Thinking about Historical Thinking in the *Australian Curriculum: History*

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Abstract

This study analyses and evaluates the approach to historical thinking in the *Australian Curriculum: History*. This research study adopts interpretative discipline based pedagogy, with a document content analysis method. The study draws upon the research of Peter Lee (1983) on historical substantive and procedural concepts which have influenced the models of historical thinking by Wineburg (2000), Seixas (2006), Lévesque (2008) and historical reasoning by Van Drie and Van Boxtel (2008). These models provide a theoretical frame to critically evaluate the relationship and application of the disciplinary structures in the *Australian Curriculum: History*. Historical methods and procedures engage students in the process of historical construction through active historical thinking and reasoning. Research judgments are made on the effectiveness of the curriculum and its design in understanding and communicating the relationship between the substantive and procedural concepts of history as a discipline. The research findings indicate that the curriculum fails to recognize the importance and distinctiveness of substantive concepts as the building blocks of historical knowledge that make historical inquiry meaningful and intelligible. The analysis of substantive concepts in the *Australian Curriculum: History* using unique, organizational and thematic concepts reflects a curriculum that does not always pay attention to historical context. The study revealed that the curriculum fails to make explicit the interrelationship between substantive and procedural concepts in the *Historical Knowledge and Understanding* strand and the *Historical Skills* strand. This has resulted in a curriculum that does not enact the analytical and evaluative nature of procedural concepts such as historical significance, continuity and change, etc. Also, there is limited understanding of the method of application of procedural concepts like historical perspectives, contestability and empathy in the curriculum and as a result this undermines the role of these concepts in facilitating historical thinking. From this
analysis a new pedagogical model, “Framework for Historical Reasoning” emerges which relates the historical substantive and procedural concepts and historical skills as a unified pedagogical approach. This model provides a framework which teachers can use to engage with the enacted curriculum and facilitate student historical inquiry and understanding.
Declaration of Originality

The following Declaration, signed by the candidate:

This is to certify that

(i) the thesis comprises only my original work towards the Masters except where indicated,
(ii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,
(iii) the thesis is 26,000 words in length, inclusive of citations, but exclusive of tables and bibliographies as approved by the Graduate School of Education.

Signature: ..........................................................
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“History is the only laboratory we have in which to test the consequences of thought.”

Etienne Gilson (Philosopher)

Chapter 1

Introduction

This study aims to analyse the Australian Curriculum: History in terms of the intended understanding and application of historical thinking. Teaching and learning of history is an inquiry into the past that develops students’ curiosity imagination and understanding of ideas and phenomena that have shaped humanity. Central to this analysis and evaluation of the Australian Curriculum: History are the disciplinary structures of history that support historical thinking. Historical thinking provides a unifying theoretical framework that draws on historical concepts and skills that are grounded in the work of historians and can be utilised in the classroom to engage students in historical inquiry, understanding and reasoning. Historical thinking emphasizes knowledge in use: the active agency of students constructing historical knowledge and understanding by using and applying historical concepts to analyse and evaluate historical causation, change, significance, interpretations etc. (Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 2006; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008; Wineburg, 2001).

SECTION 1.1 Background and Context

There had been little success over the last three decades in achieving consensus between Australian State jurisdictions on an agreed approach to curriculum. Much debate still remains on the current approach by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEEDYA) 1989 Hobart Declaration’s ‘National Statements
and Profiles’ created eight *Key Learning Areas*. This was criticised for organising knowledge and skills into eight piles irrespective of disciplinary pedagogy (Yates & Collins, 2008). History was collapsed into *Studies of Society and Environment* (SOSE) and taught in the *Time, Continuity and Change* strand. This approach was reinforced by the 1999 MCEEDYA Adelaide Declaration. Curriculum policy adopted ‘Essential Learnings’ as entitlements for students, e.g. Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). In VELS, SOSE disappeared and history, geography and economics were reinstated as disciplines within the Humanities domain. Students engaged in historical thinking under the dimensions of *Historical Knowledge and Understanding* and *Historical Reasoning and Interpretation* (VCAA, 2005). Like SOSE, VELS history standards still remained vague, for example at Level 6, students were required to “analyse events which contributed to Australia’s social, political and cultural development.” (VCAA, 2005). Whitehouse (2011) believes that these curriculum developments failed to pay adequate attention to the disciplinary identity of teachers.

The Hobart and Adelaide Declarations never achieved a consistent approach to curriculum with each Australian jurisdiction modifying and adopting a variety of implementation approaches. SOSE integration squeezed the history discipline by diluting its skills and knowledge and failed to acknowledge the discipline’s unique methods. Worse still, universities responded to curriculum change by dropping the history method in education degrees in favour of a SOSE method with only 16 universities in Australia offering a history method, of which 10 of these are in NSW (Mason, 2010). This resulted in the legitimized and institutionalized teaching of history by non-trained teachers and a decline in student enrolments at senior history (Clark, 2008; Taylor, 2004, 2008). The only exception to national decline was in NSW, which maintained Australian History at Years 9 and 10 as a discrete middle subject with 100 hours mandated teaching. A consequence of 1990s changes was that two approaches to history education in Australia emerged: integrated SOSE approach and the discipline history approach.
Ironically, while school history was in decline, the 1990’s “History Wars” raged in the public sphere between historians such as Manning Clark, Geoffrey Blainey, Stuart Macintyre, Keith Windschuttle, Robert Manne and Henry Reynolds. They argued that Australian historical research had shifted to a negative “black armband” (Blainey, 1993, p. 10) interpretation of the past with “an excessive focus on past wrongs [that] promotes a mournful relationship with the past that harms the nation, and is ultimately inaccurate” (Parkes, 2007, p. 388). Therefore, historical consciousness according to Seixas (2000) where national narratives are needed to “shape collective memory”. The History Wars found numerous fronts, therefore it was unsurprising that a battlefront in the nation’s classrooms emerged which continued to challenge and undermine history education. Guyver (2011b) asserts that teachers of history cannot avoid these contested histories as they are “de facto interventionists in public debate that is academic, pedagogical, and political”, leaving teachers vulnerable. The NSW curriculum attracted public criticism; Sydney journalist P.P. McGuinness criticised the NSW syllabus for its excessive use of politically correct buzzwords such as invasion, genocide, assimilation, integration, Terra Nullius, culture conflict, dispossession, and he further accused the NSW Syllabus of “controlling the future through indoctrinating our children” (Clark, 2003, p. 178). Prime Minister John Howard (1996-2007) viewed SOSE as lacking “any sense of structured narrative, replaced by a fragmented stew of ‘themes’ and ‘issues’ . . . it has succumbed to a postmodern culture of relativism where any objective record of achievement is questioned or repudiated” (Howard, 2006). He believed that SOSE focused on obsessive all-consuming guilt and shame and political correctness of leftist versions of history that had hurt the nation. Howard demanded a restoration of Australian history in the nation’s classrooms, calling for “root and branch renewal” and linked it to restoring “our national sense of self” in schools (Howard, 2006). Howard was playing on community fears by linking history and civic responsibility, and that “an inadequate history education in fact threatens the ongoing health of civic public life” (Clark, 2004). Howard saw the purpose of curriculum as a tool for social (re)production by defining Australian national identity and his personal view that the purpose of history education was a conservative transmission model of
factual memory that commemorated nationally significant events (Clark, 2008; Taylor, 2004). The History Wars and Howard’s intervention and what came after set the political agenda for history education in Australia in the first decade of the 21st Century. It indicated that history teaching and curriculum was not value free and the past provided a lens to view the development of contemporary society and highlighted the interrelationship between politicians and historians in shaping history teaching (Guyver, 2011a).

In August 2006, the then Education Minister Julie Bishop convened the Federal National History Summit to advise on a sensible centre by developing an ‘Australian History Curriculum for Years 9 and 10’ (DEST, 2007). The summit, according to the Minister, was to “identify the basic facts and building blocks of Australian history that every student should have an appreciation of . . . [and] strengthen the teaching of history” (6th July, 2006). John Hirst, a summit attendee believed Howard wanted a structured narrative of Australia’s objective record of achievement to be acknowledged. Nash, Crabtree et al., (1997) argue that political attempts to assert a national narrative fail to accept that historian’s work and knowledge is always tentative and contingent limited by historical objectivity. Hirst (2008) agrees, believing Howard’s mistake was “to assume that if historians record events chronologically, they will not intrude their own values and the true story will unfold itself. But a narrative chooses its events and its themes”. The curriculum was rejected universally, with any form of imposed national narrative made up of historical ‘milestones’ and ‘significant people’ (DEST, 2007) declared unteachable (Clark, 2008; Taylor, 2008). Fundamentally, the curriculum was what Seixas (2000) called collective memory history, that there is historical truth out there waiting to be captured and communicated to students. Ultimately, the curriculum failed to engage students in historical thinking and alienated historians. Guyver (2011b) argues that the strands of history as a discipline, as a context and as controversy need to coexist as they all have a place in the curriculum. The legacy of the past two decades of curriculum experimentation will pose a
challenge to the successful implementation of the Australian Curriculum in terms of quality history teacher education and resources that support the curriculum.

Howard’s vision for a history curriculum was short lived with the Australian Labor Party’s November 2007 election victory which promised an *Educational revolution* and development of a *World Class Curriculum*. This was agreed in principle by all jurisdictions in *The Melbourne Declaration on Education Goals for Young People* (MCEETYA, 2008), which aims to develop “successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens” with a “solid foundation in knowledge, understanding, skills and values” (MCEETYA, 2008, p. 13). The National Curriculum Board (NCB) which later became the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, (ACARA) identified the disciplines of English, science, mathematics and history as part of phase one of the national curriculum development process. They published successive development papers that set out aims, design approach and structure for each disciplines curriculum with the final curriculum in history published in December 2010. The release of each development paper was followed by an intensive consultation process engaging academics, practising teachers, stakeholders and parents. The inclusion of history in phase one of the process reflects the importance of classroom history. ACARA emphasized the importance that core disciplines required students “to think deeply and logically, and obtain and evaluate evidence in a disciplined way as the result of studying fundamental disciplines” (MCEETYA, 2008, p. 8). ACARA defined the parameters of history as not just a narrative but that students “need to both know history and practise it” (National Curriculum Board, 2008, p. 7). The pedagogical approach to history is to be grounded by processes of historical whereby “investigation undertaken in order to understand the past. Steps in the inquiry process include posing questions, locating and analysing sources and using evidence from sources to develop an informed explanation about the past” (ACARA, 2010b). This can be achieved “through teacher-directed and student-centred learning” (ACARA, 2010a). The *Australian Curriculum: History* is to engage students’ historical understandings of evidence, continuity and change, cause and
effect, significance, contestability and empathy. The history curriculum was to be grounded in a world history context (unlike Howard’s vision). The challenge has been for the Australian Curriculum: History design to be explicit about how the intended curriculum enacts the central procedural concepts and methods of the history discipline.

**SECTION 1.2 Rationale**

The purpose of this study is to examine, analyse and critique the ‘intended’ Australian Curriculum: History in supporting the ability of students to engage in the disciplinary structures of history’s “own methods and procedures” (ACARA, 2010a, p. 1). The foundation of this study is located in extensive research on historical thinking (Ashby & Lee, 1987; Ashby, Lee, & Dickinson, 1997; Lee, 1983; Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 1994, 1999, 2006, 2009; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008; VanSledright, 2004; Wineburg, 2001). Influenced by Bruner (1960), ACARA proposes a curriculum model whereby the discipline’s “own methods and procedures” give meaning and structure to it and differentiates between historical substantive and procedural concepts. The Australian Curriculum: History identifies historical concepts as: evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, perspectives, empathy and contestability (ACARA, 2010b) as core for developing historical knowledge and understanding by fostering historical inquiry. This study will:

- describe and explain substantive and procedural historical thinking concepts in the Australian Curriculum: History
- use disciplined based historical thinking as a theoretical framework in critiquing and evaluating the Australian Curriculum: History

**SECTION 1.3 Research Question**

The key research question in this study is:

To what extent does the Australian Curriculum: History support historical thinking?
Sub Questions

1. What is historical thinking?
2. What theoretical or philosophical groundings of substantive and procedural concepts are evident (implicitly or explicitly) in the Australian Curriculum: History?
3. What theoretical or philosophical groundings of substantive and procedural concepts are suggested by what is absent from the Australian Curriculum: History?
4. What does the Australian Curriculum: History suggest (implicitly or explicitly) is the purpose of historical thinking?

SECTION 1.4 Significance of the Study

The Australian Curriculum: History advocates a disciplined inquiry that prioritises a critical disciplinary approach to historical understanding (MCEETYA, 2008). The curriculum demands that students can struggle and engage thoughtfully with different and conflicting interpretations of the past and therefore think deeply about the past. History curriculum should focus on historical thinking concepts as it provides disciplinary structure and demands student engagement by allowing them to develop critical thinking skills that judge and critique historical substance (ACARA, 2010b). The curriculum needs to be evaluated against its own aims and rationale in fostering a disciplinary structure. The implementation of the curriculum in 2012-13 will provide further opportunities for research on how the new curriculum impacts teacher pedagogy and its effectiveness in improving students’ historical understanding.

SECTION 1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Some key terms which will be used throughout this study are often assigned multiple meanings and interpretations.
**Curriculum**

Curriculum can be defined in many ways. The broad literature definition refers to all types of learning and academic experiences offered under guidance of an educational institution or jurisdiction. Curriculum is a constructed, organised and interrelated set of learning aims and objectives, knowledge, skills and experiences that is either school generated or determined by national jurisdictions that guides teachers and holds student learning assessable and accountable (Blake & Hanley, 1995; Brady & Kennedy, 1999; Marsh & Willis, 1999; Solaiman, 2007).

**Substantive Concepts**

Substantive concepts are terms that help describe subject matter and content knowledge of history that allow one to access to the past, i.e., key terms, names, events etc. These concepts help identify, locate and organise historical substantive content making the historical phenomena meaningful and intelligible. They can be categorised as unique, organisational or thematic concepts (Haenen & Schrijnemakers, 2000; Halldén, 1997; Lee, 1983; Nichol, 2005; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008; W. Walsh, 1951).

**Procedural Concepts**

Procedural concepts allow students to construct historical knowledge by employing historical thinking concepts in communicating historical understanding. Procedural concepts “are ideas that provide our understanding of history as a discipline or form of knowledge” (Lee & Ashby, 2000, p. 199). Van Drie and Van Boxtel refer to these as meta-concepts. Procedural concepts can be utilised to analyse historical significance, evidence, cause and consequence, continuity and change, historical perspectives, source analysis and historical empathy (Ashby et al., 1997; Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 2006; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008).
**Historical Thinking**

Historical thinking is the conceptual substantive and procedural underpinnings that guide and shape the structure of the history discipline. Historical thinking allows teachers to design conceptually based curriculum and engage in student centred inquiry that is grounded in concepts that are the work of a historian (Lévesque, 2008; National Center for Teaching History in Schools, 2005; Rosenzweig & Wineburg, 2008; Seixas, 2006; VanSledright, 2004; Wineburg, 2001).

**SECTION 1.6 Conclusion**

The disputed territory of Australian history curriculum has had many false dawns, challenged by questions of collective memory of whose history, national identity, historical consciousness and disciplined history (Clark, 2008; Guyver, 2011a; Seixas, 2000, 2004; Taylor, 2004). Much of this debate has been centred on substantive content of history. What emerges from the research is the challenge to history education is not only what is taught and the value of substantive knowledge, but how it is taught i.e., method of history teaching and learning. There is a greater need to explore the importance of “Pedagogical Content Knowledge” (Shulman, 1987) in historical inquiry that is grounded in substantive and procedural concepts that give history its structure.
“The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there”

(Hartley, 1953)

Chapter 2

Literature review

Constructivist thinkers Dewey, Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky have had immense influence on teaching, learning and curriculum design. The impact on the teaching of history has resulted in an increasing body of work which has explored student cognitive meaning making in the discipline with a particular focus on historical “knowledge-in-use structures” (VanSledright, 2009, p. 435). Peter Seixas (2006, p. 1) succinctly states, “What should students know and be able to do when they are finished their years of school history? Surely the accumulation of facts-to-be-remembered is not an adequate answer to the question”. School history should not be memory narrative; rather it should examine the goings on behind the curtains of historical construct. This discipline based approach to history originates from within disciplinary inquiry methods and skills of historians. Scholars like Denis Shemilt (1980) and Peter Lee (1983) examined historical thinking in the UK Schools’ History Project in the 1970s and 1980s. Lee (1983, 2000) recognises that it was important that students understood the distinction of core historical concepts by categorising historical understanding using two concepts: substantive and procedural. Substantive history makes up the content of history that often characterised traditional history, whereas, procedural concepts like change, cause, effect “are ideas that provide our understanding of history as a discipline or form of knowledge” (Lee & Ashby, 2000, p. 199) and characterise it as active construction of knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). Making
disciplinary structures explicit through the use of historical substantive and procedural concepts place a focus on pedagogy and student understanding (Bruner, 1960; Shulman, 1987). Lee’s distinction in history learning between substantive and procedural concepts is foundational to the work on historical thinking by Sam Wineburg (2001), Peter Seixas (2006), Stéphane Lévesque (2008) and Jan Van Drie and Carla Van Boxtel (2008). These provide a prism in which to analyse Australian Curriculum: History. The review of the literature seeks to elaborate the following:

- Curriculum and Pedagogy
- Historical Disciplinary Structures (Substantive and Procedural Concepts)
- Teaching and Learning in History
- Historical Thinking

SECTION 2.1 Curriculum and Pedagogy

Jerome Bruner (1960) argued that any subject could be taught to students during their cognitive development once the processes and structure of the discipline are made transparent and explicit to them; therefore, curriculum design should be determined by these disciplinary structures. Schwab (1978) agrees that disciplined-based curriculum and pedagogy imposes constraints and “if a structure of teaching and learning is alien to the structure of what we propose to teach, the outcome will inevitably be a corruption of that content” (p. 242). Bruner argued this could be achieved by a process of a ‘spiral curriculum’ whereby students reconnect frequently with the discipline’s central concepts through lenses of different substantive knowledge which result in development and transition of deep and meaningful cognition (Bruner, 1960). Curriculum research began to shift focus from content knowledge to ‘methods’ of teaching curriculum with a particular focus on “knowledge-in-use” (VanSledright, 2009), with increased emphasis on the central disciplinary concepts, skills, pedagogy and curricular materials.
Shulman’s (1987) model for pedagogical reasoning and action offers a further lens through which to view the teaching and learning process in history teaching. The model seeks to illuminate learning processes between teacher and student through scaffolding of historical comprehension, transformation, instruction and evaluation, reflection and new comprehension. Firstly, in Shulman’s model, teachers should demonstrate, comprehend and understand disciplinary structures and conceptual organisation that defines the process of inquiry that historians engage in their analysis and construction of the past. Secondly, “Pedagogical Content Knowledge” (PCK), requires teachers to translate and communicate through meaningful learning opportunities the disciplinary structures into classroom contexts. Shulman’s PCK represents the interrelationship between content knowledge, disciplinary methods and teaching methods and strategies, making teaching and learning process pedagogically powerful. Thirdly, instruction in history requires teachers to use their PCK to engage students in contested historical debates through discussion and explanation: “rather than presenting the past as stable and unproblematic, the history teacher fosters an intellectual climate of argument and inquiry” (Zajda & Whitehouse, 2009, p. 959). Central to this debate is the problematic nature of historical reliability of perspectives and interpretations. Students must learn to debate and question history as this is central to historical understanding. Finally, student evaluation, reflection and new comprehension require teachers to assess student understanding of the knowledge and process of inquiry which in turn provides opportunities for new student inquiries. This stage of the model requires teachers to be reflective practitioners about the efficacy of teaching and student learning and adapting the curriculum and teacher pedagogy when required.

