National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions

Literacy Progression

Appendices 1 to 5

Contents

Appendix 1. The evidence base for development

The literacy progression was developed on a foundation of peer-reviewed, internationally recognised research in the fields of literacy and language development. It is informed by studies from a broad range of approaches including cognitive psychology, linguistics and sociolinguistics.

A number of seminal pieces of research provide a theoretical framework for this progression. The functional model of language, first developed by Michael Halliday, has been used because

it underpins much of the structure and content of the Australian Curriculum: English. It has been adopted as a key theoretical approach across the world, including in Singapore, Hong Kong, Finland, the USA, China and South Africa. It describes how to use language and grammatical knowledge to make meaning in different contexts, for different audiences and purposes. The model has been developed in Australia over the last 40 years and is included in teacher education courses across Australia.

The distinction between 'constrained skills' and 'unconstrained skills' (Paris 2005) is an important theoretical underpinning in the development of the structure of the progression. Paris's theory supports the relationship between the foundational sub-elements, or constrained skills, such as phonological awareness and phonic knowledge; and the unconstrained skills, or application sub-elements, such as understanding texts. The constrained skills are a set of skills that reach an optimal level early in the development progression. They are taught explicitly in the Australian Curriculum: English. The unconstrained skills, or application sub-elements, become increasingly complex across all years of schooling and across learning areas, and are never described as fully mastered. Importantly, Paris notes that constrained skills are essential for literacy development but they are not sufficient for a student to become 'literate' and that unconstrained skills develop alongside constrained skills.

The four related literacy resources described by Freebody and Luke in 1990, and further explained in 1999, are code breaker, text participant, text user and text analyst. They describe a repertoire of capabilities used by proficient readers. These form the framework of literacy that underpins both the Australian Curriculum: English and the reading sub-elements in the literacy progression. Freebody and Luke's theories of reading behaviours that support successful learning have informed the development of the progressions.

A list of all literature considered for each sub-element of the National Literacy Learning Progression is provided in appendices 2–4.

More research and empirical studies into literacy development have been conducted in the elements of reading and writing than in speaking and listening. For validation purposes, this imbalance is exacerbated by the absence of NAPLAN student performance data for speaking and listening. Research has typically focused on the early years, although there is growing interest in the research community in literacy development across learning areas and for older students.

It is acknowledged that new evidence and research will emerge, perhaps through this project, which may challenge the sequencing of content in the Australian Curriculum. New evidence will be reported in ACARA's annual process for monitoring the effectiveness of the Australian Curriculum, for consideration in future Australian Curriculum evaluations and reviews.

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Appendix 2. Key references – Speaking and listening

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Victorian Department of Education & University of NSW 2016, Tools to Enhance Assessment Literacy. <http://teal.global2.vic.edu.au/>

Speaking

The development of this sub-element progression was informed by the following:

Alexander, RJ 2008, Towards Dialogic Teaching: Rethinking classroom talk, 4th edn, Dialogos, York.

Dawes, L, Littleton, K, Mercer, N, Wegerif, R & Warwick, P, Thinking Together in the Primary Classroom, The Centre for Research in Education and Educational Technology (CREET), The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK.

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Interacting

The development of this sub-element progression was informed by the following:

Alexander, RJ 2008, Towards Dialogic Teaching: Rethinking classroom talk, 4th edn, Dialogos, York.

Dawes, L, Littleton, K, Mercer, N, Wegerif, R & Warwick, P, Thinking Together in the Primary Classroom, The Centre for Research in Education and Educational Technology (CREET), The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK.

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Appendix 3. Key references – Reading

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Appendix 5. Literacy experts consulted during development

ACARA acknowledges the contribution of the following literacy experts who were consulted during the development of the progression:

- Dr Misty Adoniou
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- Dr Peter Knapp
- Dr Mary Macken Horarik
- Dr Meree Reynolds
- Dr Janet Scull
- Dr Len Unsworth
- Dr Claire Wyatt-Smith
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