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9 The feasibility of implementing cross-curricular studies of Asia

Anne Cloonan

Introduction

The new Australian Curriculum requires that all Australian schools include studies of Asia in their curriculum. Within the structure of the national curriculum, studies of Asia are positioned as one of three ‘cross-curriculum priorities’: ‘Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia’, ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures’ and ‘Sustainability’ (ACARA 2014).

The promotion of Asia-related learning as a curriculum priority, in this case within the Australian school system, reflects public policy that increasingly promotes the economic and social benefits that closer engagement with Asia offers students (AACTF 2012). The cross-curriculum priorities ‘need to be addressed for the benefit of both individuals and Australia as a whole’ and aim to ‘provide students with the tools and language to engage with and better understand their world at a range of levels’ (ACARA 2014).

Teachers have a major influence on students’ development (Hattie 2003; Rowe 2013), with students’ cross-curricular study of Asia being experienced through their teachers’ pedagogy. However, as the new national curriculum is being introduced into schools, there is evidence to suggest that 1) while the Australian Curriculum assumes it to be unproblematic, cross-curricular teaching can take many forms, with varied nomenclature and interpretation; and 2) teachers perceive themselves to be unprepared to respond to the mandate to incorporate teaching of Asia-related studies. Even highly experienced teachers with specialist knowledge in Asia struggle to articulate and create integrated cross-curricular teaching examples.

This chapter describes advice to and expectations of teachers regarding studies of Asia in the Australian Curriculum; explores theoretical literature on cross-curricular teaching approaches, analyses teacher perceptions of their preparedness and capacities for teaching studies of Asia, and investigates an exemplary teacher’s implementation of studies of Asia in light of theorisations of cross-curricularity.

Studies of Asia in the Australian curriculum

In Australia and elsewhere, educational policy and school systems are redefining ‘which qualities count as the embodied characteristics of a “good student”’ (McLeod & Yates 2006, p. 51). Curriculum reform is a response to assessments
of what is worth knowing at a given time and place in history: in this case, of citizens with the capacities and capabilities to live, work and interact with the peoples, cultures and societies of Asia. Access to the lucrative economies of Asia, the geo-political influence of China and India and, in Australia, regional location and the movement of people between continents, make studies of Asia desirable.

Asia-related and educational policies, significantly the White Paper Australia in the Asian Century (AACTF 2012) and the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Children (MCEETYA 2008), have influenced development of the new Australian Curriculum (ACARA 2014). The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Children (2008) recognises that ‘India, China and other Asian nations are growing and their influence on the world is increasing. Australians need to become ‘Asia-literate’, engaging and building strong relationships with Asia’ (p. 4).

The specific goals outlined in the declaration include that . . .

all young Australians [are to] become . . . active and informed citizens . . . [who] appreciate Australia’s social, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity. . . [and] are able to able to relate to and communicate across cultures especially the cultures and countries of Asia.

(pp. 8–9)

The Australian Curriculum outlines the Asia-related content teachers are being directed to teach, and, in a very limited way, how they are to teach it. The ‘Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia’ priority (ACARA 2014) seeks to stimulate opportunities for students to recognise the diversity within and between the countries of Asia; to develop an understanding of their cultures, beliefs and environment; and to identify connections between the peoples of Asia, Australia and the rest of the world. It has been developed around three key conceptual areas:

1 Asia and its diversity, in which the diversity within and between the countries of the Asia region is explored, including their cultures, societies and traditions as well as their environments and the effects of these on people’s lives;

2 Achievements and contributions of the peoples of Asia, including examination of the past and continuing achievements of the peoples of Asia to world history and the influences that the Asia region has on the world’s aesthetic and creative pursuits;

3 Asia–Australia engagement, including the nature of past and ongoing links between Australia and Asia, as well as development of knowledge, understanding and skills to enable active and effective engagement with peoples of the Asia region.

While it is clear from the curriculum that teachers are expected to incorporate studies related to these three conceptual areas, there is a paucity of advice in
the curriculum about a) how to teach across the curriculum or b) how teachers who do not have a background in Asia-related studies are to integrate this into their teaching sequences. This chapter now turns attention to these two issues.

Cross-curricular teaching approaches

The Australian Curriculum omits a definition of cross-curricular approaches, instead advising that priorities:

enrich the curriculum through development of considered and focused content that fits naturally within learning areas. They enable the delivery of learning area content at the same time as developing knowledge, understanding and skills relating to . . . Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia . . . Incorporation of the priorities will encourage conversations between learning areas and between students, teachers and the wider community.

