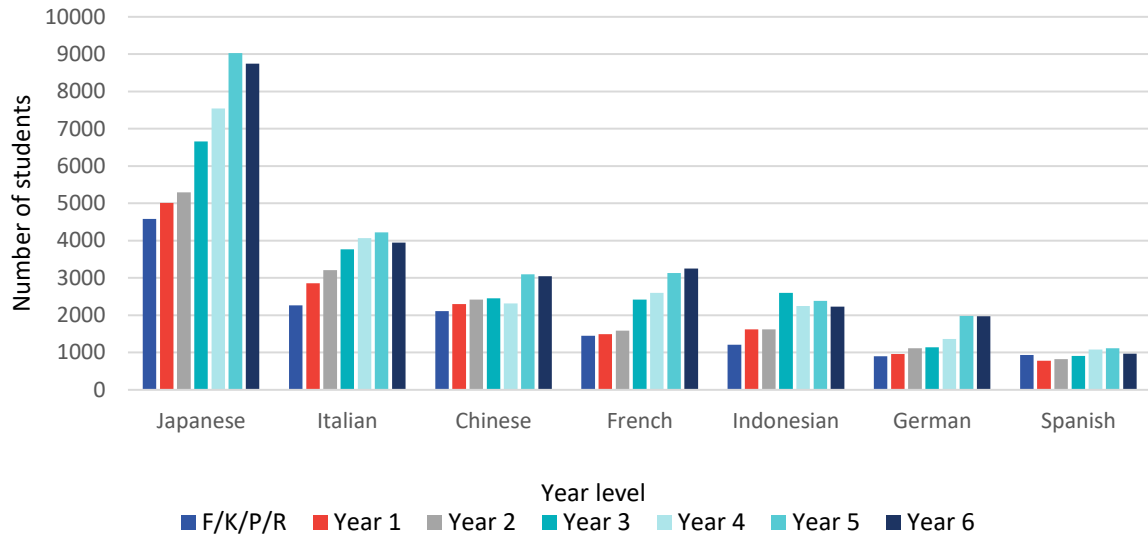
Theme 2: Student participation

2.1 Statistical data on student participation

The teacher survey data indicate that student participation in languages programs in the primary years nationwide tends to grow incrementally (often with new entry points) from the Foundation Year through to Year 6. Japanese is by far the most commonly taught language (as reported by survey respondents) in the Years F-6, followed by Italian, then Chinese, French, Indonesian, German, and Spanish (see Figure 5, below).

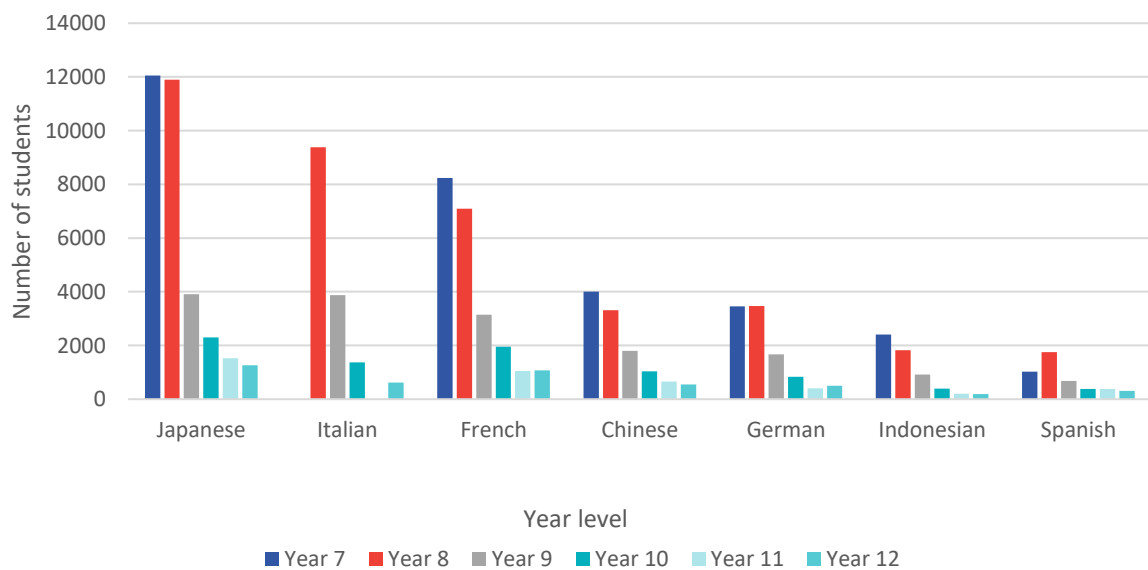
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Figure 5: Student participation numbers by language and year level as reported by survey respondents: Primary years



In the secondary years, student participation is again (as reported by respondents) highest in Japanese, followed by Italian, then French, Chinese, German, Indonesian, and Spanish. Student participation is highest in Year 7, remains relatively strong in Year 8, then declines significantly in Years 9-12, as language study becomes no longer compulsory (see Figure 6, below).

Figure 6: Student participation numbers by language and year level, as reported by survey respondents: Secondary years



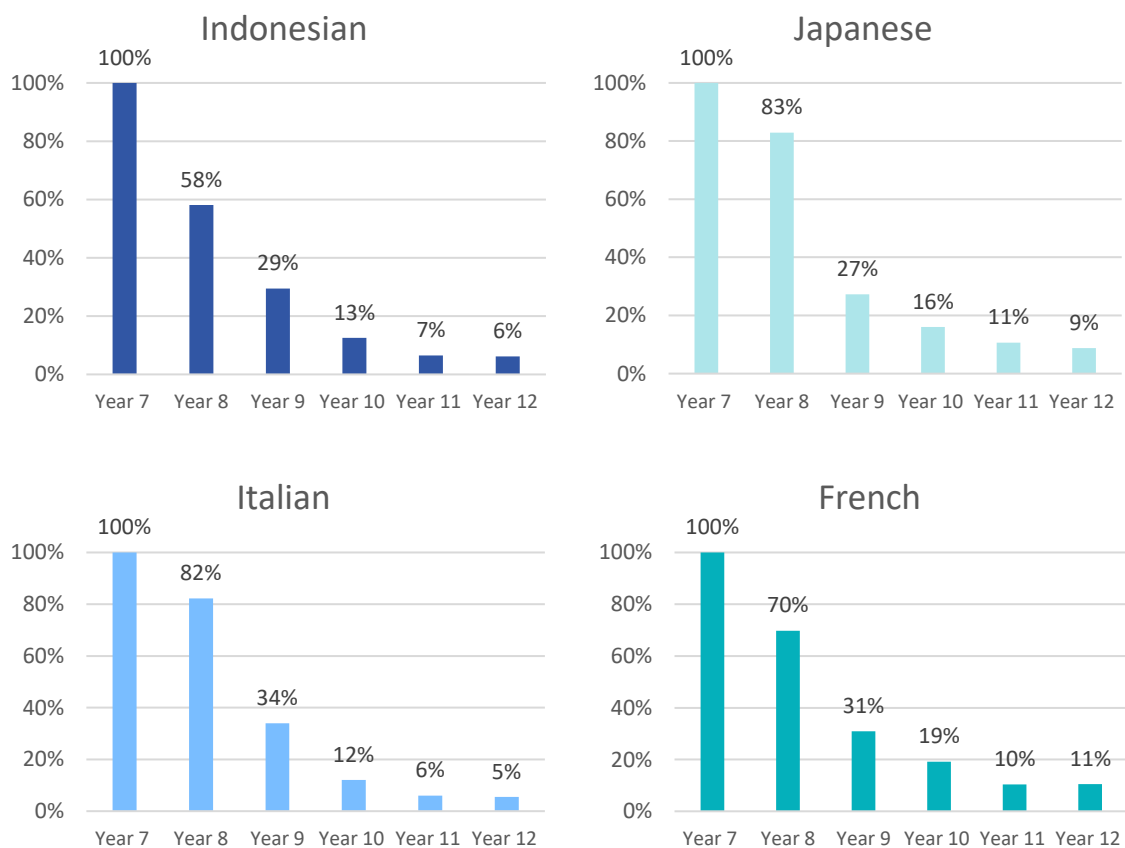
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Three areas of response are discussed below.

2.1.1 Attrition rates

Attrition rates in secondary schools are significant. Participation rates in Year 9 have in general fallen to a third of those in Year 7. Retention rates in Years 7-9 are strongest in German (40%) and Spanish (41%). The lowest retention rates (highest attrition) between Years 7-9 are seen in Japanese (27% retention) and Indonesian (29% retention). Participation rates in Year 12, as a percentage of Year 7 participation are highest in Spanish (19%) and German (12%), and lowest in Italian (5%) and Indonesian (6%). Higher participation rates in Year 11 and 12 are likely due to new enrolments in *ab-initio* or beginners' courses at Year 11, especially in Spanish (see Figures 7-10, below). Overall retention rates in languages education remain highly problematic. At the point when language learning is no longer compulsory, participation drops dramatically, such that by senior secondary years, approximately 90% of students have left, or have made alternative subject choices that restrict their ability to continue with languages learning.

Figures 7, 8, 9 and 10: Retention rates as a percentage of Year 7 enrolments, selected languages, as reported by survey respondents: Secondary



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2.1.2 Learner language background

There is evidence in many languages of participation by learners for whom the target language is a heritage language, or a first language, still commonly used at home and in the community. Many of these students attend community language schools as well as attending classes in mainstream school contexts. Numbers of learners with some language background are limited for most languages. The two languages with the most pronounced presence of learners with some language background are Italian and Chinese. Chinese teachers report approximately 10% first language learners and 20% background language learners across the years in primary school, slightly lower participation (8% first language and 16% background learners) in junior secondary years, and higher participation (24% first language and 21% background language learners) in the senior secondary years. In Italian, teachers report 2% first language and 15% background language learners in the primary years, 3% first language and 13% background learners in junior secondary, and 5% first language and 24% background language in the senior secondary years. It is worth noting that these data are based on teacher interpretations of learner background. At secondary level teachers may assign background based on course eligibility rather than actual language ability, resulting in a higher proportion of second language learners being identified than is actually the case. This is discussed further below.

2.1.3 Transition from primary to secondary school

Survey data shows that 75% of teachers in junior secondary programs report having learners with prior learning experiences in their Year 7 classes. In order to address this need, the Australian Curriculum provides a dedicated curriculum pathway for language learners in order to facilitate transition from primary school through to at least early secondary school. The extent to which teachers actually apply the F-10 framework in Years 7-10 is discussed further below.

2.2 Qualitative data on student participation

Qualitative data in relation to student participation were addressed through open ended questions in relation to transition arrangements, differentiated teaching for language background learners, and through some anecdotal comments about compulsion and elective programs in the challenges section referred to previously. Some common themes emerged:

2.2.1 Transition arrangements: The challenges of building on prior language learning in the junior secondary years

Teachers in primary schools commented on the lack of progress toward meeting curriculum standards due to low time on task, non-linear pathways (composite classes), and a general lack of adequate resources, as previously indicated. In addressing the needs of students transitioning to secondary school language programs, secondary teachers' responses indicate that while they wish to recognise prior learning (as outlined in the Australian Curriculum), it is challenging, and often unrealistic, to do so. Teachers offer extension activities to transitioning learners in Year 7, but argue they typically 'cover the primary school program in six weeks', given they have higher frequency and duration of lessons than in primary school. Teachers suggest learners 'haven't retained much' (consistent with the 'forgetting' principle- see Appendix 1) or have little grammatical knowledge on which to build a

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differentiated program. One teacher in an F-12 school noted that new Year 7 entrants into a continuing language program were effectively provided with a six-week transition program before engaging fully in the language program with students continuing from primary school.

2.2.2 Differentiation: The challenge of addressing the needs of learners with prior knowledge of the language, in an otherwise 'second language' program

Addressing the needs of heritage learners, such as those born in Australia who still use their mother tongue at home with parents or grandparents, or learners who migrated to Australia in recent years, who use the language at home, and attend, or have attended, community school, is largely a language specific issue. As mentioned previously, recognition of the needs of such heritage or background learners is distorted somewhat in secondary school by eligibility criteria at senior secondary levels. It is possible that a child who speaks Chinese (Mandarin) at home, who attends community school regularly, and arrived in Australia as a child is eligible to undertake the Continuers (Second Language) examination at Year 12. Such students are thus 'eligible' to be defined as second language learners and are able to undertake the second language program in junior secondary school. Teachers recognise the challenges and potential disincentives to non-background learners of this situation, and typically attempt some form of differentiation to keep all learners motivated and engaged in the classroom.

2.2.3 Learner motivation and the issue of compulsion to learn a language

Teachers in primary schools typically have mandated programs through to Year 6, though with different starting points (the Foundation Year or Year 3, most often), and time on task limited to 30-60 minutes a week in many cases. Primary teachers note learner motivation and engagement to be issues, particularly in the upper primary years. Junior secondary teachers ponder the issue of compulsion as a means of retaining students in languages programs but recognise that compulsion is not the solution to low motivation or longer term retention of more learners in their program. Teachers realise that in a context where support for language learning (especially at home) is low, compulsion is unlikely to lead to improved outcomes, in language learning or in motivation to continue language study beyond the compulsory years. Rather, teachers look for innovations in curriculum design and in resource development that can offer a more meaningful experience of language learning in the compulsory years that might lead to more engaged and motivated learners continuing to study the language into the post compulsory years.

