Think about your students. What knowledge of their strengths, skills, learning preferences and abilities do you have? What other education approaches do you already know that you could bring to an analysis of how to meet a student's learning needs (e.g. educational taxonomies, learning theory, etc.)?

Children and young people have preferences for the way in which they interpret information, make connections with prior learning and demonstrate that understanding. Major differences in learning styles include learning by experimenting, reflecting, doing or feeling, and learning individually or within a group.

Source: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2008e.

A tool designed for use when completing an ILP is presented in 'Resource 3.4 Understanding the student' (page 83). If you completed Resource 1.1 (Module 1.1) or Resources 3.1 to 3.3 (Module 3.1) to profile a student in your class, take that data and try to include it in Resource 3.4. Think about any gaps that are left, and how you might complete these.

If you have not yet completed a profile of a student with language difficulties (using the resources referred to in Modules 1.1 and 3.1), you might like to start by using the observational profiles in the resources section (Resources 3.1 and 3.3).

Stage 2: Determining adjustments that need to be made to the curriculum

An ILP can be used to set annual, long- and short-term educational goals for students with language difficulties. When setting goals for a student, a teacher or an SSG should consider these principles:

- goals should allow the student to participate in their classroom programs
- goals should be based on curriculum content and experiences similar to those for same-age peers
- goals should be fully inclusive where possible
- all parties should agree upon the goals
- the goals should also be a priority for the student
- goals should build upon the strengths and skills of the student
- annual, long- and short-term goals need to be differentiated
- goals must be achievable, and able to be monitored and evaluated.

Reflect on, and/or discuss each of these principles. Do current programs for students with language difficulties in your school conform to each of these principles? If not, what might need to be modified in your current practices?

A useful tool designed to be used when completing an Individual Learning Plan is presented in 'Resource 3.5 Goal setting' (page 84). Using knowledge identified when completing Table 3.2.1on page 76 of this guide, adapt the template to identify three goals in each square.

Stage 4: Monitoring and evaluation

Assessment and the development of revised strategies for teaching and learning is a core area of expertise of teachers. Monitoring and evaluation of students with language difficulties enables student progress to be measured, the effectiveness of the program to be assessed and new goals to be developed. Where a student's progress does not seem to be occurring within the time frame allowed for, or planned, you may need to adopt problem-solving strategies to reassess goals, targets, activities and methods.

Teachers and coordinators can use Table 3.2.3 when evaluating the progress of a student with language difficulties.

Table 3.2.3 Evaluation of the program

What is working?	Where to next?
What is not working?	**Where to next?**

Going further

The assessment and profiling tools described in Module 3.2 can be used within a class or across a school.

You might go further, and develop for a school a customised information kit for teachers and parents about Individual Learning Plans for students with language difficulties. The kit could include a presentation outlining the process and teacher-ready templates.

Resource 3.1: LSP oral language observation profile

Name of student: Year level: Date:

From your observations, compared to other students of the same age, does the student exhibit any of the language behaviours described?

			Yes	No
1 IDEAS	**Words – Does the student:**			
	1.1	have limited understanding of words?		
	1.2	have difficulty with word relationships? (e.g. synonyms, antonyms, multiple-meaning words)		
	1.3	take a comparatively long time to recall or say many words?		
	1.4	frequently use 'simple' non-specific words and phrases? (e.g. *good*, *big*, *sort of*, *stuff*)		
	1.5	have difficulty learning new words?		
	Sentences – Does the student:		**Yes**	**No**
	1.6	have difficulty following instructions?		
	1.7	respond inappropriately or not respond to questions?		
	1.8	have difficulty understanding or producing short sentences?		
	1.9	use relatively more short sentences and fewer longer, more complex sentences?		
	Discourse – Does the student:		**Yes**	**No**
	1.10	have difficulty identifying the topic or theme of spoken texts?		
	1.11	have difficulty logically connecting a sequence of sentences around the same topic?		
	1.12	struggle to recount or retell stories and events in a cohesive manner?		
	1.13	have difficulty providing explanations for actions or events?		
2 CONVENTIONS	**Phonology – Does the student:**		**Yes**	**No**
	2.1	mispronounce many words; say sounds in the wrong order? (e.g. *ephalant*, *hostible*)		
	2.2	have difficulty breaking words into sounds?		
	2.3	have difficulty identifying sound patterns across words? (e.g. *rhyme*, *alliteration*)		
	Grammar – Does the student:		**Yes**	**No**
	2.4	use incomplete sentences?		
	2.5	use incorrect word order?		
	2.6	have difficulty with subject–verb agreement? (e.g. *The boys is playing.*)		
	2.7	have difficulty with word endings? (e.g. plural *–s*, past-tense *–ed*, adverb *–ly*)		
	Genre – Does the student:		**Yes**	**No**
	2.8	have limited awareness of noun–pronoun relationships across sentences? (e.g. *The boys are playing. They are very noisy.*)		
	2.9	struggle using conjunctions to logically connect sentences?		
3 PURPOSES	**Using language to achieve purposes – Does the student:**		**Yes**	**No**
	3.1	struggle to start, maintain and end conversations? (e.g. taking turns with peers, topic maintenance)		
	3.2	have difficulty interpreting and using non-verbal communication? (e.g. eye contact, facial expression, gestures, tone of voice)		
	3.3	misinterpret non-literal language? (e.g. pull up your socks)		
	3.4	have difficulty adjusting language to the listener? (e.g. best friend vs principal)		
	3.5	have difficulty using language for a variety of different purposes? (e.g. seeking assistance, expressing ideas, greeting)		
4 ABILITY TO LEARN	**Perceiving, attending to and using oral language – Does the student:**		**Yes**	**No**
	4.1	have difficulty using language to help them engage in and complete a task? (e.g. use self-talk)		
	4.2	become inattentive or easily distracted, especially when background noise is present?		
	4.3	have difficulty recalling spoken information?		
	4.4	rarely seek clarification when required?		

Source: Adapted from 'Oral language observational profile', in Munro 2005, pp. 83–4.

Resource 3.2: Sample curriculum standard and the template

Health and Physical Education

Movement and physical activity

At Level 4, students perform confidently and efficiently in a range of movement environments (indoor, outdoor and aquatic). They refine basic and complex motor skills and apply these skills in increasingly complex games and activities. They maintain regular participation in moderate to vigorous physical activity and monitor exercise intensity. They explain the process for improving health-related fitness. Students effectively use strategic thinking and work with both more- and less-skilled peers to improve game performance. Students work independently to improve performance. They evaluate the performance of a partner and provide constructive feedback based on performance criteria to assist skill development. Students describe and analyse the various roles required in competitive sports. They work in a group to create a game, and establish rules and procedures for its safe conduct.

		Expressive language	Receptive language
Ideas	words		
	sentences		
	discourse		
	topic		

Resource 3.3: Classroom observation profile

How well the student:	Context (e.g. listening to a narrative, learning new topics, guided reading, small-group maths, etc.)			
	Date	Date	Date	Date
perceives and attends to spoken language				
comprehends vocabulary				
uses appropriate words				
says words accurately (articulation)				
understands sentences				
produces meaningful sentences				
produces grammatically correct sentences				
listens and retains what was heard in longer spoken discourse				
asks and answers questions				
learns new language				
uses language to communicate with peers				
uses language to learn				
stores knowledge in long-term memory				
narrates, recounts, says longer presentations				

Resource 3.4: Understanding the student

	Relevant activities and environments	Current strengths, skills and successes	Most effective teaching strategy
Home			
School			
Recreation			
Community			

Resource 3.5: Goal setting

Long-term and annual goals		
By the end of this year	Mid-point	Leaving school
Short-term goals (specific, measurable, achievable)		
End of week	End of term	End of year

Resource 3.6: Program planning

	Where	Activities
What needs to be taught?	Home	
	School	
	Recreation	
	Community	

Resource 3.7: Implementation

Organisational strategies				
Curriculum area	When	Where	By whom	With whom

Module 4:

Teaching Strategies for Students with Language Difficulties

The Language Support Program Professional Learning Guide has been developed to assist teachers, coordinators and school leaders to understand about language, language disorders and language difficulties, and how the ICPAL oral language framework can guide a Language Support Program.[15]

This is the fourth learning module within this Professional Learning Guide. It comprises three sections that address the following key questions about the school-based support of students with language difficulties:

- How can the ICPAL language framework be used to develop teaching and learning approaches and activities?
- How do principles of oral language teaching fit within broader system-wide principles of teaching and learning?
- What kind of learning environments and practices will most suit students in need of support?
- What curriculum support materials have been produced that can be used and/or adapted to meet the needs of students in a Language Support Program?
- Are there specific teaching strategies suited to the needs of students with language difficulties in the Early Years and Middle Years of schooling?

Prerequisites[16]

It is expected that participants will commence this module after completing at least Modules 2 and 3.

Outcomes

Learning outcomes are identified at the beginning of each module. They apply to all the sessions in the module. Learning outcomes will usually be met by engaging with the content of the module and completing relevant learning opportunities identified.

By the end of Module 4, you will be able to:

- develop a learning environment that meets the needs of students with language difficulties
- be aware of a range of teaching approaches and strategies
- use and adapt curriculum support materials to meet the needs of your students
- recognise and use in Early Years and Middle Years classrooms authentic teaching and learning strategies to support students with language needs.

Timing

For the benefit of users engaging with a module within a self-paced or collegiate professional learning program, an estimation of the time it should take to complete a module section is provided at the start of each section. Additional research and practical classroom-based activities are not included in this time estimation.

Module 4.1 timing – 90 minutes
Module 4.2 timing – 90 minutes
Module 4.3 timing – 60 minutes

Resources

Recommended resources are specified at the start of each section of a learning module. This allows participants to source any external resources required before the professional learning begins. In most cases, however, required resources are included in this guide and presented after the reference to them in the text. Larger resources may be found at the end of a module.

Resources follow a predictable numbering system where the first numeral identifies the module and the second numeral identifies the number of the resource within the module.

Glossary of key terms

Descriptions of key terms used are listed at the front of the module, and are also highlighted in colour the first time a term is used. The complete listing of key terms used in the guide is included in Appendix 1.

Module 4.1:
ICPAL as a teaching framework

Module 4.1 builds on the knowledge and skills you acquired in Modules 1, 2 and 3 about language, the ICPAL language framework and how to identify and profile students with language difficulties. It guides you through general principles that should inform teaching and learning, and allows you to think about the learning environment and about general teaching and learning approaches. It concludes with an example of how 'Indicators of Progress' and 'Teaching Strategies' can be aligned to the ICPAL language framework.

Resources

1 English curriculum P–10

2 'English Developmental Continuum P–10' (available at: www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/englishcontinuum/default.htm)

3 Resource 4.1 Principles of learning and teaching

4 Resource 4.2 Standards, indicators of progress and teaching strategies

Timing

90 minutes

Module glossary (terms in italics are separate glossary items)

ICPAL language framework	Ideas, Conventions, Purposes and Ability to Learn in both the expressive and receptive areas of (oral) language
Indicators of Progress	Points on the learning continuum that highlight critical understandings required by students in order to progress through curriculum standards

Incidental and spontaneous language or systematic and explicit teaching?

Many students learn language by being immersed in it and interacting with it. Their innate language-learning capacity allows them to use their existing knowledge to make sense of new language information in order to modify what they know. They are able to try out their interpretation of word meanings and adjust their understanding accordingly. These students believe they can learn oral language successfully and are intrinsically motivated to do so.

Students with language difficulties, for reasons not fully understood, do not learn language in this spontaneous and incidental way to the same degree as their peers, and therefore require explicit language teaching. In addition to this, because language is the primary means by which all aspects of the curriculum are delivered, adjustments will need to be made across all learning areas to ensure that students have the opportunity to participate and learn.

Using ICPAL as a teaching framework

In Modules 2 and 3, you will have seen how the ICPAL language framework and the curriculum can help monitor and describe a student's oral language development, and identify areas where students with language difficulties might face problems. The ICPAL language framework can also be used to design teaching and learning activities to target these difficulties.

Principles of learning and teaching

Any principles for oral language teaching need to relate to a broader set of principles of learning and teaching that underpin the nature of the learning environment, approaches and strategies, and teaching procedures.

Are you familiar with a set of principles for learning and teaching that already impact on your classroom teaching? If you are not familiar yet with any such principles, you can still use the following activity either individually or in a collegiate professional learning activity.

Use a 'Fishbone diagram' (or Inspiration software) to clarify or brainstorm your ideas. Try to 'tease out' principles about the learning environment, responding to student needs-backgrounds-perspectives-interests, links to the community, and development of higher-order thinking skills.

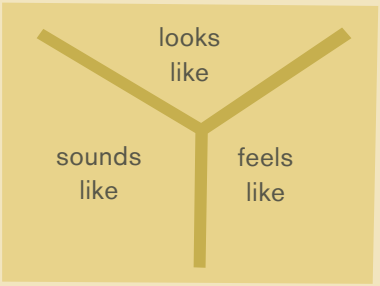
Dr John Munro, the author of the ICPAL language framework, has also developed 'Principles of oral language teaching' (in Munro 2005), which can be aligned to system-wide principles of learning and teaching for all classrooms. The two sets of principles can be found in Resource 4.1 on page 116.

The learning environment

The type of classroom in which students engage with the curriculum, the teacher and their peers is a significant factor underpinning a number of these principles of oral language and whole-school teaching and learning.

When supporting students with language difficulties in small groups and in regular classrooms, you need to know what to teach and how to develop the teaching conditions (i.e. the 'learning climate') that fosters oral language learning.

A 'Y chart' enables you to think outside the square while brainstorming about what a learning environment for oral language learning might be like. On a large sheet of paper, draw a Y shape and brainstorm what the 'learning climate' would look, sound and feel like.



Results can be shown around the room, and if you are participating in a collegiate professional learning activity where there is more than one person or group, you can view each Y chart, examine individual or group responses, and consider how they differ from your own.

Teaching conditions likely to foster oral language learning

The following approaches and strategies suggest how teaching conditions can help students improve their oral language learning (see Munro 2005). They describe oral language learning in the Early Years but can be adapted for the Middle Years of schooling.

If you are engaging with the following section individually, use a reflective learning approach to note points that you can add to your Y chart and subsequently use in your own oral language teaching. You might also develop a checklist against which you can audit your own oral language teaching against each strategy.

If you are undertaking a collegiate professional learning activity, consider dividing up the approaches and strategies, and use a jigsaw strategy to investigate and report back to others.

Have students speak and explicitly comprehend oral language as often as possible

The more frequently a student speaks or responds to speech, the more the student will learn about oral language and make aspects of it automatic. Optimise students' opportunity for this in both individual and group activities. Many students who have oral language difficulties may have been reluctant to engage in oral communication in the past.

Teach language using concentrated, salient examples in natural as well as contrived transactions, while students are communicating real messages. Encourage students to use the language they are learning while pursuing other goals (e.g. in the arts (visual/performing) or physical education), and in as many areas of their world as possible. Try to ensure that there is concrete support for meaning in contexts. Teach language in contexts in which the student must communicate interactively and not simply be 'talked at'. Provide opportunity for sharing and for feedback for the student.

Work on drawing out oral responses from students. Because these students may use oral language less fluently or recall words very slowly, there is often the tendency to do the talking for them. These students will improve their oral language only by using it more frequently in supportive contexts. Avoid talking for them. Support them to talk as much as possible and in as many ways as possible.

Give students 'wait time'. Allow them to gather their thoughts to prepare a response. Also, recognise that pauses and silences are a natural part of conversation, as they allow students to rephrase, re-examine and learn as they speak.

Discuss the purposes and values of listening and speaking

When students have clear purposes or reasons for speaking and listening, they have reasons for learning language skills and for learning to use language in order to make it work for them. Many of those who have oral language difficulties will not have experienced these purposes and values. Help the children see that the language teaching is helping them:

Say what they are thinking or feeling at any time	Give feedback that mentions this. It is good when you tell me something is hard (e.g. *I can try saying it another way. This helps you learn it better.*)
Achieve their goals or purposes	Give feedback that mentions this (e.g. *Saying it like that really helped you get what you wanted.*)
Make sense of the world	Give feedback that mentions this (e.g. *When you say it another way it can help you know it better.*)

Model oral language actions

Model or act out and talk about the actions that can be used as often as possible. Give students time to try using various actions such as making a picture of what they hear. Students become aware of the actions that they can use when they listen or before they speak (e.g. how to plan what they might say). When students discuss with others the actions that they use, other students can try out their actions and perhaps take them on for themselves. Use the form of group collaborative learning in which students work together on text, and discuss their interpretations and why they made them.

Let students see they are allowed to 'try things out', have time to do this, and are able to take risks

Encourage students to try out what they might say and to take risks when speaking. When they say something that doesn't make sense or is incorrect, encourage their attempts at expression and give them the opportunity to modify or change what they have said. Let them see that nothing that is said is set in concrete and that they can change whatever they want.

Help students see an oral text or a conversation as a 'playing field' or 'sandpit' on which they are free to experiment with various actions to achieve a goal. They need to understand that they have the freedom to experiment while making language and that this is valued by the teacher.

Encourage students to use gestures to help get their message across.

Provide positive, constructive feedback wherever possible

With each student, decide how you might give positive feedback that will support future learning. Let students know what they have in place (i.e. what they are doing well or correctly at any time) and suggest options for what they might do to improve the next step in their learning.

When a student is learning more about an idea or a strategy, let them know that they are taking more control of it; managing it better. Students who have language difficulties need to know how they are progressing at any time, what they are doing correctly and what they might do to improve their performance. Students will also get positive feedback by seeing that what they say is understood and that they can communicate about particular topics effectively. Maximise the opportunities for them to express themselves effectively.

Help students build their self-efficacy as learners and users of oral language

It is critical that these students believe they can learn language successfully and can make the language they learn work for them. Their self-efficacy will drive their future motivation to learn and their learning activity. Your work as a teacher is made much harder if the students don't believe that they can learn oral language successfully or that it can work for them. Through the feedback you provide, help them see that their success as language learners and users is increasing. As they learn each aspect, help them see that the new knowledge is in their heads, is now theirs and can be used by them.

Encourage students to self-correct

Encourage students to make self-corrections. Give them the opportunity to learn how to monitor what they are saying and how to self-correct by modelling self-correction and reinforcing the attempts at self-correction in the student and others.

Let students see they have time to think and to learn and can gradually use their knowledge automatically

Give students time to organise their thinking, particularly when learning a new strategy or idea. Use dialogue (e.g. *You've got time* or *Give yourself time to think*). Build personal planning time into all sessions. Let students see that they have time to plan what they will say before they need to speak to the group. Teach them how to plan and encourage them to seek assistance during planning times. When learning a new idea, give students time to practise it a few times and then to gradually use it automatically. Let them know that they will have time to think about instructions you give and to put together their response.

Relax the speaker before talking

Many students who have had earlier difficulties communicating may lack self-confidence and become anxious or stressed when required to communicate orally. It may be necessary to assist students to relax before communicating. You can achieve this through visual imagery techniques.

Help students to 'get ready' what they know for communicating

It is important that those who have oral language difficulty know they have time to organise what they know about a topic and get their knowledge ready before they need to talk about it or consider using it. This may involve using teaching procedures that assist students to:

- recode their non-verbal knowledge of a topic to verbal form
- expand their background knowledge
- recall actions they can use when they listen or speak
- think about why they are listening or speaking – their *purposes* (e.g. to let other people know what they think or feel or see in their minds).