(ACARA 2014)

The Curriculum also, somewhat ambiguously, suggests that the cross-curriculum priorities ‘will have a strong but varying presence depending on their relevance to learning areas’ (ACARA 2014). This lack of precision in referring to cross-curricular approaches is not surprising, given the overall lack of agreement around definitions of approaches to integrating curriculum. The inappropriate, interchangeable use of terminology describing various approaches to curriculum integration by teachers (Godinho 2007) reflects a general lack of consensus in the area.

The ambiguity of the ‘embedding’ and ‘varying presence’ of the ‘cross-curriculum’ approach resounds with the under-theorisation of integrated approaches to curriculum in general. Approaches to curriculum integration have a long history. Commended by Dewey in the 1930s (Dewey 2007) and supported by Bruner in the 1960s (Bruner 1986), they have waxed and waned in popularity (Rennie & Wallace 2009).

Commitment to cross-curricular approaches is variable, with many subject area teachers territorial about their specialisation within the curriculum. Disciplines ‘embody ways of thinking about the world’ (Mansilla & Gardner 2009, p. 101), and ‘disciplining the mind’ is described as developing the capacity to move beyond memorising information and processes in subject area learning to a point where one can challenge ingrained ideas and apply knowledge and skills to new situations (Mansilla & Gardner 2009, pp. 97–103). Subjects in the curriculum are based on disciplines; but disciplines are changeable; do not factor in children’s experience; are neither constant nor coherent; are not the only source of knowledge in contemporary society; and are often confused with school curriculum subject matter (Rogers 1997). Esteeming disciplinary learning above school subject learning, and suggesting that disciplines are fixed rather than fluid, ignores learner experience and contemporary challenges to traditional knowledge bases (Deng & Luke 2008).
Integrated approaches to subject area learning are often seen as an antidote to student disengagement (Godinho 2007). While subject area learning can divide and fragment knowledge, resulting in a lack of relevance to students, learning focused on issues that draw on a range of subject areas can engage students in ways that more closely reflect out-of-school or real world capabilities (Hayes Jacobs 1989). More recently, integrated approaches are positioned as curricular responses to calls for new kinds of human capital in the face of shifting demographics and cultures, and to the impact of globalising and technologising forces on the growth of and challenges to knowledge and its traditional bases (Luke, Graham, Weir, Sanderson & Voncina 2007).

However, integrated approaches are not unproblematic. There is a lack of clarity around what constitutes cross-curricular approaches. Cross-curricularity is not a single, definable, agreed-on concept. It has multiple labels and definitions that are sometimes used interchangeably. Approaches differ in finely nuanced ways, and there is a lack of consensus as to how they might be used in designing and implementing curriculum. The subtle differences are contested. Cross-curricular pedagogy is a complex web of tentatively related and even contradictory ideas that are deeply affected by the pedagogical stance of those implementing it. A brief discussion of this complexity, drawing on a selection of theorisations, is now presented.

Hayes Jacobs (1989) presents a continuum of six alternative approaches to curriculum integration: discipline based, parallel disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, integrated day programs and complete integrated programs.

These can be briefly described as follows. Discipline-based teaching involves disciplines taught independently of one another, and so with no integration. In parallel disciplinary teaching, teaching-related disciplines focus on aspects of the same topics, or areas of interest. Multidisciplinary teaching involves the linking of multiple school subjects by a theme or issue while maintaining the integrity of the disciplines, rather than attempting to synthesise knowledge. Interdisciplinary approaches (presented as the most sophisticated) involve knowledge and ways of thinking from a number of disciplines brought together, to explain issues and solve problems. Integrated day programs address an issue or area of learning that is highlighted for a single day. A complete integrated program involves all curriculum design being implemented through integrated approaches (Hayes Jacobs 1989).

Other theorists present further options that differ subtly from those described above. For example, Godinho and Abbott (2011) discuss two further types of curriculum integration: transdisciplinary and pluridisciplinary. Briefly, in transdisciplinary approaches, planning concentrates around an issue, problem or topic with a framework developed around concepts and central ideas/questions; pluridisciplinary approaches juxtapose subjects/disciplines that are related in some way, such as history and English or geography and languages (Godinho & Abbott 2011).

