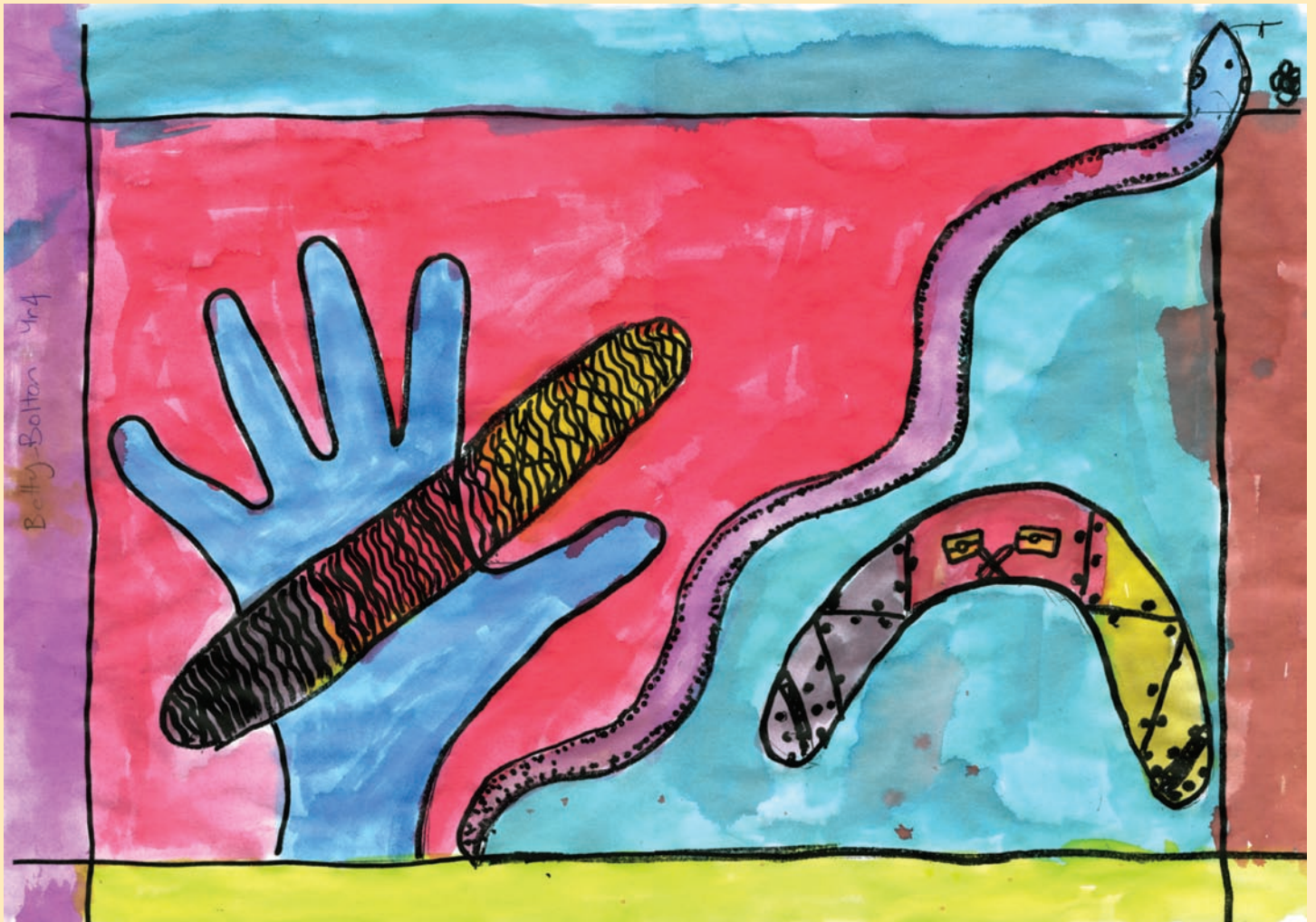




Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations



# Indigenous Languages Programmes in Australian Schools

## A Way Forward

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Australian Council *for* Educational Research

This project was funded by the former Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training through the Australian Government's School Languages Programme.

The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

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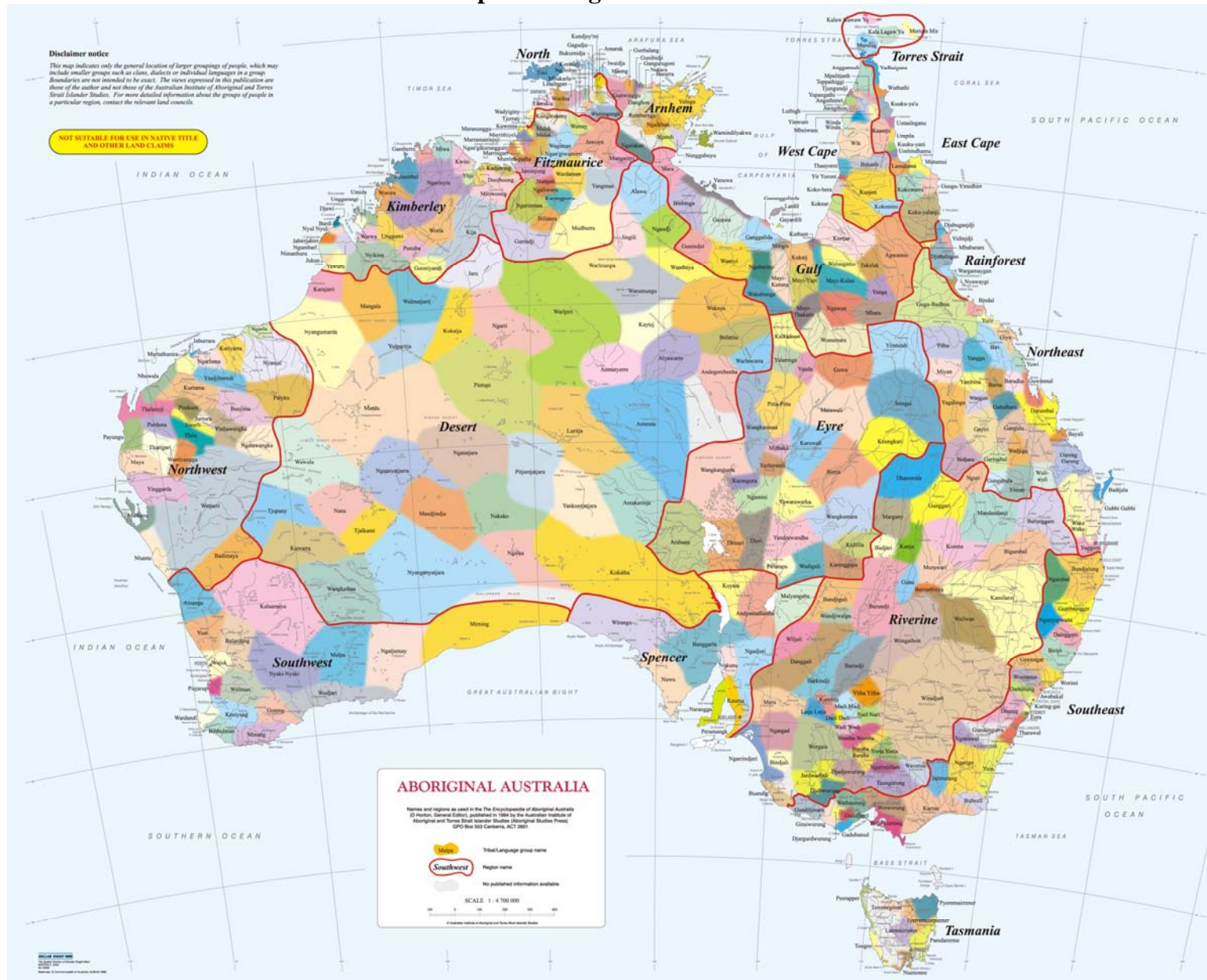
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# Map of Aboriginal Australia



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## List of Abbreviations

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|         |  |
|---------|--|
| ACER    | Australian Council for Educational Research                              |
| AECG    | Aboriginal Education Consultative Group                                  |
| AEP     | Aboriginal Education Policy  |
| AIATSIS | Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies    |
| AILF    | Australian Indigenous Languages Framework                                |
| AISACT  | Association of Independent Schools, ACT                                  |
| AIEO    | Australian and Islander Education Officer                                |
| ALLP    | Australian Language and Literacy Policy                                  |
| ALPI    | Aboriginal Languages Programmes Initiative                               |
| ASCED   | Australian Standard Classification of Education                          |
| ASSPA   | Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness                          |
| ATAS    | Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme                                    |
| ATSIC   | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission                         |
| ATSILIP | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Initiatives Programme    |
| BIITE   | Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education                     |
| CDEP    | Community Development Employment Project                                 |
| DCITA   | Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts        |
| DECS    | Department of Education and Children's Services                          |
| DEECD   | Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria        |
| DEEWR   | Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations              |
| DEST    | Department of Education, Science and Training                            |
| ESL     | English as a Second Language   |
| FATSIL  | Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages            |
| HREOC   | Human Rights and Equal Opportunity                                       |
| IESIP   | Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme                     |
| ILSS    | Indigenous Language Speaking Students                                    |
| KLA     | Key Learning Area  |
| LAIP    | Language Access Initiatives Programme                                    |
| LOTE    | Languages Other Than English   |
| MALLP   | Master-Apprentice Language Learning Programme                            |
| MCEETYA | Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs |
| MILR    | Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records                          |
| NALP    | National Aboriginal Languages Project                                    |
| NALLS   | National Aboriginal Languages and Literacy Strategy                      |
| NT DEET | Department of Education, Employment and Training                         |
| NILS    | National Indigenous Languages Survey                                     |
| NSW BOS | New South Wales Board of Studies   |
| PAG     | Project Advisory Group   |
| PTI     | Part Time Instructor   |
| SACE    | South Australian Certificate of Education                                |
| SACSA   | South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability                 |
| SLP     | Schools Languages Programme  |
| SOSE    | Studies of Society and Environment                                       |

---

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| SSABSA | Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia             |
| TAFE   | Technical and Further Education                                  |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| VACL   | Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages                   |
| VAEAI  | Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated          |
| VCAA   | Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority                    |
| VCE    | Victorian Certificate of Education                               |
| VELS   | Victorian Essential Learning Standards                           |



## Notes

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### **Word Use**

Generally speaking, we have used the term ‘Indigenous’ to apply to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. However, we have used the term ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander’ when referring to original documents that used this term; in some instances we have used the term to emphasise the distinct identities of these two broad groups of people.

### **Currency of information**

This report is based on information collected in 2006 and 2007. Updated information provided by jurisdictions is indicated in footnotes.

## Foreword

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Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are the first languages of this continent. This status, and their unique value in the world's languages, makes it imperative for them to be learned, taught, used, and protected from their current state of endangerment. School programmes have much to contribute to the health and vitality of Indigenous languages. *Indigenous Languages Programmes in Australian Schools: A Way Forward* is concerned with documenting the quality of these programmes, and suggesting concrete ways forward for schools and Indigenous communities developing them.

For Indigenous families, parents and communities, school programmes have both high cultural and high educational value. Schools have a crucial role in supporting the delivery of these programmes by Indigenous languages teachers. Long-term, sustainable programmes involve schools and communities working together as active leading partners. These partnerships recognise and enhance the capacity of community members to develop and pass on their language and cultural knowledge, to build on their teaching skills and to develop quality resources for their programmes.

While in all locations successful language programmes are underpinned by local commitment, in some locations programmes are fortunately able to also access community language and cultural centres which are able to provide specialist support and resources. However this support is delivered, it is essential for local communities and their schools to have access to quality advice, strategic resources and the capacity to build language learning networks.

*Indigenous Languages Programmes in Australian Schools: A Way Forward* acknowledges that quality programmes can operate effectively in the broad range of language revival and maintenance situations. It is critical that quality programmes be developed to cater for the wide diversity of language environments for Indigenous people in all parts of Australia.

*Indigenous Languages Programmes in Australian Schools: A Way Forward* is an evidence-based approach and hopefully heralds a renaissance of Indigenous languages reclamation and learning across Australia. It is hoped that this report will be the practical and positive impetus needed to enhance the quality and effectiveness of those programmes. If it can achieve this, then it will make a welcome contribution to future directions for Indigenous languages programmes in schools.

Kevin Lowe  
Federation of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Languages  
NSW Delegate

May 2008

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- May Kwan (Independent Schools Queensland, representing the non-government education sector)
- Kevin Lowe (NSW Board of Studies, representing the Australian Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages)
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- Denise Wilkowski (Sanderson High School, representing the Australian Secondary Principals Association)

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Finally, we thank the many individuals from State and Territory education jurisdictions, schools, universities, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions, and Language Centres who generously provided information and support for this project.

(A full list of organisations and individuals who contributed to this project is provided in Appendix 4.)

# Executive Summary

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## Introduction

The national project which is the subject of this report is directed towards strengthening the quality of Indigenous languages programmes in schools. The purpose of the project is to provide a snapshot of the current national situation in Indigenous languages education in Australian schools.

The target groups to benefit from the Project are:

- teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages who are delivering programmes in Australian schools and those wishing to deliver such programmes;
- Indigenous and school communities wishing to introduce, improve or expand the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in their schools; and
- policy makers and programme officers from State and Territory education jurisdictions wishing to introduce, improve or expand the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in their schools.

The (former) Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) contracted the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to undertake the project. It is one of several national projects funded through the Australian Government's School Languages Programme (SLP). These national projects support the implementation of the *National Statement and Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2005-08*, developed through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). The *National Statement and Plan* was endorsed by all Ministers of Education in March 2005.

The *National Statement and Plan* affirms the value of all languages, including Australia's Indigenous languages.

The Indigenous languages project is the first phase of support for Indigenous languages programmes delivered in Australian schools. The outcomes will inform further action undertaken at a national level.

The project should also be seen in light of several other national policies and current developments.

First, the project supports implementation of the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy* (AEP), which was instigated in 1990 and which continues to form the foundation of all Indigenous education programmes. One of the national goals enunciated in the AEP is "to develop programs to support the maintenance and continued use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages."

Second, the Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000 (Amended 2005), which provides the legislative basis and appropriate funding for Indigenous

education programmes, notes that “developing programs to support the maintenance and continued use of the languages of Indigenous people” (p.5) is one of a number of strategies aimed at achieving equitable and appropriate educational outcomes for Indigenous people.

Third, current discussions regarding the development of a National Curriculum provide a timely forum for considering the place of Indigenous languages in school curricula.

Finally, this project is particularly pertinent given the intention of the Australian Government to become a signatory of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2007) which reaffirms the right of Indigenous peoples to have access to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

## **Methodology**

To achieve the project aims, and to develop a set of recommended actions to be undertaken to improve the sustainability and quality of Indigenous languages programmes delivered in Australian schools as part of a second phase of the Project, we undertook the following tasks:

- a) a comprehensive literature review of existing national and international research on Indigenous languages and the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in schools;
- b) a comprehensive mapping exercise to document:
  - current State and Territory policies and practices relating to Indigenous languages in Australian schools;
  - numbers and types of Indigenous languages programmes currently being delivered in schools in each State and Territory and how these are staffed and funded; and
  - the range of training and professional learning options and/or teacher preparation courses available to teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages in each State and Territory to enable them to deliver such programmes in schools;
- c) an analysis of existing models of teacher preparation and/or training and professional learning for those involved in, or wishing to become involved in the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in schools, and an evaluation of their relevance and applicability to the Australian context. This evaluation focused on a consideration of the applicability of a foundation project, operating through the New South Wales Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource Centre, that is based on aspects of the Master-Apprentice model used in the US and Canada; and
- d) six case studies of examples of good practice of Indigenous languages programmes in schools reflecting different settings.

## **Key findings and recommendations**

### **Review of the Literature**

In 2005, the authors of the *National Indigenous Languages Survey Report* concluded that the situation of Australia's languages is very grave and requires urgent action. Of 250 known Australian Indigenous languages, it was found that less than 20 could be considered as strong; however, three or four languages of these languages were showing signs of moving into endangerment because they were spoken only by small groups of people, most of whom were more than 40 years of age.

Currently, many Indigenous communities are working hard to maintain or revive their languages. Within schools, also, there is increasing activity related to the teaching of Indigenous languages.

There is considerable variation across the States and Territories in current policy and practice related to Indigenous languages programmes in schools. Some states have strong policy documentation; several have none.

Major issues pertaining to Indigenous languages that are reiterated in recent relevant national literature include the following.

- There will need to be a range of Indigenous language programme types depending on the situation the language is in now (e.g., strong or endangered).
- Community input and control over language programmes is essential.
- There is not consensus about whether Indigenous languages belong in the school *as well as* in the home and community.
- Learning an Indigenous language can enhance a range of social and academic outcomes for all students.
- Trained staff are critical to any language programme. Wherever possible, it is desirable to have Indigenous language teachers deliver programmes in schools. These teachers need appropriate training.
- There must be practical national support and resourcing for school language programmes.
- There is a need for greater coordination of Indigenous languages programmes at the national level. A national agency could provide advice on such issues as the practicalities of establishing a language programme, developing appropriate resources, training teachers, and networking amongst personnel involved in Indigenous languages programmes.

### **Indigenous Languages Programmes in Schools: The Current Situation**

Over 16,000 Indigenous students and 13,000 non-Indigenous students located in 260 Australian schools are involved in an Indigenous language programme. Most of these students are located in government schools in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, New South Wales, and South Australia. Each of these states receives strong systemic support for their programmes in terms of one or more of:

the provision of curriculum documentation and resources; initial teacher preparation; and ongoing teacher professional development and support.

More than 80 different Indigenous languages are taught.

About 28% of the programmes are first language maintenance programmes<sup>1</sup>, and include bilingual programmes undertaken by students in the early years of schooling and throughout their schooling.

About 12% of programmes are second language learning programmes, whereby a language is taught to learners in the Languages area of the school curriculum. In this type of programme, students have little or no assumed knowledge of the target language.

About 50% of programmes are language revival programmes. Such programmes include language revitalisation (about 28%), whereby the language is still spoken by a small group of older speakers within the community; language renewal (about 4%), whereby the language is no longer spoken in its full form but there is sufficient linguistic heritage within the community to develop a language programme; and language reclamation (about 18%), whereby there has been a break in the transmission of the spoken language but there is sufficient evidence from archival material for language reconstruction and learning.

The remainder of the programmes (about 10%) are language awareness programmes, whereby the little bits that are known about a language are

---

#### <sup>1</sup> Types of Indigenous Languages Programmes

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| First Language Maintenance | Students are first language speakers of the language. These programmes extend and develop students' language skills and may include the development of specialist skills such as interpreting and translating. They may be conducted as transition to English programmes for students in the early years of schooling.                                    |
| Second Language Learning   | A strong language is taught to a wide range of learners (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) in the Languages area of learning — in much the same way as non-Indigenous languages are. Students have little or no assumed knowledge of the target language.  |
| Language Revival           | A general term that covers three subtypes:  |
| Revitalisation             | The language is still spoken by a small group of older speakers within the community. These language programmes aim to extend the use of the language into the younger generations of speakers. Indigenous students within these programmes will have considerable passive knowledge of the language.   |
| Renewal                    | The language is no longer actively spoken 'right through' or in its full form, but there are Indigenous people who actively identify with the language. Sufficient linguistic heritage remains within the community to develop a language programme.  |
| Reclamation                | There has been a break in the transmission of the spoken language, but there is sufficient evidence from historical documentation and archival material for language reconstruction and learning.   |
| Language Awareness         | The little bits that are known about a language can be incorporated into another area of learning (e.g., Studies of Society and Environment), but are not enough for sustained language learning. The focus is on teaching <i>about</i> Indigenous languages and on exploring socio-historical issues. Communicative fluency or competence is not a goal. |

incorporated into another area of learning. The focus is on teaching *about* Indigenous languages and on exploring socio-historical issues.

### **Teacher Preparation and Ongoing Professional Development**

School personnel and community members who are involved in the development and teaching of Indigenous languages programmes are diverse in terms of their language proficiency and teaching experience. School language programmes vary considerably from first language maintenance programmes to general language awareness programmes.

Overall, the professional learning opportunities for people wishing to teach an Indigenous language in a school are limited. One state education department offers an *Aboriginal Language Teacher Training Course*. Participants graduate and are eligible to register as an Aboriginal Language Teacher. They develop skills in programme planning, resource development, teaching strategies and language proficiency. Some education jurisdictions offer ongoing and focussed professional opportunities (e.g., regional and school-based workshops) for school staff teaching Indigenous languages.

Teacher training courses in Indigenous languages teaching are practically non-existent in universities. Only one university has a dedicated course on Indigenous languages teaching. A small number of universities provide a linguistics course in Indigenous languages, but these do not prepare people for teaching in schools. Some teaching degrees include a component (either compulsory or elective) that deals with Indigenous cultural awareness, including issues related to language.

A number of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions offer courses to teachers and potential teachers of Indigenous languages. These courses span several categories, including Indigenous language courses specifically for teachers, language conversational experiences, and general certificates for Indigenous teaching assistants.

Some Indigenous Language Centres support school language programmes by providing resources and professional learning opportunities for teachers. In some cases, staff from the Centres are involved with schools, either through the direct teaching of language or by supporting school personnel in their teaching.

### **Master-Apprentice Model**

The Master-Apprentice model of language learning and teaching was developed in California in the early 1990s as a way of saving Indigenous languages in that state. The approach aims to preserve or revive a language by pairing a speaker of the target Indigenous language (master) with younger members of Indigenous communities (apprentices) who want to learn their language of heritage.

A form of the Master-Apprentice model is being trialled in two NSW schools. The schools teach the two related languages Ngiyampaa (Hillston Central School) and Ngemba (Brewarrina Central School).



The model is informally applied in other schools in Australia where an Elder who speaks the target language works with a younger member of the community who teaches in a school classroom setting.

Greater attention could be given to using the Master-Apprentice model as one way of preparing Indigenous language teachers for the future. The model could be more effectively applied if greater formal support from education departments in the States and Territories were given; this could be, for example, in the form of payment to Elders (masters) for their time and for a time allowance for apprentices to work with Elders on developing their language skills. This is particularly important in states such as South Australia, which have no Language Centres to support this type of work.

The development of strong links between education jurisdictions and Indigenous Languages Centres is likely to lead to a more successful implementation of the model in the Australian context. Endeavour Language Teacher Fellowships, provided by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), could be made available to support development and application of the Master-Apprentice model to Indigenous language teaching in Australia.

### **Case Studies of Good Practice**

Case studies were conducted in six schools from a range of settings including those in metropolitan, regional and remote areas. Language programmes in the schools ranged from revival language programmes, second language learning programmes, and first language maintenance programmes (Bilingual or Two Way Learning programmes).

Schools were selected from a list of schools recommended by key personnel in education jurisdictions as having a strong reputation for maintaining good practice in Indigenous languages programmes.

The case study schools all demonstrated a combination of a number of the following features.

- The language programme is embedded in the total school programme; there is whole-school planning to develop an integrated approach to teaching the target language.
- Students are actively engaged through the use of trained staff who use sound pedagogical approaches in the classroom.
- teachers have access to a wide range of resources that have been specifically developed to support teaching and learning in the target language.
- Teamwork is promoted and there is a shared commitment to the language programme; teachers and assistant teachers are equal partners, and there is two way mentoring and learning.
- The critical importance of induction into the culture of the school and involvement in relevant professional learning opportunities for non-qualified teachers is recognized and acted on.

- The critical importance of understanding the cultural backgrounds of Indigenous students and the links between language, culture and self-identity is recognized and acted on.
- Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives are valued by the school community.
- Teachers draw on the insights, knowledge, and experience of community members.
- Literacy skills in the target language are transferred to English language learning.
- A Master-Apprentice type model is promoted whereby first language speakers of the target language work with younger novice speakers to develop their language skills.
- There is strong systemic support for the language programme in terms of syllabus documentation, curriculum planning, provision of resources, ongoing training workshops for teachers and teaching assistants, and the facilitation of networking.
- Good use is made of multi-media language resources.
- The school principal provides strong leadership in building the language programme and ongoing support for its maintenance.
- Members of the language team – including teachers, linguists, teaching assistants, community advisors – have a passion to build a strong and sustainable programme in the school.

### **Key Principles and Recommendations**

The recommendations of this report should be interpreted in light of six key principles for Indigenous languages education in schools.

#### ***Key Principles***

##### ***Key Principle 1***

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the first people of this country and their languages are unique to it. The capacity to learn these languages and support their reclamation and long term maintenance as strong and viable languages is of great significance to both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal Australians.

##### ***Key Principle 2***

Ownership of each Indigenous language belongs to a group of people who are its custodians; their language should only be taught in schools with their agreement.

*Key Principle 3*

School languages programmes are not sustainable unless they are developed and presented in partnership between the school and the owners of the language being taught.

*Key Principle 4*

Learning an Indigenous language and becoming proficient in the English language are complementary rather than mutually exclusive activities.

*Key Principle 5*

The primary responsibility for maintaining, revitalizing, or rebuilding Indigenous languages does not rest with schools, although schools may have an important role to play.

*Key Principle 6*

The most successful school language programmes will flow from a collaborative approach involving Indigenous communities, Indigenous Language Centres, linguists, schools and teachers.

***Recommendations***

The following 15 recommendations are made with a view to supporting the *National Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2005-2008* as well as supporting the maintenance, revitalization, and rebuilding of Australia's Indigenous languages.

*Recommendation 1*

That DEEWR and State and Territory education departments support the maintenance, revitalization, and rebuilding of Australian Indigenous languages by creating opportunities for students to learn an Indigenous language as part of the Australian Government School Languages Programme.

*Recommendation 2*

That where there are ten or more students in any one school who speak an Indigenous language as their first language, they be given the opportunity to continue to learn that language either as part of the school's language programme or as part of a bilingual education programme.

*Recommendation 3*

That teacher education departments in universities be encouraged and funded to develop Indigenous language units within undergraduate, post-graduate, and/or professional programmes.

*Recommendation 4*

That universities and TAFEs offer scholarships for the training of Indigenous language teachers as part of their scholarships programmes.

*Recommendation 5*

That preservice Indigenous teachers, and in particular preservice early childhood and primary school Indigenous teachers, be provided with an opportunity to train in the teaching of their language of heritage. This training might be undertaken at other institutions or organizations such as TAFE institutions and Indigenous Language Centres. Credit should be granted for such undertakings.

*Recommendation 6*

That DEEWR and State and Territory education departments provide incentives (e.g., scholarships, fee support, and time for study) to inservice teachers to retrain as Indigenous language teachers.

*Recommendation 7*

That each State and Territory education department develops a strategy for training Indigenous language teachers. Possible strategies should include consideration of the WA model of preparation of Indigenous language teachers (Aboriginal Language Teacher Training Course); courses offered by Indigenous Language Centres; and courses offered in the TAFE context.

*Recommendation 8*

That individuals who do not have initial teacher qualifications but who have successfully completed a recognized course of training in Indigenous language teaching be recognized as language teachers and receive all the benefits that normally accrue to a qualified teacher, including salary.

*Recommendation 9*

That career pathways for Indigenous languages teachers be established within State and Territory education jurisdictions. The establishment of ongoing Indigenous languages teaching positions within schools will provide improved employment conditions for individuals and will enhance the sustainability of school programmes.

*Recommendation 10*

That a dedicated percentage of the School Languages Programme funds be targetted for Indigenous languages. A system of accountability should be developed that requires States and Territories to report on how funds have been used for Indigenous languages programmes. School Languages Programme funds

should be allocated on a triennial basis to enhance the quality and sustainability of programmes.

*Recommendation 11*

That DEEWR allocate funding from its Digital Education Revolution to support school Indigenous languages programmes. In keeping with the aims of the Digital Education Revolution, this funding should be used for the development of online curriculum content, conferencing facilities, teacher professional development, and community engagement.

*Recommendation 12*

That MCEETYA fund a position within DEEWR for a national coordinator of Indigenous languages programmes in schools.

The role of this person will be to promote the development of sustainable Indigenous languages programmes in schools; to facilitate networking of those involved in Indigenous languages teaching across States and Territories; and to be involved in policy coordination across government departments, in keeping with the whole-of government approach to Indigenous affairs. In particular this will involve working with DEEWR; the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts; the Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; and State and Territory education departments.

*Recommendation 13*

That schools develop appropriate procedures (including sufficient time for consultations) to enable the school and the Indigenous community to work together to reach decisions on the teaching of Indigenous languages including decisions regarding the language to be taught and how the programme will be implemented.

*Recommendation 14*

That schools develop appropriate procedures for developing relationships with Indigenous Language Centres to enable the sharing of expertise and resources, and to strengthen the cultural context for their Indigenous languages programmes.

*Recommendation 15*

That the current movement towards the development of a National Curriculum be seen as an opportunity to develop a national curriculum framework for Indigenous languages. Any national curriculum framework must take account of local contexts and ensure that local cultural knowledge is embedded in each Indigenous language programme.

# 1 Background to the Project

---

## 1.1 Australia's Indigenous Languages

In a benchmark paper on the state of Indigenous languages published in 2001 by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage, linguists McConvell and Thieberger traced the extent of Indigenous language loss in Australia.

These authors noted that before European settlement, as many as 250 distinct languages flourished across Australia. By 1980, a quarter of the languages had disappeared. By 1990, nearly two thirds were gone, or nearly gone. In 1996, the percentage of Indigenous Australians speaking their language was around 13% and falling. In 2001, only about 17 Aboriginal languages could still be classified as strong, that is, used by all age groups. Most of the speakers of Indigenous languages live in the Top End, Kimberley, and Central desert, mainly in areas remote from towns, although remoteness in itself does not guarantee maintenance of an Indigenous language.

Undercounting of Indigenous people in the 1996 census, together with an 8% greater number of respondents saying they know an Indigenous language than saying they speak it at home, suggests that there may be in the order of 55,000 speakers of Indigenous languages in Australia.

In 2005, authors of the *National Indigenous Languages Survey Report* concluded that

. . . the situation of Australia's languages is very grave and requires urgent action. Of an original number of over 250 known Australian Indigenous languages, only about 145 Indigenous languages are still spoken and the vast majority of these, about 110, are in the severely and critically endangered categories. This critically endangered category indicates languages that are spoken only by small groups of people mostly, over 40 years old.

Eighteen languages are strong in the sense of being spoken by all age groups, but three or four of these are showing some signs of moving into endangerment.

Many other languages are not fully spoken by anybody, but words and phrases are used, and there is great community support in many parts of the country for reclamation and heritage learning programmes for such language. (AIATSIS/FATSIL, 2005, p. 3)

These two reports, in addition to other reports and papers published over the last two decades, and summarised in Chapter 4 of this report, have established quite clearly the critical state of Australia's Indigenous languages. To date, the role of schools in the preservation and promotion of Indigenous languages has varied considerably across States and Territories, and across time.

## 1.2 Languages Education in Schools

The place of Indigenous languages in schools could be considered in light of the place of languages learning in schools generally. Languages Other than English is one of the eight key learning areas in the *National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century* (MCEETYA, 1999), which continue to guide curriculum policy and programmes operating in Australian schools.

Languages education in schools is primarily the responsibility of State and Territory education authorities. The School Languages Programme is based on recognition by the Australian Government that young Australians with language skills and an understanding of international cultures are vital to our nation's future in an increasingly global community

To support the teaching and learning of Asian, European, Australian Indigenous languages and Auslan in schools, and community language programmes in ethnic schools, the Australian Government is providing \$112 million over four years (2005 – 2008) through the School Languages Programme (SLP) to State and Territory education authorities.

A key initiative with the potential to influence the role of schools in Indigenous languages maintenance and rebuilding is that instigated by the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) with the release of the *National Statement and Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2005-08* (*National Statement and National Plan*).

## 1.3 The National Statement and Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2005-2008

The *National Statement and Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2005-08*, which was developed through MCEETYA and endorsed by all Ministers of Education, is intended to provide greater coordination for languages education across the country. The *National Statement* affirms the place of languages education in the school curriculum, and describes the purpose and nature of learning languages. The *National Statement* affirms the value of *all* languages, including the importance of Australia's Indigenous languages.

Australian Indigenous languages have a unique place in Australia's heritage and in its cultural and educational life. For Indigenous learners, they are fundamental to strengthening identity and self-esteem. For non-Indigenous learners, they provide a focus for development of cultural understanding and reconciliation. (p. 7)

The *National Statement* highlights the importance of quality teaching and supportive teaching conditions for languages education for all students. The document emphasises that teachers need to be well-trained and have opportunities to participate in appropriate ongoing professional learning.

The *National Statement* draws attention to the cumulative nature of language learning and the need for a whole-school commitment to languages education. In

The *National Plan* aims to:

- establish long-term directions for languages education;
- advance the implementation of high quality and sustainable programmes;
- maximise collaboration in the use of national, state, and territory resources; and
- provide flexibility in implementation by individual jurisdictions.

There are six strands of the Plan, each with associated underpinning principles and actions. The strands concern teaching and learning, teacher supply and retention, professional learning, programme development, quality assurance, and advocacy and promotion of languages learning.

To support implementation of the *National Plan*, 5% of SLP funds are reserved for strategic national projects, including the following:

- Improving the national coordination and quality assurance of community languages schools;
- Investigation into the current provision of Indigenous languages programmes in Australian schools;
- Investigation into the state and nature of languages education in Australian schools;
- Development of a nationally coordinated promotion of the benefits of languages learning in schools;
- Review of teacher education for languages teachers;
- Development of a *Guide to the Teaching, Learning and Assessing of Languages in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* for teachers and schools;
- Leading Languages Education – a professional learning programme for school principals and leaders;
- 2006 National Seminar on Languages Education “*Maximising the Opportunity*” This event was held in October, 2006;
- Professional Standards Project - development and implementation of a nationally coordinated professional learning programme for languages teachers;
- 2007 National Seminar on Languages Education. This event was held in November, 2007
- Student participation data collection.

The national project which is the subject of this report is directed towards strengthening the quality of Indigenous languages programmes in schools. It will contribute towards the achievement of the objectives listed for Strand 2 (Teacher Supply and Retention) and Strand 3 (Professional Learning) in the *National Plan*.

Complementing the national projects are three national initiatives: the Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning in Practice (ILTLP) Programme, the main aim of which is to develop languages teachers’ knowledge and understanding of intercultural language teaching and learning, with a particular focus on long-term planning and programming; the Endeavour Language Teacher Fellowships (ELTF), which provides opportunities for practising languages



teachers in Australian schools and trainee (preservice) languages teachers in Australian tertiary institutions to improve their language and cultural skills through an intensive short-term study programme; and the Collaborative Structural Reform Project, which aims to identify a range of innovative, cost efficient and pedagogically appropriate models for languages education delivery and collaboration across higher education.

## 2 Aims and Methods

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### 2.1 Scope and Aims

The overall purpose of this Project was to investigate the current provision of Indigenous languages programmes in Australian schools. The outcomes of the Project are intended to inform further action undertaken at a national level to strengthen the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages in Australian schools.

Specifically, the Project was designed to:

- obtain a comprehensive national picture of the current provision of Indigenous languages programmes in Australian schools, including information about teacher preparation, training and professional learning opportunities for teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages delivering or wishing to deliver such programmes;
- identify critical factors contributing to the delivery of good practice Indigenous languages programmes being delivered in Australian schools in a range of settings across Australia;
- promote good practice in Indigenous languages programmes nationally; and
- make key recommendations for action that can be undertaken in the next phase of the Project to improve the sustainability and quality of Indigenous languages programmes delivered in Australian schools.

The main groups to benefit from the Project are intended to be:

- teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages who are delivering programmes in Australian schools and those wishing to deliver such programmes;
- Indigenous and school communities wishing to introduce, improve or expand the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in their schools; and
- policy makers and programme officers from State and Territory education jurisdictions wishing to introduce, improve or expand the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in their schools.

### 2.2 Methods

The following Project components were designed to address the Project aims.

**a) Literature review.** A comprehensive review was conducted of existing national and international literature on Indigenous languages and the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in schools.

Chapter 3 reports the results of this review.

**b) School Indigenous languages programmes.** A comprehensive mapping exercise was conducted to determine and document the numbers and types of Indigenous languages programmes that were delivered in schools in each State and Territory in 2006.

This mapping exercise, in addition to the literature review, was designed to capture a picture of what is happening nationally and identify the ways in which the unique issues associated with the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in schools have been approached in each State and Territory. In addition, the mapping exercise served to highlight gaps in programme support and areas that could benefit from a national approach.

Initial phone and email contact was made with key people from each State and Territory education jurisdiction (Catholic, Independent, and Government schools). Key people were identified through a list provided by DEST, through contact with members of the Project Advisory Group (PAG), through internet searches, and through our own informal networks. A programme mapping proforma was developed (see Appendix 1) and sent to each of the key people with a request to work with colleagues to complete the proforma, if possible prior to consultation visits that were held in each State and Territory. The proformas formed the basis of consultations.

Any gaps in information were filled through follow-up emails and phone calls with the original contacts as well as with other personnel identified during the consultations.

Chapter 4 reports the results of this mapping exercise.

**c) Teacher preparation.** A comprehensive mapping exercise was conducted to determine the range of training and professional learning options and/or teacher preparation courses available to teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages in each State and Territory in 2006 to enable them to deliver such programmes in schools.

A teacher training mapping proforma was developed (see Appendix 2) and sent to identified people in all universities and TAFEs. Key people were identified through the Australian Education Directory, and included Deans of Education, Directors of Indigenous Units, and Directors of TAFEs. We requested that the proforma be forward to an appropriate person within the organisation to complete. In the event of no course or unit provision in the listed areas, we asked for a nil response. We also obtained from DEST a spreadsheet of university returns about information on courses using ASCED codes – one of which relates to Australian Indigenous Languages (ASCED 091517, DEST University Statistics Section, Policy and Analysis Branch, Higher Education Group).

In addition to the original plan of mapping school programmes, and university and TAFE involvement in teacher preparation, we contacted all Indigenous language and cultural centres to obtain information about any language work that they might be involved in with school-aged children and/or people who work in schools.

Chapter 5 reports the results of the mapping of teacher preparation and professional development activity.

**d) Master-Apprentice model of language teaching and learning.** An examination of the Master-Apprentice model of language teaching and learning<sup>2</sup> was conducted with a view to examining its applicability in the Australian setting.

The national and international literature on the Master-Apprentice model was examined and summarised.

In addition, the applicability of a foundation project operating in New South Wales (NSW) that is based on aspects of the Master-Apprentice model was examined. Initially visits were planned to the two NSW schools using the Master-Apprentice model. However, in consultation with NSW Office of the Board of Studies personnel, it was decided that a better opportunity to obtain information about the schools' programmes would be provided by attending a regional Indigenous language workshop in Bourke which would be attended by, amongst others, the school personnel involved in the programmes as well as by NSW Office of the Board of Studies personnel. Subsequent phone calls to involved staff were also made to obtain supplementary information.

Chapter 6 presents details of the Master-Apprentice model of language teaching and learning.

**e) Case studies.** Six examples of good practice of Indigenous languages programmes in schools reflecting different settings were identified. Nominations of good practice school language programmes were sought from the key education jurisdiction personnel identified previously. A nomination proforma was prepared (see Appendix 3) that provided opportunity for comment about the various features of the nominated programmes.

All nominations were discussed at length with the key jurisdiction personnel. Although all nominations appeared to be strong, where choices had to be made, we sought assistance from jurisdiction personnel about how best to prioritise schools in terms of demonstrating good practice.

We tried to achieve a mix of schools/programmes covering a range of characteristics, including:

- language type (first language maintenance; second language learning; language revival [revitalisation, renewal, reclamation]);
- student type (Indigenous and non- Indigenous);
- school type (government and non-government);
- level (primary/secondary); and
- location (metropolitan, rural/regional/provincial, remote).

Chapter 7 presents details of the six examples of good practice in Indigenous language teaching in schools.

**f) Recommended actions.** The final chapter of this report summarises the findings of the project and in light of these findings presents a set of

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<sup>2</sup> This approach aims to preserve or revive a language by pairing a speaker of the target Indigenous language with younger members of Indigenous communities who want to learn the language of their heritage.

recommended actions to be undertaken to improve the sustainability and quality of Indigenous languages programmes delivered in Australian schools as part of a second phase of the Project.

## 3 Historical Overview and Review of the Literature

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### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the national and international literature on Indigenous languages and the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in Australian educational settings.

Section 3.2 begins with a brief overview of the status and nature of language endangerment globally, and then focuses on two major recent reports that highlight the Australian Indigenous language situation – *State of Indigenous Languages in Australia – 2001* (McConvell & Thieberger, 2001) and the *National Indigenous Languages Survey Report* (NILS) (AIATSIS & FATSIL, 2005).

In Section 3.3, two of the most recent edited books concerning the delivery and success of Indigenous languages in educational settings are discussed. These books provide an overview of how, why and by whom Indigenous languages programmes have operated in Australian educational settings. The development of models for training and implementation in schools is also discussed.

In Section 3.4, different types of Indigenous languages programmes are discussed, keeping in mind that there are several national and international models for communities to use for the implementation of their own language programmes.

Section 3.5 contains a brief overview of policy recommendations made by Australian Government bodies over the past twenty years concerning Indigenous languages in education. This section encompasses Inquiries, Reports and Studies that include some aspect of Indigenous language.

Section 3.6 is an overview of State and Territory policy recommendations and documents.

The chapter closes with a brief summary of the dominant themes that have been evident in the literature on Indigenous languages, especially as they pertain to the teaching of Indigenous languages in Australian schools.

### 3.2 Language endangerment

#### International Language Endangerment

According to the UNESCO report *Language Vitality and Endangerment*, “A language is endangered when it is on the path towards extinction . . . when its speakers cease to use it, use it in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and cease to pass it on from one generation to the next. That is, there are no new speakers, either adults or children” (2003, p.3).

In the same report it is documented that of the world’s 6000 languages, 3000 of them are losing speakers and are endangered. In addition there are at least 800 languages that are very close to extinction and “[we] estimate that about 90% of

the languages may be replaced by dominant languages by the end of the twenty-first century” (UNESCO, 2003, p. 3).

The *National Indigenous Languages Survey Report* (2005) also highlights the severity of this global situation:

From a cultural heritage viewpoint, this is a disaster of huge proportions, and one that is moving so fast that international action is needed immediately to deal with it. In the same way as the heritage value of buildings and natural features has been recognized, the importance of intangible heritage is now gradually being appreciated by international and national bodies. Languages are making an appearance on many agendas and the advantages (including socio-economic efficiencies) of using local languages in at least the early stages of education are gradually being accepted in more and more countries. (p.23)

In *Vanishing Voices: The Extinction of the World's Languages*, Nettle and Romaine (2000) argue that linguistic diversity is a benchmark of cultural diversity; that language death is symptomatic of cultural death; and that every person has a right to their own language, to preserve it as a cultural resource, and to transmit it to their children.

In contrast to this is the view that all languages need not be preserved, exemplified in the essay by Kenan Malik (2000) *Let Them Die*. Malik does note, however, the existing nature of the endangerment of the world's languages (including the Australian situation):

At least half of the world's 6000 languages are expected to disappear over the next century; some pessimists suggest that by the year 3000 just 600 languages will be left. According to the American Summer Institute of Linguistics, there are 51 languages with only one speaker left - 28 of them in Australia alone. A further 500 languages are spoken by fewer than 100 speakers, and another 1,500 by fewer than 1,000 speakers. Most will be lucky to survive the next decade. (p. 1)

McConvell and Thieberger (2001) predict that the 6000 or so languages currently spoken in the world will be reduced by at least 50% within the next century. They report Crystal's (2000) speculation that the reduction to one language (English) by around 2100 AD, while not likely, would not be beyond the bounds of possibility at the present levels of attrition. They describe the threat of domination by powerful languages in this way:

This loss of languages has affected the Indigenous people encapsulated in nation states occupied by colonial settlers more severely than any other group, and if the trend continues, will cause the complete loss of such languages in the next century. These languages are in most cases spoken by small populations, subject to social and health problems more severe than the mainstream, and under intense pressure to assimilate to the dominant society and culture, even if lip-service is given to a liberal ideology of self-determination and multiculturalism. The languages threatening them are not (as may be the case in Africa or Asia) medium-sized regional languages in the context of a patchwork of languages of different sizes spoken

throughout the country, but the most powerful languages in the world, each having total dominance within the nation state. (McConvell & Thieberger, 2001, p. 10)

According to Skutnabb-Kangas (2003), the future of 90–95% of the world's spoken languages is threatened in the sense that only 10% or even 5% of today's languages may exist in 2100 as vital, healthy languages that are being passed on to children. Skutnabb-Kangas (2003) claims that:

In all parts of the world, Indigenous peoples (and minorities) are trying to counteract this threat. In many, if not most, cases, the initiatives and demands for linguistic human rights come from the people themselves, not governments or even (outsider) non-government organisations. All generations are involved – elders, parents, youth, even children. (p.81)

The general situation for Canada is described by Kinkade (1991). Of the 60 or so languages originally spoken, at least eight were extinct by 1990 and less than 26 of the remaining languages are likely to survive up to 2040. Thirteen of the original 60 are near extinction and 23 are endangered (that is, the language groups have few speakers under 50 years of age with small percentages of children learning them). Of the remaining languages in Canada, although seen as viable by Kinkade, there are only small populations that support them, a risk factor in itself. In the long-term, Kinkade indicated that only four Indigenous languages were viable (Kinkade, 1991). Norris (1998) revises this estimate to three.

In North America, the original number of Indigenous languages spoken has been estimated to be around 300 (McConvell & Thieberger, 2001), which is comparable with Australian figures. It has been estimated that of the 211 languages surviving in the USA and Canada in 1960, 51 have since disappeared (Zepeda & Hill, 1991) and that recent figures estimate that there will only be 20–30 languages alive in 2040 in North America (Campbell, 1997). Eighty percent of the North American languages spoken at the turn of this century will die in this generation.