2.3 Considerations arising from student participation survey responses

2.3.1 Differentiating curriculum between primary school and secondary school

Addressing the needs of learners who transition to secondary school, while recognised in flexible curriculum progressions in the ACL, remains a challenge for teachers. Rather than providing an alternative, differentiated pathway for continuing learners, which teachers find unrealistic and impractical, a clear differentiation in curriculum offering between primary and secondary school may be an alternative solution.

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Teachers recognise that the nature of teaching and the learning experiences in primary and junior secondary school are different, the time on task may differ substantially, and learners' needs and interests have changed as well. A curriculum framework with different goals that reflect the learning needs and immersive language experiences of learners in the primary years, and a different framework for learners from Year 7, which takes a more conceptual, comparative perspective on language learning and communication, may provide for easier transition and more meaningful learning opportunities and realistic outcomes at both stages of schooling.

2.3.2 Addressing the needs of learners with both prior learning experience or home background in the language

Delivering a highly differentiated curriculum in the one classroom for transitioning students (in the F-10 pathway) or for students with prior knowledge of the language (the background learner pathway), alongside the second language (Year 7-10) pathway is clearly a challenge for many teachers.

Providing meaningful and integrated classroom experiences in the context of such diversity may rest in the provision of a more targeted set of learner-centred, age-appropriate resources that facilitate growth in understanding for novice learners and opportunities for extension for more advanced learners. Languages that are widely spoken in the community clearly need resources that acknowledge diversity of learner background and experience.

All secondary languages programs need to anticipate the presence of learners transitioning from primary school. It might be useful to forgo the assumption that learning in the primary years provides a solid foundation for extension in the secondary years. Instead, actual classroom experiences designed for both primary curriculum and junior secondary curriculum may need to be more clearly differentiated, to ensure learners understand and appreciate that language learning in both primary and secondary school represents a different, but equally challenging and valuable, experience. For example, language learning in the primary years could focus on oral interactive, immersive experiences, without extensive focus on rule formation or extensive written language activity. The secondary program could focus on the science of language, developing the metalanguage and metacognitive skills and higher order literacy skills to explore, analyse and compare languages and cultures, as they build control of language structures and features to engage in their own personal meaning making in the target language in diverse contexts.

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Theme 3: Teacher profile

3.1 Statistical data on teacher background

3.1.1 Age and gender

The language teaching profession is overwhelmingly female, 86% of all respondents to the surveys. The age profile shows over 20% of respondents aged under 40, over 30% aged 40-49, over 30% 50-59, and just under 15% over the age of 60 (see Figure 11, below). The age profile varies across languages: German and Indonesian (15%) have the lowest proportions of teachers under the age of 40. Chinese has the youngest age profile, with 40% of teachers under the age of 40, followed by Japanese (30%) and Spanish (30%) (see Figure 12, below).

Figure 11: *Age profile of language teacher survey respondents*

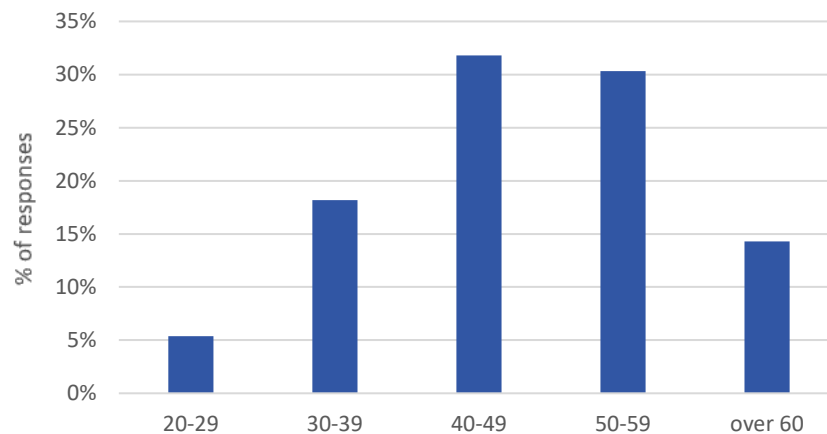
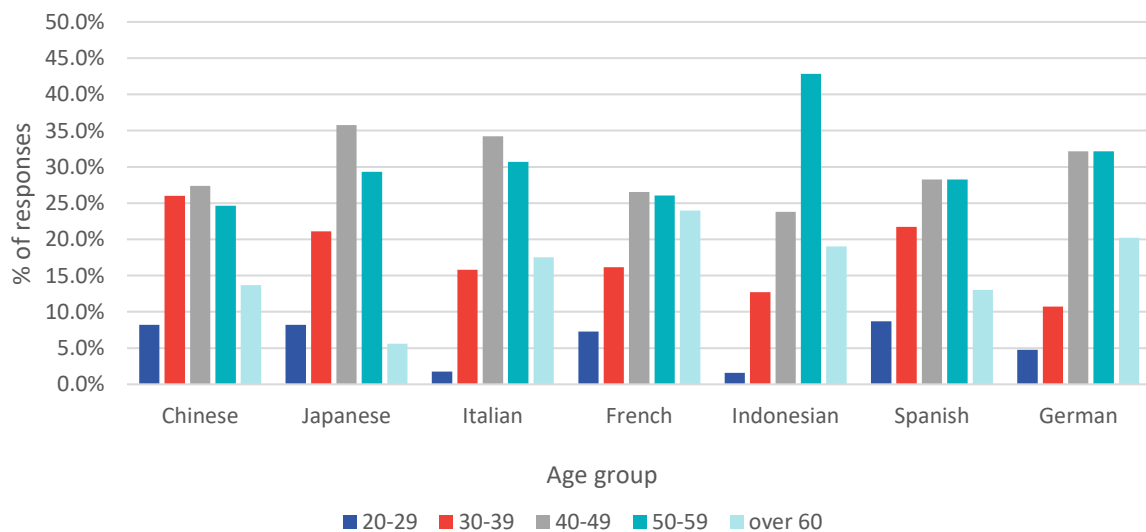


Figure 12: *Age profile of language teacher survey respondents, by language*



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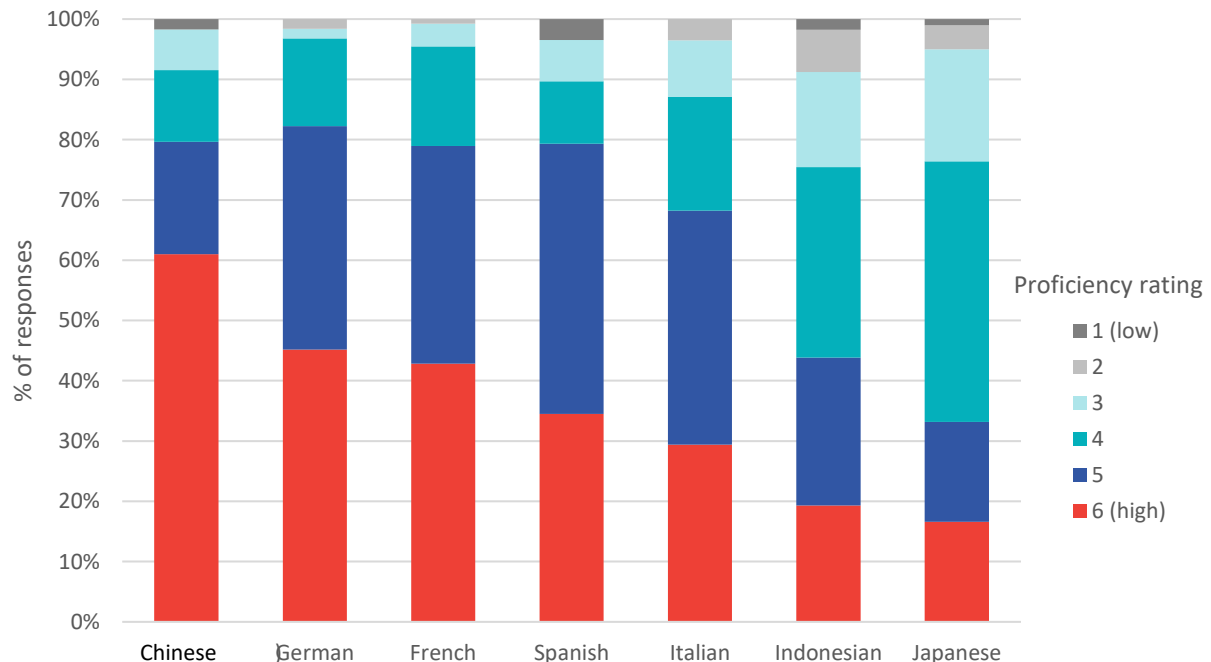
3.1.2 Country of birth

63% of all respondents report being born in Australia. Of the 37% born overseas, 38% of these were born in Asia, 43% in Europe (including the UK), 19% elsewhere. Of those born in Asia, 40% were born in China, 24% in Japan. Those born in Europe are widely distributed- 27% UK, 25% France, 15% Italy, 12 % Germany. Over 65% of Chinese teachers are born overseas, as are 40% of French teachers, 25% of Indonesian teachers, and less than 25% of Japanese and Italian teachers.

3.1.2 Teacher self-reported proficiency levels

Teachers were invited to self-report their proficiency level on a scale of 1 (low) to 6 (high) (see Figure 13, below). Levels of proficiency varied considerably across languages between primary and secondary teachers, and those teaching in F-12 schools (often in the independent or Catholic sectors). Highest proficiency levels (Level 6) were recorded by Chinese teachers at all levels (over 50%). Only 10% of Japanese teachers in secondary schools rated themselves at Level 6, as did 30% of Indonesian secondary teachers. In primary schools under 5% of Indonesian teachers and under 10% of Italian teachers rated their proficiency at Level 6. 30% of Japanese and Indonesian teachers in primary schools rated their proficiency at the lower levels (Levels 1-3), along with 25% of primary Italian teachers. Low (Levels 1-3) proficiency ratings were reported by 15% of secondary Japanese and Indonesian teachers.

Figure 13: *Respondent teachers' self-rated proficiency levels by language*



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3.1.3 Language teacher proficiency certification

Teachers were asked to describe any qualification or certification they have in their language, and the level of achievement (including interpreting and translation qualifications). The responses indicate a wide variety of means by which teachers certify their proficiency, from undergraduate bachelor degrees, to National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) interpreting certifications, in-country short courses, to more recognised certification systems available internationally. Teachers of European languages typically refer to language specific versions of the EU Framework, such as Project Italian Language Dante Alighieri (PLIDA) for Italian, Diplôme d'études en Langue Française/Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française (DELFDALF) for French and Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera (DELE) for Spanish. Japanese teachers overwhelmingly refer to the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) scales to report their certification. A limited number of Chinese teachers refer to the Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK) certification system. Indonesian teachers show no clear reference point for determining their proficiency, besides in-country tertiary programs.

3.2 Considerations arising from teacher profile survey responses

3.2.1 Ensuring a highly proficient and sustainable workforce

Indonesian, Italian and Japanese programs are mostly taught by teachers born in Australia, with high numbers reporting relatively low levels of proficiency in the language they teach, in particular in Japanese secondary programs and Indonesian and Italian primary programs.

3.2.2 A system of proficiency certification to support teachers to access language maintenance and development programs

Overall, there is a need to provide more opportunities for teachers to maintain or upgrade teacher proficiency in the languages they teach, at all levels. Quality languages programs depend upon proficient teachers confident in their ability to maximise their own and learners' target language use in the classroom. The presence of home users of many languages also places significant demands on teachers for whom the target language is not their first language/mother tongue. Monitoring and developing language teachers' proficiency levels over time is a critical factor in improving the job satisfaction and learning experiences in language classrooms. This is not to suggest that teachers need to be of a certain proficiency level to become a teacher of a language. This is not suggesting any intention of introducing a gate-keeping exercise. Rather, a system of common or preferred certification of proficiency levels would be beneficial to understanding and supporting teachers to build proficiency over time, once in the workforce. European languages have the well-established European Framework (CEFR) to refer to, the JLPT is now well accepted for Japanese. Consideration should be given to considering the HSK system for measuring proficiency in Chinese. Some common and agreed certification system for Indonesian is required. Other systems for additional languages such as Arabic, Korean, and other emerging languages, will also need to be investigated.

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3.2.3 Targeted strategies to support proficiency upgrades

There is clearly a need to provide targeted language proficiency upgrade opportunities for specific language teacher cohorts. The data suggest that if programs in the languages Indonesian, Italian and Japanese, in particular, are to continue to prosper into the future, strategies are needed to both encourage teachers into these language classrooms, and to ensure these language teacher cohorts have access to quality language learning opportunities, both as part of their teacher education courses and in-service professional learning.

Theme 4: Teacher education and qualifications

4.1 Data on teacher qualifications and tertiary experiences

4.1.1 University language experience

70% of respondents report undertaking studies of their *language* at a university in Australia, mostly for three to four years, often as a languages major in a Bachelor degree, or similar. This includes 80% of Japanese teachers and 77% of Italian teachers, but only 55% of Chinese teachers. 34% of teachers undertook language studies overseas, with the majority undertaking these studies for less than one year, including 75% of Japanese teacher respondents and 65% of Italian teacher respondents. 20% of language teachers undertook a full degree overseas.