Scaffold the students' learning

When they are learning a new idea, provide maximum scaffolding or assistance at first, and then gradually withdraw it as the students construct more of the idea independently. Suppose students listening to a narrative or story have difficulty recalling a key name (e.g. *boat*). You could say to them: *It is something that carries things on the river.* Its name finishes with *oat. And look, here comes a big _oat down the river.* If they work out the word on this occasion but can't remember it on a second occasion, you still may need to provide scaffolding, but not as much, and then less still on a third occasion. Be prepared to use this scaffolding and gradually withdraw it for each idea.

Cue students' thinking

In parallel with scaffolding students' learning, be prepared to remind them of the thinking actions they can use at any time. Cueing students to think in particular ways can help them to gradually learn to control how they use these ways of thinking. Gradually move to the students' independent use of these ways of thinking.

Feed back to students what they have learnt

Help students see that they are making progress with their oral language. Let them see, for example, that they are learning new vocabulary and that they can talk better about ideas. Increase the opportunity for students to review what they have learnt regularly and build this into the teaching.

Build group knowledge of oral language

Let students see that group knowledge on any topic you are teaching is valued. Allow students to learn as a group. Encourage them to see oral language learning as a group activity and to scaffold each other.

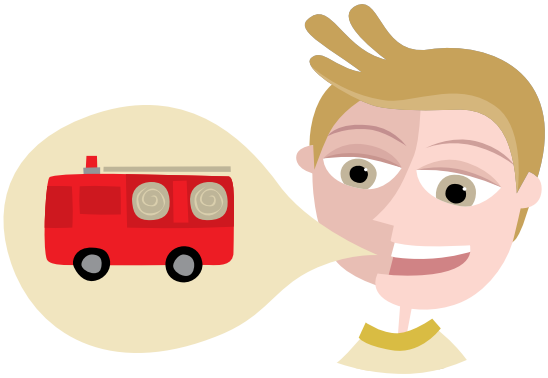
Put in place the ground rules for learning oral language

Establish the ground rules for learning oral language with students. Help them see that the goal or purpose of oral language is to discover what a speaker wants to say. You listen to find out what someone else wants to say. There are various actions that they can do to achieve this goal.

They can:

- plan before they begin to speak or try to guess what a speaker might say
- try to get a speaker to pause so that they can put together what they know about what is being said, perhaps by asking questions (e.g. *What do I know now? What could this mean?*). Think ahead and guess while listening what the talk might be about, and ask the speaker to repeat parts that don't make sense.

Students who have language difficulties need to learn how to use these ground rules in practical ways. They need to hear teachers praise them for doing these things.



Talk about familiar events initially and then move to less familiar contexts

When students are learning a new language form, ensure that the topic of the dialogue is about events in their world and is first-person based. As the students become more familiar with the form, have them increasingly use it to talk about objects, persons and events not in their immediate environments.

Regularly revise the key ideas

Provide the opportunity for students to revise regularly the key ideas they have learnt. Focus on helping them make this knowledge automatic. During revision, encourage students to link the ideas they are revising with other knowledge they have.

Help students see the value of improving their language

Help students see that by improving their language they are able to achieve more, communicate more effectively, convey what they think and feel more effectively and obtain outcomes they value. Students will be more motivated to improve their oral language if they can see that it can work for them and allow them to operate more effectively.

reflecting

Speaking and Listening: Indicators of Progress

Indicators of Progress will usually form part of each curriculum document. Those for 'Speaking and Listening', while applicable to a range of curriculum disciplines and domains, will be found in an English P–10 curriculum document (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2008a), and/or in curriculum support materials for English (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2008a).

If you did not examine the 'English Developmental Curriculum P–10' (EDC P–10) in Module 3.1, you might like to review it now and see how it links standards for Speaking and Listening with Indicators of Progress and teaching Strategies.

Resource 4.2 (page 118) is an example of how the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and the 'English Developmental Curriculum P–10' are linked. It describes learning standards, Indicators of Progress and teaching strategies for Level 3 Speaking and Listening.

Read through Resource 4.2 carefully, or if you have prepared ahead of time, cut and paste together a comparable document for Speaking and Listening at another level (e.g. Level 5 or 6). Begin by reflecting on the relationship of the standard and the Indicators of Progress. Think about the recommended teaching strategies and try to identify how students with language difficulties might need to be supported during this process, or whether you might need to adapt the teaching strategies in whole- or small-class learning.

Going further

The EDC P–10 provides many stimulating teaching strategies linked to specific curriculum levels. It can be used as a resource for some or all classes that you teach.

Identify a class that you teach and explore the standards, Indicators of Progress and teaching strategies relevant to the curriculum level at which you are teaching within the EDC P–10. Incorporate those that will be useful for teaching and learning into your teaching portfolio.

Module 4.2:
Teaching strategies: the Early Years

Module 4.2 allows you to build on the knowledge and skills you acquired in Module 4.1 about the relevance of principles of teaching and learning to the learning environment, and how teaching strategies for students, including those with language difficulties, can be linked to the curriculum. Module 4.2 describes specific teaching strategies and activities for the Early Years.

Resources

1 Resource 4.2 Standards, indicators of progress and teaching strategies

2 Resource 4.3 Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL – Ideas

3 Resource 4.4 Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL – Conventions

4 Resource 4.4 Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL – Purposes

5 Resource 4.4 Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL – Ability to Learn

6 Appendix 3 The ICPAL language framework

Timing

90 minutes

Module glossary (terms in italics are separate glossary items)

Ability to Learn	The AL in the ICPAL language framework: necessary skills and their prerequisites for the acquisition of oral language
Conventions	The C in the ICPAL language framework: rules governing the sounds, words, sentences and genres of language
English Developmental Continuum P–10	Evidence-based indicators of progress, linked to powerful teaching strategies and aligned to the progression points and the standards for the English domain of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards
expressive language	The production of a message through speaking and/or gestures or writing. Also known as *expression*, or language production
ICPAL language framework	Ideas, Conventions, Purposes and Ability to Learn in both the expressive and receptive areas of (oral) language
Ideas	The I in the ICPAL language framework: meanings of words, sentences, discourse and topics of language

Indicators of Progress	Points on the learning continuum that highlight critical understandings required by students in order to progress through curriculum standards
language difficulties	Difficulties in acquiring or using language. May be *expressive* or *receptive*. These difficulties may involve one, some or all of the *phonologic*, *morphologic*, *semantic*, *syntactic* or *pragmatic* components of the linguistic system
Purposes	The P in the ICPAL language framework: use of oral language within social interaction; *pragmatics*
receptive language	Ability to understand a message conveyed by another person via *expressive language*. Also known as language comprehension

Teaching approaches for the Early Years

Module 4.2 contains four specially developed sets of examples of teaching resources (i.e. Resources 4.3 to 4.6). These were developed for use in teaching students with language difficulties in the Early Years of Schooling. Each 'Aspect of language' has corresponding 'Teaching activities' for the parts of the ICPAL language framework that the indicators describe.

If you compare Resources 4.3 – 4.6 to Resource 4.2, you will notice that Resources 4.3 – 4.6 are not aligned to a specific curriculum level. Effective teaching for students with language difficulties, and particularly for students with language disorders, needs to target the students' individual language learning requirements.

Teaching approaches for ICPAL–Ideas

Resource 4.3 (pages 122 and 123) outlines some examples of teaching procedures for the ideas of language. It defines the aspects of language and recommends appropriate teaching and learning strategies for students with language difficulties in the Early Years.

Examine 'Resource 4.3 Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL–Ideas'. Try to understand its content and its recommended approach. You might like to compare the 'aspect of language' with the ICPAL language framework (Appendix 3) to see where each aspect fits.

Print Resource 4.3 and put it in your teaching portfolio. Use it in developing teaching and learning activities that support the development of the ideas of, or the meanings in language for, a student or students with language difficulties.

practising

Activities for ICPAL–Ideas

The following is a collection of activities for teaching ideas of language in the Early Years of schooling. While activities are arranged under the Ideas component of the ICPAL language framework, remember that all language exchanges involve using skills *across* the ICPAL areas.

Although some activities are confined to particular levels of skills and interest, the majority of these activities can be adapted for use across Prep to Year 4, and across ability levels.

Browse through the following teaching activities for ideas. With which are you familiar? Have you already used any of these activities in a class? Consider copying, adapting and adding to these in a teaching portfolio, for use in practical teaching activities to develop language and literacy, or in supporting students with language difficulties.

Individually, or in pairs, attempt to match activities to the 'aspects of language' and 'teaching and learning strategies' in 'Resource 4.3 Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL–Ideas' (pages 122–123).

Ideas

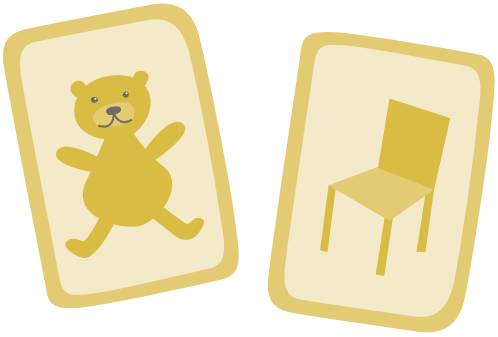
Word banks	Thematically based groups of words that are related to a topic or theme can be brainstormed by the whole class or small groups of students. Cut out pictures from magazines, newspapers and brochures or have students draw or write them.
Semantic webs	Start with a central word and draw different web parts coming from it. Brainstorm how the words go together and where they best fit.
Categorisation	Which category do words fit into? For example, if you have the category 'animals', you will have domestic animals or pets; farm animals and zoo animals; and animals that belong in the jungle, forest, snow, etc. Some more ideas include: school, home or house, sports, occupations, nature, colours, shapes, places, transport, countries and food.
Description bingo	Take a group of pictures that are different and make bingo cards. The students have to listen to attributes of the pictures to guess which picture they have – the types of attributes to be described (without giving the name) would include: what category it belongs to; what it looks like; its shape, size, colour and number; what it does; and where you find it.
Twenty questions	A student must think of something (e.g. person or place or thing) and the other students ask questions about it to work out what it is. They must try to narrow down what it might be by excluding categories.
Celebrity heads	Three students are at the front of the class. The rest of the students can see their person or place or thing headband. The students who do not know what their word is must work it out by excluding categories through a process of elimination. By adding places and other objects, you have more of an opportunity to expand the vocabulary range used by students.
Which one doesn't belong?	In this activity, students are presented with four words. You can have pictures accompanying them, or words only, depending on the skill levels of the students involved. The whole class or small group of students must work out what does not belong and give a reason *why*. Never accept the answer '*Because it's different'* – encourage the students to be more specific by using who, what, why, colour, shape, etc. cues.
Which ones go together?	Present the students with either three or four words; you can use pictures as a scaffold or use auditory words only. The students must decide which words go together and why. Ensure the students do not simply say *'Because they do'*, but encourage them to provide specific reasons why two things go together (e.g. banana, apple and phone would have banana and apple going together because they are both fruits, etc.).
Description I Spy	In this game, students play regular I Spy, but instead of saying what sound something starts with, they must describe the item they can see by category, shape, size, number, use, etc.

Teaching approaches for ICPAL–Conventions

Resource 4.4 (page 124) outlines some examples of teaching procedures for the conventions of language. It defines the aspects of language and recommends appropriate teaching and learning strategies for students with language difficulties in the Early Years.

Examine 'Resource 4.4 Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL–Conventions'. Try to understand its content and its recommended approach. You might like to compare the 'aspect of language' with the ICPAL language framework (Appendix 3) to see where each aspect fits.

Print Resource 4.4 and put it in your teaching portfolio. Use it in developing teaching and learning activities that support the development of the conventions of language for a student or students with language difficulties.



Activities for ICPAL–Conventions

The following is a collection of activities for teaching the conventions of language in the Early Years of schooling. While activities are arranged under the Conventions component of the ICPAL framework, remember that all language exchanges involve using skills ***across*** the ICPAL areas.

Although some activities are confined to particular levels of skills and interest, the majority of these activities can be adapted for use across Prep to Year 4, and across ability levels.

Browse through the following teaching activities for conventions (phonological and grammatical). With which are you familiar? Have you already used any of these activities in a class? Consider copying, adapting and adding to these in a teaching portfolio for use in practical teaching activities to develop language and literacy, or in supporting students with language difficulties.

Individually, or in pairs, attempt to match activities to the 'aspects of language' and 'teaching and learning strategies' in 'Resource 4.4 Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL–Conventions' (page 124).

Phonological conventions

Nursery rhymes	It's time to rediscover nursery rhymes! Read nursery rhymes with your students and get them to fill in words that rhyme with the previous lines. (For example, *Jack and Jill, went up the* _____.) You can try changing the names and the rhymes themselves to see if you and your students can think of words that rhyme (e.g. *Bill and Mary, fed their* _____).
Rhyming competitions	These are more difficult. Choose two words that are simple in nature. Discuss with your students whether one word or the next will have the most words that rhyme with it. Write the words down and see which student wins! (For example, *pin*, *pat*, *pig*, *pick*, *watch*, *pot*, *pine*, *let*, *leg*, *bog*, *pen*, *pant*, *man*, *bite*, *ring*, *chair*, *shoe*, *bag*, *coat*, *sky.*) Consonant blends to use can include: *sh/ch/th/tw/pl/bl/fl/sn/st/sk*.
Rhyming snap	You can develop a set of cards with pairs of cards that include words that rhyme (e.g. bear/pair). Use the cards in a game of 'snap'.
Rhyming colours	Choose a colour with the student/s. Help them to make a poster of all the words they can think of that rhyme with that colour (e.g. red – *head*, *bed*, *said*, *fed*, *wed*, *fled*). They can draw, cut and paste, or write the words on the poster.
Syllables	Talk to your students about what syllables are. It can help to explain syllables as the handclaps that we put to words, or the drumbeats that words have in them. It can be helpful for students to recognise early on if a word is long or short (e.g. *mosquito* is a long word, *dog* is a short word). You can explain that long words have more than one syllable in them. You can develop a chart to help students count syllables.
How many syllables in a name?	Introduce the topic of names of family members. Identify how many syllables exist in each person's name. Who has the name with the most syllables? Who has the name with the least syllables? How many one-syllable names can you think of? How many two-syllable names can you think of?
I spy with my little eye a word that has XX syllables	This is a great game to play at home, in the car, at school, etc. You or your student says *I spy with my little eye a word that has XX syllables* and the other person must guess it. This means that the student can identify and practise words that have one, two or three syllables, etc.
Breaking pictures up into syllables	Choose a word (e.g. alligator). Count the number of syllables in the name and then cut a picture of the object into the same number of parts. Get the student/s to assemble the parts and say each syllable separately and in combination.
Sound–letter links	Talk about the letters of the alphabet and what sounds they make. Try involving the name of the letter and the sound in a game (e.g. sound–letter snap). The student plays a game with cards of the alphabet and when they put the card down on the table, they must say the letter and the sound. You may have to help with this. Also, talk about what words start with a particular sound (e.g. *cat* starts with a *k* sound, not just *c* – i.e. c-see). Try not to do the alphabet in order so that students cannot rely on rote learning e.g. the ABC song.

Phonological conventions (continued)

Initial and final sounds	Choose a word and practise identifying the initial and final sounds of the word. I Spy is a great game for identifying initial sounds, but make sure the students say the sound and not the name. You can also use I Spy for final sounds (e.g. *I Spy with my little eye, something that ends in a 'g'*). You can use lotto or bingo cards for this or simply things in the room.
First or last sound snap	Play a game of 'snap' where you can only snap if the word or name either starts with the same sound or ends in the same sound. Hearing initial sounds is easier for students, so you may need to concentrate on this more to begin with. Any commercial cards can be used (e.g. Thomas the Tank Engine, Disney Princess, AFL cards). Select the card type to suit the interests of the student.
What is the head and tail of the animal?	Create a game where you use pictures and relate the first sound to the head of the animals and the final sound to the tail of the animal. (For example: What is in the first carriage of the train? What is in the last carriage of the train? What do family members' names begin and end with? Can the students notice other people whose names start with a particular sound?) Note: *sh, th, ch* each have one sound so *shark* starts with a sh not an *s*.
Challenge	Use a 'challenge' activity that includes counting numbers of sounds or syllables (e.g. How many *s* sounds are in the sentence *She sells sea shells on the sea shore*).
Number-plate game	Get a student to practise initial sounds outside the classroom in order to make sentences. When they are being driven in a car, they can practise making short sentences with the starting sounds of the first part of a number plate (e.g. OJL *Orange Juice is Luscious*).
Blending	Students need to be able to blend words together so that they can make sense of words they don't know. This activity involves being able to recognise the sound the letter makes (hence the importance of sound–letter links). The student has to remember the initial sound of the first letter in a word and 'attack' the next sounds in the word, joining them together to work out what the word is. Being able to blend words from another person's demonstration is part of being able to do this. (For example, when you say *d…o…g* the student can blend the sequence together and make sense of this word as *dog*.) Auditory memory is very important in this task, as a student must be able to remember all of the sounds involved so they can blend them.
Blending simple three-sound words with picture cues	You will need pictures of three-sound words. Ask your student to point to the *c…a…t* using the sounds only. Words used could include cat, dog, house, man, girl, horse, hat, bat, rat, meat, etc.
Blending simple words with no picture cues	Use any items in the classroom or house. In a classroom or schoolyard, you can say *Can you pass me the b…a…ll.* At home, a parent can reinforce the skill by asking, when in the kitchen, *Can you pass me the f…or…k please?* You can move on to more complex words once the student has mastered simple three-sound words (e.g. What words can you think of in the kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, car, etc?).

Phonological conventions (continued)

Blending using real print	Use readers to show students the different sounds in words. It is important to include the vowel sounds as well; so if there is a word that your student does not know, say *m…ea…t* rather than *m…eat*. This way, the vowel sounds get covered. Once simple words have been established, students need to be able to hear consonant blends (e.g. sl sk br fl cl). This is often where students get confused. Break the words up as in the initial blending activities. It is very useful to get students to 'feel' what their mouths are doing during these activities, as it means that they are able to be more independent when they are outside, or back in the classroom. Ask *Where can you feel the sound in your mouth? Is it a long sound? Is it a short sound? Is it a soft sound?*
Alliteration	Alliteration is a skill that students need to know. This means that they are able to work out the first main sound in tongue-twister types of sentences or rhymes (e.g. *Fanny fish found five filthy frogs*, *Dan the dog devours disgusting delicacies*). Choose a sound. Again, it is a good idea to use a sound that is being covered in the classroom. Make your own tongue twisters for these sounds. This task can be quite challenging, so you may have to take the lead for this. You can sometimes brainstorm lots of words first and then put them into a story or rhyme.
Manipulation	Being able to manipulate words, and sounds in words, means that students are able to hear sounds, maintain them in their working memory and make changes to make new words. This skill will help students to write new words simply by deleting the first, the last, or the middle sound and adding a new one. (For example, *cat* – take away the *k* sound, add a *b* sound to get *bat*; take away the *t* sound and add a *b* sound to get *cab*; take away the *a* sound and add a *u* sound to get *cut*.) You need to start with compound words. Then move to syllables. Then move to sounds. • Compound words (e.g. What do I get if I take the *cow* away from *cowboy*?) • Syllables (e.g. What do I get if I take the *fly* away from *butterfly*?) • Sounds (e.g. What do I get if I take the *p* away from *play*? What do I get if I take the *t* away from *plant*? What do I get if I take the *n* away from *plant*?). You will notice that there is a progression from compound words to syllables to sounds, and that there are progressions within the sound part in words as well. These need to be adhered to, as they are the developmental progression that this manipulation goes through. You can also play games with students, getting them to replace sounds in words. For example: What do we get if we take away the *b* from boy and put a *t* in its place? This can be incorporated with many different words. Again, start with simple three-sound words and move on to words that are more difficult.