To counter this decline in minority languages, Crystal (2000) proposes that an endangered language will progress if it meets the following six criteria:

- its speakers increase their prestige within the dominant community;
- its speakers increase their wealth relative to the dominant community;
- its speakers increase their legitimate power in the eyes of the dominant community;
- its speakers have a strong presence in the educational system;
- its speakers can write their language down; and
- its speakers can make use of electronic technology (Crystal, 2000).

In Australia, the Indigenous people who still speak languages are low on most, if not all, of these counts. On the other hand, it has been shown for Canada (McKay, 1996; Norris, 1998) and some Indigenous language groups in the USA, and argued for in Australia (McKay, 1996), that living in remote areas and/or on the group's traditional lands is conducive to language maintenance (McConvell & Thieberger, 2001).



### **Australian Indigenous Language Endangerment**

In 1990, Schmidt estimated that of the 250-300 Australian Indigenous languages spoken at the time of European settlement only 90 are still surviving (Schmidt, 1990). One contributing factor for this is that the use of an Indigenous language was actively discouraged. The Western Australian Curriculum Council noted that “[t]he surviving traditional languages continue to be threatened by Standard Australian English and there has also been expansion in the use of Aboriginal language varieties such as Aboriginal English and Kriol.” (Western Australian Curriculum Council, 2006, p. 2)

In their report, *State of Indigenous Languages in Australia*, McConvell and Thieberger (2001) noted the following:

- there has been a 90% decrease in the number of Indigenous languages spoken fluently and regularly by all age groups in Australia since 1800;
- there has been a decrease in the percentage of Indigenous people speaking Indigenous languages from 100% in 1800 to 13% in 1996;
- the decrease in the number of Indigenous languages and the percentage of people speaking these languages is accelerating over time;
- if these trends continue unchecked, by 2050 there will no longer be any Indigenous languages spoken in Australia. It is unlikely that this prediction will be borne out in exactly this way since the trend will probably level out, leaving a handful of strong languages still spoken for another generation or two, but the overall scenario is nevertheless bleak; and
- language revival has had an appreciable affect on increasing the number of people identifying as speakers of an Indigenous language in at least one region.

In addition to this report, the recent *National Indigenous Languages Survey Report* (NILS) (2005) by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages (FATSIL) highlights the state of Australia’s Indigenous languages. Three key NILS findings on the state of Australian Indigenous languages are:

- most of Australia’s Indigenous languages are now no longer fully or fluently spoken. As many as 50 languages can be expected to reach this stage of endangerment in the next 20-30 years, as the most severely and critically endangered languages lose their last speakers;
- over 100 Australian Indigenous languages are currently in a very advanced stage of endangerment and will cease being spoken in the next 10-30 years if no decisive action is taken; and
- the pattern of language loss in Australian Indigenous languages is that once the ‘tip’ into language shift starts, it moves very rapidly through the generations. However, small groups of old speakers survive for some languages for up to 20 years after language shift has gone through all generations (AIATSIS & FATSIL, 2005, p. 7).

In Australia, there is a strong movement among many linguists, educators and Indigenous people to preserve Indigenous languages through actively promoting them in educational settings, including through bilingual programmes. For example, Lo Bianco in his report *National Policy on Languages* notes that “[t]he

Australian experience, particularly in the Northern Territory (NT) where bilingual programmes have been implemented since the 1970s shows these programmes to be more effective educationally than other options” (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 113)<sup>3</sup>. In the Australian setting, the promotion and delivery of Indigenous languages programmes is widely accepted as a means of assisting in the general well-being of the Indigenous population by giving Indigenous people an identity in a dominating society, and ‘soothing’ the degree of alienation experienced.

### **3.3 National literature on Indigenous languages education**

Apart from reports and policy statements written for and by national, state, and territory government departments (these are summarised in sections 4.5 and 4.6), there are two publications in particular that provide an overview of important issues for Indigenous languages education in schools. This section summarises the major issues raised in these two publications.

#### ***Australian Languages in Education (Hartman & Henderson)***

The first publication is an edited book (*Aboriginal Languages in Education*, Hartman & Henderson, 1994) covering a wide variety of issues related to Aboriginal languages in education. The abstract of the book gives the following overview:

There is an enormous amount of interest in Aboriginal communities in teaching their languages. A lot of application is going into working out the best ways of doing this, so that programmes often develop gradually through trial and review. A fair amount of experience and skills are being accumulated, but for these language programmes to succeed they need to be well supported by schools and education systems. Many of the problems that arise are the result of the fact that Aboriginal language programmes are still relatively new and have not been properly accepted into school education or education systems. (p. 1)

More than a decade later, Indigenous languages education in schools could still be described as being in its infancy. Some of the more salient issues are raised in the following sections, each of which is derived from separate chapters in the book.

#### ***The newness of Indigenous languages in schools***

The co-editor of the book, John Henderson, summarises the issues regarding the introduction and facilitation of Indigenous languages within education (Henderson, 1994). He identifies the main issue related to implementing Indigenous languages programmes in educational settings as being their relative newness, which results in them not always being sufficiently accepted into educational systems to allow them to function properly.

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<sup>3</sup> “Our world is becoming more dependent on communication and language. Its skilled and proficient use is a key factor in economic and social spheres. Language impinges on all aspects of public and private life and pervades all aspects of society. In 1984, the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts identified the national importance of language issues, and the need to develop Australia’s linguistic resources. This report has been produced in an attempt to devise a national language policy for Australia and to highlight the processes involved in developing such a policy” (Lo Bianco, 1987:abstract).

### *Ideologies of Indigenous languages programmes*

Christine Nicholls (1994) writes about the historical contexts that frame discussions about Indigenous languages programmes (Nicholls, 1994). She comments strongly on the justification for vernacular language programmes in terms of redressing some of the social and psychic fragmentation Indigenous people find themselves dealing with on a day to day basis because of colonisation.

Vernacular language education programmes for Aborigines have as many passionate opponents and staunch defenders as the Aboriginal land rights movements, to which they have a number of structural similarities... it is unarguable that vernacular language programmes and bilingual language programmes contribute to the nurturance of Aboriginal cultural and linguistic heritage. Educational research, however suggests that there are also other critical justifications for both bilingual education programmes and language maintenance programmes. Cultural literacy in English, cognitive development, self concept, verbal intelligence, mental creativity, adaptability, self confidence, and Aboriginal control of education processes, would all seem to be vitally affected by language maintenance programmes or bilingual education programmes. (Nicholls, 1994)

### *Indigenous input into the teaching of languages in schools*

Stephen Harris, a leading advocate of, and writer about, Aboriginal education in the NT, writes about the teaching of Aboriginal languages in Aboriginal schools. Harris (1994) is concerned that there should be a large input of Aboriginal ideas in the planning and implementation of Indigenous languages in schools: "The main thing then for Aboriginal language teaching is for groups of Aboriginal staff to meet together, and sometimes meet together with parents, to work out what *they* want to do with their language, and to involve elders and other knowledgeable local people in the teaching" (p.139).

One important result of the bilingual programmes in the NT was that they exposed the need for the training of Aboriginal teachers. As a result of this, the increased control of some Indigenous schools by Indigenous people has increased the opportunities for Indigenous people to influence language policy. Harris notes three changes in emphasis in local language policies that mark the increased control by Aboriginal teachers in the schools:

- Aboriginal language programmes in schools are to be used more for the purpose of identity expression and language and culture maintenance than for building up academic skills which can be transferred to English;
- where there is more than one Aboriginal language in a community, all those languages should be used in school, and not just the 'main' language; and
- language programmes should have a chance to start in those communities where a bilingual programme has never started. (It isn't necessary to have a full vernacular literacy programme to have a useful Aboriginal language programme) (p.129).

### *Bilingual education*

By way of commenting on bilingual education for Indigenous children, Baarda (1994) presents an evaluation of the bilingual programme at Yuendumu, 1974 to 1993, as follows:

It is difficult to separate what improvements are due to bilingual education and what are due to the general improvement in white attitudes and settlement living conditions. The school is now a healthy socialising institution, no longer destructive of Warlpiri language and culture but contributing to maintenance and development. Children are prepared by the school to be good citizens in Warlpiri communities, unlike the old system which encouraged them to aspire to leave their community without giving them the skills to join the mainstream. However low levels of academic achievement and lack of secondary education opportunities are still a problem. Community support for bilingual education and Aboriginalisation could be lost even though these are not the cause of low levels of achievement. (p.204)

#### *Formulating frameworks for Indigenous languages in schools*

Joyce Hudson (1994) writes about the challenge in Western Australia (WA) of developing a curriculum document that could be used by schools to assist in their delivery of Aboriginal language programmes. She says:

By 1989, the Ministry of Education in Western Australia had launched a project with Commonwealth funding to develop a framework for the teaching of Aboriginal languages. This presented a great challenge because of the large number of different languages and the fact that some were nearly lost, while others were strong and in regular use by whole communities. It was decided to provide a framework which could be a curriculum document from which all Aboriginal languages in the state could be taught. The framework was developed incorporating four features: realistic goals; limited clientele; a school based language team; and an induction programme. (p.163)

The Framework was designed to be used in primary schools with a significant proportion of Aboriginal students, in areas where the traditional Aboriginal language is still known and used by adults in the local community, and where there is strong community support for the teaching of Aboriginal languages in the school.

One of the results of incorporating more organised Indigenous languages programmes in WA schools was the need to offer training. In the late 1980s, Pundulmurra College<sup>4</sup> in the Pilbara of WA commenced a pilot training programme for Indigenous people who worked, or would like to work, in Indigenous languages programmes. Since then, a systematic programme of preparing and accrediting Indigenous people to teach Indigenous languages in WA schools has been developed.

#### *Indigenous Community Schools and languages education*

Bucknall and Bucknall (1994) discuss the important issues of intent (“We want to keep that language...”), motivation of the Aboriginal community, and the actual delivery and implementation of language programmes in Aboriginal community schools. Their chapter provides a general introduction to the nine Aboriginal Independent Community Schools operating in WA at that time, and their

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<sup>4</sup> Now known as the East Pilbara College of TAFE.

commitment to Aboriginal language programmes. The extent to which motivation and implementation tend to be uneasy bedfellows is examined, as well as a number of the more practical difficulties involved in the way they operate.

Bucknall and Bucknall describe how, in WA in the mid-1970s, community Elders living on Strelley Station in the Pilbara were considering the idea that in order to maintain their languages, schools needed to incorporate languages into their curriculum. Bucknall and Bucknall note that the idea of bilingual schools was taking shape in the NT at this time. In WA, however, “the assimilationist policies and practices of the previous decade continued to shape an English-only approach to the classroom” (p.257).

### ***Language: Maintenance, Power and Education (Walton and Eggington)***

The second publication that highlights important issues in Indigenous languages education is an edited collection of papers that arose out of the *Cross Cultural Issues in Educational Linguistics* Conference held at Batchelor College in the NT in 1987 (Walton & Eggington, 1990). The papers in the volume were organised around three themes: language and power, language maintenance, and language in education.

#### *Language and power*

The interest in the relationship between language and power was a major theme of the conference and the volume included five papers with this focus. Authors, such as Michael Christie and Mandaway (Bakamana) Yunupingu, noted that although bilingual education gave Aboriginal people control over what happened in the classroom, the actual control of the school had to be facilitated through other means. One such method could be via the ‘Aboriginalisation’ of the school whereby meetings needed to be conducted entirely in the Indigenous language<sup>5</sup>.

#### *Language maintenance*

“Bilingual Education seems ... to have provided the means whereby English can be learnt, without necessarily threatening Aboriginal languages. Learning English and learning an Aboriginal language are not seen as mutually exclusive options, but rather as complementary tasks” (Walton & Eggington, 1990, p. xii).

Walton and Eggington (1990) noted that when bilingual education began in the NT in the 1970s, many non-Aboriginal educators supported the programmes primarily in pedagogical terms. That is, there was support for the notion that literacy skills would develop more easily in English if the first language was used as a base upon which to build those skills. Aboriginal educators, however, had a different, though complementary agenda. They saw bilingual education as a language maintenance issue.

Devlin (1990) discusses the relationship between bilingual education and language maintenance. In his paper, he presents an overview of the international literature on this relationship, and one of the main conclusions he makes is that schools and communities share the responsibility for keeping languages alive.

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<sup>5</sup> In the case of Yirrkala Community School, Yolngu was the language used.

### *Language in education*

Whatever the type of Indigenous language programme offered in schools, the actual language used in the classroom is a central issue for educators. If the school employs an English-only policy in a community where the children predominantly speak the Indigenous language, the need for Indigenous involvement will often be imperative for the effective implementation of the school programme. The paper by Gray (1990) addresses the issue of language use in the classroom. He focuses attention on how to create more successful language learning contexts, whatever language is being used. Gray also explores the idea of learning styles in relation to literacy teaching. He proposes that

[m]any of the learning difficulties Aboriginal children experience in schools occur primarily because schools are deeply embedded within a literacy-oriented culture of a kind that has been labelled 'essayist' That is, the way learning is negotiated in schools reflects those ways of using language to learn that belong to what we could call a particular Western or European style of Literacy. This literacy-oriented culture pervades both what is taught in schools and how it is taught. (p.107)

## **3.4 Types of Indigenous languages programmes in schools**

Since Indigenous languages have been incorporated into school programmes in Australia, the form or type of programme has been determined largely by such factors as:

- availability of Indigenous staff, including community Elders;
- policy of school and government(s);
- amount of support needed – community, resources, linguists;
- the type of school – government, Catholic, independent, Aboriginal community school; and
- the strength of the Indigenous language(s).

The last point is the basis of attempts to describe different types of language programmes to accommodate a variety of language situations. Amery (2002) contends that it is important to avoid using too many terms that mean more or less the same thing. Johnson (1986) suggested four names for programmes that might suit different types of language maintenance:

- continuation programmes – a label used to describe situations where a vernacular language is used by all generations of speakers;
- renewal programmes – used for situations where the language is spoken by adults but not children;
- revival programmes – used where languages are only spoken by a few elderly speakers; and
- resurrection programmes – used to describe programmes where there are no speakers left.

In 1992, an *Aboriginal Languages Framework* was developed for the WA education department (Hudson, 1994). The framework included programme guidelines for a number of different types of language situations. It was the forerunner of the Australian Indigenous Languages Framework (AILF) produced in South Australia in 1996 (SSABSA, 1996a). The AILF describes a range of

programme types to accommodate the diversity of Australian Indigenous language situations and is summarised in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1 The Australian Indigenous Languages Framework<sup>6</sup>**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| First Language Maintenance                 | A language is used daily by a sizeable speech community and so can be incorporated into children's schooling  |
| Second Language Learning                   | A strong language is taught to a wide range of learners in the Languages area of learning — in much the same way as non-Indigenous languages are  |
| Language Revival, and its three sub-types: |   |
| Revitalisation                             | A language still spoken by the older generation needs special support for it to be transmitted to the younger generations   |
| Renewal                                    | A language is no longer spoken 'right through' by anyone, but enough knowledge exists to form a language learning programme   |
| Reclamation                                | There has been a complete break in the transmission of the spoken language, but there is sufficient evidence (e.g., historical records, related languages) for language reconstruction and learning |
| Language Awareness                         | The little bits that are known about a language can be incorporated into another area of learning (e.g., Society and Environment), but are not enough for sustained language learning               |

The *NSW Aboriginal Languages Interim Framework K–10* (NSW Board of Studies, 1998; 2001) uses similar but not identical terminology to describe language programme types – Language Enhancement and Language Maintenance have replaced the Language Revitalisation and Language Renewal subtypes of Language Revival, respectively. Amery (2002) considers this to be unfortunate because Language Maintenance has prior usage in the AILF and other pre-existing classifications (e.g., McConvell, 1986), whereby the term applies to strong languages that are still spoken fluently by all members of the community.

The range of programme types gives rise to the observation by Henderson and Nash (1997) that:

Programmes vary enormously in terms of teaching hours, resources, accreditation, assessment and nearly every other characteristic of a teaching programme. Some programmes consist of informal and irregular visits to classes by Aboriginal people for language and/or culture sessions. Programmes may be a regular and continuing part of schooling, or might not be sustained for long. There are some fully accredited courses, even at senior secondary level. (p.17)

### *Bilingual Education*

One type of Indigenous language programme that has attracted both proponents and detractors is the bilingual programme. Bilingual programmes are often promoted as a route to the mastery of English as a second language. Children are taught literacy and numeracy skills and concepts first in their mother tongue (first language) so that they are able to use and understand them without conceptual interference from another language. The concepts learned in the mother tongue are later applied to the second language.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/curric/pages/languages/indigenous/>

A growing body of research evidence shows that well-designed bilingual programmes are academically effective and do not hold back students' acquisition of English (Crawford, 1997; Hornberger & Chick, 2001; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1990). Research suggests that if literacy is established in a child's first language, it is easier to switch to another language (Crawford, 1997). Research also suggests that childhood bilingualism enhances cognitive ability by promoting classification skills, concept formation, analogical reasoning, visual-spatial skills, and creativity gains (Chipongian, 2000).

In addition to the academic and cognitive benefits associated with bilingualism, there appears to be a consensus among those actively working in the area that bilingual education can assist in providing a sense of identity to speakers of Indigenous languages and their descendants. It is regularly asserted that the alienation felt by many Indigenous people can be ameliorated by connection to their heritage via language programmes of various kinds. Positive effects such as increased motivation and self-esteem, and participation in school have also been reported (Benson, 2001; Tuafuti & McCaffery, 2005).

In Australia, bilingual education began in some South Australian schools in the late 1960s; bilingual programmes were introduced in some NT and WA schools from 1973. In 2000, bilingual education programmes in Aboriginal schools in the NT were renamed Two Way Learning programmes, although three remote Catholic schools continue to use the term 'bilingual'.

In *Indigenous Languages and Culture in Northern Territory Schools. Report 2004-2005*, two way learning is described as being "based on a sociolinguistic perspective with an emphasis on culture and power dynamics within the social context" (NT DEET, 2005, p. 26).

A change of government resulted in the Two Way Learning programme returning to its original title of the Bilingual Education Programme. In 2005, the Hon. S. Sterling, Minister for Employment, Education and Training announced in NT Legislative of Assembly that:

The government is also putting bilingual education back on the agenda. It is another important teaching methodology, with some initial evidence that results from bilingual appeared generally better than other like schools. More evidence is being collected and evaluated. The program will be discussed within the community engagement process, not imposed on communities, and given its resource-heavy nature will be carefully rolled out. .... Where people see the importance and relevance of sending children to school, regular attendance should follow. Our support of bilingual education will also demonstrate to some communities our commitment to valuing an indigenous contribution to education that should act in itself to improve attendance.<sup>7</sup>

Bilingual education programmes in the NT use two formal models of bilingual education. The first is the step or staircase model; the second is the 50/50 model.

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<sup>7</sup> NT Hansard Part 1 - Debates - Wednesday 24 August 2005 Debates - Tenth Assembly, First Session - 16/08/2005 - Parliamentary Record No: 2.



The step model is the more common approach. This model aims to bridge students from literacy in their first language to literacy in English by Year 4 by gradually increasing the use of English as the language of instruction. The introduction of English and the ratio of first language to English varies according to local conditions and availability of resources. The 50/50 model, as the name suggests, gives approximately equal space for first language and English literacy and cultural instruction.

Bilingual education in practice in Australian (mostly NT) schools has sometimes been criticised as a transfer-to-English programme only. The House of Representatives Select Committee on Aboriginal Education (1985) observed:

As with Aboriginal education generally, bilingual education reflects the tensions which exist between the acquisition of knowledge and skills to allow Aboriginal people to live without disadvantage in the wider society on the one hand, and the retention of Aboriginal culture on the other. Much debate about bilingual education has taken place between those who see bilingual education merely as an effective way of developing literacy in English ('transfer' model of bilingual education) and those who see bilingual education as being an important means of maintaining Aboriginal language and culture while also enabling the acquisition of literacy in English (a 'maintenance' model of bilingual education). (p.53)

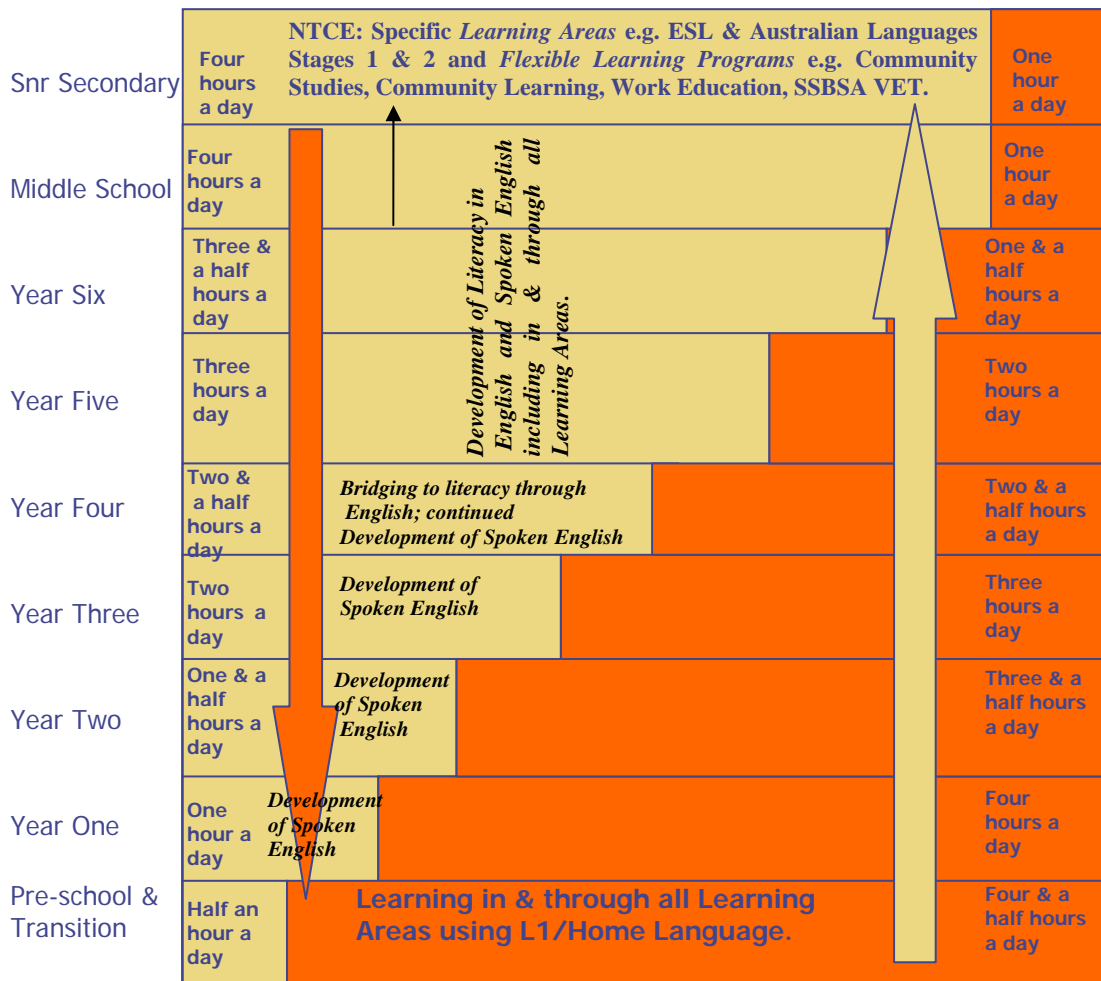
However the Handbook for Aboriginal Bilingual Education in the NT (1989, p. 8) states that Aim 4 is:

To develop such skills in oral English that by Year 5 English becomes the major language of instruction and of literacy, with the vernacular maintained for continued literacy development and for teaching of both traditional and modern knowledge where appropriate.

Other aims that are pertinent to the sustainability, development, and passing on of Indigenous languages and cultures are:

- Aim 2: foster greater proficiency in school work through the use of the Aboriginal language where appropriate;
- Aim 3: develop a more positive self concept in each child through systematic use of instruction, and the incorporation of studies of other aspects of traditional Aboriginal knowledge;
- Aim 7: Develop closer communication, involvement and mutual understanding between the school and the community it serves and promote in children and their parents a positive attitude towards education and school attendance; and
- Aim 8: Develop a better understanding of both cultures – that of the Aboriginal people themselves (and not only a particular community) and of the non-aboriginal family.

The current NT staircase model which supports the use of vernacular in Senior Secondary schooling is as follows:



**Figure 3.1** NT Step or Staircase Model

### *Language Education, Bilingualism, and Language Shift*

Discussions about bilingualism often occur in the context of discussions about the reversal of language shift. Language shift is a process whereby people who habitually speak one language switch to speaking another language and, in the process, cease using their first language.

Fishman (1991) proposed an eight-stage model for reversing language shift and recommended that efforts should concentrate on the earlier stages, until they have been consolidated, before proceeding to the later stages. Most of the earlier stages take place completely in the community, independent of any government action or initiatives. The involvement of educational institutions and schools, especially those representing government-financed compulsory education, occurs at a later stage when the community has already done a lot of both ideological clarification and language learning, possibly developing a written form of the language. Table 3.2 outlines Fishman's stages and shows that the achievement of bilingualism occurs at a late stage in the process.

**Table 3.2 Reversing Language Shift (from Fishman, 1991)**

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Stage 1 | Acquisition of the language by adults, who may effectively act as language apprentices (recommended where most of the remaining speakers of the language are elderly and socially isolated from other speakers of the language).  |
| Stage 2 | Create a socially integrated population of active speakers of the language, thereby creating a community of people who use the language frequently (at this stage it is usually best to concentrate mainly on the spoken language rather than the written language).  |
| Stage 3 | In localities where there are a reasonable number of people habitually using the language, encourage the informal use of the language among people of all age groups and within families and bolster its daily use through the establishment of local neighbourhood institutions in which the language is encouraged, protected and (in certain contexts at least) used exclusively. (At this stage it may be useful for speakers to be aware of the personal advantages of being bilingual). |
| Stage 4 | In areas where oral competence in the language has been achieved in all age groups, encourage literacy in the language but in a way that does not depend upon assistance from (or goodwill of) the state education system.  |
| Stage 5 | Where the state permits it, and where numbers warrant, encourage the use of the language in lieu of compulsory state education (at this stage it may be useful for speakers of the language to be aware of the benefits of <i>bilingual education</i> ).  |
| Stage 6 | Where the above have largely been achieved, encourage the use of the language in the workplace (lower work sphere).   |
| Stage 7 | Where the above have largely been achieved, encourage use of the language in local government services and mass media.  |
| Stage 8 | Where the above have largely been achieved, encourage use of the language in higher education, government etc.  |

One implication of Fishman's model for the teaching of Indigenous languages in Australian schools is clear. School language programmes, by their very nature (e.g., time limited, still in their infancy), will not by themselves lead to the reversal of language shift. They may, however, be one contributing factor in creating an environment in which progression through the stages can be achieved.

### **Indigenous Languages in Education Internationally**

In a number of international jurisdictions, Indigenous populations are given a variety of legislative and constitutional support to maintain and revive language, culture and custom. Some examples are outlined below.

#### *New Zealand*

Language shift from Māori to English began in New Zealand in the 1940s and 1950s as Māori migrated from communities in rural New Zealand to cities. The language of instruction in schools at this time was exclusively English and some Māori families ceased to use Māori as the language of their homes. By the 1970s, it was predicted that 'Māori would be a language without native speakers' once that generation of Māori speaking parents had passed on.

In response to the decline in Māori language, a number of initiatives were begun, including Te Ataarangi (community-based programme of Māori language learning in which native speakers were trained to be tutors); Te Kohanga Reo (total immersion Māori language family programme for young children from birth to six years of age); and Kura Kaupapa Māori (Kura kaupapa Māori are total immersion schools designed by Māori for Māori).

In addition, successful Indigenous language maintenance and revival in New Zealand has been influenced by the 1986 Māori Language Act declaring Māori the official language of New Zealand; the Māori Language Commission (MLC), which advises government on policy and grants certificates in Māori; recognition of Indigenous rights to language in the New Zealand Bill of Rights; and the existence of a single Māori language.

New Zealand also has a National Māori Language Strategy, which was revised by Te Puni Kōkiri (the Ministry of Māori Development) in 2003. The revision was intended to support the revitalisation of te reo Māori. The new strategy attempts to ensure a more coordinated approach by Government to its Māori language activities and that such activities occur in partnership with Māori people.

#### *Scandinavia*<sup>8</sup>

There is a relatively strong movement in the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden, and Finland and in the Kola Peninsula of Russia to protect the Sami language.

The Sami language group consists of nine dialects that are classified into three main language groups. These are dialects of the southern region including Umesami and Southsami; of the central region including Pitesami, Lulesami and Northsami; and of the eastern region including Enaresami, Skoltsami, Akkala/Kildinsami and Tersami. Six of the dialects have their own written language. These are Eneresami, Northsami, Kildinsami, Lulesami, Southsami and Eastsami.

The report *Investigation on the use of Sami from 1999 (Undersøkelse om bruken av samisk fra 1999)* estimates that 23,000 people use Sami language in Norway and most of these reside in inner-Finmark. The Southsami language is spoken by approximately 10% of the total population. In Finland the Sami population is estimated to be 5,000, of whom approximately one fifth use their native language. On the Kola Peninsula of Russia, approximately half the Sami population use their native language.

The northern region languages are relatively strong but there is significant language endangerment amongst the languages of the southern and eastern regions. A period of renewed interest in Sami language and culture has assisted in the renewal and revival of these languages amongst Indigenous populations. Similar provisions for the teaching of Sami languages exist in Sweden, Finland and Norway, with students in Sami homeland areas being entitled to instruction in

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<sup>8</sup> Information about the Sami language was retrieved from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sami\\_languages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sami_languages)

their mother-tongue, should it be requested or desired by their parents or guardians.

In Norway, responsibility for Sami language is an important element in cultural policy. The Sami language council is run out of the Sametinget/Sàmidiggi (Sami Parliament). Sami is an official language in the municipalities of Kautokeino, Karasjok, Kåfjord, Nesseby, Sør-Varanger and Tana. Article 110a of the Constitution states that “It is the responsibility of the authorities of the State to create conditions enabling the Sami people to preserve and develop its language, culture and way of life.”

In Sweden, individual municipalities have responsibility for primary and secondary school education. Sami students can attend Sami or mainstream State schools. The Sami schools provide Sami children with an education that also deals with Sami and is equivalent to an education in the Swedish nine-year compulsory school. Instruction is given in both Swedish and Sami, and the Sami language is taught every year of a child’s schooling.

A special board, the Sami School Board, is responsible for the operation of the Sami schools. The Sami School Board is appointed by the Sami Parliament, a popularly elected government body established in 1993. Its mission is to examine issues dealing with Sami culture in Sweden. The Sami schools are funded by the State. A municipality can make an agreement with the Sami School Board to arrange integrated Sami education for Sami students in a compulsory school. The municipality will then receive State funding for providing this education.

The national curriculum for compulsory schools specifies what students attending Sami schools should have achieved beyond the standard curriculum of regular compulsory schools. The Sami schools are responsible for ensuring students are well versed in the Sami cultural heritage and are able to speak, read, and write the Sami language. In 1995, the National Agency for Education established a syllabus for the Sami language and determined that other subjects would follow the standard syllabi for compulsory schools.

In Finland, Sami language rights are recognised in the Finnish Constitution and the Finnish Language Act, which provides for equality of use in official and court contexts of native language and access to education and public careers. Sami is the only recognised Indigenous culture in Finland and the Sami Language Act provides for the use of Sami as an official language in Sami homeland areas. The Sami language can be the language of instruction in basic, general and vocational upper secondary education, and it can be taught both as the mother tongue and as a foreign language. In the four municipalities in which the majority of Sami people live, Sami-speaking pupils must be provided with basic education primarily in the Sami language, according to the wishes of their parents or guardians.

#### *Canada*

In 2005, the Canadian Taskforce on Aboriginal Language and Cultures published *Towards a New Beginning: A foundation report for a strategy to revitalise First Nation, Inuit and Métis languages and cultures*. In relation to language education,

the report noted the benefits of bilingualism and immersion language learning, highlighting in particular the funding disparity between federal French language immersion and First Nation, Inuit and Métis language immersion programmes. The taskforce recommended equivalent funding for such programmes and equivalent programme provision as for French and English immersion programmes. The taskforce also noted that First Nations schools funded by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development lack financial and other resources to provide effective second language learning proficiency amongst students.

Elders consulted by the taskforce requested training programmes including bilingual and immersion schools, cultural camps and urban language programmes; First Nation, Inuit and Métis control of language curricula; development of educational resources; encouragement of youth to take up leadership roles in language preservation; the development of other training resources; and formal acknowledgement of Elders' ability to teach languages, including appropriate professional recognition.

### **3.5 Australian policy statements and recommendations with regard to Indigenous languages education from the late 1980s**

This section outlines policy recommendations – made by way of reports commissioned by Australian Government bodies over the past twenty or so years – concerning Indigenous languages in education. It will become clear that the authors of many inquiries, studies and reports have consulted and investigated and made many recommendations. This section will summarise some of these documents, referring particularly to major recommendations made. National studies and policy statements are presented chronologically, followed by a survey of state-based policies. Inquiries based on research, submissions or oral testimonies are included in this survey of the relevant literature; opinion pieces are generally ignored. Although there may be a great deal of activity in support of Indigenous languages in any one place, this section of the literature review focuses on publicly available documents only, and so may not cover recent community-based activities.

A number of Australian policy documents were produced in the 1990s at the Federal level, following on from the *National Language Policy* (PLANLangPol Committee, 1983) and the *National Policy on Languages* (Lo Bianco 1987). These include the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (1992) report, *Language and Culture – A matter of survival*, and McKay's (1996) *The land still speaks: Review of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language maintenance and development needs and activities*.

We will not repeat arguments here about the importance of maintaining Indigenous languages or debates about numbers of speakers or the degree of language loss. Where reports only touch on, but do not focus on, educational implications of Indigenous languages programmes we only comment on that aspect here. However, it should be noted that community support for Indigenous

language work is critical and that, since community support is often channelled through local language centres, the policies and funding associated with community language activities has an impact on the quality of programmes possible in local schools.

*National Policy on Languages (1987) and the National Aboriginal Languages Program*

In the 1970s the Federal Government was instrumental in establishing the NT bilingual education programme, which entailed the establishment of a number of literature production centres. Recognising the need for the training of Indigenous language workers, the School of Australian Linguistics was established as a resource for the bilingual programme. However, it was not until 1987 that a national language policy was developed.

The National Policy on Languages (Lo Bianco, 1987) was established in 1987 with funding from the National Aboriginal Language Programme (NALP<sup>9, 10</sup>) that ran for three years. According to Lo Bianco and Language Australia (2000), this was the first Australian public policy recognition of Indigenous languages.

In relation to Indigenous languages in school programmes, the National Policy included the statement:

Policies and educational programmes which actively operate to protect the continued use of living Aboriginal languages necessarily imply [three measures, including]...bilingual and bicultural education programmes...As far as English is concerned, these programmes ought to provide a sound basis in the first language for the acquisition of English and the development of the highest standards of literate and spoken Standard Australian English. [...] the first language would be maintained throughout schooling, allocated an important status in and treated as a serious part of the children's education. (Lo Bianco, 1987, pp. 108-109)

The policy outlined the educational grounds and advantages in bilingual programmes as including:

- enhanced effectiveness of general education when it takes place in the language most familiar to the learners and when it begins from cultural values and contexts understood by the learners;
- an increase in self-esteem among participants in the programme; and
- a second language is best acquired when young.

Lo Bianco also recognised that for Aboriginal people who are unfamiliar with a traditional language "[i]t is highly desirable that opportunities be made available for the teaching of accredited school courses and adult education programmes in some Aboriginal languages" (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 116), and that all Australian students should be able to study Aboriginal languages.

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<sup>9</sup> Information on NALP is taken from the 1992 report *A matter of survival: Report of the Inquiry into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Maintenance* (Riley-Mundine & Roberts, 1990).

<sup>10</sup> The Aboriginal Languages Initiatives Programme has since replaced the NALP. In recent years, the DEEWR and NT DEET have jointly implemented a program called the National Accelerated Literacy Program, which is also known as NALP but which focuses on English literacy.

To achieve these aims, Lo Bianco recommended establishment of a standing committee to implement the NALP, through the Commonwealth Schools Commission, as well as establishment of a key centre of language teaching and research on Aboriginal languages, based at Batchelor College.

The NALP was a short, fixed-term programme with submission-based annual funding as follows:

- \$0.5m - 1987-88
- \$1m - 1988-89
- \$1m - 1989-90.

Despite considerable opposition from language centres and Aboriginal language peak bodies like the Aboriginal Languages Association, subsequent NALP money was rolled into the *Aboriginal Education Policy* (AEP) with 60% of NALP funds allocated to projects having a direct educational focus supportive of, and complementary to, the objectives of the AEP. The NALP Review (Riley-Mundine & Roberts, 1990) noted that NALP was funded by the Government at half the level requested - \$2.5 million instead of \$5.0 million over three years.

The distribution of funds across groups was given by the Review as:

- 56% of NALP funding has gone to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and regional language centres;
- 20% to government schools;
- 5% to independent Indigenous schools;
- 2% to Catholic schools; and
- 17% to institutions, private companies, individuals (Riley-Mundine & Roberts 1990, p.114).

The NALP review criticised NALP for:

having an overly educational orientation, lacking clarity in programme goals, and having little co-ordination between projects. The Review stressed regional language centres as the key to developing language education projects. The Review found that NALP had begun to redress the serious neglect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and that the educational, linguistic, and cultural potential of the programme was enormous. They stressed, however, that language has a far greater significance than education. "Language is the key to a person's culture and culture is the very essence of a person's identity". (Reported in House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 1992, 6.14.)

Thus, despite a promising start offered by NALP funding, the opportunity was taken by government to resume this special funding allocation into what should have been the normal Education Departments' funding regimes.

#### *Australian Language and Literacy Policy (1991)*

The Green Paper on a draft *Australian Language and Literacy Policy* (ALLP) was released in December 1990. The third of its three goals dealt with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and stated: "Those Aboriginal and Torres Strait



Islander languages still actively transmitted to and used by children must be maintained and developed. All others should be recorded, where possible, for the benefit of the descendants of their speakers and for the nation's heritage" (Dawkins, 1990, p.123). This focus on stronger languages was problematic as it ignored the many surviving languages that were not still actively being transmitted.

In August 1991, the Department of Employment, Education and Training issued a White Paper, *Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy* (Dawkins, 1991). Its main aim was to guide government expenditure and policy in relation to adult English language and literacy provision, and, while improving proficiency in English for Aboriginal people was a clear goal of the programme, it did also deal with Indigenous languages. It observed that:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages should be maintained and developed where they are still transmitted. Other languages should be assisted in an appropriate way, for example, through recording. These activities should only occur where the speakers so desire and in consultation with their community, for the benefit of the descendants of their speakers and for the nation's heritage. (p.128)

It announced a Commonwealth commitment to:

- provide funding of \$1.75 million under the ALLP in 1991-92, rising to \$3.0 million in following years, to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Initiatives Programme (ATSILIP), in support of community-based language maintenance, development, research and retrieval; and
- target funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language education support under the Aboriginal Education Policy for the 1993-95 triennium. These funds were used, for example, to develop curriculum materials in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages other than English, and to assist in training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working in language education programmes. Under the AEP, a total of \$2.63 million was to be provided for Aboriginal literacy, English as a Second Language (ESL) and language education in 1992-93, rising to \$5.25 million in 1993-94 and 1994-95.

There were no funds for continuing operational expenses. ATSILIP was expanded in the next three years as a result of an additional \$9 million from the Language Access Initiatives Programme (LAIP), which was received in response to recommendations 12a and b in the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) report *Bringing them Home* (see below).

The ALLP also provided for the adoption of a *National Aboriginal Languages and Literacy Strategy* (NALLS) as part of the ALLP effective from January 1, 1993. The objectives of NALLS were to increase funding for the Aboriginal Languages Initiatives Programme (which replaced the earlier National Aboriginal Languages Project); encourage the establishment of a network of regional Aboriginal languages committees and a related national federation to participate fully in decision-making processes relating to the Aboriginal languages elements of the NALLS; and ensure the involvement of the Aboriginal Education

Consultative Groups (AECGs) in each State and Territory in planning and monitoring the implementation of the strategies. The report set four objectives for Indigenous languages:

- to engage in long term planning in Aboriginal language issues that fully involves Aboriginal people;
- to engage in high quality Aboriginal language programmes appropriate to the needs of the communities (recording, retrieval, maintenance or development, for example through bilingual programmes), in consultation and negotiation with Aboriginal communities;
- to increase the supply and quality of teachers of Aboriginal languages in order to ensure effective learning; and
- to provide professional development for Aboriginal people.

*Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991)*

This was a major and wide ranging report that promoted the importance of Indigenous languages in providing a sense of identity and personal worth. The report quotes favourably the aims of the Kaurua Plains School, including that it, "Ensure an awareness and respect for the Aboriginal child's own language" (33.1.115). The report also noted that "A lack of Aboriginal language and culture in school curriculum was ... the main reason for an identity crisis suffered by many young people". The WA Aboriginal Consultative Group saw "inappropriate curricula as a direct cause of reduced self-esteem and educational achievement amongst students in the Kimberly region" (33.1.16).

It is significant that the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody recommended:

That government and funding bodies reflect the importance of the National Aboriginal Language Policy in the provision of funds to Aboriginal communities and organisations (2: 141) (Recommendation 55).

*Language and Culture – A Matter of Survival: Report of the Inquiry into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Maintenance (1992)*

This Report to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, arose from concerns about the decline in speaker numbers for many Australian languages and so it made recommendations about ways in which to stem that decline. Several of these recommendations relate to the use of Indigenous languages in school-based programmes.

Specifically, the recommendations included that the pre-service training of teachers should ensure that they are adequately prepared to appreciate the special needs of Indigenous students, and their social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Recommendation 12), and that further training, including teaching English as a Second Language, should be provided for teachers in remote community schools (Recommendation 13 and 14).

A number of recommendations were made relating to school-based education. The first such recommendation sought to ensure that bilingual and bicultural education is provided to all Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children whose first language is other than English, where the community sought such education

and had a sufficient number of speakers to support the programme. The report also recommended that bilingual education be based on the maintenance model, that appropriate pay scales for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers of language be developed, that curriculum materials for the teaching of English as a second dialect (sic) be commissioned and that an Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages be funded to run within a university setting (Recommendations 27-32).

*ATSIC Native Title Social Justice Measures Report (1995)*

In the mid-1990s, a language agenda was set out in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages section of *Recognition Rights and Reform*, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Commission's (ATSIC) 1995 *Report to Government on Native Title Social Justice Measures*.

Language is identified in the report as an integral part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. It is noted in the Report that language retention benefits Indigenous communities in terms of self-esteem, preservation of cultural identity, and community cohesion.

In terms of language in school education, the report recommends that "The Commonwealth Government ensure State and Territory Governments implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programmes which are agreed to by the local community at early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary levels" (Recommendation 92).

*Desert Schools: An Investigation of English Language and Literacy among Young Aboriginal People in Seven Communities (1996)*

This report, from the Australian Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs and the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia, explicitly deals only with a group of seven communities and emphasises in its findings that it is not making any claims about the broader sphere of Indigenous education. It observes that professional development of teachers across the curriculum should incorporate theory and methodologies appropriate for teaching English to speakers of Aboriginal languages and include training in culturally-responsive curriculum design. In the pre-service teacher education reviewed by the Desert Schools project, focus was found to be generally lacking in the following areas:

- English/literacy/ESL as it relates to the interface with community/Indigenous languages and interculturally-appropriate pedagogy; and
- theoretical and pedagogic understandings required for the Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

The following key findings and recommendations were made:

- English language and literacy development for their young people is a major goal for the communities (Vol.1, p. 5);
- communities expressed strong concern that English language and literacy development not be at the expense of community language (Vol 1, p. 6);
- the quality of intercultural communication and intercultural learning in the school setting relies very heavily on the extent to which cultural

- understandings are developed over time, and particularly on mutual respect and ability to accommodate and develop shared aims; and
- the development of a genuinely two way exchange of knowledge and language is a critical aspect of effective pedagogy (Vol 1, p. 9).

*The Land Still Speaks: Review of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Maintenance and Development Needs and Activities (1996)*

This was a major report commissioned by the National Board of Employment, Education and Training and conducted in 1994. It included four case studies and an extensive literature review.

A number of conclusions about the ways in which Indigenous languages programmes in communities and schools should be set up were made, including:

- that control be vested in the Indigenous community, especially the local Elders;
- that Indigenous community values be supported rather than overridden or undermined;
- that curriculum development be carried out at the local level to ensure that programmes are relevant and appropriate for local students and owned by the local community; and
- that framework documents are used where available to benefit the broader experience while recognising the key role of local decision-makers in determining the detailed of the local implementation of the programme (McKay, 1996, p. 118).

The report further concluded that appropriate training (pre- and in-service) in language teaching methodology should be made available to those involved in language teaching in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, preferably on-site in the case of remote areas. The important role of Elders and the authority and knowledge that they bring to language programmes was also noted and it was acknowledged that all the necessary expertise in both language and education may not be available in a single individual, making a team approach within the programme essential.

Summaries of key recommendations are presented here to demonstrate their major foci, which were that Indigenous languages programmes should be maintained and increased, and that there should be an increase in funding to support them.

- The Commonwealth fund an ongoing information and research dissemination activity in consultation with appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bodies, to provide people in communities and local language programmes with information on, and inspiration from, the experience of other communities and language projects. The activity could provide information on:
  - how to document languages;
  - how to encourage others to speak and support Indigenous languages;
  - what language resources are useful;
  - what can be done in schools;
  - what can be done in community language programmes; and
  - how to teach language effectively (Recommendation 4).