Shulman’s model argues that teachers cannot separate the curriculum content and pedagogy and Seixas (1999) argues that because "content and pedagogy are inseparable in doing the discipline. Even conceiving of them as two different categories that must be united is no longer helpful” (Seixas, p. 329). The significance of curriculum design must provide explicitly the “intersection of content and pedagogy, in the
capacity of a teacher to transform the content knowledge he or she possess into forms that are pedagogically powerful” (Shulman, 1987, p. 15). Whitehouse (2008) states that the “questions that historians pose about the past have the potential to drive the curriculum” and affirms that any curriculum must be explicit in disciplinary structures, methods and procedures of history. Historical understanding develops most effectively by doing history, by using discipline's tools to construct historical knowledge, and it is the preserve of the teacher’s pedagogy to expose students to the historian’s disciplinary skills when constructing historical narratives.

Curriculum solely designed around substance of historical knowledge can only result in “fragile knowledge” (Perkins, 1992, pp. 21-27) and student understanding that is "limited and rigid" (Gardner, 1989, p. 256). The “intended” (Hjalmanson, 2008) Australian Curriculum: History advocates a disciplinary approach proposed by Bruner, Schwab and Shulman, therefore, these disciplinary structures must be explicit. Critical analysis of the Australian Curriculum: History must examine the intended curriculum from the disciplinary structures of substantive and procedural concepts grounded in historical thinking.

**SECTION 2.2 Historical Disciplinary Structures**

The debate between Paul Hirst (1974) and Phillip Phenix (1964) on what constitutes knowledge illustrates contemporary discussions in curriculum design and is pertinent to knowledge use in the Australian Curriculum: History. Phenix argues that the composition of knowledge is direct, propositional ('knowledge-that’) and procedural ('knowledge-how’) (Phenix, 1964), however, Hirst dismisses the distinction between direct and propositional knowledge. Propositional and procedural knowledge make up the characteristics of knowledge, which therefore has implications for discipline based pedagogy. This debate has informed Peter Lee’s ‘Philosophy of History’ (1983). For Lee the constituents of knowledge influenced the examination of
disciplinary thinking in history using two categories of concepts; first order concepts or substantive and second order concepts or procedural outlined below.

**Substantive Concepts**

History has its own language and terminology that allows us to access the past chronologically, spatially and socially to make sense of it. Historical substantive concepts focus on the subject content knowledge of history: the significant historical phenomena, its protagonists and themes (Lee, 1983; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008). These concepts can organise and locate the past through constructed narratives. Substantive concepts help students “understand ideas and concepts which emanate from the study of a historical topic as well as the factual details they are presented with, if they are to ‘transform’ the learning experience into knowledge and understanding” (Haydn, Arthur, Hunt, & Stephen, 2008, p. 52). How we think about, teach, organise and categorise these historical substantive concepts is important. Substantive terms can be organised into three groups: unique (Haenen & Schrijnemakers, 2000), organisational (Nichol, 2005) and thematic (Nichol, 2005; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008).

**Unique concepts**

Unique concepts apply singularly to specific people, places and events and only apply to one specific historical phenomenon (Haenen & Schrijnemakers, 2000; Nichol, 2005) e.g., Adolf Hitler, Nazi, Battle of Waterloo, World War I. They are terms that “derive their meaning from specific contexts” (Nichol, 2005) and provide the “building blocks” (Haenen & Schrijnemakers, 2000, p. 27) that students utilise in a specific historical inquiry to identify, describe, explain and illustrate understanding. Historians, history teachers and students use these dominant concepts to illuminate facts so that they become intelligible in constructing a significant narrative of the period in question (W. Walsh, 1951, p. 61).
Organisational concepts

Organisational concepts (Nichol, 2005) bring together and group a series of historical phenomena into periods that have intrinsic relationships and their grouping elaborates their historical meaning (Halldén, 1997; Hughes-Warrington, 2007; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008; W. H. Walsh, 1974). Walsh (1974) referred to them as colligatory concepts as they make “the past real and intelligible to us”. Organisational concepts take into account that similar historical events, actions and ideas do not take place in isolation but are part of a wider context. Organisational concepts describe and group these connected and coherent historical phenomena under a shared concept. When reconstructing the past these concepts make historical phenomena “intelligible or relevant in an explanation” (Halldén, 1997, p. 204). For example, the Industrial Revolution or Renaissance or Cold War are organisational concepts which tells us something about the context of the past and how historians have thought and written about them over time and therefore they “are not objectively existing entities in the past, but are names of types of stories we tell to understand the past” (Shaw, 2009, p. 16). According to Walsh (1974) colligatory concepts are determined by two conditions: firstly, they must be grounded in the evidence and not arbitrarily chosen, and secondly, they must illuminate the facts (Hughes-Warrington, 2007; W. H. Walsh, 1974).

Thematic

Thematic (Nichol, 2005; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008) or inclusive concepts (Haenen & Schrijnemakers, 2000) span and transcend different periods and time which can collect ideas that can be applied in multiple historical contexts, e.g. revolution, war, depression, freedoms and rights, monarchy, communism, etc. These are concepts that are not context bound like unique and organisational concepts. Superficially, they may appear not to be complex; however, they are abstract and have no fixed meaning from one historical context to another. Students can utilise thematic concepts in a range of historical inquiries that require application of analytical and evaluative heuristics. For example, student understanding of the word slavery requires understanding of
Procedural concepts of continuity and change. Slavery from early civilisation to 19th Century USA draws upon changing chronological, spatial and social frames that have influenced our understanding of this term.

Van Drie and Van Boxtel (2008) value substantive concepts; however, they acknowledge that they can be theoretically complex; abstract as well as too specific; and have no fixed meaning in time and place which results in presentism (imposing present day values on past historical phenomena). They are implicit in historical narratives that rely on a network of other substantive concepts that create coherent understanding. Historical substantive concepts often find expression in curriculum as core knowledge descriptions. It is often this content that raises political conjecture over what is included, omitted and how knowledge is represented. History curriculum can often be trapped by substantive knowledge and coverage of pre-determined and approved national narratives. An example of this was the ill-fated ‘Australian History Curriculum for Years 9 and 10’ (DEST, 2007). Alternatively, it is the substantive content that captures our curiosity about the past that sparks our inquiry. It is how we use and make meaningful the substantive content that is important.

**Procedural Concepts**

Procedural concepts are unique methods and procedures that give disciplinary structure (Bruner, 1960; Schwab, 1978; Shulman, 1987). They are the *knowledge-how* (P. Hirst, 1974; Phenix, 1964) of history. Van Drie and Van Boxtel (2008) refer to these as meta-concepts which are related to the “methods used by historians to investigate and describe historical processes and periods”. They are relational to the substantive as they explain ideas and active conceptual tools that provide understanding required in the *doing* of historical inquiry that enables historical construction (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Lee & Ashby, 2000; Lévesque, 2008). These procedural concepts enable students to move beyond lower order thinking of identify and describe knowledge and engage in higher order thinking skills such as analyse, synthesise, create and evaluate
knowledge (Anderson et al., 2001). Essentially, procedural concepts are knowledge-in-use structures that shape and guide disciplinary inquiry of history (VanSledright, 2004, 2009). These procedural concepts are foundational to historical thinking and reasoning. Procedural concepts include but are not exclusively: historical significance, evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, progress and decline, historical perspectives, interpretation, contextualization, and empathy. Their presence emerged in teaching pedagogy as a result of Bruner’s principles and found their expression in curriculum experimentation in the 1970s in the UK Schools History Project. Also, the work of Lévesque, Seixas, Van Drie and Van Boxtel and Wineburg have explored these concepts in developing models of historical thinking that is disciplined based pedagogy. They provide the theoretical framework for analysis of the Australian Curriculum: History. These models are further explored below.

**SECTION 2.3 Research on Teaching and Learning in History**

Throughout the 1960s school history in the United Kingdom was in rapid decline. In response to this the British Government funded a new history curriculum for pupils aged between 13 and 16 which focused on the nature of history and the needs of students. The Schools Council History 13-16 Project, (SHP) was established in 1972, which sought to provide an alternative curricular and pedagogical approach to traditional history. Its design was influenced by Bruner’s process of explicit teaching of the structures of the discipline, acknowledging “thinking it engenders is equally different” (Booth, 1994, p. 63) which sat at the core of the curriculum. The SHP focused on procedural concepts including judgments about historical significance, ideas about continuity and change, progress and decline, the application of evidence analysis and engagement of historical empathy. Denis Shemilt (1980), a member of the project team, evaluated the SHP in 1980, exploring the nature of historical enquiry indicating that the “working concepts of history are inseparable from the stuff-and-substance of the discipline” that support deeper historical thought. Shemilt evaluated students’ understanding of history around core procedural concepts of evidence, empathy, causation, change and continuity revealing that pupils’ construction and
application of complex historical concepts were “more elaborate, sophisticated, and productive ways than is typical of their peers following established courses” (Shemilt, 1980, p. 29). Flew (1989) describes this pedagogical approach as a “meta-history”. The SHP changed student perspectives of history from a knowledge orientated subject to a problem based discipline, advocated within an “evidence-based enquiry” as a means to making sense of the past (Shemilt, 1980, p. 87). The SHP rejected the Piagetian/Hallam view that historical understanding was too complex and abstract for children in the concrete operational developmental stage (Booth, 1983; Hallam, 1970, 1972). Shemilt’s evaluation study set the precedence for further research into historical thinking and provided the basis of future curriculum development that moved from traditional memory based history to one that engaged students in an inquiry process that actively utilised historical procedural concepts in the construction of “making sense of the human experience” (Shemilt, 1980, p. 16). Students can engage in complex and abstract historical concepts once its procedural and substantive concepts are made explicit to students during historical construction and meaning making (Ashby et al., 1997; Lévesque, 2008).

Despite the original intentions of SHP to engage in historical thinking, Dawson’s (1989) review of the evolution of “New History” throughout the 1980s critically highlights that what emerged was a “mismatch between the objectives and assessment on the one hand and syllabus and materials on the other. The former emphasised conceptual understanding, the latter the acquisition of information”. This resulted in a curricular review in 1985 making conceptual elements more explicit (Dawson, 1989, pp. 227-230). Interestingly, this mismatch could be attributed to what Flew (1989) believed that student conceptual understanding was dependent on teachers’ “meta-historical skills and insights which those trained only in traditional history certainly cannot be presumed to possess”. These critiques by Flew and Dawson of SHP provide insight into how an intended curriculum based on concepts did not align with the enacted curriculum. Also, it was accepted that the price to pay for New History limited the breadth of content that the curriculum could conceivably cover.
In the USA the challenge of teaching and learning of history traditionally bound by historical consciousness and a national narrative had posed challenges to the discipline. In 1996 the National Centre for History in Schools, University of California, funded by the U.S. Department of Education developed History Standards for grades 5 to 12. The History Standards were developed using an extensive criteria that drew on substantive and procedural concepts that give structure to the history discipline. Firstly, ‘Historical Understandings’ examined what students should know about history and was divided into two: World History Content Standards and US History Content Standards, and these in turn were broken into Eras for inquiry. Secondly, Historical Thinking Skills required students to be able to “evaluate evidence, develop comparative and causal analyses, interpret the historical record, and construct sound historical arguments and perspectives on which informed decisions in contemporary life can be based”. These skills are based on five types: Chronological thinking, Historical comprehension, Historical analysis and interpretation, Historical research, Historical issues analysis and decision making (National Center for Teaching History in Schools, 2005). The National Standards were not universally implemented or adopted due to the relative autonomy of school districts. They have, however, provided a foundation on which many school districts subsequently developed their own History Standards. An example of this was the Oakland Unified School District in California’s “Standards of Achievement” (Oakland Unified School District, 1999; Weintraub, 2000). Weintraub believed the National Standards was content focused whereas Oakland sought “to make the historical thinking standards the centre . . .integrate the discipline of history with the specific content to be taught”. At the core of their standards they identified and defined five broad categories of historical thinking, chronological and spatial thinking, use of evidence, multiple perspectives and diversity, interpretation and significance (Oakland Unified School District, 1999).
The Schools Council Project History 13-16, the USA History Standards and the Oakland District History Standards are good examples of an intended curriculum that focused not only on substantive content but engaged teachers in reflecting the procedural concepts of teaching history. They sought to engage students in historical thinking. Their critique provides an insight for analysis of the intended and enacted Australian Curriculum: History on how to make explicit the discipline’s structures and aligns the conceptual understandings with substantive knowledge. This places the models of historical thought at the forefront of curriculum and pedagogy and therefore should frame the design process.

**SECTION 2.4 Historical Thinking**

Dewey believed that “while all thinking results in knowledge; the value of knowledge is subordinate to its use in thinking” (Dewey, 1916). Classroom history demands "meaning over memory" (Stearns, 1994) that stimulates historical inquiry and curiosity. Lévesque argues that teachers adopt Bruner’s theory of making explicit the disciplines structure so that students see how history is constructed and “think critically about its content” (Lévesque, 2008, p. 17). Theorists have explored the pedagogical content knowledge of the discipline by using terms like: historical thinking (Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 2006; Stearns, Seixas, & Wineburg, 2000; Wineburg, 2001), historical reasoning (Van Dri & Van Boxtel, 2008, 2009) or historical literacy (Taylor & Young, 2003). They attempt to sign-post a pedagogical approach to teaching history that requires engagement in critical thinking on the substance of history through active application of procedural concepts. Therefore, historical thinking makes the process of knowledge construction explicit to students.

Historical thinking is complex, requiring students to negotiate between the familiar and unfamiliar and to become uneasy with the stories they tell about the past (Wineburg, 2001). Wineburg believes historical thinking is not a natural cognitive process as its goes against how we ordinarily think. Meaning making is more complex
than memorisation. Historical thinking requires student engagement with historical narrative by a process of inquiry whereby students reveal rather than retell history. Historical thinking concepts emphasize the active role of students in acquiring historical knowledge by constructing understanding through thinking about the past (Terwel, 1999; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985). The implications for a history curriculum based on disciplined-based theory is that it must connect students to the active nature of doing history (Barton & Levstik, 2004, p. 7). Lévesque (2008) believes historical thinking requires teachers to make students aware of how historical knowledge is constructed and “acquisition of such knowledge to understand the procedures employed to investigate its aspects and conflicting meanings” (p. 27) and students who think historically must “engage in analytic practices allowing them to study and question the competing historical accounts they encounter and ultimately to construct their own historical arguments and interpretations, using the agreed-on procedures, concepts, and standards of the discipline” (p. 171). The use of procedural concepts allows students to illustrate understanding of historical causation, processes of change and using and evaluating historical sources as evidence in developing a historical argument. The main models of historical thinking are outlined in Table 1 page 24.

Models of Historical Thinking

Wineburg’s (2001) Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts focused on the use of sources. It challenges teachers to guide students to read, analyse, write critically when evaluating primary and secondary sources, unpack points of view and situate events within an historical context. He suggests that students do not instinctively place historical sources in context, source them and corroborate them when reading documents, therefore the task is an unnatural act and needs to be explicitly taught to them (Wineburg, 1991a, 1991b, 1994, 1998, 2001). Rosenzweig and Wineburg (2008) suggest this can be achieved by using the four strategies below.
• **Sourcing:** This is an initial reflection and thinking about the content of source, its author and creation.

• **Contextualising:** This requires situating the document within its events, time and place and avoids the natural act of imposing presentism, viewing the past through the lens of the present.

• **Close Reading:** This requires students to carefully consider what the source is saying and the language used to say it. This requires re-reading sources; examining words used, language and contextual meaning of words/language used at the time.

• **Corroboration:** This is a strategy a student uses to inquire and question important details across multiple sources to establish historical agreements and disagreements.

(Rosenzweig & Wineburg, 2008; Wineburg, 2001)

Seixas (2006) declines to define historical thinking, rather he sees it as a process of progression; unpacking the term historical thinking with six structural and procedural benchmarks. It is important to note that Seixas does not see these elements as skills but "rather a set of underlying concepts that guide and shape the practice of history”(p. 1).

• **Establish historical significance:** This requires students to establish what is historically significant based on two criteria: events that have resulted in change and those that are revealing about enduring or emerging issues in history and contemporary life.

• **Use primary source evidence:** This requires students to construct knowledge about the past by finding, selecting, interpreting, and contextualising primary sources, not only in terms of information but sources must be read to determine their authorship, purpose, context and reliability to construct an original account of a historical event.
• **Identify continuity and change**: This provides a means to organise the complexity of historical phenomena by identifying and explaining the processes and rate of historical change and to make judgments about continuity.

• **Analyse cause and consequence**: This requires analysis of the agency that individuals and groups play in promoting, shaping, resisting change over long and short periods of time and multiple influences that create change and their intended and unintended consequences.

**Take historical perspectives**: This entails understanding the different political, social, economic and cultural contexts that shaped people’s lives and their actions, however without students’ imposition of presentism on historical phenomena.

• **Understand the moral dimensions of historical interpretations**: This provides the opportunity to learn from the past and provides insights into moral issues that affect implicitly and explicitly the present by attempting to understand perspectives and contexts of historical agents.

Lévesque (2008) builds on the work of Seixas with one notable distinction. Lévesque affirms at the heart of the history method are five essential questions: *What is important in the past? What changed? And What remained the same? Did things change for the better or worse? How do we make sense of the raw materials of the past? How can we understand predecessors who had different moral frameworks?* (Lévesque, 2008, p. 37). His procedural concepts of historical thinking are outlined below.