4.1.2 Initial teacher education (ITE) experiences

Most teachers have a Bachelor of Education or Teaching, a Graduate Diploma in Education of Teaching, or a Master of Teaching degree, as Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs, all necessary to gain teacher registration in Australia. Most teachers indicate they undertook two languages pedagogy/methodology subjects/course/units (trimester/semester length program typically as one eighth of a full year of study) as part of their teaching degree.

The experience of initial teacher education is at some considerable distance in time for many teachers, due to the age profile and number of years teaching of the cohort. In more recent times, dedicated pathways or specialisations have become available, though there are still many language teacher education programs that are combined with and taught by English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) specialists. Pathways and experiences differ for primary and secondary teachers. Primary teachers typically undertake an undergraduate degree often without any specialised instruction in a particular subject area, though this should now be changing with the requirement for specialisations in all primary programs. Secondary teachers typically undertake a graduate education degree. This is the same for Australian born students, and international students studying to teach their first language/mother tongue in Australian schools.

Teachers identified some issues in their teacher education programs including ‘too much theory’, a lack of contemporary relevance of content, and a lack of language specific pedagogy in generic teacher education programs. Many teachers commented on their satisfaction with the language teacher

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education program experienced in specific tertiary contexts, others found the experience inadequate in preparing them for the realities of languages classrooms. One feature of initial teacher education that was often mentioned is the value of professional experience placements over extensive coursework in preparing for classroom teaching. Teachers highlighted the important mentoring role that experienced, supervising teachers of their language provided them on site.

4.1.3 In-country experiences

88% of respondents stated they have undertaken some form of in-country experience (target language and/or culture country) in the last 10 years, nearly 50% of those in the recent past (2018-19). Popular reasons for in-country visits include leisure, visiting family, and leading school trips. The average length of in-country visits varies, with 35% of visits being under two weeks and nearly 45% being over three weeks. Italian and French teachers are more likely to stay longer (more than three weeks), Japanese and Chinese teachers are likely to stay for shorter periods (less than two weeks). Japanese and Chinese teachers are likely to have visited more recently, Italian and French visits are likely to have been more than five years ago. There is a small but important portion (15%) of all language teachers who have not been in-country in the last 10 years. The COVID restrictions in 2020 and 2021 have meant virtually no Australian teachers have been overseas during these years.

4.1.4 In-service teacher education and professional learning experiences

Languages teachers undertake a range of ongoing in-service professional learning. This comes from a range of providers and covers varied content. The main categories of professional learning undertaken by languages teachers are language proficiency development, in-country study, engaging with the curriculum, exploring languages pedagogies and undertaking studies for professional advancement.

Language study undertaken by teachers may be in Australia, online or in-country. Language courses take a range of forms, including ongoing courses such as weekly classes over the course of a term or longer; online self-study courses; intensive courses during school holidays; and immersion courses over a week or weekend.

Teachers often work towards language certifications such as DALF (Diplôme approfondi de langue française), DELE (Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera) or JLPT (Japanese Language Proficiency Test). As well as maintaining their own language proficiency for teaching, teachers also undertake grammar refresher courses.

Intensive and immersion courses may be offered locally or (before COVID restrictions) in-country. Other in-country study may include cultural learning and specific language pedagogy courses, as well as teaching exchanges or homestay experience. Although self-funded in-country study may be an option for some, other teachers seek or have sought out support from government programs such as the Endeavour Language Teacher Fellowship (ELTF), from cultural associations, or in connection with school exchange programs. For students who are studying while teaching, the shift of funding for international engagement to the New Colombo Plan (NLP), has led to more students in universities

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undertaking 'cultural' visits to targeted international destinations. Language courses (majors) in universities often still require an in-country period of study.

Teachers undertake professional learning related to languages curriculum when there are changes in curriculum in their jurisdiction, or when specific programs are offered in their schooling sector. Examples of specific programs include the Languages Professional Learning Program in South Australia or the Many Languages, One Methodology program in Western Australia. Additionally, senior secondary teachers undertake professional learning in curriculum and assessment through their state assessment bodies such as QCAA, SACE and VCAA. The foci of these include moderation, marking, exam setting and oral examinations. Teachers in specific systems, such as IB or Steiner/Waldorf schools, also undertake training related to those approaches.

Professional learning related to languages pedagogies is often connected to named pedagogies or systems. Of particular current interest to teachers are AIM (Accelerated Integrative Method), CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) and TPRS (Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling), while ELLA (Early Learning Languages Australia) and TCI (Teaching with Comprehensible Input) are also the focus of some current professional learning. Professional advancement is another important dimension of learning for languages teachers. This may include learning about the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Professional Standards for Teachers in the context of languages education, working towards Lead Teacher certification in relation to those standards, or undertaking leadership training with a view to positions of responsibility within a school.

4.2 Considerations arising from teacher education and qualifications

4.2.1 Initial teacher education in languages

Initiatives undertaken at national and state levels in relation to initial teacher education have seen improvements in the quality and structure of language teacher education programs. However, there is much variability across tertiary institutions and there is a need for a model of expectations or of good practice, for teachers undertaking education courses for primary or secondary educators, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level. Scottish Deans of Education have implemented a requirement for languages education preparation for all teachers, and this is a model worth considering. The promotion of double degrees in language and education (e.g. a Bachelor of Languages/Bachelor of Education) should be seen as a useful means of developing proficient and qualified teachers for all levels of schooling. The difficulty tertiary institutions have in providing any language-specific methodology may be addressed by the development of plug-in online modules shared nationally in teaching a particular language in primary and secondary contexts. The AFMLTA, First Languages Australia, Community Languages Australia and the Languages and Cultures Network of Australian Universities (LCNAU) may be able to work with Councils of Deans of Education and universities to assist with such provision. Such modules could be integrated into current degree structures in a consistent manner to ensure all teachers have a minimum standard of attention to the particulars of their own language teaching before graduating and entering the classroom.

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4.2.2 Professional experience placements

High quality mentoring/supervising in schools in quality programs reflecting contemporary practices is an essential component for preparing the future languages teaching workforce. Coordination of professional experience placement allocations, of identifying willing and experienced mentors/supervisors, and ensuring local and regional coordination of the placement process are also essential to ensure consistent and high quality support, in what teachers identify as one of the most important components of their initial teacher education experience.

4.2.3 In-service in-country experiences

While the prospects of in-country visits do not appear to be feasible in the immediate future, teachers do identify the opportunity for visiting countries where the language is spoken as an important part of their proficiency maintenance and their appreciation of contemporary language, culture and society.

Support for teachers with limited in-country experience and relatively low proficiency must be seen as an important component of ongoing professional learning. While school trips are an important source of opportunity for in-country access especially for secondary teachers, these seldom allow for sufficient time to focus on their own professional learning needs. A strategy for providing scholarships for significant in-country study or travel for those most in need would be a valuable contribution to the overall capabilities of the language teacher workforce. A number of universities and language associations offer such programs, so wider take-up of these through scholarships would provide immediate access to such opportunities. Such a strategy should necessarily be targeted at key groups, prioritising those without background in the language or having lived in the country, and be language specific in understanding the needs of the targeted groups, establishing clear eligibility criteria and specific, assessed outcomes.

4.3 Professional learning needs

4.3.1 Teacher professional learning priorities

Teachers were provided with a list of 11 professional learning options to prioritise on a five point scale. The four highest priority professional learning needs (5 being the highest) identified by respondents were:

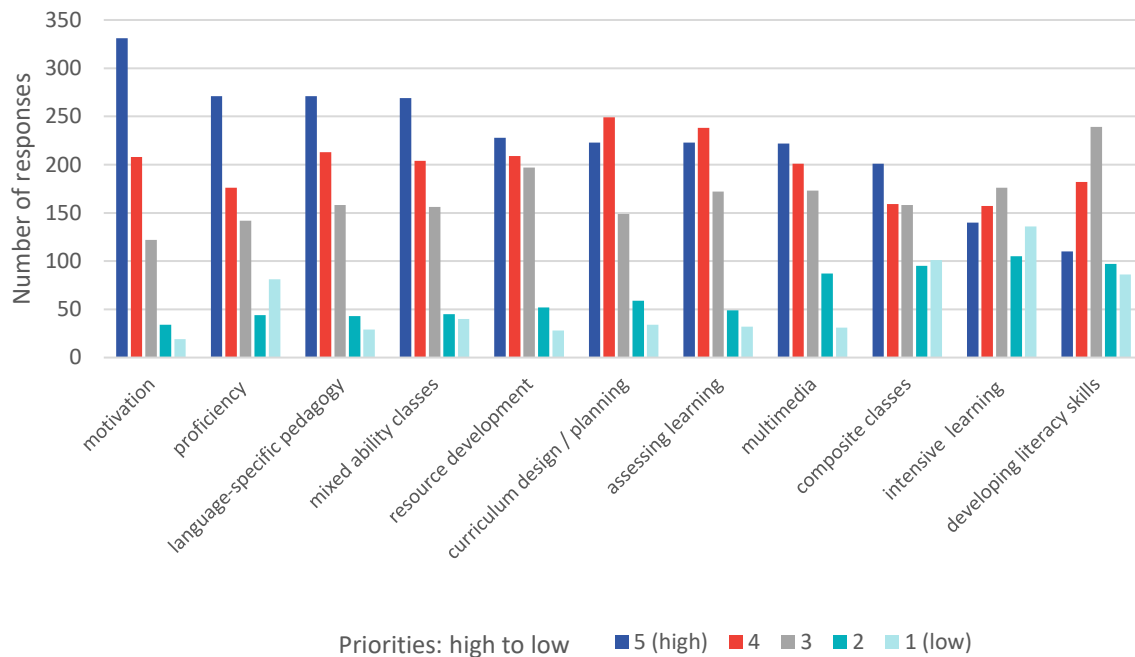
- enhancing learner motivation
- proficiency maintenance
- language-specific teaching pedagogy
- teaching mixed ability/proficiency classes (see Figure 14, below).

Primary teacher priorities were, in order, from highest need, proficiency, mixed ability classes, languages skills, motivation, and specific pedagogy. Secondary teachers prioritised learner motivation highest, then proficiency maintenance, language specific pedagogy, and mixed level classes. When

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analysing priorities by language taught, few variations on the general trends were noticeable. Indonesian teachers were particularly concerned with learner motivation, Chinese teachers were noticeable in their need for professional learning on mixed ability/proficiency classes, curriculum and planning, and resource development.

Figure 14: Respondent teacher professional learning priorities ranking, by respondent numbers



4.3.2 Considerations arising from professional learning needs in survey responses

Finding ways to enhance learner motivation remains a critical issue for teachers of all languages, especially at secondary level. Proficiency is a major concern for, especially, beginning teachers (prioritising proficiency drops off quickly in terms of priority over time teaching). As noted in the past professional learning experiences of teachers, the preferred providers for such opportunities remain the local language specific professional associations, state-based modern language teachers associations, and the national body, the AFMLTA. A longer-term strategy to coordinate and offer consistent, high quality professional learning focussing on recognised areas of need, and presented in ways appropriate for teachers in urban and regional areas, is also needed. There is an ongoing need for targeted professional learning particular to both primary and secondary levels, and addressing language specific concerns, such as resource development and curriculum planning for Chinese.

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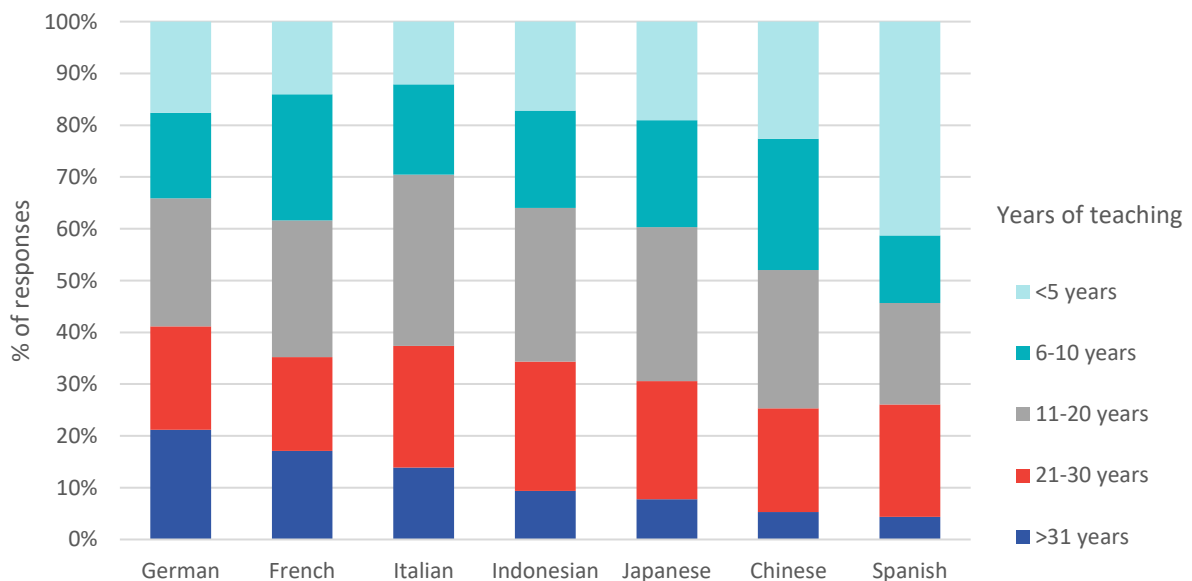
Theme 5: Teacher experience and aspirations

5.1 Statistical data

5.1.1 Teacher experience

In terms of teaching experience, 20% of current teachers have been teaching for fewer than 5 years, 20% for 6 to 10 years, fewer than 30% for 11-20 years, and over 30% for more than 20 years. Spanish has the highest percentage of newer teachers (40% under 5 years, 55% under 10 years), reflecting the relative 'newness' of Spanish programs in Australian schools. German has the highest percentage of long-term teachers (over 40% more than 20 years' experience, and over 20% with over 30 years' experience). Indonesian, Italian and Japanese teachers have highest number of 11-30 years' experience. Chinese, consistent with the age profile noted above, has nearly 50% with under 10 years' teaching experience (see Figure 15, below).