- The Department of Employment, Education and Training fund the development, in conjunction with appropriate tertiary education bodies and language centres, of specific training in language teaching methodology appropriate for Indigenous languages. The Commonwealth, State and non-government education authorities cooperate to develop systematic structures to permit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to identify potential Indigenous languages teachers to undergo this training, once developed (Recommendation 9).
- Recognition of language and culture expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language speakers for the purposes of employment within teaching and curriculum development teams, leading to development of appropriate pay structures and certification of language expertise. The corresponding lack of language and culture expertise in non-Aboriginal staff be recognised (Recommendation 10).
- Provide pre-service training that incorporates awareness of, and sensitivity to, students of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Provide specialised training for those who are posted to schools with significant numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (Recommendation 11).
- Education authorities to ensure that teachers and principals in schools in Indigenous communities actively support Indigenous language and culture programmes (Recommendation 12).
- Recognition of Indigenous language and cultures as core subjects to be taught by or under the control of local community Elders (Recommendation 13).
- Funding be channelled by State and Federal agencies to Aboriginal Language Centres and appropriate community organisations for the provision of educational programmes targeted at Indigenous languages (Recommendations 14 and 15).

*Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families (1997)*

The *Bringing Them Home Report* (HREOC, 1997) recommended that funding for Indigenous language, culture and history centres be expanded to ensure regional and national coverage; and that such centres be funded to record and maintain local languages and teach those languages, particularly to people whose forcible removal deprived them of opportunities to learn and maintain their language and to pass it on to their descendants (Recommendation 12).

*Literacy for All: The Challenge for Australian Schools. Commonwealth Literacy Policies for Australian Schools (1998)*

In this report, reference to Indigenous language issues related to low English literacy achievement amongst Indigenous students (DEETYA, 1998):

The Government is responding to the low levels of literacy achievement for Indigenous students through a new initiative which from 1998 will provide intensive ESL assistance for Indigenous students from non-English speaking communities commencing school for the first time. Some \$3000 per eligible student will be provided as supplementary support (5.3).

*Katu Kalpa - Report on the Inquiry into the Effectiveness of Education and Training Programmes for Indigenous Australians (2000)*

There are sections of this report particularly relevant to Indigenous languages education. For instance, the sections on bilingual education (5.21 – 5.29) includes Recommendation 15:

The Committee recommends that support for bilingual education programmes be maintained in those areas where they are seen as appropriate and necessary by Indigenous communities. (Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education Committee, 2000)

Professor Paul Hughes, from the Narangga Yankuntjatjara community in South Australia, described the decision taken by the Pitjantjatjara community in South Australia where parents wanted schools to concentrate on teaching ESL as it was felt that bilingual education was not achieving results commensurate with the expenditure required. Professor Hughes noted that there are not enough teachers who speak both English and an Aboriginal language fluently, nor is there an adequate body of literature in Aboriginal languages to sustain and support bilingual programmes. The committee also heard from Martin Nakata who is critical of the bilingual programme in the NT, suggesting there is no evidence that students have better English skills as a result of bilingual schooling (5.26).

The Committee noted positive comments on bilingual education from other sources. The case study on the bilingual programme at Lajamanu School found evidence of measurable increases in levels of English literacy and numeracy. Students at Lajamanu were found to perform slightly above the average in mathematics and well above in literacy when compared to other schools with mainly Indigenous students. In another example, at Yuendumu, there was an emphasis on instruction in Indigenous languages, which was seen by the local community as an important goal of schooling.

The report concluded that decisions about bilingual education belong with the communities and the educators involved. This is one of a range of approaches that can be used to address language needs of Indigenous communities. Where it is appropriate and has support from the community, it deserves consideration (5.31).

Another topic dealt with in the *Katu Kalpa* report is the teaching of Indigenous languages. It was noted that:

There is strong support for this among those who see it as an essential element in the preservation of Indigenous languages. It thus receives a great deal of support from linguists and anthropologists (5.43).

The report gathered evidence from some Aboriginal communities that felt that the school was not the place for languages, which were better taught in the family and community context.

Teaching Indigenous languages relies on there being sufficient material and trained staff to deliver the programme, and this is not often the case. An example used in the report is the work by Aboriginal languages curriculum officers in

South Australia. Support for the revival of Indigenous languages is provided dependent on the support of school communities but the choice of language is determined as much by the availability of support material as by the use of the local language (5.45).

The committee noted that preservation of Indigenous languages in schools is not inconsistent with ensuring the best method of teaching English. However, the committee noted that the enthusiasm for language preservation programmes is not always shared beyond scholars of language (5.46).

The broad point was made that learning Indigenous languages as part of a languages education programme can offer benefits to all students beyond those associated with cultural maintenance, and they can promote cross-cultural understanding and cognitive development (5.47).

*Education Access: National Inquiry into Rural and Remote Education (2000)*

This Inquiry reports on Indigenous language issues on a state by state basis and argues that the promotion of Indigenous languages is an indicator of observance of human rights. The report refers to and affirms the findings of the Katu Kalpa Report on the inquiry into the effectiveness of education and training programmes for Indigenous Australians and Recommendation 8.1 addresses Indigenous language issues as follows:

Indigenous children have a right to be educated in and about their own language, culture and history. The way in which this right is implemented, including the choice of educators, should be determined by the local Indigenous community.

...

Indigenous communities have a right to transmit their language and culture and the education system should respect the knowledge, expertise and experience of Indigenous community members and ensure that every opportunity is provided for its use in the education of Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. (HREOC, 2000, p. 79)

*The Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000*

This piece of legislation provides the legislative basis and appropriates funding for Indigenous education programmes.

Part 2 of the Act lists a number of objectives including:

*Equitable and appropriate educational outcomes for Indigenous people* - which includes “developing programs to support the maintenance and continued use of the languages of Indigenous people” (p. 5); and

*Increasing involvement of Indigenous people in educational decisions* - which includes “an increase Indigenous people who are employed or otherwise involved in education... as special teachers of the culture, history, contemporary society and languages of Indigenous people” (p. 7).

*State of Indigenous Languages in Australia (2001)*

Commissioned by Environment Australia, this report by McConvell & Thieberger, established indicators for the vitality of Indigenous languages with the

premise that these indicators could then be assessed every five years as part of the State of the Environment reporting process. One of these indicators was the "Number and type of Indigenous language programmes undertaken in language centres, schools and other institutions [Indicator IL.9]". The report's authors acknowledge that they were not able to obtain much information from education departments or schools but do outline a case study of South Australian schools, compiled by Greg Wilson. This lists programme types and numbers of students. It suggested that there needs to be an evaluation process to assess increased use and ability in target Indigenous languages but that there did not appear to be "any project which is carrying this out or intending to, although it is perfectly feasible"(95).

Relevant findings of the report include:

Language revival has had an appreciable effect on increasing the number of people identifying as speakers of an Indigenous language in at least one region (5).

...

There is some evidence of a tailing off of support for Indigenous languages in some parts of Australia in the late 1990s. Particularly detrimental has been the dismantling of the bilingual education programmes in Aboriginal schools in the Northern Territory, where Indigenous people make up 29% of the population. The establishment of this programme in 1974 was the single most important move in support of Indigenous languages that has ever occurred in Australia and its loss is a severe blow (16).

...

There has been a long-felt need (expressed as recommendations in a number of reports) for a national set of database resources which can be used to support language work by regional and community groups (19).

#### *Review of the Commonwealth Languages Other Than English Programme (2002)*

This report to the Department of Education, Science and Training made a number of recommendations specific to Indigenous languages, and like many reports outlined in this chapter, highlights the importance of involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the process of language promotion and preservation.

Amongst the recommendations were that the Commonwealth take an active role in promoting and preserving Indigenous languages in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and that the new National Languages Policy Statement explicitly recognise this Commonwealth role and acknowledge the commitment by Governments to the longer term future of Indigenous languages with comprehensive community consultation. The report also recommends a national seminar on Indigenous languages to develop a strategic plan for the revival, maintenance and promotion of Indigenous languages and that a national framework for collection and reporting of data on Indigenous languages programmes be developed. Finally, it suggests that the strategic plan include steps to fast-track training and development of Indigenous educators (Erebus Consulting Partners, 2002).



*National Indigenous Languages Survey (2005)*

Produced by a team from the AIATSIS in 2005, this report provides a summary and analysis of the results from a survey of Indigenous languages vitality status and resources carried out in 2004. While the main aim of the survey was to assess the state of Indigenous languages (especially important at the time, given that the State of Indigenous Languages Report was not going to be conducted in 2005/2006), the report also assesses relevant policy directions. Four key recommendations are made:

- *Language Nests*: A pilot programme of Language Nests, which are Indigenous language programmes for early childhood, should be established following consultation and a scoping report. The nests would expose young children to high levels of language from Elders who speak the language in an environment of play and traditional activities. The nests should be run in communities for all language categories (strong, endangered, and no longer spoken).
- *Community Language Teams*: Community Language Teams should be established to assist the running of Language Nests and other projects, including the documentation of languages. The ideal make up of these teams would include community Elders, young people and linguists. The teams would involve implementation of Master-Apprentice schemes, documentation schemes, particularly in the case where language speakers are not available for Language Nest or Master-Apprentice schemes. The report recommends establishing such Community Language Teams to assist in the running of Language Nests and other programmes and to document archived resources and materials.
- *Regional Indigenous Language Centres*: Regional Indigenous Language Centres should operate in all areas of need to provide infrastructure and technical support to Community Language Teams. Existing centres should continue to operate but should be evaluated and new centres should be considered for some regions that have no current coverage.
- *National Indigenous Languages Centre*: A feasibility study should be undertaken to evaluate the merits of establishing a National Indigenous Languages Centre. The functions of the Centre would include high-level documentation of the languages and their situation, policy development and advice, a forum for Indigenous views, and either training of language workers or close liaison with a body or bodies carrying out this training. The report recommends a feasibility study to evaluate the merits of establishing such a centre.

The discussion of Indigenous languages and education in this document emphasises the importance of community involvement and suggests that the inclusion of local language in the school may mitigate attendance problems, making the school a more inviting location for Indigenous students and their families.

*Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records Programme (2004-2005)*<sup>11</sup>

On 1 July 2004, the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) assumed responsibility for the programme areas formerly covered by ATSIC's ATILIP and LAIP. These programmes themselves had come to an end a couple of years earlier and their immediate and transitory successor had been 'The Preservation of Indigenous Languages and Records' programme. This then became the DCITA's still running 'Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records programme' (MILR)<sup>12</sup>. Programme funding supports the recording and transcription of Indigenous languages, the development of language teaching materials such as dictionaries and wordlists, CDs of songs in language, and the development of data bases and supportive links between language promoters.

The programme supports an active network of Indigenous language and culture centres, special projects aimed at saving endangered languages, advisory bodies on Indigenous language issues, and national projects and policy initiatives such as the *National Indigenous Languages Survey*.

It also funds advocacy activities to increase fluency, literacy, education and communication in language and promotes awareness and appreciation of the cultural importance of Indigenous languages and identity in the wider Australian community. The MILR programme has two main components:

- maintenance of Indigenous Languages, including archive development and management; and
- targeting of endangered languages.

A further initiative is the regional and national promotion of Indigenous languages through support for the Indigenous languages advisory body, the FATSIL. In 2004-5 the MILR programme supported:

- 21 Indigenous Languages Centres around Australia;
- 28 Indigenous language projects;
- the Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, FATSIL; and
- a national Indigenous Languages Survey (NILS, see above).

Endangered languages funding supported activities to record and revive Indigenous languages that have less than 20 fluent speakers. It supported the transcribing, translating and archiving of endangered languages and advocacy activities to promote their importance. Endangered Languages funding supported:

- multi-media recording projects;
- recording last remaining speakers' activities;
- transcription of historic recordings; and
- development of specialist learning tools.

In 2005–06, \$8.327m in funding was provided to undertake 82 activities across Australia, including support for documentation, recording, revival, archiving, teaching, materials development, advocacy, promotion and usage of Indigenous

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<sup>11</sup> Information on MILR is based on a briefing paper prepared by John Gardiner-Garden, 18/10/06.

<sup>12</sup> In 2008, the MILR programme is situated within the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts.

languages. This included funding to 16 language centres, and one peak body, the Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages. In 2006-2007 the MILR Programme has a budget of \$8.6 million and supports activities, service provision and Indigenous networks that result in:

- increased use of Indigenous languages in a range of domains and media;
- documentation of languages that have few remaining speakers;
- coordinated resources for Indigenous language projects and networks;
- partnerships with other groups and resources;
- improved public appreciation of the importance of Indigenous languages;
- evaluation regimes;
- good planning and management of services and projects; and
- employment and training.

### **3.6 State and Territory government activities, policies, reports and documents regarding Indigenous languages education in schools**

This section contains summary information from key State and Territory policy documents, reports, surveys and curriculum documents with regards to Indigenous languages education. As well as presenting summary information about policy documents, in several instances brief information is given about key actions taken by government departments that have been important in the development of the teaching of Indigenous languages in schools. Documents are presented chronologically within each State and Territory to facilitate an understanding of how policies and actions concerning Indigenous languages in schools have progressed over time.

#### **Australian Capital Territory**

##### *Languages Other Than English Curriculum Framework (1994)*

In the section of this document dealing with Australian Indigenous languages, there is an emphasis on the need for local Aboriginal participation, including in the identification of issues and the development of processes to ensure culturally sound and holistic programmes. The document stresses the need for maintenance of Indigenous languages and the place of schools "in the preservation of this linguistic heritage through Australian Indigenous language revival, and in the formation of identity through a knowledge of one or more Australian Indigenous languages" (ACT, Department of Education, 1994, p 14).

##### *Aboriginal Education and Torres Strait Islander Education Curriculum Support Paper (1997)*

This document notes that languages education should recognise the cultural base of Australia's Indigenous languages and allow:

- students to make comparisons between the socio-cultural aspects of their language of study and those of Australian Indigenous languages;
- students to examine linguistic origins of words and make comparisons between languages;
- teachers to give students a greater degree of intercultural understanding;
- teachers to use language and cultural learning strategies relevant to Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students; and

- teachers and schools to consider the implementation of Australian Indigenous languages programmes with Aboriginal community involvement (ACT DET, 1994).

The current draft of *Every Chance to Learn: Curriculum Framework for ACT schools* (ACT DET, 2006<sup>13</sup>) focuses on Essential Learning Achievements and makes no specific mention of Aboriginal languages.

## **New South Wales**

### *NSW Aboriginal Languages Interim Framework K-10 (1998)*

In 1998, the NSW Board of Studies (BOS) developed an interim framework for language teaching in the state. This has since been superseded by the *Aboriginal Languages K-10 Syllabus* (see below). The framework was not language specific but instead provided general guidelines for the development and implementation of Aboriginal language programmes in schools and communities.

The Framework document provided information about the history of Aboriginal languages in NSW, protocols surrounding language use and the development of programmes, operational considerations, and the components of a language programme.

Similar to the *Australian Indigenous Languages Framework*, the NSW Framework suggested four different types of programmes that might be developed by schools and communities. The programme types include programmes for first language speakers; second language speaker programmes; language revival programmes, including the three subtypes of language enhancement, language maintenance, and language reclamation; and language awareness programmes.

For each *type* of language programme, three programme *components* were specified. These are:

- the study of the target language, developing skills, knowledge and understanding that will enable students to communicate in that language;
- the study of related Aboriginal nations' languages, which will enable students to value the similarities and differences of the neighbouring languages; and
- the study of Aboriginal languages in general, addressing historical and contemporary contexts, relationship to culture, and Aboriginal identity and spirituality.

The Framework reflects the principles of relevant policies and strategies as set out in *Australia's Indigenous Languages* (SSABSA, 1996a); *National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People: Summary and Recommendations* (DEET, 1994); and *Languages Other Than English K-6 Generic Syllabus Framework* (NSW BOS, 1996).

To assist schools and communities wishing to use the Framework to establish Aboriginal language programmes, the NSW BOS produced a booklet containing

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<sup>13</sup> The draft was finalised in 2007

six case studies of programmes operating in NSW schools (NSW BOS, 2000). The programmes were all designed and delivered in partnerships between the local Aboriginal communities and the school staff. Some of the programmes also received assistance from a Language Centre.

*Strong Language Strong Culture: New South Wales Strategic Language Study (2000)*

The major purposes of this ATSIC commissioned study, conducted by Hosking, Lonsdale, Troy and Walsh, were to:

- investigate current language maintenance activities and available resources – including details of language teaching programmes; the effectiveness of such activities; details of available resources including funding sources; availability and assessment of teaching resources; and levels of community support and involvement;
- assess the status and viability of Aboriginal languages, identifying areas in most need of urgent attention - assessment was to identify and/or take into account language viability matters including numbers of speakers of each language group; and
- assess the structure and effectiveness of existing language maintenance projects and programmes and/or coordinating organisations. Such assessment should include recommendations as a platform for the development of a resource driven strategic action plan for future structures and decision-making for language maintenance and revival support for NSW languages.

The recommendations of the report were aimed at developing community-based language initiatives and accessing funding from various levels of government. The authors of the report noted that there was no central coordination of language initiatives in the education sector at that time.

*NSW Aboriginal Languages Research and Resources Centre*

In 2003, the NSW government established the Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource Centre (The Language Centre) to assist in preserving the State's Aboriginal languages. It gives support to Aboriginal communities to revive, maintain and teach their languages.

The Language Centre administers the Department of Aboriginal Affairs Community Language Assistance Programme, which provides grants to projects to revive NSW Aboriginal languages. Funding is provided to communities<sup>14</sup> to develop teaching materials so that Aboriginal languages can be taught. The Aboriginal Community Languages Assistance (Grants) Programme provides one-off grants of up to \$25,000 for language revitalisation activities. These activities must involve recording, revival, education or use of language or developing materials to help in the use or teaching of language; support Aboriginal community language work; and be applied for by an incorporated Aboriginal community organisation or a partnership between such a group and an incorporated body. Items produced through the project must also be made freely

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<sup>14</sup> Schools are not directly eligible for community language grants, except for projects that are conducted by an Aboriginal community organisation which will then be used by or within a school-based learning environment.

available on the publicly accessible Online Archive and the project should not be receiving funding from another government agency.

The Language Centre supports the NSW BOS, the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET), and other agencies in their work to provide NSW students with opportunities to learn Aboriginal languages. This is primarily achieved by building the foundation of language revival within the Aboriginal community by supporting community projects. Some of these projects provide strategic support for school-based programmes.

*NSW Aboriginal Languages Policy (2004)*

The NSW Aboriginal Languages Policy was developed by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in close collaboration with the NSW DET and the NSW BOS.

The purpose of the Policy is to assist Aboriginal people and communities in NSW to revitalise traditional languages. The policy acknowledges Indigenous ownership over their languages and the need for schools to recognise this when implementing programmes.

Where Aboriginal language programmes are developed in state institutions they must be based on the key underlying principle that the members of a particular traditional language group have ownership of that language and its associated teaching programmes. (pp.7-8)

The policy notes that when developing resources to accommodate Aboriginal languages programmes, schools need to recognise that the cultural and intellectual copyright remains with the local Aboriginal communities. Schools need to constructively consult with local Aboriginal communities on all aspects when developing language programmes.

The policy also notes that Aboriginal languages taught in NSW schools are to be recognised as a core subject for which a formal language curriculum is developed and implemented in partnership with Aboriginal people.

*Aboriginal Languages Guidelines and Applications (2006; 2008)*

The *Aboriginal Languages Guidelines and Applications* (NSW DET) were written to support Aboriginal languages and language programmes in NSW. The specific purposes of the Guidelines are to:

- support schools in developing an Aboriginal languages programme;
- provide information on Aboriginal community protocols; and
- provide support to schools in completing application forms.

The Guidelines and Applications provide goals and outcomes for Aboriginal Languages Programmes and reflect aspects of the NSW BOS *Aboriginal Languages K-10 Syllabus* and the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs, *Aboriginal Languages Policy*. The document provides an overview of Aboriginal Languages in NSW, and includes a set of protocols for working in Aboriginal communities and in schools.

### *Aboriginal Languages K-10 Syllabus (2003)*

The Aboriginal Languages Syllabus (2003) was developed as part of the review and development of curriculum for NSW schools across all areas of learning. The K–10 Curriculum Framework aims to ensure that all syllabuses are “coherent, challenging and allow for developmental continuity” (NSW BOS 2003, p.5). Clear guidelines are provided for the setting of standards, the assessment of student learning, and reporting of student achievement outcomes.

In addition to developing an Aboriginal languages syllabus that met the K–10 Curriculum Framework standards, the Aboriginal languages syllabus encompassed the rationale to reclaim and revive NSW Indigenous languages in order to support cultural and community identity, and to promote reconciliation and cross-cultural understanding. Three curriculum objectives guide the development of classroom programmes: using language, making linguistic connections, and moving between cultures.

To support implementation of the Syllabus, both the NSW BOS and the Languages Unit of the Curriculum K-12 Directorate organises professional development workshops for teachers and community members involved in school language programmes. Workshops are team led and provide opportunities to learn language, explore effective language teaching methodologies, and share knowledge about how to use the syllabus to develop teaching and learning programmes. Each team includes people with expertise in linguistics, specific language and cultural knowledge, and language teaching.

### **Northern Territory**

A decade ago, two NT Board of Studies (NTBOS) policy documents, the *Australian Indigenous Studies Curriculum Policy and Implementation Guidelines, Transition to Year 12 (1997)*, and the *Australian Indigenous Languages Policy and Guidelines, Transition – Year 12 (1998)*, described one main policy direction related to Indigenous languages and culture programmes: All students enrolled in NT Schools should have the opportunity to undertake Australian Indigenous Studies/to study Australian Indigenous languages.

Both documents described goals rather than actions and, as a consequence, there was no requirement for schools to adopt the policies described. The report of the review of Indigenous languages and culture in NT schools (see below, NT DEET, 2005) noted that “it is not surprising that these policies have not had a long-term, clearly identified impact on service delivery level” (p.7).

### *Indigenous Languages and Culture - Northern Territory Curriculum Framework, (1997)*

The 1997 NT Curriculum Framework document espouses the essential place of Indigenous perspectives in the school curriculum. The document notes that Indigenous students in the NT form a larger proportion of the population than in other parts of the country and so the curriculum and teaching should be designed to reflect Indigenous interests, perspectives and expectations. Understanding Indigenous cultures and perspectives is seen to be essential to understanding society. Schools may offer specific courses of study, such as Indigenous Studies or an Indigenous language, but in addition to such courses, it is noted that

teaching in all Learning Areas should address Australian Indigenous heritage, particularly that of the NT.

Key principles espoused in the Indigenous Languages and Culture section of the Framework include that:

- ownership of each language belongs to a group of people who are its custodians; their language should only be taught in schools with their agreement;
- Indigenous Australians have to be in control and have ownership of the process and implementation of curriculum development in Australian Indigenous Languages;
- schools need to develop appropriate procedures (including sufficient time for consultations) to enable the school and the Indigenous community to work together to reach decisions on the teaching of Indigenous languages, including decisions regarding the language to be taught and how the programme will be implemented;
- the provision of training and professional development must be planned for and sustained; and
- recognition must be given to the expertise of Australian Indigenous teachers and consultants.

The document proposes use of the AILF to describe the different types of Indigenous language programmes that could be implemented in schools. It describes content outcomes in three strands – Country/Land, People and Kinship; and Natural Environment, and language outcomes in three strands – Listening and Speaking, Reading and Viewing, and Writing. Within these strands, the outcomes are organised into three elements – communication, language structure and features, and learning how to learn strategies.

*Learning lessons: An Independent Review of Indigenous Education in the Northern Territory (1999)*

This report documents the results of a comprehensive review, conducted in 1999, of the education of Indigenous students in the NT. The relevant sections of the document concern discussions of bilingualism, the use of the vernacular, and Two Way Learning programmes.

The report notes that

The naturally increasing use of vernacular in schools and the ad hoc changes already made within the bilingual programme mean that from the perspective of appropriate pedagogy many Indigenous schools in the NT are flying blind. Concern has been raised about the lack of any educational research into the move away from the ‘staircase model’ (transitional bilingual programme) in bilingual schools to a 50:50 model. Other advocates claim that there was no educational rationale for the original transfer model. This was used to justify an ideologically-driven insistence that transfer to English literacy can only take place once academic competence in vernacular literacy is acquired (Collins, 1999, p.124).

In relation to two way learning, the report recommends supporting programmes where they are wanted by local communities. The report affirms the value of Indigenous language and culture; it also highlights the importance of the use of



Standard Australian English, and flexibility of delivery within a sound teaching framework. The report recommends high-level research into the use of vernacular in Indigenous schools, and the development of appropriate pedagogy to support learning in those environments.

The report also recommends the inclusion of Indigenous viewpoints in curricula and schools and the production of high quality curriculum material for the benefit of all students in building appreciation of the value of Indigenous culture and language and their interaction with Western culture.

The report notes that the NT Department of Employment, Education and Training (NT DEET) is one of the largest employers of professionally trained Indigenous teachers in Australia. It is argued that this is due, in part, to the product of bilingual education programmes. “Many trained teachers arose out of the assistant teacher categories as a direct result of being given clearly structured and meaningful roles with the introduction of bilingual schooling” (p.89).

The report also notes that research in the United States, in a number of ‘best practice’ bilingual schools, shows that

a common factor across successful bilingual schools requires that the teachers delivering the programme are themselves competent in both the languages of instruction. Another common thread in the research is that when one or both of the languages used in classrooms are not functioning effectively, overall language acquisition outcomes are negatively affected. While both of these scenarios are found in Northern Territory classrooms, the evidence also shows that from the outset the programme was beset with difficulties in both recruiting and retaining the necessary specialist skills essential in a ‘best practice’ bilingual programme.

...

Teachers in bilingual schools usually begin their teaching experience with no knowledge of the local languages at all. Few have specialist linguistic or ESL training, or indeed any training or experience to effectively teach classes of multilingual non-Standard Australian English speaking children (p.122).

#### *Indigenous Languages and Culture in Northern Territory Schools: Report 2004-2005*

This report is the culmination of a two-year review into Indigenous language and culture programmes in NT schools (NT DEET, 2005).

In particular, the review responded to the recommendations in the *Learning Lessons* report, noted above, that Indigenous perspectives should be strengthened in all NT schools and high-quality curriculum material, providing an understanding of Australian Indigenous languages and culture, should be made available to schools. The review was also cognisant of a Ministerial Statement in 2005 which recommended that there be an increased focus on Indigenous languages and culture programmes in NT schools, and that bilingual education be put back on the agenda.

The major purposes of the review were to:

- describe the continuum of Indigenous languages and culture activity in NT schools including a resource and funding index;

- summarise the views of NT DEET personnel and school staff regarding access to, and appropriateness of, languages and culture resources;
- provide findings and recommendations regarding future directions for the range of Indigenous languages and culture programmes in NT schools;
- provide findings and recommendations regarding future directions for the Two Way Learning programme; and
- develop a draft NT government policy to guide the development and delivery of Indigenous languages and culture initiatives and programmes in all NT schools.

This report provides a set of recommendations based on an extensive consultation process. These recommendations are summarised below. They fall into four broad categories: those concerned with Indigenous languages and culture in the NT context; policy, guidelines, monitoring and reporting; resourcing Indigenous languages and culture programmes; and Two Way Learning and Bilingual Education programmes.

In relation to Indigenous languages and culture in the NT context the report recommends:

- supporting a greater focus on Indigenous languages and culture programmes to improve Indigenous student outcomes; preserve cultural identities and promote cultural diversity; improve awareness and promote understandings between communities through provision of language and culture programmes for non-Indigenous students; and increase the level of engagement of Indigenous communities with schools. (Recommendation 1.1)

More extensive recommendations are provided relating to policy, guidelines, monitoring and reporting. They form Recommendations 2.1 to 2.6, and are about:

- developing an Indigenous Languages and Culture Policy that provides a clear definition of Indigenous languages and culture in relation to programmes appropriate for schools and relevant to the Indigenous people of the NT. Such a policy is to be fully implemented in government schools by 2008;
- developing guidelines for schools that assist them in implementing language and culture programmes and that include examples of best practice programmes in a range of contexts;
- updating reporting requirements to fit with the new policy;
- designing and implementing programmes in consultation with local Indigenous communities; and
- developing and implementing a strategy for communicating the contents of the changed policy to schools.

Resourcing of programmes is addressed in Recommendations 3.1 to 3.6. These concern:

- increasing funds for school-based Indigenous languages and culture programmes;
- developing guidelines for funding;
- developing a funding distribution model that allows for the greatest amount of collaboration between schools, transparency of funding, and

- targeting of resources to areas of greatest need;
- fostering the sharing of ideas amongst school communities of Indigenous language and culture programmes and initiatives;
- investigating courses, career pathways, and funding for non-Indigenous and Indigenous teachers and teacher support officers; and
- providing funding for three positions in curriculum services for ongoing school support to implement guidelines.

The final set of recommendations concerns the Bilingual and Two Way Learning programmes:

- renaming the Two Way Learning Programme the Bilingual Education Programme and requiring that the model adopted by schools be either the step bilingual model or the 50/50 bilingual model, at the discretion of schools and communities;
- giving the Bilingual Education Programme the same status as other major literacy initiatives;
- committing ongoing funds to Two Way Learning programmes;
- investigating models to provide teaching and learning resources and professional support to Two Way Learning schools;
- prioritising bilingual education as the focus of a rigorous research programme that will investigate factors that impact on success, including pedagogy, resourcing, whole-of-school factors, and system factors;
- defining pathways and target incentive programmes for the training of Indigenous vernacular speakers to increase teacher numbers;
- collecting data on the professional support needs of teachers in Two Way Learning schools and address these needs through the Two Way Learning support team;
- developing an online programme handbook that will include definitions, rationale, policy and guidelines of endorsed bilingual models;
- redesigning the accreditation model; and
- analysing student achievement data for students in Two Way Learning schools.

#### *Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2006-2009*

This document outlines the Department's plans for building a strong and relevant education system that will enable the achievement of positive educational outcomes by Indigenous students. Priority 3 of the Strategic Plan addresses Indigenous languages and culture programmes. It seeks to incorporate Indigenous perspectives into teaching programmes. The aim is to improve Indigenous student outcomes by increasing engagement and improving attendance; improving awareness and understandings between communities by providing programmes for non-Indigenous students; increasing opportunities and pathways for Indigenous employment in the education sector; and increasing the self-esteem and confidence of Indigenous learners (NT DEET, 2006)

#### **Queensland**

In an overview article about Indigenous language policy in Queensland, Nancarrow (2003) observes that, in 1991, the Queensland Minister for Education stated that all students in Queensland should have the opportunity to study a language other than English (LOTE). This was taken up by Hope Vale and

Bloomfield River State Schools who began to develop Indigenous languages programmes for teaching Guugu Yimithirr and Guugu Yalanji respectively, with the help of the Commonwealth funded Coastal School Support Centre. These programmes were trialled from 1996 to 1998 but were discontinued as language programmes after that time.

In the late 1990s there was a further shift in emphasis with recognition and funding given for teaching English as a Second Language to Indigenous students, and initiatives such as the Bandscales project being developed.

Today there are several schools in Queensland with language programmes, but these are almost all funded externally (e.g., through ATSILIP, see below) and not explicitly supported by Education Queensland.

*Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Body (QIECB), Position paper: Indigenous Languages in Schools (nd)*

This paper outlines the kinds of possible programmes and resources available:

The QIECB advocates that the development of Indigenous LOTE subjects is best done at the local school community level and where Indigenous communities have the teaching resources, language community involvement and will, schools have an obligation to implement Indigenous language programmes. (p.7)

*Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools, 2006*

This document, released in July 2006 by Queensland's Department of Education and the Arts, addresses Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. It noted the importance of supporting language programmes and provided some guidance about how schools might do this.

The document notes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups across Australia are moving towards regaining control over their knowledge through language to influence and facilitate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems and cultural and spiritual worldviews.

The document suggests that schools and teachers can play very important roles in the maintenance and revival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages through integrating and implementing Indigenous languages programmes in schools. This can be done by:

- developing local language curriculum programmes;
- facilitating language revival and maintenance programmes;
- developing networks with publishing and illustrating organisations to support language curriculum programmes;
- translating accurate information about Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages; and
- learning about aspects of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages, preferably local, that impact on learning.

### South Australia

South Australia has a comprehensive suite of policy and curriculum documents, with support materials in several languages. This is seen, for example, in the Arabana curriculum (South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services [SA DECS], 2004).

Indigenous languages attract particular attention within the languages learning area of the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework. The teaching and learning of Indigenous languages is characterised by issues that are unique to each language or magnified when compared to non-Indigenous languages.

The provision of a SACSA Framework for Australian Indigenous languages in South Australian schools indicates that:

- Australian Indigenous languages are confirmed as a distinct and explicit presence in the South Australian curriculum;
- several types of language learning programmes appropriate for each language taught are recognised, namely first language maintenance, second language learning, language revival, and language awareness. A finer categorisation of language revival gives rise to revitalisation, renewal and reclamation programme types that differ according to the specific situations of groups of languages;
- two strands – understanding language and understanding culture – have a standing equal to the communication strand, and have particular importance for Indigenous languages; and
- a framework now exists within which language specific curriculum development and elaboration can occur for a range of South Australian Aboriginal languages.

#### *The Australian Indigenous Languages Framework<sup>15</sup>, (1996)*

The Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA) commenced work in 1993 to introduce Indigenous languages into senior secondary education. The Australian Indigenous Languages Framework was a national initiative and in 1994 several languages in South Australia, Victoria and the NT were taught for the first time in accredited programmes at senior secondary level. Languages taught included 'strong' languages such as Pitjantjatjara, Eastern Arrernte and Yolngu Matha, but also languages in revival mode, including Kurna in South Australia and Yorta Yorta in Victoria. The AIL Framework laid down a blueprint for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. It established a range of programme types to accommodate the entire spectrum of Australian Indigenous language situations. The Framework is supported by illustrative programmes (SSABSA, 1996b) and a textbook (SSABSA, 1996c).

In 2003 the Framework was published for second language learners (R-12) in a set of bands (early years, primary years, middle years, senior years). In 2005 the R-10 Languages (Australian Indigenous) Teaching Resource was published and in

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<sup>15</sup> Quoted from Amery, R. (2002). Indigenous language programs in South Australian schools: issues, dilemmas and solutions.

2006 the document *Australian Languages: Curriculum statements* was published. A list of resources for teaching South Australian languages is available on the web<sup>16</sup> together with the most recent curriculum material.

*The Languages other than English Plan 2000-2007 (1999).*

This document provides extensive information and a guide to the establishment of Indigenous languages programmes.

In South Australia there are several language programmes. The South Australian Government has released the *Languages in South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework*, which notes that:

Through the study of languages, learners gain knowledge, skills and dispositions that enable them to communicate, and to make comparisons across languages and cultures. In so doing they extend their understanding of themselves and their own language, widen their network of interactions, and strengthen their literacy and numeracy skills. This enables them to communicate positively and productively as citizens in the linguistically and culturally diverse nation in which they live, and also as global citizens. (Introduction to Languages, SACSA Framework)

The Framework presents scope and standards for three broad groupings of languages: alphabetic languages, non-alphabetic languages and Australian Indigenous languages. It is recognised that, within each grouping, there are differences across languages in relation to such aspects as the nature of the particular languages and its place in the Australian context.

The Languages Learning Area is divided into three strands: Communication, Understanding Language, and Understanding Culture. Through using the target language for a range of purposes and in a range of cultural contexts, learners develop communication skills that enable them to interpret and express thoughts, feelings and experiences through a variety of spoken and written texts.

Through the Understanding Language strand, learners develop an understanding of how language works as a system, recognise the power of language, and generate awareness of the nature of the target language and of their first language by comparison. The Understanding Culture strand enables learners to develop an understanding of the interrelationships of language and culture and extend their capability to move across cultures, engaging with diversity.

*Languages Statement 2007-2011*

The new DECS Language Statement was written with the purpose of renewing the vision for languages within South Australian schools and to align priorities and directions to the current curriculum framework and to the *National Statement and Plan for Languages in Education in Australian Schools*. The Statement builds upon the previous Language Plan and sits alongside the Languages Engagement Strategy identifying the role of schools, districts and the State Office in the implementation of languages.

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<sup>16</sup> [www.decs.sa.gov.au/curric/a8\\_publish/modules/publish/content.asp?id=12837&navgrp=659](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/curric/a8_publish/modules/publish/content.asp?id=12837&navgrp=659)

Strategic Direction 1 – engaging and retaining all students of languages in quality, sustainable programmes by enhancing access, choice and continuity specifically – notes the key outcome of revival and development of Australian Indigenous languages as being achieved in consultation with custodial communities.

### **Tasmania**

There is no official government policy on Indigenous languages learning in Tasmanian schools. However, since the late 1990s the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC) has been reviving the Aboriginal language Palawa Kani from historical references to the dozen or more Aboriginal languages that existed in Tasmania prior to European settlement.

The TAC conducts a number of language learning activities with community groups. Many language activities are informal, revolving around songs and activities that take place on ceremonial occasions. Some language learning resources, such as song books and children’s story books, have been produced and are used. A dictionary is also being continually updated and recreated.<sup>17</sup> The only mainstream schools in which the TAC conducts Palawa Kani language learning activities are those on Cape Barren Island where all students are Aboriginal. This is in accordance with community policy that language learning takes place only within the Aboriginal community.

### **Victoria**

*Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation Victorian Certificate of Education Study Design (VCAA, 2004)*

This is a Year 11 -12 course that is designed to enable students to:

- revive and reclaim elements of a Victorian Indigenous language and use the knowledge gained to communicate with others;
- understand the range of cultural contexts in which the target language functions;
- make connections between language reclamation, cultural restoration and group/individual identity;
- make connections between language reclamation and Indigenous social justice and equity;
- develop knowledge and skills relevant to language revival and reclamation;
- observe and utilise parallels between the target language and other Victorian/Australian Indigenous languages to facilitate the reclamation process;
- observe and appreciate languages of other Indigenous peoples of the world;
- understand language as a system;
- understand and appreciate the role of the target language in contemporary society; and
- progress to further education, training or employment.

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.fatsil.org/LOTM/lotm.pdf>

Indigenous languages study in Victoria follows the same rationale as for non-Indigenous languages study in that it contributes to a student's overall education. Students are encouraged to participate in the process of revival and reclamation of Victorian Indigenous languages significant to themselves or their local area. Intrinsic in this process is the identification of strategies for community consultation and for participation of Indigenous family groups. It provides opportunity for the acquisition of knowledge and skill in the location and interpretation of historical records, active use of language in contemporary settings, and affirms the cultural and linguistic heritage of Indigenous Victorians.

#### *Indigenous Languages Policy*

In March 2007 the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs announced an investment of \$10,000 towards developing a new Indigenous languages policy for Victoria. The work is to be done by VACL and FATSIL and aims to make Indigenous language education more accessible to Aboriginal people.

#### **Western Australia**

##### *Framework for the Teaching of Aboriginal Languages in Primary Schools (1992)*

The Framework provides a structure for the teaching of Aboriginal languages in WA primary schools. It is based on the principles of the *Australian Language Levels (ALL) Guidelines*. Introductory chapters give a rationale for the teaching of Aboriginal languages, list goals and provide advice about setting up school programmes. Involving Aboriginal adults from the local community in the planning and implementation of the language programme is strongly advocated. Suggested strategies and modules can be adapted to suit the needs of students and teachers. Ideas for assessment, reporting, extension and useful resources are included. The document does not include language-specific materials and is dependent on the local community to provide language and cultural information, and the specialists who are able to teach the language. The Framework is supported by several curriculum resource materials, notably the *Aboriginal Languages Resource File* (Education Department of WA, 1996), and the video *Living Languages: Aboriginal Languages Programme in the Education Department of Western Australia* (Education Department of WA, 1996).

##### *Languages Other Than English Learning Area Statement (1998)*

The LOTE Learning Area Statement acknowledges the role language acquisition plays in building self-esteem. It makes specific reference to the study of WA Aboriginal languages and the role that this plays in the school context in valuing and acknowledging the importance to Aboriginal people of maintaining their linguistic heritage.



*A Description and Exploratory Evaluation of Programme Types in Indigenous and Community Languages: Final Report (Lo Bianco, 2000<sup>18</sup>)*

This project compared different types of language programmes in both immigrant and Indigenous settings. The report notes that there are at least three kinds of school programmes aimed at language maintenance in Australia: bilingual education programmes; ethnic school programmes (after hours or weekend programmes that are controlled and managed by the community concerned); and mainstream school programmes where the Indigenous language is taught as a school subject as part of the normal school curriculum.

Two case studies of Indigenous language programmes in WA schools were included. The two languages taught were Noongar and Yindjibarndi. The section reporting on these case studies is useful because it notes that the critical factors in a school programme's effectiveness were the continuing involvement of committed staff, and the type of relationship with the local community. With respect to funding, it was noted that the teaching of an Indigenous language under the languages education umbrella facilitated access to funds. The report also noted a prevailing theme in which “the language maintenance objective is inextricably embedded in other cultural, religious and identity issues.” (p.153)

*Western Australian Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Education 2005-2008 (Aboriginal Education and Training Council, 2006)*

Priority One listed in this plan is that Aboriginal history, culture and language be recognised, promoted, maintained and supported. The document notes that:

The Curriculum Council has a leadership role to play in ensuring that Aboriginal Intercultural Studies and Aboriginal Languages are given prominence in approved Courses of Study for Year 11 and 12 students. The outcomes from these studies in Upper school should articulate into Higher Education degree courses at University or other options including advanced credits towards VET Certificates or Diplomas. (p.14)

To address Priority One, one of the Outcome statements (1.3) concerns the teaching of Aboriginal languages in schools: “Trained Aboriginal Language teachers in partnership with local Aboriginal community members teach Aboriginal languages in schools to all students.” (p.16) This outcome is to be achieved by the implementation of two strategies: (a) In partnership with Aboriginal communities and Elders, all providers are to implement strategies and develop materials for the teaching of Aboriginal languages; and (b) Aboriginal people are to have access to nationally accredited training that qualifies them to

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<sup>18</sup> The report is divided into three parts. Part A discusses the salient themes of language education common to all students. Part B consists of a series of site reports on language education in different parts of Australia, including language maintenance via community controlled schooling (the case of Arabic in New South Wales); language maintenance via mainstream schooling (the cases of Khmer in Western Australia and Chinese and Italian in Victoria); and language maintenance via revitalization and revival (the cases of Noongar and Yindjibarndi, also in Western Australia). Part C is a cost benefit analysis of the various programmes. Part D is a resource kit for establishing community language programmes, with numerous organizational and individual points of contact.

teach Aboriginal languages and receive appropriate award remunerations as qualified teachers of Aboriginal Languages. Recognition of Prior Learning is to be used as a means of fast tracking recognition of competence and overcoming any difficulty arising with certification.

*Aboriginal Languages of Western Australia (2006)*

In November 2006, the WA Curriculum Council published *Aboriginal Languages of Western Australia*, an outline of the Australian Indigenous Languages course to be introduced as a WA Certificate of Education course into schools in Year 11 in 2008. To date, example exam material has been prepared for three languages – Noongar, Nyangumarta, and Wajarri.

Several rationales are provided for introducing the Indigenous languages course. It is noted that:

The course provides a unique opportunity for all students to gain an appreciation of the diversity of languages, and the interdependence of language, land and cultural knowledge.

... By learning the linguistic structure of the target language and comparing the target language with English and other Australian languages, students understand *language* as a system. Appreciating the nature of language forms a basis for appreciating the role of language in society and emphasises the importance of linguistic and cultural diversity. (p.3)

There are four key intended outcomes of the course, which are based on the LOTE and Society and Environment learning area outcomes in the Curriculum Framework. The four outcome statements relate to:

- comprehending and communicating in an Aboriginal language through listening and responding, and speaking;
- viewing and reading a variety of texts in an Aboriginal language and responding appropriately;
- generating language texts; and
- appreciating Australian Indigenous languages.

### **3.7 Summary**

It is clear that worldwide many languages are endangered. Minority languages are rapidly disappearing, and this situation pertains to Australia's Indigenous languages. One critical question for national, State and Territory education systems is "What responsibility do we have to address this situation of language endangerment in Australia?"

There is another important question to be addressed and that question does not arise out of the review of the literature referred to in this chapter. The question arises out of several other of the current DEEWR national languages projects. The question is this: Where do Indigenous languages programmes fit as part of school languages programmes generally, given that Languages Other than English is one of the eight key learning areas in the *National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*, a document that continues to guide curriculum policy and programmes operating in Australian schools?

In general, the literature and policies outlined in this chapter have placed an emphasis on the beneficial role of including Indigenous languages in school curricula, as long as the local Indigenous community is supportive and participating in the language programme. Language programmes of various kinds are generally considered to assist in providing a sense of identity to Indigenous speakers of those languages and to their descendants who have not had the opportunity to learn their native language. It is regularly asserted that the alienation felt by many Indigenous people can be ameliorated by connection to their heritage via language programmes of various kinds.

It is clear that a range of programme models are required, as the health and situation of each Indigenous language is different. Most people involved in the delivery of school-based Indigenous languages programmes argue that determining the model for a programme should be done in consultation with Indigenous people, who may have a range of opinions about whether the language should be developed in the home and community, or the school, or both. When consultation does not occur, programmes are not likely to be successful. There may be an approach to the teaching of language in the school that can be negotiated with the community, or it may be best to concentrate on ESL programmes in schools where it is not viable to instigate an Indigenous language programme.