• **Historical significance**: This requires students to establish awareness of the social, political and cultural influences by establishing evaluative criteria. These criteria could be based on historians (importance, profundity, quantity, durability and relevance) or criteria based on collective and cultural memory (intimate interests, symbolic significance and contemporary lessons).
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<td>Historical Thinking</td>
<td>Components of Historical Reasoning</td>
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<td><strong>Seixas (2006)</strong></td>
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<td>Benchmarks of Historical Thinking</td>
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<td>Asks historical questions</td>
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<td>Contextualizes</td>
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<td>Makes use of substantive concepts</td>
<td>Makes use of meta-concepts of history</td>
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Table 1 Models of Historical Thinking or Historical Reasoning
• **Continuity and change**: They give meaning and coherence by sequencing the past. Chronological thinking therefore supports their logical, coherent and intelligible judgements and interpretations of historical change.

• **Progress and decline**: They demand evaluative judgements about the rate of historical change by using historian’s criteria of continuous application, equal importance and prudential relevance.

• **Evidence**: This requires the use of raw materials to makes sense of the past. Students need to be taught how to appropriately read and use historical evidence by developing research questions, collecting and selecting evidence, analysing evidence and developing interpretative answers about sources. Also, students need to assess the problems and limits of evidence that may affect its reliability and require external and internal criticism.

• **Historical empathy**: This seeks to make sense of the ways people felt at the time. This can be achieved on the basis of three connected concepts, historical imagination, historical contextualisation and moral judgement.

In contrast to Seixas and Lévesque’s research, Van Drie and Van Boxtel (2008) advocate a model of historical reasoning. Reasoning emphasizes the active role of students in acquiring knowledge by constructing understanding through activities in developing an argument (Terwel, 1999; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985). The purpose of history is to learn "to reason with facts and stories about the past and learning to create new coherent stories" (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008, p. 87). Historical reasoning denotes that "reasoning emphasizes the activity of students and the fact that when learning history, students not only acquire knowledge of the past, but also use this knowledge for interpreting phenomena from the past and the present" (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008, p. 88). Historical reasoning requires that knowledge is actively constructed and mediated by use of language and tools (heuristics) rather than passive story-telling. Van Drie and Van Boxtel define historical reasoning as "an activity in which a person organizes information about the past in order to describe, compare,
and/or explain historical phenomena" (p.87), therefore historical reasoning is an active construction of knowledge. This form of reasoning requires students to actively confront and interrogate historical knowledge and evidence using the methods of history to organise and present their arguments. Van Drie and Van Boxtel (2008) explore historical reasoning as an active process in historical inquiry that employs general reasoning skills as well as disciplinary specific skills. They propose a framework that contains six ‘Components of Historical Reasoning’ that describe progression in students’ reasoning and learning through utilisation of learning tasks and tools such as explanatory and evaluative questioning, essays, class discussions (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008, p. 89). Their ‘Components of Historical Reasoning’ are:

- **Asks historical questions:** This is an activity where students demonstrate the ability to ask, recognise and understand historical questions. Also, students need to be able to ask different types of questions: descriptive, evaluative, comparative, which demand higher and lower order thinking skills and the application of procedural concepts. Asking historical questions serves as “an engine for historical reasoning” (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008, p. 92)

- **Using sources:** This requires historical reasoning with sources not only for information but also demands evaluation of sources; their context, reliability, usefulness, trustworthiness, etc. These are central activities when asking a historical question in the inquiry process of developing a historical argument.

- **Contextualisation:** This requires students to situate historical phenomenon within a spatial and social context in order to describe, explain, compare, or evaluate it.

- **Argumentation:** This is a fundamental component and illuminates students reasoning which requires students putting forward a historical claim and grounding it in evidence and interpretations in supporting arguments.
• **Using substantive concepts**: This requires thoughtful and deliberate use of substantive concepts that name historical phenomena and organise historical contexts to support student descriptions, explanations and arguments.

• **Using meta-concepts**: requires the active use of methods used by historians to investigate and describe historical processes and periods such as change and causation.

**SECTION 2.5 Conclusion**

This literature review has sought to examine the theoretical and philosophical background to the approaches to teaching and learning in history. Lee’s (1983) examination of substantive and procedural concepts have influenced Seixas, Lévesque, Wineburg and Van Drie and Van Boxtel who are attempting to express explicitly a method of student inquiry that explains what is going on behind the curtains of historical construction. They share the need for a pedagogical method that requires students to be critical, creative and reflective on substantive historical knowledge and establish historical meaning and understanding by employing history’s own methods and procedures to understand history. Although, students cannot reason about the past if they do not have the substantive terms and language to access, discuss and explain the past, then their understanding is limited. It is a necessity for history curriculum to find a balance, as historical thinking only becomes meaningful with substantive content (Seixas, 2006, p. 2). Only together can substantive and procedural concepts actively engage students in inquiry and meaning making about the past. These discipline-based pedagogical models provide a theoretical framework in analysing the *Australian Curriculum: History*. Furthermore, they provide a lens to view the curriculum document which is outlined in the following chapters.
Chapter 3

Research Methodology

This research study aims to analyse and evaluate the pedagogical epistemology that shapes teaching and learning of historical thinking and how this is supported in the Australian Curriculum. Central to this analysis is understanding how history discipline-based structures are realised in the “intended curriculum” (Hjalmarson, 2008, p. 594). Analysing and evaluating the Australian Curriculum: History within quantitative and qualitative frameworks represents a construction of reality of already existing data and therefore is non-reactive (Bryman, 2004; Kirvin, Vialle, Harrington, & Okley, 2006, p. 91; Neumen, 2006; Rapley, 2007). This study of the Australian Curriculum is “research about policy” (Blackmore & Lauder, 2005, p. 100) and requires investigation into the process of curriculum design. It represents the construction of what historical knowledge, understanding and skills are essential for all young Australians to be entitled to learn. Creswell’s (2009) framework for research design was used to identify approaches required for this study. According to the framework, the research design can be constructed by:

1. Identifying a philosophical paradigm that fits the research best (Interpretative disciplined-based pedagogy).
2. Selecting strategies of inquiry (quantitative and qualitative).
3. Identifying appropriate research methods (Document content analysis).

SECTION 3.1 Methodology

The research philosophical approach is an interpretative disciplined based pedagogy. The study is an interpretative methodology as it emphasises a detailed reading and analysis of the Australian Curriculum: History to discover the meaning of
disciplinary based structures of historical inquiry found in the curriculum. Interpretive analysis of the curriculum focuses on the researcher’s interaction with the *Australian Curriculum: History* to understand the curriculum’s application of historical methods and procedures through accessing meanings it assigns them (Orlikowski & Robey, 1991). The study is discipline based as it emphasizes the central methods and procedures of the history discipline. The literature study in Chapter 2 provides in-depth review of the research basis of this discipline based pedagogy and therefore provides a lens through which to interpret the curriculum. The research model, therefore, is a deductive approach whereby data is compared with known literature of Lee (1993), Seixas (2006), Lévesque (2008) and Van Drie and Van Boxtel (2008). The research data tests the validity of the curriculum in supporting historical thinking. Through this process, the research inquiry and sub-questions were contemplated. These findings were based on the researcher’s interpretive analysis. Central to the research process is researcher reflexivity and “highly interactive nature of the investigator, concepts, data collection and analysis” (Altheide, 1987, p. 68). This process allowed historical substantive and procedural concepts to initially guide analysis while allowing others to emerge throughout the study. Moving reflexively between the literature, data collection and analysis supported increased researcher understanding of the relevance and context of use of substantive and procedural concepts in the curriculum.

**SECTION 3.2 Methods: Document Content Analysis**

The method of data collection entailed is document content analysis of the *Australian Curriculum: History*. Document analysis is an “integrated and conceptually informed method, procedure, and technique for locating, identifying, retrieving, and analysing documents for their relevance, significance and meaning” (Altheide, 1996, p. 2). It is a method of examining and analysing positioning of words, meanings, concepts, themes, content knowledge and skills in curriculum documents. The research analysis of the curriculum required evaluation “in such a way that empirical knowledge is produced and understanding is developed . . . In the process, the research should
strive for objectivity and sensitivity” (Bowen, 2009, p. 34). Document content analysis allowed for the discovery of solid descriptive information and constant conceptual comparative conversation between the *Australian Curriculum: History* and the literature. To this end, the research draws on and collects descriptive as well as numerical data on the use of substantive and procedural concepts in the curriculum (Altheide, 1987). The research integrated qualitative and quantitative data in the interpretation of the overall results.

Curriculum as a document “seeks to enrol us into specific ways of knowing, acting, being in and understanding our world; that taking the work of texts seriously is central to all thinking about contemporary institutions of social life” (Rapley, 2007, p. 123). This is particularly relevant as a curriculum reflects social, political and educational constructs. Rapley (2007) asserts that documents-in-use or in the case of this study documents intended-for-use raises questions about the interaction of documents in broader context of their enactment in the classroom. Document analysis enabled the researcher to identify the presence of concepts in the curriculum, place meaning within a context and allow for understanding to emerge through investigation (Altheide, 1996). Their analysis required a “critical eye” (Bowen, 2009, p. 33) that elicited “meaning, gain[ed] understanding and develop[ed] empirical knowledge” (Bowen, 2009, p. 27) so that the researcher could “discover insights” (Bowen, 2009, p. 29) about how the curriculum supports historical thinking for researcher, teacher and student.

**Sampling**

The sampling method was confined by the research question, therefore it was limited to the Australian Curriculum documentation as this referred to the relevant topic for investigative analysis. The *Australian Curriculum: History* version 1.1 released on the December 8th 2010. Subsequent versions 1.2, 2 and 3 have been released which have not impacted on this research analysis. Version 2 released on the 17th October
2011 included the revised and approved Achievement Standards, where these are analysed version 2 is used. Their revision and approval twelve months after the curriculum strands raises questions about the design process and problems with curriculum alignment. The curriculum documents provide an “emerging encounter” (Rapley, 2007, p. 97) with the conceptualisation of historical thinking under investigation. This required the researcher to extract concepts, methods and procedures that reflect historical thinking in the curriculum by “sampling on the basis of concepts that have proved theoretical relevance to the evolving theory”(Bowen, 2009, pp. 36-37). This was achieved by breaking down curriculum organisation into manageable pieces for analysis; illustrated in Tables 4-5.

**Australian Curriculum: History Organisation and Structure**

The Australian Curriculum: History is structured across four year groupings, each of which contains a particular substantive focus demonstrated by inquiry questions, overviews and depth studies (see Table 2). The curriculum is divided into two strands: Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand (Tables 2 & 3) and Historical Skills strand (Table 4). Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand describes the substantive concepts with an “emphasis on Australian history in its world history context” (ACARA, 2010b). These strands provide content descriptions at each level that set required knowledge and skills that teachers should teach and students should learn. Furthermore, each strand descriptor also contains content elaborations which aim only to illustrate and exemplify content and therefore is not prescribed content. The two strands are to be integrated in the teaching program so the “Knowledge and Understanding strand provides the contexts through which particular skills are to be developed” (ACARA, 2010b, p. 2).

The Years 7 to 10 Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand includes an ‘Overview’ and ‘Depth Studies’. The overviews intend to give a chronological, spatial and social overview of historical phenomena that are the focus of inquiry. In the
overview, there is a particular emphasis on illustrating and understanding patterns of change that place depth studies in context. The depth studies provide in some cases electives that allow the study of specific significant historical phenomena from within the period of inquiry (Table 2).

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<th>Australian Curriculum: History Knowledge and Understanding strand</th>
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<td><strong>Foundation – Year 2: Awareness of family history and community heritage</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Year 10</th>
<th>The Modern World and Australia</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Overview</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. World War II</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Rights and Freedoms (1945- the present)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. The globalising world</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Popular Culture 1954- present or The environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>movement 1960’s – present or Migration experiences 1945-</td>
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<td>present)</td>
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**Senior Years World history: the evaluation of sources and historical debates.**
(Yet to be published)

*Table 2 Australian Curriculum: History, Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand Scope and Sequence*  
*Foundation to Year 10*
The Australian Curriculum: History refers to the procedural concepts of historical thinking as ‘Historical Understandings’. The Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand aims to develop understanding by exploring key historical procedural concepts of evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, perspectives, empathy and contestability. In the Australian Curriculum the historical understandings are developed over a scope and sequence from Foundation to Year 10. This is illustrated in Table 3. Perspectives are introduced in Year 3 to challenge that history is unproblematic. From Years 7 to 10, evidence and contestability are added to “further develop student’s understanding of the nature of historical interpretation and argument” (ACARA, 2010b, p. 3). Table 4 illustrates the Historical Skills strand scope and sequence which aims to promote historical understanding through an inquiry approach by promoting skills of: chronology, terms and concepts; historical questions and research; analysis and use of sources; perspectives and interpretations; explanation and communication (ACARA, 2010b).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Historical Understandings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundation to Year 2</td>
<td>continuity and change, cause and effect and significance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years 3-6</td>
<td>continuity and change, cause and effect, significance and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 7-10</td>
<td>continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, perspectives, evidence and contestability</td>
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Table 3 Australian Curriculum: History Historical Understandings Scope and Sequence

The Australian Curriculum: History aims to promote a “inquiry based model of teaching . . . teacher-directed and student-centred learning, enabling students to pose and investigate questions with increasing initiative, self-direction and expertise” (ACARA, 2010a, p. 2). At each year level key inquiry questions provide a framework for development of historical knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, a Year 7 inquiry question is: How do we know about the Ancient Past? It is through the use of the methods and procedural concepts of historical inquiry that foundations of student understanding and communication of historical arguments can be formed.
## Australian Curriculum: History Historical Skills Strand Scope and Sequence Foundation to Year 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chronology, terms and concepts</th>
<th>Historical questions and research</th>
<th>Analysis and use of sources</th>
<th>Perspectives and interpretations</th>
<th>Explanation and communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>F-Year 2</strong></td>
<td>• Sequence familiar objects and events</td>
<td>• Pose questions about the past using sources provided</td>
<td>• Explore a range of sources about the past Identify and compare features of objects from the past and present</td>
<td>• Explore a point of view</td>
<td>• Develop a narrative about the past</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Distinguish between the past, present and future</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written, role play) and digital technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 3-4</strong></td>
<td>• Sequence historical people and events</td>
<td>• Pose a range of questions about the past</td>
<td>• Locate relevant information from sources provided</td>
<td>• Identify different points of view</td>
<td>• Develop historical texts, particularly narratives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use historical terms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5-6</td>
<td>Sequence historical people and events</td>
<td>Identify questions to inform an historical inquiry</td>
<td>Locate information related to inquiry questions in a range of sources</td>
<td>Identify points of view in the past and present</td>
<td>Develop historical texts, particularly narratives and descriptions, which incorporate source material</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use historical terms and concepts</td>
<td>Identify and locate a range of relevant sources</td>
<td>Compare information from a range of sources</td>
<td></td>
<td>Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 7/8</th>
<th>Sequence historical events and periods</th>
<th>Identify a range of questions about the past to inform a historical inquiry</th>
<th>Identify the origin and purpose of primary and secondary sources</th>
<th>Identify and describe points of view, attitudes and values in primary and secondary sources</th>
<th>Develop historical texts, particularly descriptions and explanations that use evidence from a range of sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use historical terms and concepts</td>
<td>Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods</td>
<td>Locate, select and use information from a range of sources as evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies</td>
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</table>
## Year 9/10

- Sequence events chronologically to demonstrate the relationship between events in different periods and places.
- Use historical terms and concepts.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 9/10</strong></td>
<td><strong>Identify and select different kinds of questions about the past to inform historical</strong></td>
<td><strong>Identify the origin, purpose and context of primary and secondary sources.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Evaluate and enhance these questions.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Identify and analyse different historical interpretations (including their own).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Evaluate the reliability and usefulness of primary and secondary sources.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Develop historical texts, particularly explanations and historical arguments that use evidence from a range of sources.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Select and use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 *Australian Curriculum: History Historical Skills strand Scope and Sequence Foundation to Year 10*
SECTION 3.3 Data Analysis

Using document content analysis, the curriculum was carefully examined to provide data about substantive and procedural concept types, frequency of use and context with which concepts were employed and contrasted with current literature on historical thinking to determine if the Australian Curriculum: History was consistent with literature research. The research process used Creswell’s Six-Step approach to data analysis and interpretation (Creswell, 2009, pp. 183-190).

Step 1: Organise and prepare data for analysis

The curriculum was organised and coded firstly as a whole curriculum including Rationale, Strand Descriptors, Elaborations and Achievement Standards. In data analysis this is referred to as Australian Curriculum: History. The curriculum was then broken down by strands so that it could easily be analysed using computer software NVivo to help organise, sort and code data using Holsti (1969) unit labels of ‘item unit’, ‘context unit’ and ‘single word unit’ (Holsti, 1969, pp. 116-119). The data organisation is set out in Table 5.

Prior to coding the Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand and Historical Skills strand required a “process of organising the material into chunks or segments of text before bringing meaning to information” (Creswell, 2009, p. 186) as illustrated in Table 5. The Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand and Historical Skills strand were broken down for coding including and excluding elaborations, the purpose of which was to reflect that elaborations are only to “illustrate and exemplify content and to assist teachers in developing a common understanding of the content description . . . not intended to be comprehensive content points that all students need to be taught” (ACARA, 2010b, p. 3). The elaborations are not compulsory and therefore, subject to possible disregard by teachers, whereas, strand descriptions are mandated historical knowledge and basis of ACARA’s students learning entitlement. It was decided that elaborations do provide some point of contrast to curricular aims and rationale and therefore would be analysed firstly as part of the whole curriculum and
then the curriculum would be analysed without elaborations. This would illuminate how fundamental elaborations are in supporting substantive and procedural concepts in the curriculum despite their incomplete nature. The context units are organised by strand descriptors. For example, “The causes and consequences of the Industrial Revolution, including an examination of the impact of major scientific and technological innovations” (ACARA, 2010a, p. 34). Single word units were based on coding categories of historical thinking. Using a single word units like ‘cause’ or ‘consequence’ is discrete, providing a clear boundary and easily identified for the purpose of content analysis within the curriculum (Bailey, 1994, pp. 308-310).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holsti (1969) Unit Labels for coding and analysis</th>
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</table>
| **Item Unit** | 1. *Australian Curriculum: History* (Whole); includes Rationale, Aims, Strand Descriptors, Elaborations and *Achievement Standards*
|                  | 2. *Historical Knowledge and Understanding* strand
|                  | 3. *Historical Knowledge and Understanding* strand excluding elaborations
|                  | 4. *Historical Skills* strand
|                  | 5. *Historical Skills* strand excluding elaborations
|                  | 6. *Achievement Standards*
| **Context Unit** | Strand Descriptors in Depth Studies
| **Single Word Unit** | Substantive Concepts
|                  | Procedural Concepts
|                  | (see Table 6)

Table 5 Unit Labels for coding and analysis

**Step 2: Reading through all data**

A read through, aimed to observe a “general sense” (Creswell, 2009, p. 185) of the data and emergent substantive and procedural concepts in the *Australian Curriculum: History*. Skimming, followed by close reading culminated in interpretative
analysis (Bowen, 2009) and reflectivity of the researcher. These initial observations of
the curriculum and theoretical foundations gave a sense of disconnect between the
substantive and procedural concepts examined in the literature review and the
curriculum aim of communicating the disciplinary structures of history. The procedural
ccepts are incorporated with the Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand
and Historical Skills strand. This generated an initial questioning of the explicit and
implicit nature of conceptual understandings in the curriculum and gave a general
sense that they were undermined by the volume of historical substantive content. This
initial observation was not unlike the experiences of School History Project in its early
days, 1972-1985 (Dawson, 1989).