Grammatical conventions

Noun/verb race to the line game	In this game, you divide students into two groups: nouns and verbs. Having discussed that 'Nouns are names' and 'Verbs are doing words', the students line up (on a netball court) N/V/N/V, etc. When you call out a word that is a noun or a verb, the groups of nouns or verbs have to run (e.g. if you call out ***banana***, the nouns run; ***jumping***, the verbs run). The last one back then sits out of the game and helps you to judge. You can expand this with adjectives, adverbs and other parts of speech. With younger students you may prefer to use the terms 'things' and 'actions'.
Memory game with sentence structure	These examples are for the structure of irregular past tense. 'I went shopping and I bought a ……..' 'I went to the zoo and I saw a ……..' 'I cooked a …… and ate a ……..' 'I fell down the stairs and broke my……', etc.
Pronoun game	In this game students must describe what is happening when other members of the class or group perform different actions. You should choose a boy, girl and small group to do the actions. The rest of the class then has to describe what is happening without using the names of the class members, but rather personal (e.g. ***he/she***) and possessive (e.g. ***her/his***) pronouns.
Talking picture snap, memory, fish or bingo	In this game, decide on the sentence structure that your class or small group needs to work on. Use picture cards to play any of the games mentioned. Before completing their turn, the student must verbally describe what is happening in the picture by using a complete sentence. Playing cards can be purchased (e.g. Finding Nemo, Disney Princess, AFL cards) or created (e.g. Emotion cards, Football cards – Collingwood played … last weekend and … (won/lost), Character cards – Ariel likes to eat … cards). The aim is to have an expressive language expectation for each turn.
Twenty questions	A student must think of something (e.g. a person, place or thing) and the other students must ask questions to work out what it is. Students must try to narrow down what it might be by excluding categories. This game also teaches the students specific question-asking skills. Having a standard question type can help students to remember how to ask a question. When aiming for sentence structure practice, encourage the other students to answer in a full sentence.
Celebrity heads	Three students are at the front of the class wearing person, place or thing headbands. The rest of the students can see their headbands. The students wearing the headbands must work out what their words are by excluding categories through a process of elimination. By adding places and other objects, you have more of an opportunity to expand the vocabulary range used by students. This also encourages students to learn to use question forms. You may like to model the correct sentence or question structure for students and have written cues.

Grammatical conventions (continued)

Conjunction corner	Give the students a range of short sentences either written or with writing and pictures. Explain that they can add two sentences together by using conjunctions. Prepare cards with conjunctions and get the students to initially join two sentences with simple conjunctions. Then they can progress to conjunctions that are more complex. Ask the students to work out whether they have put all of the main ideas into the sentences and also whether the sentences make sense.
Sentence jumble	Present a small group or class with a sentence that has been cut into individual words. You may use picture symbols to assist. The students must arrange the words to make a grammatically correct sentence.
Conjunction jumble	This is an activity where the teacher provides the small group or class with two short sentences on cards and a range of conjunctions on separate cards. The students must put the two sentences together using a range of conjunctions and discuss how the different conjunctions can change the meaning of the new sentence.
Sentence completion activities	The students are given the first part of a sentence and must finish it grammatically.
Statements to questions	Give the students a range of statements that they must change to questions. Provide examples of how the word order changes to convert statements into questions. You can use statements written on cards that students can cut and physically manipulate to make questions.
Grammar guesses	Prepare a box containing a number of words (i.e. parts of speech) written on cards. The student chooses a card and has to work out what word would have come before the word chosen and after the word chosen (e.g. if the student chooses the word *going* then they must guess at the words prior to and following *going* – for example, *is going home*).
Human sentence	Write a sentence on cards. Cut it into pieces. Each student has to choose a card and work out where to stand in order so that a grammatically correct sentence is made. The rest of the class can read the sentence and work out whether it makes sense.
A long time ago	This game involves changing sentences from present tense into past tense. The students need to understand that a different form is used when talking about something that has already happened. You can talk about the morphological endings, how they sound, and also those that are irregular.
Running commentary	Two students have to act out an action at the front of the class, and the other students take it in turns to make up a sentence about what the students at the front of the class are doing. A variation of this is 'Newsreader', where students pretend to be newsreaders while describing actions.

Teaching approaches for ICPAL–Purposes

Resource 4.5 (page 125) outlines some examples of teaching procedures for the purposes of language. It defines the aspects of language and recommends appropriate teaching and learning strategies for students with language difficulties in the Early Years.

Examine 'Resource 4.5 Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL–Purposes'. Try to understand its content and its recommended approach. You might like to compare the 'aspect of language' with the ICPAL language framework (Appendix 3) to see where each aspect fits.

Print Resource 4.5 and put it in your teaching portfolio. Use it in developing teaching and learning activities that support the development of the purposes of language for a student or students with language difficulties.

reasoning

Activities for ICPAL–Purposes

The following is a collection of activities for teaching the purposes of language in the Early Years of schooling. While activities are arranged under the Purposes component of the ICPAL framework, remember that all language exchanges involve using skills *across* the ICPAL areas.

Although some activities are confined to particular levels of skills and interest, the majority of these activities can be adapted for use across year Prep to Year 4, and across ability levels.

Browse through the following teaching activities for purposes. With which are you familiar? Have you already used any of these activities in a class? Consider copying, adapting and adding to these in a teaching portfolio, for use in practical teaching activities to develop language and literacy, or in supporting students with language difficulties.

Individually, or in pairs, attempt to match activities to the 'aspects of language' and 'teaching and learning strategies' in 'Resource 4.5 Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL–Purposes' (page 125).

Purposes

Battleships	This is an excellent barrier game to encourage students to give and listen to clear directions. Each player has a grid with numbers along the top and letters down the side. The students place a range of planes, boats and ships in squares and the other students have to guess which squares they are in. To help develop good language skills, encourage the students to ask questions and give answers in full sentences (e.g. *Do you have a ship in A3?*)
Guess who	*Guess who* is a commercially available game which is ideal for younger students. This game encourages specific questioning skills and the ability to listen to and process information.
Stressed out	Give the students a sentence and ask them to say the sentence differently, depending on the situation. Talk to the students about how we talk differently depending on our conversational situation or partner. (For example, use the sentence *Watch out for that* applied to different characters and situations, such as a current affairs presenter, a jungle explorer, a teacher, players on a sports field, a parent, etc.)
You've got to be joking (1)	Collect jokes, riddles, puns or video comedy sketches and share them with students. Have the students, in small groups, analyse what language rules have been violated to create the humour.
You've got to be joking (2)	Use joke books for students to read jokes to each other without using expression. The other students must analyse why the joke was either still funny or not funny at all.
Look who's talking	In this game, place a variety of different sentences in a box. The students select a sentence and have to work out who might be saying it and in what context.
Blindfold alley	Have the students set up a safe obstacle course in a room. One student is blindfolded and has to make their way to the prize by asking questions and following the directions given by their fellow students. This game promotes clear direction-giving and clarification skills.
Problem prophets	Students are given situations that they must problem-solve. For example, Ralph wants to go to the movies, but doesn't have enough pocket money. What could he do? Books of problem-solving activities are commercially available.
Role play	This is an excellent tool for teaching appropriate social behaviours. The teacher comes up with age-appropriate hypothetical scenarios and the students must act out both positive and negative ways of dealing with the situation. The differences between the ways of behaving and the resulting outcome can be discussed.
Social autopsy	Students work out what went wrong in a conversation or social interaction. Teachers can use this in real-life situations as well as structured practice conditions.

Purposes (continued)

Non-verbal Nellie	Students have to act out something that they are thinking about, and the rest of the class have to work out what they are thinking and how they are feeling, based on the non-verbal cues. The students can also discuss how to use non-verbal cues to read real-life social situations. Explicit teaching of non-verbal behaviours is a valuable part of language teaching.
Charades	This is another opportunity for students to both practise and read non-verbal language. Modifications to the traditional rules could include miming a feeling, or for other students to guess what words might accompany the non-verbal communication.
Acting out figurative language	Provide a list of similes, metaphors and figurative language. The students choose one to act out and the others have to guess what they are doing. You can vary the level of support by having the list in front of students to begin with (e.g. *pigs might fly*; *as thin as a rake*; *he was as white as a ghost*).
Idiom idol	In this game, the teacher provides a list of idioms to students. Each student chooses an idiom and tries to work out where it came from (e.g. *He let the cat out of the bag* – the student might decide that this idiom could have come from someone trying to smuggle a cat into a classroom).
You want what?	Students have a list of indirect instructions or requests (e.g. *It's cold in this room isn't it?* which means *Can you turn on the heater?*) and the students must work out a more direct way of saying it. Conversely, students can be given a direct instruction and have to think of how it could be asked indirectly. Talk to the students about why people often put things indirectly and how they can both understand others better and be less likely to offend others if they ask indirectly.
Turn taking	Any commercially available game in which students need to take turns can be incorporated into explicit teaching about turn taking and waiting turns.
Holding the floor	A game for older students where two students are in a role-play and one student is instructed to dominate the conversation and to hold his or her turn for as long as possible, using whatever means they can. You could have a range of pragmatic rules that are being broken in this game. The trick is that the other person does not know what rule it is, but has a discussion about what rules were broken at the end of the conversation.
Colour me the same	In this barrier game, two students are given identical pictures (beware of the level of complexity of pictures) and identical markers or pencils. They have a barrier between them and are instructed to make their pictures identical. The only way they can do this without looking is to give clear instructions, follow the directions closely and clarify when they are not understood. There is a range of magnetic pictures and reusable sticker books that can be used in the same way.

Teaching approaches for ICPAL–Ability to Learn

Resource 4.6 (page 126) outlines examples of teaching procedures for the ability to learn language. It defines the aspects of language and recommends appropriate teaching and learning strategies for students with language difficulties in the Early Years.

Examine 'Resource 4.6 Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL–Ability to Learn'. Try to understand its content and its recommended approach. You might like to compare the 'aspect of language' with the ICPAL language framework (Appendix 3) to see where each aspect fits, or compare it with the standard as expressed in Resource 4.2.

Print Resource 4.6 and put it in your teaching portfolio. Use it in developing teaching and learning activities that support the development of the ability to learn language for a student or students with language difficulties.

Module 4.3:
Teaching strategies: the Middle Years

Module 4.3 allows you to build on the knowledge and skills you acquired in Module 4.1 about the relevance of principles of teaching and learning to the learning environment, and how teaching strategies for students, including those with language difficulties, can be linked to the curriculum. Module 4.3 describes specific teaching strategies and activities for the Middle Years.[17]

Resources

1 Resource 4.2 Standards, indicators of progress and teaching strategies
2 Resource 4.3 Teaching and learning strategies: ICPAL – Ideas
3 Resource 4.4 Teaching and learning strategies: ICPAL – Conventions
4 Resource 4.5 Teaching and learning strategies: ICPAL – Purposes
5 Resource 4.6 Teaching and learning strategies: ICPAL – Ability to Learn

Timing

60 minutes

Module glossary (terms in italics are separate glossary items)

Ability to Learn	The AL in the ICPAL language framework: necessary skills and their prerequisites for the acquisition of oral language
Conventions	The C in the ICPAL language framework: rules governing the sounds, words, sentences and genres of language
English Developmental Continuum P–10	Evidence-based indicators of progress, linked to powerful teaching strategies and aligned to the progression points and the standards for the English domain of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards
expressive language	The production of a message through speaking and/or gestures or writing. Also known as *expression*, or language production
ICPAL language framework	Ideas, Conventions, Purposes and Ability to Learn in both the expressive and receptive areas of (oral) language
Ideas	The I in the ICPAL language framework: meanings of words, sentences, discourse and topics of language
Indicators of Progress	Points on the learning continuum that highlight critical understandings required by students in order to progress through curriculum standards
Purposes	The P in the ICPAL language framework: use of oral language within social interaction; *pragmatics*
receptive language	Ability to understand a message conveyed by another person via *expressive language.* Also known as language comprehension

Language difficulties in the Middle Years

At points of progression or transition between and within the stages of schooling (e.g. Year 5, Year 7), language difficulties may become more pronounced as students cope with increasingly complex curriculum content. Although they have learned informal, conversational language, students often have significant difficulty in a number of more 'academic' language areas. For example, a student may have difficulty making inferences, organising language or processing abstract language. Therefore, the 'Resource 3.1 LSP oral language observation profile' (page 80) discussed in Module 3.1 will not necessarily reflect the breadth of the student's difficulties.

Many students with language difficulties, particularly those not previously identified, will have developed strategies for masking their difficulties. They may avoid unwanted attention by blending into the background, be disruptive to avoid tasks, or enlist the help of other students or their parents. Even if they are noticed, their difficulties may not be properly recognised as language based.

In secondary school, language difficulties are likely to impact adversely on the student's relationships, academic achievement, ability to reason and problem solve, and ability to plan and predict outcomes. A combination of these factors often means that this group of students is at significant risk of failing to finish school and also failing to achieve positive outcomes socially and occupationally.

Indicators of Progress for the Middle Years

Module 4.3 contains four specially developed sets of teaching and learning strategies. These were developed for use in teaching students with language difficulties in the Middle Years of schooling.

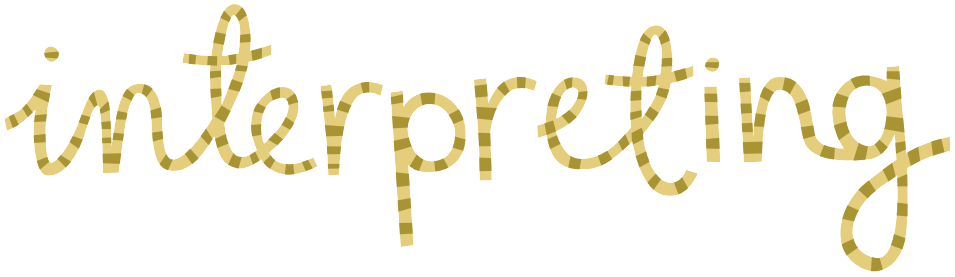
Teaching approaches for ICPAL–Ideas

Resource 4.7 (page 127) is a brief set of recommended teaching and learning strategies for the ideas of language in the Middle Years. While strategies are arranged under the Ideas component of the ICPAL language framework, remember that all language exchanges involve the use of skills *across* the ICPAL areas.

Although some strategies are confined to particular levels of skill and interest, the majority of these strategies can be adapted for use across Years 5–8, and across ability levels. More detailed examples are described in 'Activities for ICPAL–Ideas' in Module 4.2 (pages 98 to 99). These activities can be adapted to meet the needs of students with language difficulties in the Middle Years.

Examine 'Resource 4.7 Teaching and learning strategies: ICPAL–Ideas'. Try to understand its content and its recommended approach. You might like to compare the 'aspect of language' with the ICPAL language model (Appendix 3) to see where each aspect fits.

Print Resource 4.7 and put it in your teaching portfolio. Use it in developing teaching and learning activities that support the development of the ideas of language for a student or students with language difficulties.



Teaching approaches for ICPAL–Conventions

Resource 4.8 (page 128) is a brief set of recommended teaching and learning strategies for the conventions of language in the Middle Years. While strategies are arranged under the Conventions component of the ICPAL language framework, remember that all language exchanges involve the use of skills *across* the ICPAL areas.

Although some strategies are confined to particular levels of skill and interest, the majority of these strategies can be adapted for use across Years 5–8, and across ability levels. More detailed examples are described in 'Activities for ICPAL– Conventions' in Module 4.2 (pages 100 to 105). These can be adapted to meet the needs of students with language difficulties in the Middle Years.

Print Resource 4.8 and put it in your teaching portfolio. Use it in developing teaching and learning activities that support the development of the conventions of language for a student or students with language difficulties.

Teaching approaches for ICPAL–Purposes

Resource 4.9 (page 128) is a brief set of recommended teaching and learning strategies for the purposes of language in the Middle Years. While strategies are arranged under the Purposes component of the ICPAL language framework, remember that all language exchanges involve the use of skills *across* the ICPAL areas.

Although some strategies are confined to particular levels of skill and interest, the majority of these strategies can be adapted for use across Years 5–8, and across ability levels. More detailed examples are described in 'Activities for ICPAL–Purposes' in Module 4.2 (pages 106 to 108). These can be adapted to meet the needs of students with language difficulties in the Middle Years.

Print Resource 4.9 and put it in your teaching portfolio. Use it in developing teaching and learning activities that support the development of the purposes of language for a student or students with language difficulties.

Teaching approaches for ICPAL–Ability to Learn

Resource 4.10 (page 129) is a brief set of recommended teaching and learning strategies for the ability to learn language in the Middle Years. While strategies are arranged under the Ability to Learn component of the ICPAL language framework, remember that all language exchanges involve the use of skills *across* the ICPAL areas.

Although some strategies are confined to particular levels of skill and interest, the majority of these strategies can be adapted for use across Years 5–8, and across ability levels. More detailed examples are described in 'Teaching Approaches for ICPAL – Ability to Learn' in Module 4.2 (see page 126). These can be adapted to meet the needs of students with language difficulties in the Middle Years.

Print Resource 4.10 and put it in your teaching portfolio. Use it in developing teaching and learning activities that support the development of the ability to learn language for a student or students with language difficulties.

Source the book, *One in Eleven: Practical Strategies for Teaching Adolescents with a Language Learning Disability* (Brent, Gough & Robinson 2006). *One in Eleven* is an invaluable resource for teachers of Middle Years students, and provides a whole-school approach for identifying and teaching students with language difficulties across a range of school contexts. If you are an LSP coordinator, develop easily readable information for staff about the role of all teachers as teachers of language. If you are a teacher, read what *One in Eleven* has to say about the teaching needs of students with language difficulties.

Using eLearning software to support language learning across the ICPAL areas

Readily available eLearning software can be adapted or used by teachers and students to develop confidence and competence in the ideas, conventions and purposes of language, as well as for developing the ability to learn language.

Usually, eLearning software for education will be available to schools through special licensing arrangements. The following examples are not intended to be an endorsement of particular products; however, all of these have been approved for use in Australian schools. They provide an indication of how students with language difficulties can use eLearning software to develop language awareness, knowledge, skills and application.

DingoBingo	*DingoBingo* is used for vocabulary development. It includes 10 lists of words and students must show proficiency in one list before progressing to the next. The program monitors word accuracy, time taken per game and error rate. Problem words are listed after each game, and can be printed out for further practice and revision away from the computer.
Graphic organiser software	*Kidspiration* and *Inspiration K–12* are graphic organisers that allow students to graphically connect words and to develop an understanding of schematic relations. This eLearning software suits and can enhance learning in the areas of the ideas of language (e.g. 'vocabulary as a meaning network' – semantic maps and more complex word maps), and the ability to learn language (e.g. the 'ability to symbolise', the 'ability to conceptualise and categorise', the 'ability to link ideas' and the 'ability to sequence and order').
Presentation software	The sequencing capacity within and between slides, and the highly graphical interface of Microsoft PowerPoint (and its equivalents) can be used to teach the purposes of language in both expressive and receptive modes. It can be used to learn how to 'manage and direct' (e.g. how to stay on topic); how to 'listen and speak between the lines' (e.g. communication of intended meanings, and of idioms and metaphors); and how to 'adjust to context and audience' (e.g. judging how much information to give, selecting appropriate words and phrases, and linking ideas).
Phonics Alive! series	The *Phonics Alive!* series can be used for teaching and learning the ideas and conventions of language. There are four pieces of software in the series. These teach vocabulary, blending of sounds, spelling and grammar. The series is targeted at young students as well as older students with language difficulties or older ESL students.
Word processing	Word processing software can be used for teaching ideas (e.g. vocabulary, sentences, discourse and topic), conventions (e.g. phonological, grammatical and genre), purposes (e.g. staying on topic, selecting words and conventions, linking ideas) and the ability to learn language (all of the 'ways of learning').
Word Wizard	*Word Wizard* is an Australian spelling and vocabulary program developed for students with language difficulties or for extension work for mainstream students. Word Wizard uses sound, text and visual cues to teach and reinforce spelling and vocabulary skills including phonics, homophones, plurals, prefixes, suffixes and much more.