With respect to types of programmes, the weight of evidence indicates that well-designed bilingual programmes are of benefit to students. Research suggests that if literacy is established in a child's first language, it is easier to switch to another language. However, bilingual programmes in Australian schools have largely been replaced with Two Way Learning programmes, in which the philosophical underpinning of cultural equality and respect is as important, if not more so, than the emphasis on attainment of literacy skills – in either the first or second language of the student.

It is frequently noted that the provision of language programmes in schools is dependent upon the involvement of key staff, usually a small number. Such an observation is supported by another frequently noted comment that practical support in terms of staffing and resources is needed to support and maintain Indigenous languages programmes. Although, to varying degrees, State and Territory education departments have established their own centralised support processes for the teaching of Indigenous languages in schools, there is no single unit that is able to provide the full range of services. This might include the provision of advice, training, or networking resources for Indigenous languages learning in schools.

Experiences in other countries, notably in New Zealand, Scandinavia and North America, indicate that this sort of formal and well-resourced unit is best able to support existing language programmes and provide advice on the establishment of new ones.

The closest to a national coordinating body for Indigenous languages has been FATSIL. However, this organisation has not been sufficiently resourced to act as

a clearing house, advisory unit, or training centre. If a nationally coordinated approach is needed to support and advise on the practicalities of establishing a language programme, undertake initial language recording, or prepare language material for use in programmes, serious consideration should be given to appropriately funding FATSIL to undertake these activities. It is clear that a properly constituted national Indigenous language body could provide advice and support for language programmes all over the country (cf. NILS report recommendation 4, ATSIC Native Title Social Justice Measures report 6.83, SOIL report recommendation 19). This includes advice on the practicalities of establishing languages programmes in schools or preparing language material for use in such programmes.

The literature and documents outlined in this chapter suggest that although there have been significant advances in some States and Territories with respect to the teaching of Indigenous languages, there is still much to be done. To date, much of the emphasis has been on achieving recognition of the endangered status of most Indigenous languages in Australia, and on the struggle for recognition of the importance of Indigenous languages to the personal and community well-being of Indigenous peoples. There are still major questions to be addressed regarding the training and ongoing professional development of teachers for Indigenous languages programmes; the adequate resourcing of programmes; the development of appropriate curriculum; and the quality assurance of teaching, learning, and programmes generally.

## **4 Provision of Indigenous Languages Programmes in Australian Schools in 2006**

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### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents information about the Indigenous languages programmes that were delivered in schools in each State and Territory in 2006. The information was obtained at the end of 2006 by way of a survey (see Appendix 1) that was sent to key people within each State and Territory education jurisdiction. Key people were identified by DEST as being those responsible for jurisdictional oversight of Indigenous languages programmes. In some instances, when we contacted these people, we were provided with the names and contact details of other people who would be better able to provide the requested information.

The chapter begins with summary information about the numbers of students currently involved in school-based Indigenous languages programmes, the numbers of languages that are taught, and the percentages of programmes in each of the categories of the *Australian Indigenous Languages Framework* (SABSSA, 1996).

We then present the summarised information for each State and Territory. A table containing the names of schools with Indigenous languages programmes, and summary information about the programme is presented for each State and Territory. This is followed by a summary of the information provided by respondents about staffing, funding, programme sustainability and quality. While many similar issues were identified across the jurisdictions, individual circumstances and requirements mean that particular issues are unique to or more prominent within certain jurisdictions.

At the end of the sections that summarise responses from each State and Territory, tables are presented that contain combined summary information about the language programmes operating in schools.

The chapter concludes with a summary of the key points that were raised in the responses that we received.

### **4.2 Indigenous Languages Programmes in Schools**

Over 16,000 Indigenous students and 13,000 non-Indigenous students located in 260 Australian schools are involved in an Indigenous language programme. Most of these students are located in government schools in the NT, WA, NSW, and South Australia. Each of these states (and territory) receives strong systemic support for their programmes in terms of one or more of the following: provision of curriculum documentation and resources; initial teacher preparation; and ongoing teacher professional development and support.

More than 80 different Indigenous languages are taught.

About 28% of the programmes are first language maintenance programmes, and include bilingual programmes undertaken by students in the early years of schooling.

About 12% of programmes are second language learning programmes, where a language is taught to learners in the Languages area of the school curriculum. In this type of programme, students have little or no assumed knowledge of the target language.

About 50% of programmes are language revival programmes. Such programmes include language revitalisation (about 28%), where the language is still spoken by a small group of older speakers within the community; language renewal (about 4%), where the language is no longer spoken in its full form but there is sufficient linguistic heritage within the community to develop a language programme; and, language reclamation (about 18%), where there has been a break in the transmission of the spoken language but there is sufficient evidence from archival material for language reconstruction and learning.

The remainder of the programmes (about 10%) are language awareness programmes, where the little bits and pieces that are known about a language are incorporated into another area of learning. The focus is on teaching *about* Indigenous languages and on exploring socio-historical issues.

### 4.3 Australian Capital Territory

The information provided by representatives from all three education jurisdictions in the ACT indicates that there are no significant policies or associated documentation regarding the implementation of Indigenous languages programmes in ACT schools.

Two government schools were identified by Department of Education and Training personnel as offering an Indigenous language programme. These schools are identified in Table 4.1<sup>19</sup>.

Catholic Education ACT indicated that there are currently no Indigenous language programmes in Catholic schools in the ACT. There is also no specific unit of Aboriginal studies in the Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) Key Learning Area (KLA). However, the new Catholic education curriculum has units on Australia and Australian History, which contain quite specific Indigenous content.

A survey of all languages taught in Association of Independent Schools, ACT (AISACT) member schools was conducted by AISACT in 2006. This revealed that no Indigenous language programmes were currently being conducted in any AISACT member schools (17 in total). The AISACT was not aware of any school policies or practices relating to Indigenous languages, as the organisation had not had any involvement in the area to date. Table 4.1 provides summary information about the Indigenous language programmes that were offered in ACT schools in 2006.

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<sup>19</sup> In 2008, no government schools offered an Indigenous language programme.

**Table 4.1 ACT schools offering Indigenous languages programmes, 2006**

| School            | Language | Programme type <sup>1</sup> | Year started | Year level | Teacher type <sup>2</sup> | 2006 enrolment |                |
|-------------------|----------|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                   |          |                             |              |            |                           | <i>Ind</i>     | <i>non-Ind</i> |
| <b>Government</b> |          |                             |              |            |                           |                |                |
| Arawang PS        | Wirajuri | 4                           | 2006         |            | 1, 4                      | 3              | 50             |
| Narrabundah PS    | Wirajuri | 4                           | 2005         | K-6        | 4                         | 45             | 48             |

Notes to Table:

1. *Programme Type*: 1=First Language Maintenance; 2=Second Language Learning; 3=Language Revival; 3.1=Revitalisation; 3.2=Renewal; 3.3=Reclamation; 4=Language Awareness (a more detailed definitions of programme types can be found in Appendix 1).
2. *Teacher*: 1=General teaching staff (non-language specialist); 2=LOTE teacher; 3=Indigenous teaching assistant; 4=Volunteer community member; 5=Other.

#### *Staffing and funding*

No information was available for any of the ACT education jurisdictions regarding staffing and funding for Indigenous languages programmes.

#### *Sustainability and quality*

Given that only two programmes were identified, comments regarding the sustainability and quality of Indigenous languages programmes were limited. Catholic Education ACT noted that many of the Indigenous students (approximately 175) in Catholic schools in the ACT move in and out of the Territory from a range of Indigenous groups, thereby making it difficult to determine what language to teach.

## **4.4 New South Wales**

NSW has introduced a range of severely endangered languages into the school curriculum as part of a state policy aimed at preserving and rekindling the Aboriginal languages of the region. The introduction of Aboriginal language programmes in schools is also part of a wider strategy to improve the educational outcomes of Indigenous students and to close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal student performance.

Curricula are developed by a statutory body in NSW, the Board of Studies (BOS), and they apply to all schools, both government and non-government. The NSW DET is responsible for the NSW government education sector, both schools and TAFE. Representatives from both the BOS and the DET responded to requests for information for this project. Both have an investment of time, personnel, and resources in the development and implementation of Indigenous languages programmes in NSW schools.

In 2003, the Office of the BOS released the *NSW Aboriginal Languages K-10 Syllabus*. Rationale for the syllabus rests on the rights of people to learn their languages, the uniqueness of Aboriginal languages of NSW, the significant relationship between language and identity, the academic benefits of learning a language, the contribution of language learning to language reclamation and

revitalisation, and the contribution language learning can make to reconciliation and cross-cultural understanding.

The syllabus was developed in response to community consultation and request for recognition, respect and revitalisation of Aboriginal languages of NSW. Since the release of the syllabus in 2003, staff of the Aboriginal Curriculum Unit of the BOS have been working intensively with eight schools to implement the syllabus.

Both the BOS and the DET listed a number of documents that play a key role in informing current policy and curriculum documents, including:

- Report of the Review of Aboriginal Education;
- Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy;
- Aboriginal Languages K-10 Syllabus;
- Two Ways Together Aboriginal Affairs Plan;
- NSW Aboriginal Languages Policy;
- Curriculum Support for Aboriginal Languages; and
- Strong Language Strong Culture: NSW Strategic Language Study.

Another key set of resources for schools are the websites that have been developed by the BOS (<http://ab-ed.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/>) and the DET (<http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/primary/languages/aboriginal/index.htm>).

The Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy 2006-2008 states that it will increase delivery of Aboriginal languages programmes in partnership with communities. The NSW Aboriginal Languages Policy states that school principals and staff will be encouraged to support language programmes in schools where this desired by the Aboriginal community and where resources permit.

In Years 7-12, the NSW Aboriginal Languages K-10 Syllabus is implemented as a Language course, through the KLA of Languages. Aboriginal Studies, on the other hand, is offered through the KLA of Human Society and its Environment (HSIE). General language awareness may be delivered through the Aboriginal Studies course but actual language courses must be delivered through the Languages KLA as a stand alone course. It is mandatory for all students in NSW to complete 100 hours of language study in one language in one, continuous, 12-month period, preferably in Stage 4 (i.e., Year 7 or 8). However, this does not have to be in an Aboriginal language.

With respect to the primary years of schooling, there is no compulsory language component of the school curriculum in NSW but the NSW Aboriginal Languages K-10 Syllabus may be implemented in two ways. First, an Aboriginal language course can be offered as a stand alone subject as the school's Language course and as such is offered within the Languages KLA. Second, the Syllabus can be delivered as a component of the HSIE KLA, by meeting some of the Cultures Outcomes within the Syllabus that focus on learning about languages and learning about the world through languages.

There are no formal jurisdictional policy documents pertaining to Indigenous languages in NSW Catholic or Independent schools.



Table 4.2 provides summary information about the Indigenous languages programmes that were offered in NSW government, Catholic and independent schools in 2006.

**Table 4.2 NSW schools offering Indigenous languages programmes, 2006**

| School                           | Language     | Programme type <sup>1</sup> | Year started | Year level | Teacher type <sup>2</sup> | 2006 enrolment |                |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                  |              |                             |              |            |                           | <i>Ind</i>     | <i>non-Ind</i> |
| <b>Government</b>                |              |                             |              |            |                           |                |                |
| Albert Park Public School        | Bundjalung   | 3.3                         | 2000         | Yr K-4     |                           | 5              | 34             |
| Alexandria Park Community School | Wiradjuri    | 3.3                         | 2003         | K-7        |                           | 87             | 133            |
| Ballina Public School            | Bundjalung   | 3.3                         | 2001         | Yr K-6     |                           | 40             | 0              |
| Barrack Heights                  | Dharawal     | 3.3                         | 2004         | Yr 2-5     |                           | 30             | 200            |
| Bathurst High School             | Wiradjuri    | 3.3                         | 2004         | Yr 7-10    |                           | 6              | 24             |
| Bellbrook Primary School         | Thunghutti   | 3.3                         | <sup>3</sup> | Yr K-2     |                           | 22             | 19             |
| Boggabilla Central School        | Gamilaraay   | 3.3                         |              |            |                           |                |                |
| Bonalbo Central School           | Bundjalung   | 3.3                         | 2005         | Yr 7       |                           | 7              | 25             |
| Bourke High School               | Wangkumarra  | planning 2007               | 2006/7       | Yr 7-8     |                           |                |                |
| Bowraville Central School        | Gumbaynggirr | 3.3                         | 1980s        | Yr K-10    |                           | 30             | 0              |
| Brewarrina Central School        | Ngemba       | 3.3                         | 2006         |            |                           | 0              | 0              |
| Broulee Public School            | Dhurga       | 3.3                         | 2001         | Yr K-6     |                           | 19             | 342            |
| Brungle Public School            | Wirandjuri   | 3.3                         | 2003         | Yr K-6     |                           | 20             | 7              |
| Budelah CS                       |              | consulting 2007             |              |            |                           |                |                |
| Cabbage Tree Island PS           | Bundjalung   | 3.3                         |              |            |                           |                |                |
| Casino West PS                   | Bundjalung   | 3.3                         |              |            |                           |                |                |
| Chifly College, Dunheved Campus  | Dharug       | 3.3                         | 2006         | Yr 7       |                           |                |                |
| Coffs Harbour Senior College     | Gumbaynggirr | 3.3                         |              |            |                           |                |                |
| Coonabarabran High School        | Gamilaaray   | 3.3                         |              |            |                           |                |                |
| Corakai Public School            | Bundjalung   | 3.3                         | 2001         | Stage 2-3  |                           | 50             | 60             |
| Culburra Public School           | Dhurga       | 3.3                         | pre2005      |            |                           |                |                |
| Darlington Public School         | Wiradjuri    | 3.3                         | 2003         | Yr K-6     |                           | 48             | 206            |

|                                      |                            |     |      |            |  |     |     |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----|------|------------|--|-----|-----|
| Dorchester School                    | Dharawal                   | 3.3 |      |            |  |     |     |
| Dubbo College, Delroy Campus         | Wiradjuri                  | 3.3 | 2005 | Yr 9       |  | 20  | 20  |
| Dubbo West Public School             | Wiradjuri                  | 3.3 |      | Yr 4       |  | 20  | 40  |
| Evans River                          | Bundjalung                 | 3.3 |      |            |  |     |     |
| Forbes North Public School           | Wiradjuri                  | 3.3 | 2003 | Yr K-6     |  | 70  | 140 |
| Goodooga Central School              | Yuwaalaraay                | 3.3 |      |            |  |     |     |
| Goonellebah Public School            | Bundjalung                 | 3.3 |      |            |  | 100 | 160 |
| Green Hill Public School             | Dhungutti                  | 3.3 | 2000 | Yr K-2     |  | 24  | 0   |
| Hillston Central School              | Ngiyampaa/<br>Wangaaypuwan | 3.3 | 2006 | NA         |  | 0   | 0   |
| Kelso High School                    | Wiradjuri                  | 3.3 |      | Yr 8       |  | 6   | 18  |
| Kelso Public School                  | Wiradjuri                  | 3.3 | 2006 | Yr 2-6     |  | 42  |     |
| Kemblawarra Public school            | Wadi-wadi                  | 3.3 | 2005 | Yr K-6     |  | 40  | 60  |
| Lightning Ridge Central School       | Yuwaalaraay                | 3.3 | 2002 | Yr K-6     |  | 107 | 127 |
| Lismore Heights Public School        | Bundjalung                 | 3.3 | 1990 |            |  |     |     |
| Lismore Public School                | Bundjalung                 | 3.3 | 2001 | Stage 1-2  |  | 25  | 120 |
| Millbank Public School               | Thunghutti                 | 3.3 | 2004 | Stage 1-2  |  | 7   | 21  |
| Mirriwinni Gardens Aboriginal School | Thunghutti                 | 3.3 |      |            |  |     |     |
| Moree East PS                        | Gamilaroi                  | 3.3 |      |            |  |     |     |
| Moree PS                             | Gamilaroi                  | 3.3 |      |            |  |     |     |
| Nambucca Heads High School           | Gumbaynggirr               | 3.3 | 2000 | Stage 6    |  | 6   | 0   |
| Nanima Public School                 | Wiradjuri                  | 3.3 | 2007 | Stage 1-3  |  | 10  |     |
| Orara HS                             |                            | 3.3 |      |            |  |     |     |
| Parkes High School                   | Wiradjuri                  | 3.3 | 2005 | Yr 10-12   |  | 10  | 15  |
| Peel HS                              | Gamilaroi                  | 3.3 |      |            |  |     |     |
| Red Hill Environmental Education C   | Wiradjuri                  | 3.3 | 1985 | stages 2-5 |  |     |     |
| Shoalhaven High School               | Dharawal/Dhurga            | 3.3 |      | Yr 9       |  | 14  | 3   |
| Stuarts Point Public School          | Gumbaynggirr               | 3.3 | 1996 | K-6        |  | 8   | 12  |
| Tabulam Public School                | Bundjalung                 | 3.3 |      |            |  | 40  | 40  |

|                                       |                        |     |       |            |  |          |     |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|-----|-------|------------|--|----------|-----|
| Tenterfield High School               | Bundjalung             | 3.3 |       |            |  | 30       | 0   |
| Thirroul PS                           | Dharawal               | 3.3 |       |            |  |          |     |
| Toomelah Public School                | Gamilaraay             | 3.3 | 1989  | Yr K-6     |  | 60       | 0   |
| Tregear Public School                 | Dharug                 | 3.3 |       |            |  |          |     |
| Tumut PS                              | Wiradjuri              | 3.3 |       |            |  |          |     |
| Vincentia High School                 | Dhurga                 | 3.3 | 2003  | Yr 8       |  | 16       | 186 |
| Walgett CC Primary School             | Gamilaraay-Yuwaalaraay | 3.3 | 2001  | Yr K-6     |  | 100      | 5   |
| Walhallow Public School               | Gamilaraay             | 3.3 | 2001  | Stage 1-3  |  | 17       | 1   |
| Warrumbungle Nat Park E.E.C.          | Gamilaraay             | 3.3 | 2001  | All Stages |  |          |     |
| Wellington Public School              |                        | 3.3 |       |            |  |          |     |
| Wentworth Public School               | Barkindji              | 3.3 |       |            |  | 0        | 0   |
| Wilcannia Central School              | Paakantji              | 3.3 |       |            |  | 70       | 2   |
| Woodenbong Central School             | Bundjalung-Githabal    | 3.3 | 1970s | Yr K-4     |  | 12       | 42  |
| <b>Catholic</b>                       |                        |     |       |            |  |          |     |
| St Joseph's PS Walgett                | Yuwaalaraay            | 3.3 | 1996  | K-6        |  |          |     |
| St Lawrence's CS                      | Gamilaraay             | 3.3 | 2005  |            |  |          |     |
| St Mary's CS                          |                        | 3.3 |       | K-6        |  |          |     |
| <b>Independent</b>                    |                        |     |       |            |  |          |     |
| Minimbah Aboriginal PS                | Dhungutti              | 3.3 |       | 1-6        |  |          |     |
| Mirriwinni Gardens Aboriginal Academy | Dhungutti              | 3.3 |       | K-8        |  |          |     |
| Newcastle Waldorf School              | Aboriginal             | 3.3 |       | 1-6        |  |          |     |
| Tallowood School                      | Gumbaynggirr           | 3.3 |       | K-6        |  | 22 total |     |

Notes to Table:

1. *Programme Type*: 1=First Language Maintenance; 2=Second Language Learning; 3=Language Revival; 3.1=Revitalisation; 3.2=Renewal; 3.3=Reclamation; 4=Language Awareness (a more detailed definitions of programme types can be found in Appendix 1).
2. *Teacher*: 1=General teaching staff (non-language specialist); 2=LOTE teacher; 3=Indigenous teaching assistant; 4=Volunteer community member; 5=Other. Quite a few schools in NSW have Aboriginal people who are trained primary or high school teachers. Some of these are, or may become, involved in Aboriginal languages programmes.
3. Where no information was provided, cells have been left blank.

### Staffing

Teachers of Aboriginal languages in NSW may be qualified to teach another subject, be qualified primary or early childhood teachers, or have no teaching qualifications at all but are community members who work in a school in a part-

time capacity and are supported in the classroom by a qualified member of the school staff (e.g., Languages or Aboriginal Studies teachers).

Currently, there is only one qualification for people wishing to qualify as Indigenous languages teachers in NSW. This is the Masters of Indigenous Languages Education offered by the Koori Centre at Sydney University. From 2007, the Koori Centre planned to offer a Graduate Certificate and a Graduate Diploma of Indigenous Languages Education. The Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate (AETD) offers scholarships to support Government school teachers to undertake the Masters of Indigenous Languages Education course.

#### *Funding*

Funding for government sector, school-based Indigenous languages programmes in NSW is primarily sourced from the AETD. Funding applications must be endorsed by the appropriate local or regional AECG. In 2006, more than \$100,000 was provided to support 25 schools. This amount tripled in 2007 due to community demand.

A small number of schools in NSW have obtained additional funds for their programmes through DCITA<sup>20</sup>, the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs, and DET NSW Regional Offices. Funding is generally provided in small amounts for limited periods of time, typically 12 months, and uncertainty about continued funding is common.

#### *Sustainability*

Aboriginal language programmes are a priority as a result of the Aboriginal Education Review. Strategies are now being developed across DET to improve the sustainability of programmes.

A key driver for sustainability in NSW is the requirement that all students study 100 hours of a language in order to satisfy the requirements for the School Certificate. The Aboriginal language programme has the potential to provide a relevant choice of language for many students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, in rural areas. An urgent need has been identified to engage Indigenous students in education and this has led to an increased focus on, and commitment to, Aboriginal languages programmes as a means to make education more culturally relevant. A high level linguistic reconstruction is required to retain the integrity of the language. Language programmes are seen to be most sustainable in situations where Aboriginal communities are flexible and whole of school programmes are available.

There are a number of barriers to sustainability of Indigenous languages programmes in NSW. Foremost is the lack of trained staff or career pathways for such staff. Another related barrier is the extent to which programmes depend upon one or two key people to drive them. It is hoped that the strategies designed to train Indigenous teachers to be language teachers will help address this issue. Further, there is a lack of language speakers. In NSW, all languages are in need of revival, revitalisation, or reclamation (none are widely spoken and most

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<sup>20</sup> In 2008 the Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records programme is situated within the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

programmes are based on, or supplemented by, historical sources). Proposed strategies to provide incentives for Indigenous people to train as language teachers are designed to address this. There are difficulties with finding ongoing secure funding for language programmes, and there is a lack of training and professional development opportunities and ongoing support for community-based, language development projects, on which a school programme can be based.

### *Quality*

Programme quality is driven by a number of factors. From informal evidence it would seem that having the involvement of committed language/classroom teachers and community language teachers, and having strong support from the community, school executive, and trained linguists are drivers of higher quality. Enthusiasm and commitment along with flexibility from Aboriginal communities and schools also drives quality. The NSW Aboriginal Languages K-10 Syllabus and involvement of languages education teachers also drives higher quality in Indigenous languages programmes.

However, the Aboriginal Languages Syllabus has been available for only three years and there are barriers to operating quality programmes. Many of those barriers are the same as those to sustainability, particularly those concerning staff qualification, recruitment and retention. However, these are being addressed through development of career pathways and ongoing professional development. There has been no systemic attempt to formally evaluate programmes, since all are in their early stages.

## **4.5 Northern Territory**

In the NT, the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2006-2009, Priority Area 3 is Indigenous Language and Culture Programmes. This highlights the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives within teaching programmes and promotes the delivery of high quality Indigenous languages and culture programmes.

The Australian Indigenous Languages Policy recognises that before European contact, many Indigenous languages were spoken throughout Australia. The Policy notes, however, that few of these languages are spoken today and so it is important to:

- retain, maintain and strengthen Indigenous languages, thereby enhancing the empowerment and self determination of Indigenous Australians;
- enable Indigenous Australians to learn Indigenous languages as part of their schooling; and
- give recognition to the heritages value of Australian Indigenous languages and culture, and weight to cross cultural awareness and communication skills of all Australians by valuing the richness, diversity and complexity of Indigenous languages.

The Policy also notes that it is important to learn another language to give enrichment to the cognitive, educational, and social development of all students as learners.

Of all the States and Territories, the NT has had the most extensive involvement in bilingual programmes for Indigenous students.<sup>21</sup> A 2005 statement by the Minister for Education (Hansard, 24 August 2005) reaffirmed the role of bilingual education and reinforced the importance of providing Indigenous languages in schools. It reads:

The government is also putting bilingual education back on the agenda. It is another important teaching methodology, with some initial evidence that results from bilingual schools appear generally better than other like schools ... Furthermore, we intend to have a stronger focus on valuing Indigenous language and culture through the curriculum.

Currently there are 11 bilingual programmes in 10 government schools. Ten are maintenance programmes using the 'step model' and one programme is a revival programme using a 20/80 type model.

At senior secondary level, the NT DEET offers the NT Certificate of Education through the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of SA. Students in the NT can study and use their heritage languages or be a second language learner through Stage 1 and 2, Australian Languages. The course is based upon Australia's Indigenous Languages Framework. Alternatively, students may use their heritage languages and cultural knowledge in Community Studies units.

The NT DEET identified three key documents that inform current policy and curriculum:

- Australian Indigenous Languages Policy – Policy and Guidelines Transition-Year 12;
- *Indigenous Languages and Culture* in the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework; and
- *Handbook for Aboriginal Bilingual Education in the Northern Territory*.

Most students in NT government schools experience language awareness through Aboriginal Studies programmes. *Indigenous Languages and Culture* in the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework is the key point of reference in the development and implementation of these programmes. This document is informed by the overarching policy principles listed in the Australian Indigenous Languages Policy – Policy and Guidelines Transition-Year 12.

The Indigenous Languages policy statement outlines the approach that schools should adopt in the event that a language is to be offered at the school. Some communities find this process to be quite straightforward based on the high numbers of students from the one language group being enrolled at the school. However, in other settings the identification of the Indigenous language can be problematic as a result of:

- multiple language groups living in the same community;
- differing views of traditional owners and other groups living in the community;

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<sup>21</sup> See Chapter 4 for a discussion of the subtle but important distinction between Bilingual Education and Two Way Learning.

- the lack of people within the community/school with appropriate knowledge and skills to teach the language, including custodians of the language to be taught; and
- the relative standing of language teachers in the community.

Urban Catholic schools in the NT include Australian Indigenous Studies as part of the regular curriculum. While this incorporates a significant cultural emphasis that may involve aspects of language, there is no expectation that Catholic schools will provide teaching in an Indigenous language. Three remote Catholic schools have established bilingual programmes. The policy focus is not just the priority given to vernacular language maintenance, or to the status of local language and culture in the school, or to the continuing employment of local Indigenous staff. The principal focus is for each school to determine how best to teach English literacy: via the acquisition of vernacular language literacy skills in the first 3-4 years of regular schooling, or via an ESL approach, or via some other method. In other remote schools, language is incorporated into cultural programmes.

The *Northern Territory Catholic Schools Manual - April 2004* includes policy material in relation to language teaching and learning within a Chapter entitled 'Indigenous Education'. Bilingual schools use the manual developed by NT DEET, *Handbook for Aboriginal Bilingual Education in the Northern Territory (Revised 1989)*. The three Catholic schools offering a bilingual programme are resourced to a level that includes local literacy production centres and a designated specialist teacher linguist. Each school is required to establish a detailed curriculum plan that shows how the local language and English will be taught in a systematic way (invariably the step model or the 50:50 model will be used). Each school is also expected to maintain an active Language Teaching and Learning Policy Statement that articulates the school's approach to ensuring that the students will achieve similar levels of English language literacy and numeracy skills as their counterparts in other schools, including a description of the school's plans for achieving improved English language outcomes. The policy is expected to show direct evidence of community consultation and is reviewed biennially by the Catholic Education Office.

The Association of Independent Schools of the NT provided information about Indigenous languages programmes in three independent schools: Alice Springs Steiner School, Yipirinya College, and Yirara College.

The programme at the Alice Springs Steiner School has grown out of a desire by the school to be inclusive of local Indigenous communities. The school has an Arrernte language programme as part of its languages education programme. The school's commitment to Indigenous language is contained in the vision statement and constitution of the school. Generally speaking, language learning is important to Steiner programmes and Arrernte lessons fit with this philosophy. There is no formal policy about including language, however, but if it fits with a teaching block then language and culture will be included.

At Yipirinya College, the Indigenous language programme is based on the rationale that it is advantageous to maintain language and culture in areas that reflect the background of their students. If the student's home language is not

offered, families may choose which language their children learn at school. The commitment to Aboriginal languages at Yipirinya is enshrined in the school constitution and is an integral part of the school curriculum.

The rationale behind the Indigenous language programme at Yirara College is twofold: that it is educationally sound for students to acquire literacy in their own language as well as in English; and that first language literacy also develops skills potentially useful in workplace, home and community settings. The programme is guided by the NT Curriculum Standards Framework for Indigenous Languages and Culture. Students at Yirara come from a variety of home communities and so the school restricts itself to teaching literacy skills to students who belong to a family where the particular language is spoken. The policy is to offer first language literacy twice a week to students in Years 7 – 10 and students are only permitted to withdraw from those classes with permission from their families.

Table 4.3 provides summary information about the Indigenous languages programmes that were offered in NT government, Catholic and independent schools in 2006.

**Table 4.3 NT schools offering Indigenous languages programmes, 2006**

| School            | Language           | Program<br>me Type <sup>1</sup> | Year<br>started | Year<br>level    | Teacher<br>type <sup>2</sup>                 | 2006 enrolment |          |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|--|----------------|----------|
|                   |                    |                                 |                 |                  |  | Ind            | non-Ind  |
| <b>Government</b> |                    |                                 |                 |                  |  |                |          |
| Alcoota           | Arrernte (Eastern) | 1                               | 2005            | T – 7            | 3,4 (Elders)                                 | 40             |          |
| Alice Springs HS  | Arrernte (Central) | 2                               | 1999            | 8 – 12           | 2 ALSC                                       | 350            | 546      |
| Alpurrurulam      | Alyawarra          | 1                               |                 | T – 7            | 3, 4 (Elders)                                | 58             | 1        |
| Amanbidji         | Ngarinyman         | 3.1                             |                 | T – 7            | 1 (Ind), 3, 4<br>(Elders), 5<br>(linguist)   | 14             |          |
| Ampilatwatja      | Alyawarra          | 1                               | 1995            | T – 6            | 3, 4 (Elders)                                | 107            | 1        |
| Antarrengeny      | Alyawarr           | 1                               | 1999            | T – 6            | 3  | 15             |          |
| Anzac Hill HS     | Arrernte (Central) | 2                               | 2005            | 8 – 9            | 2  | 21             | 25       |
| Areyonga          | Pitjantjatjara     | 1                               |                 | T –<br>Secondary | 1 (Ind), 3, 4<br>(Elders)                    | 47             | 2        |
| Atnwerngerrp      | Alyawarr           | 1                               | 2004            | T-6              | 3  | 12             |          |
| Batchelor         | Burarra            | 4                               |                 | 8 – 10           | 1 (non Ind),<br>4 (Elders)                   | 91             | 55       |
| Batchelor         | Kriol              | 1, 4                            |                 | 8 – 10           | 1 (non Ind),<br>4 (Elders)                   | As<br>above    | As above |
|                   |                    |                                 |                 |                  |  |                |          |
| Bonya             | Eastern Arrernte   | 1                               | 2006            | T-6              | 3  | 22             |          |
| Bradshaw          | Central Arrernte   | 2                               | 2005            | 3 – 4            | 2  | 22             | 31       |
| Bulla Camp        | Ngarinyman         | 3.1                             |                 | T – 7            | 1 (Ind), 3, 4<br>(Elders), 5<br>(linguist)   | 34             |          |
| Bulman            | Rembarrnga         | 1                               |                 | T – 7            | 1 (Ind), 4<br>(Elders), 5<br>KLC<br>linguist | 54             |          |
| Bulman            | Dalabon            | 1                               |                 | T – 7            | 1 (Ind), 5<br>(KLC<br>linguist)              | As<br>above    |          |
| Canteen Creek     | Alyawarr           | 1                               | 2000            | T – 6            | 3  | 45             |          |



|   |   |        |                       |               |   |              |                    |
|---|---|--------|-----------------------|---------------|---|--------------|--------------------|
| Centralian SSC                              |   |        |                       |               |   |              |                    |
| Darwin High                                 | Tiwi, Kunwinjku & Gupapuyngu            | 2, 4   | 13 = Yr 11; 9 = Yr 12 | 11 and 12     | 2, 3, 4 (Elders)<br>1 non ind           | <sup>3</sup> | 13=Yr11<br>9=Yr 12 |
| Dripstone Middle School                     | Tiwi                                    | 4      | 2008                  | 6-9           | Elder, 1 non ind                        |              |                    |
| Elliott                                     | Mudburra                                | 4      |                       | T – Secondary | 4 (Elders)                              | 94           | 1                  |
| Epenarra                                    | Alyawarr                                | 1      | 2004                  | T-6           | 3                                       | 35           |                    |
| Gapuwiyak                                   | Djambarrpuynu (Yolngu Matha)            | 4      |                       | T – 12        | 1 (Ind), 3, 4 (Elders)<br>1 non ind     | 254          | 5                  |
| Gillen PS                                   | Arrernte (Central);                     | 4      |                       | T – 6         | 5 – IAD Linguists                       | 191          | 158                |
|   |   |        |                       |               |   |              |                    |
| Haasts Bluff                                | Luritja/Pintupi                         | 1      |                       | T – 6         | 3                                       | 12           | 7                  |
| Harts Range                                 | Eastern Arrernte                        | 1      | 2005                  | T – 7         | 3                                       | 55           |                    |
| Howard Springs                              | Tiwi                                    | 2, 4   |                       | T – 4/5       | 5 (School of Languages)                 | 56           | 260                |
| Ipolera                                     | Arrernte (Western)                      | 4      |                       | T – 6         | 5 – Teachers IAD                        | 12           |                    |
| Irrkerlantye Learning Centre @ A/Springs HS | Arrernte (Central)                      | 1      | 1999                  | 7             | 3                                       | 46           |                    |
| Irrultja                                    | Alyawarr                                | 1      | 1995                  | T – 6         | 3                                       | 26           |                    |
| Jabiru                                      | Gundjehmi                               | 2, 4   |                       | T – 6         | 1 (non Ind), 3, 4 (Elders)              | 149          | 143                |
| Jabiru                                      | Kunwinjku                               | 2, 4   |                       | T – 6         | 1 (non Ind), 3, 4 (Elders)              | As above     | As above           |
| Jilkminggan                                 | Mangarrayi                              | 3.1, 4 |                       | T – 7         | 3, 4 (Elders), 5 (KLC staff)            | 99           | 1                  |
| Katherine South Primary                     | Jawoyn                                  | 4, 1   |                       | T – 7         | 1 (non Ind), 4 (Elders), 5 (ATAS)       | 115          | 253                |
| Lajamanu                                    | Warlpiri                                | 1      | 1982                  | 3 onwards     | 1 (Ind), 3, 4 (Elders)                  | 180          |                    |
| Laramba                                     | Central Anmatyerra                      | 1      | 2003                  | T – 7         | 3,                                      | 87           |                    |
| Larrakeyah Primary                          | Gupapuyngu (Yolngu Matha)               | 2, 4   |                       | T- 7          | 5 Aboriginal Resource Officer           | 19           | 335                |
| Maningrida                                  | Burarra                                 | 1      | 1986                  | T – 12        | 5 (linguist), 3, 4 (Elders)             | 547          |                    |
| Maningrida                                  | Ndjebbana                               | 1      | 1981                  | T – 12        | 3, 4 (Elders), 5 (linguist)             | As above     | As above           |
| Manunda Terrace                             | Gupapuyngu (Yolngu Matha)               | 4      |                       | T – 3         | 1 (non Ind)<br>3 (AIEWs),<br>4 (Elders) | 43           |                    |
| Milingimbi                                  | Djambarrpuynu Gupapuyngu (Yolngu Matha) | 1      | 1973                  | T – 11        | 1 (Ind)                                 | 269          |                    |
| Milyakburra                                 | Anindilyakwa                            | 1      |                       | T – 7         | 1 (non Ind), 3 (Elders)                 | 29           |                    |
| Minyerri                                    | Alawa                                   | 1, 3.1 |                       | 8-11          | 5 KLC Linguist, 3 (Elders)              | 155          |                    |
| Mt Allen                                    | Central Anmatyerra                      | 1      | 2003                  | T – 10        | 3,                                      | 63           |                    |
| Murray Downs                                | Alyawarra                               | 4      |                       | T – 7         | 4 (Elders)                              | 23           |                    |
| Neutral Junction                            | Kaytetye                                | 3.1    | 1998                  | T – 6         | 3, 4 (Elders)                           | 20           |                    |

|                          |  |                                   |      |                  |   |             |     |
|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|------|------------------|---|-------------|-----|
| Ngukurr                  | Wagilak<br>Marra<br>Ngandi<br>Rembarrnga | 3.1.2                             |      | T –<br>Secondary | 1 (Ind), 3, 6,<br>5                           | 274         |     |
| Ntaria                   | Arrernte (Western)                       | 1                                 |      | T –<br>Secondary | 3   | 126         |     |
| Numbulwar                | Ritharrngu                               | 3.1                               | 1997 | T – 7            | 1 (non Ind),<br>3, 4, 6<br>(Elders)           | 242         |     |
| Numbulwar                | Wubuy                                    | 3.1                               |      | T – 7            | 1 (non Ind),<br>3, 4, 6<br>(Elders)           | As<br>above |     |
| Numbulwar                | Kriol                                    | 3.1                               |      | T – 7            | 1 (non Ind),<br>3, 4, 6<br>(Elders)           | As<br>above |     |
| Numbulwar                | Ngandi                                   | 3.1                               |      | T – 7            | 1 (non Ind),<br>3, 4 (Elders)                 | As<br>above |     |
| Nyirripi                 | Warlpiri                                 | 1                                 |      | T- 6             | 3   | 38          |     |
| Papunya                  | Luritja/Pintupi                          | 1                                 | 1979 | T –<br>Secondary | 1 (Ind), 3, 5                                 | 65          |     |
| Pigeon Hole              | Bilinarra                                | 1                                 |      | T- 7             | 1, 3, 5 (KLC<br>Linguist)                     | 54          |     |
| Ramingining              | Djambarrpuynu<br>(Yolngu Matha)          | 4                                 |      | T – 11           | 3, 4 (Elders),<br>5 ATAS                      | 207         |     |
| Ramingining              | Gupapunguya<br>(Yolngu Matha)            | 4                                 |      | T – 11           | 3, 4 (Elders)                                 | As<br>above |     |
| Robinson River           | Garawa                                   | 1                                 |      | T – 7            | 3, 4 (Elders)                                 | 65          | 7   |
| Rockhampton<br>Downs     | Wambaya<br>Warumungu                     | 3.1                               |      | T- 7             | 5 (TCLC<br>staff)                             | 11          |     |
| Ross Park                | Arrernte (Central)                       | 1, 2                              |      | T – 3            | 5 – IAD<br>Linguists                          | 37          |     |
| Sadadeen                 | Arrernte (Central)                       | 4, and<br>mix of 1,<br>2          |      | T – 6            | 5 – – IAD<br>Linguists                        | 20          |     |
| Sanderson High           | Gumatj (Yolngu<br>Matha)                 | 2, 4                              |      | 8 – 10           | 1, 4 (Elders)                                 | 88          |     |
| Shepherdson<br>College   | Djambarrpuynu<br>(Yolngu Matha)          | 1                                 | 1974 | T – 12           | 1 (Ind), 3, 4<br>(Elders)                     | 506         |     |
| Soapy Bore               | Alyawarr                                 | 1                                 | 2005 | T-6              | 3   | 35          |     |
| Stirling                 | Anmatyirra                               | 1                                 | 2003 | T-6              | 3   | 19          |     |
| Tennant Creek<br>High    | Warramungu                               | 4 (culture<br>only to<br>non Ind) |      | 7 and 8          | 5 (TCLC<br>staff)                             | 179         | 69  |
| Tennant Creek<br>Primary | Warramungu                               | 4                                 |      | T – 6            | 5 (TCLC<br>staff)                             | 272         | 106 |
| Ti Tree                  | Central Anmatyirra                       | 1                                 | 2003 | T – 7            | 3   | 94          |     |
| Titjikala                | Luritja/Pintupi                          | 4                                 |      | T- 4             | 3, 4 (Elders),<br>5 (part time<br>instructor) | 35          |     |
| Urapunga                 | Ritharrngu<br>/Ngalakan                  | 3.1                               |      | T – 7            | 3, 4 (Elders),<br>5 (KLC<br>linguist)         | 39          |     |
| Utopia Clinic<br>School  | Alyawarr                                 | 1                                 | 2005 | T-6              | 3   | 36          |     |
| Watiyawanu               | Luritja/Pintupi                          | 1                                 |      | T – 4            | 1 (non Ind)<br>3, 4 (Elders)                  | 41          |     |

|  |  |      |      |                     |  |                            |    |
|--|--|------|------|---------------------|--|----------------------------|----|
| Willowra   | Warlpiri   | 1    | 1977 | T – 7               | 1 (non Ind),<br>3, 4, 5, 6<br>(Elders)                       | 51                         |    |
| Yirrkala   | Dhuwaya (Yolngu<br>Matha) Gumatj<br>(Yolngu Matha)             | 1    | 1977 | T – 12              | 1 (Ind), 3, 4<br>(Elders), 5, 6<br>(linguist)                | 194                        |    |
| Yuendumu   | Warlpiri   | 1    | 1974 | T – 6               | 1 (Ind, non<br>Ind), 3, 4<br>(Elders)                        | 152                        |    |
| <b>Catholic</b>  |  |      |      |                     |  |                            |    |
| Ltyentye Apurte<br>CEC   | East Arrernte,<br>(Bilingual staircase<br>model)               | 1    | TBA  | Pre-Post<br>primary | 1, 3   | 110                        |    |
| Murrupurtiyanu<br>wu Catholic<br>School                          | Tiwi (Bilingual<br>staircase model)                            | 1    | 1976 | Pre<br>school- 6    | 1, 3   | 224                        |    |
| Our Lady of the<br>Scared Heart<br>Thamarrurr<br>Catholic School | Murrinhpatha   | 1, 2 | 1978 | Pre–post<br>primary | 1, 3   | 285                        |    |
| St Francis Xavier<br>School, Daly<br>River                       | Ngankikurrungurr   | 3.2  | 2004 | T-7                 | 1  | 60                         |    |
| Xavier CEC   | Tiwi   | 1    | 1990 | Yr 8-12             | 3  | 54                         |    |
| <b>Independent</b>   |  |      |      |                     |  |                            |    |
| Alice Springs<br>Steiner School                                  | Arrernte & Warlpiri  | 2    | 1997 | K-6                 | 4  | 8                          | 72 |
| Yipirinya School   | Central Arrernte &<br>Western Arrernte &<br>Warlpiri & Luritja | 1    | 1978 | Pre-<br>Secondary   | 5 Language<br>speakers<br>who are now<br>trained<br>teachers | 73 &<br>39 &<br>43 &<br>63 | 0  |
| Yirara College   | Western Arrarnta   | 1    | 1997 | 7-10                | 2,4  | 8-14                       | 0  |
| Yirara College   | Pitjantjatjara   | 1    | 1997 | 7-10                | 2  | 8-14                       | 0  |
| Yirara College   | Pintupi/Luritja  | 1    | 1997 | 7-10                | 3  | 6-12                       | 0  |
| Yirara College   | Warlpiri   | 1    | 1997 | 7-10                |  | 5-10                       | 0  |
| Yirara College   | Kaytetye   | 3    | 2003 | 7-10                | 3  | 2-5                        |    |
| Yirara College   | Alyawerr   | 1    | 2003 | 7-10                | 5 Translator   | 3-7                        |    |

Notes to Table:

1. *Programme Type*: 1=First Language Maintenance; 2=Second Language Learning; 3=Language Revival; 3.1=Revitalisation; 3.2=Renewal; 3.3=Reclamation; 4=Language Awareness (a more detailed definitions of programme types can be found in Appendix 1).
2. *Teacher*: 1=General teaching staff (non-language specialist); 2=LOTE teacher; 3=Indigenous teaching assistant; 4=Volunteer community member; 5=Other.
3. Where no information was provided, cells have been left blank.

### Staffing

NT government sector records of teachers and teaching assistants who are qualified to teach an Indigenous language are not maintained centrally but may be held in schools. The Two Way Learning/bilingual schools look for people with qualifications and people who have an affinity with Language. The NT bilingual programme operates with 11 programmes across 10 schools. Depending on the size of the school, four types of specialist roles are staffed as full-time or part-time positions: regional linguists; literature production supervisors; teacher linguists; and Aboriginal literacy workers. Finding teachers in urban settings is difficult as programmes need a custodian of the language, who is literate in the language of the classroom, and who is a qualified teacher. Custodians of the language are

employed on an hourly rate. Some have been working in schools for a long time but without any formal recognition. Schools need to maintain authenticity of the teaching of the language within the cultural way of teaching the language and so observation of cultural protocols is essential. Tensions often exist between certification and community legitimacy. That is, although someone may be 'qualified' to teach a language according to Departmental requirements, the same person may not be acknowledged within a given community as being appropriate to teach that language.

In the Catholic sector, system records of personnel are maintained through the Catholic Education Office payment system. Because Catholic education in the NT is a small system with only three schools teaching Indigenous languages, there is a direct inference that teachers and teaching assistants in remote schools that are delivering an Indigenous language are qualified to teach that language and they would not be recruited if they were not able to teach the language offered by that school.

#### *Funding*

The bilingual programme contains a budget allocation for specialist staff, teaching assistants, central department staff and operational costs at the school level. Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme (IESIP) funding has also been used to employ staff and run programmes in other non-bilingual schools. Catholic sector bilingual schools are funded through NT DEET. Funding covers the costs associated with staff, including teacher linguists, supervisors, literature production centres, Aboriginal literacy workers, and teaching assistants. Other remote schools in the Catholic sector, that is, schools that do not have a bilingual programme, do not receive additional staff funding.