To give the reader another example of the lack of consensus around the use of terminology and the finely differentiated approaches, Wallace, Sheffield, Rennie and Venville (2007) identify five integrative teaching approaches: synchronised, cross-
curricular, thematic, project-based, whole-school specialisation and community-focused curriculum design and implementation.

Synchronised teaching refers to teaching of similar content and processes in different school subjects. Cross-curricular teaching comprises the incorporation of broad skills, concepts or attitudes across separately taught elements of the curriculum. Thematic teaching involves linking subjects into a similar theme or point of focus. Project-based teaching is the organisation of curriculum around a project/s within which subjects are embedded and subject boundaries blurred. A whole-school specialised approach involves a long-term commitment to an area of specialisation; and community-focused programs are designed to help students understand and appreciate notions of community.

Teachers often use these labels interchangeably (Godinho 2007), while theorists assign particular meanings to various terms. While many primary teachers and some secondary school teachers would describe their cross-curriculum work as interdisciplinary, theorists would challenge this nomenclature. Teachers have differing affinities with disciplinary and interdisciplinary pedagogical approaches, and differences also exist between cross-curricular and within-subject skills and knowledge (Luke et al. 2007).

Some theorists do not believe that work done in primary school and junior secondary school is ‘disciplinary’ at all but is better described as ‘pre-disciplinary’ or intuitive learning (Gardner & Boix Mansilla 1994). According to this definition, interdisciplinary learning cannot take place until midway through secondary schooling, after students have engaged in sufficient prior learning in the relevant disciplines of the type usually undertaken as students progress through the years of secondary school. Interdisciplinary learning, by this standard, is seen as a way of examining topics, themes or problems,

the capacity to integrate knowledge and modes of thinking in two or more disciplines to produce a cognitive advancement: for example, explaining a phenomenon, solving a problem, creating a product, raising a new question—in ways that would have been unlikely through a singular disciplinary means.

(Boix Mansilla 2004, p. 4)

There is also the issue of the different pedagogical value assigned to various cross-curriculum approaches. For example, commitment to progressive notions of education is seen as strongest in approaches based on teacher/student collaborative identification of issues, and that highlight personal and social integration (e.g. Beane 1997). Conversely, the range of approaches emerging from various situated applications can present legitimate options to teachers and learners working in different contexts (e.g. Godinho 2007).

Integrated day programs, wherein aspects of culture are addressed for a single day (Hayes Jacobs, 1989), can lack a context of interculturality that involves multi-faceted exchange within and across cultural groups in ways that avoid a focus on superficial difference (e.g. UNESCO 2006; Cloonan, O’Mara & Ohi 2014). Cross-curricular teaching, drawing on the definition of Wallace, Sheffield,
Rennie and Venville (2007), which comprises incorporating skills, concepts or attitudes across separately taught elements of the curriculum, can similarly lack depth, as the learning can be secondary to the core learnings of the primary discipline. Examples of this include the teaching of gamelan in music or silk painting in art, Haiku in English or curry preparation in food technology, without accompanying cultural understandings.

On a practical level, cross-curriculum approaches present a range of challenges, including difficulties for timetabling (especially in secondary schools, where there is a greater tendency for subjects to be taught separately); the meeting of reporting requirements around student learning in discrete subject areas; challenges in curriculum and assessment design; and a scarcity of supportive professional learning opportunities for teachers (Moss & Godinho 2007; Boix-Mansilla 2008).

So ‘cross-curriculum’ is a term used interchangeably and imprecisely. ‘Cross-curriculum’, and a range of other terms used to describe the embedding or integration of various aspects of school subject learning, is contested in terms of definition, value and how it is used in designing and implementing primary and secondary school curriculum. There are organisational implications in trying to embed studies of Asia across the curriculum. The Australian Curriculum’s avoidance of a definition of the term ‘cross-curriculum’ leaves Australian teachers without a clear theoretical grounding underpinning curriculum design and implementation.

Despite this there are compelling reasons for the integration of subject area knowledge, including as a means of engaging students who are marginalised by discrete subject area studies, for development of student capacities in the face of globalising and technologising forces that are challenging traditional forms of knowledge and its bases, and as a means of exploring phenomena and issues that transcend subject area learning. The warrant underpinning and the breadth of scope involved in studies of Asia offer a rationale for their positioning as a cross-curriculum priority, but adequate pedagogical advice is not yet available to the profession.

**Teacher capacity for teaching studies of Asia**

Insights into the self-perceptions of Australian teachers’ capacity for planning, implementing and assessing Asia-related teaching and learning can be drawn from a recent survey of 1,319 Australian teachers (Halse et al. 2013).