Figure 15: *Survey respondents' years of teaching experience, by language*



85% of respondents are in permanent, continuing positions, 64% are teaching full time. 12% teach in more than one school site, 65% of these teaching across different primary school sites, and many others teach in community contexts as well as in mainstream schools. 15% of teachers report they teach more than one language.

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5.2 Qualitative data

5.2.1 Teacher experiences

Teachers were invited to describe past employment experiences as a language teacher. Teachers' responses indicate a high degree of job security and job satisfaction, despite the challenges. Many teachers comment on the ease of finding work, and of moving to new teaching sites at different stages of their careers.

There does, however, appear to be a divide between the experiences of teachers in sites where languages are supported by leadership teams (including principals), and the experiences in sites where language teachers feel unsupported. Teachers in some sites spoke of extended periods of multiple contracts, leaving them with low job security, or a fraction of time position resulting in a need to teach across school sites in order to maintain a viable workload. Some teachers referred to the need to become a generalist teacher in order to secure a permanent position despite a preference to teach a language.

Primary school teachers accept composite classes as a feature of their teaching, but, with low time on task and large numbers of students to teach on a weekly basis, find it difficult to develop their program and provide learners the sense of progress that may enhance their enjoyment of language learning. Teachers continue to refer to the lack of support or appreciation for the languages learning area in schools and school communities as a real impediment to job satisfaction.

5.2.2 Teacher aspirations

Finally, teachers were invited to comment on their future aspirations as a teacher of languages, and what support they would need to achieve those aspirations.

Teachers expressed their ongoing desire to motivate and engage learners with languages and cultures learning. Their needs, in summary, reflect the considerations arising from this analysis:

- a need for improved valuing of languages education and the material support to offer quality programs that engage learners
- the need for more curriculum support within sectors, noting the loss of curriculum officer positions around the country in recent years
- ongoing professional support from professional associations
- access to and opportunities to undertake in-country learning experiences
- the need to enhance understandings of incorporating online and blended learning into their programs
- experienced teachers to have more opportunity to mentor and supervise students during professional experience placements and also new teachers, especially in the primary years.

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5.3 Considerations arising from teacher aspiration survey responses

As noted earlier, the challenges of providing a quality program and maintaining learner interest and engagement, particularly into the post compulsory years, remains a key concern for teachers. Teacher experience as outlined in this section reflects a dedicated workforce looking for appropriate support both professionally and logistically, to plan and deliver high quality languages education at all levels of schooling.

Theme 6: Resourcing languages education

6.1 Summary of responses

In terms of understanding the teaching resources used by teachers, principally qualitative data were sought through Teacher Survey 3 (TS3). The report provided here is provisional. The survey remains open, and a final report will be included once the survey is completed.

The data indicate that teachers use a range of commercially available resources, such as textbooks, posters, games, cards, music, digital programs, and computer apps in their teaching. The data also indicate the use of teacher-generated materials with equal or greater frequency. A narrow range of textbooks, with repeated references to some commercially available resources, are used mostly by secondary teachers. Some teachers, mainly in the primary years, identified that they did not use any commercial texts or courses.

In response to questions on the use of digital resources and interactive web-based teaching, the data reveal that 66% of teachers report being fully or moderately well connected for the use of digital resources and web-based teaching. 37% of teachers in school language programs indicate an increase in the use of technologies during COVID lockdowns and online teaching requirements that may have already been available.

Alongside a description of use of digital resources and interactive web-based teaching, teachers across all language learning contexts noted that any positive impact is dependent upon infrastructure capacities, device accessibility, and availability of high-quality, authentic, language-specific resources.

The data also indicate that where the use of digital resources and web-based teaching was limited or not present, reasons appeared to be a deficit in one of the features rather than teacher willingness or skill.

6.2 Considerations arising from resourcing survey responses

The resource base for languages teaching and learning is extensive, in most cases, but teachers identify a lack of resources to address differentiated learning needs in composite class settings and in classrooms where diversity of learner background is evident. They identify the move to digital resources and to online and blended modes of delivery and interaction as important classroom practices requiring additional resourcing, and question the future relevance of print-based materials and use of textbooks in classrooms. In some languages however, particularly in Chinese, some

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sequential and well-scaffolded print materials are necessary to provide for the ongoing challenge of learning to process language in print, where character knowledge remains limited.

Overall there is a need for a national strategy toward the coherent provision of materials and resources that reflect contemporary understandings of languages and cultures learning, of contexts and communities in which the language is used, of language learning as a bi/plurilingual endeavour, and of learners as digitally connected and capable of learning via means many teachers have never experienced.

Community languages data

7.1 Data collection processes

Distribution of two surveys designed specifically for teachers of community languages was facilitated by Community Languages Australia, which sent links to affiliate organisations in all states and territories. The community languages surveys were also accessible on the same website as the mainstream school teacher surveys and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teacher surveys. 557 responses from community languages teachers were received for Survey 1 and 328 responses to Survey 2. Not all states and territories were well represented: 75% of all respondents were based in Victoria, over 10% in NSW, and fewer than 5% in Queensland, ACT, and Western Australia. Only two surveys were completed in South Australia, and one in the Northern Territory. Over 30% of respondents taught Chinese, over 10% taught Vietnamese and Greek; with under 5% teaching Japanese, Tamil and Cantonese. Responses were received from teachers of 45 languages.

7.2 Statistical data analysis

7.2.1 Community language program provision

Teachers report that 69% of their community language programs are organised by school year or age level, and 31% are organised by proficiency level (across age or year levels). Most programs are conducted as one lesson a week for two and a half to three hours a week on average. Class sizes vary considerably but average class size is 20-25 students per class. 65% of programs use the ACL or a state version to plan their teaching. 35% develop their own curriculum or use a curriculum model drawn from their home country.

7.2.2 Student participation in community language programs

Teachers who undertook the survey teach from early years through to Year 12 and beyond. Adult learning is important for this sector. The language proficiency of the students in their classes varies considerably, depending mostly on the history of migration to Australia. Teachers were asked to state the proportion of learners in their classes who they would describe as background/heritage language learners, first language learners, and second/additional language learners. The language reporting the highest proportion of first language learners was Tamil (over 40%), followed by Chinese, Japanese and

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Vietnamese (each 25%). Heritage language learners were prominent in Sinhala (over 75%), Japanese (over 70%), Vietnamese and Cantonese (each 65%).

7.2.3 Community teacher profile

7.2.3.1 Age and gender

25% of community language teachers completing the survey are under the age of 40, 60% between 40 and 60, and under 15% over the age of 60. The age profile of Chinese teachers is significantly younger than average. 83% of respondents are women. 88% are born overseas.

7.2.3.2 Community language teaching experience

44% of respondents have been teaching for fewer than 5 years, 40% for between 5-15 years, and 15% for more than 20 years. 20% of teachers teach at more than one school site, which may be a mainstream school setting.

7.2.4 Community language teacher education

7.2.4.1 Qualifications

Of those community language teachers born overseas, 65% have completed a tertiary degree overseas, and 35% have completed primary or secondary school. 53% have undertaken language study overseas, mostly for four years (as part of their degree). Over 50% of respondents have also undertaken some tertiary study in Australia, typically for two to four years. A smaller proportion, 36%, have undertaken formal language study in Australia. 45% hold tertiary qualifications in teaching, 33% hold a certificate in community language teaching, and 18% hold no qualifications.

7.2.4.2 Professional learning experiences

Over 30% of respondents have undertaken certificate courses run by local community languages organisations, 45% regularly attend language conferences and workshops, and 15% have undertaken certificate courses run by organisations overseas.

7.2.4.3 In-country experiences

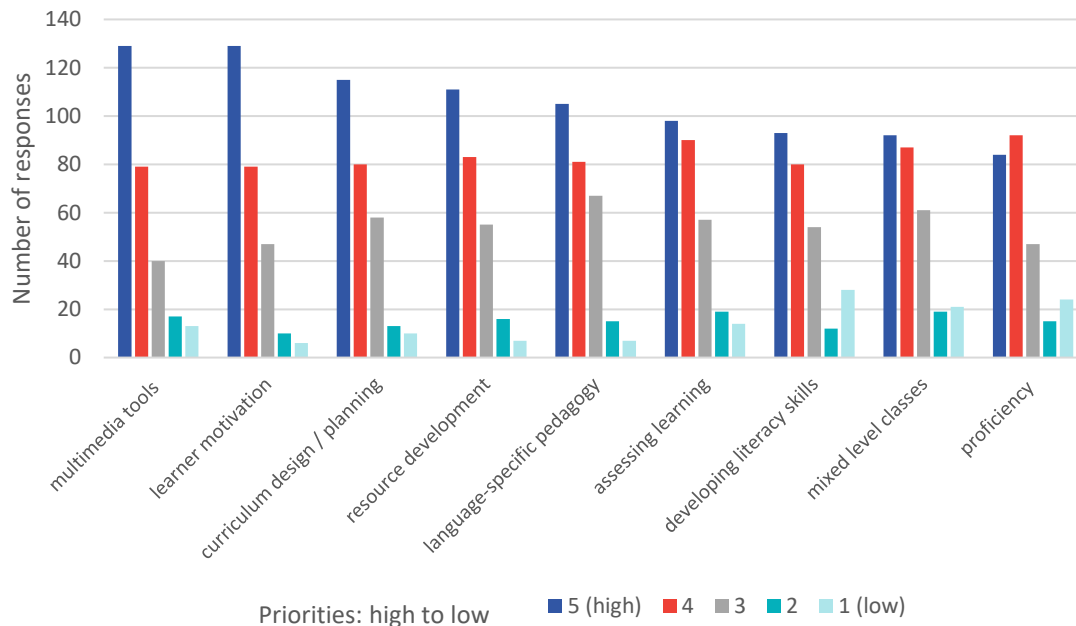
Nearly 85% of community language teachers have undertaken in-country experiences in the last 10 years, mainly to visit family, or for leisure.

7.2.5 Professional learning needs

Teachers were provided with a list of nine professional learning opportunities and invited to rank them in terms of priority. The highest priority professional learning needs were clearly use of multimedia tools in language teaching, and enhancing learner motivation, followed by curriculum design and planning, and resource development (see Figure 16 below).

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Figure 16: Survey respondent community teacher professional learning priorities



7.3 Considerations arising from community language survey responses

The community languages sector is comprised of a teacher community of very diverse backgrounds and experience. Levels of qualification and certification held by teachers in community schools are varied, though a high proportion do undertake community languages certification courses where these are available. The professional learning needs identified highlight the ongoing challenges of providing meaningful and engaging curriculum to learners of diverse language background and learning experience, and diverse motivation to attend such classes. Program provision, typically once a week for approximately three hours (sometimes with expected supplementary home activities for more regular engagement), adds to the challenges of quality program provision, and learner progression, especially where the language is not regularly used at home or in the community.

7.4 Community language teachers' qualitative data analysis

Community teachers were invited to respond to a range of open-ended questions about their experiences as a community languages educator. Responses covered the challenges they faced in teaching, issues in the organisation and delivery of programs, responses to learner diversity in classrooms, their experiences in becoming a language teacher, and their aspirations for the future.

Several themes emerge from teachers' responses to these questions, which are summarised below.

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7.4.1 Leadership and administration

Teachers reflect on the importance of good school leadership and management to their work satisfaction. Teachers (and perhaps administrators) complain about the level of imposed bureaucracy which is time consuming and stressful in a situation where bureaucratic 'standards and expectations are the same as (day) schools, without the support or resources' to undertake these tasks. Concerns were raised about the compensation process within community schools, where rates of pay are uncertain and honoraria are used to reduce tax and entitlement liabilities, with schools uncertain of their legal position in relation to these processes.

7.4.2 Time issues: Preparation and teaching time

Time required to develop and provide a quality program is a common concern. In relation to teachers' high aspirations to develop learners' language skills, having only one three hour lesson a week (and homework) is viewed as insufficient to have a substantial impact on learners' language level. In relation to workload recognition and adequate compensation, teachers describe the amount of preparation and marking time required as often unsustainable and insufficiently recognised. Teachers believe some of the resource development investments could be reduced if there were more collaboration between community schools.