Grammar Factory	Grammar Factory is a software program covering English grammar topics for the Early to Middle Years of schooling. The exercises are fully interactive, with sets of 10 questions for each exercise drawn at random. Students receive instant feedback and are able to call up worked examples when needed. Students can listen to any words that are unfamiliar, and the topic help is fully narrated.
Interactive learning objects	The Le@rning Federation makes and licenses digital learning materials to support teaching and learning. Materials are available free of charge to all Australian and New Zealand schools through state or territory and sector web portals.[18] Interactive learning objects for literacy and English have been produced for students in Years 5–9. All learning objects require students to use expressive and receptive language to learn about the ideas, conventions and purposes of language: • Ideas: vocabulary (e.g. 'Dream machine', the 'Point of view' series); discourse and topic (e.g. 'Show and Tell' series) • Conventions: sentences (e.g. 'Crimewatchers'); genre (e.g. 'Celebrity garbage', 'Finish the story' series) • Purposes: context and audience (e.g. 'Robots: make a catalogue'). Interactive learning objects are especially useful for developing the ability to learn language as they allow students to learn about and use symbols; to conceptualise and categorise, and to link ideas; to sequence and order; and to transfer what has been learned.

Going further

During the Middle Years of schooling, particularly in secondary schools, where a student will encounter many teachers, a Language Support Program should include training and support for teachers across different disciplines and domains.

Integrating the teaching of literacy across different fields of knowledge is an important part of effective literacy teaching. Pressley (2002), and Hall and Harding (2003), emphasise the need for strong connections across the curriculum so that literacy is also an integral part of other content areas.

'Literacy teaching and learning are not discrete pursuits. They are undertaken for a purpose, which is to make explicit to both teachers and students when literacy is integrated into other curriculum areas and when connections are made between school and out of school literacy practices' (Czislowski-McKenna et al. 2006).

Source Czislowski-McKenna et al. 2006, and read about how it describes the role of all teachers as teachers of oral language. If you are an LSP coordinator, develop easily readable information for staff about the role of all teachers as teachers of language. If you are a teacher, read what the paper has to say about oral language teaching.

Resource 4.1: Principles of learning and teaching

Principles of oral language teaching (Munro 2005) At any point, teach language skills and knowledge that:	**Principles of Learning and Teaching P–12** **(available at: www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingprinciples/principlesandcomponents.htm)**
allows students to express their understanding and intentions	**The learning environment is supportive and productive** 1.3 uses strategies that promote students' self-confidence and willingness to take risks with their learning 1.4 ensures each student experiences success through structured support, the valuing of effort and recognition of their work
helps students achieve their goals or purposes	**The learning environment is supportive and productive** 1.1 builds positive relationships through knowing and valuing each student 1.3 uses strategies that promote students' self-confidence and willingness to take risks with their learning
matches the students' current knowledge about language and their world	**Students' needs, backgrounds, perspectives and interests are reflected in the learning program** 3.1 uses strategies that are flexible and responsive to the values, needs and interests of individual students 3.3 builds on students' prior experiences, knowledge and skills
recognises the students' preferred strategies	**Students' needs, backgrounds, perspectives and interests are reflected in the learning program** 3.1 uses strategies that are flexible and responsive to the values, needs and interests of individual students 3.2 uses a range of strategies that support the different ways of thinking and learning 3.3 builds on students' prior experiences, knowledge and skills
has students pursue other goals and motives across a range of contexts (not just language sessions)	**Learning connects strongly with communities and practice beyond the classroom** 6.1 supports students to engage with contemporary knowledge and practice
provides clear examples	**Students' needs, backgrounds, perspectives and interests are reflected in the learning program** 3.1 uses strategies that are flexible and responsive to the values, needs and interests of individual students 3.2 uses a range of strategies that support the different ways of thinking and learning

uses contexts which clarify meaning	**Students' needs, backgrounds, perspectives and interests are reflected in the learning program** 3.1 uses strategies that are flexible and responsive to the values, needs and interests of individual students 3.2 uses a range of strategies that support the different ways of thinking and learning 3.3 builds on students' prior experiences, knowledge and skills
teaches in the students' world and communicates 'real' or authentic messages	**Students' needs, backgrounds, perspectives and interests are reflected in the learning program** 3.1 uses strategies that are flexible and responsive to the values, needs and interests of individual students 3.2 uses a range of strategies that support the different ways of thinking and learning 3.3 builds on students' prior experiences, knowledge and skills 3.4 capitalises on students' experience of a technology-rich world
follows a developmental learning pathway	**Students are challenged and supported to develop deep levels of thinking and application** 4.1 plans sequences to promote sustained learning that builds over time and emphasises connections between ideas
uses contexts in which the students communicate interactively, and share and receive feedback	**Students are challenged and supported to develop deep levels of thinking and application** 4.2 promotes substantive discussion of ideas 4.3 emphasises the quality of learning with high expectations of achievement 4.4 uses strategies that challenge and support students to question and reflect 4.5 uses strategies to develop investigating and problem-solving skills 4.6 uses strategies to foster imagination and creativity **Assessment practices are an integral part of teaching and learning** 5.1 designs assessment practices that reflect the full range of learning program objectives 5.2 ensures that students receive frequent constructive feedback that supports further learning 5.3 makes assessment criteria explicit 5.4 uses assessment practices that encourage reflection and self-assessment
provides opportunity for optimal communication and practice	**Learning connects strongly with communities and practice beyond the classroom** 6.2 plans for students to interact with local and broader communities

Resource 4.2: Standards, indicators of progress and teaching strategies

Victorian Essential Learning Standards

The following outline describes the standard that all students in Years 3–4 should be working towards and achieve by the end of Year 4.

Speaking and Listening

At Level 3, students vary their speaking and listening for a small range of contexts, purposes and audiences. They project their voice adequately for an audience, use appropriate spoken language features and modify spoken texts to clarify meaning and information. They listen attentively to spoken texts, including factual texts, and identify the topic, retell information accurately, ask clarifying questions, volunteer information and justify opinions (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2008a).

English Developmental Continuum P–10

The English Developmental Continuum P–10 (EDC P–10) describes student progress at levels 3.25, 3.5 and 3.75 in Speaking and Listening. For example:

At level 3.25, the work of a student progressing towards the standard at Level 4 demonstrates, for example:

- awareness of purpose and audience in short presentations
- active contribution to the preparation and presentation of performances when working with small groups
- relevant questioning to clarify the meaning of others' presentations
- attentive listening to a range of spoken texts, live and recorded, about familiar ideas and information.

The EDC P–10 identifies aspects of this progress in order to recommend Indicators of Progress and possible teaching strategies:

- ideas communicated
- conventions of language
- purposes of communication
- communicating orally.

Indicators of Progress

At level 3.25, 'Communicating orally (the ability to learn oral language)' has the following Indicators of Progress, applicable to all students in the classroom:

- Students plan and organise the subject matter for spoken texts and prepare the background information on the topic so that they take account of its context, purpose and audience.
- Students adopt an appropriate verbal style, including word choice, to suit a chosen text and the needs of a specified audience.
- Students decide how they will adjust pace, volume, pitch and pronunciation to enhance meaning when speaking.
- Students rehearse their performance and modify it appropriately.
- Students say how they identify the main idea and supporting details in spoken texts such as plays, advertisements or speeches.

Teaching strategies

The recommended teaching strategies for all students include an example where students respond to the Roald Dahl story, *Danny the Champion of the World.*

1 Before speaking and listening: Getting your knowledge ready

The learning and teaching approach for speaking and listening is illustrated for students responding to the story, *Danny the Champion of the World*.

Develop a speaking and listening plan

The teacher says: *You are going to listen to the story Danny the Champion of the World and then talk about what new things you have learnt. What might you do to help you talk about what you have learnt?*

Students talk about their speaking and listening plans to get themselves ready for the listening and speaking activity. The following questions can prompt them to say what they will do to listen effectively.

What will help you to get started with the listening?

I will put together what I already know about the story.

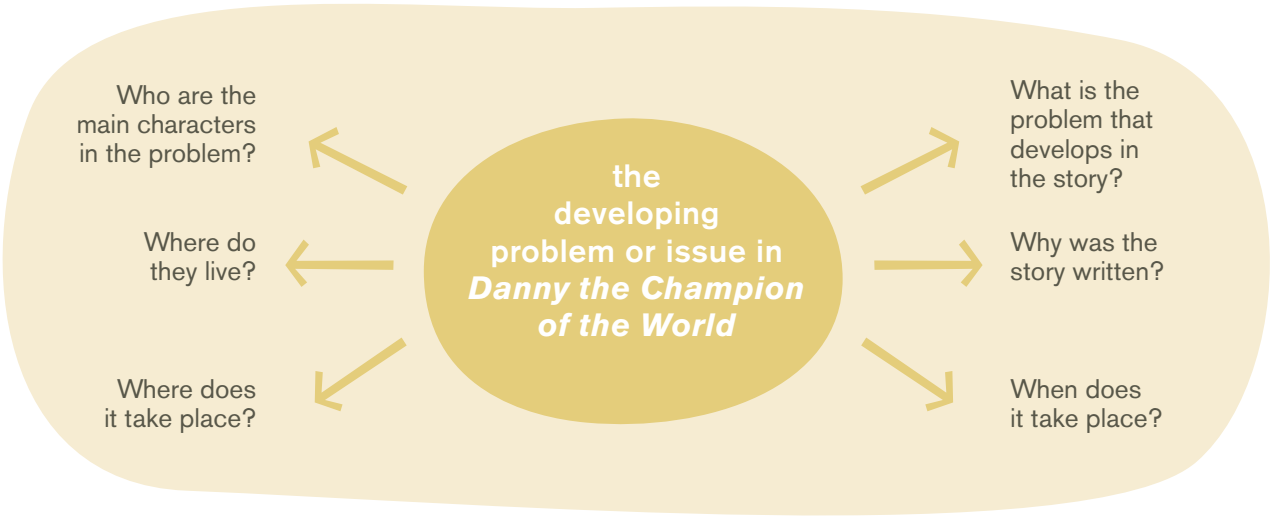
What will you do to help you keep track of what you hear while you are listening?

I can:

- put myself into a listening state or into a speaking and listening state
- make a picture of what I hear
- note down key words I hear
- draw an ideas network while listening
- say over to myself what I hear
- tell myself what the story says
- guess what the story might say
- ask questions to clarify what I hear
- periodically summarise what I hear.

Identify questions that the text answers

Students are told that in the chapters they are about to listen to, problems or issues will develop. They suggest the types of questions the text might answer. For example, they suggest possible answers to the questions presented.



2 During speaking and listening: Tuning in to ideas

The learning and teaching approach for speaking and listening is illustrated for students responding to the story, *Danny the Champion of the World*.

Learn to stay on topic

Students create their own conversation. They give special attention to what they will do to stay on topic, for example, they decide the overall ideas they want to communicate and keep reminding themselves of them. For parts that involve only Danny, the conversation could be Danny thinking aloud.

Students practise using appropriate voice and pausing patterns and intonation while talking, in order to convey their intention and maintain the listeners' interest. For the sentence: *Although some rich people had lots of food, there were many people living nearby who had little food and their families were starving*, they practise stressing particular words and phrases such as *although*, *many people*, *little food*, *starving*.

3 After speaking and listening: Consolidating and review

The learning and teaching approach for speaking and listening is illustrated for students responding to the story, *Danny the Champion of the World*.

Reflect on values of speaking and listening

Students are encouraged to reflect on how sharing ideas with others and listening to what others think, helped them. They collate a group list of values for speaking and listening.

Speaking and listening helped me to:

- know more about my peers
- make other people feel good
- make other people laugh
- learn new things
- feel sad or scared
- share enjoyable experiences
- help people know what to do.

Students gradually add to this list as they identify other ways in which speaking and listening helped them. Teachers use this list to help students understand how speaking and listening effectively can solve problems and resolve issues.

Modify speaking and listening plans

Students modify their speaking and listening plans for specific purposes. For example, they plan how they will:

- participate in a debate; they identify the key ideas and points of view raised by other speakers and alternative points of view.
- present a report, including how they will sequence the main and subordinate ideas and the questions they will answer; and cater for what listeners already know about the topic.

Students with language difficulties may often be working at a level or levels below the standard for their chronological age. This means that they may need to work towards a standard at a lower curriculum level. Alternatively, scaffolded teaching and learning may assist students with minor language difficulties to reach the norm or curriculum standard for their age and year level.

Using the EDC P–10 model (pages 118–120), identify other texts that could be used to meet the Standard and Indicators of Progress for level 3.25 (Years 3–4). Take one of these texts and develop a teaching strategy to cater for a student with language difficulties.

Or, analyse the recommended teaching strategies and, using the text recommended, adapt them to cater for a student with language difficulties.

Resource 4.3: Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL–Ideas

Aspect of language	Teaching and learning strategies
Say existing vocabulary	Students: • name familiar objects, actions and attributes such as colours, shapes (e.g. *What is this called?* or *What is Peter doing here?*) • suggest synonyms for words • suggest the words for a particular context.
Comprehend existing vocabulary	Students: • indicate, select or locate named items, events or actions • discriminate between items.
Learn to comprehend and say new vocabulary	Students: • identify instances of what the word means • say the new word accurately • say the actions that characterise the word • suggest how it is like words they know • suggest synonyms for the word • identify contexts in which the word is and isn't appropriate • say the meaning of the word • practise recalling the meaning of the word.
Sentence meaning comprehension	Students: • identify events or relationships described by a sentence • demonstrate their understanding of sentences by pointing to a picture or role playing • follow instructions.
Sentence meaning expression/production	Students: • complete sentences they hear to demonstrate meanings • retell an event or describe a picture in sentences • gradually say sentences with meanings that are more complex and that refer to more events, and link them in ways that are more complex.
Ask and answer WH questions	Students: • practise answering WH questions during or after listening to a story, watching a film or engaging in an experience • practise asking WH questions and answering them before they listen to a story, see a film or do an activity, by using what they think might happen.

Aspect of language	Teaching and learning strategies
Understand and express cause–effect and temporal sequences at sentence level	For a sentence heard or an experience, students: • suggest what might have been the cause and outcome of a particular event • suggest the order in which events have occurred • describe what might have happened before or after the event • express and comprehend temporal instructions in the correct sequence (e.g. before, after, while).
Listen to and comprehend spoken discourse	Students listen to extended prose, such as a story, a description or an explanation and: • retell or recount what they heard (i.e. summarise small amounts of text) • answer questions about what they heard • select from either sets of pictures or verbal descriptions those they heard • visualise what they heard and describe it in words • use timelines and flow charts to visually link ideas.
Produce discourse (i.e. recount, retell)	Students learn how to plan and sequence a recounting by: • recounting and retelling earlier experiences such as an excursion; using visual cues (e.g. photos, timelines, flow charts, mind maps, etc.) to assist them • taking on a character and talking about what it would be like • practising being a narrator.
Understand or describe the topic or theme	Students: • listen to part of a conversation or a story and guess its topic or theme • say what they do to work out the topic of a story or a conversation • play games like '20 Questions' or 'Hangman' in which they work out the topic of a story • make up a small speech for a topic they have selected (their peers need to guess the topic).
Think about ideas in imaginative ways	For a story that they have heard, or events that they have seen, students suggest: • how the outcomes might have been different if the events had occurred in other contexts • whether the key characters were different in particular ways • whether key elements of the story were changed.

Resource 4.4: Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL–Conventions

Aspect of language	Teaching and learning strategies
Phonological	Students: • learn to manipulate and store the phonological patterns appropriate to their development and need at any time. They: - identify sounds or sequences in sound patterns (e.g. rhyme, onset/rime segmenting, deleting the first and last sounds, phonemic segmenting, deciding whether a word contains a particular sound) - blend sounds and sequences into larger sound patterns - combine segmenting and blending strategies such as deleting and swapping sounds in words (The phonological patterns include one-syllable words and two,-three- and four-syllable words with varying stress patterns.) • retain sequences of sound patterns in short-term memory; imitate sound sequences of increasing complexity.
Articulation and speaking patterns	The articulation activities targeted in any small group will depend on the articulation needs of the students. Students may target activities in learning to: • perform the movement patterns to produce sounds • articulate sound patterns of increasing length • imitate intonation patterns in sentences of increasing length • retrieve words rapidly. Cued articulation is a useful tool to highlight particular sounds. *Consult with your speech pathologist for management of articulation difficulties.*
Grammatical (receptive language)	Students: • identify examples of events or relationships described by a grammatical form (e.g. *Show me the book*; *Show me the books*) • act out or draw sentences they hear.
Grammatical (expressive language)	Students: • create sentences from a story, a picture or experience using a particular grammatical frame (e.g. *The people are dancing*; *The people will dance*) • arrange a string of words to describe particular sentence meanings (e.g. unscramble sentences) • complete sentences they hear with particular grammatical constraints (e.g. 'cloze' activity).
Genre	Students use and comprehend conventions to link sentences into discourse: • listen to a story of two or three sentences about a topic that doesn't have connectives such as ***also***, ***then***, ***after that*** or ***however*** and suggest what might be used to link them • continue a story using connectives and pronouns • suggest the pronouns that might be used in a story they hear • suggest who or what is referred to by pronouns in a story • suggest the tense of particular verbs based on what has been said earlier in the text.

Resource 4.5: Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL–Purposes

Aspect of language	Teaching and learning strategies
Manage and direct (i.e. initiate, maintain conversation or discussion)	Students: • practise initiating and maintaining a short conversation with peers (e.g. role-playing; suggesting how different characters might converse about a topic).
Manage and direct (i.e. stay on topic)	Students: • listen to a story that goes off the topic, and decide where it does this and how to maintain the original topic • listen to an incomplete story and suggest how it might be continued • give a topic or a name of a story and take turns to say sentences that allow the story to build. Students need to say sentences that retain the topic.
Manage and direct (i.e. take turns)	Students: • practise taking turns in a variety of activities (e.g. fine and gross motor activities, games) • role-play situations that require turn-taking (e.g. using playground equipment) • can use physical prompts to indicate whose turn it is to speak (e.g. pass a ball or microphone around).
Listen and speak between the lines (i.e. comprehend and use common idioms)	Students: • hear idioms such as *by the skin of your teeth*; *can't make heads or tails of it*; *down in the dumps* and: - discuss what each might mean - describe the picture it tells them to make in their mind - say when they could use it.
Adjust to context and audience (i.e. judge how much and the type of information you need to give)	Students: • describe pictures to peers, who then decide what the picture shows • listen to a story and say what else they need to know • tell versions of a story for different audiences.
Use language for different goals (i.e. comprehending and expressing goals for using language)	Students: • suggest why particular actors in stories or videos said what they said, and what their goals or motives might have been • suggest what alternative things they might have said to achieve their goals more effectively • act out, in drama activities and games, ways in which they would say things to achieve particular goals or outcomes for themselves.