The respondents worked in primary, secondary and special schools in the government, Catholic and independent education sectors, and were drawn from all Australian states and territories. They are a self-selecting sample of teachers, many recruited through the peak national professional association that supports Asia-related teaching and learning, some through educational authorities and other subject associations. It is likely that the majority of teachers who responded were those interested in studies or languages of Asia, with 38% of respondents being teachers of Asian languages.

Of the survey respondents, only those who teach Asian languages responded that teaching and learning about Asia was included in their initial teacher training.
Just 20% had completed or were currently enrolled in a postgraduate course of study relating to teaching and learning about Asia.

The teaching workforce will require strong support to implement the Asia priority, given that student learning and achievement is supported when teachers have deep, subject-specific, content knowledge, and the capacity for flexible, varied teaching approaches related to that content (Borko 2004; Darling-Hammond 2006; Darling-Hammond & Richardson 2009).

For many respondents, Asia-related teaching was not at present core to their teaching purposes: they don’t assess student learning in the area; they lack knowledge of resources, and cross-curricular teaching of studies of Asia is spontaneous, arising from incidents or comments; it is related to planned teaching, but not specifically planned for, highlighted or assessed. A third (33%) of all respondents described inclusion of Asia in their teaching practices as ‘accidental’ or ‘occasional and incidental’, and only 53% agreed or strongly agreed that they often use assessment tasks to monitor students’ learning about Asia. Teachers did not know of suitable resources for classroom usage, with just 20% agreeing that they were familiar with a range of resources for Asia-related teaching and learning. When asked whether they ‘take every opportunity to incorporate learning about Asia into [their] teaching’, only 17% agreed or strongly agreed, while 58% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement; 22% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Competing school-based pressures appear to have a major influence on the implementation of the priority, with 50% of survey respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they ‘don’t believe there is enough time or space in the curriculum to include teaching and learning about Asia’; 20% neither agreed not disagreed, and 26% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Competition for a place in the curriculum for studies perceived to be additional (non-core) requirements has been cited elsewhere as an impediment to implementation (AEF 2012).

Sequential Asia-related teaching and learning across year levels, a goal of the Australian Curriculum, gives direction to teachers and enables the deepening of student understandings over time in a coordinated way, building cohesively on previous learning and avoiding fragmented and repetitive student learning experiences. Isolated Asia-focused activities and patchy implementation in some but not all classrooms, result in little gain for students (AEF 2012). However, 68% of survey respondents indicated that their school did not provide a clear sequence of Asia-related teaching and learning across a number of year levels. This means that less than a third of respondents felt their school promoted the kind of planning that promotes cohesive learning experiences.

It is probable that the lack of confidence in teaching studies of Asia amongst the general Australian teaching profession would be much higher than indicated by these figures, given that the majority of teachers in Australian schools are not affiliated with the professional association dedicated to promoting studies of Asia, are not teachers of Asian languages, and may be less likely to have the same level of interest in Asia-related teaching and learning than the survey sample.

One of the key opportunities for integrating a focus on Asia is through literacy education. Another survey, involving the author, of 320 representative Victorian
primary literacy teachers, drawn from remote, rural and metropolitan schools, both Government and Catholic, found that 56% of respondents did not feel confident in teaching literature about/from Asia, or about Australia’s engagement with Asia. English/literacy teaching ought to be synergistic with the incorporation of Asia-related texts; however, confidence amongst the primary teachers who participated in the survey was not high.

It appears evident from the results of these surveys that the majority of Australian teachers lack the preparation and confidence to develop Asia-related learning in consistent and knowledgeable ways. The results also point to the need for development of whole school commitment to and capacity for implementation of cross-curricular learning.

Teacher implementation of studies of Asia

The following discussion of pedagogical practice draws on one of the twelve case studies of exemplary teacher pedagogical practice from the Asia literacy and the Australian Teaching Workforce research project (Halse et al. 2013), on which I was a researcher. Recruited through recommendation by the peak national professional association supporting implementation of studies of Asia in Australian schools, these twelve teachers were considered by that association to be exemplary teachers of studies of Asia, at various stages of their careers.

The following discussion centres on an example of cross-curriculum implementation of studies of Asia by a teacher widely considered to be exemplary in the area, and analyses it in light of theoretical offerings relating to curriculum integration and school context. This case of an exemplary lower secondary teacher of Indonesian language implementing a cross-curricular approach is offered as illustrative of some of the challenges that teachers in other jurisdictions/countries encounter with cross-curricularly.