7.4.3 Teaching practices

Younger teachers comment that some older teachers are sticking with 'traditional methods' that relate to their own experience back in the home country, which are increasingly irrelevant to young Australian-born children. While there is no lack of enthusiasm among teaching staff, there is still a concern that community schools lack experienced or well-qualified teachers, able to address the challenges of teaching the language in complex classroom contexts.

7.4.4 Resourcing: Teaching materials, facilities, including ICT

Teachers comment on the lack of suitable resources for the local context, particularly in emerging community languages, and especially for heritage language learners. Teachers require additional support to access or develop resources that are relevant to the local Australian context, that are adapted to the realities of life in Australia, and which are age and proficiency appropriate for heritage learners in particular. They also seek advice on developing resources that are relevant to the diversity of learners they often have in one classroom.

In terms of facilities, the cost of renting classroom space is seen as a high cost factor, reducing funds available for resource development (and salaries). Teachers are very keen to have access to improved levels of technology to provide students with 'real 21C learning experiences'.

7.4.5 The learners: Motivating and engaging learners of diverse background

Teachers recognise that many students do not attend community school willingly, there is often much pressure from parents to attend, but not always parental support to ensure students keep up with the learning expectations week to week. The timing of classes, even the length of classes, can be challenging for younger learners, and for those who attend community school soon after day school

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has ended. Teachers recognise that learning their home language 'is not a priority in their life', with learners 'doubting the value' of learning their heritage language, which they seldom use outside the classroom. Teachers constantly refer to the pedagogical challenges of planning and providing engaging, but differentiated learning opportunities. The majority of teachers have, naturally, developed strategies to address this issue as best they can, but recommend classes be organised by proficiency level, not age or year level, appreciating that a critical mass of learners is necessary for such a differentiated proficiency model of class organisation.

7.4.6 Considerations arising from community languages survey qualitative responses

The overwhelming message from teachers' responses is the sense of dedication to what is otherwise a time consuming but under-compensated responsibility. The challenges of working to curriculum expectations, while lacking adequate resources to respond to the diversity of learners in classrooms are issues that need to be addressed in a timely and systematic manner. The development of teaching and learning materials that are age and proficiency appropriate, that reflect the Australian context in which learners live, and which are consistent with the curriculum constructs being applied in Australian languages education is a critical priority. Undertaking research into best practices in organising classes and delivering meaningful learning experiences to learners of diverse background and experience is essential in order to understand and respond to the challenges the community languages sector face, in a timely and effective manner.

7.5 Teacher preparation, experience and aspirations

In terms of the experience of becoming a teacher in the community school sector, teachers reinforce the importance of professional learning especially that provided by community school organisations, or provided by universities for community schools teachers. Some teachers welcomed the recent provision of online professional learning opportunities, some looked forward to returning to face-to-face mode. Particular areas of need in professional learning were assistance in improving learner motivation and engagement, and ways to improve their use of digital learning materials into their teaching practice. Some younger teachers requested their schools make information about initial teacher training courses and in-service courses more readily available.

In terms of their current experiences, many of the challenges and issues discussed above were mentioned again, but there was an overwhelming sense of passion, enjoyment, and satisfaction in their role as a community language educator. The following quote sums up the thoughts of many respondents.

The community language teacher is one of the most challenging position as it requires a lot of not paid time for preparation the good lesson for a diverse group of students with different levels of language knowledge and age differences. The most difficult (part) is to have students with similar age and different language levels. For students, the community language is not compulsory and usually on Saturdays, so the lessons have to be interesting and engaging to motivate their learning.

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In terms of aspirations, community language teachers desire to be valued, to obtain suitable certification, and compensation for their contributions, and to improve their practice in order to motivate and engage learners and encourage them to continue their studies of their home language. Overall they, collectively, seek to build recognition and support for the community languages sector, and for the very important role it fills in supporting bilingualism in individuals and multilingualism in society more generally.

7.5.1 Considerations arising from community language teacher preparation and aspirations survey responses

Quality professional learning opportunities, well documented certification of professional learning undertaken, and a strategy to assist community schools in supporting their teachers financially is essential in order to develop and maintain a well-qualified and suitably compensated workforce. The role of the community language sector in supporting language learning and use in Australia is significant. A longer term strategy to build the sector, and enhance its workforce is essential.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages data

8.1 Survey participation data

Two surveys were designed specifically for teachers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Distribution of the surveys was facilitated by First Languages Australia, which sent links to affiliated organisations and communities in all states and territories. The First Languages surveys were also accessible on the same website as the mainstream school teacher survey and community languages survey. 67 responses were received for Survey 1 and 23 responses to Survey 2. Not all states and territories were well represented: 40% of responses came from Western Australia, 10% from NSW, and fewer than 10% from Queensland, Northern Territory, Victoria and South Australia. Respondents taught language in government, independent and Catholic sectors, as well as in out-of-school contexts. 40% taught in primary school contexts, 25% taught in secondary schools, 28% in F-12 school sites, and 25% taught language to adult classes. Adult and community programs are important in this area of languages education.

It should be noted that while the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participant numbers seem low, First Languages Australia approximates that there are currently around 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander language instructors working with schools. Looking at the program numbers provided by each state and territory we can see that while a handful of schools have more than one instructor, many more schools share an instructor with other schools in their region.

8.2 Program provision

Lessons in primary school are typically 30-60 minutes in length, and from under 60 minutes to two hours in secondary schools. Year 12 classes may be up to three hours a week, but such programs are uncommon. 12% of learners are described as using the language at home, 40% have family background in the language, and nearly 50% are learning language as a second/additional language. Most teachers taught language with reference to state or national curriculum frameworks for Aboriginal and Torres

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Strait Islander languages, 25% stated they taught language based on their own curriculum, which they and their communities had developed.

8.3 Teacher profile

Participating teachers are 80% female, with 50% aged 40-50, and 50% aged over 50. 75% of respondents identify English as their mainly used language, 25% identify their First Language. One teacher listed Kriol as their main language. Most have learned the language they teach at home or in their community, some have learned formally through university courses or local language centres. Half of respondents had permanent teaching positions, 40% were on contract and the rest were in casual employment. 75% were working full time. 40% have been teaching for fewer than 5 years, 30% up to 20 years, and 30% have been teaching for over 20 years.

At this point in time qualifications in Indigenous languages include Certificate II, III and IV programs. There are traineeships offered in Western Australia and Alice Springs, and individual subjects and short course offerings at select universities. While there are no undergraduate options that provide qualifications specific to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages, 70% of respondents have qualifications in the language they teach, and 65% hold a university degree. In terms of undertaking education as a language teacher, over 60% state they were taught locally, while under 40% had undertaken TAFE or university education in language teaching.

Respondents were invited to prioritise their professional learning needs in two sets of five options. The highest priority among all respondents to the first set was 'how to improve my language skills' (75%) followed by 'how to encourage students to learn language' (68%) and 'how to develop students reading and writing skills in language' (53%). In the second set of options the highest priority was learning more about 'how to teach my language' (71%), followed by 'how to use computers in teaching language' (59%), and 'how to assess learners' language skills' (53%).

8.4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages teacher survey qualitative responses

Teachers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages were also invited to respond to a range of open-ended questions about their experiences as a language educator in schools in their community. Responses covered the challenges they faced in teaching, issues in the preparing their classes, their experiences in becoming a teacher of language, and their hopes for the future. Coming from diverse contexts in which they teach language, in language maintenance, language revival, and additional language contexts, make it difficult to summarise or make generalisations about the full cohort. Rather, samples of responses from teachers in diverse contexts are provided, to allow teachers' own voices to tell their stories. [N.B. the names of specific languages or communities have been removed to protect anonymity.]

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8.4.1 Planning and provision of programs

Tell us something that you think is important about how you plan and teach your language classes (each paragraph is a different response to this request).

Within our community [] language teachers work together to follow a scope and sequence that we have developed to cover a range of culturally appropriate themes that maximises the students learning opportunities to develop their language skills in the areas of communication and understanding. Our school values [] language and culture lessons and provides opportunities for teachers to also learn with their students to develop their own capacity for language use and valuing of Aboriginal cultural perspectives and the connections across other learning areas that they can make.

Our program is based on developing literacy skills. Oracy is already strong. We develop sets of readers based on noun classes and other grammatical structures common to the language. From the readers we develop activities, including worksheets that the students work through as a class, discussing and supporting each other. We use the teaching of syllables/phonemes as the main method of learning to read and write in [].

Need to plan with my language speaker - she comes in for 2 of the 5 lessons, which are the main speaking instructional lessons. We plan for revision of what we have done, conversation practice, some new vocab or topic. Although she teaches her language [], in 2 of the other lessons students either practice more of this if this is their language or they don't have one; other students look at and listen to their language in whatever way they can. So all languages are values in the class. We need to have a good understanding and equipment of what is available.

Working with local Elders. Acknowledging the different dialects and the orthography used in my teaching. Ensuring my resources are correct and engaging. Try to use hands on activities and where possible real items. Group activities and rotations using the same 'keywords'. Reflect at the end of each session to see what participants are taking away, reinforce how they can use the words outside of the classroom.

For the Elders group I use the resources I made at teacher training and used in a primary school for over 10 years. The very first session was based on talking about language and the grievances that the Elders have with past experiences. This is something that has to be done for Aboriginal languages as it is very emotional because your language defines who you are and where you come from. At the beginning of each lesson the Elders talk about the week they had trying to use their new found language.

8.4.2 Considerations arising from planning and teaching in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survey responses

Working within curriculum guidelines and developing context-relevant resources are important parts of teachers' work. Some communities and schools have invested significant energy in the production of curriculum resources necessary for classroom teaching. Other languages teachers are working on country, with communities, learning how to represent the language, and structure learning opportunities that are responsive to the language and the communities who use that language.

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Naturally, for revival languages the process of planning and provision is constrained by the availability of knowledge holders and community members to assist in building a local program.

The work of regional and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language centres and programs needs significant and ongoing resourcing. These organisations are well placed to assist in delivering programs in local languages, identify critical needs in diverse communities, and facilitate the further growth and accessibility of language materials and collations to ensure meaningful programs are able to be provided and sustained.

8.5. Challenges teaching language

Tell us if there is anything about your language that can make it a bit tricky for you to teach (each paragraph is a different response).

Our town has been a hub for other Aboriginal languages of the region and sometimes families would like their children to learn the languages of their own regions. At our school we communicate to our families that all languages are valued and respected and that the reason we learn [language] is because we live in [language] country of which our school exists.

Unfortunately I do not have a classroom for Languages. I have to move from class to class to teach my lessons. This means I do not have the opportunity to put up language posters or print. I also have to carry my resources and materials from each class. This often has made me tired, particularly on a hot day.

The issue for Aboriginal languages is lack of in some cases research for the language e.g. was it ever recorded, how much was recorded and who recorded the language. Also, for my language there are also 14 dialects and a lot of the recorded language doesn't separate the dialects. Not always having enough people to teach the language in schools.

The language is difficult to learn with, for example, very complex systems affecting both nouns and verbs. The words can be very long (20 letters to a word is quite common). The main problem is the absence of literate Aboriginal Assistant teachers in the classroom. Also most ATs have little or no formal training.

The fact that teachers themselves aren't covering Aboriginal History within the classroom as they don't have the knowledge to be able to confidently touch base of Local Aboriginal History and Cultural understanding of our region let alone WA or Australia. The students always ask questions to why and how. Or they unfortunately aren't even aware of the local native flora or fauna in English or are amazed to find out fun facts in [language] that reverts the [language] to English. Example a student called an echidna a hedgehog or the fact it lays a egg in its pouch. We are losing Australian History.

Different dialects. This can often cause issues within, schools, community and family. The title I use is the "Broader [language]" this content has words/pronunciations from various dialects within the [language] Nation.

It's very tricky to provide language learning opportunities in our communities because there is no state or federal funding provided ... what is largely overlooked is the preparation and readiness of our languages to be taught anywhere let alone in schools. Where is the evidence that categorically supports (the notion that) language learning in schools will make sure of language revitalisation and living languages in community? We need support to do the work in community first. Research, learning, then sharing with others.

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Community conflict regarding dialect/spelling/pronunciation. Elders are very supporting of teaching language in schools but a lot of community members feel it shouldn't be shared. Schools choose not to have Aboriginal languages taught in their school. Lack of value placed on Aboriginal language and culture.

8.5.1 Considerations arising from challenges teaching language

The challenges are immense for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages teachers (qualified or unqualified) working in schools. While a select few schools have a history of resource production and teacher training, most language programs are starting from scratch. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages teachers cannot Google materials to use in the classroom or download texts, activity sheets or multimedia materials to support their teaching. As well as developing resources, planning programs, and engaging and assessing students, these educators are managing the school community relationship, spending out of school hours working with their language advisors around what is appropriate to teach in the program, while also providing *ad hoc* cultural awareness training to their fellow staff in an effort to ensure a basic understanding of the local history, culture and protocols. Several previous reports that outline the particular challenges of teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages have been published, each outlining opportunities to meet the needs that teachers have identified. The actions outlined in *Nintringanyi* published by First Languages Australia in 2018 provides a useful starting point.