Resource 4.6: Examples of teaching procedures: ICPAL–Ability to Learn

Aspect of language	Teaching and learning strategies
Use of language to learn	Teachers: • pre-teach new vocabulary, using photos, objects, signs, gestures, functions, categories, synonyms • use real-life experiences to introduce and consolidate knowledge of vocabulary; repeat real-life experience many times • use visual cues to support oral language, particularly when giving instructions • develop and practise listening behaviours • teach *Stop Think Do* strategies to reduce impulsiveness • use peers to assist and support students to stay on-task • encourage students to practise repeating instructions to develop self-talk strategies, initially out aloud and then to self.
Ability to perceive oral language	Students: • practise repeating instructions to develop self-talk strategies • hear a list of words and select those that were in a story they heard • recall in order the events that occurred in a story they heard or a film they saw • learn to use various short-term memory strategies (e.g. visualising, repeating what they have heard, using mnemonics) to assist recall of details.
Long-term memory storage and retrieval	Students: • review or summarise what they have learnt and what they will remember • articulate how what they have learnt is like what they already knew, and where the new ideas fit in • imagine themselves remembering the new ideas in later sessions. Teachers: • provide repeated opportunities for language experiences.

Resource 4.7: Teaching and learning strategies: ICPAL–Ideas

Aspect of language	Teaching and learning strategies
Word	Teaching the vocabulary of a new topic within the classroom may not be sufficient. Reinforce new words before and after a topic is presented in class so that the students will have some prior knowledge of the language and be able to concentrate on comprehension of the teacher's instructions during the lesson. • Students will need to hear new words before reading them, and may require help to pronounce them correctly. It may be necessary to help the students divide the words into syllables. • Identify base words (e.g. a student might know 'history' but not 'historically'). • Link new vocabulary to words students already know. • Use visual images or concept maps. • Pre-teach key concepts and vocabulary. • Explicitly teach academic language. There are many words that have a different meaning from their day-to-day usage when they are used in a classroom context (e.g. *argue* can mean *fight* but it can also mean *outline and support a particular view*). There are also a number of words that do not commonly occur outside of the classroom, such as *text*, *reference* and *calculate*.
Sentence	Consider your students' understanding and use of: • questions • complex sentences – cause/effect (*because*, *so*); temporal sequence (*when*, *before*); and condition (*if*, *unless*).
Discourse and topic	The following strategies can be used to support students' understanding and use of oral and written text: • retelling/recounting (i.e. summarising) • providing a choice of responses • visualising what the students heard or read and describing it in their own words • using timelines, graphic organisers (e.g. concept maps, flow diagrams, affinity diagrams, T charts, spider maps[19]) to visually link ideas • listening to part of a conversation or a story and guessing its topic or theme • highlighting and underlining key words, terms and ideas • playing games like '20 Questions' or 'Hangman' where students work out the topic of a text • saying what they do to work out the topic of a story or a conversation • providing summary sheets and outlines of complex material, in advance if possible • encouraging students to verbalise and write plans before they begin writing.

Resource 4.8: Teaching and learning strategies: ICPAL–Conventions

Aspect of language	Teaching and learning strategies
Phonological	Teachers should assist students to learn to manipulate and store phonological patterns. Students should: • identify sounds or sequences in sound patterns • blend sounds and sequences into larger sound patterns • apply manipulation strategies such as deleting and swapping sounds in words.
Grammatical	Model and reinforce a range of appropriate grammatical structures in oral and written language activities (e.g. verb tense, passive voice).
Genre	Teachers should model and reinforce various oral and written styles: • narrative • character study • instructional • argumentative essay • compare or contrast • analytical.

Resource 4.9: Teaching and learning strategies: ICPAL–Purposes

Aspect of language	Teaching and learning strategies
All aspects of Purposes (i.e. manage and direct; listen and speak between the lines; adjust to context and audience; and use language for different goals)	Teachers should encourage and allow students to: • play card or board games • practise keeping on topic during conversation • discuss everyday interactions between people (e.g. from television programs) • practise modifying tone and style of communication to communicate different intentions • use role play and rehearsal • practise language and social skills required for interaction with peers and for work experience, interviews and classroom interactions (e.g. *What would you say if you ... were late for school? needed to leave early?*).

Resource 4.10: Teaching and learning strategies: ICPAL–Ability to Learn

Aspect of language	Teaching and learning strategies
Use of language to learn	Teachers: • pre-teach new vocabulary, using; students' previous knowledge or experience categories; and synonyms • use a range of materials to support the learning of new language • be explicit about expectations • avoid ambiguous or non-literal language when giving instructions • limit the new concepts or vocabulary presented at any one time • explicitly link new learnings with what the students already know • be explicit about the purpose of an activity.
Ability to perceive oral language	Students: • learn to use various short-term memory strategies (e.g. visualising, repeating what they have heard, using mnemonics) to assist recall of details.
Long-term memory storage and retrieval	Students: • review or summarise what they have learnt and what they will remember • articulate how what they have learnt is like what they already knew, and where the new ideas fit in • imagine themselves remembering the new ideas and using them in the future. Teachers: • provide repeated opportunities for practising new language • help students develop organisational skills by demonstrating how to sort and file their work, how to use diaries and timetables, etc. • explicitly teach the skills required for note taking, essay writing, etc. • teach planning and time-management skills by showing students how to break tasks down into their component steps.

Module 5:

Implementing a Language Support Program

The Language Support Program Professional Learning Guide has been developed to assist teachers, coordinators and school leaders to understand about language, language disorders and language difficulties and how the ICPAL language framework can guide a Language Support Program.[20]

This is the fifth and final learning module within this Professional Learning Guide. It comprises two sections that address the following key questions about the school-based support of students with language difficulties:

- What is the recommended model for planning, implementing and sustaining a Language Support Program?
- What should be the roles played by school leaders, coordinators, teachers, aides, parents and professionals within a Language Support Program?
- Are there any processes or guidelines that school communities should adopt to support a student with a language disorder or difficulty?

Prerequisites[21]

Before beginning this module, users who are taking a whole-school approach to a Language Support Program (e.g. principals, school leaders, parents, community members) should ideally have completed Module 1.1 and Module 2.1. Teachers, coordinators and aides would normally engage with this module after completing parts or all of Modules 1 to 4.

Outcomes

Learning outcomes are identified at the beginning of each module. They apply to all parts of the module. Learning outcomes will usually be met by engaging with the content of the module and completing relevant learning opportunities identified.

By the end of Module 5, you will:

- understand how you can most effectively contribute to a school Language Support Program
- understand how the Effective Schools Model can be used to underpin a Language Support Program
- understand the principles of Student Support Groups and recognise how they can be used to support students with language difficulties.

Timing

For the benefit of users engaging with a module within a self-paced or collegiate professional learning program, an estimation of the time it should take to complete a module section is provided at the start of each section. Additional research and practical classroom-based activities are not included in this time estimation.

Module 5.1 timing – 90 minutes
Module 5.2 timing – 60 minutes

Resources

Recommended resources are specified at the start of each section of a learning module. This allows participants to source any external resources required before the professional learning begins. In most cases, however, required resources are included in this guide and presented after the reference to them in the text. Larger resources may be found at the end of a module.

Resources follow a predictable numbering system where the first numeral identifies the module and the second numeral identifies the number of the resource within the module.

Glossary of key terms

Descriptions of key terms used are listed at the front of the module, and are also highlighted in colour the first time a term is used. The complete listing of key terms used in the guide is included in Appendix 1.

Module 5.1:
Using an Effective Schools approach

Module 5.1 allows you to consider how the components of the 'Effective Schools Model' can support a whole-school approach involving school leaders, coordinators, teachers, parents and professionals when implementing a school-based Language Support Program.

Resources

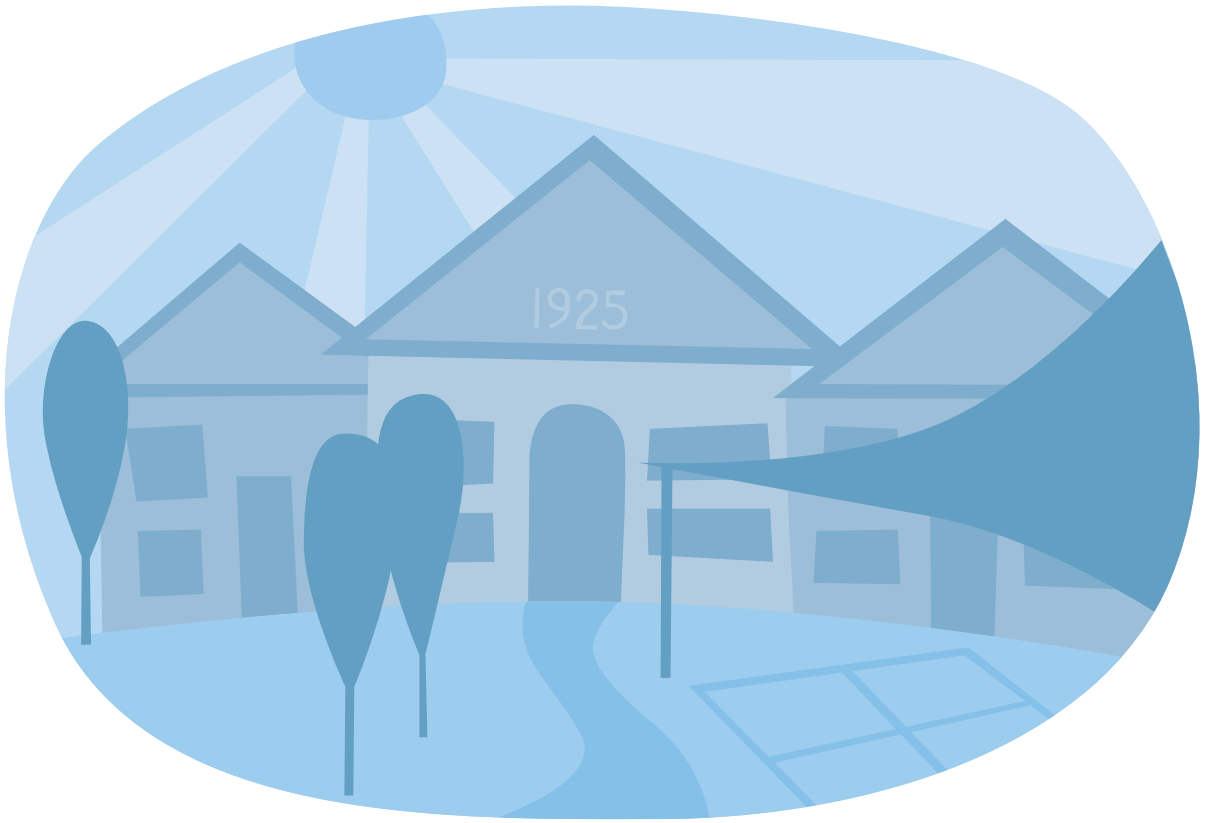
1 Resources 5.1 to 5.8 Effective Schools Model
2 Resource 5.9 Actions required for an effective Language Support Program
3 'English domain – Characteristics of effective schools' (available at: www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/improvstudlit.htm)
4 'Advice for Whole School Planning – Using the Effective Schools Model' (available at: www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/equity/planning/default.htm)

Timing

90 minutes

Module glossary (terms in italics are separate glossary items)

cognition/cognitive	Mental process of being aware – knowing, thinking, learning, reasoning and judging
ICPAL language framework	Ideas, Conventions, Purposes and Ability to Learn in both the expressive and receptive areas of (oral) language
language difficulties	Difficulties in acquiring or using language. May be *expressive* or *receptive*. These difficulties may involve one, some or all of the *phonologic*, *morphologic*, *semantic* *syntactic* or *pragmatic* components of the linguistic system
language disorder	Extreme *language difficulties* not accounted for by other factors such as ESL, hearing loss, intellectual disability or social/emotional factors. Diagnosis is made by a multidisciplinary team that includes a speech pathologist and a psychologist. Is also referred to as language disability, language impairment or specific language impairment
Language Support Program Team (LSPT)	Team responsible for implementation of a school-based Language Support Program
pedagogy	Instructional ideas, strategies, skills and practices used to improve student outcomes
phonemic awareness	Explicit awareness that spoken words are made up of syllables, which are in turn made up of sequences of *phonemes* (individual speech sounds)



Implementation of a whole-school approach to a Language Support Program requires effective school leadership, detailed planning, informed and committed school-based staff, knowledge of how to use professional expertise in the school or region, and the engagement of parents.

When developing a program, school communities will need to ensure that specific programs and strategies to support students with language difficulties are incorporated into whole-school planning and are not simply another 'add-on' to the running of the school.

Using the Effective Schools Model

The Effective Schools Model was initially developed by Sammons et al. (1995) and has been widely used and adapted by school systems for school improvement. This model can be used to understand how a Language Support Program can facilitate the effective teaching and support of students with language difficulties, as well as enhancing the learning of all students. [22]

Figure 5.1.1 The Effective Schools Model

Are you familiar with the Effective Schools Model and its components? If you are engaging with this learning module individually, think about the components that might apply to your role within the school. Explore some or all of the components that are described in the remainder of Module 5.1.

'Resource 5.1 Professional leadership' (page 147) describes how school leaders and teachers should demonstrate school leadership in the area of learning. Using this resource, identify five key elements for developing or maintaining an effective whole-school approach to language support.

If you are engaging in a collegiate learning activity, consider dividing up the components of the model that are described in the remainder of Module 5.1. After reading about your section/s, write down on a large sheet of paper five key elements for school leaders and teachers to consider when developing or maintaining an effective whole-school approach to language and literacy support. Present your ideas to the rest of the group, allowing time for other group members to ask questions. Adapt 'Resource 5.9 Actions required for an effective Language Support Program' (page 155) to collate ideas.

If you are a school leader, reflect on or discuss what professional learning teams need to be established in your school or cluster to strengthen understanding about supporting language learning.

Professional leadership

Professional leadership has a key role to play in planning for and implementing a Language Support Program. It may require the involvement of the principal, coordinators and teachers, and can involve regional and school-based specialists.

Professional leadership will include:

- a firm and purposeful approach
- a participative approach
- being a leading professional (i.e. involvement in and knowledge of what goes on in classrooms).

The Language Support Program Team

The practical implementation of a Language Support Program will be led by the Language Support Program Team (LSPT), comprising specially trained teachers who will oversee and foster the implementation of the program. Members of the team need to have learned skills for screening oral language knowledge in classroom activities, for investigating potential language difficulties in greater depth, and for implementing a responsive teaching program.

The members of the LSPT need to work with colleagues in the school to plan and develop an implementation strategy and action plan. Others in the school who should be involved in this work are the school leadership team, the curriculum team, the professional development team and classroom teachers. A school speech pathologist would be a valuable consultant to this team.

Creating an action plan

The action plan for the implementation of a Language Support Program may contain information about each of the elements of effective schools described in Module 5.1. It will specifically include data relating to staff knowledge, professional learning opportunities, monitoring and evaluation, and technical input and support (e.g. speech pathologists, regional support personnel).

The action plan will include the following:

- how current relevant staff knowledge will be collated
- how the program will take account of and build on existing staff knowledge and experience
- when and how teachers can share their learnings to build a corporate professional knowledge of oral language teaching
- how staff will be assisted to 'fine tune' the procedures they use to identify students who may have oral language difficulties; the action plan might specify the professional learning opportunities for staff to learn improved procedures and to trial these
- how the professional learning program will be evaluated, according to a number of indicators (e.g. enhanced staff professional knowledge, improved student learning outcomes, parent satisfaction with meeting students' needs)
- how resident and regionally based experts will support the school community by providing specific information about individual students.

If you are a member of an LSPT, use the description of the LSPT to conduct a SWOT[23] analysis that will enable you to improve the effectiveness of your team.

If you have already implemented a program, members of the team might identify resources to use when explaining the program to new teachers or parents. Another option to consider may be developing an induction program that includes training for teachers using this Language Support Program Professional Learning Guide.

Shared vision and goals

Developing and implementing an agreed vision and goals for a Language Support Program should involve a range of staff (e.g. the principal, other school leaders, coordinators, teachers, aides, speech pathologists) and regional and community representatives (e.g. parents, regional staff).

A shared vision and common goals will involve:

- unity of purpose involving a consensus on values
- consistency of practice when adopting a whole-school approach to language teaching and learning
- collegiality and collaboration between sectors of the school community.

'Resource 5.2 Shared vision and goals' (page 148) describes the roles of school leaders and teachers where there is a shared vision and goals about language. Identify five key elements for developing or maintaining an effective whole-school approach to language and literacy support. Do these already exist in your school? Which might need to be enhanced?

Your school may already have a vision and goals in which language learning or the support of students with language difficulties is explicitly or implicitly registered. With support from your colleagues, identify and analyse your school's current policies and plans to identify where language learning fits into the current school vision and goals, and where it might need to be strengthened.

Learning communities

Effective learning communities will include:

- regular school-based staff development
- opportunities for parental involvement in the learning of the child or young person.

School-based staff development

Staff development includes the professional learning and professional development of school leaders, coordinators, aides and professionals (e.g. speech pathologists) in the knowledge and skills required to develop and deliver an effective program.

In the regionally developed and delivered Language Support Program a number of professional learning principles were identified for supporting high-quality learning for students. These included the need to:

- improve staff skills in creating productive learning environments responsive to student needs
- promote continuous improvement to the daily life of schools
- align professional development programs and activities with school goals and system-level priorities, and build a common language across the whole system
- build knowledge, practise new learnings, obtain feedback, receive coaching and evaluate results in terms of the impact on improved student learning
- develop adult communities that work collaboratively and take responsibility for improving student learning
- provide sustained access to research-based expertise and adequate financial resources to support teacher learning.

'Resource 5.3 Learning communities' (page 149) describes learning communities that take account of language learning. Using this resource, identify five key elements for developing or maintaining an effective whole-school approach to language and literacy support.

If you are a school leader or teacher, you might like to use Resource 5.3 to identify how parents, researchers, health professionals and community representatives can be involved in the program.

Stimulating and secure learning environment

Creating a stimulating and secure learning environment is essential when considering the development, maintenance or improvement of a Language Support Program. The development of an environment that promotes language learning, including that for students with language difficulties, has implications for school leaders and teachers.