#### *Sustainability*

As with programmes in most jurisdictions Australia-wide, the NT programmes are dependent on key people, such as linguists, as well as community members. The high mobility of staff within the NT school system also impacts on language programme; a range of community issues affect the involvement of Indigenous staff. In addition, non-Indigenous staff require ongoing cross-cultural training. Funding regimes and allocation of resources can also be a barrier to sustainability, particularly given that programmes are not part of the core funding to schools. However, for success, they require some kind of permanency of staff and a custodial teacher in place in classrooms. There is tension between funding at the local level and at the central level. Once again community participation is essential to success but it is acknowledged that ongoing support is often lost in the milieu of other issues affecting communities.

It was reported that in the Catholic sector a few committed individuals have been overloaded and that while resources and funding are generally available, they are not always applied in appropriate ways. Once again the need for community support for language programmes was highlighted. It was noted that if the language chosen is not generally supported it has major implications as to whether students will learn the language – at times, whether they will attend school at all.

### *Quality*

There are a number of factors that drive and support quality in Indigenous languages programmes in the NT. There is a great deal of external support but it is driven by school needs. School principals support and advocate Indigenous languages programmes strongly, particularly where schools are running bilingual programmes. It was reported that Charles Darwin University provides support for Indigenous languages, although details of the support were not provided. Quality is also improved and driven by a large number of first language speakers who are available to support schools, as well as by the widespread use of the language in the community.

The SSABSA/NT Certificate of Education (NTCE) allows senior secondary students to complete Indigenous language courses and gain Tertiary Entrance Rank from such courses. The course in Australian Languages includes the study of the linguistic structure of at least one Indigenous language and a language component of the course comprises a minimum of 10% of the overall content. A second course in Aboriginal Studies focuses on Indigenous perspectives on national issues and draws on language and culture, but language is not a specific content requirement.

Government policy on bilingual education is also a driver of quality and while support has varied over the years, quality improves when it is on the agenda.

Barriers to quality in Indigenous language courses include some of the factors outlined as barriers to sustainability but also include the reliance on the commitment by the school and school council to make a place for language classes. Low student attendance is another important fact that impacts on quality. In the Catholic sector an identified barrier was the need for succession planning. Many Indigenous teachers in remote schools are 'worn out' and the number of younger teachers coming in to replace them appears to be insufficient at present.

## **4.6 Queensland**

Traditional Indigenous languages within Queensland are not formally supported by any of the education jurisdictions in Queensland or by Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) products or services (i.e., Indigenous languages are not a designated LOTE syllabus nor currently form any QSA recognised component of the senior phase of learning).

Although there were no policies or associated documentation identified as underlying the implementation of Indigenous languages programmes in Queensland schools, the *Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools* document, released in July 2006, does mention Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and the importance of schools supporting language programmes.

The formal response from Education Queensland identified two schools that were operating Indigenous languages programmes in 2006 (see Table 4.4). This contrasts with feedback from other sources, such as language centres, which identifies other sites where Indigenous languages programmes are operating.

For instance, Cairns West State School has run an Indigenous language programme with funding from the Department of Housing Community Renewal scheme. Under this scheme, the West Cairns Indigenous Languages and History Project was developed. A large percentage of students enrolled at the school live in public housing, hence the eligibility of the school to access this funding. The project is designed to engage Indigenous youth in a local languages programme at Cairns West State School by offering students in Years 6 and 7 the option to study either local Aboriginal languages and history in Aboriginal Studies classes, or Torres Strait Island languages as a LOTE subject. The large number of Aboriginal languages spoken by students led to a decision to focus on history, culture and languages more generally in Aboriginal studies. The other strategy was to introduce a Torres Strait Islander language course, which included two languages: Kalaw Kawaw Ya (KKY), taught by a trained teacher who spoke the language; and Meriam Mir, taught by a teaching assistant who spoke the language. In the initial year, 2006, the course ran for 9 months and anecdotal reports suggested a positive experience for students. There were reported spin-offs in terms of improvements in the area of behaviour management, and the Japanese language teacher reported improved learning outcomes in that class, attributed mainly to students having had a choice of which language they were to study. The inclusion of the LOTE course in the 2007 curriculum was uncertain due to staff turnover.

Table 4.4 provides summary information about the Indigenous languages programmes that were offered in Queensland schools in 2006.

**Table 4.4 Queensland schools offering an Indigenous language, 2006 programme**

| School                      | Language     | Programme type <sup>1</sup> | Year started | Year level | Teacher type <sup>1</sup> | 2006 enrolment |                |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                             |              |                             |              |            |                           | <i>Ind</i>     | <i>non-Ind</i> |
| <i>Government</i>           |              |                             |              |            |                           |                |                |
| Mitchell State School       | Gungarri     | 2                           | 2000         | 4-7        | 3, 4                      | 18             | 35             |
| Thursday Island High School | Kala Kawa Ya | 2                           |              |            |                           |                |                |

Notes to Table:

1. *Programme Type*: 1=First Language Maintenance; 2=Second Language Learning; 3=Language Revival; 3.1=Revitalisation; 3.2=Renewal; 3.3=Reclamation; 4=Language Awareness (a more detailed definitions of programme types can be found in Appendix 1).
2. *Teacher*: 1=General teaching staff (non-language specialist); 2=LOTE teacher; 3=Indigenous teaching assistant; 4=Volunteer community member; 5=Other.
3. Table 5.4 contains the information supplied by Ed Qld. It does not include information about schools that work with the language centres, or Cairns West State School.

One Queensland respondent to our request for information about Indigenous languages programmes in Queensland schools provided the following background information:

During the 1970s, several schools on Western Cape York, notably Aurukun and Pormpuraaw conducted bi-lingual programmes drawing upon the traditional Wik group of languages. These programmes were supported by

the Commonwealth Government and the Summer Institute of Linguistics. However, as a result of direction changes in policy/programming from the Commonwealth Government, these programmes had ceased to operate by the 1980s. In the period 1992-1997, the Queensland Education Department implemented a project to develop an Indigenous Languages Policy and accompanying support materials for Queensland State Schools. A reference group comprising departmental officers, school staff and community members coordinated the development of draft documents; however the socio-political context of the period resulted in the non-endorsement of the policy and support materials.

Despite this setback, several community-based language programmes evolved, primarily in Cape and Gulf Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities in the Torres Straits. These include Yugambeh language in the Logan area, Gunggari language in Mitchell, Djirrbal language in the Tully area, Kuuk Thaayorre language in Pormpuraaw, Wik Mungkan language in Aurukun, Guugu Yalanji language at Bloomfield River and Wujul Wujul, Guugu Yimithirr at Hope Vale, and several Torres Strait Islander language programmes in the Torres Strait. Generally, these programmes have been supported through Commonwealth funding (e.g., ATSILIP) with minimal Queensland Government funding assistance.

In the early 1990s, Hope Vale and Wujal Wujal (Bloomfield River) State Schools developed Indigenous LOTE programmes for teaching Guugu Yimithirr and Guugu Yalanji respectively. These programmes were trialled from 1996 to 1998 but were discontinued as formal LOTE programmes after that time. Hope Vale retains its language programme; however, Wujal Wujal's programme is not operating, primarily due to resourcing issues, both financial and human. Language programmes require sustained commitment, particularly from community members – without support these resource people are susceptible to 'burn out'.

Concurrently, several Queensland agencies and language centres (e.g., Yugambeh) have also supported the development of community-based language programmes, resulting in a number of language programmes linking in with Queensland schools. These programmes/activities were supported through Commonwealth funds, previously ATSIC then DCITA, under language revival/maintenance programmes.

Another Queensland respondent noted the MCEETYA languages and Indigenous education policies that include directives for the teaching of Indigenous languages. In light of this, the respondent provided this perspective on Indigenous languages in Queensland schools:

There is an apparent disjunct between national policies and recommended strategies for states and the current Queensland policy and actions (with respect to Indigenous languages).

This respondent also noted that great scope and potential exists for the consideration of Indigenous languages within QSA products and services. It was noted that if a QSA Indigenous languages policy were developed and approved, a *strategic action plan* would be needed to manage the development of materials and products. Adequate time to produce materials, consult widely and trial products would need to be considered, carefully planned out, and strategically

prioritised. Human resources and funding opportunities would need to be taken into consideration when developing strategies.

### *Sustainability*

Although the position of Education Queensland (and the Queensland Catholic Education Commission) has been to provide in-principle support to school communities that are interested in implementing Indigenous languages programmes, it has been difficult for schools to sustain their programmes without formal support. More often than not, these school-developed programmes have been driven and maintained by key, committed individuals in the schools. Many of the programmes have finished when these people have moved on, or when the lack of support for these people has made it difficult for them to continue their work.

Queensland respondents noted that the sustainability of language programmes must be driven by the system. The lack of clear direction or policy around Indigenous languages in Queensland is the biggest barrier to having sustainable Indigenous languages programmes in schools.

Another barrier is the mixed feelings within Aboriginal communities throughout Queensland about the idea of traditional languages being taught in schools. Many people have a strong “spiritual and emotional connection with their language and want this to be passed on to their children” (Nancarrow<sup>22</sup>, 2003, p.3). At the same time there is a general concern about the “education system taking over the agenda on what is fundamentally Aboriginal knowledge” (p.3). This is compounded by the general experiences Indigenous communities have with schools that can be distancing and culturally non-inclusive. There is stronger support within Torres Strait Islander communities to have both traditional and modern languages taught in schools. However, the fact that most Torres Strait Islander people live on mainland Australia (with Townsville having the highest population of Torres Strait Islanders) raises issues with regard to which languages are most appropriate to be taught in any particular area.

### *Quality*

The lack of systemic support or infrastructure and the absence of people who can support Indigenous languages programmes in schools are major drawbacks to ensuring quality in the delivery of programmes in Queensland schools. The absence of appropriate training and support for Indigenous languages teachers is also a major drawback.

## **4.7 South Australia**

The South Australian DECS has well-developed Indigenous language policies and accompanying Indigenous language syllabuses and resources to support traditional language learning with language awareness, revival and/or maintenance focuses.

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<sup>22</sup> Nancarrow, C (2003) *The Future of Indigenous Languages in Queensland*. Looking to the Future – Smart Moves in Education Conference. James Cook University. 31 October, 2003. <http://people.aapt.net.au/~cassynancarrow/language/futures.html>



The Department's rationale for the inclusion of Indigenous languages in programmes in government schools in South Australia was described in the following way:

(It) enriches subject offerings and assists in further developing respect for and understanding of Indigenous values, culture, history and linguistic traditions. The inclusion of Indigenous language programmes has the potential to also increase participation by Aboriginal people in the shaping of school programmes, and to increase their engagement in classroom activities. Historically, schools have been 'killers' of Indigenous language with students being admonished if they were 'caught' speaking a language other than English. With an understanding that language is a social tool and not simply an artefact, Indigenous language programmes in schools are supportive of community efforts to reclaim languages to enhance self esteem and positive social and cultural identity. In this sense, the process of language maintenance or reclamation needs to be owned and driven by Indigenous communities. DECS policy positions on languages and the place of Aboriginal languages centres on inclusiveness and understanding the links between language, land, people and culture and reconciliation – understanding that language maintenance and revival are part of this. The key document for the government sector is the LOTE Plan 2000-2007.

In schools in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands a policy regarding first language speakers is in place. The Anangu Education Services at the Ernabella Office of DECS has produced a range of resources to support Indigenous languages programmes in schools across the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands. There is no overall policy regarding Indigenous language teaching. SOSE has Indigenous studies, and elements of Indigenous languages arise as a by-product of studies in this area. However, references to people and place names are often underdone or wrong, and are frequently drawn from a number of languages rather than reflecting 'local' language.

In the Catholic sector, there is an emphasis on valuing the importance and ensuring equality of all languages including Indigenous languages in schools. There is growing interest from (non-Indigenous) parents in their children learning an Indigenous language. The programme at Christian Brothers College (CBC), for instance, is comprehensive. The engagement with Indigenous culture and language fits with the social justice and pastoral care ethos of Catholic schools in general, and CBC in particular.

Catholic Education South Australia has an Indigenous Education policy that focuses on providing the Commission's policy position regarding:

- access and support for Indigenous students;
- the involvement of Indigenous people in education;
- inclusive curriculum; and
- employment of Indigenous people.

This policy does not have an emphasis on Indigenous languages. Indeed, reference to language only arises in the context of the Commission's policy position on discrimination where it states that "...schooling should be socially just, so that: students' outcomes from schooling are free from the effects of

negative forms of discrimination based on sex, language, culture and ethnicity, religion or disability; and of differences arising from students' socio-economic background or geographic location."

The Catholic Education Languages Policy is currently under review. This policy is expected to be inclusive of all languages, including Indigenous languages. The CBC programme is guided by the SACSA Framework which includes a specific focus on Australian Indigenous languages. The relevant scope and standards have been prepared for Indigenous languages in general and are not framed in terms of one language or another, or of one programme type or another. There are six programmes currently offered at CBC, including a compulsory one to study one language to Year 10 with electives offered in Years 10 to 12. This exceeds the regulated requirement for language provision in non-government schools and systemic requirements to offer a language to the end of Year 9. The school has a long standing relationship with a school in the Pitjantjatjara Lands (Mutijulu Community) and in the past has offered scholarships to students from the Mutijulu Community to come to school. Year 10 students visit Mutijulu Community as a cultural awareness component within their religious education programme. In addition, students at Year 11 were offered Indigenous language as an elective within their religious education programme. Based on this experience, and with the benefit of a charismatic teacher with a background in teaching in Pitjantjatjara Lands, and a strong community belief in the importance of Indigenous languages, the subject was offered to students in 2004 as part of the South Australian Certificate of Education.

In the Independent sector, at Murray Bridge Christian School, Indigenous language is seen as a valuable tool. Many families at the school are Ngarrindjeri people, so offering the language is seen as one way to be more inclusive. More broadly, the school is inclusive of language and culture with Indigenous studies being included in SOSE or Aboriginal studies. Programmes are supported/delivered by community members, Aboriginal Education Workers (AEWs), parents, and tutors (paid or voluntary).

Independent schools develop their own policy as regards first language speakers. For example, the Lutheran school at Ceduna caters to a school population that is 80% Indigenous but which comes from all over South Australia and other parts of Australia. As a result, the school has difficulty in determining which language to teach and understands that it may potentially alienate large numbers of students and their families by choosing one language over another. There is no general policy regarding Indigenous language teaching.

Table 4.5 provides summary information about the Indigenous languages programmes that were offered in SA government, Catholic and independent schools in 2006.

**Table 4.5 SA schools offering Indigenous languages programmes, 2006**

| School               | Language       | Programme type <sup>1</sup> | Year started | Year level | Teacher type <sup>2</sup> | 2006 enrolment |         |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------|
|                      |                |                             |              |            |                           | Ind            | non-Ind |
| <b>Government</b>    |                |                             |              |            |                           |                |         |
| Amata AnS            | Pitj./Yank.    | 1                           | <sup>3</sup> |            |                           | 99             | 2       |
| Augusta Park PS      | Adnyamathanha  | 3.1                         | < 1998       | R-2        | 1, 2, 2, 5 (SSO)          | 63             | 165     |
| Augusta Park PS      | Arabana        | 3.1                         | < 1998       | 3-5        | 1, 2, 2, 5 (SSO)          | 37             | 90      |
| Augusta Park PS      | Pitj./Yank.    | 2                           | < 1998       | R-7        | 1, 2, 2, 5 (SSO)          | 37             | 90      |
| Carlton S            | Adnyamathanha  | 3.1                         | < 1998       |            | 1, 3                      | 22             | 0       |
| Carlton S            | Pitjantjatjara | 3.1                         | < 1998       | R-7        | 1, 1, 3                   | 63             | 4       |
| Ceduna AS            | Gugada         | 4                           | 2006         | R/1, 4/5   | 1                         | 20             | 100     |
| Ceduna AS            | Pitjantjatjara | 2                           | 2006         | R-5        | 1, 1, 1, 3                | 64             | 229     |
| Ceduna AS            | Wirangu        | 4                           | 2006         | R/1, 4/5   | 1                         | 20             | 100     |
| Cooper Pedy AS       | Antikirinya    | 3.1                         | < 1998       |            | 1, 3                      | 23             | 0       |
| Cowandilla PS        | Pitjantjatjara | 2                           | 1986         | 1-7        | 1, 3                      | 21             | 2       |
| Erabella AnS         | Pitj./Yank.    | 1                           |              |            |                           | 113            | 6       |
| Flinders View PS     | Adnyamathanha  | 3.1                         | < 1998       | R-4        | 1, 3                      | 60             | 60      |
| Flinders View PS     | Pitjantjatjara | 1                           | < 1998       | R-7        | 1, 3                      | 60             | 60      |
| Fraser Park PS       | Ngarrindjeri   | 3.2                         | 2000         | R-7        | 1, 3, 3                   | 30             | 0       |
| Fregon AnS           | Pitj./Yank.    | 1                           |              |            |                           | 42             | 0       |
| Gepps Girls Cross HS | Pitjantjatjara | 2                           | 2001         | 8-12       | 1                         | 16             | 26      |
| Hampstead PS         | Warlpiri       | 1                           | 2004         | R-7        | 1, 5 <sup>1</sup>         | 16             | 0       |
| Hawker AS            | Adnyamathanha  | 3.1                         | 2005         | R-10       | 1, 3, 3                   | 16             | 30      |
| Indulkana AnS        | Pitj./Yank.    | 1                           |              |            |                           | 40             | 0       |
| Kaurna Plains S      | Kaurna         | 3.3                         | < 1998       | R-12       | 1, 2, 3                   | 133            | 5       |
| Kirton Point PS      | Pitjantjatjara | 2                           | < 1998       | R-7        | 1, 3                      | 59             | 352     |
| Koonibba AnS         | Pitjantjatjara | 2                           | < 1998       | R-7        | 1, 3                      | 40             | 2       |
| Lincoln Gardens PS   | Pitjantjatjara | 2                           | < 1998       | R-7        | 1, 1, 3                   | 46             | 50      |
| Mansfield Park PS    | Pitjantjatjara | 2                           | < 1998       | R-7        | 1, 3, 3                   | 21             | 0       |
| Marree AbS           | Arabana        | 3.1                         | < 1998       | R-12       | 1, 3                      | 16             | 0       |
| Mimili AnS           | Pitj./Yank.    | 1                           |              |            |                           | 53             | 1       |
| Murputja AnS         | Pitj./Yank.    | 1                           |              |            |                           | 16             | 0       |
| Murray Bridge HS     | Ngarrindjeri   | 3.2                         | < 1998       | 8-10       | 1, 3, 3                   | 23             | 26      |
| Murray Bridge JPS    | Ngarrindjeri   | 3.2                         | < 1998       | R-2        | 1                         | 21             | 210     |
| Murray Bridge PS     | Ngarrindjeri   | 3.2                         | < 1998       | 3-7        | 1, 3                      | 27             | 355     |

|                              |                |         |        |                 |           |    |                                   |
|------------------------------|----------------|---------|--------|-----------------|-----------|----|-----------------------------------|
| Murray Bridge South PS       | Ngarrindjeri   | 3.2     | < 1998 | R-7             | 1, 3      | 30 | 0                                 |
| Ocean View P-12 C            | Various        | 4       | 2006   | 10-12           | 1, 1, 3   | 10 | 0                                 |
| Oodnadatta AbS               | Antikirinya    | 3.1     | < 1998 |                 | 1, 3      | 45 | 0                                 |
| Pipalyatjara AnS             | Pitj./Yank.    | 1       |        |                 |           | 60 | 0                                 |
| Port Augusta West PS         | Adnyamathanha  | 3.1     | 2000   | R-7             | 1, 3      | 28 | 252                               |
| Port Lincoln PS              | Pitjantjatjara | 2       | 1999   | R-7             | 3         | 49 | 547                               |
| Renmark JPS & PS             | Ngarrindjeri   | 3.2     | 2002   | R-7             | 1, 3      | 34 | 0                                 |
| Salishury North R-7 S        | Kaurna         | 3.3     | 1999   | R-7             | 1, 3      | 48 | 0                                 |
| Salishury Nth R-7 S          | Pitjantjatjara | 2       | 2006   | 1-7             | 1, 3      | 24 | 103                               |
| School of Languages          | Kaurna         | 3.3     | 2005   | 11-12, adults   | 1, 3      | 55 | 5                                 |
| Stirling Nth PS              | Adnyamathanha  | 3.1     | 2005   | R-5             | 1, 3      | 29 | 150                               |
| Victor Harbor PS             | Ngarrindjeri   | 3.2     | 2002   | R-7             | 1, 3      | 21 | 0                                 |
| Victor Harbor PS             | Pitjantjatjara | 1       | < 1998 | 7               | 1         | 1  | 29                                |
| Watarru AnS                  | Pitj./Yank.    | 1       |        |                 |           | 16 | 0                                 |
| Willsden PS                  | Adnyamathanha  | 1.3     | < 1998 | R-7             | 1, 3      | 90 | 70                                |
| Willsden PS                  | Arabana        | 1.3     | 2004   | R-7             | 1, 3      | 90 | 70                                |
| Wiltja Programme             | Pitj./Yank.    | 1       |        | 8-12            | 1, 3      | 9  | 2                                 |
| Winkie PS                    | Ngarrindjeri   | 3.2     | < 1998 | R-7             | 1, 3      | 16 | 13                                |
| Yalata AbS                   | Pitjantjatjara | 1       | < 1998 |                 |           | 74 | 5                                 |
| Youth Ed Centre              | Adnyamathanha  | 3.1     | 2006   | Young offenders | 3         | 24 | 0                                 |
| <i>Catholic</i>              |                |         |        |                 |           |    |                                   |
| Christian Brothers College   | Pitjantjatjara | 2 and 4 | 2004   | 10-12, SACE     | 1,2 and 3 | 1  | Yr 10=11;<br>Yr 11=7;<br>Yr 12=11 |
| <i>Independent</i>           |                |         |        |                 |           |    |                                   |
| Murray Bridge Christian Coll | Ngarrindjeri   | 2       | 2004   | 3-7             | 1         | 16 | 49                                |

Notes to Table:

1. *Programme Type*: 1=First Language Maintenance; 2=Second Language Learning; 3=Language Revival; 3.1=Revitalisation; 3.2=Renewal; 3.3=Reclamation; 4=Language Awareness (a more detailed definitions of programme types can be found in Appendix 1).
2. *Teacher*: 1=General teaching staff (non-language specialist); 2=LOTE teacher; 3=Indigenous teaching assistant; 4=Volunteer community member; 5=Other.
3. Where no information was provided, cells have been left blank.

### *Staffing*

South Australia Australian Languages are taught by Indigenous teachers and Indigenous Language and Culture Specialists in schools with the support of teachers, linguists and curriculum specialists. Through the annual implementation of the Aboriginal Languages Programmes Initiative (ALPI) and associated reporting, DECS receives details of Aboriginal Language and Cultural Specialists employed by schools. While the aggregated list in Table 4.5 is comprehensive, it is not systematic in that it only reflects the staff appointed on an annual basis through the receipt of ALPI funds.

### *Funding*

In South Australia, language and cultural specialists are funded through ALPI. Eighty percent of funds are allocated to cover the cost of hourly paid instructors. Government programmes in South Australia use school-based funding and budgets. Initiative grants through the ALPI are submission-based and funding is capped so that as programmes and demand grow, the funding is necessarily diminished.

### *Sustainability*

In the government sector, there is a concern that the next generation of Indigenous teachers and workers in schools will not be present to sustain current programmes because there is a lack of clear career structure for Indigenous languages teachers. Similarly, the systemic drive to maintain and enhance programmes largely rests with two DECS project officers. If they leave, the Indigenous languages programmes would be vulnerable. Programme sustainability is driven by the inclusion of Indigenous languages in the languages learning area, and by the development of a DCITA funded dictionary.

In the Catholic sector, three key issues were identified as impacting on programme sustainability:

- the need for skilled and qualified people who are available to deliver and support programmes;
- availability of programmes to encourage people to become qualified; and
- funding to support the acquisition/development of language resources.

The need for skilled people is an issue that arises also for Independent schools. People involved may not be involved in a given school for the long term; teachers transfer and Indigenous community members relocate. Effective programmes are therefore highly dependent on the stability of individual teachers and community members.

### *Quality*

DECS Australian Indigenous Languages Policy and Programme Officers are supportive of the need for nationally determined protocols to be established for introducing Indigenous languages in schools. Such protocols need to be informed by socio-linguistic perspectives that demonstrate the understanding of the place of language within Indigenous community and also acknowledge the complexities and characteristics of Indigenous languages.

The response from the Catholic sector indicates that quality comes as a result of:

- principals establishing and promoting programmes;
- language consultancy support delivered through the Catholic Education Office; and
- the ability of teachers to engage students.

Parents and teachers showing an interest in Indigenous languages programmes also aids in quality of provision. However, funding is limited and constrained by the ability of individual schools to access money from Indigenous funding streams for Indigenous languages programmes. Teacher supply also affects the quality of programmes. There is an ongoing need for language specific professional development as well as professional development focussing on generic teaching skills related to delivering language programmes. Independent schools have expressed interest in finding out more about Indigenous languages programmes, thereby revealing a need for accessible information. It has been noted that finding people who possess the required skills and knowledge and who are available is very difficult.

## 4.8 Tasmania

The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre has operated the Palawa Kani Languages Centre statewide throughout Tasmania since 1993. The Palawa Kani language is being revived within the Aboriginal community throughout Tasmania, from small children through to adults, with school-aged children being the main target group. Tasmanian Aboriginal languages are not currently taught within the mainstream education system, as the community policy for some years has been that language learning is to take place only within the Aboriginal community until such time as the Aboriginal community decides otherwise.

## 4.9 Victoria

The rationale for Indigenous languages programmes in Victorian government schools was described as deriving from an implicit feature of *Yalca: A Partnership in Education and Training for the New Millennium*<sup>23</sup>.

Yalca makes reference to the goals of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP), which includes the goal to:

. . . increase the number of Aboriginal people employed as educational administrators, teachers, curriculum advisors, teachers assistants, home-school liaison officers and other education workers, including community people engaged in teaching of Aboriginal culture, history and contemporary society, and *Aboriginal languages* (our emphasis).

The provision of Indigenous languages programmes arises through the consultative processes undertaken by the local AECGs. Given the centrality of the local AECG role, it is understood that the rationale for providing an Indigenous language programme centres on the advice of the local AECG, which, by

<sup>23</sup> Yalca is a partnership agreement between the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) and the Victorian State Government; in 2008 a new education strategy *Wannick: Learning Together- Journey to Our Future* was released.

implication, incorporates the views of local traditional owners and the broader Indigenous community.

Although there are no official policies regarding the provision of Indigenous languages programmes in Victorian schools, the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) allow flexibility to offer Indigenous languages programmes within the LOTE domain.<sup>24</sup>

The Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority has worked with the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL) and the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) to develop a Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) course, *Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation*<sup>25</sup>. The accreditation period for Units 1-2 is 2004-2010, and for Units 3-4 is 2005-2010. The Study Design document provides extensive background information about the Indigenous languages of Victoria, as well as information about how to implement the course in schools, assessment and reporting, and course content.

In Victorian independent schools, Indigenous languages are funded as part of languages education programmes. There are no policies that directly address Indigenous languages for either first language speakers or as part of the independent schools curricula.

Table 4.6 provides summary information about the Indigenous languages programmes that were offered in Victorian government and independent schools in 2006. No programmes were offered in Catholic schools.

**Table 4.6 Victorian schools offering an Indigenous language programme, 2006**

| School   | Language               | Programme type <sup>1</sup> | Year started | Year level    | Teacher type <sup>2</sup> | 2006 enrolment |         |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------|
|  |                        |                             |              |               |                           | Ind            | non-Ind |
| <b>Government</b>                                    |                        |                             |              |               |                           |                |         |
| Victorian P-12 College of Koorie Ed – Glenroy Campus | Incidental Wurundjeri  |                             |              | Across school |                           |                |         |
| Swan Hill Campus                                     | Incidental Wemba Wemba |                             |              | Across school |                           |                |         |
| Woolum Bellum Campus                                 | Gunnai                 | 3, 2                        |              | Across school | 3, 1                      |                |         |

<sup>24</sup> The Victorian School of Languages (VSL) is a government school that provides language programs for students in Years 1 to 12 who do not have access to the study of those languages in their mainstream schools. In 2006 the School was approached by Indigenous community members to offer VCE Unit 1 in Indigenous Languages of Victoria Revival and Reclamation to 11 students. It was taught to students in Ballarat and Horsham using a video conferencing model.

<sup>25</sup> For further details, see

<http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/lotte/ausindigenous/ausindigindex.html>

|                               |             |           |      |       |                    |    |     |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------|-------|--------------------|----|-----|
| Victorian School of Languages | Wergia      | 3.3       | 2006 | 11-12 | 5                  | 11 |     |
| <b><i>Independent</i></b>     |             |           |      |       |                    |    |     |
| Mount Evelyn Christian School | Warlpiri    | 4, 2      | 1981 | 9-10  | 1 (fluent speaker) | 0  | 124 |
| Worawa Aboriginal College     | Yorta Yorta | 2, 3.3, 4 | 1981 | 7-12  | 1, 2               | 66 | 0   |

Notes to Table:

1. *Programme Type*: 1=First Language Maintenance; 2=Second Language Learning; 3=Language Revival; 3.1=Revitalisation; 3.2=Renewal; 3.3=Reclamation; 4=Language Awareness (a more detailed definitions of programme types can be found in Appendix 1).
2. *Teacher*: 1=General teaching staff (non-language specialist); 2=LOTE teacher; 3=Indigenous teaching assistant; 4=Volunteer community member; 5=Other.

### *Staffing*

The *Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation* VCE Study Design proposes that the Language team in the school can consist of several people or as few as two, depending on the skills of the people available. Several important roles noted include:

- the language teacher(s)/specialist(s)/speaker(s) of the language(s) targeted for study;
- Koorie Educator;
- Elder(s) with cultural knowledge and/or knowledge of the target language(s), or an interest in the language(s);
- community persons with an interest in the language(s);
- classroom teacher(s);
- linguist(s) when needed; and
- others who may wish to be involved.

### *Funding*

Victorian Indigenous languages programmes attract funding through languages education funding and other existing funding mechanisms (e.g., the Student Resource Package, and the Leading Schools Fund).

### *Sustainability*

In all sectors in Victoria, succession planning and the availability of language teachers and key staff was noted as an important factor in programme sustainability. Community ownership of programmes was also highlighted by the government sector as a factor that aids sustainability of programmes.

### *Quality*

Quality is perceived to suffer when the community is not engaged with the language programme. In the government sector, additional factors of lack of recognition of the historical significance of Aboriginal languages and racism were also nominated as barriers to quality.

Programme quality is perceived to be fostered when there is agreement amongst decision makers about answers to such questions as:



- Why teach an Indigenous language?
- What language should be taught?
- Who is going to teach the language?
- What qualifications should the teacher have?
- Is there due recognition, approval, and participation by the Koorie community?
- How will the language be delivered?
- How will students connect with the language? and
- How will overall quality be assured?

In the independent sector, programme quality is driven in schools like Worawa and Mt Evelyn Christian School by whole school commitment to language programmes, leadership commitment, and regular programme evaluation.

#### **4.10 Western Australia**

Aboriginal language programmes in Government schools are guided by the the Languages Other Than English Learning Area Statement of the *Curriculum Framework for Kindergarten to Year 12 Education in Western Australia* (1998). Aboriginal languages have been part of the list of priority languages under the WA Department of Education and Training since 1995.

Promotion, maintenance and preservation of Aboriginal Languages are also priorities in the Aboriginal Education Operational Plan. A number of Aboriginal Languages are now being taught to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in a range of metropolitan, urban, rural and remote community schools across WA.

Aboriginal languages education is a co-operative effort between the school and the Aboriginal community. The language (or languages) taught in the school and language speakers are identified by the local Aboriginal community. Planning and teaching time is established as part of the regular school timetable to enable language speakers and school staff to develop and teach the language programme.

Key documents for public schools in Western Australia that support the implementation of the *Curriculum Framework* are the *Outcomes and Standards Framework* and the K-10 Syllabuses. The K-10 Syllabuses are advisory materials that provide teachers with practical support and clarity on what should be taught and learned in each year and phase of schooling when developing learning, teaching and assessment programs. Scope and sequence statements for Noongar and Wajarri have been developed as resources to support teachers in the use of the *Middle Childhood (K-3) Syllabus* and the *Early Adolescence (8-10) Languages Syllabus*

In the independent sector language programmes are driven by communities but influenced by the *Curriculum Framework*. There are no formal policy documents that guide independent schools.

A WA Certificate of Education secondary school subject, *Aboriginal Languages of Western Australia*, is planned for introduction into WA schools in the period

2008-2012. To date, sample assessment materials have been developed for the Noongar, Nyangumarta, and Wajarri languages.

Table 4.7 provides summary information about the Indigenous languages programmes that were offered in WA government, Catholic and independent schools in 2006.

**Table 4.7 WA schools offering an Indigenous language programme, 2006**

| School                          | Language  | Programme type <sup>1</sup> | Year started | Year level | Teacher type <sup>2</sup> | 2006 enrolment <sup>3</sup> |                |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
|                                 |   |                             |              |            |                           | <i>Ind</i>                  | <i>non-Ind</i> |
| <b>Government</b>               |   |                             |              |            |                           |                             |                |
| Albany SHS                      | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 2004         | 8-9        | 2                         | 23                          | 372            |
| Avonvale PS & Ed Support Centre | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 1994         | K-7        | 2                         | 57+5                        | 105+6          |
| Balga SHS                       | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 2004         | 8-9        | 2                         | 48                          | 67             |
| Balingup PS                     | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 2005         | 3-7        | 2                         | 0                           | 34             |
| Bayulu RCS                      | Walmajarri<br>Gooniyandi                                    | 3.1                         | 1995         | K-7        | 2, 5                      | 115                         | 3              |
| Blackstone RCS                  | Ngaanyatjarra   | 1                           |              | K-7        | 3, 5                      |                             |                |
| Bluff Point PS                  | Wajarri   | 3.1                         | 2000         | K-5        | 3                         | 91                          | 244            |
| Boulder PS                      | Wangkatha   | 2                           | 2002         | K-7        | 2                         |                             |                |
| Brookman PS                     | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 2000         | K-7        | 2                         | 59                          | 302            |
| Brookton DHS                    | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 2000         | K-7        | 2                         | 23                          | 141            |
| Cable Beach PS                  | Yawuru  | 3.2, 2                      | 2000         | 3-7        | 1,2,4                     |                             |                |
| Caralee Comm. School            | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 2000         | K-7        | 2                         | 54                          | 183            |
| Cue PS                          | Wajarri   | 3.1                         | 1995         | K-7        | 3                         | 54                          | 12             |
| Dawul RCS                       | Woola   | 3.1                         | 1999         | K-7        | 2                         | 26                          | 0              |
| Djidi Djidi Aboriginal School   | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 1995         | K-7        | 2                         | 76                          | 3              |
| Djugerari RCS                   | Walmajarri  | 3.1                         | 1998         | K-7        | 4                         | 16                          | 0              |
| East Carnarvon PS               | Wajarri   | 3.1                         | 2001         | K-7        | 2                         | 129                         | 212            |
| East Kalgoorlie PS              | Wangkatha   | 2                           | 2000         | K-7        | 2                         | 65                          | 0              |
| East Kenwick PS                 | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 2005         | K-7        | 3                         | 58                          | 385            |
| Esperance SHS                   | Wangkatha   | 3.1                         | 1998         | 8-9        | 2                         | 31                          | 389            |
| Fitzroy Crossing DHS            | Bunuba<br>Walmajarri<br>Gooniyandi                          | 3.1                         | 1985         | K-7        | 2,3, 4, 5                 | <sup>4</sup>                |                |
| Geographe Bay ESC               | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 2003         | K-7        | 2                         | 1                           | 46             |
| Gnowangerup DHS                 | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 2000         | K-7        | 2                         | 21                          | 106            |
| Hannans PS                      | Wangkatha   | 2                           | 2005         | 3-7        | 5                         | 182                         | 18             |
| Jameson RCS                     | Ngaanyatjarra   | 1                           |              | K-7        | 3, 5                      | 30                          | 0              |
| John Willcock College           | Wajarri   | 3.1                         | 1997         | 8-9        | 2                         | 169                         | 489            |
| Kalgoorlie Boulder High School  | Wangkatha   | 2                           | 2006         | 8          | 3                         |                             |                |
| Katanning PS                    | Noongar   | 3.1                         | 2001         | K-2        | 2                         | 61                          | 62             |
| Kiwirrkurra RCS                 | Pintupi   | 1                           |              | K-7        | 3, 5                      |                             |                |
| La Grange RCS                   | Nyangumarta<br>Juwally<br>Karajarri<br>Mangala<br>Yulparija | 3.1                         | 1985         | K-10       | 2, 3, 4, 5                | 120                         | 6              |

|  |                               |         |      |      |                   |       |     |
|--|-------------------------------|---------|------|------|-------------------|-------|-----|
| Leonora DHS  | Wangkatha                     | 2, 3.1  | 2005 | 3-7  | 5                 |       |     |
| Looma DHS  | Nyikina Mangala<br>Walmajarri | 3.1     | 1995 | K-10 | 1, 2, 3, 4,<br>5  | 119   | 1   |
| Marble Bar PS  | Nyangumarta                   | 2, 3.1  | 1995 | K-7  | 4,5               |       |     |
| Medina PS  | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 1996 | K-7  | 5 LOTE<br>Trainee | 70    | 115 |
| Menzies/Morapoi<br>RCS                                 | Wangkatha                     | 2, 3.1  | -    | 3-7  | 5                 |       |     |
| Moorditj<br>Aboriginal CC                              | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 2000 | K-7  | 2                 | 137   | 0   |
| Mt Barker SHS  | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 1999 | 8-9  | 2                 | 18    | 152 |
| Mt Margaret RCS  | Wangkatha                     | 3.1     | 2002 | K-7  | 4                 | 15-24 | 0   |
| Nannup DHS   | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 2003 | K-2  | 2                 | 0     | 49  |
| Newton Moore<br>SHS                                    | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 1998 | 8-9  | 2                 | 40    | 426 |
| Northam SHS  | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 1999 | 8-12 | 2                 | 12    | 12  |
| Northampton DHS  | Wajarri                       | 3.1     | 2000 | 8-10 | 2                 | 11    | 32  |
| Nullagine RCS  | Martu Wangka                  | 1, 3.1  | 1995 | K-7  | 5                 | 34    | 4   |
| O'Connor PS  | Wangkatha                     | 2       |      | 3    | 5                 |       |     |
| One Arm Point<br>RCS                                   | Bardi                         | 3.1     | 1985 | K-10 | 4, 5              |       |     |
| Onslow PS  | Yindibarndi                   | 3.1     | 1995 | K-7  | 2                 |       |     |
| Queens Park PS   | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 1999 | K-7  | 2                 | 50    | 59  |
| Rangeway PS  | Wajarri                       | 3.1     | 1999 | K-7  | 2                 | 264   | 203 |
| Roebourne High<br>Anx (linked to<br>Kararrtha)         | Yindjibarndi                  | 3.1     | 1998 | 8-10 | 2                 |       |     |
| Roebourne PS   | Yindjibarndi                  | 3.1     | 1992 | K-7  | 2                 | 180   | 0   |
| Sandstone PS   | Wajarri                       | 3.1     | 2000 | K-7  | 3                 | 5     | 3   |
| Seaforth PS  | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 2004 | K-7  | 1                 | 62    | 234 |
| Shark Bay PS   | Malgana                       | 3.2     | 2004 | K-7  | 1+2               | 9     | 50  |
| South Hedland PS                                       | Nyangumarta                   | 2, 3.1  | 1990 | K-7  | 2,3               |       |     |
| South Kalgoorlie<br>PS                                 | Wangkatha                     | 2       | 2006 | 3    | 5                 | 0     | 0   |
| Swan View SHS  | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 2004 | 8-9  | 2                 | 53    | 284 |
| Tjuntjuntjara RCS                                      | Pitjantjatjara                | 1       | 2000 | K-7  | 3, 5              |       |     |
| Wanarn RCS   | Ngaanyatjarra                 | 1       |      | K-7  | 3, 5              |       |     |
| Wangkatjunga<br>RCS                                    | Walmajarri<br>Wangkajunga     | 3.1     | 1995 | K-7  | 2, 5              | 83    | 0   |
| Warakurna RCS  | Ngaanyatjarra                 | 1       |      | K-7  | 3, 5              |       |     |
| Warburton RCS  | Ngaanyatjarra                 | 1       |      | K-7  | 3, 5              |       |     |
| Warnbro CHS ESC  | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 2003 | 8-10 | 3                 | 8     | 4   |
| Waroona DHS  | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 2002 | K-2  | 2                 | 5     | 108 |
| West Northam PS  | Noongar                       | 3.1     | 1999 | K-7  | 2                 | 72    | 71  |
| Wiluna RCS   | Martu Wangka                  | 3.1,3.2 | 2004 | K-7  | 5                 |       |     |
| Wingellina RCS   | Ngaanyatjarra                 | 1       |      | K-7  | 3, 5              |       |     |
| Yulga Jinna RCS  | Wajarri                       | 3.1     | 2004 | K-7  | 3                 | 15    | 0   |
| <b>Catholic</b>  |                               |         |      |      |                   |       |     |
| Birlirr Ngawiyiwu<br>Catholic School                   | Jaru                          |         |      |      |                   |       |     |
| Luurmpa Catholic<br>School                             | Kukatja                       |         |      |      |                   |       |     |
| Ngalangangpum<br>School                                | Kija                          |         |      |      |                   |       |     |
| Kururrungku<br>Catholic Education<br>Centre, Billiluna | Walmajarri                    |         |      |      |                   |       |     |

|  |                              |     |      |       |       |    |   |
|--|------------------------------|-----|------|-------|-------|----|---|
| St Mary's School, Merredin                   |                              |     |      |       |       |    |   |
| St Patrick's School, Katanning               |                              |     |      |       |       |    |   |
| Warlawurru Catholic School                   | Jaru                         |     |      |       |       |    |   |
| <b>Independent</b>                           |                              |     |      |       |       |    |   |
| Kulkarriya Comm School                       | Kriol, Walmatjarri & Nyikina | 3.1 |      | K-12  | 3,4   | 77 |   |
| Nyikina Mangala Comm School                  | Nyikina                      | 3.1 |      | K-10  | 3,4   | 28 |   |
| Parnngurr Comm School                        | Martu Wangka                 | 1   |      | K-10  | 1,3,4 | 52 |   |
| Purnululu Aboriginal Independent Comm School | Kija                         | 3.1 |      | K-10  | 3,4   | 31 |   |
| Rawa Comm School                             | Manyiljarra                  | 1   |      | K-12  | 3,4   | 75 | 0 |
| Strelley Comm School                         | Nyangumarta                  | 3.1 |      | pp-12 | 3,4   | 65 | 0 |
| Wulungarra Comm School                       | Walmajarri                   | 3.1 |      | 1-12  | 1,3,4 | 26 | 0 |
| Yakanarra Comm School                        | Walmajarri                   | 3.1 |      | K-10  | 1,3,4 | 38 | 0 |
| Yiyili Aboriginal Comm School                | Gooniyandi                   | 3.1 | K-10 | K-10  | 3,4   | 73 | 0 |

Notes to Table:

1. *Programme Type*: 1=First Language Maintenance; 2=Second Language Learning; 3=Language Revival; 3.1=Revitalisation; 3.2=Renewal; 3.3=Reclamation; 4=Language Awareness (a more detailed definitions of programme types can be found in Appendix 1).
2. *Teacher*: 1=General teaching staff (non-language specialist); 2=LOTE teacher; 3=Indigenous teaching assistant; 4=Volunteer community member; 5=Other.
3. *Kimberley, Pilbara, and Goldfields Districts Schools*: Individual school enrolment numbers are not available for these schools. However, at the end of 2005 there was a total of 5,971 students learning an Aboriginal Language in classes from K-11 in schools in these regions. A total of 25 Aboriginal languages were being taught in remote, rural, urban and metropolitan areas to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.
4. Where no information was provided, cells have been left blank.

### *Staffing*

Most school-based Indigenous languages programmes (government, Catholic and independent) are staffed by teaching teams that include a teacher who has graduated from the Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training course (see Chapter 6 for details). Language teachers in government schools are funded by the WA DET LOTE staffing budget. Language teachers in independent schools are funded through school budgets.

### *Sustainability*

Sustainability is driven by strong support structures – for example, opportunities to network and professional development are provided by Aboriginal languages curriculum officers. The Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training course also drives sustainability, as local Aboriginal people gain training to teach their own language in their schools and community. However, lack of teaching staff remains a barrier. There are not enough teachers with sufficient language competency

available to schools. There is a need for intensive language courses to provide Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers (AIEOs) and Aboriginal teachers with proficiency in language. There is also a lack of younger language speakers who can work in a school setting and with local Elders.

School attitudes also impact sustainability. Where school administration is supportive, sustainability is more easily achieved. Unsupportive school administrators or staff with little understanding about what it takes to teach an Aboriginal language in a school environment make language programmes difficult to maintain. High staff and principal turnover is also an issue for sustainability and consistency within schools. Coordination and in-school support from Aboriginal languages curriculum officers help maintain language programmes. However, where a school already has a language programme (e.g., in an Asian or European language), they tend not to be prepared to implement a second language. Appointment of Aboriginal language teachers and appropriate resourcing is vital to sustainability.