**Step 3: Coding the data using NVivo**

An analysis of the Australian Curriculum: History required a method of examining and
analysing the positioning of words, meanings, concepts, themes and content
knowledge associated with historical thinking (Neumen, 2006). The Australian
Curriculum was open-coded using NVivo. Open coding was used as a tool when looking
at breaking down, disentangling data units into segments of single words or short
sequences of words for categorizing, examination, comparison and analysis of data
(Flick, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) in order to identify historical substantive and
procedural concepts. Holsti (1969) believes that the formulation of categories should
reflect the rationale of research questions (Holsti, 1969, p. 95). Coding categories were
determined both by historical understandings of the curriculum and concepts that
emerged from the literature study.

Coding of the data was from a “Start List of Codes” (Huberman & Miles, 1994) with
two parent codes, substantive and procedural concepts. Each parent code then
provided opportunities for sub-categorisation under child nodes. Substantive concepts
were analysed using the child nodes: unique (Haenen & Schrijnemakers, 2000),
organisational (Nichol, 2005) and thematic (Nichol, 2005; Van Drie & Van Boxtel,
2008). Whereas procedural concepts child nodes were set out by ACARA in the
curriculum and they also have their origins in the literature. In the process of data analysis further concepts emerged from the curriculum such as sources, impacts, consequences, progress and decline. These concepts are not explicit in the rationale of historical understandings; however, they are quite evident in the curriculum strand descriptors. This raised questions about the use of history’s own methods and procedures and the consistency of conceptual language in the curriculum. These nodes are represented in Table 6.

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<tr>
<td>Child Nodes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Unique</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Sources</td>
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<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Continuity and change</td>
<td>Impacts</td>
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<td>Organisational</td>
<td>Cause and effect</td>
<td>Consequences</td>
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<td>Significance</td>
<td>Progress and Decline</td>
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<td>Perspectives</td>
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<td>Empathy</td>
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<td>Contestability</td>
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</table>

Table 6 Coding Categories of Substantive and Procedural Concepts

Step 4: Using the coding process to generate descriptions for interpretation and analysis

Armed with analytical codes, document analysis sought to ‘mine’ the *Australian Curriculum: History* in search of specific data around historical thinking. This information was then analysed, statistically, to discern patterns and contexts so as to elicit meanings and interpretations. The analysis phase relied on four basic guidelines:

- Ask the data explicit questions about historical concepts
- Analyse data minutely
- Frequently interrupt coding to write theoretical notes
• Never assume analytical relevance of any traditional variable until data shows it to be relevant

(Strauss, 1987)

The questions asked of the data were:

1. What theoretical or philosophical groundings of substantive or procedural concepts are evident (implicitly or explicitly) in the Australian Curriculum: History?
2. What theoretical or philosophical groundings of substantive or procedural concepts are suggested by what is absent from the Australian Curriculum: History?

First, a system of enumeration whereby to record “the frequency with which each of these categories is observed in the documents studied” (Bailey, 1994, p. 305) was graphed. Second, a system of analysis of the “amount of space” (Bailey, 1994, p. 313) devoted to each category within a year level curriculum and individual strands was observed and graphed. Third, examining data for key words or phrases, e.g. cause, consequence, change, evidence that suggest theoretical orientations of historical thinking was gathered. Finally, this was followed by descriptive analysis of the contextual use of substantive and procedural concepts in the curriculum. Using categories like these for analysis requires a critical eye, seeking to develop empirical knowledge and elicit meaning from the investigation about how the curriculum supports historical thinking (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). In examining the Australian Curriculum: History, judgements were made as to the utility of these concepts.

Step 5: Representation of document analysis findings

Analysis of the curriculum sought to represent data both in graphical format and interpretative analysis of the context in which concepts emerged in the curriculum. The graphical format allowed for analysis of quantitative frequency in which concepts
emerged in the curriculum. Then the context and single word units of individual descriptors were analysed by examining key concepts that would suggest consistent theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of the curriculum. From this, patterns were identified and further analysed and evaluated.

**Step 6: Interpretation of the meaning of themes and descriptions**

Qualitative interpretative analysis sought to convey descriptive information for analysis on the conceptualisation and communication of historical thinking. From this judgements were made on the frequency and context in which concepts were used or absent from the curriculum. This contributed to the evaluation of the effectiveness of it in supporting historical thinking. Interpretation intended to explore implications for historical thinking for the implemented and experienced history curriculum (Hjalmarson, 2008). Also, it provides “a comparison of the findings with information gleaned from the literature or theories” (Creswell, 2009, p. 189) of historical thinking and aims to generate new questions around historical ‘pedagogical content knowledge’ (Shulman, 1987). An unintended product of this analysis was a new pedagogical model of historical reasoning that merges historical substantive and procedural knowledge with the methods of historical inquiry.

**SECTION 3.4 Trustworthiness and Rigour**

A important research challenge is to ensure rigour and trustworthiness (Flick, 2006) was maintained. Document analysis is often criticised as speculative and based on researcher intuition with the reader relying on trust of researcher interpretations of data to be accurate and legitimate. Qualitative document analysis must provide two key assurances of trustworthiness: firstly the process of evidence interpretation must be explicit, and secondly, access to data is provided for verification (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The challenge of minimizing researcher subjectivity on the curriculum documents, “the researcher, should make the process of analysis as rigorous and as transparent as possible” (Bowen, 2009, p. 38). Document analysis is a particular
interpretation as one seeks to convince readers of the strengths and limitations of the curriculum in achieving history’s own methods and procedures. This inquiry viewed the investigator as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis and therefore “the researcher/analyst relied on skills as well as intuition and filtered data through an interpretive lens” (Bowen, 2009, p. 36) of disciplined-based pedagogy. As Manheim et al (2002) point out, document analysis researchers “must rely on their ability to present a clear description, offer a convincing analysis, and make a strong argument for their interpretation to establish the value of their conclusions” (Manheim, Rich, & Willnat, 2002, p. 317). The Australian Curriculum: History reflects stable data. Interpretive analysis of the curriculum using document analysis provided specific levels of concept measurement and application. This lends itself to establishing rigour in the study by providing descriptions to convey findings. Furthermore, results of this study are confirmable as inferences drawn are traceable to data contained in the Australian Curriculum: History.

Limitations

According to Bowen (2009) limitations of document analysis of the curriculum are minimal. Its advantages of easy availability, cost effectiveness, lack of obtrusiveness, non-reactivity, stability, exactness and coverage outweigh its limitations of insufficient detail, low irretrievability and biased selectivity (Bowen, 2009, pp. 31-32). The Australian Curriculum: History is easily and freely available online. It could be argued that I have demonstrated some elements of reactivity as a result of the development process. For example, the strand descriptors were approved by MCEETYA in December 2010; however, the final draft of Achievement Standards was not approved until October 2011 with considerable modification and has therefore not been included in this analysis.
SECTION 3.5 Importance of the study

The Australian Curriculum: History will be implemented in 2013; therefore the significance of this study is timely and will provide grounding for further discussion and research on how the curriculum is enacted in teacher pedagogy and student historical understanding. These research findings provide a critique of the curriculum and areas of attention regarding discipline-based pedagogy and the use of substantive and procedural concepts. Therefore, this research is a significant critique with strong messages for policy-makers and has implications on any further curriculum review.

SECTION 3.6 Conclusion

An interpretative discipline based document analysis study of the Australian Curriculum: History is significant as it seeks to elaborate a conceptual understanding of historical thinking and how explicit, implicit or deficient they are in the intended curriculum. Fundamentally, the researcher sought to analyse a curriculum that explicitly and practically promotes historical thinking by facilitating historical meaning over memory (Stearns, 1994) and remains true to history’s “own methods and procedures” (ACARA, 2010a, p. 1). Research analysis of the curriculum in the following chapters highlights that the curriculum has not been consistent in achieving the aims set out in its own rationale.
“Historical knowledge is fundamental to understanding ourselves and others”

(ACARA, 2010b, p. 1).

Chapter 4

Analysis of Substantive Concepts in the Australian Curriculum: History

Every discipline has its own language and concepts that give meaning to its structure; however, this relationship between discipline and curriculum design can be problematic and challenging. This chapter focuses on the analysis of substantive concepts present in the curriculum. Curriculum is a social construct and, by recognising this, one must draw attention to what historical phenomena are selected and why (Lee, 1983). The substance of historical knowledge only becomes meaningful when we apply history’s “own methods and procedures” (ACARA, 2010b) that allow us to cultivate that curiosity and inspire our imagination. The ability to question, describe, synthesise, analyse, discuss and construct understanding of historical phenomena relies on substantive concepts and the application of procedural concepts (Lee, 1983; Lee & Ashby, 2000). These are grounded in the Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand of the curriculum.

By its nature, history curriculum chooses substantive content it sees as learning entitlement of students. This can be problematic when a curriculum is developed around core content. It risks a curriculum that views history as depository of historical content that can be mined and plundered for the purpose of student conceptual breadth (Lee, 1983). Also, historical substantive content may be chosen to support a sense of national consciousness and collective memory (Guyver, 2011b; Seixas, 2000,
2004; Taylor, 2004). Such grand narratives may influence curriculum and therefore undermine authentic student historical inquiry by negating the application of procedural concepts such as historical perspectives and interpretations. Lee (1983) also argues that students who do not grasp and understand the context and structure of substantive concepts risk historically impoverished understanding. Consequently, curriculum must attempt to place meaning and understanding on selected substantive concepts within appropriate historical contexts. The analysis in this chapter will centre on substantive concepts (Ashby et al., 1997; Lee, 1983; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008) contained in the Australian Curriculum’s Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand and Historical Skills strand. The following three questions frame analysis of substantive concepts within curriculum:

1. What theoretical or philosophical groundings of substantive concepts are evident (implicitly or explicitly) in the Australian Curriculum: History?

2. What theoretical or philosophical groundings of substantive concepts are suggested by what is absent from the Australian Curriculum: History?

3. What does the Australian Curriculum: History suggest (implicitly or explicitly) is the purpose of historical thinking?

Analysis of the curriculum requires reflection on the selection, category and context in which substantive concepts emerge. Substantive concepts are what Phenix (1964) called knowledge-about the discipline; forms of knowledge words we use to shape, organise and categorise information. The emerging challenge of the curriculum is that substantive concepts are often hidden and implicit in the curriculum documents, text books and teacher instruction, therefore student use and understanding of substantive concepts can be limited (Limón, 2002). Substantive concepts in the curriculum are important so “students develop: knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the past” (ACARA, 2010b) and overcome what Van Drie and Van Boxtel (2008) see as the challenges substantive concepts pose regarding their abstract, theoretical, limited and specificity of meaning.
Figure 1 illustrates the use of substantive and procedural concepts in the *Historical Knowledge and Understanding* strand including and excluding elaborations. Naturally, substantive historical concepts compose a significant volume of the *Australian Curriculum: History*, however, removal of the elaborations has quite a significant impact on the curriculum and procedural concepts. Figure 2 illustrates coding of substantive concepts in both strands including and excluding elaborations. The exclusion of elaborations illustrates significant decline in the use of substantive concepts which has implications for curricular coherence, historical literacy, depth and understanding. Their exclusion results in a curriculum that is substantially vague and general.

![Bar chart showing substantive and procedural concepts in the Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand including and excluding elaborations.](image-url)
SECTION 4.1 Findings and Discussion of Historical Substantive Concepts

The Australian Curriculum: History uses the all-consuming word *terms*, to define “a word or phrase used to describe abstract aspects or features of the past (for example colonisation, revolution, imperialism, democracy) and more specific features such as a pyramid, gladiator, temple, rock shelter” (ACARA, 2010b). The word *term* is a narrow definition and fails to elaborate the assortment of historical substantive concepts which seek to contextualise, characterise, shape, organize and categorise historical information and phenomena of historical content knowledge. Emerging out of the literature study substantive concepts can be categorised as unique (Haenen & Schrijnemakers, 2000), organisational (Nichol, 2005) and thematic (Nichol, 2005; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008). These substantiative concepts contextualize historical phenomena by empowering students with the language of history so that they can analyse and construct the past in a critically informed manner through the application of procedural concepts and historical skills.
The coding of *Australian Curriculum: History* used the categories, unique (Haenen & Schrijnemakers, 2000), organisational (Nichol, 2005) and thematic (Nichol, 2005; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008) (as illustrated in Figure 3) and extrapolated data that was analysed using document analysis to highlight the use of substantive concepts. Each category of substantive concept occupies a specific role in illuminating historical knowledge in the curriculum. Analysis of the *Historical Knowledge and Understanding* and *Historical Skills* strands with and without elaborations raises questions about the effectiveness of the curriculum when exploring historical content knowledge within the three categories of substantive concepts as illustrated in Figure 3. This raises a number of challenges; firstly, without elaborations, the skills are generic and secondly, skills are divorced from substantive content that gives meaning to historical inquiry. Substantive concepts are entirely absent from *Achievement Standards* which rely exclusively on procedural concepts and historical skills. This is a fundamental flaw in the curriculum design process. At the core of Seixas’ ‘Benchmarks of Historical Thinking’, procedural concepts only find meaning within the context of historical content. Therefore, analysing the curriculum using three categories of substantive concepts provides an interesting mode of research to analyse curricular use of knowledge.

![Figure 3 Unique, Thematic and Organisational substantive concepts in the Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand including and excluding elaborations](image)

52
**Unique Substantive Concepts:**

Unique substantive concepts define specific historical knowledge content terms that provide a context to distinctive historical phenomena, for example patricians and plebeians, Tokugawa Shogunate, First Fleet, Immigration Restriction Act 1901, Gallipoli, Day of Mourning 1938, etc. Unique concepts in the curriculum should provide the “building blocks” (Haenen & Schrijnemakers, 2000, p. 27) that frame student historical knowledge and understanding by giving them the historical concepts, language and terms to establish chronology, context, source analysis and engage in historical thinking, reasoning and inquiry.

Figure 4 illustrates the number of references of unique concepts in the *Knowledge and Understanding* strand decreased significantly from 578 to 208 coded references when elaborations are removed. The implications of limiting the use of unique concepts results in individual teachers and school curriculum becoming responsible for specific conceptual knowledge that frame their implemented curriculum. This impacts on the procedural concepts whereby teachers and students judge historical significance by the criteria “interesting to me”. Seixas (2006) challenges this criteria stating the selection and analysis of historical significance must be based on the following criteria: resulting in change and revealing emerging issues in history and contemporary life or important stages in humanity. Furthermore, in the *Historical Skills* strand, unique substantive concepts were referenced exclusively in the elaborations with 49 references. This potentially results in an historical inquiry that is not set within historical context and limits the effective analysis of procedural concepts such as change over time.
Figure 4 Unique concepts in the Historical Knowledge and Understanding Strand with and without elaborations, Historical Skills strand and Achievement Standards

The Year 7 curriculum focuses on “The Ancient World” and will be used to exemplify contextual use of unique concepts. What immediately becomes apparent is inconsistent use of unique concepts from one elective to another within depth studies “The Mediterranean World” and “The Asian World”. An example of this is in the Rome elective. The strand descriptors use unique concepts like ‘patricians and plebeians’ to describe key groups in ancient Roman society. Whereas the Egypt elective uses terms such as nobility, bureaucracy and women, also in the China and India depth study electives it uses terms kings, scholars, craftsmen, women, which are more thematic and can be applied to a number of historical contexts. Although the India depth study elaborations uses unique concepts of “social structure of India, including the role of Brahmins – priests, teachers; Kshatriyas – kings, warriors; Vaishyas – merchants, artisans; Shudras – labourers, peasants”. This inconsistency is problematic when unique concepts describing social structure of Ancient Rome are explicit in strand description whereas in India they are relegated to an elaboration and not at all present in Egypt and China. Unique concepts such as Pharaoh, Nomarch, Visor, Emperor, Si
Kong, etc. are absent. This lack of use of unique concepts is concerning as it limits the curriculum coherence and effectiveness in communicating historical knowledge. In addition, it has implications for how teachers and students may view western and eastern societies. Fundamentally, the lack of understanding of the importance of unique concepts in historical inquiry undermines the curriculum and highlights faults of incoherence in its design.

Research findings on unique concepts when elaborations are excluded in Years 5 and 6 curriculums also reflect their limited use. In Year 5, the following were the only unique concepts: Australian colonies, gold rushes, Eureka Stockade, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, convict or colonial settlement in Australia. In Year 6, the curriculum was limited to three unique substantive concepts: Australia’s Federation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and World War II. Similarly, in Year 9 there is a limited use of unique concepts, which is particularly surprising when you have historically rich depth studies units such as the Industrial Revolution, Making a Nation and World War I. The Knowledge and Understanding strand descriptors in Year 9 identify the following unique concepts: French Revolution and American independence, transatlantic slave trade, convict transportation, free settlers on the frontier in Australia, Darwinism, Chartism, European settlers in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Legislation 1901-1914, including the Harvester Judgment, pensions, and Immigration Restriction Act, World War I, Gallipoli campaign, conscription debate and the Anzac legend. When elaborations are included, there is a greater use of unique concepts; however, it still remains substantially deficient.

It is apparent that the curriculum fails to acknowledge the purpose of unique concepts as building blocks of historical inquiry and understanding. One can only hypothesise about inconsistent employment of unique substantive concepts in the curriculum. The curriculum reflects poor structural design failing to highlight the importance of unique substantive concepts in developing historical literacy, language
and comprehension. Consequently, the curriculum provides a foundation for historical substantive knowledge that is limited and general, which will have implications for teaching and learning of history.