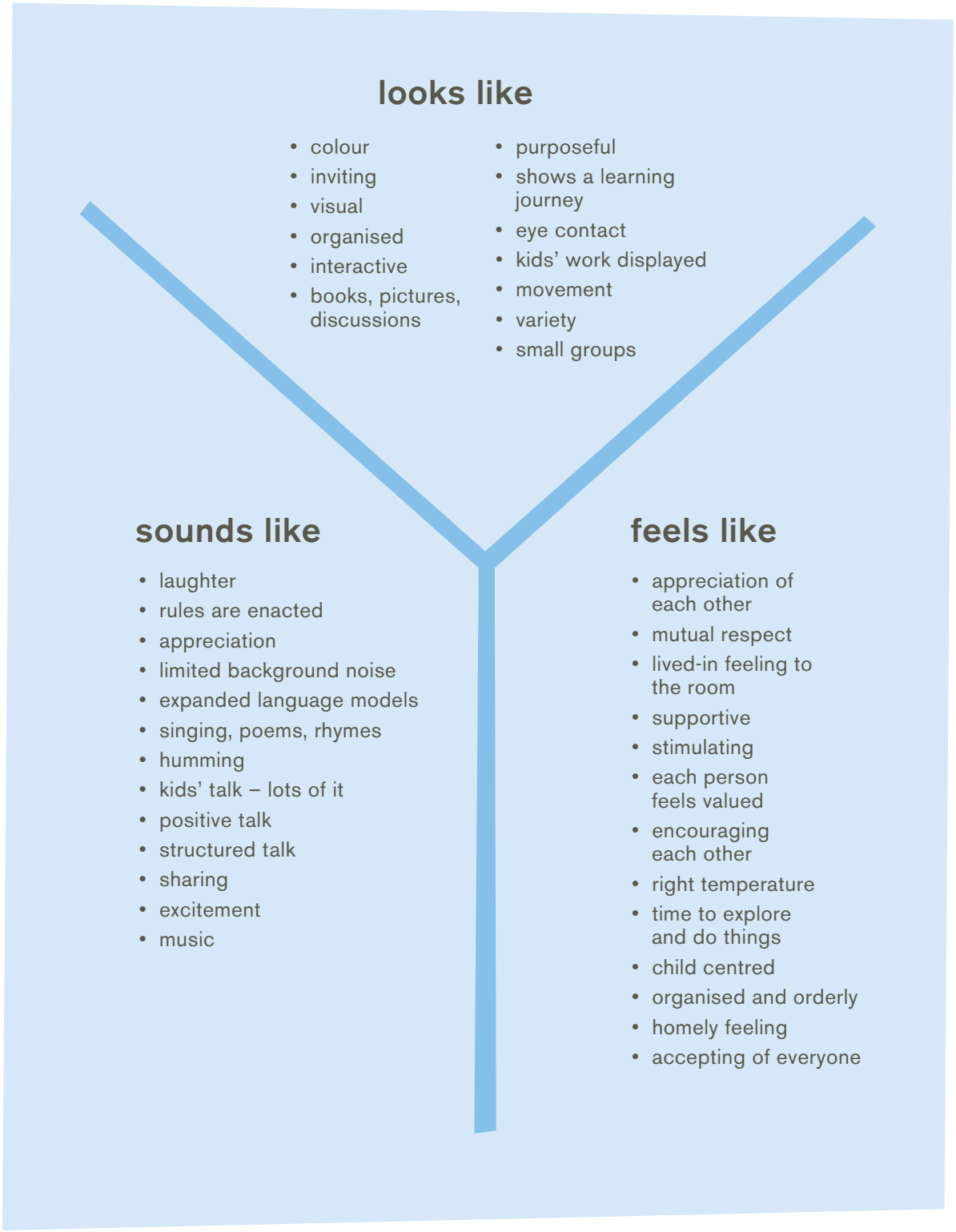
Stimulating and secure learning environments will involve:

- raising student self-esteem
- clear, consistent and fair discipline
- immediate, direct and positive student feedback
- conveying a sense of trust in students and setting standards of mature behaviour
- an orderly atmosphere
- an attractive and challenging working environment.

'Resource 5.4 Stimulating and secure learning environments' (page 150) describes how school leaders and teachers can improve students' outcomes. Using this resource, identify five key elements for developing or maintaining an effective whole-school approach to language support.

If you are a teacher or a language support aide, think about what constitutes an effective language-inclusive classroom. Use Figure 5.1.2 to assist you. Think about the improvements that you might make to your classroom to improve language learning.

Figure 5.1.2 What happens in a language-inclusive classroom?



Focus on learning and teaching

A focus on learning and teaching is central to implementing a Language Support Program. It will involve developing consistent and cohesive approaches to whole-school, student-centred language learning. A focus on learning and teaching will involve:

- maximisation of learning time
- emphasis on rigour
- focus on achievement.

Such a focus cannot be achieved if teachers, coordinators and LSP assistants do not speak a common language that allows them to discuss the linguistic development of all students. The ICPAL language framework provides language tools that can be used to describe and monitor the language learning of all students, including those with language difficulties.

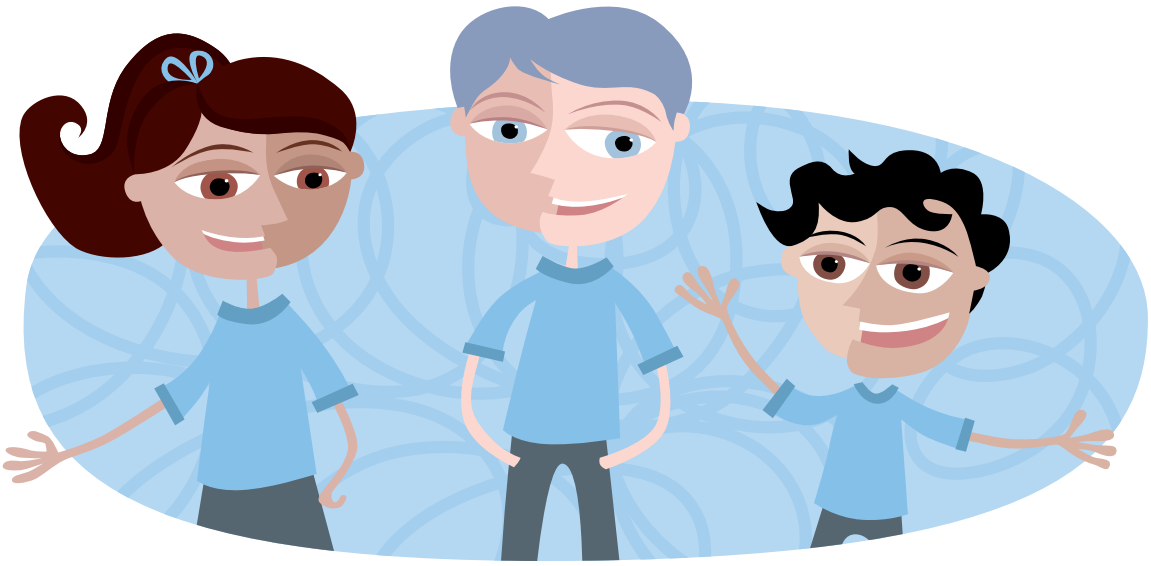
Modules 2.2 and 2.3 provide an overview of the ICPAL language framework.

'Resource 5.5 Focus on learning and teaching' (page 151) describes how school leaders and teachers can improve students' outcomes. Using this resource, identify five key elements for developing or maintaining an effective whole-school approach to language support.

If you are a school leader, a coordinator or a member of an LSPT, you might like to consider how language learning is currently being embedded in learning and teaching in all areas of the curriculum. How could this be ascertained? What kind of evidence would be required to demonstrate this?

If you are a teacher you might like to consider how your own teaching is culturally responsive to the needs of English as a Second Language (ESL) students or Indigenous students, including any with language difficulties.

Appendixes 4 and 5 contain advice about how to cater for Indigenous and ESL students with language difficulties.



Purposeful teaching

Advice for school leaders relating to purposeful teaching includes a recommendation that there be timetabled provision for three to five weekly sessions of explicit, intensive literacy instruction. Advice about purposeful teaching also recommends that teachers need to know a student's home literary practices in order to scaffold literacy learning. As oral language development underpins literacy learning, it is essential that students with language difficulties receive explicit, intensive oral language instruction. These and other aspects of purposeful teaching in effective schools have implications for the use of student data, identification procedures and the need for structured, explicit and sequenced lessons.

All of these will be relevant to a Language Support Program that meets the needs of students with language difficulties. Purposeful teaching will need to include:

- efficient organisation
- clarity of purpose
- structured lessons
- adaptive practices.

'Resource 5.6 Purposeful teaching' (page 152) describes how high-quality teaching can lead to improved student outcomes. Using this resource, identify five key elements for developing or maintaining an effective whole-school approach to language support.

Undertake a backwards-planning activity adapting 'Resource 5.10 Backwards-planning activity' (page 156) to explore the time required for your school to realistically implement changes to staff knowledge and skills, use of identification and screening processes, and small- and whole-group teaching.

High expectations

It is always challenging to cater for all students in mixed-ability classrooms. This is particularly applicable to students with language difficulties. In the past, benchmarking of literacy performance focused on the achievement of minimum literacy standards.

High and appropriate expectations of students with language difficulties will depend on appropriate monitoring and evaluation of their progress. Individual Learning Plans will assist in this process.

Effective school practice teaches us that there should be high expectations of all students. Fullfilling these expectations will require:

- all teachers taking an active role in supporting and monitoring students' progress in language development across the ICPAL areas
- communicating expectations about language achievement levels for all students
- providing students with intellectual challenges.

'Resource 5.7 High expectations of all students' (page 153) describes how high expectations are applicable to students at all ability levels, including those with language difficulties. Using this resource, identify five key elements for developing or maintaining an effective whole-school approach to language support.

If you are a teacher, think about how you currently screen your students for language difficulties, develop appropriate teaching strategies and monitor student progress. Use Resource 5.7 (page 153) to reflect on whether you have high expectations of these students.

Accountability

Accountability might seem to narrowly focus on teacher performance. Within a Language Support Program, however, it can include funding for a program, community involvement and participation, and monitoring and evaluation of a student's language outcomes and social and academic outcomes.

Accountability will involve:

- a focus on improved student outcomes in language skills
- continually examining the evidence of students' progress in language skills across the ICPAL areas
- exploring, documenting and reviewing over time innovative solutions for responding to diverse student needs to improve literacy outcomes.

'Resource 5.8 Accountability' (page 154) describes how school leaders and teachers can improve outcomes, including those of students with language difficulties. Using this resource, identify five key elements for developing or maintaining an effective whole-school approach to language support.

If you are a school leader, or a member of an LSPT, use 'Resource 5.11 Accountability – funding, community involvement, monitoring and evaluation' (page 157) to identify, discuss and plan for how funding, community involvement and monitoring and evaluation can be incorporated into planning for the development or maintenance of a Language Support Program.

Going further

The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website includes a detailed analysis of how the Effective Schools Model can improve student outcomes in literacy for students in the Middle Years of schooling (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2008b). The website includes a detailed analysis of the characteristics of effective schools; where the roles of principals, school leaders and teachers are aligned against each part of the model. Examples and key questions are also provided.

The information provided is also applicable to the Early and Later Years of schooling.

You might like to explore the Effective Schools Model on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website to further your understanding of just one component, or of the entire Effective Schools Model, as a means to improving student outcomes as they relate to literacy.

If you have a particular interest in equity issues, the website has additional information on using the model for whole-school planning (see Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2004).

Module 5.2:

Role of Student Support Groups in a Language Support Program

Planning for the introduction and maintenance of a Language Support Program within a school will need to draw on the experience and knowledge of a range of people within and outside the school. Module 5.2 provides school leaders, coordinators and parents with general information about Student Support Groups that may apply to students with language difficulties.

Resources

1 *Student Support Group Guidelines* (available at: www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/guidelines.htm)

2 Resource 5.12 Roles/responsibilities of the Student Support Group

Timing

60 minutes

Module glossary (terms in italics are separate glossary items)

language difficulties	Difficulties in acquiring or using language. May be *expressive* or *receptive*. These difficulties may involve one, some or all of the *phonologic*, *morphologic*, *semantic*, *syntactic* or *pragmatic* components of the linguistic system
language disorder	Extreme *language difficulties* not accounted for by other factors such as ESL, hearing loss, intellectual disability or social/emotional factors. Diagnosis is made by a multidisciplinary team that includes a speech pathologist and a psychologist. Is also referred to as language disability, language impairment or specific language impairment

Student Support Groups

Schools are encouraged to establish a Student Support Group (SSG) for any student with additional learning needs (e.g. students with a language disorder). SSGs are particularly important for students with a clinically diagnosed language disorder. What a school community learns through the use of SSGs for students with learning disorders can be transferred into effective approaches for supporting students with language difficulties more generally.

Guidelines for Student Support Groups are regularly updated. Check online to ensure that you have the latest guidelines. Before beginning Module 5.2, you should download and print the current guidelines, available at: www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/guidelines.htm

An SSG is a cooperative partnership involving parents, school representatives and professionals that ensures coordinated support for each student's educational needs through the development of specific educational goals and a tailored educational program.

A primary role of the SSG is to develop an Individual Learning Plan for a student with additional learning needs that sets educational goals for both the short term and the long term. This process focuses on the student taking an active role in the school and in the wider community into the future.

Membership

An SSG consists of school-based and non-school representatives having a direct role in the care of the child or young person.

Membership will typically include:

School	Non-school
• the principal or nominee (to act as a chairperson) • a class teacher (primary) or teacher(s) nominated as having responsibility for the group in decision-making • the student (where appropriate).	• the parent/guardian/ carer(s) • a parent/guardian/ carer(s) advocate where chosen by the parent/guardian/ carer(s).

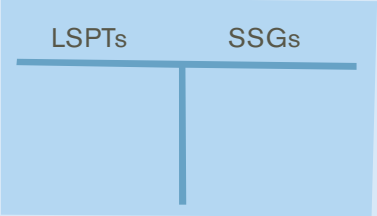
working together

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the SSG are to:

- identify the student's needs
- determine any adjustments to be made to the curriculum
- plan an appropriate education program
- develop an Individual Learning Plan
- discuss the plan with teachers and provide support to implement the learning plan
- provide advice to the principal concerning the additional educational needs of the student and the types of resources required to meet these needs
- review and evaluate the student's program on a regular basis as determined by the group, and at other times if requested by any member of the group.

An LSPT and an SSG may involve similar personnel, but have quite different roles. Use the information above, and that included in 'Resource 5.2.1 Roles/ responsibilities of the Student Support Group' (page 158) to develop a 'T chart' that identifies the differences between their membership, aims and responsibilities (i.e. across the top of the T write 'LSPTs' and 'SSGs' and then on either side of the organiser, list the differences).



A description of the role of the Language Support Program Team (LSPT) is included in Module 5.1 (page 134).

Consultants

The SSG can invite input from others with knowledge or information about the educational or social needs of a student. The number and choice of consultants, whose role is to advise, should be agreed to by all members of the SSG.

Consultants are used by the SSG to:

- assist in the establishment of educational goals for the student
- provide support in the development of educational programs
- help determine appropriate strategies to implement agreed programs.

Consultants are typically Student Support Services Officers (e.g. guidance officers, psychologists, social workers and speech pathologists).

The knowledge of others from within and outside the school can also be drawn upon. These can include:

School	Non-school
• school disabilities coordinators • learning area or year-level coordinators • specialist school staff • student welfare coordinators • teachers/LSP assistants/teacher aides • teachers who have taught the student previously and/or other members of staff • visiting teachers • curriculum consultants • special education consultants • specialist school staff.	• other government department staff • medical practitioners • paramedical practitioners • preschool teachers and/or advisers and/or early intervention staff.

Depending on your role in the school, you may already have been in contact with and understand the role of each of these people. If you are undertaking a collegiate professional learning activity, use a 'think-pair-share' activity to identify what kind of expertise each of these people might bring to an SSG.

Begin by reflecting on your opinions and ideas on the topic and record them on a template, pairing up with the participant next to you to discuss your ideas and opinions. The next stage of the process requires the group to come together and share their ideas and develop a group response.

Source: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2007, p.6.

Operation

SSGs are convened on a regular basis and all discussions and reports considered by, or arising from, the SSG process are treated in strictest confidence unless all members agree otherwise.

Examples of sample meetings of an SSG are included in '*Student Support Group Guidelines 2008*' (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2008e).

Monitoring and evaluation

All schools are required to measure, rate and report the achievement and progress of students. The monitoring and evaluation phase of a planning sequence is critical for students with clinically diagnosed language disorders.

The review process includes all relevant people as agreed by the SSG. An example of a proforma for use in the monitoring and evaluation phase is included in '*Student Support Group Guidelines 2008*' (DEECD 2008e).

Most importantly, monitoring and evaluation of students with language disorders or language difficulties uses information included in the student's Individual Learning Plan.

Information about Individual Learning Plans is included in Module 3.2.

If you are engaging with Module 5.2 within a collegiate professional learning activity, you might consider developing a group electronic presentation (e.g. MS PowerPoint) about the role of a Student Support Group that can be used to inform staff and the community. Use the content of Module 5.2 to identify its components. You should ensure that the presentation focuses on students with language difficulties.

Resource 5.1: Professional leadership[24] (Effective Schools Model)

Principals and school leaders	Teachers
Professional leadership is in evidence when school leaders: • consider the following questions to formulate how professional leadership may look in their school: - How effectively do the leadership teams within our school promote curriculum planning that is designed to improve each student's learning? - How effectively do the leadership teams within our school promote strategies for teaching literacy across the curriculum to improve each student's learning? - How effective is teacher participation in decision-making about the implementation of evidence-based approaches to literacy intervention to improve each student's learning? • provide active leadership and coordination that sets clear directions and targets to improve each student's achievement in literacy and establishes clear roles and responsibilities for all teachers in supporting literacy education, including provision of a designated school literacy coordinator with significant experience and knowledge of literacy education.	Professional leadership is in evidence when teachers: • improve learning experiences and literacy outcomes for all students • reflect on their practices in teaching literacy throughout the curriculum • adopt and share evidence-based practices for purposeful literacy teaching with colleagues • direct and monitor their own professional learning in effective teaching • report on the literacy demands and expectations of the curriculum.

Resource 5.2: Shared vision and goals[25] (Effective Schools Model)

Principals and school leaders	Teachers
Shared vision and goals are in evidence when school leaders: • articulate an inclusive learning and teaching vision that respects, supports and integrates the sociocultural and linguistic backgrounds and experiences of all members of the school community to improve the profile and status of literacy education • prioritise and plan for a regular, timetabled literacy intervention approach to ensure the legitimacy and status of the program within the school community • appoint suitably qualified and trained staff to coordinate a whole-school approach to literacy intervention for students with language difficulties • consider flexible timetable arrangements • adopt and review a coordinated whole-school approach to communicating and reporting on evidence of student progress in literacy across the curriculum • create regular, ongoing opportunities for all teachers to share values, beliefs and understandings about literacy teaching and learning to extend individual and collective knowledge and expertise as literacy educators • allocate a specific room for literacy intervention with appropriate resources and in a central position.	Shared vision and goals are in evidence when teachers: • adopt a shared responsibility for teaching knowledge about language and curriculum literacies across the curriculum, including links between literacy interventions and mainstream programs • adopt an evidence-based, data-focused approach to student learning to guide and measure literacy improvement levels in and across the curriculum • regularly attend and engage in professional learning forums to reflect on and enhance teaching practice and knowledge.

Resource 5.3: Learning communities[26] (Effective Schools Model)

Principals and school leaders	Teachers
Learning communities are in evidence when school leaders: • systematically resource, implement, monitor and review literacy induction programs for new staff members • establish professional learning teams to plan, implement and evaluate comprehensive programs for students identified at risk of not achieving acceptable literacy outcomes • create regular opportunities for strategic professional learning forums • develop and monitor an integrated, whole-school literacy program of teacher capacity building for improving student outcomes in literacy • promote and provide opportunities to work in partnership with parents and local community agencies to acknowledge and develop students' literacy practices at home and in the wider community (e.g. regular newsletters, information evenings, personal letters, home-based spelling assistance and supervised reading).	Learning communities are in evidence when teachers: • notify parents of their child's participation in a literacy intervention program and implement timely processes for mutual and respectful information exchange about student progress • are professionally skilled and supported in addressing the literacy demands and learning expectations across the curriculum through targeted, needs-based, quality professional learning • have ongoing opportunities to extend beliefs and understandings, knowledge and expertise as literacy educators across the curriculum • work with each other and with students to develop a shared language and common understandings for talking about and monitoring students' progress in literacy across the curriculum.