The teacher, Anita (a pseudonym), was classed as a lead teacher of Indonesian language and studies of Asia against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership), standards that provide a framework for classifying and developing the teaching workforce.

In writing Anita’s case study I drew on data I had collected from her and others at her school through the use of a questionnaire, semi-structured teacher and principal interviews, through field notes detailing my observations about the features of the school site, learning spaces and available resources, through study of school policy documents, teaching programs and resources, lesson plans, samples of students’ work and Anita’s narratives of her teaching practice.

Anita is an experienced lead teacher working at a government, co-educational school that caters for students in their first ten years of schooling in a rapidly expanding growth corridor in the suburbs of an Australian capital city. The school has a history of educating the children of members of Australian armed services and was recently relocated to a new site following a rapid growth in the student population, from four hundred to one thousand enrolments in just over three years. The school has seventy equivalent full-time staff comprising the principal,
three deputy principals, fifty teachers and sixteen education support staff. The majority of staff are of Anglo-Celtic background, with some second- or third-generation Europeans, one teacher from Indonesia and Anita, who was born in Canada. Anita has been at the school for over ten years, first as a teacher of Italian, and now, following a period of study, is Head of Languages and teaches the Indonesian language.

Two thirds of the parents of students at Anita's school are employed in either professional or skilled/trade fields. One third of the student population has a language background other than English, with student connections to eight Asian countries, including Korea, Indonesia, mainland China and India. The greatest growth in student numbers was from students whose families had moved from India and Mainland China. Diversity amongst student cohorts is typical in Australia.

A school review by an external reviewer made studies of Asia a school priority area, which meant that the school developed a school council approved and funded Studies of Asia action plan. The review recommended that curriculum offerings be made more relevant to the needs of the changing school community – particularly given increased numbers of students with Asian backgrounds and the increased time spent by members of the armed forces in Indonesia. While the national curriculum requires the subjects to be taught, individual schools in Australia have flexibility in deciding how the content of subjects is presented to students – what pedagogical approach is taken.

Anita is a primary teacher by background. In her current role she is Head of Languages, teaching Indonesian language to students at all levels of schooling. Anita also leads the school's Studies of Asia committee, which is responsible for: implementation of the Studies of Asia action plan, including the initiation and sustaining of annual student and teacher study tour programs to Indonesia; hosting of reciprocal visits of Indonesian teachers and students to their school; teacher professional learning; curriculum development, implementation and resourcing (including grant applications); and student learning, including the introduction of an Indonesian language program in place of an Italian language program.

An ongoing issue facing teachers is the disengagement of some Year 8 students (aged thirteen and fourteen) in Indonesian language classes, and their reluctance to communicate in oral and written form. As Anita explains,

I knew that a lot of our Year 8s, mostly those who were new to our school in Year 7, had already locked it out. They hadn't done it [Indonesian language] in primary school and we were pushing language, language, language to help them catch up. They were doing the work but there was no commitment. They just sat through the classes.

To tackle these challenges, Anita initiated a Year 8 elective project in which curriculum from various learning areas was integrated.

Acknowledging and building on students' out-of-school interests and life experiences to make learning more relevant to students (Moll, Amanti, Neff &
Gonzalez 1992), the team planned work and taught students within a cross-curriculum study, ‘Indonesian MasterChef’. MasterChef Australia is a franchised reality television competitive cooking show that is avidly viewed and discussed by Anita’s students. In MasterChef Australia, large numbers of hopeful domestic cooks undertake weeks of individual and team-based food knowledge and cooking challenges. Through judging of their knowledge and preparation skills by professional chefs and food critics, contestants are gradually eliminated until there is a single winner of a large sum of money, training by leading chefs and a cooking book contract. Based on the original British MasterChef, versions are now produced in over two hundred countries around the world. Many of Anita’s students also watch MasterChef China, MasterChef Indonesia and MasterChef India online.

The Indonesian MasterChef Year 8 elective project was cross-curricular, in that it had contained elements of a number of school subjects, including food technology (food shopping, handling and cooking, menu analysis and planning, food presentation and safe use and care of kitchen equipment); information and communication technologies (searching and locating information); media technologies (film recording and editing); personal learning (group organisation and collaboration); history (investigation of the spice trade); geography (cultural comparative work); and economics (commerce and trade). Anita and a team of teachers of Indonesian worked with food technology teachers and media support staff to plan and teach Indonesian language studies within a cross-curricular study of food, agriculture and cooking.