In the survey the teachers were asked specifically about the challenges in program planning and delivery. The nature of the responses indicates the diverse needs both in the classroom but also in the background if programs are to be successful. Challenges listed included:

- further custodian-led research and documentation of the nature of individual languages which communities wish to share with their younger generations will be a vital ingredient in language maintenance and revival
- allowing communities to determine the nature of what language is to be taught, and how it should be represented is clearly an important ingredient for success in this endeavour
- properly resourcing programs and teachers to create a high-quality teaching space and program
- ensuring generalist teachers, school leaders and administrative support staff in schools with language programs support provision, and understand something of the nature and history of Country and community, and critical aspects of the language itself, are critical for success
- the provision of community and on Country learning activities to support the school based activities and provide a strong context for language use outside the school.

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8.6 Experiences becoming a language teacher

What was it like for you trying to find a language teacher job that was good for you? Was it hard to find a job? (Each paragraph is from a different respondent.)

I have always had to work in multiple schools to work full time. Language is the one specialist role that doesn't automatically come with a classroom. So having resources in multiple schools without a designated teaching space is hard work. It was hard to find a school that would pay me as a teacher rather than an AIEO (Aboriginal Islander Education Officer) who teaches language. Next year I have been offered permanency 1-6 years full time. It's been 6 years of searching and now my dreams have come true!

We had vibrant classes in the 70s and 80s, maybe even 90s, then Elders passed away, some language speakers in schools got jobs working with mining companies, and we now find it very, very hard to get people to come into our schools to teach. Those that do have a few amateur people help them - there is NO professional development specifically for them.

It is really hard to find a language job. Especially for [language]. I was lucky enough though my school wanted it so that's why I studied.

I just like sharing my culture with future generations. I don't really do this as a 'job' and was approached through my community.

I have worked and an Aboriginal Islander Education Officer prior to teaching language and while doing my language training. Everyone wanted to employ me as an AIEO and ask me to teach language. Now that there has been a push for schools to teach language again and they have to employ a teacher I feel more validated and people are wanting an Aboriginal language. I am 4 days language permanent and 1 day AIEO. I have been offered permanent fulltime next year at a different school, teaching 1-6.

8.6.1 Considerations arising from experiences becoming a language teacher

As highlighted in the survey responses, and outlined by First Languages Australia in their reports of 2018 and 2021, the lack of adequate teacher education is a major gap that needs to be overcome to achieve sustainable implementation of the (Australian Curriculum) Framework for any language.

While state education authorities are beginning to invest in the provision of language programs in schools, the challenge remains of developing qualified language teachers and providing them sustainable career pathways. Clear pathways for language teacher education and placement, registration, mentoring, networking and professional development need to be established, as do equitable pay rates and conditions for all of the community members involved in each language program.

Nationally, there are only two programs that educate people to be independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teachers. These are the Western Australian Aboriginal Languages Traineeship (ALTT), a three-year program delivered as Professional Development by the Western Australian Department of Education, and the Master of Indigenous Languages Education offered by

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The University of Sydney to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who already hold a Bachelor of Education or similar teaching degree. While in the past SA, WA, NT and Queensland have each offered flexible undergraduate education degrees as part of a pathway that supports the needs of those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, most of these programs no longer exist. There are currently no undergraduate offerings that provide for an Indigenous language teaching specialisation.

Given the limited opportunities, and the effort that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who wish to teach their languages go to acquire the required qualifications, it makes no sense that these people then struggle to find stable employment as language teachers.

As outlined by First Languages Australia in its 2021 report, exceptional school leaders demonstrate a capacity to identify potential language teachers and guide them through training and into well-supported teaching positions. The rewards of such efforts have been shown to reap significant benefits for the students, collaborating custodians and whole of school communities.

8.7 Hopes and goals as a language teacher

What are your hopes and goals for being a teacher of your language? (Each paragraph is a different response.)

For all students to embrace their local native language as their own. For them to understand that language is the connection to the land in which they live and connects all living things within their area.

I want to continue growing the relationship between the elders and the school program. They are happy for now to have non indigenous teaching language, but would love a language assistant - so important to bring the indigenous voice into the classroom. Challenging where we are.

I want Aboriginal children to have a chance to learn their own languages. I want the Education Department to put their money where their mouth is - ie Language is said to be important in all the documents, but in my situation, I don't really see anyone hardly interested in it anymore. They are happy for me to teach ONE semester a year - maybe so they can tick some box - we need more classes. We need a new model to provide training and support for people who might give teaching in schools a go, and we need structures and support for anyone brave enough to do so.

An important issue is not to see languages rolled by technology/standards/systems to the extent that they cease to be critical community tools, sustaining culture, kinship, history, environments, identity, knowledge, creativity and all those other important realities that must have been part of the loong unfolding, adaptation, transformation and modification of the lived experience on this continent

I would love to teach my language full time in a school in my local area. I want to be fluent in my language so I can speak my language at home and at school to others. I don't want my language to die, I want to help revive my language.

I want to keep my language alive. Teaching Aboriginal languages keeps culture and language living. # I want to see our community, particularly Stolen Generation empowered with their language. # Our youth should be taught language. Language gives a person identity. # Aboriginal language teachers

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need to be respected as teachers and knowledge keepers. # Funding needs to be stable. # Record our Elders and speakers before more language is lost.

Keep learning my language. I want to hear kids speaking language everywhere. I want to learn how to use a computer.

8.7.1 Considerations arising from hopes and goals

As in other language teaching contexts, the dedication, enthusiasm and commitment of teachers to provide learning opportunities is evidently strong. The challenges for First Languages teachers are clearly manifold, and the needs for language maintenance and revival are critical. Providing opportunities for the broader community of learners to learn a local language- as an additional language- is also critical to understanding and broader appreciation of First Languages and First Nations. Assisting communities in the development and growth of their language programs is a vital component of a coherent and cohesive national plan for languages education.

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Section 2: Data collection from jurisdictions in all states and territories

In mid-2020 a letter requesting data on program provision and student participation was sent to representatives in Departments of Education, Catholic Education and Independent schools authorities in all states and territories. Specific data sought from jurisdictions for this project included:

- program provision data on languages taught in schools, (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Community languages)
- data on availability of languages programs at each year of schooling, including provision of languages programs for students with previous background in a particular language
- data on program types, (such as bilingual or immersion programs, distance education programs)
- time allocations across the years of schooling, (either as recommended or as provided)
- student participation data; student participation rates in each language at each year level including information on student background, if available
- teacher supply data: numbers of teachers employed in your sector, including information on areas of shortage identified in your sector.

The process of gaining access to data varied considerably. Whilst the project had received ethics clearance for data gathering, and a letter of support from the Australian Government Department of Education Skills and Employment, additional clearances to undertake research and access data were required in some states and territories. Departments of Education in all states and territories have agreed to share data, and most data have been provided at this point. Data from the Northern Territory is expected to be provided shortly. Table 5, and Figures 17 and 18, below, indicate preliminary data collected on numbers of students across the nation studying languages in primary and secondary schools.

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Table 5: Preliminary results from national collection of language participation data in top 12 languages taught in government schools nationwide, 2021

Language	Primary students	Secondary students	Total
Japanese	127030	78800	205830
Chinese*	108800	30985	139785
Italian	105578	33829	139407
Indonesian	96463	24934	121397
French	59193	59885	119078
Spanish	28396	10383	38779
German	15231	18397	33628
Auslan	39065	1957	41022
Arabic	10076	2032	12108
Greek**	7773	2017	9790
Vietnamese	7285	2080	9365
Korean	5614	2064	7678
Totals	610504	267363	877867

Northern Territory data to be added

- Only top 12 languages in relation to participation numbers included
- Data on community languages taught through state government Schools of Languages will be reported separately

*Chinese includes Chinese (Mandarin) and Chinese

**Greek includes Greek and Greek (Modern).

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Figure 17: *Distribution of student participation in language learning nationwide from preliminary data collected 2021 (NT not included)*

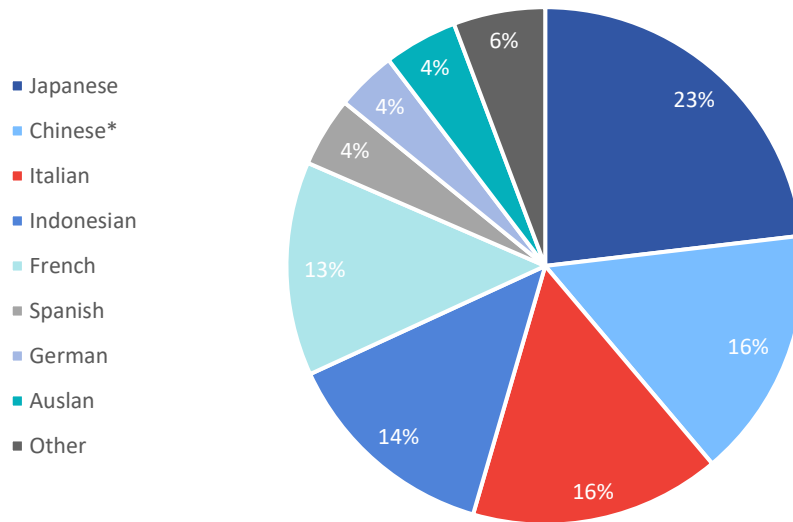
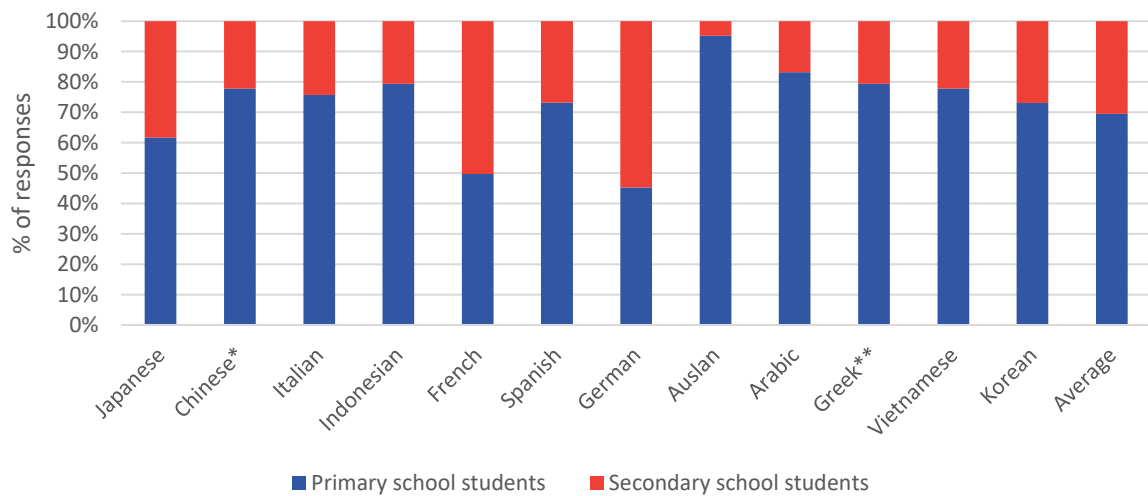


Figure 18: *Distribution of top 12 languages taught in Australian government schools across primary and secondary years*



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Requests for data from the Catholic and Independent schools sectors were less successful, as state offices for these jurisdictions do not always actively request or collect such data from the schools affiliated with their jurisdiction. In this case, some state offices were supportive in forwarding our request for data directly to schools. As a result, data sets from individual Catholic or Independent sector school sites in a number of states and territories were received.

The result of the data collection process has shown that processes for collection and dissemination of data within government jurisdictions vary considerably across the nation, a situation well known to the field. In general, the project will be able to report nationally on data from the government school sector only. It is worth noting that not all data is comprehensive or complete. Processes for data collection in some states and territories appear voluntary, meaning that the figures collected represent only a portion of the actual state of language education in that state or territory. Some negotiation is ongoing, to establish whether additional data is collected, or why particular data is not gathered.

Data collected were:

- language program provision data in mainstream school programs, including availability of languages programs at each year of schooling
- student participation in each language at each year level.

The following data are not available in all states and territories

- student participation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages programs taught in mainstream schools
- community languages provision (outside of mainstream school languages programs) in states where such programs are managed under state government education authorities
- time allocations across the years of schooling, (either as recommended or as provided).

Some data anticipated as being available have not been made available, largely because these appear not to be collected, or reported separately, including:

- provision of languages programs for students with home background in a particular language
- information on student participation in dedicated home language programs, if available
- data on program types (such as bilingual or immersion programs, distance education programs).

Information on teacher supply, including numbers of teachers employed in each sector, and information on areas of shortage identified have not been collected, as these appear not to be available in relation to languages teachers in particular.

At present the project can report on a reasonably complete picture on language program provision and student participation in the government school sector across the country.

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These data relate to:

- the seven most commonly taught languages (Japanese, Italian, French, Chinese, Indonesian, German and Spanish). These seven languages constitute a high proportion of languages programs in schools. Data on an additional five languages most commonly taught (Auslan, Arabic, Greek, Korean, and Vietnamese) is included in the national dataset.