Resource 5.4: Stimulating and secure learning environments[27] (Effective Schools Model)

Principals and school leaders	Teachers
A stimulating and secure learning environment is in evidence when school leaders: • consider, reflect and implement responses to the following questions to identify how a stimulating and secure environment could be organised in their school - How can we improve the school environment to make it more conducive to student learning and engagement? - How effective are the strategies employed for creating a positive literacy learning environment in the school? - To what extent does appropriate student behaviour support engaged learning and improved student outcomes in literacy? • establish regular opportunities for strategic professional learning forums about literacy pedagogy • provide supportive school organisational structures to incorporate effective, evidence-based literacy approaches across the curriculum.	A stimulating and secure learning environment is in evidence when teachers: • create opportunities for students to work regularly over time with a teacher and/or team of teachers with whom they can establish an effective working relationship to improve their literacy achievement levels • acknowledge and celebrate students' progress in literacy • recognise the importance of fostering students' confidence and self-esteem • acknowledge and reflect in curriculum planning the diversity of interests and literacy practices that students bring to school • provide sustained and flexible opportunities for students to receive one-to-one literacy support from teachers and teaching aides in the classroom • create teaching and learning environments that are supportive of students' improvement in literacy across the curriculum • are knowledgeable about and practise using a range of evidence-based strategies for purposeful literacy teaching in all essential learning strands.

Resource 5.5: Focus on learning and teaching[28] (Effective Schools Model)

Principals and school leaders	Teachers
A focus on learning and teaching is in evidence when school leaders: • establish flexible staffing, organisational and timetabling structures that support and align teaching and learning programs in a range of contexts to support focused literacy learning and teaching • coordinate provision of evidence-based strategic professional learning to improve student literacy outcomes, including the use of individual, differentiated pre- and post-diagnostic literacy assessments; student self-assessment; direct instruction; phonemic awareness; cognitive strategies; study and organisational skills; cooperative and individual-focused learning experiences; explicit planned opportunities for sustained literacy activities across the curriculum (e.g. including reading to students, shared and modelled reading and writing, guided reading, reciprocal teaching, guided writing, independent reading and writing, roving literacy conferences and discussion groups); and access to and use of a wide variety of electronic and print media in authentic literacy tasks • coordinate provision of strategic professional learning for teachers to support students at risk of being under-challenged in improving their literacy outcomes.	A focus on learning and teaching is in evidence when teachers: • ensure all students experience improvement in literacy outcomes relative to their identified learning needs and potential • plan collaboratively in teams to improve students' literacy and learning outcomes across the curriculum • provide regular and frequent feedback to students • maximise opportunities within designated/extended class times for responsive, evidence-based literacy teaching and learning strategies • use a variety of observation and assessment measures to regularly and collaboratively monitor student progress in literacy • extend student capabilities in reading, writing, speaking and listening, critical literacy and literacies associated with information and communication technologies.

Resource 5.6: Purposeful teaching[29] (Effective Schools Model)

Principals and school leaders	Teachers
Purposeful teaching is in evidence when school leaders: • make systematic use of literacy transition data and school-level literacy assessment data at all year levels to monitor and plan for student progress over time • establish professional learning teams to plan, implement and evaluate comprehensive literacy programs for students identified as having potential to achieve at a higher standard • discuss with teachers and students preferred optimal times for timetabling of literacy intervention to maximise learning time for improving student literacy outcomes • timetable provision for at least three to five weekly sessions of explicit, intensive literacy instruction.	Purposeful teaching is in evidence when teachers: • understand the developmental needs of students and appreciate the importance of planning to engage them in all aspects of their learning at the appropriate level • make timely use of student transition data to identify students at risk of not achieving acceptable literacy standards across the curriculum and students at risk of being under-challenged • use a range of assessment tools that identify students' literacy learning needs with specific implications for practical, pedagogical interventions and locate students' achievement progress over time on developmental measurement scales • provide structured, explicit and sequenced sessions in one-to-one, and/or small-group settings so that students have planned, regular opportunities to work on identified, specific literacy needs over time • engage students in developing appropriate, authentic and purposeful literacy assessment procedures, including ongoing opportunities for student reflection and self or peer assessment.

Resource 5.7: High expectations of all students[30] (Effective Schools Model)

Principals and school leaders	Teachers
High expectations of all students are in evidence when school leaders: • involve all teachers in taking an active role in supporting students' improvement in literacy development • consistently and transparently communicate high expectations of student achievements in literacy • promote professional dialogue in response to evidence-based research on what works for students with language difficulties • direct and support teachers to recognise and support diversity in student learning to ensure that all students experience success in literacy and meet challenging learning outcomes in academic, creative and other pursuits.	High expectations of all students are in evidence when teachers: • articulate a belief that all students can achieve improved literacy achievement levels • guide students to identify and focus on their abilities and to build on these to achieve progress in literacy • understand the relationship between literacy and learning and have high expectations for the improved literacy achievement levels of all students • access and analyse school-level and student-level data for use in planning for and monitoring optimal literacy learning opportunities for all students across the curriculum • establish appropriate expectations for improved levels of literacy achievement and ensure that these are clearly and consistently communicated to all students • encourage and support all students to set high personal learning goals that will progress their learning.

Resource 5.8: Accountability[31] (Effective Schools Model)

Principals and school leaders	Teachers
Accountability is in evidence when school leaders: • inform the school community of school and system standards and targets for improving students' literacy outcomes • adopt a coordinated whole-school approach to monitoring and reporting on students' progress in literacy in all essential learning strands • direct and support teachers in the uses of diagnostic and developmental assessment tools to identify, monitor and report on students' progress in literacy • guide and support teachers to establish and review individual student literacy targets within all essential learning strands • allocate financial and personnel resources to analysis of pre- and post-measures of literacy assessments • allocate funding to effectively build teacher capacity and coordinate approaches to literacy interventions to extend and support other initiatives enabling new ways of designing curricula.	Accountability is in evidence when teachers: • are informed of and are responsive to school system standards and targets for literacy education • negotiate and establish challenging yet achievable literacy goals and targets with individual students • communicate expectations of literacy development to parents/caregivers and families, including ways they can maintain support • collaboratively and discerningly investigate a range of data sets on student outcomes in literacy to establish evidence of students' progress in literacy, and to continuously inform and enhance teaching and learning.

Resource 5.9: Actions required for an effective Language Support Program

	Action requiring the involvement of school leaders	Action requiring the involvement of teachers	Key questions
Shared vision and goals			
Purposeful teaching			
High expectations of all students			
Learning communities			
Accountability			
Stimulating and secure environment			
Professional leadership			
Focus on teaching and learning			

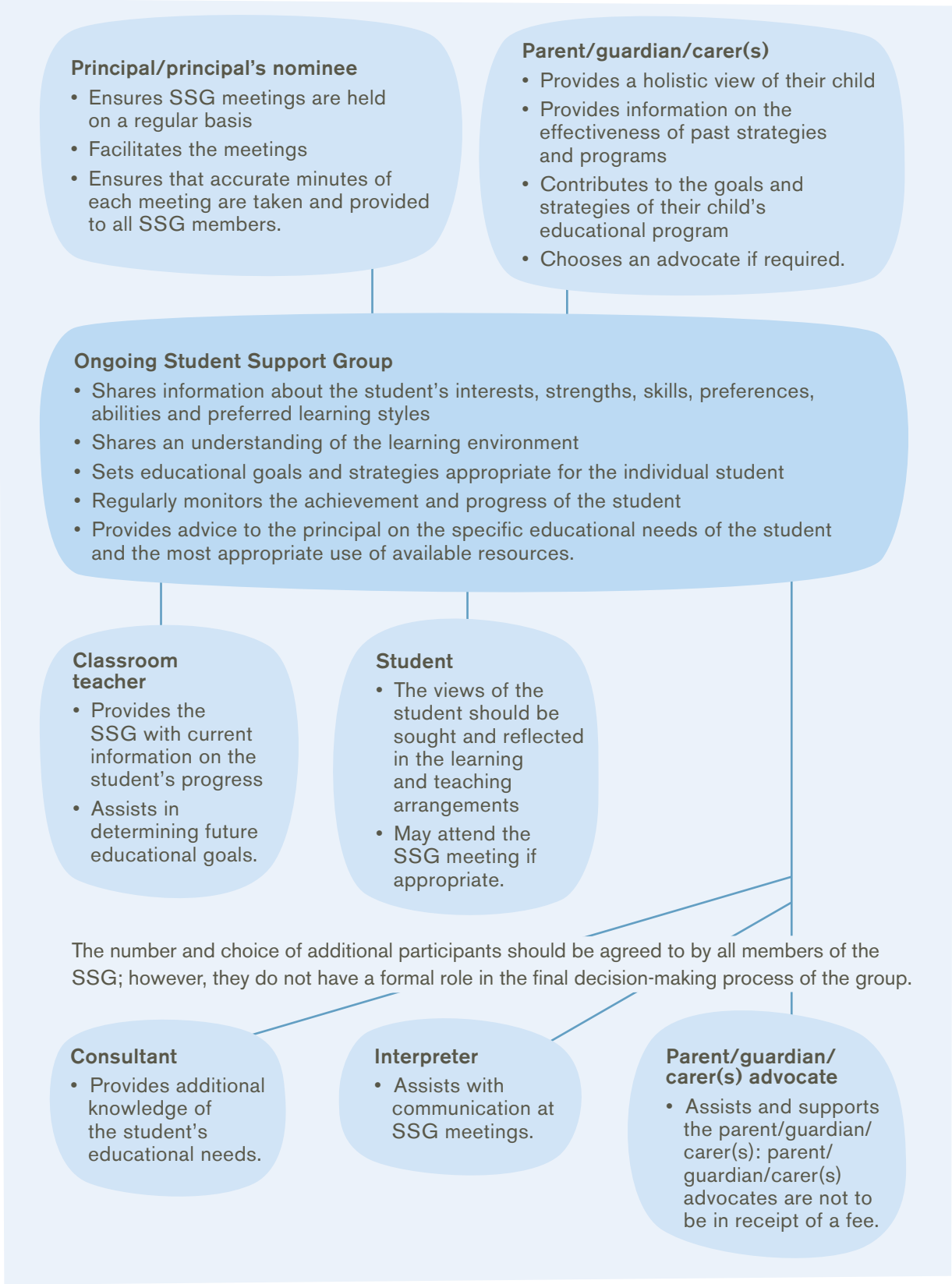
Resource 5.10: Backwards-planning activity

Timeframe	Staff knowledge and skills	Identification and screening processes	Small- and whole-group teaching
Three years from now			
Two years from now			
One year from now			
Six months from now			
Next week			

Resource 5.11: Accountability – funding, community involvement, monitoring and evaluation

	Role of the school leader	Role of the teacher	Key questions
Funding the LSP			
Start-up phase			
Maintenance phase			
Community involvement in the LSP			
Start-up phase			
Maintenance phase			
Monitoring and evaluating student progress in the LSP			
Start-up phase			
Maintenance phase			

Resource 5.12: Roles/responsibilities of the Student Support Group



Appendixes

The Language Support Program Professional Learning Guide contains several appendixes. These appendixes use resources that are of relevance to the Teacher Guide and to all or some of the learning modules that comprise the Professional Learning Guide.

Appendixes in the Language Support Program Professional Learning Guide

1 Glossary of key terms

2 Language Support Program Implementation Survey

3 The ICPAL language framework

4 Indigenous students with language difficulties

5 English as a Second Language students with language difficulties

6 Secondary school students with language difficulties

Appendix 1: Glossary of key terms

The field of linguistics uses many and varied definitions of terms relating to language development. The terms in the Language Support Program Professional Learning Guide are used in the same sense as the ICPAL language framework uses the term. (Note: terms in italics comprise seperate glossary items.)

Ability to Learn	The AL in the ICPAL language framework: necessary skills and their prerequisites for the acquisition of oral language
auditory figure–ground differentiation	Ability to attend to one sound (e.g. the teacher's voice) in the presence of other background noise/sound (see also *auditory selective attention*)
auditory gestalt or closure	Ability to identify partially heard or distorted auditory stimuli, such as part of a word or phrase (e.g. recognise 'hel_copter' as 'helicopter')
auditory perception	Ability to identify, interpret and attach meaning to sound
auditory selective attention	Ability to attend to one sound for processing while inhibiting others (see also *auditory figure–ground differentiation*)
aural	Related to the sense of hearing
clause	A group of words containing a subject and a verb, which forms part of a sentence
cognition/cognitive	Mental process of being aware – knowing, thinking, learning, reasoning and judging
content words	Words that carry meaning by themselves (e.g. 'dog', 'glide', 'round', 'quick')
Conventions	The C in the ICPAL language framework: rules governing the sounds, words, sentences and genres of language
discourse	Connected oral or written communication more extensive than a single sentence
English Developmental Continuum P–10	Evidence-based indicators of progress, linked to powerful teaching strategies and aligned to the progression points and the standards for the English domain of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards
expression	See *expressive language*
expressive language	The production of a message through speaking and/or gestures or writing. Also known as *expression*, or language production
function words	Words that connect content words together (e.g. 'a', 'the', 'however', 'then')
genre conventions	Linguistic rules and conventions for linking sentences into larger text units (e.g. oral recount, giving instructions, monologue)
grammatical conventions	Linguistic rules (*Conventions*) for combining words into sentences. See *morphology* and *syntax*
ICPAL language framework	*Ideas*, *Conventions*, *Purposes* and *Ability to Learn* in both the expressive and receptive areas of (oral) language

Ideas	The I in the ICPAL language framework: meanings of words, sentences, discourse and topics of language
Indicators of Progress	Points on the learning continuum that highlight critical understandings required by students in order to progress through curriculum standards
intonation	Rise and fall in pitch of the voice in speech. See also *prosody*
language difficulties	Difficulties in acquiring or using language. May be *expressive* or *receptive*. These difficulties may involve one, some or all of the *phonologic*, *morphologic*, *semantic*, *syntactic* or *pragmatic* components of the linguistic system
language disorder	Extreme *language difficulties* not accounted for by other factors such as ESL, hearing loss, intellectual disability or social/emotional factors. Diagnosis is made by a multidisciplinary team that includes a speech pathologist and a psychologist. Is also referred to as language disability, language impairment or specific language impairment
Language Support Program Team (LSPT)	Team responsible for implementation of a school-based Language Support Program
meanings	Understanding and expression of exact desired ideas at a word, sentence and discourse level
metacognition	Conscious awareness of one's thinking and learning processes: thinking about thinking
metalinguistics	Conscious awareness of language processes. Ability to talk about language
morpheme	Smallest unit of meaning that is either a word in its own right (free morpheme), e.g. 'cook', or part of a word (bound morpheme), e.g. 'cooking'
morphology	Linguistic study of patterns of word formation in a language; system of word-forming elements (*morphemes*) and processes in a language
oral language	Verbal communication through spoken symbols (sounds, words, sentences and discourse) that represent objects, actions and ideas
pedagogy	Instructional ideas, strategies, skills and practices used to improve student outcomes
phoneme	Individual unit of sound in speech (e.g. 's', 'sh', 'm', 'th')
phonemic awareness	Explicit awareness that spoken words are made up of syllables, which are in turn made up of sequences of *phonemes* (individual speech sounds)

phonological conventions	Rules for combining sounds to make spoken words
phonological knowledge	What we know about individual sounds (*phonemes*) in our language
phonology	Study of the sound system of a language
pragmatics	Social use, purpose and implied meaning of oral language, which is dependent on situational context. See also *Purposes*
prosody	Patterns of *intonation* and stress placed on sounds, syllables and words in oral language
Purposes	The P in the ICPAL language framework: use of *oral language* within social interaction; *pragmatics*
receptive language	Ability to understand a message conveyed by another person via *expressive language*. Also known as language comprehension
referent	What or who a word or symbol refers to
semantics	Aspect of language that deals with meaning
short-term auditory memory	Ability to retain and immediately recall information that has been heard; temporary storage of information (approximately 30 seconds)
subordinate clause	Dependent clause that is not complete by itself
syntax	Arrangement of words in a phrase or sentence to indicate relationships of meaning

Appendix 2: Language Support Program Implementation Survey

Name:

1 (Weak), 2 (Below average), 3 (Average), 4 (Good), 5 (Very good)

How do you rate yourself in:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
your understanding and knowledge about the influence of oral language on learning and general school performance?					
your understanding and knowledge of oral language learning disorders?					
your knowledge of systematic teaching strategies for improving the achievement of students with language disorders?					
How do you rate your colleagues or staff in:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
their understanding and knowledge about the influence of oral language on learning and general school performance?					
their understanding and knowledge of oral language learning disorders?					
their capacity to identify students with a language disorder?					
their capacity to meet the oral language needs of students, in particular those experiencing difficulties?					
How do you rate your school in:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
current processes for identifying students who may have a language disorder?					
current practices in supporting staff in meeting the oral language needs of students?					
current practices in supporting students with language disorders?					
current level of oral language resources available for staff to access?					
How ready is your school to:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
identify who will be responsible for coordination and implementation of the Language Support Program?					
incorporate the Language Support Program into whole-school planning?					
identify and specifically target students for the program?					
involve all appropriate staff?					
support the implementation of the LSP with adequate resourcing?					

Appendix 3: The ICPAL language framework

Ideas	**Words**	Words have meaning
		Parts of words have meaning
		Vocabulary as a meaning network
	Sentences	Simple sentences describe an event
		Variations of simple sentences describe an event
		More complex sentence ideas
	Discourse	The genre, or cohesion, of the spoken message
	Topic	The main theme
Conventions	**Phonological**	The rules governing the combining of sounds in words
	Grammatical	The rules governing the combining and unpacking of words in sentences
	Genre	The rules governing the combining of sentences in discourse
Purposes	**Managing and directing**	How to start, maintain and end conversations
		How to take turns
		How to stay on topic
	Listening and speaking between the lines	How to 'read' in a message its intended meaning
		How to use idioms and metaphors
		How to extend a language exchange
	Adjusting to context and audience	Judging how much information to give
		Judging what others might know during the conversation
		Selecting appropriate words and conventions
		Using the context to assist understanding
		Linking ideas in relation to a particular context
	Using language for different goals	Identifying goals for an oral communication
		Inferring goals for an oral communication
		Using language to extend a language exchange
		Using language to request, agree, confirm, compliment, etc.
Ability To Learn	**Ability to perceive oral language**	Auditory perception
		Auditory discrimination
		Short-term auditory memory
	Ways of learning	Ability to use symbols
		Ability to conceptualise and categorise
		Ability to link ideas (e.g. cause and effect)
		Ability to sequence and order
		Ability to transfer knowledge
	Opportunities to learn	A range of experiences in which expressive and receptive language skills can be applied and learned

Appendix 4: Indigenous students with language difficulties

The Language Support Program (LSP) provides direct assistance to teachers in developing sound oral language competency in children and young people to maximise their learning potential. An assumption of the Professional Learning Guide is that both teachers and learners will be operating in Standard Australian English.

When using this Professional Learning Guide with Indigenous students, teachers need to be aware of a number of factors that may be impacting on Indigenous students in schools. Medical conditions such as conductive hearing loss due to high rates of childhood middle-ear disease, students speaking Aboriginal or Koorie[32] English or a range of other Indigenous languages, and the impacts of socioeconomic disadvantage, may play a part in many Koorie students' oral language development. Psychosocial factors such as fear of non-Indigenous institutions may also impact on oral language development. Some Koorie students may also suffer anxiety about being separated from their parents during the school day; it should be noted that some Koorie students today are the children of successive 'stolen generations'.

It is important that you are aware of these issues, as you will need to adapt strategies and materials to meet the needs of individual Koorie students. The correct identification of Koorie English language characteristics is the key to correctly addressing Koorie students' needs with appropriate resources and strategies in a timely and targeted manner. Some of these issues are expanded upon below.