The Indonesian and the food technology teachers adopted a team approach to planning and had responsibility for different aspects of curriculum delivery.

The food technology teachers directed the planning of handling and cooking, menu analysis and planning, food presentation and safe use and care of kitchen equipment. A teacher’s aide with expertise in media and information and communication technologies supported student filming and editing. While Anita and the other teachers of Indonesian language took responsibility for teaching cultural understandings that drew on subject matter from geography, history, commerce and economics, the emphasis of their teaching and assessment was on Indonesian communication and language awareness and personal learning (see Table 9.1 for an extract from Anita’s unit assessment and planning document).

Students examined Indonesian food advertisements (a textbook activity); compared daily menus in Indonesia and Australia; and kept a food diary for a day, written up in menu form and as a recount (with a focus on using conjunctions, time markers, and plurals in Indonesian language). They undertook a cultural study of food, agriculture and ingredients specific to Indonesia, including research into rice, coconuts and the spice trade; analysed a selection of Indonesian restaurant menus for evidence of local produce, the skills of chefs, cultural dishes, the influences from and on other countries, their catering to a variety of tastes, and the language and images used; and undertook Internet research to investigate the menus of global fast food outlets in Indonesia.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment task: year 8 MasterChef unit</th>
<th>Success criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaking and listening:</strong></td>
<td>Correct sentence structure, pronunciation and tone/phrasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role play: bargaining and buying something in the supermarket</td>
<td>Participate effectively in interactions on simple well-rehearsed topics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listen to a recording of students discussing their likes and dislikes and fill in a grid</td>
<td>Extract information from spoken text in order to complete an information activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bargaining for the food for their ‘MasterChef’ recipe</td>
<td>MasterChef cooking segment (see Table 9.2)</td>
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<td>Reading their script for the ‘MasterChef’ cooking segment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong></td>
<td>Reading and demonstrating comprehension of short, modified text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading about a day of food for a child in Indonesian:</td>
<td>Recall most of the main ideas, objects and details presented in a text</td>
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<tr>
<td>demonstrate comprehension through creating a chart using the information</td>
<td>Use correct pronunciation, tone and fluency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading their script for the ‘MasterChef’ cooking segment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Translating the judges’ feedback: ‘MasterChef’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Writing:</strong></td>
<td>Write paragraphs and linked sentences using appropriate language related to the topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paragraph about daily food intake: include adjectives to describe the food, comparisons, tastes, likes/dislikes, conjunctions . . .</td>
<td>Write and edit their own work in the language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creating a role play for ‘MasterChef’ cooking segment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment task: year 8 MasterChef unit</td>
<td>Success criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Language functions and structures:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Target language:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Stating likes/dislikes/preferences</td>
<td>• Spices</td>
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<td>• Use of ‘ini’ and ‘itu’ preceding and following the noun</td>
<td>• Fruits and vegetables</td>
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<td>• Describing things: asking and giving weight, quality</td>
<td>• Foods: 5 food groups</td>
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<td>• Identifying when</td>
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<td>• Expressing and asking about needs</td>
<td>• Suffix: nya to form nouns, followed by adjective</td>
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<td>• Expressing wants</td>
<td>• Comparatives: suka, tidak suka, kurang suka, lebih suka, sekali, kesukaan</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Giving reasons</td>
<td>• money, prices: large numbers</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Expressing opinions</td>
<td>• buying and prices: Saya mau . . ., Boleh saya . . ., Berapa harganya . . .?</td>
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<td>• cooking words: campur, menggoreng, membakar</td>
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<td>• formation of plurals: beberapa, banyak</td>
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<td>• quality: mahal, murah</td>
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<td><strong>Key cultural understandings:</strong></td>
<td>• The spice trade and its influences: both within and outside of Indonesia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Rice has 5 names in Indonesia depending on the stage of growth</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Key agriculture in Indonesia</td>
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<td>• Politeness relating to buying goods</td>
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<td>• Cultural recipes/dishes</td>
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<td>• Pedagang Kaki Lima and other sellers of food</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Types of food at different meals</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Use of spoon and fork/hand for eating</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Use of negatives appropriately – e.g. kurang for food</td>
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<td>• Special foods for festivals</td>
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Students watched a cooking demonstration of the Indonesian dish Nasi Goreng. Anita deleted the verbs from an Indonesian language recipe for the dish and students had to find and insert the appropriate verb and its form as each step was explained. Working collaboratively, students then translated the recipe, prepared the dish and filmed each step in the process. To do this, the students collaboratively assigned roles, including head chef, food shopper, camera operator and editor. All team members shared responsibility for cooking. Teachers gave them a list of required ingredients and a budget.