**Organisational Substantive Concepts**

Substantive concepts that are organisational refer to the grouping together of historical phenomena by chronologically linking intrinsic historical events into periods that share common historical significance. The importance of substantive organisational concepts in the curriculum allows for elaboration of historical narratives and interpretations, grounded in historical sources, and their purpose is to illuminate facts in a meaningful and organised manner (Hughes-Warrington, 2007; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008; W. H. Walsh, 1974), for example The Ancient World, Medieval Europe, Renaissance Italy, Industrial Revolution and World War II. The curriculum strand descriptions should aim to provide organisational concepts that are connected and coherent for both teacher and students. This supports their inquiry and historical construction of understanding of the past so that they can be organised within a chronological, spatial and social context.

Analysis of organisational substantive concepts in the *Australian Curriculum: History*, are mostly employed in the *Knowledge and Understanding* strand descriptors (Figure 5). They are not overly compromised once elaborations are removed; however, inconsistent use within the curriculum structure is problematic. They were almost exclusively absent from the curriculum from Foundation to Year 6 and are mostly found in Year 7-10 strand descriptions. In Foundation to Year 6 curriculum, the use of organisational concepts are limited to terms like “eighteenth century” and “twentieth century” within the framing context of an inquiry question in Year 6. For example “How did Australian society change throughout the twentieth century?” In Year 7 “The Ancient World” it uses the organisational concept “Ancient” to organise a coherent historical inquiry which include Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt. The
organisational concept “Ancient” is never used as a descriptive prefix to India and China depth studies, whereas it uses the concept “Imperial China”. In Year 8 organisational concepts used include: The Vikings (c.790 – c.1066), Medieval Europe (c.590 – c.1500) and Renaissance Italy (c.1400 – c.1600). These organisational concepts are used to title depth studies rather than to organise knowledge into intelligible connected and coherent inquires that allow for the application of procedural concepts. Unlike Year 7 and Year 8, Year 9 curriculum relies more on thematic concepts such as “Making the Nation” “Progressive ideas and movements 1750-1918” with limited use of organisational terms such as “The Industrial Revolution (1750 – 1914)”, “Nineteenth Century”, “Twentieth century” and “World War 1”. This further highlights the inconsistency in the use of organisational concepts in the curriculum depth studies.

Organisational concepts are also used in the Knowledge and Understanding strand to name depth studies rather than in engaging students in historical understanding that is grounded in the application of historical procedural concepts that are fundamental in inquiry. The National Center for History in Schools UCLA, emphasises chronological thinking which focuses students’ reasoning on examining relationships.
between historical phenomena to explain causality (National Center for Teaching History in Schools, 2005). For example, the procedural concepts cause and effect utilise organisational concepts that make the historical knowledge relevant and intelligible so that students can order events, ideas and people that illuminate their explanation and communication of causation from within a historical context. Organisational concepts in the curriculum should seek to make concepts like change and significance comprehensible.

**Thematic Substantive Concepts**

Thematic substantive concepts (Haenen & Schrijnemakers, 2000) are concepts that span and transcend different periods and time, which can collect ideas that can be applied in multiple historical contexts, e.g. revolution, war, depression, freedoms and monarchy. Thematic concepts, therefore, are quite abstract in the curriculum and problematic in their use as they “are given meaning in the context of related concepts within a conceptual network” (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008, p. 100). Once again, the curriculum utilised thematic concepts, in an extremely abstract and historically unconnected structure. Figure 6 illustrates there is not a large decline in the use of thematic concepts unlike unique concepts. This reaffirms that the curriculum is reliant on these concepts that are not grounded within a historical context.

The Year 3 to 6 curricular focus is based on thematic concepts that develops “awareness of justice and fair play . . . democratic concepts and rights, and the diversity of Australian society” (ACARA, 2010b, p. 4). A good example of a thematic concept here is “Democracy”. When this concept is analysed in the curriculum it exclusively appears within an extremely narrow context of the development of Australian democracy. In Year 4, students examine democracy to describe impacts of the “Eureka Stockade on the development of democracy”. In Year 6, students are to explore “experiences of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal people and/or Torres Strait Islanders, migrants, and women”
(ACARA, 2010b). In Year 9, students are required to investigate “key events and ideas in the development of Australian self-government and democracy, including women’s voting rights” (ACARA, 2010b). This one thematic concept requires a wealth of historical inquiry beyond continental Australia. To truly appreciate and generate awareness of democracy as a historical thematic concept, inquiry must acknowledge that it collects a range of historical characteristics and attributes since the time of ancient civilisations; furthermore, the concept requires evaluation as it has changed over time. The curriculum provides an extremely weak conceptual understanding of democracy as a thematic concept. Furthermore, it limits student analysis of democracy using procedural concepts to evaluate how it changed over time.

Figure 6 Thematic concepts in the Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand with and without elaborations, Skills Strand and Achievement Standards

In Year 7, the overriding thematic concept features ancient societies and civilisations. There is a deliberate and organised approach to examine this concept spatially and socially across depth studies and within electives. The following thematic concepts help elaborate the main overarching concept of civilisations: society, physical
features, law and religion, beliefs, values and practices, everyday life, warfare, death and funerary customs, contacts and conflicts, expansion of trade, colonisation and war and significant individuals. Thematic concepts are only made meaningful and intelligible when used in the context of unique concepts. This ensures consistent application of both substantive and procedural concepts across the Year 7 curriculum and ensures consistency in what teachers teach and students learn despite the historical context of the depth study. It allows for comparison of civilisations, which enable analysis of procedural concepts. Unfortunately, this consistent approach to thematic concepts in Year 7 is not maintained in Years 8 and 9.

There is continuity and extension of thematic concepts of civilisation and societies in the first two depth studies in Year 8, ‘The Western and Islamic World’ (Vikings, Medieval Europe, Ottoman Empire and The Renaissance) and ‘The Asia Pacific World’ (Angkor/Khmer Empire, Shogunate Japan, Polynesian Expansion). Across these two depth studies, however, there is inconsistent use of thematic concepts, for example depth study one focuses on social, cultural, economic, political and cultural achievements and significant individuals. In depth study two ‘The Asia Pacific World’, there is no examination of the thematic concept of significant people. This once again reflects poor curriculum design whereby depth studies Angkor/Khmer Empire, Shogunate Japan or The Polynesian expansion across the Pacific, are not inquired using the same criteria of significant people. Furthermore, there is more of a focus on an environmental theme applied to the units on ‘The Asia Pacific World’ but not to ‘The Western and Islamic World’. The lack of a knowledge and understanding descriptor on significant people and the focus on an environmental theme may have implications for student perspectives and interpretations of the Asian region. The third depth study, ‘Expanding Contacts’, focuses more on the themes of expansion, contact and conquest, which is particularly evident in the ‘Mongol Expansion’ and ‘Spanish Conquest of the Americas’ electives. The third elective in this depth study, ‘Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa’, however, lacks comparable thematic conceptual links with alternative electives in this depth study. This raises questions and challenges
conceptual consistency of both substantive and procedural concepts of electives within a depth study.

Year 9 and 10 depth studies are organised around broad thematic concepts like ‘Progressive ideas’, ‘Movements of people’, ‘Rights and freedoms’, ‘Popular culture’, ‘The environment movement’ and ‘Migration experiences’. These thematic concepts tend to be self-contained with the depth studies titles as the organising concept; however, they are not organisational concepts, as they are generic and applicable to any historical context. The Year 9 depth study elective options in ‘Making a Better World?’ also provide quite different substantive conceptual knowledge, which has implications for the application of procedural concepts. For example, the ‘Industrial Revolution’ and ‘Movement of peoples’ depth studies focus on change and impacts whereas ‘Progressive Ideas’ depth study focus on cause and impacts. Similarly, there is no overriding thematic concept that links elective options in Australian and Asia depth studies. This fundamentally undermines consistency of the teaching and learning program and has implications for alignment with Achievement Standards. The lack of shared thematic concepts within a depth study has resulted in the application of different procedural concepts between elective choices within the same depth study. This undermines general historical conceptual understanding in the curriculum (this will be elaborated on in the next chapter). There is a need for thematic conceptual consistency within and across depth study electives. The lack of this consistency has implications for procedural conceptual understanding and what teachers teach and students learn from class to class and school to school.

SECTION 4.2 Conclusion

The quality and effectiveness of history curriculum can be compromised by predetermined grand narratives dictated by substantive knowledge and coverage of predetermined national narratives which often degenerates into an implemented and experienced curriculum that is based on memorisation of facts, dates and names (J.
Hirst, 2008; Taylor, 2004, 2008). Taylor (2008) and Hirst (2008) argue this was the case regarding the 2006 Australian History Summit and rejection of the Guide to the Teaching of Australian history in Years 9 and 10 (DEST, 2007). The research analysis suggests that the Knowledge and Understanding strand and Historical Skill strand (including and excluding elaborations) are not consistent or coherent in their use of unique, organisational and substantive concepts. Substantive concepts are compromised once elaborations are excluded, resulting in a curriculum content that is general and limited. Their use lacks deliberate, structured or organised approach to historical context in the curriculum design irrespective of electives chosen within a depth study. This is problematic as application of procedural concepts only becomes meaningful with substantive knowledge. Despite the limited nature of elaborations as they stand currently in the curriculum, analysis including elaborations highlights that they do serve a purpose in unpacking substantive knowledge and illuminating their relationship with procedural concepts. Each descriptor needs explicit elaborations which would flesh out substantive knowledge and how they may be applied to the procedural concepts. The significance of historical substantive concepts is fundamental in understanding historical chronology and context; furthermore, students cannot reason about the past if they do not have substantive terms and language to question, inquire, access, discuss and explain the past. It is a necessity for any history curriculum to find a balance that allows students to discover the historical knowledge and its language to know and access the past as well as procedural concepts that allow them to investigate and inquire about the past.
Analysis of Procedural Concepts in the Australian Curriculum: History

SECTION 5.1 Introduction

The history curriculum design must be grounded in structures by applying “discipline-bound concepts” (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008, p. 99). The Australian Curriculum: History aims and rationale focuses on disciplinary structures of history and affirms that it has its “own methods and procedures . . . It is interpretative by nature, promotes debate and encourages thinking” (ACARA, 2010b, p. 1). At the core of this rationale students are required to “know history and practise it” (National Curriculum Board, 2008, p. 7). Students must develop historical skills that “guide and shape the practice of the discipline” (National Curriculum Board, 2008, p. 7). The Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand aims to develop student historical understanding by using historical concepts of “evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy, significance and contestability” (ACARA, 2010b, p. 1). These understandings are procedural concepts and are grounded in the literature of Lee (1983, 2000), Seixas (2004, 2006 and 2009), Lévesque (2008) and Van Drie and Van Boxtel (2008 and 2009).

The rationale of the curriculum implies links between substantive concepts by applying historical methods and procedures requiring students to do history through a disciplined inquiry based model that places skills of “historical questions and research;
the analysis and use of sources; perspectives and interpretations; comprehension and communication” (ACARA, 2010a, p. 2). These allow students to construct historical understanding and meaning by applying historical understandings (procedural) to historical substantive concepts. Peter Stearns proposes historical thinking concepts engage students in historical “meaning over memory” (Stearns, 1994, 1998; Stearns et al., 2000). Without their application, history education becomes knowledge acquisition and memorisation of dates and places.

The research on procedural conceptual knowledge in history education is quite established. Lee (1993, 2000) elaborated on the Phenix/Hirst debate by applying it to the disciplinary structures of history organising it around the substantive and procedural. Procedural conceptual analysis of the Australian Curriculum: History is central to evaluating student historical understanding and therefore a valuable contribution in underpinning curriculum development. Peter Seixas’ (2006) development of ‘Benchmarks of Historical Thinking’ has been adapted by ACARA in the Australian Curriculum design by the removal of the verb from procedural concepts. The application of the verb to the concept illustrates the active nature of student learning when they engage in the concept. For example Seixas’ (2006) ‘analyse causes and consequence’ becomes cause and effect in Australian Curriculum: History. Removing the verb from the concept removes the agency of the concept, therefore depriving procedural concepts of their constructivist nature and the active method when applying concepts. This is counter-intuitive to the historical inquiry process and will be further elaborated and discussed below.

The analysis of procedural concepts in the curriculum represented in Figure 1, (Chapter 4) illustrates the limited and weak representation of procedural concepts in the curriculum. Like substantive concepts, these strand descriptors were analysed including and excluding elaborations to highlight the use and application of these concepts once elaborations were removed. This has been illustrated in Figure 7. It is quite evident from Figure 7 a similar challenge to the effectiveness of the curriculum
emerges once the curriculum is analysed by strand and excluding elaborations. The discipline’s procedures become incoherent and severely compromised once elaborations are removed and the procedural links between concepts and skills are lost. Despite the explicit prominence of these concepts in the rationale of the Australian Curriculum, the implicit nature of their employment in strand descriptors and elaborations compromises them. The concepts that give meaning and structure to the history discipline and its inquiry nature are compromised by the curriculum design. They have become overwhelmed by content, for example, “Viking conquests and relationships with subject peoples, including the perspectives of monks, changes in the way of life of the English, and the Norman invasion”. This will impact on how teachers teach the curriculum, what students learn in historical inquiry and to what extent there is student historical understanding. Each historical understanding will be analysed individually, to illustrate frequency and context of use to interpret and judge the effectiveness of the Australian Curriculum in supporting historical thinking through the application of historical procedural concepts. The following questions are asked of the curriculum to illuminate historical procedural concepts:

1. What theoretical or philosophical groundings of historical procedural concepts are evident (implicitly or explicitly) in the Australian Curriculum: History?
2. What theoretical or philosophical groundings of historical procedural concepts are suggested by what is absent from the Australian Curriculum: History?
3. What does the Australian Curriculum: History suggest (implicitly or explicitly) is the purpose of historical thinking?
Historical procedural concepts represented in the Australian Curriculum: History (whole), Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand including and excluding elaborations, Historical Skills strand including and excluding elaborations and Achievement Standards. * Achievement Standards are in draft format.
SECTION 5.2 Findings and Discussion of Historical Understandings

Evidence

The Australian Curriculum: History defines evidence as “the information obtained from sources that is valuable for a particular inquiry . . . Evidence can be used to help construct a historical narrative, to support a hypothesis or to prove or disprove a conclusion” (ACARA, 2010b). This simple definition is in fact quite problematic, Seixas (2006) states there is a distinction between reading a source for information and reading a source for evidence, and each requires different strategies. A failure to distinguish this and elaborate it will result in the curriculum becoming the source of ‘historical truth’, one interpretation and construct of the past which can be naively accepted by students and ultimately results in memory history.

Students must learn to read sources differently; exegesis of sources does not only involve the skills of reading for information or finding proof or evidence for an argument, but demands “close reading” (Rosenzweig & Wineburg, 2008). Husbands (1993) observes that historical sources “are not in themselves ‘history,’ or ‘the past,’ but they provide the basis for constructing historical knowledge”. Students analyse the meaning of words chosen in the context of the time it was written, extract their own thinking about the past and evaluate trustworthiness of sources. In the process of contextualisation and corroboration, comparing and contrasting these multiple accounts, historians and students start to build an understanding of what happened in the past and why (Rosenzweig & Wineburg, 2008). Students are required to think critically about sources by finding, collecting, selecting, interpreting, asking questions, contextualising, evaluating and criticising sources to reveal their historical meaning. The use of sources requires students to struggle with the problematic nature of historical study, hindsight, memory, individual values and time which all can influence the construct of source evidence and its reliability.
Figure 8 illustrates the compromised nature of the application of the concept of evidence once elaborations are removed from strand descriptors with only ten references in the curriculum. This is counter-productive to authentic historical inquiry that is based on source analysis. Figure 9 illustrates there is greater use of the concept of source than there is evidence. Seixas (2006) refers to this as “use primary source evidence” and Van Drie and Van Boxtel (2008) refer to “use of sources”. The loss of the verb to use here creates a pedagogical disconnect in understanding that in historical inquiry, sources are used as evidence to support arguments. The Historical Skills strand attempts to make connections between sources and evidence: “Develop historical texts, particularly explanations and historical arguments that use evidence from a range of sources”. The inconsistent application is a fault of curriculum design where a lack of understanding of the purpose of sources as evidence in historical inquiry and where the methods and procedures are segregated.

Despite evidence being used as a core historical concept in developing historical understanding its use in the Knowledge and Understanding strand is minimal with only six references (Figure 8). It is used in Year 7 overview and depth study ‘Investigating the Past’. The overview seeks to explore a range of evidence to prove the ‘Out of Africa’ theory and human migration; the evidence for the emergence and establishment of ancient societies (including art, iconography, writing tools and pottery); discussing the evolving nature of the evidence in this period, which shows increasingly sophisticated forms of technology; identifying sources of evidence for the emergence of organised states; and the evidence for contact between these societies.
Figure 8 Procedural concept of evidence present in the Australian Curriculum: History

Figure 9 Procedural concepts of evidence and source in the Australian Curriculum: History.
The Year 7 Depth Study ‘Investigating the Past’ seeks to engage students with methods of historical inquiry. It would be expected at its core is the active use of sources of evidence that represents the doing of history. It requires students to examine a range of sources and methods used in historical investigation. One must question why such a depth study exists. Students have been engaged in historical investigation using sources of evidence in the curriculum organisation Foundation to Year 6. The curricular focus is inquiry; therefore, all depth studies require investigating the past. A cynic might suggest that this depth study teaches the method of historical inquiry and the rest of the curriculum teaching and learning can get back to facts and dates! The only other reference to sources or evidence in the Knowledge and Understanding strand descriptors is in Year 9 where students investigate “the changing nature of the sources that provide a record of life in this period, such as paintings, travellers’ journals and the development of photography and film by 1918”. It is quite apparent the concept of evidence is not a prominent concept in the teaching of the Historical Knowledge and Understanding strand.