Standard Australian English and Koorie English

While the Language Support Program provides a sound theoretical framework, teaching strategies and other support material that is relevant for all students, the program was primarily developed with the needs of speakers of Standard Australian English in mind. The use of the LSP with speakers from other language backgrounds needs to take into consideration the language and language learning differences of students who may not use Standard Australian English as their main language.

It has been estimated that up to 80 per cent of Indigenous people in Australia speak Aboriginal or Koorie English as their mother tongue. Koorie English is a dialect of Standard Australian English. It is a distinctively different language with systematic variations across the areas of the ICPAL language framework. These differences may be evident in sound production, sentence structure and meanings of words and phrases, as well as in the use of language during social interaction. You need to be aware that many Koorie students have had limited exposure to Standard Australian English prior to starting at school, and it is vital that you value the Koorie English they bring to school. Koorie English plays an important role in the development and maintenance of Koorie culture and it is a powerful means of expressing Koorie identity.

In time, and with explicit teaching, Koorie students will 'code switch' as they transfer their Koorie English to Standard Australian English to suit new audiences, purposes and contexts for the communication. It is critical to Koorie students' learning that you value Koorie English as a specific dialect and not a 'weaker' form of Standard Australian English. It is also important that you understand the cultural conflict Koorie students may experience when transitioning from Koorie English to Standard Australian English (Eades 2008).

A lack of awareness about the features of Koorie English may also lead you to incorrectly view Koorie students' oral language as being characterised by the presence of language difficulties requiring the intervention of a speech pathologist or other specialist, when in fact the teaching strategy more relevant might be to explain the difference between a Koorie English word and a Standard Australian English word. An important part of your role is to ensure that Koorie students become increasingly aware of the differences from Standard Australian English while remaining competent users of Koorie English.

Effective oral language teaching that will facilitate Koorie students' competence in both Standard Australian English and Koorie English must involve the following components:

- accepting and valuing Koorie English
- broadening the linguistic repertoire of Koorie students
- providing all students with the opportunity to be exposed to a range of language systems
- assisting the development of effective 'code switching' by using a variety of expressive learning and assessment tasks, including painting, singing, acting and drawing.

Health and communication issues

Many Indigenous children across Australia are at a higher risk of health and developmental problems. This is due to extreme socioeconomic disadvantage caused by higher unemployment rates, lower educational standards, overcrowded housing and poorer general health. Indigenous

children suffer increased rates of bilateral perforated eardrums. This is associated with middle-ear disease and resultant conductive hearing loss, termed Recurrent Otitis Media (ROM). When hearing loss is present for long periods, listening, speech and language skills can be affected (Speech Pathology Australia n.d.(c)). In terms of identifying students at risk, and allocating appropriate resources, a significant proportion of Koorie students may present with hearing loss, impacting on their expressive and receptive language skills.

The implications for you as a teacher again relate to your awareness of these facts and of the need to refer students with particular health issues impacting on their ability to learn to appropriate specialist intervention. Student Support Services Officers (SSSOs) are available to assist you, and referrals to these services can be made by the school principal via School Network processes or your local regional office.

Koorie community partnerships and support

In Victoria, as in all Australian states and territories, schools with a significant number of Koorie students employ Koorie home or school liaison officers. These officers work with Koorie families and teachers to improve the attendance and literacy levels of Koorie students. They are vital resources for you, both when identifying the specific language and learning needs of Koorie students, and in assisting you to engage with parents or caregivers and the Koorie community.

In addition, Victoria employs 16 regionally based Koorie Education Development Officers who act in a support role and help to provide an Indigenous perspective across the curriculum. You are encouraged to further explore the issues raised in this appendix with these officers as you seek to identify the oral language needs of Koorie students.

The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. (VAEAI) can also provide you with information about its regional workers and programs available through Victorian regional offices.[33]

Evidence-based interventions and high teacher expectations

The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the VAEAI launched *Wannik: Learning Together – Journey to our Future*,[34] a new education strategy for Koorie students, in 2008.

This publication highlights the importance of maintaining high expectations for all Koorie students, and found that low teacher expectations of Koorie students negatively affect students' learning. Following a comprehensive review of approaches to Koorie education in 2007, one of the key findings was that 'there is insufficient focus on education outcomes for Koorie students and a failure to make the education system, at all levels, explicitly accountable for improvement in outcomes for Koorie students.'[35] New approaches and evidence-based programs are currently being developed to provide additional oral language support for Koorie students. They include:

- supporting teachers to gain a greater understanding of Koorie culture
- employing additional literacy specialists to work in schools with high numbers of Koorie students, building on the already successful Literacy Improvement Teams
- developing literacy programs that recognise the importance of 'code switching' between Koorie English and Standard Australian English
- developing a coordinated Individual Learning Plan for each Koorie student in Victorian government schools in discussion with a parent or caregiver.

Going further

Teachers in Victorian schools can source further information about Koorie Support Services on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website (www.education.vic.gov.au). This includes: The 'Wannik' strategy and advice about Individual Learning Plans for Koorie students. Your regional office can also provide you with information about local oral language training programs and any available further information about Koorie student resources or programs.

Appendix 5: English as a Second Language students with language difficulties

The Language Support Program (LSP) provides direct assistance to teachers in developing oral language competency in children and in young people to maximise their learning potential. An assumption of the Professional Learning Guide is that both teachers and learners will be operating in Standard Australian English. While the framework and many of the teaching strategies presented in the LSP are consistent with English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching theory and practice, the following additional advice may assist, particularly when you are thinking about targeting appropriate support or intervention for ESL students with language difficulties.

In Victorian government schools, almost 25 per cent of the population is from language backgrounds other than English (defined as a case in which the student, their mother, father or caregiver speaks a language other than English at home). ESL students therefore comprise a significant percentage of students in our schools, and a range of support is available to assist you to meet their needs.

Language and learning

As with all learners, ESL students' general educational attainment is the sum of many factors (e.g. socioeconomic situation, physical and intellectual ability or disability, parental expectations, teacher expectations, school structures and organisation, the nature of the curriculum). In addition, ESL students are bilingual and/or bicultural. They bring other experiences to the classroom, such as being migrants, refugees, or students finishing their schooling in an English-speaking country. These experiences all impact on the rate at which individual ESL students learn.

Language and learning are inextricably linked, and success at school for ESL students can be measured by the rate at which they are able to transfer and express their knowledge from their home language to Standard Australian English. Language is both the means by which they demonstrate what they know and the vehicle through which they learn and refine their understanding of concepts. ESL students are not a homogenous group, and developing competence in English as an ESL student is a long-term process. Students will develop at different rates, depending on a range of factors. These include the learner's:

- previous educational experiences
- degree of exposure to and use of English
- similarities and differences between their first language/s or dialects and Standard Australian English
- age
- attitude to English and to being an English language user
- in-school and out-of-school environment.[36]

Support for ESL students

It is important that teachers and coordinators uitilise available resources to identify and target the language support best suited to individual ESL students' needs. The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development provides a range of resources and other supports that will help you work more effectively with students from language backgrounds other than English.

The *English as a Second Language Companion to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards* (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2005) provides a framework for assessing student achievement and developing effective learning programs for second language learners in Victorian schools. The ESL Companion describes the stages of ESL learning preceding the English standards for students learning English. As ESL students move through the ESL standards, the English standards are likely to become more appropriate for describing their English language learning. ESL students are also likely to require ESL support when they are being assessed against the appropriate English standard.

The learning needs of ESL students will vary according to factors such as their pre-migration experiences. *The ESL Handbook* (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2007) will help you in determining and addressing the learning needs of ESL students. The purpose of *The ESL Handbook* is to provide schools with information on:

- policy and funding for ESL programs
- planning and implementing effective ESL programs.

In Victoria, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development provides funding to government schools for the employment of appropriately qualified ESL teachers and Multicultural Education Aides to staff ESL programs. Multicultural education aides assist with communication between the school and parents of students from language backgrounds other than English. These aides also assist students in the classroom or on a one-to-one basis.

The overwhelming majority of young people from refugee backgrounds enrolling in Victorian schools have experienced some disruption to their education prior to arriving in Australia. *Strengthening Outcomes – Refugee Students in Government Schools* (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2008d) acknowledges that without interventions at a system and a local school level, many students from refugee backgrounds are likely to experience considerable disadvantage and may fail to achieve their educational and social potential.

ESL students with special needs

Identifying ESL students with special needs may present particular challenges for teachers who are used to viewing student characteristics and behaviours through the prism of a student's English language competency. Students may have a physical, neurological or cognitive disability. They may have a learning difficulty or be gifted in one or more ways. There is a risk that these characteristics may be masked by a student's lack of competence in English and not acknowledged or attended to.

The struggle to learn English may also be misinterpreted as a learning difficulty and therefore lead to inappropriate labelling, lack of appropriate support and possible stigmatising. Teachers need to correctly determine whether a student's language and literacy needs relate to ESL factors or to other issues (Department of Education and Children's Services 2006, p. 7). Increasingly, assessment procedures for a range of cognitive functions are conducted in a child's native or home language, giving professional education support staff a more accurate indicator of cognitive functioning than would an assessment in English. When a correct diagnosis has been made, an appropriate remedial program can be developed.

The Language Support Program offers effective interventions designed for native English speakers. Many of these interventions may also be beneficial for young ESL students, with the caveat that classroom materials may need to be amended and scaffolded for ESL learners.

Appendix 6: Secondary school students with language difficulties

The Language Support Program (LSP) was originally developed in 2005 by Dr John Munro for teachers and coordinators of Early Years schooling. As the program has continued to evolve as a professional learning resource in regions in Victoria, the original material has been developed and extended to encompass the Middle Years of schooling, which extend across the transition between primary and secondary schools.

The Language Support Program Professional Learning Guide similarly provides advice and resources suitable for teachers of the Middle Years in secondary schools (i.e. Years 7–8 in Victoria). A specific learning pathway is identified in the Teacher Guide for teachers of the Middle Years, including those in secondary schools.

Within Victoria, regionally delivered professional learning about the Language Support Program is available for school leaders, teachers and coordinators within secondary schools. If you are interested in these programs you should approach the relevant regional office.

Support for students with language difficulties across the curriculum

In secondary schools, students with language difficulties may encounter problems with learning in a range of curriculum disciplines and domains. Where students are taught by a number of different teachers in these different disciplines and domains, they may encounter problems with consistency of approach. Such problems can be avoided or mitigated if every teacher commits to being a teacher of language and if the school creates an Individual Learning Plan for each student with language difficulties.

Individual Learning Plans are described in Module 3.2.

Social and academic issues

Students with language difficulties in secondary schools may increasingly encounter difficulties with socialisation, planning tasks and working independently, as well as with the receptive and expressive modes of language.[37]

Difficulties with socialisation

Students experiencing difficulties with social skills due to language difficulties may encounter problems interacting with others both in and outside the classroom, within the context of classroom tasks and in a more formal context.

They may have problems in a range of expressive language situations (spoken and written) and may display particular characteristics in the classroom, including difficulty making and maintaining friendships associated with poor conversational skills (e.g. turn-taking, introducing and maintaining topics, using language, body language and facial expression to demonstrate empathetic listening skills). They may also misinterpret or fail to detect social cues communicated through facial expression and body language, and may process language literally and have difficulty interpreting or detecting sarcasm, humour, slang and ambiguity. Their inability to manipulate language for varying social situations and needs (e.g. to persuade, negotiate, gossip, joke) may also result in an inability to defend themselves verbally and they may resort to physical aggression or respond in ways that appear inappropriate.

Practical classroom strategies in different curriculum disciplines and domains that support students with difficulties in socialising effectively include:

- using simple language
- giving students time to formulate and offer prompts to help them structure language and generate the vocabulary they need to express themselves
- being aware of when sarcasm, irony or ambiguous language is being used and checking that students have comprehended correctly
- offering students feedback on their interactions and being available to explain what they are doing wrong (if they are willing for you to assist in this way)
- providing opportunities for students to practise social skills through role play and rehearsal
- providing one-on-one or small-group assistance to learn and practise conversation skills.

Difficulties with language comprehension

Students with language difficulties may have problems with language comprehension (i.e. receiving and interpreting correctly the 'message' so that they can comprehend what is read, solve problems and monitor their environment).

A student who has difficulties in this area would most likely display particular characteristics, including an inability to follow verbal and written directions appropriately, and instead need directions repeated numerous times (e.g. they may have problems with reading comprehension and with maths problem-solving). They may also misinterpret assignments and test questions.

Practical classroom strategies in different curriculum disciplines and domains that support students with difficulties with language comprehension include:

- giving only one direction at a time (e.g. *finish your revision sheets*, *now start on your essay*, instead of *start on your essay after you finish your revision sheets*)
- describing your actions verbally as you perform an activity, or using visual clues and talking aloud while students watch and listen
- allowing students to paraphrase, repeat or explain instructions before answering
- using multiple modalities for reinforcement (e.g. encourage students to read, say it aloud and develop a visual image)
- encouraging students to use a reading-level-appropriate dictionary.

Difficulties with text-level language

Students with language difficulties may have problems with text-level language (i.e. understanding and producing language at the level used in written works or texts). Language used in texts may take the form of short questions and statements or larger chunks of language such as in written texts (e.g. essays, reports, novels, textbooks) and visual texts (advertisements, multimedia, films).

A student who has difficulties in this area would most likely display particular characteristics, including difficulty independently interpreting and gaining information from written and spoken texts due to limited vocabulary or word knowledge. They may also have difficulty comprehending all the ideas expressed or key points, and consequently be unable to summarise or paraphrase texts. In addition, they may be unable to identify the relationships between ideas and how these are conveyed through the structure of the text, as well as having difficulty drawing inferences from the text.

Practical classroom strategies in different curriculum disciplines and domains that support students with difficulties with text-level language include:

- pre-teaching (e.g. provision of key vocabulary with descriptions in simple language, giving more time for reading of written texts and explanation of key ideas and concepts)
- providing summary sheets and outlines
- using concept maps to present vocabulary, key concepts and the relationships between ideas
- conducting class discussion and giving the necessary background information before expecting students to start set work
- underlining key words and phrases
- providing written information in smaller chunks
- slowing down the rate of presentation by speaking slowly and pausing
- providing visual clues and gestures to support verbal and written material
- being prepared to negotiate the amount of work set and the amount of time allocated to complete the task.

Difficulties with language expression

Students with language difficulties may have problems with language expression (i.e. communicating thoughts and ideas in speech and writing).

Students with difficulties in the area of expressive language may have problems conveying their thoughts to others. Their language may present as simplistic and lack specificity (e.g. they may use simple, short, repetitive sentences, omit words and have difficulty using grammatical conventions correctly). They may also struggle with tasks that require them to retell events, write on or discuss given topics and remember, retain and manipulate information using specific or technical words.

Practical classroom strategies in different curriculum disciplines and domains that support students with difficulties with language expression include:

- teaching new vocabulary using a hierarchical approach (i.e. teaching related words that can be grouped together into categories and subcategories)
- explaining new words in context and providing maximum opportunities for students to use these words in writing and speaking tasks
- preparing students to discuss classroom content by going over key words, completing word/ideas association tasks and collecting possible phrases for responses
- teaching students how to sequence ideas through using the steps of brainstorming on a topic (i.e. identify key words/ideas, discuss the order of ideas and practise providing sequenced responses)
- teaching the difference between formal and informal language
- teaching the difference between a phrase or incomplete sentence and a complete sentence
- pre-teaching grammatical conventions and involving students in activities that focus on increasing the length and complexity of sentences
- practising answering *who*, *what*, *when*, *why*, *how* questions on different topics and issues using full sentences
- teaching students how to ask different questions to obtain information and maintain conversation
- teaching students how to use language to persuade and express a point of view
- encouraging students to read a range of texts (e.g. books, editorials, advertisements) in order to become familiar with different language styles
- prompting students to pause and think about what they have to say before providing verbal responses.

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Notes

1 A detailed description of the purpose and content of the Language Support Program Statewide Resource is included in the Teacher Guide section of the resource.

2 Suggested learning pathways through the learning modules for a range of users (e.g. teachers, coordinators, LSP assistants, school leaders, parents, community members) are identified in the Teacher Guide section of the resource.

3 http://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au

4 A detailed description of the purpose and content of the Language Support Program Statewide Resource is included in the Teacher Guide section of the resource.

5 Suggested learning pathways through the learning modules for a range of users (e.g. teachers, coordinators, LSP assistants, school leaders, parents, community members) are identified in the Teacher Guide section of the resource.

6 Appendix 3 expands this schema to define teaching activities in the receptive and expressive modes of language.

7 Pages 9–12. Includes descriptions and examples of concept maps, issues maps and lotus diagrams.

8 Table 2.1.4 expands this schema to define teaching activities in the receptive and expressive modes of language.

9 Table 2.1.4 expands this schema to define teaching activities in the receptive and expressive modes of language.

10 Table 2.1.4 expands this schema to define teaching activities in the receptive and expressive modes of language.

11 A detailed description of the purpose and content of the LSP Statewide Resource is included in the Teacher Guide section of the resource.

12 Suggested learning pathways through the learning modules for a range of users (e.g. teachers, coordinators, LSP assistants, school leaders, parents, community members) are identified in the Teacher Guide section of the resource.

13 See Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2008c.

14 Semel, Wiig & Secord 2003.

15 A detailed description of the purpose and content of the LSP Statewide Resource is included in the Teacher Guide section of the resource.

16 Suggested learning pathways through the learning modules for a range of users (e.g. teachers, coordinators, LSP assistants, school leaders, parents, community members) are identified in the Teacher Guide section of the resource.

17 Teachers of the Middle Years may benefit from reading the sections 'Activities for ICPAL–Ideas', 'Activities for ICPAL–Conventions' and 'Activities for ICPAL–Purposes' for the Early Years (Module 4.2). A number of these activities can be adapted for students in Years 5–8 with language difficulties.

18 Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2007, pages 9–16 contains descriptions and examples of many types of graphic organisers.

19 Accessed via 'Digilearn: Digital Learning Resources' (http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/elearning/digilearn.htm). See also The Le@rning Federation 2008.

20 A detailed description of the purpose and content of the LSP Statewide Resource is included in the Teacher Guide section of the resource.

21 Suggested learning pathways through the learning modules for a range of users (e.g. teachers, coordinators, LSP assistants, school leaders, parents, community members) are identified in the Teacher Guide section of the resource.

22 The material in Module 5.1 is adapted from Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2008b.

23 A description of a SWOT analysis and a template is included in Module 1.1.

24 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2007, 'English domain – Professional leadership', DEECD, Melbourne.

25 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2007, 'English domain – Shared vision and goals', DEECD, Melbourne.

26 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2007, 'English domain – Learning communities', DEECD, Melbourne.

27 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2007, 'English domain – Stimulating and secure learning environment', DEECD, Melbourne.

28 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2007, 'English domain – Focus on learning and teaching', DEECD, Melbourne.

29 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2007, 'English domain – Purposeful teaching', DEECD, Melbourne.

30 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2007, 'English domain – High expectations', DEECD, Melbourne.

31 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2007, 'English domain – Accountability', DEECD, Melbourne.

32 This word means 'man' or 'people' in numerous languages of south-eastern Australia. Like Murri, Nunga, Nyungar and other similar collective terms, it identifies the Aboriginal people of a particular place (mainly New South Wales and Victoria).

33 Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. 2008, VAEAI, Melbourne, http://www.vaeai.org.au

34 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development & Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. 2008.

35 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development & Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. 2008, p. 12.

36 Department of Education and Children's Services 2006, p. 7.

37 The Statewide Resource acknowledges the contribution of the Gippsland Region Speech Pathology Team, whose 'Language Help Sheets' were used to develop many of the ideas and strategies for secondary students in this appendix.

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