There also can be issues of geographical isolation for network meetings and PD, and associated costs of travel and accommodation. This can make ongoing training and support for Aboriginal language speakers working in schools more difficult. A driver for sustainability is the development and sharing across languages and districts of support materials.

The number of different Aboriginal languages spoken in one school community can impact on the sustainability of a language programme if agreement is not reached and sustained over time about which language will be taught. Aboriginal community involvement and support of Elders and other community members helps drive sustainability.

### *Quality*

Many of the school programmes are reported to be of a very high standard, although quality is also reported to be variable. Teachers make most of their own resources and work hard to ensure their programmes are engaging for their students. Most Aboriginal language teachers are viewed as being very accountable and having put in place strong systems of monitoring outcomes. Quality programmes are seen to be driven by committed and enthusiastic language speakers, supportive school administrators and staff, dedicated language rooms and resources, sufficient time and funds for resource preparation, and regular support from Aboriginal languages curriculum officers.

Weak programmes strong lack resources and support from school staff. As outlined above in relation to sustainability, the availability of language speakers also impacts on the quality of the programmes offered. At the school level, interruptions to school timetables and missed language classes affect quality. Language teachers often have other demanding roles at their schools and communities, and absence from school for cultural and personal reasons impacts on the quality of the programme.

## 4.11 Technology and Indigenous languages

The digital age has provided a wealth of tools such as digital libraries, wordlists, and dictionaries to assist Indigenous language speakers, their communities, and linguists in their efforts to document, revitalise and maintain Indigenous languages. In addition to this work, a small number of organisations in Australia and internationally are developing Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) resources that can be used in the support of teaching Indigenous languages.

In Australia, Multilocus Interactive<sup>26</sup> has worked with schools and organisations since 1998 to produce CDROM resources in a variety of Indigenous languages. Recently, the organisation was awarded for a project which produced a series of eight Indigenous languages teaching resources developed in consultation with eight language groups from WA (Ngaanyatjarra and Nyangumarta), South Australia (Adnyamathanha and Arabana), the NT (Ngarinyman), NSW (Paakantji), Tasmania (Palawa Kani) and Victoria (Wathaurong). The resources developed for each of the languages included an interactive CD-ROM which features stories and songs reflecting the culture of each language group, as well as exercises and games to promote language skills. The accompanying teachers' guide includes suggested lesson plans and black line masters.

The Arwarbukarl Cultural Resource Association Inc<sup>27</sup>, based in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie area (Awabakal Country), has developed a computer programme, the Miromaa3, which can be used by organisations to assist them in their language work. Miromaar3 is now used in language maintenance work in over 25 communities in Australia and Arwarbukarl has conducted IT language workshops with a number of language and culture centres. The software includes a user-friendly database to assist organisations to gather, organise, analyse and produce outcomes for language work and incorporates audio, images and videos. The group recently hosted a forum which focussed on Indigenous languages and ICTs.

An online Indigenous language courses is offered out of Alice Springs by the Ngapartji Ngapartji group. The Ngapartji Ngapartji<sup>28</sup> project offers an online language and culture site which provides the opportunity to experience Pitjantjatjara language and culture online with a range of videos, songs and short films produced by young Pitjantjatjara speakers with support from elders, linguists and mentors. Yalata School (SA) use the website to teach young Pitjantjatjara people Pitjantjatjara literacy, and students in Santa Maria College in Melbourne used the site to develop some language skills before the school embarked on a cultural immersion trip to the APY lands.

To address the continual Indigenous language displacement, the DEECD (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria) and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) has funded a joint proposal by Monash University Linguistics Faculty, ICT and Australian Indigenous Studies Researchers and Industry partners from the education sector

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<sup>26</sup> <http://www.multilocus.com.au/portfolio/indigenoulanguage/index.htm>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.arwarbukarl.com.au/>

<sup>28</sup> <http://ninti.ngapartji.org/>

and Indigenous community organisations for the project titled *Reclamation of Victorian Indigenous languages: Using ICT to enable effective exchange between academics, educators and the Indigenous community*. This project commenced in 2007 and has also been supported by the ARC (Australian Research Council) Linkage Project Scheme.

Developments in Australia mirror developments internationally. For instance Rosetta Stone<sup>29</sup>, a company that develops interactive language learning software, has set up an arm of the company devoted to working with communities to develop interactive software for teaching and learning of endangered languages. So far, software has been developed for the two native North American languages Sitimaxa, and Kanien'kéha (Mohawk) and Iñupiaq, spoken by the Iñupiaq people of Alaska.

Technology has also been introduced in the context of the Master-Apprentice model of language learning (see Chapter 6). Gardner (2005) describes the design of a project which paired Masters (Stó:lō Elders from British Columbia, fluent in Halq'eméylem) and Apprentices (language teacher trainees), equipping each with a computer, relevant hardware, software, and high speed internet access. The Apprentices use multimedia language resources to connect with the Masters, more fluent in their native language, in order to develop their own language skills (Gardner, 2005).

## 4.12 Summary

Systemic curriculum requirements, staffing requirements and funding, and resourcing for Indigenous languages programmes in schools vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. However, there were a number of observations made that are common across almost all sectors, States and Territories as being important for the success of these programmes.

Quality and sustainability are affected almost everywhere by the lack of staff who have a combination of teaching skills, Indigenous language skills, and links with community. There is a heavy reliance in individual schools and sectors on key, committed people. Many jurisdictions noted the need for defined career paths for teachers of Indigenous languages in schools, as well as ongoing support and training for teachers and assistants to maintain programmes and quality. The existence of strong relationships between schools and local Indigenous communities is another factor that was identified in almost every response we received as being essential.

The NT, WA and South Australia have a stronger suite of policies and more stable, targeted funding streams for schools to access when providing Indigenous language instruction to students. This possibly reflects the great proportion of languages that are taught as first language maintenance in these states when compared with programmes in the other states. NSW, however, also has a targeted policy and funding stream for its language programmes, even though its programmes are focussed primarily on language revival.

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<sup>29</sup> <http://www.rosettastone.com/global/endangered>

The use of digital technology in the teaching of Indigenous languages is becoming more common. Several organisations have developed quite sophisticated resources that are either language specific or able to be adapted for use across a range of languages. The use of digital technology in schools' Indigenous languages programmes appears at this stage to be dependent on local infrastructure and expertise.



# 5 Teacher Preparation, Training and Professional Learning

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## 5.1 Introduction

This section presents information about the range of training and professional learning options and teacher preparation courses available to teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages for the delivery of Indigenous languages programmes in schools<sup>30</sup>.

First points of contact for collecting information to map the range of courses and professional learning opportunities outlined in this chapter were the representatives of government, Catholic and independent education systems in each State and Territory. The researchers also conducted internet searches on the websites of education institutions, sent emails and conducted phone interviews with representatives from universities, TAFEs, and Indigenous language and cultural centres in each State and Territory. Many of the people contacted completed a proforma that provided details of the courses and units that they offered (see Appendix 2). Some face-to-face interviews were conducted.

Information provided indicates that, overall, there is a limited range of opportunities within education jurisdictions that support teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages to systematically develop the knowledge and skills associated with planning and delivering school Indigenous languages programmes. Education jurisdictions that have a commitment and accompanying policies to support school Indigenous languages programmes do have some initiatives in place to support professional development for teachers and community members. These are mostly in the form of workshops and professional development activities. The most developed programme of professional learning for Indigenous languages teachers is the WA Department of Education and Training (DET) *Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course*, which is a more extensive training programme for AIEOs. The course has been well attended over recent years and graduates of the course are eligible to apply to the Department for appointment as an Aboriginal Language Teacher.

There is also a limited range of professional learning opportunities on offer from universities and TAFEs to people wishing to teach Indigenous languages in schools. The Schools of Education in universities do not generally include Indigenous languages in their teacher preparation courses or in subsequent professional development courses for teachers. Linguistic departments offer some courses in Australian Indigenous languages but these are not geared towards the training of Indigenous languages teachers. The most significant and relevant courses for teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages wishing to work in schools are those on offer at Sydney University, with the *Master of Indigenous Languages Education*, and a small number of TAFE institutes.

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<sup>30</sup> Information for this chapter was collected in 2006-2007.

Staff from a number of Indigenous language and cultural centres are involved in school language programmes and the workshops and activities undertaken at these centres provide another set of professional learning opportunities for Indigenous languages teachers.

The following sections summarise in greater detail the information obtained from our consultations with providers of training and ongoing professional development for teachers of Indigenous languages.

## 5.2 Education jurisdictions

The professional learning opportunities that education jurisdictions provide for school personnel and community members who are involved in Indigenous languages programmes varied considerably across States and Territories, and across systems. Some education jurisdictions offered ongoing and focussed professional opportunities for school staff teaching Indigenous languages; others were in the process of building on their resources.

In addition to professional learning activities that were offered by education jurisdictions, survey respondents also nominated courses that teachers could undertake that were offered by other institutions, such as universities. Courses that are offered by universities and TAFEs are described in more detail later in this chapter.

Given the policies regarding the teaching of Indigenous languages in schools in the *ACT*, *Tasmania* and *Queensland*, it is not surprising that the education systems in these regions did not indicate any professional learning opportunities for teachers and Indigenous Education Workers (IEW)<sup>31</sup> wishing to teach Indigenous languages (although it was noted that two staff members working in Education Queensland schools were currently undertaking Masters in Indigenous Language Education at the University of Sydney).

Table 5.1 presents a summary of the information obtained about professional learning opportunities for teachers of Indigenous languages in the States and Territories. This is followed by more detailed information for States and Territories in which professional learning opportunities are available for teachers of Indigenous languages.

**Table 5.1 Education jurisdictions: Professional learning opportunities for teachers of Indigenous languages, 2006**

| State | System | Professional learning opportunities  |
|-------|--------|--|
| ACT   | All    | None within jurisdiction   |
| Qld   | All    | None within jurisdiction   |
| NSW   | Govt   | Aboriginal Curriculum Unit, Board of Studies - offers workshops each term; The Languages Unit of the Curriculum K-12 Directorate, NSW DET - regular workshops including Teaching Methodology for |

<sup>31</sup> The term Indigenous Education Worker (IEW) is a generic term used to cover Indigenous people employed in a para-professional capacity to support the education of Indigenous students. IEWs and equivalent Indigenous staff may also be referred to as Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers, Aboriginal Education Workers, Aboriginal Education Assistants, Aboriginal Teacher Assistants and Koorie Education Workers.

|            |              |  |
|------------|--------------|--|
|            |              | Aboriginal Languages, a 2-day course for teachers.   |
|            | <i>Cath</i>  | None within jurisdiction; teachers can access BOS workshops  |
|            | <i>Indep</i> | None within jurisdiction; teachers can access BOS workshops  |
| <b>NT</b>  | <i>Govt</i>  | Bilingual Education Programme - annual programme conducted over 3-4 days for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff; Four trained linguists (from Batchelor Institute) deliver on site PD based on individual school needs.   |
|            | <i>Cath</i>  | 4x Education Officers deliver onsite PD for teachers and IEWs (not language specific); Study incentive programmes for teachers and IEWs –support for travel and fees provided for those undertaking courses at Charles Darwin University and Batchelor Institute |
|            | <i>Indep</i> | Within school PD, network/teacher exchanges with other schools, mentoring, BIITE, IAD, AnTEP   |
| <b>SA</b>  | <i>Govt</i>  | DECS Project Officers (Greg Wilson and Guy Tunstill) – offer a range of PD activities  |
|            | <i>Cath</i>  | None within jurisdiction   |
|            | <i>Indep</i> | None within jurisdiction   |
| <b>Tas</b> | <i>All</i>   | None within jurisdiction   |
| <b>Vic</b> | <i>Govt</i>  | General PD - none specific to Indigenous languages   |
|            | <i>Cath</i>  | None within jurisdiction   |
|            | <i>Indep</i> | General PD - none specific to Indigenous languages   |
| <b>WA</b>  | <i>Govt</i>  | Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training & Regional Aboriginal Languages Network meetings – for Aboriginal teachers and IEWs  |
|            | <i>Cath</i>  | Some teachers have participated in the WA DET courses ( <i>see above</i> )   |
|            | <i>Indep</i> | Some IEWs have participated in the WA DET courses ( <i>see above</i> )   |

### New South Wales

In NSW, both the NSW DET and the NSW BOS indicated that they are active in providing professional learning opportunities in the form of workshops for people involved in Indigenous languages programmes in schools. In NSW, the greatest need with respect to professional learning opportunities is, at this stage, for formal and informal courses and opportunities for developing the fluency and language proficiency of the Community Languages Teachers. TAFE NSW is in the initial stages of developing such courses.

The Aboriginal Curriculum Unit (ACU) of the NSW BOS offers workshops each term. Although not a training organisation, given that there are limited training and professional learning opportunities for people, the Unit incorporates such opportunities into intensive workshops each term with each of the eight school projects. The ACU is also moving to establish networks of schools that are all working on the same languages with some of the eight schools, once their own project is established and secure, acting as mentors to new schools wishing to begin an Aboriginal languages programme.

In 2005, an Aboriginal Languages Consultant was appointed to the Languages Unit of the Curriculum K-12 Directorate in the NSW DET to provide professional development resources and workshops for teachers, and active support for the implementation and maintenance of school programmes. The Languages Unit has produced a package - *Teaching Methodology for Aboriginal Languages* - which is a two-day workshop offered to teachers. Anyone involved in a school language team (Aboriginal education workers and community Elders) has access to these activities.

### **Northern Territory**

The NT's *Bilingual Education Programme* offers professional development for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, including annual professional development programmes conducted over 3-4 days. Four trained linguists deliver on-site professional development for schools based on individual school needs. The linguists help in delivery of Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) units (Certificate I and II in Own Language Work) on-site. An example of a typical programme was recently conducted with five schools from North East Arnhem Land. The programme focused on moderation of first and second language materials. However, it also had an inherent professional development component as teachers shared insights into programme delivery and teaching resources. This type of activity does not have a formal qualification outcome.

Staff who teach in NT Catholic schools have access to study incentive programmes, and support for travel and fees, when they undertake courses offered by Charles Darwin University and BIITE. Four Education officers provide professional development on-site in schools

### **South Australia**

The provision of professional development through the South Australian DECS is largely driven by DECS Project Officers, Greg Wilson and Guy Tunstill. Over many years, they have been responsible for organising a range of professional development activities responsive to demand. Programmes often take the form of regional and school-based workshops (for example, *Planning, Programming and Assessing for Australian Indigenous Languages*, which was held at Port Augusta in 2006). Participation in professional development is often supported through the use of Aboriginal Languages Programmes Initiatives (ALPI) funding to release teachers. In other instances, professional development is more direct through modelling, and training teachers in the pedagogy associated with language teaching. Formal training also occurs for teachers in schools in Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands including that which was offered by the University of South Australia in external mode in the early 2000s (Cooper Pedy Oodnadatta). ALPI funding is also available to support Aboriginal Education Workers or people from the community to participate in training.

### **Victoria**

In Victoria, there are no specific professional learning opportunities offered by educational jurisdictions that focus specifically on Indigenous languages. It was noted, however, that Koorie educators and people interested in Koorie education could undertake courses offered by the Victorian Corporation for Aboriginal Languages, most notably in Yorta Yorta.

### **Western Australia**

As part of the languages education strategy and in order to meet the continued increase in demand for Aboriginal Languages teachers, the Western Australian Department of Education and Training, through the two Aboriginal Languages Curriculum Consultants, provides an *Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course* that addresses workplace competencies and provides accredited training for Aboriginal language speakers working in school Languages programmes.

The course incorporates language teaching methodology, including professional development in the use of the *Curriculum Framework* and outcomes-based education, as well as specific information pertinent to the needs of teachers of Aboriginal languages. The programme also responds to key areas of the *Aboriginal Education Operational Plan 2005-2008*, including the following specific priorities:

- increasing the employment of Indigenous Australians in education;
- increasing professional development for staff involved in Indigenous education; and
- expanding culturally inclusive curricula.

Summary details of the *WA Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course* are provided in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2 WA Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course**

| <i>WA Department of Education course details</i> |  |
|--|--|
| Course name                                      | Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course   |
| Course length                                    | 18-24 months; two years in-school language teaching as a trainee and four block releases of five days.   |
| Continuity                                       | Commenced in 1998  |
| Key resources                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course Outline</li> <li>• Curriculum Framework</li> <li>• LOTE Outcomes and Standards Framework</li> <li>• Framework for Teaching Aboriginal Languages in Primary Schools</li> <li>• (Draft) Aboriginal Languages Secondary Framework 8-10</li> <li>• Aboriginal Languages Resource File</li> <li>• Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Assessment Rubric</li> </ul>  |
| Language   | Open to Indigenous Languages speakers from any language group  |
| Students   | <p>Aboriginal language speakers who are working in a LOTE programme and meet language proficiency requirements (reasonable speaker or beginning speaker working with an Elder) are eligible to apply for training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language Specialist (Indigenous community members)</li> <li>• AIEO (Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer)</li> <li>• Aboriginal teacher</li> </ul> <p>Written competency not essential but reasonable level of English literacy required to meet course requirements. Trainees must be working in a school LOTE programme and need to be teaching in at least 1x LOTE class per week for the 2 years while completing the training.</p> |
| Enrolment 2006                                   | Indigenous: metropolitan 12; Kimberley 35; non-Indigenous: 0<br>Expected completion rate: 60% (Total: 143 enrolled, 86 graduated from the course since 1998, 65 as qualified languages education teachers)   |
| Qualifications                                   | Graduates are eligible to apply to the WA College of Teaching for "Limited Authority to Teach" registration. When registration is complete Aboriginal LOTE teachers are eligible for appointment as an Aboriginal Language Teacher. Aboriginal LOTE Teachers are appointed under Section 47.6 of Teacher Career Structure (Level 1, point 6, of the Teachers Award).   |
| Skills   | <p>Minimum requirement of Competent in the areas of: Planning and Preparation; LOTE teaching; Language use in LOTE class; Classroom Management (see Rubric below)</p> <p>At the successful completion of training the Aboriginal Language Teachers will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. have developed a good understanding of the Curriculum Framework and Outcomes &amp; Standard and Framework in the LOTE area</li> </ol>   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. be able to apply knowledge of Curriculum Framework and OSF to develop a high degree of skills and expertise in language teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plan a language programme and develop appropriate resources</li> <li>• use a range of listening, speaking, viewing, reading and writing strategies to teach language</li> <li>• teach and monitor the learning outcomes of the language programme and report students progress in LOTE to parents</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. have the skills to utilise appropriate technology to make oral, visual and written resources in their own language</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

The course is coordinated by two Aboriginal languages curriculum officers, Lola Jones (Kimberley, Pilbara, and Goldfields Districts) and Lois Spehn-Jackson (MidWest, South-West, and Metropolitan Districts), who have been involved since inception of the course. These two officers are responsible for administration and delivery of the course, in-school support and assessment of trainees, and provide support to schools implementing programmes, which is funded by the curriculum officers' budget. Asked to comment on the sustainability and quality of the course, they expressed the hope that in the near future a university will take the course on board. On their own, they believe that they cannot possibly continue to provide the course as well as support to all the schools in the state.

The course is held in very positive regard and is considered to be of high quality, as evidenced by the many interested applicants. It encourages younger Aboriginal language speakers to work with Elders and community members to deliver quality language programmes in schools.

There are, however, a number of issues that may affect the sustainability/quality of the course in the future, including:

- personnel - the quality of the course is very dependent on the two curriculum officers who conduct the course;
- funding – travel and accommodation for block releases, payment of relief teacher/AIEO, payment of Elders/Language Specialists to support younger speakers;
- student numbers – number of younger language speakers available; and
- languages – diversity of languages and language situations.

Table 5.3 provides an overview of the WA *Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course*.

**Table 5.3 Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Module Outline, Stage 1 – 4**

| <b>STAGE 1</b>   | <b>STAGE 2</b>   | <b>STAGE 3</b>   | <b>STAGE 4</b>  |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key features of CF</li> <li>• Intro to principles of CF and learning outcomes</li> </ul>  | <b>CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning outcomes</li> <li>• Intro to phases of development</li> <li>• Learning in early childhood</li> </ul>   | <b>CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning, Teaching and Assessment</li> <li>• Phases of development</li> </ul>   | <b>CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation guidelines</li> <li>• Elements of outcomes planning cycle</li> <li>• Collaborative strategies &amp; outcomes</li> </ul>   |
|  | <b>LOTE LEARNING OUTCOMES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro to LOTE Learning Outcomes</li> </ul>  | <b>OUTCOMES &amp; STANDARDS PROGRESS MAPS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unpack SOS Oral Level 1-4</li> </ul>  | <b>OUTCOMES &amp; STANDARDS PROGRESS MAPS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unpack reading levels 1-4</li> <li>• language tasks and outcomes</li> </ul>  |
| <b>PLANNING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes focused planning cycle</li> <li>• Lesson plan guides</li> <li>• Range of oral &amp; written activities</li> <li>• Classroom instructions</li> </ul>  | <b>PLANNING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes focused planning</li> <li>• Intro to using a term planner</li> <li>• Planning for excursion or demonstration</li> </ul>  | <b>PLANNING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes focused planning</li> <li>• Planning for a term</li> </ul>   | <b>PLANNING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring planning formats with an outcomes focus</li> </ul>   |
| <b>RESOURCES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary &amp; Secondary Frameworks</li> <li>• Resources File</li> <li>• Creating resources</li> </ul>  | <b>RESOURCES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excursions &amp; Incursions</li> <li>• Picture talk / repetition book/chart</li> </ul>   | <b>RESOURCES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video/ digital camera</li> <li>• Using photos &amp; videos</li> </ul>  | <b>RESOURCES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating virtual reading books (PowerPoint)</li> <li>• commercial resources CDROMs</li> </ul>   |
| <b>INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language families</li> <li>• Language health &amp; changes</li> </ul>   | <b>INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using Aboriginal Languages skills in a career</li> </ul>  | <b>INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting Aboriginal Language programmes</li> </ul>   |   |
| <b>ORTHOGRAPHY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sounds and spelling systems</li> <li>• Writing Indigenous languages</li> </ul>   | <b>SYSTEM OF TARGET LANGUAGE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language grammars, suffixes, prefixes</li> <li>• Teaching language structures</li> </ul>   | <b>ALPHABET / SYLLABLE CHARTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different types of charts &amp; uses</li> <li>• Planning &amp; making charts</li> </ul>   | <b>ALPHABET SYLLABLE CHARTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of different charts for different phases of development</li> <li>• Using &amp; teaching syllables</li> </ul>   |
| <b>ASSIGNMENT 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan &amp; teach 3 consecutive lessons (using resources developed in stage 1 - big book/chart, key words, song)</li> <li>• Make lesson observations &amp; notes</li> <li>• Self-evaluation</li> </ul> | <b>ASSIGNMENT 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detail planning &amp; teaching for five consecutive lessons (using resources developed in stage 2)</li> <li>• Student evaluation &amp; work samples</li> <li>• Self-evaluation</li> </ul> | <b>ASSIGNMENT 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan language &amp; cultural programme for a term (10 weeks)</li> <li>• Detail planning &amp; teaching for ten consecutive lessons</li> <li>• Collect range of student work samples</li> <li>• Make alphabet / syllable chart</li> <li>• Self and teacher evaluation</li> </ul> | <b>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT</b> <p>On successful completion trainees will be eligible to apply for ‘untrained teacher’ status. This will include a 12 months probationary period (with performance management) while working in a LOTE programme to consolidate language and teaching skills and knowledge.</p> |

### 5.3 Universities

All Australian universities were contacted and asked to describe any courses or units they offered that might be classified as professional learning opportunities for teachers, Indigenous education workers and community members who teach, or intend to teach, Australian Indigenous languages in schools. Information was returned from a variety of sources, including university Indigenous education centres, and departments that offer degrees in Education, Linguistics, or Indigenous Studies.

Teacher preparation and training courses, and professional learning opportunities for teachers are generally situated within university education departments. Teachers of primary school students generally complete the majority of their studies within the education department/school/faculty; teachers of secondary school students generally complete an undergraduate degree in their chosen field and then go on to study for a Diploma of Education.

We also contacted the former Australian Department of Education, Science and Training. This department provided data from their Higher Education Statistics Collection relating to the numbers of students participating in an Indigenous language course. According to these figures, the most activity in Indigenous languages courses between 2002 and 2005 was at BIITE.

**Table 5.4 DEST records of higher education students participating in an Indigenous language course**

| University         | 2002      | 2003     |           | 2004     |           | 2005     |           |           |           |
|--------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                    | Adv Dip   | Masters  | Adv Dip   | Masters  | Adv Dip   | PhD      | Grad Cert | Adv Dip   | Dip       |
| Southern Cross Uni | 0         | 1        | 0         | 1        | 0         | 0        | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| University of Qld  | 0         | 0        | 0         | 0        | 0         | 1        | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| BIITE              | 13        | 0        | 75        | 0        | 66        | 0        | 0         | 20        | 27        |
| Charles Darwin Uni | 0         | 0        | 0         | 0        | 0         | 0        | 4         | 0         | 0         |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>13</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>75</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>66</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>4</b>  | <b>20</b> | <b>27</b> |

Overall, 12 of the 40 universities contacted indicated that they provided a course or units that either focussed on, or included, some content on Indigenous languages. The extent to which these were suitable or appropriate for those wishing to teach Indigenous languages in schools varied considerably.

In addition to the universities listed in Table 5.5, three universities (University of Technology Sydney, University of Newcastle, and the University of NSW) provided feedback that they were currently engaged in discussions related to plans to introduce Indigenous language courses.



**Table 5.5 University courses and units that include Indigenous languages content, 2006**

| University   | School/Faculty                                    | Course                                   | Units  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <i>Education Faculties/Departments/Schools</i>     |   |  |  |
| University of Adelaide                             | School of Education                               | Postgraduate Education Studies           | Indigenous Education (EDUC 5007)   |
| University of Canberra                             | School of Education and Community Studies         | Bachelor of Education                    | Indigenous Australia: Contemporary Issues (6878) Indigenous Education: What Works (6577)   |
| University of Queensland                           | School of Education                               | Bachelor of Education (Sec)              | Indigenous Knowledge & Education (EDUC2090); Studies of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples: Specialist Teaching Area (EDUC6875) |
| <i>University Indigenous Centres</i>               |   |  |  |
| University of South Australia                      | The Unaipon School                                | Pitjantjatjara Language Summer School    |  |
| University of Sydney                               | Koori Centre                                      | Master of Indigenous Languages Education |  |
| <i>Schools of Linguistics and Language Studies</i> |   |  |  |
| Australian National University                     | School of Language Studies                        | Bachelor of Arts                         | Language in Indigenous Australia; Language in Indigenous Australian Society  |
| Monash University                                  | School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics     | Bachelor of Arts                         | Aboriginal Languages of Australia  |
| University of Adelaide                             | School of Humanities                              | Bachelor of                              | Karna Language and Language Ecology (LING2007)   |
| <i>Schools of Australian Indigenous Studies</i>    |   |  |  |
| Charles Darwin University                          | School of Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems | Graduate Certificate in Yolngu Studies   | Language and Culture   |
| Flinders University                                | School of Humanities (Australian Studies Unit)    | Bachelor of Arts                         | Australian Languages: Issues and Debates; Australian Languages: More Issues and Debates  |
| James Cook University                              | School of Australian Indigenous Studies           | Bachelor of Indigenous Studies           | Australian Indigenous Languages; Creoles & English Based Languages in Indigenous Australia   |

Respondents from universities completed a proforma providing details of the courses and units that they offered (see Appendix 2). The information they provided is summarised in the following section, grouped according to the area or school of the university in which the unit of course is located.

### Schools of education

Responses from university schools of education indicated that there is no real focus on Indigenous languages studies in most undergraduate or postgraduate education degrees. Three universities indicated that they offered units on broader issues concerning Indigenous education, which included some sessions on Indigenous language awareness. The context for this focus is more on appreciating the languages that Indigenous school students may bring to school with them than on preparing teachers to be involved in developing or teaching an Indigenous language.

#### *University of Adelaide (School of Education)*

An elective unit called *Indigenous Education* is offered as part of a Master of Educational Studies course. The focus of the unit is on broad social and cultural themes related to Indigenous education but there is a small focus on language awareness. The unit is largely sustained through the presence of the current lecturer as no one else in the school has her particular skills or interests. The future of the unit will also be dependent on student numbers. The lecturer noted that she would very much like to have an Indigenous speaker teach the unit. Table 5.6 provides summary information about this unit.

**Table 5.6 University of Adelaide Indigenous Education unit details**

| <i>University of Adelaide – Indigenous Education unit details</i> |   |
|---|---|
| Unit name   | Indigenous Education (EDUC 5007).   |
| Course length   | 2 hours contact time per week for 12 weeks.   |
| Continuity  | Commenced in 2006.  |
| Key resources   | Reader developed by lecturer (to be reviewed in 2007).  |
| Language  | General awareness - some examples include Kaurna, Ngarrindjeri, Warlpiri and Bundjalung. (due to the current location of students in Adelaide and lecturer's PhD research). |
| Students  | Masters Coursework students (optional course).  |
| Enrolment 2006  | Indigenous: 0                      non-Indigenous: 12<br>Expected completion rate: 100%.  |
| Qualifications  | Master of Educational Studies.  |
| Skills  | Cultural and historical awareness and some pedagogical skills.  |
| Website   | <a href="http://www.adelaide.edu.au/professions/education/programmes/">http://www.adelaide.edu.au/professions/education/programmes/</a>                                     |

#### *University of Canberra (School of Education & Community Studies)*

Two units taught as part of the students' undergraduate degrees in education have a limited focus (one lecture) on Indigenous languages: *Indigenous Australia: Contemporary Issues* and *Indigenous Education: What Works*. The focus is mainly on the Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages that students bring to school with them rather than on the teaching of these languages. The course lecturer commented that if there was a shift of policy on offering Indigenous languages in schools, the university might consider the implications this would have for teacher preparation.

Table 5.7 provides summary information about these units.

**Table 5.7 University of Canberra *Indigenous Australia: Contemporary Issues and Indigenous Education: What Works* unit details**

| <i>University of Canberra – unit details</i> |   |
|--|---|
| Unit name                                    | Indigenous Australia: Contemporary Issues (6878)<br>Indigenous Education: What Works (6577).  |
| Course length                                | 6878: 1 lecture and tutorial (3 hrs); 6577: 1 lecture and tutorial (3 hrs) devoted to Aboriginal English and Torres Strait Islander Creole. |
| Continuity                                   | Commenced in 2006.  |
| Key resources                                | Bourke, Bourke & Edwards (2004) <i>Aboriginal Australia</i> , plus guest lecturer.  |
| Language                                     | Non-specific, general awareness.  |
| Students                                     | Undergraduates; 6878 -Bachelor of Community Education, 6577- compulsory for all 1st year Bachelor of Education students.                    |
| Enrolment 2006                               | Indigenous: 4 non-Indigenous: 302<br>Expected completion rate: 100%.  |
| Qualifications                               | Contributes to Bachelor of Community Education; and Bachelor of Education degrees.  |
| Skills                                       | Language awareness.   |
| Website                                      | <a href="http://www.canberra.edu.au/courses/">http://www.canberra.edu.au/courses/</a>   |

*University of Queensland (School of Education)*

The response from the University of Queensland (School of Education, Indigenous Education Coordinator) indicated that in the education courses *EDUC2090 Indigenous Knowledge & Education* and *EDUC6875 Studies of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples: Specialist Teaching Area* (within teacher preparation programmes) and in Aboriginal studies courses *ABTS1000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives* and *ABTS2020 Indigenous Approaches to Knowledge* there is some coverage of Indigenous languages. The units address Aboriginal Languages in the Pama-Nyungan family group with specific reference to the relational language structure and the way this structure informs Aboriginal English. In addition, local language groups present to students in Juggera, Turrbal and Nunukal. The units attempt to give a broad understanding of the significance of language group and identity.

**University Indigenous centres**

The three courses that are listed in the following section are offered from within university Indigenous centres. These courses are very different from each other with respect to their origin, objectives, and the types of students who participate in them. The programme offered by the Koori Centre at the University of Sydney is the most comprehensive of any of the universities in terms of preparing participants to teach an Indigenous language programme.

*University of South Australia, The David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research*

The *Pitjantjara Summer School* is offered through The David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research, which is part of the University's Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences. The College employs predominantly Indigenous academic staff who have extensive community and industry connections. The Summer School is intended to benefit people who have contact with Pitjantjara people in the course of their work. It is available to people with a basic understanding of the language as well as to those with no experience.

The course is very popular with over 60 potential applicants waiting for the 2007 programme. Barriers to sustaining the course include availability of teachers with qualifications to teach in the programme, and the costs involved in travelling to Adelaide to teach the programme and in reviewing and updating teaching materials. Currently, resources are sold to students and the course attracts a fee, which helps to offset expenses.

The programme attracts excellent student feedback and waiting lists to enrol in the programme are extensive. All feedback attests to the high quality of the programme, which is linked to the calibre of teaching staff (a linguist and an Indigenous Elder) and teaching methodologies that encourage practice and experience. Students gain knowledge of basic Pitjantjara language as well as insights into Pitjantjara history and culture.

The University of South Australia has plans to expand on the offering of Aboriginal languages into accredited Degree level programmes in the future, and this will be investigated at some length by the David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research. Protocols need to be in place to teach a language, including the need to gain permission from traditional owners.

Table 5.8 provides summary information about the Pitjantjara Summer School course.

**Table 5.8 Summary information about the Pitjantjara Summer School course**

| <i>University of South Australia Pitjantjara Language Summer School details</i> |  |
|---|--|
| Course name   | Pitjantjara Language Summer School   |
| Course length   | Option A - Two full weeks 9.00am - 4.00pm;<br>Option B - First week; Option C - Second week only (Must have previously completed the first week).  |
| Continuity  | Commenced in 1993, conducted annually since, except for 1999. (Pitjantjara Language subjects have been available 1975).  |
| Key documents   | Resources are currently under review a) Brian Kirke. <i>Wangka Kulintjaku. (Talk so as to be understood) Introductory self instruction course in basic conversational Pitjanjatjara.</i> (6 lessons CD & written); b) Paul Eckert & Joyce Hudson. <i>Wangka Wiru. A handbook for the Pitjantjara language learner.</i>   |
| Language  | Conversational Pitjantjara (a dialect of the Western Desert Australian Aboriginal language).   |
| Students  | Teachers from Anangu schools, community workers, land management officers, anthropologists, nurses, geologists, prison officers and current University students, plus Aboriginal people who work in areas such as health, education, police, courts, native title and drug counselling (no entry requirements).  |
| Enrolment 2006  | Indigenous: 40 non-Indigenous: 20<br>Expected completion rate: 100%.   |
| Qualifications  | A Certificate of Completion (not a degree course).   |
| Skills  | By the end of the school, students should be familiar with a basic vocabulary of approximately 300 words, the sounds of the language and able to reproduce them, and have a basic grammatical knowledge with an understanding of the 4 noun and 4 verb classes and 4 or 5 tenses of the verbs in each class, and should be able to converse in simple sentences. |
| Website   | <a href="http://www.unisa.edu.au/unaipon/pit-language.asp">http://www.unisa.edu.au/unaipon/pit-language.asp</a>  |

*University of Sydney (Koori Centre)*

Indigenous Languages Education courses offered at the University of Sydney's Koori Centre are designed to meet the need for qualified Indigenous Australian people to participate in the delivery of language teaching programmes in a range of educational settings.

The *Master of Indigenous Languages Education* is a one-year degree course for Indigenous people who have a recognised teaching qualification and who wish to develop skills in Indigenous language teaching. Indigenous teachers completing the course up to the end of 2010 will be eligible for approval to teach Indigenous languages in schools.

In 2009, the NSW DET will reconsider the *Master of Indigenous Languages Education* and any other available Indigenous languages programmes in terms of the requirements for Indigenous languages teachers after 2010.

From 2007, the Koori Centre plans to offer a Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma of Indigenous Languages Education, with entry requirements of two years of teacher training.

Table 5.9 provides summary information about the *Master of Indigenous Languages Education* course.

**Table 5.9 Summary information about the *Master of Indigenous Languages Education* course**

| <i>University of Sydney Master of Indigenous Languages Education course details</i> |  |
|---|--|
| Course name   | Master of Indigenous Languages Education.  |
| Course length   | The Graduate Certificate is completed in one semester, the graduate diploma in one and a half and the Master's takes a full year.  |
| Continuity  | Commenced in 2006.   |
| Students  | Only available to Indigenous Australian students. Students must have completed either a four year teaching qualification, such as a B Ed, or a three year degree and a Dip Ed or other qualifications acceptable to the Centre. No language proficiency requirement.   |
| Language  | Students who wish to learn an Indigenous language as part of the degree must have access to a suitable external language learning programme or study a language offered by the University of Sydney.   |
| Qualifications  | Master of Indigenous Languages Education.  |
| Skills  | To complete their degree students complete eight subjects in the areas of Linguistics for Indigenous Languages (Sounds and Writing, Words and Meanings, Sentences and Texts, Field Methods, Research Project, or Learning and Indigenous Language) and Teaching Indigenous Languages (Theories and Methods in Language Learning, Language Curriculum Development, Technology and Language Learning). |
| Website   | <a href="http://www.koori.usyd.edu.au/index.shtml">http://www.koori.usyd.edu.au/index.shtml</a>  |

The following units are also offered at the University of Sydney:

KOCR2605 *Speaking Gamilaraay 1* - This unit of study provides students with a basic competence in speaking, understanding, reading and writing Gamilaraay sufficient to recognise and construct simple utterances in the language, and to understand its relationships with other languages. Classes take the form of three-hour intensive oral workshops, which progressively develop each student's

abilities in the language. Assessment is by short written assignments based on lesson content and an appraisal of individual oral/aural performance together with a short essay on Gamilaraay culture or a related topic.

KCSE3202 *Teaching Aboriginal Languages* - This unit of study orients students within the second/foreign language acquisition literature, and presents policy, implementation models, teaching methods/approaches and pedagogies, resource and materials design, as well as programming and planning methods with a particular focus on teaching Aboriginal languages. It is available to students enrolled in the Koori Centre.

### Schools of Linguistics and Language Studies

A small number universities offer units in Indigenous languages as part of a degree in linguistics or language studies. Although some graduates may pursue careers in which they work with Aboriginal communities, their numbers are limited, as are the numbers of Indigenous graduates. These units are not typically undertaken as part of a degree in education but they are included here to provide an indication of the potential range of resources available within universities to support Indigenous languages teachers and speakers. A search of university websites and handbooks revealed that languages and anthropology departments other than those listed here do, at times, offer studies of Indigenous languages. However, the demand for these courses varies and they are not offered every year.

#### *Australian National University (School of Language Studies)*

There are two courses offered at the Australian National University that cover Indigenous languages - *Language in Indigenous Australia* and *Language in Indigenous Australian Society*. Both courses cover opinions and research on Australian languages; language and local groups; genetic and areal relations between languages; basic structural features (including learning some of a selected language); vocabulary and semantic structure, especially kinship; speech use and etiquette; specialised codes: sign language, respect language, song language; impact of English on traditional languages; loanwords, language reduction and shift; pidgins, creoles, and Aboriginal English; language and education: language policy, bilingual education; language and the law, and language reclamation. Table 5.10 provides summary course information.

**Table 5.10 Summary information about the Australian National University School of Language Studies courses**

| <i>Australian National University - course details</i> |   |
|--|---|
| Course name  | Language in Indigenous Australia (Undergrad) (LING2016)<br>Language in Indigenous Australian Society (Postgrad) (LING6016).                                     |
| Course length  | LING2016 26 hrs of lectures/7 tutorials; LING6016 1 semester.   |
| Continuity   | Unknown.  |
| Key resources  | Michael Walsh & Colin Yallop (eds), 2005. <i>Language and Culture in Aboriginal Australia</i> .   |
| Students   | LING2016 12 units of Anthropology, Archaeology, History, Linguistics or Sociology.  |
| Language   | No, general awareness.  |
| Qualifications   | Contributes to degree.  |
| Website  | <a href="http://info.anu.edu.au/StudyAt/_Arts/Undergraduate/Courses/_LING2016.asp">http://info.anu.edu.au/StudyAt/_Arts/Undergraduate/Courses/_LING2016.asp</a> |

*Monash University (School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics)*

The course *Aboriginal Languages of Australia* provides an introduction to Australian Aboriginal languages covering features of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and sociolinguistic issues including language status, bilingualism and the role of linguistics in language maintenance and revival.

The sustainability of this course is attributed to the energy of the coordinator. Although student participation was considered to be stable in 2006, subject to staffing continuity, it was recognised that succession planning was needed for the course to continue. The course is recognised as a priority by the Linguistics Department. The availability of resources is seen to be a key limitation with respect to the quality of the course. Staff at Monash University have strong links with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) through the development of the VCE Unit *Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation*.

Monash respondents noted that staff at GippsTAFE were considering developing a module for Indigenous language reclamation as a TAFE subject that would be a stepping stone to university courses such as the Monash *Aboriginal Languages of Australia* course.

Table 5.11 provides summary information about the *Aboriginal Languages of Australia* course.

**Table 5.11 Summary information about the *Aboriginal Languages of Australia* course**

| <i>Monash University - course details</i> |   |
|---|---|
| Course name                               | Aboriginal Languages of Australia (LIN2370)<br>(The School introduced a graduate course in 2006 in Studies of Language Endangerment - not specifically focusing on Australian Indigenous languages, but the course draws in part on the Australian experience).   |
| Course length                             | One semester.   |
| Continuity                                | 1980.   |
| Key documents                             | <a href="http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/2006handbooks/units/LIN2370.html">http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/2006handbooks/units/LIN2370.html</a>   |
| Language focus                            | Does not focus specifically on one Indigenous language but uses a case study approach to cover both Pitjantjatjara and Yorta Yorta languages.   |
| Target students                           | An elective for Undergraduate Linguistics students (Year one linguistics or equivalent - flexible with this) and Indigenous studies students. Small numbers of International students enrol occasionally.   |
| Enrolment 2006                            | Indigenous: 0                      non-Indigenous: 28<br>Expected completion rate: 95%<br>(2 distance students (both Indigenous) were enrolled in Studies of Language Endangerment).  |
| Qualifications                            | Contributes to BA or other Bachelor Degree.   |
| Skills                                    | Familiarity with linguistic features of Aboriginal languages – grammar, phonology and discourse; appreciation of the social culture of language particularly variation within languages – family clan groups and variation across languages; social situation of language dispossession in settled areas ; issues of language endangerment more broadly across Australia. |
| Website                                   | <a href="http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/2006handbooks/units/LIN2370.html">http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/2006handbooks/units/LIN2370.html</a>   |

*University of Adelaide (School of Humanities, Linguistics Unit)*

A unit entitled *Kaurna Language and Language Ecology* was introduced in July 1997 with the backing of the Kaurna community and financial support from DECS. The unit gives an insight into the ways in which Kaurna sources are being used to forge a new Kaurna identity and develop an associated language that is being used to address contemporary needs. Table 5.12 provides summary information about the course.

**Table 5.12 Summary information about the *Kaurna Language and Language Ecology* course**

| <i>University of Adelaide- course details</i> |  |
|---|--|
| Unit name                                     | Kaurna Language and Language Ecology LING 2007.  |
| Teacher                                       | Dr Rob Amery.  |
| Course length                                 | 3 contact hours per week/ 1 semester.  |
| Language                                      | Kaurna.  |
| Students                                      | Undergraduates.  |
| Qualifications                                | Contributes to degree.   |
| Skills  | Learn some Kaurna language; develop an understanding of the structure of the language; understand the context in which the language existed at the time of colonisation; appreciate the circumstances under which the language is being revived. |
| Website                                       | <a href="http://access.adelaide.edu.au/courses/details.asp?year=2007&amp;course=007176%2B1%2B2710%2B0">http://access.adelaide.edu.au/courses/details.asp?year=2007&amp;course=007176%2B1%2B2710%2B0</a>  |

**Schools of Indigenous Australian Studies**

Several Departments of Indigenous Australian studies across universities also responded to surveys sent out as part of the mapping process. As with linguistics departments, the courses described below are not specifically geared towards teachers. These courses do, however, offer another potential source of professional learning opportunities for teachers of Indigenous languages programmes.

*Charles Darwin University (School of Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems)*

The *Graduate Certificate - Language and Culture Yolngu Studies* is designed to give an introduction to the life and languages of the Yolngu people in North East Arnhem Land. It concentrates on Yolngu Matha (Yolngu language) forms of Dhuwala, and focuses on the everyday community version of the language. The course is relevant for both first language maintenance as well as second language learning. The course is approved by Yolngu educators and Elders who act as advisers to the University; course quality is largely driven through the role of the lecturer Waymamba Gaykamangu. The course is well-regarded. In November 2005, the Yolngu Studies team was awarded the prestigious Prime Minister's Award for University Teacher of the Year.

The course facilitators indicated that, in the long term, sustainability will depend on government leadership that supports and promotes the need for cultural understanding. At the time of the mapping process, there were no teachers involved in professional development in Yolngu studies. Other professionals, however – such as GPs, lawyers, and nurses – regularly undertake the course. The course facilitators have links with the education sector through regular contact



with NT DEET and schools in Arnhem Land. Table 5.13 provides summary information about the course.