Further data will be reported in relation to:

- other emerging languages taught in mainstream school sites in some states and territories
- the provision of programs and student participation data in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages (where such data is available)
- the provision of community languages programs, where such programs and data collection processes is the responsibility of the local government school jurisdiction.

Considerations arising from the data collection process for program provision and student participation data

A nationally agreed data collection process for monitoring developments in program provision and student participation in languages education, in the government school sector, and in the independent and Catholic jurisdictions in all states and territories is urgently required. While there are logistical issues in gathering data in the non-government sectors, a streamlined, online process for data submissions should be feasible, given that there is evidence that schools in those sectors do in fact collect and maintain databases for languages education programs.

Data that should be collected at school level, and then provided to jurisdictional authorities for collation, include the following:

- program provision: languages taught (additional languages, First Languages, and community languages), including year levels, number of classes offered, contact time per week
- student participation: total student numbers per language, per year level
- teacher workload: total number of teachers and fraction of time allocated to delivering the languages program.

Additional information to be gathered where appropriate should include data on:

- the provision of opportunities for students to engage in community languages learning during school hours at the school
- the provision of dedicated classes for background and first language learners who have a differentiated curriculum from the mainstream second language classes
- other relevant data such as teacher supply issues, and accredited professional learning programs made available to improve program provision and teacher proficiency.

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Data from state-based Schools of Languages, which offer programs after hours, and from Distance Education providers, which teach remotely, should be collected and reported separately.

Detailed information on intensive program types, such as bilingual, or immersion programs and CLIL programs, should be included in the data collection process.

Processes for collecting detailed information on the provision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in schools should be collected in coordination with First Languages Australia.

Processes for collecting data on Community Languages taught in non-mainstream, out of school hours programs should be collected in coordination with Community Languages Australia.

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Section 3: Review of Languages Education initial teacher education (ITE) provision in universities

Initial Languages Teacher Education is available at 27 Australian universities across all states and territories. Most of these courses require on-campus study and offer some online components, but there is a small number of universities offering fully online programs. In most cases, those studying to become teachers of languages will study two or three specialised languages teaching methods courses over the course of their degree. The vast majority of universities offer generalised methods courses covering all languages. Only one university appears to offer methods courses specific to individual languages. Universities that specify the languages in their teacher education courses generally do so on the basis of languages offered for study at that university. The most commonly specified languages reflect the most commonly taught languages in Australian schools: Chinese, Japanese, French, German, Spanish, Indonesian and Italian. Other additional languages specified include Arabic, Classical languages, Greek, Korean, and Hebrew.

The clarity of language proficiency requirements for prospective language teachers is somewhat inconsistent. In some cases, the information is clearly available alongside program information, while in other cases, it is difficult to locate. In many universities, a major or minor in a language is a pre- or co-requisite with language methods courses. Alternatively, proficiency may be measured by years of study, completion of a qualification overseas or language testing. In some cases, prospective students are directed to teacher registration bodies, but it is not always easy to find the language proficiency requirements specified by these bodies (other than English requirements).

Initial languages teacher education at Australian universities is offered in two main dimensions: primary or secondary teaching; and at two levels: undergraduate or graduate entry.

Undergraduate primary teacher education programs are commonly offered at universities, but these are the most varied when it comes to preparation for language teachers. Of 14 identified programs, most indicate Languages Education as a specialisation. In these programs, students may access a number of teaching methods subjects. Two primary education programs do not appear to offer a Languages Education specialisation; three do offer languages teaching and learning as part of the degree, but without Languages Education teaching methods; and in one university, teaching methods for Languages Education are embedded as part of HASS methods.

Undergraduate secondary teacher education programs are more consistent in offering Languages Education methods courses. Of 13 programs identified as offering a Languages Education specialisation, 12 included Languages Education methods subjects. Students in most of these programs study two Languages Education methods courses/subjects/units, with some programs offering three or four, one program offering only a single subject, and one program's offerings were unclear.

In graduate entry programs such as Master of Teaching and Learning, Languages Education methods courses are more consistently available. For aspiring primary school teachers, six universities offer

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Languages Education methods, though patterns of study are varied. In two primary teaching programs, Languages Education methods are embedded in HASS methods courses.

In relation to teacher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, while it does not have a languages specialisation, the Bachelor of Education (Primary) at Charles Darwin University, in collaboration with the Batchelor Institute, is the only program that offers any courses related to Indigenous languages. The Bachelor of Arts (Linguistics) is highly tailored to the needs of Aboriginal people wanting to learn about, and potentially teach, their own languages.

Specialisation as a languages teacher is most readily available through graduate entry secondary teaching programs. Of 21 programs identified, 19 offer Languages Education methods courses/subjects/units. Students would most commonly study two courses over their degree, but some universities offer one, three, four or more 'methods' courses. One other university offers a Languages specialisation, but teaches methods subjects that are not specific to Languages. One university does not offer a languages specialisation for secondary teachers. There are a small number of other postgraduate languages teacher preparation programs that do not specify the level of schooling (primary, secondary, adult, etc.). The Languages Education specialisation offered in these programs are varied, with between one or more methods courses/subject/units available.

Considerations arising from the review of languages education initial teacher education (ITE) provision in universities

The application of AITSL graduate standards has led to more consistency in course design and content expectations in learning area specialisations in initial teacher education at universities nationwide. However the review of Languages Education specialisations at undergraduate and graduate entry level indicates there are still marked disparities in the quality and quantity of courses focussed explicitly on contemporary pedagogies for languages teaching and learning in primary and secondary school contexts.

Given the diversity of learner linguistic and cultural backgrounds commonly encountered in schools, and consequently in languages classrooms, and the particular challenges encountered in teaching languages which differ substantially in nature and origin from English, it is desirable for there to be a review of what constitutes a high quality preparation for teaching each additional language in the contemporary Australian classroom context.

There is a further need to establish a basis for initial teacher education for teaching First Languages. The need for a flexible initial teacher education program that provides for a First Languages teaching specialisation has long been identified. The design of such a program has been undertaken by First Languages Australia, however it has yet to find a university prepared to offer the program. The programs currently undertaken at CDU and the Batchelor Institute provide a starting point for development of such courses. Looking internationally, a program such as the Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalisation offered by the University of Victoria in Canada – with embedded certificate and diploma course and a Master programs for those graduates that wish to continue their studies – provides a model for adaptation to the Australian context.

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As outlined in section 4.2.1, Initial Teacher Education in languages, there is a need for a model of expectations or of good practice, for teachers studying to become primary and secondary educators, at both the undergraduate and graduate entry level, including some requirement for languages education preparation, as part of a holistic languages and literacy education for all teachers. Uncoupling Languages Education from TESOL programs would be a desirable first step in addressing the particular pedagogical needs of the additional and home language teacher in our schools. Ensuring teachers of English non-cognate languages have access to dedicated course components in language-specific methodology is essential to overcome some of the challenges teachers face in engaging learners, ensuring growth in language knowledge and abilities, and in maintaining student participation over the years of schooling. The proposal for 'plug-in', online modules shared nationally needs urgent consideration.

In the short term, a further review of tertiary programs for language teacher education could identify models of good practice that can be documented and made available nationally to assist universities in developing or enhancing their Languages Education specialisations. Looking to international contexts, including Scotland, would provide a solid starting point.

part 3

Part 3: What might the national plan and strategy look like?

Parts 1 and 2 of this Discussion Paper considered the need for a National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education in Australia, and a review of previous and current policies, plans, projects and approaches to languages education across the nation, referenced against international comparisons; as well as providing initial findings from Research Projects 1 and 2. Considerations arising from these reviews and data have informed commentary throughout the paper.

Informed by these data, reviews and considerations, the following is a suggested outline of what the National Plan and Strategy might include, and looks specifically at overall objectives, and categories for goal setting, as well as draft goals in these categories, which will ultimately lead to a set of recommendations and the plan and strategy itself. Continuing stakeholder collaboration and participation through the National Summit and Focus Groups will contribute further to both the detail of vision, goals, breadth of plan and strategy elements and recommendations, and to the structure of the plan and strategy.

Suggested design for the plan and strategy

The National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education in Australia should include the following sections:

- **Executive summary**, encompassing
 - Why we need a plan and strategy and how the project came about
 - with a focus on the opportunity for blue-sky thinking translated into a realisable plan that meets the needs of a diverse and complex nation with critical language education needs for all Australians.
 - Whose interests are to be served and how in the plan and strategy
 - necessarily inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, community, and additional language learning opportunities, in and out of schools, universities, and other places for learning, for all languages, across lifespans.
 - A summary of vision, overall objectives, goal categories, specific goals and recommendations
 - recognising Australian Government objective of increasing languages learning
 - including the goals of and for the diverse communities and for different purposes.
 - A timeline for developing actions from recommendations
 - including short, medium and long term goals, connected to an action plan and recommendations for states' and territories' education jurisdictions to fashion their own implementation plans.

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- A summary of resourcing requirements for the plan and strategy
- A description of the evaluation and review process that will follow the plan and strategy.
- **Background and context**
 - A description of the process for developing the plan and strategy, including stakeholder involvement and contributions, and project steps and phases
 - An evaluation of strengths and challenges in the Australian context, referenced against previous policies, plans, strategies, projects, and compared with international contexts.
- **Findings**
 - Findings from this project and other relevant data sources
 - Research Project 1- Participation and provision
 - Research Project 2- Towards a national plan and strategy
 - Other data sources, including national languages project and research project outcomes, national and international literature and practices.
- **Vision, objectives, goals and recommendations**
 - Overarching vision and objectives
 - Goal categories and sub-categories
 - Specific goals and targets
 - Recommendations.
- **Actions and timeline**
 - Suggested actions arising from recommendations
 - Timeline for actions, including short, medium and longer term framings
 - Evaluation and review processes and timelines.
- **Resource implications**
 - Funding from current sources
 - Additional resourcing requirements.
- **Appendices**
 - Summary of recommendations
 - Project participants, across all aspects of the project
 - The Project Advisory Group
 - Consultation processes
 - Reference and resource lists
 - Data summaries.

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Suggested goals

In reviewing the research project findings, input from the Project Advisory Group, stakeholder consultations and other available documentary information was considered to develop the following suggested goal categories and goals to be discussed through the National Summit and Focus Group processes. As draft goals, these will be subject to change based on feedback and consultation. Each category of goal type is briefly described, together with articulation of one or two primary goals. The set of goals sits within an overall vision for expansion of languages education, with increased altitude and amplitude.

Overarching goal

The overarching goal of the National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education in Australia is to **provide high quality plurilingual language and literacy education for all learners across all contexts and age groups.**

The plan must include opportunities for the teaching and learning of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, community, and additional languages, recognising the diversity of learners, their variable backgrounds, learning contexts and learning needs. It must be inclusive of pre-school, school years, and post school years planning; community and formal learning settings; university preparation and in-service support for teachers of languages; be sustainably resourced; and responsive to changing circumstances. The AFMLTA will continue to work with First Languages Australia and Community Languages Australia, on their respective current projects, for a coordinated and inclusive approach to languages education for all Australians.

Summary of goal areas and draft goals

1. Learners and learning

Learners are at the heart of the plan and strategy, and the focus of the plan and strategy.

Goal 1a: *For every student in Australia to have access to multiple language learning opportunities, including languages which are for them first, heritage and additional languages*

Goal 1b: *For confident and engaged learners of languages, who have skills and knowledge which is valued, developed and applied in meaningful and relevant ways*

Goal 1c: *For students themselves to inform and contribute to the ongoing design and implementation of their language learning experiences.*

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2. Teachers and teaching

Languages teachers and the work they do needs acknowledgment, recognition, support, and ongoing commitment to improvement and appropriate resourcing. There must be planning for succession and growth to meet the diverse language learning needs of Australians. There must be ongoing relevant professional learning for teachers of languages.

Goal 2a: *For an increased and empowered language teacher workforce, skilled to provide engaging and relevant language learning experiences which respond to learner needs across all learning contexts*

Goal 2b: *For national provision of targeted and relevant ongoing professional learning for teachers of languages, including opportunities for teachers to design, conduct and contribute to their own professional learning collectively in networks and cohorts, suitable to their practice needs.*

3. Schools and schooling

Schools- from pre-schools through to Year 12 (or 13) and across all sectors and jurisdictions- provide the majority of languages teaching and learning experiences in Australia, and require coordinated and articulated support across all languages, learning and teaching approaches, year levels and transition points. State and territory jurisdictions are principally responsible for provision of education across the school years, and must be included in coordinated and collaborative ongoing planning.

Goal 3a: *For provision of quality languages programs, consistent with national and international best practice, to ensure access for all learners, in their first and additional languages across the years of schooling*

Goal 3b: *For frequency and intensity of language learning opportunities consistent with literature on optimal learning times and retention and development of language*

Goal 3c: *For organisational structures and leadership teams committed to the promotion and realisation of consistent, quality provision of languages education*

Goal 3d: *For recognition of the contribution that languages teaching and learning makes to broader school priorities, including literacy and learner identity.*

4. Out of school context

The learning and teaching of languages occurs in many contexts, including community-based, distance and out of hours programs, which must be connected to and inform more formal educational settings. Community programs in both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and migrant languages provide significant contributions to the overall languages education ecology in Australia, and are critical to a future-focused society which recognises and values language and cultural diversity.