Students were required to: list ingredients; simplify steps in the recipe and translate them into Indonesian; shop at a (simulated) market for ingredients; bargain in Indonesian with shopkeepers (Indonesian teachers); budget appropriately; follow the steps in the recipe; film/photograph and commentate a ‘MasterChef’ segment in Indonesian showing each step, including cooking, preparation, tasting and judging; taste the Nasi Goreng and discuss what they liked and disliked in Indonesian; ‘plate up’ the food and present it to the judges (Indonesian-speaking teachers) for tasting and feedback; edit footage, including the development of English subtitles, and translate the judges’ comments into English.

Indonesian language teachers acting as judges marked the work of each group using the assessment criteria for Indonesian language use in the MasterChef cooking activity outlined in Table 9.2; the group with the highest score from each Year 8 class participated in a ‘cook off’, during which they made an Indonesian dish of their choice.

While cultural knowledge was evident in the planning document (see ‘Key cultural understandings’ the column on the lower right-hand side in Table 9.1), student learning of these aspects was not explicitly assessed. Similarly, student learning in food technology, media technologies, history, geography and economics was not explicitly assessed. Student engagement was measured through teacher observation and student reflective comments. A marked improvement was observed in both student engagement and capacities to communicate in Indonesian, as well as in their intercultural knowledge and language awareness. The approach resulted in increased student engagement in Indonesian language learning, with learning situated within a meaningful context and given an immediate purpose.

In terms of the Australian Curriculum, this use of other school subjects such as food technology, media, history, economics and geography to support the teaching of Indonesian language did ‘enrich the curriculum through development of considered and focused content that fits naturally within learning areas’ (ACARA 2014). Similarly, the teachers’ integration of studies of Asia (drawing specifically on history and geography) with Indonesian language did ‘enable the delivery of learning area content at the same time as developing knowledge, understanding and skills relating to . . . Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia’ (ibid). The incorporation of the priorities ‘encourage[d] conversations between learning areas and between students, teachers and the wider community’, but how might it be described in relation to theory?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4 MasterChef</th>
<th>3 Chef</th>
<th>2 Cook</th>
<th>1 Apprentice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Included accurate use of previous language and skills – bargaining and cooking – few errors.</td>
<td>Mostly accurate use of previous language and skills – in bargaining and cooking – few errors.</td>
<td>Several errors in use of previous language and skills – in bargaining and cooking – few errors.</td>
<td>Frequent errors in language use, making the dialogue unclear and difficult to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>Consistently accurate pronunciation. Use of voice expression to add to the meaning. Pronounces unfamiliar words correctly.</td>
<td>Mostly accurate pronunciation. Use of voice expression to add to the meaning. Pronounces some unfamiliar words correctly.</td>
<td>Acceptable pronunciation with several errors. Little use of expression to add to meaning. Some difficulty pronouncing unfamiliar text.</td>
<td>Poor pronunciation with many errors. No use of expression to add to meaning. Much difficulty pronouncing unfamiliar text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>Maintained flow of speech over familiar and unfamiliar language.</td>
<td>Maintained flow of speech over familiar language with only a few hesitations.</td>
<td>Reasonable flow of speech over familiar language with several hesitations.</td>
<td>Very disjointed speech with no flow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script</td>
<td>Used most language learned in this topic and included many phrases and language learned previously in order to make comprehensive scripts.</td>
<td>Used most language learned in this topic and included some phrases and language learned previously, in order to make accurate scripts.</td>
<td>Used some language learned in this topic but did not include previously learned language. Scripts were comprehensible but lacked detail.</td>
<td>Used only essential language and scripts were short and only somewhat comprehensible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td>Very high involvement, excellent effort, thoroughly prepared, very little support needed.</td>
<td>Considerable involvement, good effort, well prepared, very little support needed.</td>
<td>Some effort and involvement, somewhat prepared, additional support required.</td>
<td>Little effort and involvement. Left the tasks to others in the group or required extra assistance and support to complete tasks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When asked to describe the pedagogical approach taken, Anita was somewhat vague in her articulation. As she explains,

[We were] working with food technology teachers so there was that cross-multi-subject planning and we’re choosing the best movie to go on our internal television program through the IT team.