**Table 5.13 Summary information about the *Language and Culture Yolngu Studies* course**

| <i>Charles Darwin University - course details</i> |   |
|---|---|
| Course name                                       | Graduate Certificate - Language and Culture Yolngu Studies.   |
| Course length                                     | Graduate Certificate - 2 years part-time (8 Units).   |
| Continuity  | 1997.   |
| Key documents                                     | Online course information available at:<br><a href="http://eagle.ntu.edu.au/NTU/Apps/coursere.nsf/P_Course_Select/04F09F9F6069FF4F69256F1300362BB2?OpenDocument">http://eagle.ntu.edu.au/NTU/Apps/coursere.nsf/P_Course_Select/04F09F9F6069FF4F69256F1300362BB2?OpenDocument</a>  |
| Language focus                                    | Yolngu Languages. Yolngu complex of languages - 40-60 similar but distinct languages.   |
| Target students                                   | Standard entry - Bachelors degree or equivalent. However, undergraduate students and Graduate Masters and PhD students often select course units as elective options on a fee for service basis.<br>Also suitable as a PD option for health and education and government workers, researchers and workers in Yolngu communities. Native speakers of Yolngu languages who do not have an undergraduate degree, but who are recognised as Yolngu intellectuals by Yolngu advisers to the School of Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems, and who have good literacy skills and experience in education or research, are also eligible for admission. (No institutional requirements).<br>Added as elective in some other courses but not in undergraduate courses in education or nursing. |
| Enrolment in 2006                                 | Indigenous: 1 non-Indigenous: 65<br>Expected completion rate: 90%.  |
| Qualifications                                    | Graduate Certificate or a contributory element to other qualifications.   |
| Skills  | Understanding of language and culture of NE Arnhem Land, including a basic grounding in the sounds of the languages, grammar, basic vocabulary to enable the development of conversation ability and the learning of other Yolngu languages. Students also gain knowledge of moeity systems, various aspects of kinship, Yolngu life, creations stories, songs, art and ceremonies and how these relate together.   |
| Website   | <a href="http://learnline.cdu.edu.au/yolngustudies/study.htm">http://learnline.cdu.edu.au/yolngustudies/study.htm</a>   |

*Flinders University (School of Humanities, Australian Studies Unit)*

The aims of *Australian Languages: Issues and Debates* and a subsequent course, *Australian Languages: More Issues and Debates* include providing students with a basic understanding of the diversity and structural features of Australian languages and the current situation of languages in contemporary Aboriginal Australia. It is not a pure linguistics course, which could be regarded as a strength because it attracts students without any background in linguistics. In some respects, however, it is also a limitation, insofar as a lot of time is spent explaining elementary linguistics or grammatical concepts. The course has loose, informal links with the secondary and primary education sectors but none that are formal. The units are not currently being offered – this is largely dependent on the availability of the course coordinator to teach it.

It was reported that the Student Evaluations of Teaching (SET) assessments for the units have been consistently excellent, and it is clear that there is student demand. Staffing is seen to be the key issue, in terms of both barriers and drivers with regard to offering high quality programmes. Funding is also an issue - while

funding for speakers has been available in the past, no funding is currently available. Guest speakers provide first hand insights into socio-linguistic experiences and demonstrate knowledge and history without formal education. Table 5.14 provides summary information about the units.

**Table 5.14 Summary information about Flinders University *Australian Languages* units**

| <i>Flinders University - unit details</i> |   |
|---|---|
| Course name                               | 1. Australian Languages: Issues and Debates;<br>2. Australian Languages: More Issues and Debates.   |
| Course length                             | One semester for each course.   |
| Continuity                                | Commenced 1998, last offered in 2003 to 90 students .   |
| Key resources                             | <a href="http://www.flinders.edu.au/calendar/vol2/ug/australian.htm">http://www.flinders.edu.au/calendar/vol2/ug/australian.htm</a>   |
| Students                                  | Undergrads in Australian Studies, Humanities, Education or Archaeology.   |
| Language                                  | None specific - a basic understanding of the structural features of Australian languages, whilst recognising the diversity amongst them.  |
| Qualifications                            | Courses contribute to Bachelor degree; Associated Majors: Australian Studies; Indigenous Studies Minor; Bachelor of Archaeology.  |
| Skills                                    | For successful completion of this topic students: demonstrate an ability to identify the structural features of Australian languages; identify the diversity and complexity of Australian languages; demonstrate an ability to evaluate the complexity of language contact phenomena in Australia; collaborate with peers in group learning and presentations; demonstrate an ability to explain and evaluate contemporary issues and debates in Australian languages; demonstrate an ability to develop relevant research questions; and show evidence of presentation skills. |
| Website                                   | <a href="http://www.flinders.edu.au/calendar/vol2/ug/australian.htm">http://www.flinders.edu.au/calendar/vol2/ug/australian.htm</a>   |

*James Cook University (School of Indigenous Australian Studies)*

*Australian Indigenous Languages and Creoles and English Based Languages in Indigenous Australia* (within a Bachelor of Indigenous Studies course) are both offered within the University's School of Indigenous Education Studies. The former provides an overview of Indigenous languages in Australia, focusing on the relationship between history, culture and language and providing an introduction to a selection of languages from across the country, including the Gugu-Badhun language. The latter focuses upon the speech varieties that are based on English, known as pidgins, creoles and Aboriginal English and which are spoken by many Indigenous Australians. Topics covered include development of pidgin and Creole languages; attitudes to these languages; comparison of the two Australian creoles with Indigenous languages; and implications for education. Previous students have included an Indigenous student from the Education Department, whose role was/is the Indigenous adviser on languages within the state school system.

It was reported that evaluation feedback from students has been extremely positive on the professional manner in which these units have been conducted and the knowledge gained personally, as well as the applicability to students' career pathway. The Indigenous students have particularly commented on how empowering they have found the units to be. Their own knowledge bases are highly valued as are their individual contributions to the class discussions. One of the perceived limitations is that a non-Indigenous person teaches the units and,

although various resources are used, including relevant guest speakers, this does not provide the 'lived, personal experiences' that a fluent Indigenous speaker has. Issues of staffing and low student numbers, and the elective status of the units potentially affect their sustainability. Table 5.15 provides summary information about the units.

**Table 5.15 Summary information about James Cook University Indigenous Australian Studies units**

| <i>James Cook University - course details</i> |   |
|---|---|
| Course name                                   | IA2020 Australian Indigenous Languages;<br>IA3002 Creoles and English Based Languages in Indigenous Australia (within Bachelor of Indigenous Studies course). |
| Started                                       | IA2020 commenced in 2000 as a first year subject under the linguist Joyce Hudson. IA3002 commenced in 2003 as a second and third year subject.                |
| Length  | Each subject is conducted as an intensive week block with both pre and post block work during one semester.   |
| Documents                                     | Course outlines (provided).   |
| Students                                      | Undergraduates.   |
| Enrolment 2006                                | (IA2020) Indigenous: 5 non-Indigenous: 10<br>(IA3002) Indigenous: 7 non-Indigenous: 13<br>Expected completion rate: 99%.                                      |
| Qualifications                                | Subject completion towards their own individual degree.   |
| Language                                      | IA2020 general awareness with specific emphasis on Gugu-Badhun language; IA3002 general awareness but specific emphasis on Torres Strait Creole language.     |
| Web links                                     | <a href="http://www.jcu.edu.au/app/coursefinder/">http://www.jcu.edu.au/app/coursefinder/</a>   |

## 5.4 TAFES

The type of training and professional learning opportunities that TAFES offer to teachers and potential teachers of Indigenous languages falls across a number of categories, including Indigenous languages courses specifically for teachers, language conversational experiences, and general certificates for Indigenous education workers.

### Certificates in Indigenous Education Work

For many years now, there has been a push to increase the involvement of Indigenous people in schools and to provide training and professional development opportunities for IEWs. Many TAFE institutions offer either a general teaching assistant course or a specific certificate for IEWs that focuses on issues in working in the classroom and within schools, liaising with Indigenous communities, and working with Indigenous students.

Although these courses provide teaching-related training, they do not have a specific focus on language teaching or teaching Indigenous studies. Exceptions to this are *Certificates III and IV in Indigenous Education Work* offered at BIITE. The following core and elective units in this course specifically cover Indigenous languages work, as described in the Course Handbook:

*Certificate III in Indigenous Education Work:*

- ULO003 *Promote Indigenous languages and culture in the school:* Identifies and explores the local Indigenous language and cultures within the school environment. You will discuss ways to actively promote local language and culture within the school (core unit).
- ULO005 *Develop beginning oral and written competence in an Australian Indigenous Language:* Provides an opportunity to develop oral and written competencies in an Australian Indigenous language. It is based on social, historical and political aspects of language used in communities (elective unit).

*Certificate IV in Indigenous Education Work:*

- ULO009 *Develop Indigenous languages and culture lessons for the classroom:* Develops your knowledge of local Indigenous languages and cultures. You also plan a series of lessons to teach about Indigenous language and culture to children (core unit).
- ULO011 *Develop beginning oral and written competence in an Australian Indigenous language:* Provides an opportunity to develop oral and written competence in an Australian Indigenous language. It is based on social, historical and political aspects of language used in communities (elective unit).
- ULO012 *Develop enhanced oral and written competence in an Australian Indigenous language:* Allows you to further develop your skills and knowledge in an Australian Indigenous language. The unit develops oral and written competence and also involves language learning and research skills (elective unit).

**Certificates in Indigenous languages study**

Most TAFE institutes contacted in the process of conducting the mapping exercise for this report responded that they did not offer Indigenous languages courses, either generally for the purposes of language study or for people wishing to gain skills to enable them to work in an Indigenous language education programme. The TAFEs that did respond with information about accredited courses in Indigenous languages are listed in Table 5.16.

**Table 5.16 TAFE courses that include Indigenous Languages content, 2006**

| <b>TAFE</b>                     | <b>Course</b>  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Batchelor Institute             | Certificate I/II in Own Language Work.   |
| Pilbara TAFE:                   | Certificate III/IV in Australian Language and Cultural Heritage.   |
| GippsTAFE:                      | Certificate III in Australian Indigenous Language Study.   |
| Tropical North Queensland TAFE: | Certificate III/IV in Indigenous Australian Language Studies; Diploma of Indigenous Australian Language Studies. |
| New England Institute of TAFE:  | Gamilaroi Aboriginal Language programme.   |

Further information about these courses is presented below.

*Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)*

The aim of *Certificate I/II in Own Language Work* is to provide people with skills to enable employment as language workers in Indigenous Languages Centres, community schools, resource production centres, cultural centres and other community language projects. The training enables language workers to fulfil community, language researcher and employer expectations. Schools make contact with BIITE to conduct courses to support Indigenous language workers and work with schools is generally formalised with a memorandum of understanding. Systemic interaction is limited to liaison/input into course development.

The quality of the course is supported through appropriate levels of resourcing and 'community buy in' with support for language teaching. The key barrier affecting quality centres is the presence of low levels of literacy in English and/or own language. BIITE endeavours to alleviate this issue by offering: a) Foundation Studies that lead to a *Certificate in Written and Spoken English*; and b) Pre-Tertiary Studies (PTS), which focuses on academic writing. The sustainability of the course is affected by attendance and non-completions as a result of 'sorry business' and other community issues, such as receipt of royalty payments (demotivator); remoteness that causes difficulties in sustaining contact with BIITE; and the level of previous educational experience.

BIITE maintains a strong philosophical and practical emphasis on 'Both Way' Learning, giving equal emphasis on the Western model of learning as well as to an Indigenous model of learning. The approach is enacted through course delivery. Planning has commenced for a course to be specifically developed for Teacher aides/Assistants. The course, currently entitled *Language Teaching Course*, is expected to provide a qualifications pathway for people who have attained Certificate II in *Own Language work*. Discussion continues at BIITE as to whether the course would follow a higher education delivery and qualifications stream - Diploma/Associate Diploma/Degree - or a VET stream Certificate III and Certificate IV. Table 5.17 summarises information about this course.

**Table 5.17 BIITE course in Indigenous Languages**

| <i>BIITE course details</i> |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Course name                 | Certificate I/II in Own Language Work.   |
| Course length               | Cert I - 330 hours, Cert II - 500 hours<br>(12 months course but usually completed part-time over 2-3 years).  |
| Continuity                  | 2002 - 2004; Reaccredited in 2005.   |
| Key resources               | Course Handbooks; Certificate I in Own Language Work 70120NT; Certificate II in Own Language Work 70121NT.   |
| Language                    | No, adaptable to all languages.  |
| Students                    | Indigenous language workers including those working in schools as Teacher Aides/Assistants; no requirements.   |
| Enrolment 2006              | Indigenous: tba non-Indigenous: tba<br>Expected completion rate: 40%.  |
| Skills                      | Skills to support the delivery of an Indigenous language within a school setting encompassing: demonstrate a sense of responsibility towards the employer and the community, especially Elders; write basic examples of language and read them back in a way that a non-literate speaker of the language can understand; access documents already written in the |

|         |  |
|---------|--|
|         | language to extend their knowledge of language; create own original documents using their traditional language (primarily by transcribing recorded spoken language) and read them aloud to others; be confident speakers of own language in appropriate work contexts; demonstrate awareness of cultural protocols; demonstrate knowledge of the use of a range of technical equipment appropriate to language work e.g., recording equipment, computers and resource production technology. |
| Website | <a href="https://www.batchelor.edu.au/file_documents/students/Coursehandbook_07.pdf">https://www.batchelor.edu.au/file_documents/students/Coursehandbook_07.pdf</a>  |

### *Pilbara TAFE*

While the *Certificate in Australian Language and Cultural Heritage* is primarily for Indigenous Australians it is also open to non-Indigenous Australians. The course aims to provide students with skills and knowledge relating to Australian languages, traditional knowledge and cultural heritage; to enable students to organise, develop or manage language programmes in their own communities; and provide training to people who are employed in government and community language and cultural heritage programmes. Students also learn how to use new technologies to promote Australian languages and traditional knowledge. Table 5.18 summarises information about this course.

**Table 5.18 Pilbara TAFE course in Indigenous Languages**

| <i>Pilbara TAFE course details</i> |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Course name                        | Certificate III/IV in Australian Language and Cultural Heritage.   |
| Course length                      | Cert III - 420 hrs; Cert IV - 680 hrs.   |
| Continuity                         | Reaccredited in 2006.  |
| Students                           | LOTE teachers, Language Workers, Indigenous Community members. (No requirements).  |
| Languages                          | First language maintenance, second language learning, language revival and awareness.  |
| Skills                             | Competency in language; general understanding of the linguistic structure of Indigenous languages; cultural awareness; other employability skills such as driver training, first aid training and skills in electronic and digital media, including the use of software. |
| Website                            | <a href="http://www.pilbaratafe.wa.edu.au/">http://www.pilbaratafe.wa.edu.au/</a>  |

### *GippsTAFE*

The *Certificate in Indigenous Australian Language Study* aims to provide participants with the skills and knowledge to produce a wide range of teaching, cultural and promotional materials based on Indigenous Australian languages. In this course, students can also learn how to manage the funding and implementation of language programmes and/or research; and record, maintain, teach and reclaim Indigenous Australian languages (based on 39075QLD – see below). Table 5.19 summarises information about this course.

**Table 5.19 GippsTAFE course in Indigenous Languages**

| <i>GippsTAFE course details</i> |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Course name                     | Certificate III in Indigenous Australian Language Study.   |
| Started                         | 2006; Planning for Certificate IV in 2007 and Diploma 2008.  |
| Length                          | 12 months; part-time available.  |
| Students                        | Koorie Educators; Indigenous Victorians wanting to engage in language revival and reclamation. Other Indigenous workers (DSE/Parks Victoria) where their job description requires knowledge of Indigenous languages. |
| Language                        | Not Language specific – student works on own language (no requirements).   |
| Skills                          | Skills to undertake a language revival process; skills and knowledge in language of choice; pathway from VCE that may articulate into Higher Ed (e.g. Monash University)   |
| Web links                       | <a href="http://www.gippstafe.vic.edu.au/courses/koorie/certiilanguage.html">http://www.gippstafe.vic.edu.au/courses/koorie/certiilanguage.html</a>  |

*Tropical Nth Qld TAFE*

*Certificate III/IV in Indigenous Australian Language Studies* and *Diploma of Indigenous Australian Language Studies* were developed by the Indigenous Studies Product Development Unit (ISPDU) for Tropical North Queensland TAFE (TAFE Queensland). *Certificate III* was offered by Yeronga Institute of TAFE in 2003 and 2004 (since amalgamated Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE) but has not been offered since, due to difficulties in engaging an Indigenous linguist/teacher. The courses are accredited to 06/05/2007 and TAFENSW has a reciprocal agreement/licence with TAFE Qld (Centre for Training Materials, see above) in respect of these courses, and wishes to develop a language programme that may be similar or based on them.

The courses provide skills and knowledge in the areas of teaching, materials production, linguistics and management of Indigenous languages programmes in order to support communities with aims spanning all language revival categories and language awareness. The courses are composed of units of competency, some of which were developed by the Course Development Advisory Committee and some of which were drawn from a range of national training packages (e.g. TAA04). A course preamble provides all relevant information, including course structure with unit lists showing elective streams in: a) community education and interpretation; and b) linguistics and research, rules governing elective units, entry to the course (for Indigenous people only) etc. Course documentation is available from the Centre for Training Materials.

In the current policy and funding climate in Queensland, these courses may not be sustainable. That is, they may not be extended or redeveloped at expiry of their accreditation period. There is strong demand for the courses, and for components of them, at community level. However, they are not currently offered by any TAFE Queensland institute due to lack of support and resources to source Indigenous and other linguists, teachers and support workers. Table 5.20 summarises information about this course.

**Table 5.20 Tropical North Queensland TAFE course in Indigenous Languages**

| <i>Tropical Nth Qld TAFE course details</i> |   |
|---|---|
| Course name                                 | Certificate III/IV in Indigenous Australian Language Studies; Diploma of Indigenous Australian Language Studies.  |
| Course length                               | Cert III - 385 hours (34 weeks); Cert IV - 490 hours (43 weeks); Diploma - 780 hours (68 weeks).  |
| Continuity                                  | 2003-2004 (not offered since).  |
| Key resources                               | Course outlines (provided).   |
| Language                                    | Not language specific.  |
| Students                                    | Training has been offered to Indigenous community members working in/wishing to establish language programmes, and other Indigenous people.   |
| Qualifications                              | Students who complete particular units of competency obtain a Statement of Attainment for those units.  |
| Skills                                      | Skills at (AQF) Certificate IV level in VET teaching if opt for community education stream at Cert IV and Diploma levels. Increasing levels of linguistic competence and cultural/cross cultural knowledge and skills as progress through levels.<br>Cert III - assist in cultural studies programmes in communities and schools; assist in basic materials development for language resource centres and schools; pursue further language studies; Cert IV - offer cultural studies programmes and develop materials in schools/resource centres; conduct cultural tours; assist in museum work, land claims, research and as interpreter/advisor in mediation and legal contexts; pursue further language studies; Diploma - as a language worker/research consultant, teach and contribute to teaching programme development for language courses in schools and resource centres, advise and liaise with tourism organisations, museums, libraries, land councils/organisations, court mediation/ interpretation and research. Pursue further tertiary studies in linguistics, anthropology or other areas of the humanities. |

*New England Institute of TAFE*

A response was also received from New England Institute of TAFE relating to the *Gamilaroi Aboriginal Language programme* they have been conducting for the past two years in Tamworth, Moree, Armidale, Narrabri, Coonabarabran. The programme also runs in schools at Toomelah, Walgett and Coonabarabran.

No specific details were provided about the course or its participants, although it was noted that the Institute had been working closely with the NSW Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate and the NSW Indigenous Languages Advisory committee to complete a draft *Certificate I in Indigenous Languages* that would be ready for implementation in 2007. The Institute also has a Language Development Working Party that assesses the structure of TAFE run programmes and further development of newly recruited trainers.

The Gamilaroi language is in high demand through New England and even in the metropolitan areas. It has a large support group that includes people from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, the University of Sydney, the Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate, and communities and schools. The *Gamilaroi Aboriginal Language programme* boasts a well-produced set of resources including dictionaries, song books, picture dictionary, and a music/song CD.



## 5.5 Indigenous Language and Cultural Centres

A number of Indigenous language and cultural centres play an important role in supporting local schools to develop and teach Indigenous languages programmes. As well as providing schools with teaching resources and materials, staff at some centres also teach or assist with language teaching in schools. Furthermore, by enabling community members to learn and develop their language skills, the centres provide another source of professional learning opportunities for potential teachers of Indigenous languages.

We developed a list of Indigenous language and cultural centres in each of the States and Territories and contacted each one with a request for information about their involvement in school language programmes, the training of teachers to teach Indigenous languages, and the development of resources for use in schools. The relevant information provided by the centres is summarised in this section.

### *Alice Springs Language Centre*

The Centre offers courses in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous languages. Support for Arrente language programmes in nine primary and secondary schools, as well as the School of the Air, is provided in the form of direct teaching and resources.

### *Dhinawun Consultancy*

This independent consultancy offers support for cultural programmes and language teaching, in Gunggari and Gamilaraay (under development) in two Queensland state schools.

### *Diwurruwurru-jaru Aboriginal Corporation*

The Katherine Regional Aboriginal Language Centre supports language programmes in two very remote government schools in the region through direct teaching, the provision of resources (word lists, phrases, books, videos) and the informal training for language teachers (teaching assistants and community speakers).

### *Kimberley Language Resource Centre*

Based in Halls Creek, this Centre is an independent, community-based, Aboriginal organisation with members from across the Kimberley. Most of 16 government and independent schools that the Centre has contact with are remote; the Centre also supports the School of the Air. Support for language teaching in a number of Indigenous languages is through to teaching assistants, providing resources and conducting bush trips. Direct teaching assistance is provided to Halls Creek District High School.

### *Korrawinga Aboriginal Corporation*

Korrawinga conducts the Butchulla Language Programme (Nyanga Buranga Burangam - Look, Listen, Learn and Know). The programme supports the teaching of Butchulla in three state schools in Queensland, providing language resources and offering support through direct teaching.

*Mirima Dawang Woortlab-gerring, Language and Culture Centre (MDWg)*

The MDWg is based in Kununurra and provides support to schools through teaching Miriwoong to a Year 6 class at the local Catholic primary school and to six different groups of mostly non-Indigenous children at the Kununurra District High School from different age groups and levels. Most of the lessons have more of a focus on culture than on language.

The Centre also offers the Barramundi Programme, which is designed for Indigenous children who have skipped part of their early education. MDWg provides regular classes for this group in order to strengthen their identity, although some of the children are from non-Miriwoong background.

Feedback from MDWg indicated that teacher training is a major issue due to the increasing demand for language classes. Currently there are only two half-time positions on Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) funding to provide classes.

*Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative*

Muurrbay, based in Nambucca Heads, supports Aboriginal people, particularly Gumbaynggirr, in the revival and maintenance of their language and culture through a range of activities. The Co-operative supports language and culture programmes in six schools (a mixture of government, Catholic and independent, pre-primary, primary and secondary) by providing teachers, teaching support, and resources in Gumbaynggirr.

An intensive full-time language course, *Certificate IV in Teaching Gumbaynggirr Language and Culture Maintenance*, is currently being offered at Muurrbay. This course is being offered to Indigenous people with the support of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs through the NSW Aboriginal Languages Database project.

The class is being taught by a non-Aboriginal teacher-linguist with the support of Gumbaynggirr language teachers. Another non-Aboriginal teacher-linguist provides an introduction to Australian linguistics and language teaching skills and methodology. Students are also provided with training in Information and Communication Technology that assists them to prepare language classes and resources. Muurrbay aims to use graduates as teachers in school language programmes, as the demand for teachers in schools in the region has been greater than the supply available.

*North Queensland Language Centre*

Feedback from the Centre indicated that one of the state schools in its region ran a language Awareness Programme for Years 1 to 7 in 2005 but this could not continue because of a lack of funding. Other programmes in North Queensland have also lost funding to run Indigenous languages courses. Principals are generally not keen to conduct programmes within school hours, but after-school programmes were considered a possibility. The issues of interest and funding at the State level were being considered by the Queensland Indigenous Language Advisory Committee.

*Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages*

The Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL) is the state body responsible for coordinating Community Language Programmes throughout Victoria. VACL liaises with education jurisdictions on issues related to the teaching of Indigenous languages in schools. In 2006, VACL commenced development of an Education Kit for Victorian Schools to raise awareness and understanding of Indigenous Languages. The kit does not aim to teach languages to children, but rather talks about the history of language, and its connection to culture, stories, and knowledge. VACL has also supported the development of languages teaching resources including the Wathaurong CD Rom (developed by the Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative Ltd and Multilocus Interactive) and the Nambur Ganai Language Interactive CD-Rom.

*Wangkanyi Ngurra Tjurta Aboriginal Corporation Language Centre*

The Wangkanyi Ngurra Tjurta Aboriginal Corporation Language Centre, representing approximately 1000 kilometres of the Goldfields, Central & Western Desert region, operates out of Kalgoorlie in WA. The centre provides support to around 20 primary and secondary school from the government, Catholic and independent sectors through direct teaching and supporting the schools' language and cultural programmes. The centre has developed resources in the Wangkatha which include a dictionary, learning workbooks and worksheets.

*Wiradjuri Language Development Centre*

The Wiradjuri Language Development Centre was established by Stan Grant, a Wiradjuri Elder, to facilitate the revival of the Wiradjuri language. The *Wiradjuri Language Development Project* is under the authority of the Wiradjuri Council of Elders who appointed Stan Grant to be responsible for the project and John Rudder to be the consultant. The course content includes Wiradjuri grammar and vocabulary, songs and welcome speeches and has been attended by Aboriginal Education Assistants, trainee and qualified teachers from NSW government and Catholic schools. The project also has involved offering Wiradjuri classes to students in primary and secondary, government and Catholic schools across a number of locations, as well as to adults in various settings.

*Yugambeh Museum, Language & Heritage Research Centre*

This Centre provides some support and resources to schools in south east Queensland. Feedback from the Centre did not indicate the extent of activity.

## **5.6 Summary**

This chapter has provided information on the teacher preparation, training, and professional learning opportunities that are available to teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages to support them in developing and teaching Indigenous languages programmes in schools. A range of organisations were surveyed, as part of the mapping process, and they provided information on courses and content relevant to the teaching of Indigenous languages.

Responses were sought and received from education jurisdictions, universities, TAFE institutes and Indigenous language and culture centres. It was clear from these responses that the school personnel and community members who are

involved in the development and teaching of Indigenous languages programmes are diverse in terms of their language proficiency and teaching experience; they may include Indigenous language speakers, general teachers, languages education teachers, and linguists. Furthermore, the language programmes that are offered in schools vary considerably, from general language awareness to first language maintenance. Accordingly, the type of teacher preparation and ongoing professional learning that will support people to contribute to the development and teaching of a school Indigenous language programme needs to cater to this variation. It is also clear from the information presented in Chapter 5 that there is a significant number of Australian schools (over 260) that deliver programmes to nearly 30,000 students. Despite this, the responses documented in this chapter, indicate a paucity in professional learning opportunities for Indigenous languages teachers – opportunities to develop both their language and pedagogical skills. The following dot points summarise what is available to people wishing to prepare themselves to teach an Indigenous language in schools, or to engage in continued professional development.

- Some education jurisdictions, depending on current policy and funding availability for the teaching of Indigenous languages, offer short workshops and professional development activities.
- The most extensive course is that offered by the WA DET – the *Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course*.
- Teacher preparation courses offered by schools of education at universities do not, in the main, cover Indigenous languages.
- Some teaching degrees include a component (either compulsory or elective) that deals with Indigenous cultural awareness, including issues related to language.
- Other areas within universities offered limited courses that focussed on Indigenous languages in varying degrees, but these were not generally directed at teachers.
- The most relevant university course was the University of Sydney’s *Master of Indigenous Languages Education*.
- A small number of TAFE Institutes offered Indigenous languages courses, including the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, which offered *Certificates in Own Language Work* and included Indigenous languages content in its *Certificate courses in Indigenous Education Work*.
- Courses offered by Indigenous language and cultural centres provide a potential source of professional learning opportunities, for example, the Murrumbidgee Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative’s *Certificate IV in Teaching Gumbaynggirr Language and Culture Maintenance*.

In addition to availability of professional learning opportunities, the quality and sustainability of these opportunities is of concern. Some of the institutions that responded to the mapping process gave very positive reports regarding the quality of their courses, and this was often attributed to the passion and enthusiasm of course coordinators and lecturers. There were a number of Indigenous lecturers who were described as having knowledge and skills that enhanced participants’ learning experiences. Student feedback surveys, strong enrolment numbers and, in one case, an award for University Teacher of the Year, were cited as evidence of the quality of the courses and units on offer.

There were, however, a number of issues that were raised concerning the long-term sustainability of these courses. Generally, these related to:

- policy and funding – the political climate in the various States and Territories has a significant influence on the professional learning opportunities available;
- resources – resource issues are particularly salient with languages that are being reclaimed;
- staffing – there are only a limited number of people who have the knowledge and skills to conduct these courses; once they move on, the courses may no longer be offered;
- location – remote areas have particular funding needs related to accommodation and training; and
- articulation – there is a need for courses to be formally structured and coordinated so that particular levels of learning are accredited and built on in further training (e.g., TAFE courses articulating to university courses).

There is no doubt that there is a small but highly knowledgeable and extremely passionate group of people who have the level of skill and experience to provide others with the ability and knowledge required to teach Australian Indigenous languages.

It is fundamental that these people are supported with the necessary structures to provide quality professional learning opportunities for teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages. This is vital in developing Indigenous languages as a component of school curricula, and for students if they are to experience quality Indigenous languages programmes in our schools.

## 6 Master-Apprentice Model

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### 6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present an overview and discussion of the Master-Apprentice model of language teaching and learning with a view to examining its applicability in the Australian setting.

In the following sections, we outline the Master-Apprentice Language Learning Programme (MALLP) as described in some of the North American literature on language revival and revitalisation. This overview is followed by a brief description and discussion of language learning teaching models that share some characteristics of the MALLP.

The final section of this chapter describes an investigation of the implementation of the Master-Apprentice model of language learning and teaching in the Australian setting, particularly as it is being explored in the NSW context where there are no first language speakers of any of the original Aboriginal languages that existed within the current state boundary.

### 6.2 The Master-Apprentice Language Learning Programme (MALLP)

The Master-Apprentice Language Learning Programme (MALLP) was developed in California in the early 1990s as a way of saving Indigenous languages in that state. In 1998, it was reported that of 98 languages originally spoken in what is now known as the state of California, 45 had no fluent speakers at all, 17 had only one to five speakers, and the remaining 36 had only elderly speakers. No Californian language was being used as the language of daily communication (Hinton, 1998).

In *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice* (Hinton, 2001), the term ‘language revitalization’ encompasses the full range of programmes from those that aim to reestablish a language as the language of daily use in all walks of the life of a community (e.g., Hebrew) to those associated with a language that is almost or completely extinct, and the community that wants to revive it is so small or the resources so meager. In such cases, the aim is not complete fluency or reestablishment of the language as the main language of communication; instead the aim is to produce one or two speakers per generation through a mentored programme such as the MALLP.

Thus, the primary objective of the MALLP is to develop new fluent speakers of their languages of heritage. This is done by pairing a speaker of the target Indigenous language (master) with younger members of the tribes (apprentices) who want to learn their language of heritage. Masters are given training in a system of immersion style language teaching and learning with the goal of making the apprentices fluent.

Hinton (1997), the founder and major proponent of the model, describes the MALLP in this way:

. . . a training programme designed to teach a common-sense, culturally appropriate, oral approach to language teaching and language learning to teams consisting of a native speaker and an apprentice. The goal is for the apprentice to develop proficiency in his or her language over a period of a few years. . . . Most of the apprentices and many of the masters are already involved in education programmes, and some have children whom they involve in the language learning process.

. . . Teams get a single two-day training workshop to teach them the philosophy and methodology of the programme. Masters are taught techniques of teaching language through context, gesture, and action; and apprentices are taught how to be active learners. The training workshop gives the teams frequent short practice sessions in monolingual language work and then conducts discussions about the problems, failures, and successes of each session. (pp. 180-181)

Hinton stresses that more important than doing lessons most of the time, the Master-Apprentice teams do real life activities together – such as cooking, housework, taking a walk or a drive – at all times communicating in the language.

The MALLP has been administered by the Advocates for Indigenous Californian Languages Survival (AICLS) and supported by a number of foundations. Selection of teams is based on fluency (Master) and demonstration of interest in learning and teaching the language (Apprentice). Of relevance also is how close the Master and Apprentice live to each other. Each team member is given a small stipend to pay for their time spent in the programme (360 hours) and/or to offset lost salary from their regular employment.

### **6.3 Related teaching models for Indigenous languages learning**

The methods of the MALLP are not totally unique but in many respects are eclectic mixes of ‘tried and true’ approaches to language teaching and learning. The model applies linguistic elicitation techniques and uses ideas from Total Physical Response, and conversational competence models. The use of technology in the MALLP is common.

With respect to MALLP methods, Hinton (1997) explains that

While the methodology of this programme involves many aspects that are unique to MALLP, it is also informed strongly by various language-teaching and learning programmes such as “Total Physical Response” (Asher 1977), communication-based instructional approaches (for example, Supahan and Supahan 1995-1996), and learner-guided language learning, (for example, Brewster and Brewster, 1976). The aim of MALLP is for teams to create their own mini-immersion situation for language learning purposes. The techniques are fairly simple: teams are instructed to live their daily lives together, doing things as they might normally do them, but communicating always in the language, at least for 10 to 20 hours per week. Games and other language-learning activities may also be used and

traditional activities such as participating in ceremonies are very strongly encouraged. (p. 180)

Since the early 1990s, a series of conferences and workshops have been organized in North America to assist language activists to share information with each other about their language work and to generate new ideas for language programmes. Associated projects being undertaken in individual communities include work on the development of practical writing systems, the development of written and recorded materials to support teaching-learning programmes, the establishment of language gatherings where the language is practiced, immersion camps for families or groups of children, and the development of protocols for use of the language in formal situations.

According to Warford (2006), in the last decade language pedagogy has moved to a more sociocultural view of language teaching and learning – as opposed to the previously emphasised psycholinguistic approach – and has been the basis of Warford's Narrative Language Pedagogy, a model for teaching non-dominant languages that centres on authentic conversations (narratives) as the focus of instruction. Sociocultural theory has provided a solid foundation for Hinton's efforts to promote the survival of Indigenous languages, including through application of the MALLP.

#### *Total Physical Response (TPR)*

TPR is based on the premise that the human brain has a biological programme for acquiring any natural language. It is a method developed by Asher (1996) to aid learning foreign languages. The method relies on the assumption that when learning a second or additional language, that language is internalized through a process of codebreaking similar to first language development. The process allows for a long period of listening and developing comprehension prior to production. Students respond to commands that require physical movement.

The model has three vital aspects: understanding the spoken language must come before speaking; understanding is developed through body movement; and the listening period creates a readiness to speak. This model teaches never to force speaking. It is also recommended that TPR be used for only short periods of time because students will soon tire of doing it.

The TPR method also focuses on two key components: the use of movement as a memory enhancer; and the use of imperative as the only method of instruction. This means that the teacher uses commands to direct the students. With TPR, the student is able to learn and retain vocabulary through hands on instruction.

Since TPR consists mainly of commands, it tends to neglect narrative, descriptions, and conversational forms of language. A potential flaw of the method is that teachers will have trouble teaching abstract vocabulary or expressions. One remedy is for teachers to write words on cards accompanied by appropriate pictures. TPR may be ineffective if the teacher uses it for a long period of time without switching to other activities that help teach the target language.



### *Accelerated Second Language Acquisition Approach*

The Accelerated Second Language Acquisition approach (Greymorning, 1999) for teaching languages emphasizes spoken language in an immersion environment. The methodology focuses on revitalizing languages that are on the decline through a technique modeled on children's initial language acquisition.

Babies think in images, not in words. When they hear language and you connect it with an image, it meshes. Children think in images until they are around 8 or 9 when 'words' start coming into their thoughts.<sup>32</sup>

Greymorning claims that, when the approach is followed correctly, people can pick up the language in 18 hours, although he does not specify what level of spoken competence can be attained in this time.

With this method, the object is to get people to figure the language out the way any child would have to figure it out by getting clues or input from surrounding things. The visual and acoustic input for a child is what they see in front of them. Language is created when you create things through imagery that teach the language. The aim is to start with single words and then add to the single words.

According to the technique, an initial word list of nouns is developed. For instance, in one training programme for the Inupiaq language, Greymorning had participants develop their first list comprised each of four nouns under the categories of human terms, animals, transportation and objects. Lists were entered onto laptops equipped with the Inupiaq fonts. By the end of the workshop, participants had been guided through exercises that resulted in the production of nine skills sets or lists that followed a logical developmental progression. Participants were provided with examples of images to show how they are inextricably linked with the word lists. Ideally, when workshop participants return to their schools, they will begin amassing the photo collection they will need for the word lists they have developed.

Other approaches to language teaching and learning that have elements in common with the Master-Apprentice model of language teaching and learning include communication-based instructional approaches (e.g., Supahan & Supahan 1995-1996) and learner-guided language learning (e.g., Brewster & Brewster, 1976).

## **6.4 Elements of successful language learning and teaching programmes**

Linn, Naranjo, Nicholas, Slaughter, Yamamoto, & Zepeda (2002) reported on a project that gathered information from as many different types of North American revival, revitalisation and stabilisation language programmes as possible. The aim was to identify common methods and processes, to discover under what conditions programmes are most effective, and what were the barriers to their success. They found that important factors in the development of successful

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<sup>32</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.nsbds.org/site/index.cfm/1,1,404.html>

language programmes included a change in a community's attitudes about their language, awareness of its language situation, and a creative shift in its desire and ability to take action.

Linn et al. (2002) also noted that transformation of the culture of the school is crucial for programmes implemented within the context of the school. They argue that Indigenous teachers must recognise that they are carriers of cultural and linguistic knowledge, and be recognised by non-Indigenous teachers as such. Ideally, the school environment is one where "language teachers can begin to legitimize their language and culture, validate their teaching, and incorporate community values into the schooling of children" (p. 116). Also important is the shift from a feeling of hurt to one of responsibility.

Language is a responsibility, not a privilege. Successful language programmes have students that feel that it is their responsibility to learn and to begin passing the language on to their families, and they have communities that feel it is their responsibility to promote language use, not simply give lip service to the importance. (p.116)

Linn et al. (2002) developed a list of characteristics that appear to be shared, partially or wholly, by successful language programmes across a range of different types of programmes from the strongly academic to the very natural home immersion programme, and in a range of settings, including in schools. These characteristics include the following:

- *Using teams.* The best results are obtained with language teams. Successful teams rely on the Elders in all final decision making although they will include community language teachers and advocates, and outside resource people, such as linguists and curriculum developers.
- *Using immersion, speaking the language.* It is not always possible to have total language immersion, as in home language learning. The aim is to obtain as close as possible an immersion situation given contextual characteristics such as the training and confidence of the 'teacher' and the commitment of the Elders, community members, and non-Indigenous support people.
- *Being family oriented.* Teaching children the language does not work well if they cannot go home and use the language with their parents or grandparents. Successful programmes encourage parent and extended family involvement with children through such activities as camps and night classes for adults.
- *Setting goals.* Goals may be different for different communities. In keeping with Western goal theory, Linn et al. propose that goals should be set that are long term and high, but there should also be specific intermediate goals that are attainable. Classes that have intermediate goals generally achieve them and experience less frustration in facing the formidable task of teaching and learning an entire language.
- *Building up not out.* Many communities have had to make a choice to either teach everyone just a bit about the language or teach a few to really speak the language in order to build up the language. It is important that the people who do undergo intensive language training are committed to becoming teachers and to passing the language on to others. When the new

teachers begin teaching the language, they will be teaching to more and more, or building the language out.

- *Balance in old and new.* This refers to the need to seek a balance between the traditional and the new. For instance, successful programmes will be built on the traditional oral language and will rely on Elders for decisions about many aspects of the language programme; but they must also develop an alphabet or system of syllabics to use as a teaching tool and introduce new ideas such as the use of CD-ROMs.
- *Working through language variation issues.* There is sometimes tension within a community over such issues as the traditional form of language (oral not written, the development of a writing system, language variation, and what should be taught). Being aware of such tensions as potential pitfalls and establishing mechanisms for discussion and resolution are essential.
- *Working through politics.* Language revitalisation efforts often get entangled in local and family politics. Although obtaining community-wide support is best, sometimes it may be better not to formally involve the entire community until difficulties in recruiting resource persons, Elders, language teachers, and language learners have been sorted out.
- *Perseverance.* Keep going no matter what: no money, no tribal support, personality problems in the group, the loss of speakers.

Linn et al. (2002) also maintain that money, tribal support and a large number of speakers are useful but not key or fundamental characteristics to a successful programme.

## **6.5 The NSW Master-Apprentice model of language learning and teaching**

A form of the Master-Apprentice model of language learning and teaching has been introduced into two NSW schools. The schools teach the two related languages Ngiyampaa (Hillston Central School) and Ngemba (Brewarrina Central School). Neither of these languages has any remaining fluent speakers although the languages are being reclaimed through the efforts of a small group of people.

Brewarrina Central School is a K-12 school located in Brewarrina, a small rural town in north western NSW. The school draws its enrolment from the immediate township and settlements. A small number of children travel by bus from Gongolgon (45 kilometres) each day. The majority of the student population (99%) identifies as Aboriginal. The Community Working Party plays a significant role within the school and there is a strong emphasis on Aboriginal education, cultural awareness and community involvement.

Hillston Central School is a K-12 school located in Hillston. Hillston, a town of about 1200 people, is a rural community about 110 kilometres north of Griffith in Western NSW.

A case study prepared for the NSW BOS for a publication on teaching Aboriginal languages provides the following background to the Ngiyampaa/Ngemba languages.

The Ngemba language group extends from Brewarrina in the central north of NSW to Wilcannia in the state's west, to Sandy Creek in the south. Some people put Ngemba together with Ngiyampaa, which extends to Wilandra Creek. The words of both groups are similar but the southern group has a softer pronunciation and the north is described as being 'heavy in the tongue.' (p. 20)

Several other publications provide detailed information about the Ngiyampaa/Ngemba languages: *Yapapunakirri: Let's Track Back* (Beckett & Donaldson, 2003) and *Ngiyambaa: The Language of the Wangaaybuwan* (Donaldson, 1980).

A loose application of a form of the Master-Apprentice model has been applied in efforts to reclaim the Ngiyampaa/Ngemba languages, largely through the work of Tamsin Donaldson, Lesley Woods, and Brad Steadman. Tamsin Donaldson, the Master, began learning from Ngiyampaa people in 1972. She was formerly a research linguist at AIATSIS, and is now a visiting fellow at ANU. Brad Steadman is a descendant of the Murphy and Williams families of Brewarrina and the Knight family of Bourke. He was formerly the Senior Language Officer at the Brewarrina Aboriginal Cultural Museum until 1999. He has over a decade of experience researching and collecting family history and other aspects of Aboriginal culture. Lesley Woods (Hillston) is an Aboriginal linguist who began work at Pundalpurra (WA) before completing linguistic studies at UNE.

Some of the work of these people, and others, in reclaiming the Ngiyampaa/Ngemba languages has occurred in the context of Hillston Central School and Brewarrina Central School.

We could not locate any written documentation pertaining to how the Master-Apprentice model is applied in the schools and the following information was obtained from a variety of sources including interviews with Brad Steadman, Lesley Woods, and Aboriginal languages staff from the NSW BOS and the NSW DET.

Lesley Woods describes aspects of the Master-Apprentice model as she experienced it in relation to learning her own language.

When I became interested in learning my language, one of the first blows was the fact that there were no more fluent speakers of my language left to teach me, they had all gone and taken our language and the vast amounts of cultural knowledge embedded within the language, with them. The next was the realisation was that there were several fluent speakers in my own family during my childhood and adolescence and I didn't know. At about this time, Linguist Tamsin Donaldson was making recordings with the few remaining speakers, learning the language, writing a grammar and later, a small dictionary, so all was not lost, although so much already was.

The journey into reclaiming my language has been a long one and has diverged in many different directions at times, from studies at TAFE and University, collaboration with Tamsin on a dictionary project, working with

my community on language reclamation to working with the local school setting up a language programme....<sup>33</sup>

One of the difficulties of applying the Master-Apprentice model has been the distances between the team. The contact with Tamsin is mostly via phone with face-to-face contact occurring only every couple of months. Ideally the model allows for daily use of the language in everyday situations. One approach to overcoming the distance problem is for there to be paid time together, although a funding source for such an approach would need to be identified.

Although Tamsin Donaldson has the most knowledge of the languages, in developing dictionary manuscripts, she will check back with Brad for authenticity who will also then check back with the community. Cultural camps provide a good forum for checking this checking process.

Night classes have been conducted with adults in the community at Hillston with the aim of preparing at least one person from the class to become a language teacher at the school. The aim is then for the regular classroom teacher to assist with student management. In the second semester of 2007 it was planned for the language to be an option/elective for students in K-6, and in 2008 for the language to be introduced into Years 7 and 8. The linguist (Lesley Woods) and the language teacher spend 45 minutes every day listening to tapes and one day per week planning lessons

The role of schools in the reclamation of the Ngiyampaa/Ngemba languages was described as substantial although the community stuff is more exciting. It was noted by one involved person that

...in addition to achieving language learning goals, introduction of the language into the school curriculum is also about reconciliation, changing attitudes, valuing, educating non-Indigenous people. Let's not have tokens though. All teachers should have cultural awareness training. This needs to be imbued through the syllabuses and cultural events such as NAIDOC week – but we do not want a 'rent a Koori approach'.

## 6.6 Discussion

The Master-Apprentice model was developed as a way of revitalizing endangered languages or rebuilding dead ones. The approach aims to preserve or revive language not through the traditional way of developing archives of field notes and taped recordings of spoken language, but through developing new, fluent speakers of their languages of heritage through intergenerational transmission of language. However, when a language needs to be rebuilt because there are no remaining speakers of the language, the approach often does rely extensively on archival materials.