The research analysis of the strands including elaborations highlights the compromised nature of evidence as a procedural concept. For example, in the Year 7 depth study on Ancient Greece one strand descriptor describes social structure as ’Roles of key groups in Athenian and/or Spartan society (such as citizens, women, slaves), including the influence of law and religion; however, elaboration of this descriptor requires “examining evidence of the social structure of Athenian or Spartan society (for example the roles of citizens, women, slaves in Athenian society and the roles of Spartiates, Perioikoi and Helots in Spartan society)”. The problem here is the concept evidence is disconnected from the substance of the strand descriptor and relegated to an elaboration of content. If the intent of the descriptor is to engage with evidence it should be explicit in the compulsory part of the curriculum. If the curriculum is to be truly inquiry based founded on history’s own concepts, the strand descriptor could read “students examine the roles of key groups of the social structure of Athenian and Spartan societies including evidence of their influence on law and
religion”. This descriptor connects the substantive content with historical investigative analysis of evidence to draw conclusions about social structure in Ancient Greece. Also, the strand descriptor on Ancient Roman beliefs states “The significant beliefs, values and practices of the ancient Romans, with a particular emphasis on ONE of the following areas: everyday life, warfare, or death and funerary customs”, this lacks the use of evidence based inquiry. Once again the elaboration emphasises the use of the concept when investigating the “significant beliefs associated with daily life (for example the evidence of household religion) and practices (for example the use of public amenities such as baths, and the forms of entertainment in theatres and amphitheatres)”. There is a disconnection between substantive and procedural concepts. This is a curricular flaw that is repeated in a number of depth studies and contexts particularly at Years 7 and 8. The concept is better elaborated in the Historical Skills strand, however, this highlights the concept is disconnected from the understandings in the curriculum.

In the Historical Skills strand the concept evidence is better placed; however, there are still inconsistencies particularly in the conceptual differences between source and evidence. Figure 9 illustrates frequent use of the concept in the curriculum. This also demonstrates the importance of the concept source in historical investigation. In Year 2, the elaborations of the historical skill ‘analyse and use sources’ illustrates the confusion and lack of clarity of the concepts source and evidence. It suggests that these terms are interchangeable: “locating historical evidence of the local community including signs of the past in the present (for example place and street names, monuments, built and non-built historical landmarks) and examining sources such as photographs, newspapers, stories and maps to learn about the past”. This demonstrates poor conceptual understanding of historical procedures and reflects incoherency in the curriculum’s concepts and organisation. One locates historical sources of the local community and examines these sources as evidence to learn about the past. Sources only become evidence based on views, interpretations and perspectives in establishing an historical opinion or argument. The skill of source
analysis aims to provide new evidence about historical phenomena that is under investigation when constructing student understanding.

In Year 3, this skill is elaborated as “analysing a range of sources (for example photographs, maps, oral histories) to locate information about the people, places and events in their community’s present and past”. In Year 5, the purpose of the skill elaboration is more focused, “on examining two sources of evidence to identify similarities and/or differences, and describing what they reveal about the past”. Note the use of “sources of evidence” here. In the Year 5 skill ‘Explanation and Communication’, confusion over the concept of evidence and source recurs. The skill descriptor states, “Develop historical texts, particularly narratives and descriptions, which incorporate source material” and its elaboration “using sources to develop narratives.” The problem here is at the stage when students are explaining and communicating historical knowledge and understanding they are using historical sources as evidence to communicate that understanding. The lack of clarity about conceptual differences in the early years is problematic as it could lead to inevitable corruption of knowledge and understanding. A reason why there is confusion around the use of the concept of evidence and source in Foundation to Year 6 is that the curriculum structure scope and sequence of the concept of evidence is only applied from Year 7 onwards. This goes against Bruner’s (1960) belief that students need to constantly reconnect with disciplinary structures through a spiral curriculum. This undermines achieving historical understanding from Foundation to Year 6. There is no justification for not introducing students to the concept of sources of evidence where primary students use sources to explain their historical understandings of the past.

In contrast, the Year 7 to 10 Historical Skills strand begins to clarify this confusion over the distinctive conceptual application of source and evidence. In Years 7 and 8 the historical skill of ‘Analysis and use sources’ establishes a clear difference by requiring students to “locate, select and use information from a range of sources as evidence” with the elaborations backing up the distinction by “identifying information within a
source that can be used as evidence to support an interpretation” and “describing the social structure of the ancient society, using evidence from sources such as artwork and written accounts”. The skill ‘explanation and communication’ also establishes a distinction: “develop historical texts, particularly descriptions and explanations that use evidence from a range of sources”. In Year 9 and 10 the skill strands this is further developed and established; “process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument” and “Develop historical texts, particularly explanations and historical arguments that use evidence from a range of sources”.

What is evident from analysis of the concept evidence is that it fails to capture the active nature of the concept and falls into the trap of confusion over concepts such as source. This is also a result of compartmentalising the understanding from the skills resulting in a disjointed curriculum. Lévesque (2008) argues the challenge for teachers is to open students’ eyes to the reality that “knowledge the past as being a result of human constructs based on the critical use of evidence” (2008, p. 138). Students should engage in historical thinking on the same basis, “rather than reading texts in unproblematic ways, critical engagement with source material can position students to experience subject disciplines directly….students adopt the role of the historian” (Whitehouse, 2005, p. 83). Rouet et al (1996) make distinctions about reasoning with and about source documents. Reasoning with sources requires students to use source information when inquiry about the past and reasoning about source documents consist of active student evaluation of the nature and reliability of sources (contextualisation, sourcing and corroboration) (Rouet, Britt, & Perfetti, 1996). Students should be able to critically engage and evaluate source material which “can position students to experience the discipline directly” (Zajda & Whitehouse, 2009, p. 955) by applying the skills of historians. The value of evidence and its use to solve problems, answer questions and engage in thinking, are important to any study or argument when one seeks to reconstruct the past, establish historical meaning and significance. A core objective and learning entitlement of the Australian Curriculum
seeks to engage students in “deep thinking” (MCEETYA, 2008), however, this is not successfully achieved as that requires students to critically analyse and evaluate sources. The concept and skill of using evidence remains deficient in the curriculum as it remains more about plundering sources for information, requiring lower order comprehension (identify, describe and explain). As a result sources will go uncriticised and unquestioned.

The concept evidence would be better understood in the curriculum by using a verb to establish its agency as both a concept and as a skill. Students examine sources for use as evidence within contextual historical knowledge. Examining sources requires students to firstly, identify the type, origin, content features and establish context. Secondly, students use of evidence implies an evaluative aspect of a source; its purpose, corroboration and reliability so that sources can be used (or disregarded) to support historical arguments (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008, 2009).

**Continuity and Change**

The Australian Curriculum: History defines continuity and change thus “aspects of the past that remained the same over certain periods of time are referred to as continuities. Continuity and change are evident in any given period of time and concepts such as progress and decline may be used to evaluate continuity and change” (ACARA, 2010b). Once again this definition is extremely unclear and actually explains the concept of change by using another historical concept, “progress and decline”, to define it. The curricular definition drops Seixas’ active use of the verb “identify continuity and change”. According to Stearns (1998), understanding historical change over time is the core purpose of the discipline that influences a multifaceted and multilayered inquiry of our human structures. The concept of change over time and continuity in times of change over time help make sense of the past by organising and sequencing the complexity of past significant events to give historical inquiry structure
and coherence to student’s descriptions (Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 2006; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008).

Shemilt’s (1980) research noted that student conceptual understanding of change can be episodic in relation to different historical phenomena. Students do not contemplate or appreciate the nature and direction of change as a continuous process. Students will understand change, continuities, progress and decline as episodic because the curriculum design itself is episodic moving from depth study to depth study with the overview as a limited thread to tie it together. Also, students need to be able to evaluate rates and speeds of change. Van Drie and Van Boxtel (2008) argue that “studying changes also raises questions about how change came about, whether it came about gradually or suddenly, as well as questions about the impact of changes and continuity or discontinuity” (Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008, p. 102). The curriculum must elaborate attributes of change and continuity and illustrate evaluative criteria. Lévesque (2008) values criteria that included continuous application, equal importance and prudential relevance that will allow students to examine and judge progress and decline within and across historical inquiries.

Analysis of the curricular use of the concept of change in the whole curriculum is represented in Figure 10. The concept is used 117 times altogether, however, when analysed only in the strand descriptors it is employed 67 times. Alarmingly, once elaborations are removed from strands (Knowledge and Understanding strand 43 times and Historical Skills strand 0 times) there is a further decline in usage. The concept loses significant prominence in the curriculum and is overwhelmed by content knowledge. Once again, the exclusion of the rationale and elaborations highlights the problematic nature of their exclusion in understanding the use of these concepts. There is greater use of the concept of change, 67 references in the Knowledge and Understanding strand and Skills strand (43 excluding elaborations) than the concept of continuity with eight references (seven excluding elaborations). Despite these concepts being relational the concept continuity needs to be more explicit if students
are to effectively evaluate change and continuities over time and the criteria to help students evaluate this.

![Figure 10: Procedural concepts continuity and change in the Australian Curriculum: History](image)

The use of these concepts within the context of the curriculum manifests in many inquiry questions which help illustrate the analytical nature of this pair of procedural concepts. This is a good start to engaging in the concepts and places it the forefront of teaching and learning. For example, ‘How did colonial settlement change the environment?’ (Year 5); or ‘How did the nature of global conflict change during the twentieth century?’ (Year 10).

Interestingly, concepts of change and continuity are not utilised in Year 4 and Year 6. They are mentioned in the Year 7 overview, but, never applied in any depth studies. In Year 8, ‘The Western and Islamic World’, only the 2 of the 4 electives, ‘The Vikings’
and ‘Medieval Europe’ use the concept of change in their descriptors. The concept is absent from ‘Ottoman Empire’ and more bizarrely it is absent from ‘Renaissance Italy’. The idea of not inquiring about the Renaissance from the concept of cultural change is somewhat remarkable. Similarly, in the depth studies ‘Asia-Pacific World’ and ‘Expanding Contacts’ the concept of change is evident in only two of three electives, ‘Angkor/Khmer Empire’ and ‘The Spanish Conquest of the Americas’. The inconsistent use of a core historical concept change highlights a key problem. If a Year 8 teacher chooses the following depth study elective sequence, students would not engage or use the concept of change: Renaissance Italy (c.1400-1600), Shogunate Japan (c.794-1867) and Mongol Expansion (c.1206-c.1368). This is a problem, particularly when Achievement Standards expects students to “explain patterns of change and continuity over time”.

Where the concept of change is used, it is applied effectively in Year 8. The Viking depth study requires students to inquire about “changes in the way of life of the English, and Norman invasion” and in Medieval Europe, “significant developments and/or cultural achievements, such as changing relations between Islam and the West”. In one of the very few occasions the relational concepts of continuity and change are applied is in Year 8 Medieval Europe whereby students are to inquire into “continuity and change in society in ONE of the following areas: crime and punishment; military and defence systems; towns, cities and commerce”. Also, in the Year 8 curriculum the historical skill of Chronology, Terms and Concepts, the elaboration highlights the concept’s application as “placing historical events in sequence in order to identify broader patterns of continuity and change”.

In Year 9 and 10 there is a better balance in the use of concepts continuity and change. There are some exceptions which should highlight the concept of change but fail to. These are ‘Progressive ideas and movements (1790-1918)’, ideas should be fundamental to the agency of change and the Australian history unit ‘Making a nation’. The Year 10 curriculum is most consistent in addressing this core concept in each of its
depth studies strand descriptors and follows it up with elaborations: ‘World War II’, ‘Rights and Freedoms’ and ‘The globalising world’. The Year 10 curriculum examines the “changing role of women” in WW II; in Freedoms and Rights the “Methods used by civil rights activists to achieve change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples” and Popular culture “The changing nature of the music, film and television industry in Australia during the post-war period . . . Australia’s contribution to international popular culture (music, film, television, sport) and changing beliefs and values that have influenced the Australian way of life”, Australia’s Migration, “The impact of changing government policies on Australia’s migration patterns, including abolition of the White Australia Policy, ‘Populate or Perish’...The contribution of migration to Australia’s changing identity as a nation and to its international relationships” (ACARA, 2010b).

The concept of progress and decline requires students to make “evaluative judgement to assess these changes as for better or worse” (Lévesque, 2008, p. 92). The concepts of progress and decline are relational to continuity and change and should not be confused as the same. They are ‘oppositional and successional . . . oppositional concepts of equal rank’ (Koselleck, 2002, p. 219). The curriculum subverts progress and decline as an attribute of continuity and change. Concepts of progress and decline are fundamentally important in understanding direction and rate of change in historical inquiry. They require deep thinking that is evaluative in nature. These concepts though mentioned as a defining attribute to continuity and change are only minimally present in the curriculum design, evident 4 times (figure 11). The concept of progress is vital and could be imbedded into the curriculum to engage students in deeper thought. The concept of decline is used to judge the collapse of Anghor/Khmer civilisations and Shogunate Japan. This is quite limited and the concepts could easily be applied in Year 7 Ancient Civilisations or in Year 9 Industrial Revolution or Progressive Ideas depth studies and even in the Year 10 depth study ‘Rights and Freedoms’. According to Lévesque (2008), the quest for freedom is closely related to ideas of progress. Students need to evaluate and challenge notions that things get better over
time. Students must engage in evaluative concepts of progress and decline by use of evaluative criteria that allow for critical analysis of change in history. Lévesque (2008) applies three standards to engaging students in these concepts: first, students must understand the chronology of a historical phenomenon; second, students should be presented with case studies showing the value of progress and decline and allow for discussion on interpretations and perspectives and finally students must understand how to judge the past in terms of concepts that are relevant to the past (Lévesque, 2008, pp. 108-110). Fundamental to historical inquiry is identifying significant changes in history that have contributed to human progress or decline.

A key argument, here, then is more explicit links between overviews and depth studies so that depth studies do not become episodic and that analysis of change and rate of change become apparent in student understanding. The overview does not necessarily have to be taught as something discreet or at the introduction of the study; however, there should be an explicit summative unit that ties student historical understanding to conceptual analysis of their learning. Students could engage in processes of mapping and tracking (analysis) of historical change; evaluating rates of change; underlining continuity or discontinuity with the past; and reflecting themes and patterns that emerge from the past and how these connect to another point in the past or present and moves forward into the future. The curriculum is not consistent with this and is unclear how to apply the concept pedagogically. The curriculum, teaching and learning would be better served if the application of historical concepts were explicit and made more active by being explained as Identify and explain continuity and change and Evaluate progress and decline. This would allow students to examine chronological thinking by identifying where change happens and evaluate rates and direction of that change by developing arguments that evaluate human progress and decline.
Figure 11 Procedural concepts continuity and change and progress and decline in the Australian Curriculum: History

Cause and effect

The Australian Curriculum: History defines cause as a “range of reasons for an historical event or development (including influences of particular motives, values and attitudes)” (ACARA, 2010b). Once again the curriculum has adapted Seixas (2006) by dropping the verb to analyse, therefore, losing the analytical agency of the concept. Causation is used in historical inquiry to identify long and short term chains of events and developments over time that lead to historical change. The concept of causation is a complex concept in engaging students; therefore, it is paramount that it is clearly communicated in the curriculum so that students can maintain ownership of the historical inquiry. Lee (1998) explains the complexity for student thinking about causation is ‘counter intuitive’ to them. For students, often the last cause or trigger is the most important e.g. the most significant cause to WWI is the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. According to Seixas (2006) the central role of this concept
in historical explanation is the ‘agency’ by which people, movements, events and ideas “play in promoting, shaping, and resisting change” (p. 6). Seixas argues the agent of causation does so in contexts that impose constraints and limitations (e.g. natural environment) and that causes have intended and unintended consequences. Furthermore, there are types of causes such as economic, political, social, cultural, technological and ideological. The research indicates that students find it difficult to use multiple causes and different types of causes to explain historical change as well as understanding cause and consequence can at times be simultaneous (Carretero, Lopez-Manjon, & Jacott, 1997; Halldén, 1997; Shemilt, 1980; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008). In curriculum design it is important that there is clarity and precision about what the aim of student understanding of causation is to be; reasons why an event happened; highlight causes from a narrative; make links and connections between causes; organise causes into categories; distinguish long (trends) and short term (triggers) causes; and order causes in a hierarchy of importance (Chambers, 2006).

The Australian curriculum is limited in its use of the concept of causation. Figure 12 illustrates there is a greater emphasis in evaluating effects (impacts and consequences) in the curriculum than there is on identifying, describing and explaining historical causation with only six references to causation in the Knowledge and Understanding and Skills strand. In the Foundation to Year 6 there is no examination of causation, despite the rationale sequencing it from Foundation. How are students supposed to meet Achievement Standards if they are not exposed to the concept in the strand descriptors? In Year 5 Achievement Standard “students identify the causes and effects of change” and in Year 6 students are to “identify change and continuity and describe the causes and effects of change”. The first use of the concept emerges in the Year 8 inquiry question, “What were the causes and effects of contact between societies in this period?” In strand descriptors of Year 8 it is limited to examining causes of the Black Death. In Year 9 and Year 10 the concept is limited to “An overview of the causes of World War 1 and the reasons why men enlisted to fight in the war” (Year 9) and “An overview of the causes and course of World War II” (Year 10). An “overview” is limited
to identification rather than evaluation of the significant causes of World War I. The curriculum fails to illuminate the concept to students and may reinforce counter-intuitive understanding of causation in students’ historical understanding. Furthermore, it limits the effectiveness of students’ evaluation of what caused change.

Figure 12 Procedural concepts of cause and effect in the Australian Curriculum: History

The relational concept of cause in the curriculum is the concept of effect as “the range of outcomes or consequences (both intended and unintended)” (ACARA, 2010b). It is peculiar here that the curriculum design adopts the concept effect over the generally accepted historical term consequence in historical thinking (Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 2006; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008). The use of the term effect does not reflect the discipline of history; rather the term is scientific in origin. The term may have been chosen to have consistent language across disciplines of English, mathematics, science and history. This is misdirected as the purpose of the Australian Curriculum is to be discipline based. Also, the concept of historical consequence may be perceived to have negative connotations. The term impact also reflects scientific connotations. Figure 13
illustrates further confusion where the concept impact supersedes the curricular accepted concept of effect. This at best may be mere semantics using interchangeable synonyms of effect, consequence and impact and at worse, poor coherency in curricular writing. Irrespective of why, it does illustrate further the lack of a shared understanding of concepts and the need for consistent language and application of their use in the curriculum. This undermines teaching and learning, for example “The impact of World War II, with a particular emphasis on the Australian home front, including changing roles of women and use of wartime government controls (conscription, manpower controls, rationing and censorship)”. The Year 2 descriptor, “The impact of changing technology on people’s lives”, would be more appropriate to use the concept consequence whereby there is a focus on the changes which technology has brought to people’s lives. Year 4 provides a good example of the use of three concepts of effect, impact and consequence and highlights conceptual inconsistency across one year level. Students are required to investigate:

- What was the nature and consequence of contact between Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples and early traders, explorers and settlers?;
- The journey(s) of AT LEAST ONE world navigator, explorer or trader up to the late eighteenth century, including their contacts with other societies and any impacts;
- The nature of contact between Aboriginal people and/or Torres Strait Islanders and others, for example, the Macassans and the Europeans, and the effects of these interactions on, for example families and the environment;
- The impact of a significant development or event on a colony.