Anita’s ambiguity reflects the lack of clarity and sometimes interchangeable use of terms evident in the theoretical writings on cross-curricularity, discussed in an earlier section of this chapter. Anita’s teaching example sits within the definition of cross-curricular teaching as the incorporation of broad skills, concepts or attitudes across separately taught elements of the curriculum (Wallace et al. 2007), as cultural studies were embedded with various subjects. The MasterChef activity alone could be said to be project-based, with studies of Asia embedded within the activity, and with subject boundaries blurred. However, when all of the aspects of the elective unit are considered, the example illustrates a cross-curriculum approach with a focal activity.

Ignoring, for the sake of analysis, the contested nature of the term ‘disciplinary learning’ within school settings, Anita’s example could be termed multidisciplinary (Hayes Jacobs 1989) in that there is a linking of multiple school subjects through the themes of food and trade. While there are elements of cross subject planning and teaching, the integrity of the disciplines is maintained, particularly in terms of student assessment.

This example was part of an elective curriculum offering, not within the mandated curriculum. This suggests cross-curriculum teaching that involves teaching of content that crosses subject areas is most easily achieved in a secondary school outside of individual timetabled subject areas. Disadvantages of this include that as they are not compulsory, not all students experience this learning; so elective studies cannot be relied on to fulfil the mandate of the Australian Curriculum regarding studies of Asia.

The purpose of the analysis above is not to suggest the example’s strengths or its weaknesses per se. Rather it seeks to shed light on identifying and illustrating options available to teachers as a means of promoting professional dialogue around and respectful theorisation of teachers’ work. The integration of studies of Asia is most frequently accomplished in combination with language learning (Halse et al. 2013), but even in this likely context, an exemplary teacher attempting to embed a cross-curricular approach to studies of Asia languages faced challenges.

Conclusion

The development and mobilisation of a citizenry able to engage with the economic, social and political rewards of intercultural relationships with people living in and with links to Asian countries is a substantial and sensitive undertaking. Responses to the mandating of the inclusion of studies of Asia in the Australian
Curriculum are illustrative of the known complexities involved in moving from educational policy to school-based implementation (e.g. Ball 2008).

For knowledgeable, school-based implementation of the cross-curriculum priority, a strong and widely appreciated theoretical base of cross-curricular pedagogical approaches is required. However, a plethora of terminology and differences in the interpretations surround the theoretical area of curriculum integration, and the advantages and disadvantages of various approaches are unclear. Cross-curriculum approaches hold much potential for teaching the studies of Asia; however, strengthening of pedagogical expertise is required, to incorporate a more nuanced understanding of the distinctions of approaches to curriculum integration and their usefulness for different teaching purposes.

The success of school-based implementation rests, to a large degree, with teacher capacity. However, it appears evident from survey results that the majority of Australian teachers lack the preparation and confidence to develop Asia-related learning in consistent and knowledgeable ways. Support for initial and ongoing education in the area of Asia-related teaching and learning is urgently required if superficial treatment is to be avoided.

Despite the lack of teacher confidence found in the surveys cited, knowledgeable and committed teacher pedagogical work, informed by the characteristics and needs of school communities, is evident in the teacher case study. Student disengagement in subject learning was successfully addressed through a cross-curriculum approach, with student progress in language learning evident. Teacher knowledge of student needs and resources, of Asia-related content and of engaging pedagogy is also evident. Expertise could be further informed by documentation and analysis of a range of examples of cross-curricular approaches and their purposes. Of particular interest would be examples of contemporary, contextually responsive, intercultural, Asia-related pedagogical and assessment practices, which illustrate integration of a range of curriculum areas, at a range of levels of schooling.

The challenging lack of clarity around effective pedagogical approaches, coupled with uncertainty about Asia-related content, are concerning, given the pressures facing the teaching profession to be the levers of change in developing a citizenry able to competently live and work in the Asian region. The mandating of an Asia-related cross-curricular priority is in a context where both teacher confidence and supportive theoretical work on cross-curriculum approaches is lacking. More work needs to be done to ensure teachers do not inadvertently lapse into pedagogies that promote superficial exoticism, emphasising differences rather than similarities, and that lack intellectual depth (Cloonan, O'Mara & Ohi 2014).

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