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Goal 4a: *For a resourced, valued and integrated approach to language learning from birth to the senior years, in all languages, and in all teaching and learning contexts*

Goal 4b: *For targeted support of community languages (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, and migrant and out of school community languages) through local, regional and national programs, linked to languages strategies and policy, social policy and relevant agencies and stakeholder communities.*

5. Universities, higher and further education

Universities and other higher education providers provide both languages education programs and initial and continuing teacher education programs. Transition from school to university, and strategies to ensure languages are coordinated across the higher education sector and offer suitable teacher education programs for teachers of languages and all teachers need to be part of an overall national plan and strategy.

Goal 5a: *For an articulated strategy to link school and higher education languages education, to ensure ongoing access for all learners to languages learning opportunities in the post-secondary context*

Goal 5b: *For a national approach to full provision of higher education languages offerings, including prominent world languages, Australian First Languages, minority, migrant and community languages, classical languages, and Auslan*

Goal 5c: *For a national approach to embedding languages education into initial and continuing education programs for teachers of languages, and for all graduating teachers.*

6. Education sectors and jurisdictions

Government, Catholic and independent schools all provide languages education and are committed to languages education as one of the key learning areas of the national goals of schooling. Coordination between sectors will be critical for ongoing planning for national goals and targets, and will necessarily include an improved approach to provision and participation data collection.

Goal 6a: *For cross-sectoral collaboration to support implementation of key initiatives, informed by data, to improve languages teaching and learning across all sectors*

Goal 6b: *For qualified languages consultants to be employed in all education jurisdictions to provide language specific support to teachers of languages in schools, including for additional, community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programs.*

7. Curriculum

The ACL provides the core curriculum for languages programs F-10, and will need expansion to include different models or approaches to teaching and learning, and further expand its capacity to provide

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for learners of different backgrounds and ages. More work at senior secondary level also needs to occur to increase participation, and recognise learner background more accurately.

Goal 7a: *For language specific curricula that empower teachers to respond effectively, and with a range of pedagogical approaches, to the learning needs of diverse learners, variable year level entry points, different teaching and learning contexts, and the specificities of languages*

Goal 7b: *For development of further curricula and curriculum development support in languages (and for entry points and cohorts of learners) not yet developed in the ACL.*

8. Resources

The dynamism of languages, the communities of learners and the use of digital technology in communication and in learning necessitate a thorough review of resource provision for engaging experiences in language education.

Goal 8: *For a nationally co-ordinated process of resource development to respond to urgent identified needs to create language-specific, learner relevant, educationally engaging, and authentically derived resources, available online, for all learner cohorts.*

9. Data

A nationally coordinated approach to collection of data to inform improvement in provision and participation of languages education is required.

Goal 9: *For a comprehensive understanding of languages provision and participation nationally, based on a coordinated process of data collection, to evaluate impact and inform ongoing planning.*

10. Research

Research underpins understanding across time and contexts how languages are taught and learnt. A dedicated research commitment is required to inform ongoing planning and development.

Goal 10a: *For targeted and coordinated research projects to ensure a quality evidence-base for ongoing planning and development of language learning and provision, across all teaching and learning cohorts*

Goal 10b: *For teachers of languages to be supported to conduct their own research and to work with academic researchers and communities, where relevant, to improve languages teaching and learning.*

The above goals are summarised in Table 6, below.

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Table 6: Summary of draft goals

Goal areas		Draft goals
Learners and Learning	1a	<i>For every student in Australia to have access to multiple language learning opportunities, including languages which are for them first, heritage and additional languages</i>
	1b	<i>For confident and engaged learners of languages who have skills and knowledge which is valued, developed and applied in meaningful and relevant ways</i>
	1c	<i>For students themselves to inform and contribute to the ongoing design and implementation of their language learning experiences</i>
Teachers and Teaching	2a	<i>For an increased and empowered language teacher workforce, skilled to provide engaging and relevant language learning experiences which respond to learner needs across all teaching and learning contexts</i>
	2b	<i>For national provision of targeted and relevant ongoing professional learning for teachers of languages, including opportunities for teachers to design, conduct and contribute to their own ongoing professional learning collectively in networks and cohorts, suitable to their practice needs</i>
Schools and Schooling	3a	<i>For provision of quality languages programs, consistent with national and international best practice, to ensure access for all learners, in their first and additional languages across the years of schooling</i>
	3b	<i>For frequency and intensity of language learning opportunities consistent with literature on optimal learning and retention and development of language</i>
	3c	<i>For organisational structures and leadership teams committed to the promotion and realisation of consistent, quality provision of languages education</i>
	3d	<i>For recognition of the contribution that languages teaching and learning makes to broader school priorities, including literacy and learner identity</i>
Out of school contexts	4a	<i>For a resourced, valued and integrated approach to language learning from birth to the senior years, in all languages, and in all teaching and learning contexts</i>
	4b	<i>For targeted support of community languages (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, and migrant and out of school community languages) through local, regional and national programs, linked to social policy and relevant agencies and stakeholder communities</i>

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Goal areas		Draft goals
Universities, higher and further education	5a	<i>For an articulated strategy to link school and higher education languages education, to ensure ongoing access for all learners to languages learning opportunities in the post-secondary context</i>
	5b	<i>For a national approach to full provision of higher education languages offerings, including prominent world languages, Australian First Languages, minority, migrant and community languages, classical languages, and Auslan</i>
	5c	<i>For a national approach to embedding languages education into initial and continuing education programs for teachers of languages, and for all graduating teachers</i>
Education sectors and jurisdictions	6a	<i>For cross-sectoral collaboration to support implementation of key initiatives, informed by data, to improve languages teaching and learning across all sectors</i>
	6b	<i>For qualified languages consultants to be employed in all education jurisdictions to provide language specific support to teachers of languages in schools, including for additional, community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programs</i>
Curriculum	7a	<i>For language specific curricula that empower teachers to respond effectively, and with a range of pedagogical approaches, to the learning needs of diverse learners, variable year level entry points, different teaching and learning contexts, and the specificities of languages</i>
	7b	<i>For development of further curricula, with curriculum development support in languages, entry points and cohorts of learners not yet developed in the ACL</i>
Resources	8	<i>For a nationally coordinated process of resource development to respond to urgent identified needs to create language-specific, learner relevant, educationally engaging, and authentically derived resources, available online, for all learner cohorts</i>
Data	9	<i>For a comprehensive understanding of languages provision and participation nationally, based on a coordinated process of data collection, to evaluate impact and inform ongoing planning</i>
Research	10a	<i>For targeted and coordinated research projects to ensure a quality evidence-base for ongoing planning and development of language learning and provision, across all teaching and learning cohorts</i>
	10b	<i>For teachers of languages to be supported to conduct their own research and to work with academic researchers and communities, where relevant, to improve languages teaching and learning</i>

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Part 4: Next steps

The National Summit

The National Languages Plan and Strategy Project (the Project) is being implemented with a focus on evidence-based research and consultation with key stakeholders. The Project Advisory Group (PAG) draws on advice from persons with significant expertise and strategic knowledge of languages education in Australia. Insights from the PAG have informed the Project, generally, and in the drafting of the Discussion Paper, *Altitude and Amplitude: Towards a National Plan and Strategy for languages education in Australia*. The National Summit provides an opportunity to broaden the consultative processes to representative stakeholders from across Australia.

The objectives of the National Summit are to:

- (i) provide an introductory overview of the data gathered across Research Project 1 and Research Project 2
- (ii) provide considered, expert input from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages learning, community languages learning and additional languages learning contexts identifying needs and interests and identifying critical issues that ought be incorporated into any plan;
- (iii) use these inputs as the basis for scaffolding of stakeholder engagement with the Discussion Paper and gathering stakeholder response, particularly in relation to draft goals included in the Discussion Paper
- (iv) use the reflections and feedback from the selected key stakeholders to refine the goals in the Discussion Paper and to develop recommendations that form the basis of the National Languages Plan and Strategy.

Participants to the National Summit are invited representatives from all states' and territories' government, independent school and Catholic sectors, language teachers and participants with identified expertise or perspectives. The additional participants include noted academics as well as representatives from DESE, ACARA and AITSL. A total of approximately 65 participants, including AFMLTA Project Team and DESE team members, will attend.

The virtual National Summit agenda will commence with real-time presentations from AFMLTA Project Team Lead Researchers followed by prerecorded input from selected PAG members. These two input sessions outline the data and current languages learning landscape in Australia. With the assistance of facilitators, small group discussions will use the information provided as a lens through which to review and reflect upon the goal areas articulated in the Discussion Paper. The small group discussion will be reflected back, in summary, to the whole group. Facilitators will also be asked to reflect back to the AFMLTA Project Team on what was discussed in groups that was not reported.

A post-Summit survey will be distributed to all attendees so as to capture reflections that were not able to be provided on the day or thoughts that emerged post-Summit. The survey will focus

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particularly on the goal areas and identification of any recommendations that might accompany a goal. The survey will be conducted as online survey in Qualtrics.

Focus Groups

Following the National Summit, all feedback collected on the day and through the survey will be collated. A summary document, with information on project to date, draft goals and recommendations will be developed as the basis of discussions in Focus Groups. The Focus Groups provide opportunities for the direct involvement of languages teachers in the Project.

The objectives of the Focus Groups are to gather data on the draft goals and recommendations. Confirmed participants to each Focus Group will be provided with the summary document, as described above, prior to the activity. The Lead Researchers will guide participants through the document, seeking targeted feedback from grass-roots practitioners. The nature of the questions used during the Focus Groups will evolve out of the specific feedback provided at the National Summit and will be an opportunity ascertain some insight into practitioner response to priorities outlined in the goals and recommendations.

It is anticipated that sixteen (16) Focus Groups will be conducted across August to October, 2021. There will be nationally supported Focus Groups for teachers of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages (one Focus Group); for teachers in community language or out of school language learning settings (two Focus Groups); for teachers of Auslan, supported with a Auslan interpreter (one Focus Group); for teachers in the ACT, NT, SA and Tasmania (one Focus Group in each state or territory); for teachers in NSW, Qld, Vic, WA (two Focus Groups in each state).

The Focus Groups will be facilitated as virtual sessions. Each session will be approximately one hour in length and will be recorded and transcribed. Sessions will be conducted out of school hours at either a 4.00pm-5.00pm or 6.00pm-7.00pm timeslot. In order to maximise individual teacher participation, each session will be capped at a maximum of thirty (30) participants. Where necessary and appropriate, an expression of interest process will be used to maximise the diversity of input across attributes such as regional, rural, remote and urban, sectors, levels, languages.

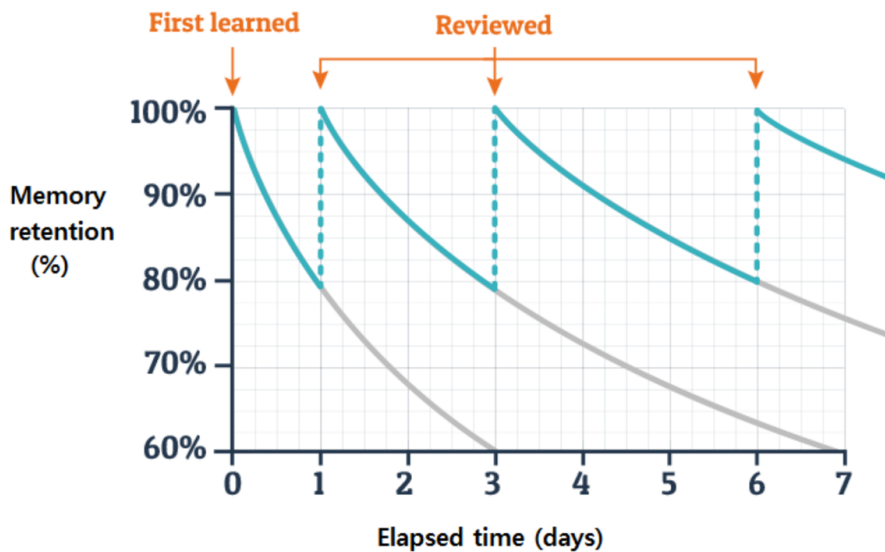
Progression (towards) the development of a National Plan and Strategy

Data collection processes are cumulative with processes of analysing the data being iterative and informing ongoing development, review and refinement of the National Languages Plan and Strategy. At every stage, key personnel from the Department of Education are involved in review of material and confirmation of suitability for distribution is received prior to dissemination. The Project Advisory Group also provides significant endorsement at key stages. Input from key stakeholders at and after the Summit and in the focus groups will also be incorporated. The final National Languages Plan and Strategy will draw together all of the feedback and input and will be presented to the Australian Government at the conclusion of the project.

appendices

Appendix 1:

Figure 1: *Ebbinghaus' forgetting curve and review cycle*



Note: The forgetting curve outlines the process of 'forgetting' information presented or first learned. Where there are two, three or four additional learning sessions in a week, where content learned is reviewed or expanded, 'remembering' is increased- from a low of around 20% retained information for one offering/lesson, to 90% with three or more learning sessions.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Ebbinghaus-forgetting-curve-and-reviewcycle_fig1_324816198