The three descriptors in Year 4 are investigating the nature of contact and conflict on different historical contexts; however, the use of these concepts lacks consistency. This will inevitably cause confusion. The interchange between these terms is evident throughout the curriculum and particularly in Years 8 and 9. Student achievement of
historical understanding would be better served if there was consistent language when concepts of cause and effect are used in the curriculum to focus student inquiry.

![Figure 13 Procedural concepts of effect, impacts and consequences in the Australian Curriculum: History](image)

The Year 10 compulsory unit ‘Rights and freedoms’ fails to use concepts of cause and effect to investigate the civil rights movements of the 1950s and 1960s in the USA and Australia. This seems bizarre as it fails to acknowledge the significant period of change that was the 1960s and how the American Civil Rights movement had an effect on other civil rights movements globally, particularly in the Indigenous Australian context. The curriculum prefers to use the term “influence”, which fails to understand the evaluative nature of historical inquiry by investigating the extent of the influencing effects that the American Civil Rights movement had on other civil rights movements.

The curriculum needs to be clear on conceptual aspects and attributes of effects and possible confusion it creates when alternative terms are used. Students need to be able to identify, describe, explain and analyse causation, as well as evaluate the extent
consequences of the historical phenomena have caused change. The concept of cause and effect in the curriculum fails to truly engage students in the higher order analytical and evaluative thinking. Rather, the curriculum focused on mere comprehension of concepts. This is extremely limited historical understanding. The concept would be better served in the curriculum as being expressed as explain and analyse cause and consequence. This would engage students in both lower order identify, describe and explain as well as the higher order analysis in the application of historical concepts.

**Significance**

The concept of historical significance is the one concept that is prevalent in the *Australian Curriculum: History* (Figure 14). The curriculum defines the concept of significance as “the importance that is assigned to particular aspects of the past . . . examination of the principles behind the selection of what should be investigated and remembered and involves consideration of questions” (ACARA, 2010b). Although this definition seems to capture the multifaceted and evaluative dimensions of historical significance, it would however, fail to realise it in the curricular strands. As was the case with previous procedural concepts it reduces Seixas’ “establish historical significance” to just *significance*, thereby removing the active student judgment making. To claim a historical phenomenon is significant for historical investigation is a “claim that implies an evaluative judgment on particular aspects of the past” (Lévesque, 2008, p. 43). If history is the reconstruction of the past, key questions for students become who were the significant people, events and ideas that are worthy of investigation. Seixas (2007) believes that students who do not think and reflect on historical significance may simply take what is presented to them by others to be significant. Bradshaw (2006) suggests that most of the procedural concepts are utilised during a historical significance enquiry (Bradshaw, 2006) e.g. significant effects of the Industrial Revolution on society. It enables students to examine why historians may hold different interpretations about what has been significant. Debate about significance requires students to move beyond substantive knowledge and toward evaluation of historical phenomena by asking questions, using sources, assessing
change, etc. The ability to establish historical significance is reliant on being able to classify, examine and analyse pieces of historical evidence and explain their connection to a certain theme, idea, event, or place and evaluate their contribution to change.

The complexities of historical significance are not easy to transfer from the discipline to the classroom and therefore its application can be problematic. Often school history has evaluated historical significance in terms of memory of intimate interests (family history that allows people to connect to the past) as evident in Foundation to Year 3; symbolic significance (national collective and patriotic history) as evident in Years 4 to Year 6 and contemporary lessons (conceptualizing the present by using events for simple historical analogies) in Years 7-10 (Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 2006, 2009; Shemilt, 2000; Wineburg, 2001). The challenge for the curriculum is to allow students to critically evaluate historical phenomena on the basis that it resulted in change and is it revealing about the past on emerging and enduring issues of human development (Seixas, 2006).

For historians, teachers, and students, evaluating historical significance requires them to “ask questions” about significance (ACARA, 2010b; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008, 2009). How is this identification of significance made and on what basis? How do these events and individuals connect to larger themes and ideas? By asking students to question significance, teachers engage them in the engine of historical thinking that achieves understanding. These questions require students to move beyond facts to evaluation of narratives, evidence and perspectives. These styles of questioning are essential questions in evaluating significance in historical thinking. A thoughtful response to these questions requires that students grapple with problems of identifying, explaining and evaluating an event or individual’s historical significance. By asking these questions, students can begin to achieve an understanding of historical significance by evaluation based on establishing historical criteria. Students must pose the question, “What makes an event historically significant?” The Year 3 curriculum has focused on the evaluative nature of the concept with the inquiry questions, “How
and why do people choose to remember significant events of the past?” with curricular elaborations by “discussing their origins and significance . . . comparing the significance of national days in different countries . . . investigating the origins and significance of international celebrations or commemorations”. Table 7 provides some examples of inquiry questions in the curriculum.

![Significance](image)

**Figure 14** Procedural concepts of historical significance in the *Australian Curriculum: History*
Use of the historical procedural concept of significance in the Australian Curriculum: History Inquiry questions

- How and why do people choose to remember significant events of the past?” (Year 3)
- What were the significant events and who were the significant people that shaped Australian colonies? (Year 5)
- What contribution have significant individuals and groups made to the development of Australian society? (Year 6)
- Which significant people, groups and ideas from this period have influenced the world today? (Year 8)
- What was the origin, development, significance and long-term impact of imperialism in this period? What was the significance of World War I? (Year 9)
- How was Australian society affected by other significant global events and changes in this period? (Year 10)

Table 7 Concept of Significance in Inquiry Questions in the Australian Curriculum: History

Despite the prevalence of significance in the curriculum represented in Figure 14, its contextual use is not evaluative in nature. For evaluation of historical significance to be successful as a procedural concept in the curriculum it requires more than listing important historical content; rather, students should be encouraged to design and articulate shared criteria to evaluate the concept of historical significance as they determine what makes such events significant. It is inadequate thinking for students to justify historical significance as “It is significant because I am interested in it”. Academic historians have evaluated significance on the basis of importance, profundity, quantity, durability and relevance (Lévesque, 2008; National Curriculum Board, 2009; Partington, 1980); or remarkable, remembered, resonant, resulting in change and revealing (Counsell, 2004). Cercadillo categorised the criteria of significance as contemporary, causal, patterns of change, symbolic, revelatory and present (Cercadillo, 2006). The curriculum application of historical significance should require students to develop such criteria so that they appreciate aspects of the past are “not only filtered through contemporary eyes but also as signifying what these particular pasts now mean to contemporary actors” (Lévesque, 2008, p. 51). This requires higher order “deep thinking” (MCEETYA, 2008).
In Year 7 the concept is applied equally to depth studies electives and within the same context, significant beliefs and significant individuals. The curricular application of the concept of significance seems to be focused on listing, identifying and selecting of significant personal stories, individuals, places, buildings, sites, landmarks, events and beliefs. The concept is not framed to allow for the application of the evaluative nature of the concept. Why is x significant? And why was x chosen as significant? The strand descriptor in Year 7 Ancient Rome states, “The role of a significant individual in ancient Rome’s history such as Julius Caesar or Augustus” sets the criteria of who is significant in Ancient Rome, i.e. Emperors. The strand descriptor would engage students in higher order thinking if it stated “Evaluate which Emperor was the most significant and why”. Similarly in Year 8 depth studies ‘The Western and Islamic worlds’ the concept is applied consistently to significant developments and significant individuals. In Year 10 a strand descriptor on ‘Rights and freedoms’ states “The significance of the following for the civil rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: 1962 right to vote federally; 1967 Referendum; Reconciliation; Mabo decision; Bringing Them Home Report (the Stolen Generations), the Apology”. The strand has identified the significant events and reduced evaluation to the selection of one of the following. The strand should be as follows: evaluate to what extent events, ideas, individuals significantly contributed to the improvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ civil rights.

The application of significance in historical inquiry is more complex than listing and identifying key people, places and events. The curriculum does not allow for the implementation of the evaluative nature of significance and fails to engage students in active discussions about the concept by creating evaluative criteria and asking questions about the historical context. The concept of significance requires evaluative judgements about historical phenomena and the extent to which it causes change. Fundamentally, judging historical significance involves a decision making process, deciding on criteria for assessment, justifying selection and coming to a consensus on
criteria to evaluate historical phenomena. The conceptual procedure in the Australian Curriculum fails to illuminate the characteristics of the concept. It would be better served as establish and evaluate historical significance as it returns the concept to an active process of historical construction. Student evaluation of historical significance enhances student understanding of historical procedural concepts.

**Perspectives**

The Australian Curriculum defines the concept perspectives as “a point of view from which historical events, problems and issues can be analysed, e.g. a gender perspective (either masculine or feminine) of the past. The way that events are seen in the present may be different to how people viewed them in the past. This means that historical knowledge depends on considering the perspectives of people in the past” (ACARA, 2010b). Achieving historical understanding of perspectives is a challenging task for students. It requires engagement with different political, social, economic, and cultural contexts that shape and mould historical phenomena under investigation. Building on source analysis, historical inquiry requires the ability to identify, describe, explain and analyse different points of view, values and attitudes of different people in historical sources. The purpose is to engage students in understanding the “role of human agency in historical events and developments” (ACARA, 2010a), particularly different points of view as a consequence of past experiences and a myriad of historical voices, e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples or women’s perspectives. This allows students to critically challenge sources or received versions of historical narratives. Sexias (2006) refers to the concept as “taking a historical perspective” as a cognitive act of understanding dimensions that influence the past. At the core of Wineburg’s (2001) work “Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts” is his belief that trying to establish understanding of historical perspective is challenging and unnatural in student cognition. Understanding the past requires students to struggle with multiple perspectives of historical actors, recognise and avoid imposing presentism on evidence and place perspectives within a historical context (Seixas, 2006). Teaching students for understanding of historical perspectives needs to be
deliberate and targeted. The students need to come to a realisation that there can be a diverse range of perspectives from a range of people associated with a single historical phenomenon. This is a key to historical inquiry and understanding.

In the Australian Curriculum: History, perspectives are identified as a core historical understanding. Figure 15 illustrates there are only two references to perspectives in the Historical knowledge and Understanding Strand. Unlike the other concepts which are mostly found in the Knowledge and Understanding strand, the concept of ‘perspective’ is almost entirely found in the Historical Skill strand “Perspectives and interpretations” and in the elaborations of this skill with 21 references. In the Historical Skills strand the specific skill of “Perspectives and interpretations” holds a dominant place in the scope and sequence of skills from Foundation to Year 10 (Table 8).

Figure 15 Procedural concept of historical perspectives in the Australian Curriculum: History
The historical skill of “Perspectives and interpretations” has the potential to create confusion and fails to highlight the distinctive nature of both these concepts. Historical interpretations encourage students to become aware of the way history is constructed and may be interpreted differently. This allows students to avoid imposing ‘one version’ of history. McAleavy (1993) makes the point that “an interpretation of history is a conscious reflection on the past and not the ideas and attitudes of participants in past events”. Historical interpretations are distinctive as they are a reconstruction of the past whereby historians use sources of evidence to justify their historical argument. Understanding historical interpretations requires a skilful application of historiography: that historians have a particular political world view, location, access to new evidence and the social, political, cultural and economic lenses they apply to their inquiry. This requires a very different skill set to identifying, describing and analysing historical perspectives of those who witnessed the historical phenomena that a student may inquire about.

When analysing the use of perspectives in the Knowledge and Understanding strand it becomes apparent that this concept is quite absent. It only encourages teachers to look at historical perspectives in two strand descriptors. The Year 8 elective depth study on Vikings, students are required to inquire about “Viking conquests and
relationships with subject peoples, including the perspectives of monks, changes in the way of life of the English, and the Norman invasion”. The second reference to historical perspectives is found in Year 9 elective depth study, Asia and the World. Students must examine the “significance of ONE key event that involved the Asian society and European power(s), including different perspectives of the event at the time”. The limited use of taking perspectives in the Knowledge and Understanding strand is extremely problematic, reinforcing throughout the curriculum there is only one version of the past. It is imperative for the curriculum to reflect an awareness that the varieties of historical perspectives provide the contextual substantive knowledge that is fundamental to historical inquiry.

The historical concept and skill of perspectives and interpretations would be better served as being utilised as recognise historical perspectives and evaluate historical interpretations ( historiography). Differentiating between perspectives and interpretations signals they are not the same. This would highlight the distinctiveness of these historical methods and procedures. Students recognise that other people have views, attitudes, values and motivations that may be different to people in the past as well as those today. Evaluating historical interpretation is a progression of recognition of perspectives because historical interpretations by those who investigate and inquire about the past come to an understanding about the past that is filtered through a lens shaped by their methods of inquiry, questions they ask and values. Students must come to an awareness that historians do not always agree and historical debate and contestability is fundamental to historical inquiry.

**Contestability**

The curriculum defines that contestability “occurs when particular interpretations about the past are open to debate, for example, as a result of a lack of evidence or different perspectives” (ACARA, 2010b). Contested historical debates are a fundamental part of historical thinking. Students’ develop an understanding that there
is not ‘one version’ of the past and historians can have a variety of contentions and do not always agree, e.g. as recent debates regarding the black armband view (Taylor, 2004). The idea of examining contestability must be approached with caution and sensitivity. Student analysis of contested debates should avoid suggestions that the discipline is a mass of uncertainty with regard to accuracy of historical perspectives and interpretations. Teachers should aim to examine those historical debates that are open to a myriad of interpretations and must be placed in context (Taylor & Young, 2003).

The inclusion of contestability in the curriculum is welcomed: It encourages students to think deeply and discuss contested historical phenomena. Despite the Australian Curriculum highlighting contestability as a core understanding it is barely used in strand descriptors. The concept is extensively referenced in the curriculum rationale and introductory rationale at each year level of the curriculum, illustrated in Figure 16. However, contestability only emerges once in the Historical Skills strand elaboration for Year 9 ‘Chronology, terms and concepts’ which requires the discussion of “contestability of particular historical terms such as ‘settlement’, ‘invasion’ and ‘colonisation’ in the context of Australia’s history”. This very limited reference to contestability across the whole curriculum is extremely problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, if contestability is considered of value to student historical understanding then the concept needs to be more explicit in strand descriptors and not relegated to elaborations. Secondly, the only contested bit of history that is identified in the Australian Curriculum is that of the black armband view. This in not itself a problem as it provides a relevant lens to view Australian historical interpretations. What is concerning, however, is that it is the only contested history in the curriculum. This sends a message to students that Aboriginal history is the only history to be contested. If the purpose of examination of contested history is valued it would be better placed to look at it from a comparative nature with other nations’ contested past. This would help place it in context. Contestability may be implicit in the descriptor: “The commemoration of World War I, including debates about the nature
and significance of the Anzac legend”. The implicitness of this concept in the intended curriculum may be evident to well-trained eyes, however, does it become explicit in the enacted curriculum?

The use of contestability as a core historical understanding is flawed in the curriculum application as it is too limited and applied to only one context. It fails to acknowledge that all histories are contested not just settlement and invasion histories. The use of contestability on its own is a distraction from core concepts of historical interpretations and historiography. Furthermore, contestability would be better served from within the method and procedure of *evaluate historical interpretations* (historiography). This better reflects specialisation of historical debates between historians, the lens which historians apply to their historical inquiries and contested debates between historians.

![Contestability Graph](image)

*Figure 16 Procedural concept of historical contestability in the *Australian Curriculum: History*
Empathy

The *Australian Curriculum: History* defines historical empathy as “an understanding of the past from the point of view of a particular individual or group, including an appreciation of the circumstances they faced, and the motivations, values and attitudes behind their actions” (ACARA, 2010b). In history education there has been much debate about historical empathy (Ashby & Lee, 1987; Barton & Levstik, 2004; Davis Jr, Yeager, & Foster, 2001; Lee & Shemilt, 2011; Lévesque, 2008). Lee and Shemilt (2011) argue the concept of empathy is mistakenly labelled and confused with the need for affective engagement, for sympathy and therefore fails to distinguish between the objectivity of cognition and subjectivity of emotions. The term can be provocative and as a result, its application can be shallow and capricious and therefore questions of assessment emerge. The debate has centred on what empathy means and the appropriateness of moral judgment in historical inquiry to avoid the subjective take on effect of historical empathy. Lévesque (2008) and Barton and Levstik (2004) both see empathy as fundamental to recognising that protagonists in the past have different, values, attitudes, motivations, and therefore historical empathy is about historical perspectives. The concept has been explained as understanding the moral dimension in history (Seixas, 2006), moral judgements in history (Taylor & Young, 2003), perspective taking (Davis Jr et al., 2001), perspective recognition (Barton & Levstik, 2004).

Taylor (2003) believes it is quite appropriate to “ask questions about how somebody felt in a given historical circumstance as a way of developing an understanding of character, their motivations and their perspectives” (Taylor & Young, 2003, p. 53). Ashby and Lee (1987) believe that historical empathy is part of the process of acquiring empathy and an outcome is that students develop “a set of beliefs and values which are not necessarily his or her own”. Seixas (2006) argues that if a historical narrative is meaningful, then implicitly and explicitly there is moral judgement taking place that has implications for moral issues today. Historical thinking encourage students to acknowledge that people in the past “acted according to
different norms, values and belief systems” (Lévesque, 2008, p. 168). Trying to make sense of the past, students must employ empathetic understanding, contextualize it to their own contemporary assumptions and make moral judgments. Empathy as recognizing historical perspective engages students in imagination restrained by historical evidence that develops from the active engagement of complex viewpoints from the past through normalcy, contextualisation and multiplicity (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Davis Jr et al., 2001). Lévesque (2008) observes student understanding of historical empathy through analysis of perspectives using three interrelated concepts of historical imagination, historical contextualisation and moral judgement.

The exploration of empathy and morality within the historical framework can pose complex political, not to mention historical problems that can unease historians and students alike. The validity of historical empathy in historical inquiry is unconvincing. Carlo Ginzburg (1980) argues that it is a falsity that we can place ourselves in the shoes of those from the past, their societies were different from our own and therefore they were culturally and ideologically different from us. Much of the research concludes that student application of the concept creates historical understanding that is vague, naive, inherently inferior and ignorant (Davis Jr et al., 2001; Lee & Ashby, 2000; Lee & Shemilt, 2011; Shemilt, 1980). Students fail to discern the difference of moralities between the past and the present and unconsciously imposed their own contemporary socio-cultural morality and values to make judgements about actions, ideas and protagonists from the past (Shemilt, 1984). Taylor (2003) refers to this as the issue of “moral relativism” (p. 53). Furthermore, school students are still developing their own empathy and moral frames which limit their ability to assess this. The question remains, can students truly empathise with historical protagonists and their experiences? The consequences of confusion between historians, history teachers and educationalists about historical empathy is the lack of a shared understanding its application in classroom history. Lee and Shemilt (2011) acknowledge that any analysis of student understanding of empathic understanding is challenged by a lack of proven teaching approaches and therefore its inclusion in history teaching and learning should
be on an experimental basis until there is a greater understanding of how to teach the concept and assess student understanding of empathy.

The difficulty and confusion over this concept is quite apparent in the Australian Curriculum. The curriculum clearly lacks grounding in historical thinking literature on empathy. Its core understandings view perspectives, contestability and empathy as something different and separate. The curriculum seems to misunderstand historical empathy as “an appreciation of the circumstances and challenges faced by people in the past” (ACARA, 2010a). Figure 17 illustrates that the curriculum only makes reference to the concept of empathy sixteen times in the rationale with no implicit or explicit reference in the Historical Knowledge and Understand strand, Historical Skills strand, elaborations or Achievement Standards. If this is a core concept, then the curriculum must bridge the design of the substantive and procedural concepts to ensure that empathy is taught and can be assessed; otherwise it will be ignored in the enacted curriculum. If it is an experimental ingredient in the curriculum, then it must be clearly unpacked in the curricular strands and elaborations.

Historical inquiry requires students to detach themselves from their own contemporary world views and recognise how past perspectives differ from to us today. Perspectives using evidence and commentary on contested debates about the past will allow for students to construct deeper historical understanding. The concept of empathy is about understanding the context of historical perspectives. As a consequence student understanding of this has been achieved within the concept of perspectives. Why the need to have another vague concept to address what has already been addressed? The heart of historical empathy should be perspective based and avoid the pedagogical misunderstandings and confusion associated with empathy. The concept of empathy, like contestability, is more objectively placed in ‘recognise historical perspectives’ allowing students to imagine while at the same time being restrained by evidence which would facilitate students’ historical understanding and
could be communicated by developing historical skills in *Create and Communicate Historical Arguments*.

**Figure 17** Procedural concept of historical empathy in the Australian Curriculum: History

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**SECTION 5.3 Conclusion**

The *Australian Curriculum: History* aims to achieve student understanding and use the central understandings of evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, perspectives, contestability and empathy to engage in historical inquiries. The research data findings and analysis, however, demonstrates that the curricular application of these discipline-based structures fails to highlight the explicit interrelationship between the substantive knowledge and the procedural concepts. The experiences of Schools History Project’s mis-match of concepts in the intended and enacted curriculum (Dawson, 1989; Flew, 1989; Shemilt, 1980) sets an example and precedence for the *Australian Curriculum: History* in its current state. These research findings have illustrated and analysed that the curriculum falls short in
consistent use of the concepts in the strand descriptors and curriculum alignment with the \textit{Achievement Standards}. The procedural concepts are often hidden in the \textit{Historical Knowledge and Understanding} strand and \textit{Historical Skills} strand and elaborations undermining their analytical and evaluative nature. The use of these concepts in the curriculum is inconsistently applied, lacking strategic or deliberate use and development across the curriculum. Also, though the elaborations are not comprehensive in their current state, once removed they reflect a further weakening of the curriculum conceptually. It is imperative the curriculum uses comprehensive elaborations in unpacking knowledge, understandings and skills to further highlight the conceptual and skill orientated structure of the discipline’s structures. It is generally accepted that sophisticated students’ understanding of procedural concepts when applied to substantive concepts results in a greater depth of student historical understanding. The \textit{Australian Curriculum: History} must make procedural concepts explicit by indicating the active agency that gives history its structure. The alternative is corruption of the discipline’s pedagogical content knowledge and a curriculum that is driven by memorisation of historical content.
Chapter 6

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is the analysis and evaluation of the *Australian Curriculum: History* in supporting historical thinking. ACARA reaffirmed its commitment to the disciplines of English, mathematics, science and history as central to school curricular from Foundation to Year 10, elaborating on the structure of the whole curriculum that other areas such as geography will be written on assumptions that all students will learn in those areas across Foundation to Year 8 (ACARA, 2011). This places history at the forefront of teaching and learning policy for all jurisdictions, universities and schools. Therefore, the *Australian Curriculum: History* must seek to provide a significant opportunity for students to “think deeply” (MCEETYA, 2008) about historical construction, however, the curriculum has the potential of disintegrating into transmission of historical knowledge and memory history. The curriculum needs to explicitly highlight disciplinary structures through historical thinking and reasoning about the past. This research examined substantive and procedural concepts grounded in the literature to analyse and evaluate their use in underpinning historical thinking and reasoning in the *Australian Curriculum: History*. The research method of qualitative document analysis of the curriculum revealed that the rationale of the curriculum fails in its application in the *Historical Knowledge and Understanding* strand and *Historical Skills* strand. The findings reveal that the curriculum does not address challenges and criticisms that the literature on historical thinking examine, which has resulted in a curriculum where the balance is tipped in favour of content knowledge to the detriment of disciplinary structures.

This research had three aims. First, a literature review of historical thinking revealed that the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of historical thinking are grounded in distinctions between substantive concepts (first order concepts) and
procedural concepts (second order concepts) (Lee, 1983). Second, a quantitative and qualitative approach to document analysis examined the presence, use and context of substantive and procedural concepts in the Australian Curriculum: History. Third, the literature review and results of curriculum document analysis were compared to examine if historical understandings were evident or differed from the literature. The application of this paradigm provided “a lens through which to interpret” (Kerlin, 1997, p. 1) historical thinking concepts present in the curriculum. Last, the research findings and literature led to the creation of a pedagogical model that provides an overarching approach to teaching historical reasoning: Framework for Historical Reasoning (Figure 18).

The curriculum design process was flawed from the outset. The Australian Curriculum: History Framing Paper (2009) and Shaping Paper (2009) acknowledged the importance of disciplinary structures from the literature, but this never materialised in an applicable way in the curriculum. In the curriculum design process the basic principles of “Backward Design” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2006) were not adopted. The fundamental challenges and failings of the curriculum are grounded in this processes. The Historical Knowledge and Understanding and Historical Skills strands were developed and approved twelve months before the Achievement Standards, which has resulted in problems aligning what teachers want students to learn both in terms of skills and concepts and what already existed in the approved strands. Furthermore, the design and consultation process was driven by what historical content should be taught. This has been problematic and has further undermined the disciplinary structures and diluted the procedural concepts of history.

The Australian Curriculum: History organisation around Historical Knowledge and Understanding and Historical Skills strands exist in a disconnected state and have failed to explicitly link substantive and procedural into an effective curriculum that facilitates historical thinking and reasoning that support student historical inquiry. One must be cautious of a curriculum design which disconnects substantive and procedural
concepts from historical skills as they compartmentalise them as something separate and not part of a pedagogical approach to teaching history as evident in the two strands. These strands fail to illuminate differences between historical knowledge (i.e. substantive concepts) and historical understandings (i.e. procedural concepts). The result is that procedural concepts are indistinguishable from historical knowledge. Procedural concepts must be explicitly at the forefront of the curriculum implementation, teaching and learning (Bruner, 1960; Lee, 1983; Lee & Ashby, 2000; Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 2009; Shulman, 1987; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008, 2009; VanSledright, 2004, 2009). There is a need to illustrate differences between them in the curriculum design to highlight the disciplinary structures of history. The Achievement Standards are set in a summative framework and would be better placed linking directly to the Knowledge and Understanding strand and Historical Skills strand descriptors. Also, the purpose of elaborations is only to illustrate and exemplify content and therefore is not comprehensive. Their absence undermines already tenuous links between substantive and procedural concepts in the curriculum. These elaborations need to be further unpacked to restore the integrity of the discipline. The curriculum would be better served if it was structured using the Historical Knowledge strand and the Historical Reasoning strand. The Victorian Essential Learning (VELS) is a successful precedent (VCAA, 2005). Seixas (2009) argues that curriculum design which engages students in historical thinking and deep understanding can be achieved in a variety of ways. Firstly, embedded in the topics (e.g. “students will learn to assess the causes of WWII”); or secondly, embedded in more general themes (e.g. “students will understand the roots, consequences and moral issues associated with modern warfare”); or thirdly as a framework or strand for historical thinking in the front (introductory) section of the curriculum that provides a pedagogical approach to connect substantive and procedural. The curriculum has failed to achieve any one of these options as it has allowed historical knowledge to drive the curriculum design and learning rather than the concepts of historical thinking.
The research analysis and findings of the curriculum’s use of unique, organisational and thematic concepts reflect that it fails to understand that substantive concepts are the building blocks that underpin inquiry. To ask questions, uses sources, inquire and construct arguments about the past students need to have the historical language to access, use and apply in their historical construction. The reliance on thematic concepts results in historical knowledge that is vague and disconnected from the historical phenomena and from applicable procedural concepts. The inconsistent and limited use of unique concepts in depth studies fails to reflect the importance of grounding inquiry within specific historical contexts. The use of organisational concepts to title depth studies rather than to group historical phenomena for analysis of continuity and change across chronological, social and ideological frames further undermines historical conceptual application. From the design of the curriculum it is apparent that it values particular historical content rather than approaches to historical thinking and reasoning. If the *Australian Curriculum: History* is to fulfil the aims and rationale that engages with historical understandings in a meaningful way, then ACARA must accept that to do so it will have to be at the expense of coverage of historical content knowledge. The curriculum needs to be grounded in discipline based pedagogy so that students will gain greater insight into the deeper lessons of history and historical construction. They learn to apply historical procedural concepts beyond specific events to conceptual and transferable understandings. The volume of historical knowledge in the curriculum has become an albatross around its neck. There will not be enough time to teach everything. Teaching content coverage will compromise student application of historical procedural concepts. Furthermore, the curriculum’s episodic structures of *Overviews* and *Depth Studies* are determined by topics, therefore limiting students’ application of concepts, e.g. continuity and change; further undermining historical understanding.

The *Australian Curriculum: History* has identified core historical understandings as evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, perspectives, empathy
and contestability which are “investigated within a particular historical context to facilitate an understanding of the past and to provide a focus for historical inquiries” (ACARA, 2010b). Historical understandings are further compromised by the loss of the verb which gives these concepts their agency and the active role in student historical construction (Seixas, 2006). They would be better served attaching terms identify, describe, explain, analyse, evaluate and create to make the curricular use of concepts active, therefore rather than just evidence; it should be *examining sources for use as evidence*. A pedagogical approach to this has been illustrated in the *Framework for Historical Reasoning* (Figure 18). The use of these concepts to analyse the curriculum further highlighted their inconsistent use in strand descriptors. These procedural concepts are applied only to elicit lower order thinking of identify and describe rather than highlighting the explicit purpose of these concepts which is to analyse, synthesise, evaluate and create. The curriculum fails to highlight the purpose of how these concepts are applied pedagogically in the classroom. If there is not explicit communication, understanding and demonstrated application of these concepts in the curriculum, teachers will disregard them and history education will remain doomed to memorisation of facts and dates. The failure to explicitly apply these concepts in the right cognitive context will further support a curriculum that is driven more by content coverage than student historical meaning making through historical inquiry. The problem in the curriculum is that their contextual use fails to engage students in the investigative nature of historical analysis and evaluation. These concepts need to be explicit and not hidden in historical content so students are aware of the active nature of historical construction. To engage students in the application and integration of these procedural concepts, students need to understand that these concepts must be transferable between historical contexts. A radical solution and one that would reduce the confusion would be to organise the strands as *Historical Knowledge strand* and a *Historical Understanding strand*. This would make explicit the distinction between the substantive and procedural concepts and indicate the active agency that gives history its structure. Also, this would place them explicitly at the fore of curriculum strands allowing the historical understandings to become the focus of inquiry.
The failure to make explicit the procedural concepts in the curriculum could be rectified alternatively by providing a different model of historical reasoning. The curriculum needs to be revised to strengthen the presence of the discipline-based pedagogy advocated by Bruner (1960), Schwab (1978) and Shulman (1987). It needs to
make explicit historical substantive and procedural concepts that truly engage students in deep thinking about how the past is constructed. According to Lee (1983), curriculum must reflect the interrelationship between substantive and procedural concepts if it is to remain faithful to disciplinary structures. The Framework for Historical Reasoning (Figure 18) can serve as a pedagogical approach to addressing the problems within the existing curriculum. This framework has emerged from the literature study and analysis of the curriculum and attempts to bridge the gap by making explicit links between historical substantive concepts, historical procedural concepts and historical skills and methods (Lee, 1983; Lévesque, 2008; Seixas, 2006; Van Drie & Van Boxtel, 2008; Wineburg, 2001). The framework is not a step by step process; rather it provides a practical overarching pedagogical approach that makes historical thinking and processes of historical construction visible to students. More importantly, the framework shifts the curricular focus away from content coverage towards a truly investigative problem solving classroom. It is an authentic expression of VanSledright’s (2009) “knowledge-in-use” structures.

The framework deliberately uses verbs e.g. ask; describe; analyse; recognise etc. to indicate students’ active participation in the construction of historical understanding and remains faithful to the disciplinary structures of historical inquiry. The use of the verb further illustrates the agency of history’s methods and procedural concepts. Therefore, the framework highlights the complexity of historical reasoning processes as a critical, analytical, evaluative and creative discipline. The framework is unpacked below.

- **Ask historical questions**: Student design of good questions is a complex process that must be explicitly taught to students. Students must learn important competencies to ask questions as the engine of inquiry. Asking questions allows students to engage in the rich and big ideas of history. This requires students to ask, recognise, develop, formulate, plan, understand and modify inquiry questions that are descriptive, evaluative and
comparative. They learn to construct a question that elicits the use of substantive and procedural concepts e.g. what was the most significant cause of World War I? Historical questions like this require not only explanation of causation but also evaluative judgements about those causes.

- **Develop a historical inquiry through research:** Research inquiry requires the development of skills and processes that are more than just locating and identifying a variety of historical sources and information related to inquiry questions. Research is a universal and transferable inquiry process including gathering sources and evidence, analysis, synthesis, organising knowledge, utilising a range of research tools such as libraries, interviews, ICT, types of presentation and citation and bibliographic conventions.

- **Describe historical knowledge, context and chronology:** At the heart of this history discipline are stories that inspire curiosity and imagination. In the process of inquiry or reading or watching historical narratives it is imperative that students develop comprehension of historical knowledge, facts, and protagonists to describe history. It is foundational that students become aware of the social, spatial and chronological frames that bind historical contexts. Students must develop historical literacy and comprehension of unique, organisational and thematic substantive concepts that make history meaningful and intelligible. If students do not know the substantive concepts of the narrative they will not have the language to ask questions, use sources or develop historical arguments.

- **Examine historical sources for use as evidence:** Examination of historical sources requires problem solving skills. Finding, collecting, selecting, interpreting, asking questions, evaluating, contextualising, criticising sources to reveal their historical meaning and significance; students are required to think critically. Students must read sources differently; not only for finding information, ‘proof’ or evidence for an argument, but also the meaning of words chosen in the context of the times they were written.
Students need to learn to ask the following questions of sources; What is the type of source? When was it created? Who created it? What does the source tell us? What was happening at the time it was created? For what purpose did the author create it? Is it useful in answering our questions? Can this source be corroborated with other sources? Is the source reliable?

- **Apply historical concepts:** These concepts give the discipline of historical construction its structure. Student application of these concepts engages students in the critical construction of history as an interpretative discipline and requires negotiating with the evidence to establish perspectives. They are analytical and evaluative through their application. Establishing and evaluating historical significance; identifying and explaining continuity and change; explaining and analysing cause and consequence; and evaluating progress and decline. These concepts have been unpacked in Chapter 5.

- **Recognise historical perspectives:** Students must learn to value the role of human agency in contributing to historical phenomena. Students need to learn that those who lived in the past had a different social, moral and political world view, and therefore, recognise that the past had many agents who viewed their world differently. Students must approach the past with caution as not to impose presentism as this may lead to corruption of knowledge. In historical reasoning it is imperative to engage with multiple perspectives paying particular attention to the silent voices of the past such as Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander peoples and women in providing a rich narrative and inquiry. This allows students to critically challenge sources or received versions of historical narratives.

- **Evaluate historical interpretations:** Students need to engage with historians and recognise that they bring political, social, cultural and economic world views, influenced by their time and context. Students need to recognise this and evaluate it so that it can be appropriated into their own historical construction.
• **Create and communicate historical arguments:** Students learn to communicate their historical arguments of causation, significance and change that are grounded in and restrained by the evidence, perspectives and interpretations. This is a creative process that can engage students in a range of mediums such as narratives, essays, debates, role-plays, podcast or vodcasts, Wiki Spaces etc. It is through the creative and communicative process that student historical understanding can be assessed. Students need to learn to use their historical understanding that is grounded in analysis of historical knowledge and evidence and is communicated in a creative and engaging manner for their audience. Furthermore, students learn to value critical appraisal of their historical construction. The culmination of student historical inquiry should always be the launch pad for new inquiries.

Teaching and learning of history is an inquiry into the past that develops students’ curiosity, imagination and understanding of ideas and phenomena that have shaped humanity. The implementation of the curriculum in 2012-13 will provide further opportunities for research on how the enacted curriculum impacts on teacher pedagogy and how it is experienced by students. In the review process, the curriculum needs to be assessed in a way that all teachers can understand, use and implement historical thinking concepts in their everyday classes. Teachers need to see how these concepts facilitate students’ development of critical, creative and reflective thinking about the past. This can only be achieved if the curriculum is explicit on the structures that shape the discipline as an inquiry. Inevitably, it will be the responsibility of teachers to enact the analytical and evaluative criteria to fulfil the rational of the curriculum. It will rely on teachers’ historical pedagogical content knowledge to make the curriculum work in classrooms. The *Framework for Historical Reasoning* provides a scaffold for this and enhances teacher practice by making it visible and explicit. Those who support historical understanding, reasoning, thinking and inquiry will have to be
able to demonstrate how it works with classroom curricula, resources, pedagogy and assessment. This is a challenge that extends beyond the curriculum documents themselves to professional development, modelling the use of concepts, resources and teacher training in pedagogical approaches to teaching the disciplinary structures of history. This will be fundamental to the successful implementation of the curriculum and student historical understanding of the process of historical construction.
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