Hinton (1997) noted the important role that schools have played in saving a number of endangered languages – the Maori, Irish, Welsh, Hawaiians, Navajos,

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<sup>33</sup> Retrieved from [http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/8661/Session\\_2\\_WALSH\\_5\\_REPLACEMENT2.pdf](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/8661/Session_2_WALSH_5_REPLACEMENT2.pdf)

and Mohawks, for instance, have been able to establish immersion schools where the language of instruction is the heritage language. However, Hinton also noted the enormous task of creating and teaching an entire curriculum in a minority language, which takes a great many people and resources.

The Master-Apprentice model provides in-depth immersion opportunities for building both language skills and cultural knowledge but so far it has been difficult to establish a strong programme in Australia.

In NSW, where attempts have been made to apply a form of the Master-Apprentice model, its application is hindered by distance (between Master and Apprentice), the lack of identified funding to support implementation of the model, and the small numbers of proficient speakers of an Indigenous language who can act as Masters. Elsewhere in Australia, notably in WA and the NT, loose versions of the model have been applied with some success, as described in several of the case studies presented in the next chapter.

One possible way of strengthening the Master-Apprentice programme in Australia is for Endeavour Language Teachers Fellowships to be made available for Indigenous languages teachers. These Fellowships are offered to practising language teachers in Australian schools, and trainee (pre-service) language teachers in Australian universities to improve their language and cultural skills through intensive short-term study programs. Currently, however, the Fellowships are only available to teachers of Asian, European, Latin American, and Middle Eastern languages. Language Centres have the potential to apply this model as part of their language revival and maintenance work, in conjunction with schools, where appropriate.

## 7 Case Studies

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Six case studies of good practice in the provision of Indigenous languages programmes in schools are presented in this chapter.

The case study schools were chosen from twenty schools that were nominated by key personnel who were familiar with the range of Indigenous languages programmes provided within their jurisdictions. Nominated schools were reported as having strong community support, links with a linguist expert in the language, proficient speakers as teachers, involvement of qualified languages education teachers, provision of training and ongoing PD for teachers, positive student outcomes (language success, participation, involvement, and positive school attitudes), longevity of the programme, principal, and staff support for programme. The language programme was seen as part of the total school curriculum, not as an add-on.

The final selection of schools was designed to achieve a mix of schools and programmes types covering a range of characteristics, including:

- language type (first language maintenance; second language learning; language revival (revitalisation, renewal, reclamation);
- student type (Indigenous and non- Indigenous);
- school type (government and non-government);
- level (primary/secondary); and
- location (metropolitan, rural/regional/provincial, remote).

The six schools were:

- Cable Beach Primary School;
- Ceduna Area School;
- Moorditj Noongar Community College;
- Shepherdson College;
- St Mary's Primary School (Bowraville); and
- Willowra Primary School.

## 7.1 Cable Beach Primary School



### Introduction

This section documents the Yawuru language programme offered at Cable Beach Primary School (CBPS) to students in Years 3 to 7. It is one of two languages offered to students at the school, the other being Indonesian.

The information for the case study was collected during a two day visit to the school in November 2006. The visit involved discussions with school staff (principal, deputy principal, Yawuru language teachers, Yawuru speaking Elder, regular classroom teachers, Aboriginal Education Specialist Teacher and AIEOs), classroom observations, and the collection of school and departmental documents. Additional information about the school's language programme was obtained during discussions with the Aboriginal languages curriculum officer at the Broome District Office (which occurred during a previous visit to the town in September 2006, and during incidental conversations at the National Languages Seminar, Canberra November 2006), a one-day visit to the Aboriginal language teachers training programme in Kalgoorlie September 2006, and in follow-up emails and telephone conversations with relevant people

The Yawuru language programme at CBPS fits within the context of the school's Aboriginal Education Strategy (AES), which was developed by the Aboriginal staff (teachers, AIEOs, AEST) of the school. The AES has the ultimate aim of achieving inclusive and accelerated improvement of educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait island people.

### School profile

Cable Beach Primary School is in the coastal town of Broome, which is located in the Kimberley region of WA. The Kimberley is located in the far north of the state and covers an area of 421,451 square kilometres, an area three times the size of England, but is home to only about 31,000 people.

The town has a rich cultural history, which began with the traditional Aboriginal inhabitants of the area and which subsequently was strongly influenced by the pearling operations that began in the 1860s. These operations brought not only people of European, Japanese, Chinese, Malay, Koepanger, and Filipino descent (as entrepreneurs and divers) but they also brought Aboriginal people from other language groups into the area. European, Asian, and Aboriginal cultures have



blended to create a unique mix that is reflected in the school's student and teacher profiles.

CBPS is one of three government primary schools in the town. There is one government secondary school and one Catholic K-12 school.

In 2006, there were approximately 375 students in 16 classes from Kindergarten to Year 7 at CBPS. School enrolments have declined in recent years (down from 500 in 2002) because of a redistribution in the school intake boundary. The school has a culturally diverse student and staff population and prides itself on its ability to work collaboratively with its stakeholders and to follow the principles of inclusivity. About 44% of the students identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

The school provides a range of programmes to cater for its culturally and educationally diverse student group. For instance, there is:

- a music specialist (who oversees two bands, two choirs, an instrumental music programme, and a song writing programme);
- a *Getting It Right*<sup>34</sup> Literacy Teacher;
- five specialist Aboriginal staff (an Aboriginal Education Specialist Teacher and four AIEOs);
- additional support for literacy development through the Aboriginal Tutoria Assistance Scheme (ATAS) programme, Indigenous Language Speaking Students (ILSS) and NIELNS funding; and
- focussed support for students with disabilities and special needs.

The school is recognised for its achievements on multiple fronts and it strives to provide opportunities for teachers to showcase their work. For instance, in 2004, one teacher received a Westfield Scholarship, another received an Inaugural Outstanding Aboriginal Teacher Award, and one staff member presented her work at the National Indigenous Education Conference. Indigenous staff were involved in a *Capacity Building Project* in 2004. Five Year 7 students were awarded scholarships to Perth schools in 2005. One teacher received the Premier's Teacher of the Year Award 2005 for her work in the *Getting it Right* literacy programme from Pre Primary to Year 3. There is a high level of achievement in athletics, team games (football, cricket, netball), and swimming. The State Junior Motorcross champion and a State Champion swimmer were students of the school in 2004. During 2004, six ex-students represented WA in different State teams, including one student who had won an AFL scholarship. The school was recognised as an

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<sup>34</sup> The *Getting it Right* literacy and numeracy strategy provides for the training and placement of specialist teachers in selected primary and district high schools to support classroom teachers. They assist in diagnosing the needs of students who are struggling and provide programs that meet their needs. The Specialist Teachers work shoulder-to-shoulder with classroom colleagues, collaborating with them in the classroom, modelling integrated teaching strategies in their area of specialisation and supporting the planning and implementation of effective teaching and learning programs. They do not routinely withdraw groups of students from a class, and the classroom teacher maintains responsibility for the progress of all students in the class. The Specialist Teachers share their expertise with colleagues and gradually build the capacity of the whole school to improve literacy and numeracy. They support the collection, analysis and use of information about literacy and numeracy progress of individual students, groups and the whole school so planning decisions can be informed by quality evidence of learning and ongoing needs

Outstanding School in the WA DET Aboriginal Education Awards of Achievement in 2005.

The school has an active P & C, an Aboriginal parent group (previously the Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness (ASSPA) group), and an Aboriginal Advisory Group.

### **The Yawuru language programme**

The history of Indigenous languages in the West Kimberley region of WA provides a backdrop for understanding the development of the Yawuru language programme at CBPS. In addition to the general devastating influence of English on Indigenous languages in Australia (through the influence of government policies and the missions), the pearling industry established in Broome in the 1860s brought with it a particular influence. English speaking pearlivers used Aboriginal and Asian divers. Over the years, intermarriage and interaction between the groups tended to push the use of Aboriginal languages into the background and some of the languages of the area have now died out.

Although students at CBPS come from a diversity of Aboriginal backgrounds, when it came to deciding on which language of many to teach, the answer was simply “the language of the land”; that is, the language of the traditional owners of the land on which the school is situated.

Yawuru is a dying language with only a few people identified as full speakers of the language. One of those speakers, Mrs Doris Edgar, has been a key person in the development of the Yawuru programme at CBPS.

Prior to the CBPS programme, a Yawuru language programme had been introduced in 1990 at another Broome School but that ceased in 1996. CBPS implemented its Yawuru language programme for students in Years 4 to 6 in 1997 in response to community wishes to revive and maintain the dying language. Dianne Appleby and her mother, Doris Edgar, initiated the programme with languages education funding. During this time, the ASSPA programme also provided funding for developing language resources.

In 2003, the school provided a room for the Yawuru programme but the room had to be shared with other staff and programmes. This sharing was not in the best interests of the language programme. In 2004, through the efforts of the then Yawuru language teacher, the room became available solely for the teaching of Yawuru.

Yawuru classes are currently taught over a two-day period for 50 minute sessions. The language is taught to students in Years 3 to 7 who have chosen to learn Yawuru rather than Indonesian. In 2006, more students elected to study Yawuru than they did Indonesian.

In 2006, the Yawuru teaching team comprised Merrilee Lands, a LOTE teacher; Doris Edgar, the Yawuru language specialist; and Dalisa Pigram, who graduated from the Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course in 2006. Lola Jones,

from the Kimberley District Office, has also been an integral part of the Yawuru programme, having provided curriculum and planning support since 1995.

Indigenous languages were never written languages and were passed down through the generations orally through stories, dance, song, art, and everyday conversations. In keeping with this historical tradition, the Yawuru programme has an oral focus. However, to assist in maintenance of the language for future generations, an orthography (spelling system) for the Yawuru language has been formalised by the Broome Yawuru language team in consultation with linguist Joyce Hudson. This orthography uses letters from the English language.

In addition to WA DET LOTE funding, the Yawuru language programme has been assisted through funding from ASSPA, PSPI (Parent School Partnership Initiative), and IESIP (Indigenous Education Supplementary Initiative Programme).

Table 7.1 summarises the themes around which the Yawuru language programme has been developed.

**Table 7.1 Outline of the Yawuru Language Programme**

| <b>Year 3</b>   |  |
|---|--|
| Term 1  | Greetings; Counting                              |
| Term 2  | Body/Face  |
| Term 3  | Feelings; Colours                                |
| Term 4  | Animals and Tracks                               |
| <i>Outcomes</i>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and respond to class instructions and greetings in Yawuru.</li> <li>• Identify and say keywords as per theme/focus areas (oral focus).</li> <li>• Answer and ask simple questions in Yawuru (e.g. What's this? Where is? Who's this? How many?)</li> <li>• Read and label keywords.</li> <li>• Yawuru phonemes (syllables)</li> <li>• Start Yawuru Sound/Word Book - add keywords from each topic.</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>Year 4</b>   |  |
| Term 1  | Conversational phrases                           |
| Term 2  | Ngali Mingan Book                                |
| Term 3  | Family (directional suffixes)                    |
| Term 4  | Animals/Actions (positional suffix)              |
| <i>Outcomes</i>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and respond to class instructions and greetings in Yawuru.</li> <li>• Identify and say keywords as per theme/focus areas (oral focus).</li> <li>• Answer and ask simple questions in Yawuru (e.g. What's this? Where is? Who's this? How many?)</li> <li>• Read and label keywords.</li> <li>• Yawuru Phonemes (syllables).</li> <li>• Yawuru Sound/Word Book - add keywords from each topic.</li> </ul>      |  |
| <b>Year 5</b>   |  |
| Term 1  | Introduction to 6 Yawuru seasons, and Wet season |
| Term 2  | Cold season                                      |
| Term 3  | Hot season                                       |
| Term 4  | Review of seasons                                |

*Outcomes*

- Understand and respond to class instructions and greetings in Yawuru.
- Identify and say keywords as per theme/focus areas (oral focus).
- Answer and ask simple questions in Yawuru
- Use keywords in familiar sentences/phrases
- Read and label items using keywords and phrases
- Identify and start to use suffixes to make phrases/sentences
- Yawuru Sound/Word Book - add keywords from each topic.

**Year 6**

|        |                                     |
|--------|-------------------------------------|
| Term 1 | Common plants and uses              |
| Term 2 | Common plants and uses              |
| Term 3 | Environments and animals/birds/fish |
| Term 4 | Environments and animals/birds/fish |

*Outcomes*

- Understand and respond to class instructions.
- Identify, read and write keywords as per theme/focus areas (oral and written). Answer and ask simple questions in Yawuru.
- Use sentence frames to make own sentences in Yawuru.
- Read & write familiar sentences in Yawuru.
- Use suffixes to make phrases/sentences.
- Yawuru Sound/Word Book - add keywords from each topic

**Year 7**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Term 1 | Goanna hunting; plural versus singular pattern |
| Term 2 | Goanna hunting; plural versus singular pattern |
| Term 3 | Negotiated project                             |
| Term 4 | Writing system                                 |

*Outcomes*

- Understand and respond to class instructions.
- Identify, read and write keywords as per theme/focus areas (oral and written). Answer and ask simple questions in Yawuru.
- Use sentence frames to make own sentences in Yawuru.
- Read and write familiar sentences in Yawuru.
- Identify and use plural versus singular pattern in Yawuru (system of the language).
- Yawuru Sound/Word Book - add keywords from each topic



Songs and games in Yawuru

### **Systemic support and resources**

CBPS taps into the strong systemic support for Indigenous languages in WA schools in terms of teacher training, the development of curriculum, and the provision of teaching resources.

The teaching of Indigenous languages within the WA Government school system was formalised with the LOTE (Languages Other Than English) Policy in 1992. Implementation of the policy resulted in an increased demand for Aboriginal Languages. To meet this demand, the Education Department of WA developed a training programme for Aboriginal language speakers who wanted to teach an Aboriginal language in schools. Training incorporates a LOTE methodology course, professional development in the use of the Curriculum Framework and outcomes-based education. Each cohort of trainees completes a two-year in-school traineeship. In addition, they are released from their schools to attend four block training sessions. The WA training programme for teachers is described in more detail in section 5.2 of this report.

The *Framework for the Teaching of Aboriginal Languages in Primary Schools* (Ministry of Education, 1992) provides a structure for the teaching of Aboriginal languages in WA primary schools. It is based on the principles of the *Australian Language Levels (ALL) Guidelines*. Introductory chapters give a rationale for the teaching of Aboriginal languages, list goals and provide advice about setting up school programmes. Involving Aboriginal adults from the local community in the planning and implementation of the language programme is strongly advocated. Suggested strategies and modules can be adapted to suit the needs of students and teachers. Ideas for assessment, reporting, extension and useful resources are included. The document does not include language-specific materials and is dependent on the local community to provide language and cultural information and the specialists who are able to teach the language.

The *Framework* is supported by the *Aboriginal Languages Resource File* (Education Department of WA, 1996). This file contains a large collection of black-and-white ink sketches on A4-sized, sturdy card. The pictures are non-language specific and accurately depict animals, birds, plants, people, implements, and environments relevant to students learning Aboriginal languages. Illustrations are indexed and organised into categories including nature walk, colours, actions, bush foods, the river, body parts, current seasons, and who are my relatives. These culturally appropriate pictures are especially useful for eliciting oral language (listening, responding and speaking) from students in the early to middle childhood phase of development and to stimulate writing from those who are more proficient in the language.

Another resource available to Aboriginal language teachers is the video *Living Languages: Aboriginal Languages Programme in the Education Department of Western Australia* (Education Department of WA, 1996). The video is designed to promote and expand the teaching of Aboriginal languages in schools as part of its LOTE 2000 policy. Teachers and students from early childhood to early adolescence, in a range of schools in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions, are shown engaged in Aboriginal language programmes. A variety of activity-based teaching and learning strategies are demonstrated and insights into the planning,

implementation and evaluation of the programmes are provided by teachers, language specialists, Aboriginal Education Workers and parents. The importance of community involvement and a collaborative approach to the planning and implementation of the language programme are emphasised. This video is useful for disseminating information about the value of learning a language other than English and provides teachers with suggestions for teaching and learning strategies to improve student outcomes.

Through the teacher training programme, teachers are taught to be resourceful in their development of materials to use in their lessons. There is a strong network amongst graduates of the teacher training course and the sharing of materials and ideas is encouraged.

### **Relationship with secondary school programme**

In 2006, negotiations were occurring about the introduction of a Yawuru language programme into Cable Beach High School to enable primary school students to continue with Yawuru into the secondary years of schooling. In 2006, Indonesian was the only LOTE offered at the high school. If Yawuru were introduced, it would be possible for students to take the accredited secondary school subject *Aboriginal Languages of Australia*, which is planned for introduction into WA secondary schools in the period 2008-2012.

### **Best practice/innovative features/critical success factors**

Several key elements provide strength to the Yawuru language programme.

The first key element is the application of a form of the Master-Apprentice model of language teaching whereby a Yawuru speaking Elder works with a younger Yawuru person who is learning the language. The master, Mrs Edgar, works only with the teachers, not the students in the classroom. It is an informal arrangement whereby she spends one day a week in the classroom observing and talking with the LOTE teachers during break times, providing an opportunity for them to practice speaking the language and learn new words; correcting their pronunciation; chatting about Yawuru history and cultural issues.



Doris Edgar Yawuru ('master') works with the two 'apprentice' Yawuru teachers and the DET Aboriginal languages curriculum officer from the District Office

Another notable strength is the strong systemic support (described above) provided through the WA DET LOTE strategy, which, translated into practical action, is largely dependent on the work of two Aboriginal languages curriculum officers located in Departmental regional offices. One of the curriculum officers, Lola Jones, works out of the Broome District Office and is responsible for the Kimberley, Pilbara, and Goldfields Districts; the other officer, Lois Spehn-Jackson, works out of the Geraldton office and is responsible for the Mid West, Metropolitan, and South-West Districts. These two people work very closely together, particularly in the provision of the Aboriginal languages teacher training course.

The third strength is the supportive school climate in which the programme operates. Throughout the school, there is visible evidence of the value placed on the Aboriginal heritage of the district. On formal school occasions, the traditional owners of the land are acknowledged, school murals depict Aboriginal culture, and the school is adorned with Yawuru words and labels. One of the Aboriginal teachers at the school described some of the positive aspects of the school culture in this way:

We wanted little things, little changes, things that teachers could take on board like the daily Yawuru greeting on the PA system, and culturally inclusive curriculum with Aboriginal books and music being used as well as the Western resources. These things all help with daily attendance – not just being at school, but being really engaged

The key thing in the school is a strong group driven by wanting to make a difference for our kids. There is an increasing number of Aboriginal staff - nine at the moment, including parents on short contracts funded by PSPI, and the Happy Kids programme.

The Yagarrama Bulanjin room (a dedicated room for the Aboriginal staff) provides a place for the Aboriginal staff in the school. This helps us to be strong together.

There are strong efforts to engage the community, the parents, There are clubs for kids after school – soccer, kite making, chess, mini golf, mosaics, table tennis, jewelry, etc. Lots of community people come and get paid a small wage.

In sum, good programme design, a strong team, and supportive school culture have ensured that the Yawuru language programme has thrived at the school.

Teachers at the school believe that the language programme has helped build students' cultural identity and self esteem.

Some Indigenous students would laugh when they heard the language, but now they feel proud and are passing it on and teaching the younger kids. It is not just the language but the cultural side as well which they are learning about.

The teachers believe that the positive experience of students learning about their traditional language and culture will flow through into their overall learning, although currently only anecdotal comment supports this view, not hard data. It was noted, however, that the school will be using the Western Australian Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (WALNA) data to examine more closely the changes in student achievement and attendance in recent years.

Although one of the strengths of the Yawuru language programme at CBPS has been the use of a form of the Master-Apprentice model, this will not continue in its current form because the Master (Doris Edgar) is unable to continue her one day a week time at school in the classroom with the language teachers. Informal contact will continue, however, through out-of-school visits by the teachers to the Master's home.



## 7.2 Ceduna Area School

### Introduction

Ceduna Area School is a Reception to Year 12 (R-12) school which services the town of Ceduna and surrounding hinterland. Located on the west coast of South Australia, Ceduna has a population of 4000 people. Major industries include commercial fishing, agricultural and pastoral enterprises gypsum mining, salt mining, and tourism.

The school has an enrolment of 475. It is structured into three distinct sub-schools: Reception – Year 5; Middle School, Years 6-9; and Senior School, Years 10-12. Facilities include gymnasium, swimming pool, music rooms, tech studies and library which also provides services to the local community. A new R-5 building was completed in 2005 and officially opened in November 2006.

Within the student population, 20-25% identify themselves as Indigenous with the majority coming from one of the two local language groups – Wirangu and Gugada.

In recognition of its work in improving the educational outcomes for Indigenous students, the school won an Achievement Award through the *Dare to Lead* initiative in 2004.

Two languages are currently taught at Ceduna Area School – Indonesian and Pitjantjatjara.

### Origins of the Indigenous language programme

Pitjantjatjara is not the language of the Indigenous people living the local area. However, it has been taught at the school since 1997 when it was introduced as an engagement strategy for Indigenous students who were presenting behavioural management issues at the school. At that time it was taught by an Indigenous person skilled in Pitjantjatjara and the programme was confined to delivery to identified students in Years 4-9.

In realising the benefits of teaching an Indigenous language, in terms of engagement for Indigenous students and as a cultural awareness strategy for non-Indigenous students, the principal of the time negotiated with the DECS to have five teachers trained to teach Pitjantjatjara. The training involved external mode delivery, using tapes and teaching notes combined with face to face sessions over weekends and term breaks. As a direct outcome of the training, Pitjantjatjara was then offered as a language other than English (LOTE) to students in R-Year 9.

### Indigenous Language Programme

#### *Policy*

The school has an established policy that all students are required to learn a language through to Year 9. Within this overarching policy, students are offered increasing choice in relation to which language they learn as they progress through the school.

### *Organisational arrangements*

All students in Reception to Year 5 study Pitjantjatjara and Indonesian according to the following arrangements:

- students in Reception and Year 1 participate in one term of Indonesian and one term of Pitjantjatjara;
- students in Years 2 and 3 participate in one semester (two terms) of each language; and
- students in Years 4 and 5 choose to learn either Pitjantjatjara or Indonesian.

On entry to the middle school, students again have a choice as to whether to learn Pitjantjatjara or Indonesian where, subject to staffing, the chosen language is delivered through two, one hour lessons each week. In the senior school, students are offered languages in the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) through Distance Education.

The Reception to Year 5 programme is taught by the R-5 School Principal as a specialist programme in each classroom. Similarly, the Middle School programme is taught by two specialist language teachers as a timetabled subject for students that chose to learn the language.<sup>35</sup> The R-5 principal has extensive experience in Pitjantjatjara language and teaching Indigenous students and all teachers have participated in training to teach Pitjantjatjara language.

### *Involvement of Indigenous people*

Indigenous people are involved in the language programme in three ways. First, Indigenous people from the community are invited to assist with the programme from time to time as hourly paid instructors. This involvement is for a specific block of time and centres on a particular event, theme or story within in the programme.

Second, the school occasionally draws on the resources of the Ceduna Aboriginal Arts and Culture Centre to enrich a particular aspect of the language programme.

Third, wherever possible, the teachers are supported in lessons by the AEWs and Aboriginal School Support Officers (SSOs).

### **Observations**

Two lessons were observed during the site visit, a session with a Year 4/5 class and the other with a Reception/Year 1 class.

#### *Year 4/5 Class*

- The focus of the lesson was a translated (into Pitjantjatjara) version of the picture storybook, *Titch* by Pat Hutchins. Key features of the lesson included the following features: all greetings, introductions and discussions were delivered in Pitjantjatjara with diversion into English only where students appeared unsure of what was being said;

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<sup>35</sup> Wherever possible, students are given their first choice in this area, although for logistical reasons, in some instances first choices may not be able to be accommodated for all students.

- repetitions were highlighted and students drew on picture clues to predict the text; and
- students worked in groups to develop their own simple, short story in Pitjantjatjara.

To assist the students in the application task, each group was provided with a laminated sheet containing vocabulary organised into familiar grouping such as: people, animals, descriptions, things, actions, suffixes, places and body parts. Students also had access to a Pitjantjatjara – English dictionary to source additional vocabulary as required.

#### *Year R/1 Class*

The lesson revolved around a Pitjantjatjara story book, *Ngayulu Nyaa Nyangu? (What did I see?)* written by Pamela Kenny-lu and illustrated by Robert Wonja-lu. As with the 4/5 lesson, all greetings, introductions and discussions were delivered in Pitjantjatjara with diversion into English only where students appeared unsure of what was being said, although in this lesson there appeared to be a little more explanatory discussion in English.

The story was read three times; first without discussion; then with discussion in English highlighting the repetitive nature of the text (*Ngayulu Nyaa Nyangu* being repeated on each page) and clues to the text evident in the illustrations, and finally as a shared reading exercise with all students encouraged to join in, particularly with the repetitive text.

The students were then given an application task, to draw their own picture based on the pattern of text evident in the story. That is, an 'animal doing something', such as, a mouse running about or a snake lying in a tree. While the students were completing their drawing, the teacher moved about the room, scribing a sentence which reflected the actions in each student's drawing using the introductory text, "*Ngayulu Nyaa Nyangu .....*" It was the teacher's intention to collect all the illustrations and text and bind them together as a new picture story book to be read together in the next lesson.

#### **School-based resources**

With the support of funding sourced through a Technology School of the Future (TSof) Grant secondary students at Ceduna Area School have developed a number of online games which draw on Pitjantjatjara vocabulary. The games include crossword puzzles, memory and matching games and spelling activities.

The school has also developed a number of topic planners which align with the Curriculum Scope and Standards of the SACSA Framework related to Indigenous Languages. Published topic planners include:

- Year 4/5 Weather
- Rec/Year 1 Families – Introduction
- Rec/Year 1 Communication
- Year 2/3 Communication

## **Linkages**

### *Local languages*

Where possible, local language vocabulary is identified as part of the Indigenous language programme. However, the treatment of local languages is not as comprehensive as that associated with Pitjantjatjara as teachers do not have a comparable knowledge of the languages and teaching resources do not exist to the same level of detail as those which have been produced for Pitjantjatjara.

### *Systemic support*

Ceduna Area School is highly appreciative of the support received from the two Indigenous Languages Officers, Guy Tunstill and Greg Wilson, based within the DECS in Adelaide. This support includes the provision of professional development, access to resources, guidance in programme development and the provision of work samples to illustrate how the language teaching can be referenced against the standards evident in the SACSA Framework.

At the same time, the school and individual staff members are supportive of activity generated at a systemic level. Staff have delivered workshops for other teachers and contributed to the development of curriculum resources.

### *Cultural camps*

Students in the Middle School participate in three, one day cultural camps. These camps focus on bush food, bush medicine and Indigenous culture and provide a natural extension to the Indigenous language programme offered at school. Whilst having different focus areas, the camps operate with three overarching objectives:

- to improve language understandings;
- to increase cultural awareness; and
- to enhance respect for Indigenous people.

The camps are supported through the application of Parent School Partnership Initiative (PSPI) funding and participation is based on Indigenous students inviting non-Indigenous students to join them on the camp.

## **Future developments**

### *Expansion of Middle School Curriculum*

The school is investigating options for the expansion of the language programme for students in Years 8 and 9. The current planning centres on offering three language options:

- Indonesian;
- West Coast Indigenous languages (possibly Pitjantjatjara, Wirangu and Guguda); and
- an online language programme which would be delivered through the Open Access College.

The third option still requires further development but it is envisaged that students will receive teacher support through generic language teaching – structure and grammatical conventions with activity mapped against specific LOTE outcomes. In this sense the programme would have a language rather than a cultural focus although culture will necessarily feature as part of the content.

*Development of an Indigenous Dreaming Trail*

The school is planning to develop an Indigenous Dreaming Trail through the school grounds which will feature plants and stories labelled in a number of Indigenous languages including Wirangu, Guguda, and Pitjantjatjara.

**Commentary on Master-Apprentice Model**

While the principles underpinning the Master-Apprentice Model are acknowledged to be sound, there are practical issues around the identification of ‘Master(s)’ and ‘Apprentices’, given the low level of functional use of local Indigenous languages. For example, while two elderly sisters Gladys and Doreen Miller are ideally suited to being Masters in relation to the Wirangu language<sup>36</sup>, their health and the capacity for other younger people to develop language skills makes the prospect of implementing a Master-Apprentice model unlikely in the foreseeable future.

**Critical success factors***Strong language/literacy teaching*

Through the consultations and observed lessons it is apparent that the Pitjantjatjara programme at Ceduna Area School benefits from the passion and strong teaching skills provided by the Assistant Principal who is responsible for the implementation of the programme. The programme is well organised and delivered with enthusiasm using sound literacy/language teaching strategies such as:

- immersion in language through speech, stories and word lists;
- building on known greetings and nouns to introduce new vocabulary;
- using repetitions and opportunities to practise and build confidence; and
- using contextual cues to reinforce meaning.

It should also be noted that these skills are recognised and used beyond the school through the leadership role that the Assistant Principal plays in supporting professional development activities within the region as well as contributing to the development of resources at a statewide level.

*Embedding language teaching in the school*

In order to strengthen the understanding and use of Pitjantjatjara language within the school, the R-5 Assistant Principal:

- provides class teachers with greetings and language cards to assist with classroom routines and integrate the Pitjantjatjara with teaching and learning in other KLAs;
- ensures that Pitjantjatjara work is displayed in each classroom; and
- contributes Pitjantjatjara language items to the school newsletter and a feature article in the school magazine.

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<sup>36</sup> It may be noted that Gladys Miller has been extensively involved in previous projects to record the Wirangu language in written and spoken forms including a number of resources which are used by the school.

Within the R-5 section of the school, the programme travels to each classroom. In this sense it is further embedded within the school as it is not seen as something different with its own specialist area.

### *Middle Years*

Within the Middle Years programme, the critical success factors centre on:

- the role played by the two skilled language teachers, both of whom were part of the initial group of teachers trained at Ceduna Area School;
- a programme of engagement through the use of technology where students develop on-line resources for younger students and beginning learners of the language; and
- culture camps, which are used as a strategy for making the culture and the language relevant and ‘alive’.

### **Lessons learned**

As a second language programme, the Pitjantjatjara programme at Ceduna Area School provides an ideal model for other schools considering the introduction of an Indigenous language as their LOTE. The school has trained staff to deliver the programme and access to a wide range of resources which have been developed to support teaching and learning in Pitjantjatjara.

While the Indigenous language programme at the school is undoubtedly well organised and well taught, it nevertheless struggles for legitimacy with some parents and staff questioning the need for the programme to be offered

The programme battles for equal status with other areas of the curriculum .... if a kid struggles in Maths parents seek assistance to improve learning but if in the same situation with languages, particularly Indigenous languages people argue that the programme should be dropped.

Although some parents are supportive of the programme, a number of participants in a parent focus group highlighted three key issues in regard to the schools Indigenous language programme:

- teaching another language when children (in R-2 particularly) are only beginning to learn in English;<sup>37</sup>
- preference for a local Indigenous language to be taught rather than Pitjantjatjara;
- a preference for greater involvement of community members in teaching the Indigenous language (assuming that a local Indigenous language is offered).

In response to these issues the school reinforces the point that it is a requirement of DECS that all children learn languages until Year 10 and that Pitjantjatjara language provides both the mechanism for learning another language as well as a window into a culture which coexists with the predominant Anglo-Western culture within the Ceduna region. The school further reinforces that it has teachers trained to teach Pitjantjatjara language, and resources to support teaching and

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<sup>37</sup> This issue is raised as a concern by some parents in relation to LOTE more generally (despite evidence that learning another language has benefits which include enhancing understanding and skills in a first language)

learning in Pitjantjatjara exist in relative abundance in comparison with what is available for local Indigenous languages.

The lesson which is derived from this issue centres the need for two key questions to be at the forefront of planning, decision making and communication related to Indigenous languages programmes in schools. *Why teach an Indigenous language?* and *What Indigenous language will be taught?* Where a consensus does not exist in response to these questions, significant and ongoing consultation and communication is required to resolve misconceptions and build a shared understanding of the outcomes and benefits which may be derived from the implementation of an Indigenous language programme.

### **Key resources**

South Australian Curriculum and Accountability Standards (SACSA) Framework *R-10 Languages (Australian Indigenous) Teaching Resource.*

Trish Jenner (1998) *Units of Work in Pitjantjatjara* Written as part of a project funded by the South Australian Secondary School of Languages.

Koonibba Aboriginal Community Council (2006) *West Coast Gugada Language Cards.*

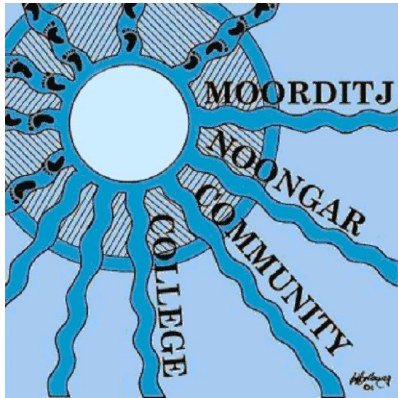
Emma Cother and Dr Mary-Anne Gale (2005) *Draft Resource Guide for Indigenous Languages of South Australia Part B Language Resources.*

Gladys Miller (2005) *Wirangu Picture Dictionary.*

Gladys Miller (2005) *Hunting for Wombat.*

Ceduna Area School *English – Wirangu Dictionary.*

### 7.3 Moorditj Noongar Community College



#### Introduction

The information for this case study was collected during a two day visit to the school in February 2007. The visit involved discussions with school staff (principal, deputy principal, the senior Noongar language teacher, AIEWs, and regular classroom teachers, focus group discussions with students, classroom observations, and the collection of school and departmental documents.

Additional information about the school's language programme was obtained during discussions with the Aboriginal languages curriculum officer at the Geraldton District Office (which occurred during a previous visit to the town in September 2006, and during incidental conversations at the National Languages Forum, Canberra November 2006), a one-day visit to the Aboriginal language teachers training programme in Kalgoorlie September 2006, and in follow-up emails and telephone conversations with relevant people.

#### School profile

Moorditj Noongar Community College (Moorditj) is situated in Middle Swan, approximately 20 kilometers east of Perth. The school was opened in 2001 and was the first government school for Aboriginal children in the Perth metropolitan area. All students at the school are Aboriginal, with 90% being from the Noongar group; most other students are from the Wangkatha and Yamaji groups.

The school was purpose built and designed by members of the Aboriginal Noongar Community. It reflects a contemporary view of Noongar culture, and this is reflected through the learning programmes offered to the students. There are five separate clusters within the school – two teaching clusters, a cluster for the music and art room, one for the library, and an administration cluster.

The school caters for approximately 130 students from Kindergarten to Year 7. Curriculum priorities are Literacy, Numeracy and Information Communication Technologies. There are specialist Literacy and Numeracy teachers who work closely with both students and teachers.



The Multi Age Grouping (MAG) approach to learning is a feature of the school, whereby children of different ages learn in small groups, with work designed to be appropriate to students' levels.

Several special programmes operate in the school. The Police Rangers Programme was established to build leadership qualities in the school's older students, and to improve their self-esteem. The programme is also designed to create positive relationships within the community. Students in the Police Rangers engage in activities such as rock climbing, Air Rifle Range, orienteering, movies and cultural visits. A Breakfast Programme is operated in the school by the St Vincent de Paul Society.

Department endorsed programmes include Aboriginal Education Specialist Teacher (formally ELAN); Commonwealth Literacy and Numeracy Programme; Family Links - School Based Community Liaison Officer; Getting it Right – Literacy; and Learning with ICT Project.

All teachers at Moorditj have extensive experience working with Aboriginal students. Their work is strongly supported by the two Aboriginal language teachers, AIEOs, and Education Assistants.

In 2005, Roma Winmar, the school's senior Noongar language specialist, received the Barry Hayward Award for outstanding achievement by an Aboriginal individual.

### **The Noongar language programme**

Students at Moorditj mostly speak Aboriginal English and learn Noongar as a second language. A two way approach is used in teaching all programmes at the school. This means that while teaching Standard Australian English, staff at the school also acknowledge and value the students' first home language.

The Noongar language revitalisation programme is embedded in the school curriculum as part of the overall Noongar language and culture philosophy of the school. The major aim of the language programme is to give students an improved knowledge of and connection to their culture. It is assumed that achievement of this aim will result in high self-esteem and strong sense of identity for students. The programme is reported as being highly regarded within the Noongar community.

The school has two Noongar language teachers, who take Noongar language lessons weekly. The senior language teacher works with the younger students in a language nest environment. The other language teacher takes formal LOTE (Noongar) classes in Years 4-7.

The senior language teacher is a proficient speaker of Noongar and is regarded as an Elder within her community. She is a qualified Noongar language teacher within the WA DET.

In the K-2 classes, a language nest model has been implemented, whereby young children are exposed to high levels of the language through the presence in the

classroom of the senior language teacher. This teacher works with the class teachers and AIEOs rather than as a language teacher working with the children as a class group. She described her role in this way:

Whatever lesson she (the teacher) was doing, say she was doing health, then we might do a class activity with the kids where they put in the Noongar word in the class activity. Like, I wash my (Noongar word), or I brush my (Noongar word).

So it's sort of team teaching and that's what I do. You can offer these services. Like you say "I will do this" then it depends whether they (the teacher) takes up on it. And it was quite difficult last year because of the way everything was timetabled but the 6-7 teacher actually gave me some of her time and I had half an hour to go in there and do a lesson on water. She'd already done it and she had those kids just like that.

I found it was good working with themes. The teachers have already given them the information – like with the environment and the water cycle stuff – and then you come along behind and they know that in their head. Then they are just translating the language and setting that with what they have already done. It's all integrated with what they are doing in the classroom. That's a huge strength.

The kids get words. Family, lots of family. And when they're doing their key words and stuff, I would be sitting with the kids talking Noongar all the time, pointing to the words.

Greetings and all that are done in Noongar, and the weather, we sing it.

The K-2 Language Nest receives special funding from the WA Department of Education.

Another key role of the senior LOTE teacher at the school is to develop resources, mostly in the form of books. The resources then become part of the school library's stock and are available for the students to borrow, but not to take home.

And like here you've got the glossary, and here's a song and the kids have a bit of fun (singing song...) And then this kid's doing the action and the other one's saying the words. Do you remember Burl Ives – the white duck (singing in Noongar...) and you can put it on the computer with the little things going away, or whatever. But I have fun myself. And Lois made up a poem, I've done this poem to death: "Spider, spider what have you got in your web? I've got...blah, blah, blah, blah.

There are quite a few dictionaries, like the red dictionary. Most are probably out of print now. The Language Centre's gone. But we run off copies.

We are trying to put it electronically. Yes, like with Jason, a teacher here last year, and I didn't have that kind of technology skill and he worked with me to get it there. I have Daisy Bates, Ethel Hassell, several dictionaries, one that has south west dialects – it's written in a different way from the way we would write it here but when you know it, you can adjust it.

The kids don't use the computer for LOTE. It's something we are trying. I'd need more training for that type of thing. But there are people that ... Grant Dodd who was doing the high school, he's a LOTE teacher, very good with computers and he's done things like when you say "What colour is it?" And you click the thing. He's up there at Geraldton. There are lots of things like that that could be done if you knew how. Cheryl (the Deputy Principal) is going to get someone to come in and that will be my training. Getting things to work with the timing is the problem – when you are ready for it.

The third role of the senior language teacher, and one which contributes to the resources development activities, is to engage in language rebuilding activities. This teacher spends considerable time working with archival material and she consults with other members of the Noongar community over linguistic features of the language and its orthography.

### **Programme outcomes**

In terms of the LOTE outcomes described in the Department's Curriculum Framework document, it was difficult to obtain a clear picture of the outcomes students have achieved by the completion of Year 7. The Framework document describes intended outcomes in this way:

The LOTE learning area has six learning outcomes, each of which is essential to students' ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in the target language. These learning outcomes are interrelated and cannot be achieved in isolation. The first three outcomes; (Listening and Responding, and Speaking; Viewing, Reading and Responding; and Writing); describe the different ways in which students will use the target language. The other three learning outcomes; (Cultural Understandings; The System of the Target Language; and Language Learning Strategies); describe knowledge and skill areas which are essential to effective language use and which will be demonstrated through the first three learning outcomes: for example, when monitoring student progress in the learning outcomes of Writing, Cultural Understanding, the ability to use the System of the Target Language and the use of appropriate writing skills and strategies will be taken into account.

When asked if students would be able to construct a speech in Noongar, in either written or spoken format, when they leave the school in Year 7, the response of one teacher was

Some can. We've only had two years where we've had Year 7s graduating because the school's only been going that long. And then I think there were only about four or five of them, and then last year about 10. So it's all new.

It was reported by teachers at the school that one mark of the programme's success is the high degree to which students are keen to practise the Noongar language in the playground and at home. In addition, teachers reported that other members of many of the students' families are also keen to learn the language. Adult classes, both formal and informal, are planned for the future. It is envisaged that these classes would assist in advising families about what is happening in terms of Noongar language at school and what parents can do at home to help. Elders' support for the language programme is ongoing. They have a role to play

in checking on correct dialect and language, and in transcribing the language into correct orthography.

One important outcome of the language programme noted by school staff is that the regular classroom teachers become engaged in the programme and learn the language with the students.

### **Systemic support**

Strong systemic support for the Noongar language programme is provided through the training of teachers in the *Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course* (described in Chapter 5, and in the Cable Beach Primary School case study). In addition to this systemic support, which ensures that qualified teachers present the programme, the programme is strengthened by its place within the WA LOTE framework.

LOTE is one of the eight learning areas of the WA Curriculum Framework. Key Learning areas are framed by an Overarching Statement that describes the principles underpinning the curriculum and sets out the outcomes to which all learning areas contribute. It outlines the scope of the curriculum and the teaching, learning and assessment strategies that help to ensure that students achieve the outcomes. Through the Framework it is mandated that the programme be monitored, the students be assessed in terms of outcomes, and reporting of students' progress in the language be provided to parents and District and Central Office Departments.

Systemic support is also provided for the programme through the provision of ongoing professional learning opportunities for the language teachers each term at a regional level. These meetings provide an excellent opportunity for teachers to develop and share their resources and to discuss pedagogical issues related to language teaching and learning, in particular those related to teaching an Indigenous language.

We share things when we have our LOTE meetings. This text was from one of our LOTE things so you can change it around if you want to. There is one thing I haven't done that is put all the words around....the kids have read this in school so we go over it again. ....then you say put the crab on the water or on the rock or whatever.

Informal evenings with other Noongar language education colleagues are also available.

### **Relationship with secondary school programme**

There is no systematic follow-through of the Noongar language programme into any of the secondary schools that Moorditj students enroll in at the completion of Year 7. According to the senior language teacher:

the students go on to a variety of high schools. Balga might have a language programme. I think John Newton High School might have something, too. But there isn't anything locally – at the local schools. So it's hard to pursue the language.

A WA Certificate of Education senior secondary school subject, *Aboriginal Languages of Western Australia*, (see Chapter 4) is planned for introduction into WA schools in the period 2008-2012. To date, example assessment materials have been developed for the Noongar language (as well as two other WA languages). No information about the likelihood of schools pursuing this opportunity was available, although one WA linguist/academic made this comment:

My experience on the Year 11/12 advisory committee was that there was some disagreement (and some suppression of disagreement) of a very important issue – how many schools could conceivably actually implement this programme?

### **Best practice/innovative features/ critical success factors**

The Deputy Principal of the school described several strengths of the programme in this way:

I think one of the strengths of the programme is that it's not just the Noongar language that is taught; it's teaching the cultural side as well. The cultural awareness activities that Roma is involved in are huge. And the integration with English and being able to switch from one to the other is a key feature. And then there are the resources that she develops. They are so important.

Certainly the emphasis on the development of resources is important. Of equal importance, is the time allocation given to the senior language teacher for language rebuilding activities. These activities have already contributed substantially to the development of the Noongar component of the Certificate of Education senior secondary school subject, *Aboriginal Languages of Western Australia*.

Teamwork is a key feature of the school language programme and an essential element of making the programme work within the school. This teamwork is also reflected in the support provided for the programme at all levels across the school and in the community. The fact that the programme is valued by all staff and incorporated across the curriculum enhances programme success. Related to a team approach, are the high levels of enthusiasm and commitment to making the programme work that are evident within the school. All school staff appear to recognise and value the amount of work involved in making the programme work.

The introduction of the language to students in the early years in a Language Nest environment and the scaffolding of learning through to Year 7 contribute to the programme's success. Students learn early that language has cultural importance, and opportunities for language development are incorporated into cultural excursions. Students are provided with opportunities to relate what they have learned in the language classroom to other aspects of their life situations, and to reflect on the importance of language to who they are.

### **Sustainability of the programme**

The programme at Moorditj is more likely to be sustainable than some other Indigenous language programmes in Australian schools for several reasons: there is strong systemic support for the programme; the planned Certificate of Education senior secondary school subject, *Aboriginal Languages of Western Australia*, provides an end-point motivation for language instruction in the school; and the school is in a strong position as a community school that is supported by the Noongar community but which operates within the state education system.

On the other hand, the frequently noted comment made in all States and Territories that the success of a programme is so often dependent on the hard work of one person or a small group of dedicated people applies to the situation at Moorditj. Currently, there is a very competent senior teacher who also has a time allocation for the development of resources and for language rebuilding activities. The following comment was made in reference to this teacher:

If the current teacher left it would be very difficult to find a qualified Noongar LOTE teacher to replace her.

Similarly, the systemic support provided to the school is to a large extent dependent on the work of the two Aboriginal Language Curriculum Officers, and is described in this comment:

Lois and Lola know more than the average and they have worked very hard, I must say, and if anything ever happened to them I don't know what would happen to the language programmes. That's an important issue – the inheritance of their work and someone being able to take over their work.

## 7.4 Shepherdson College

### Introduction

Shepherdson College is a Preschool to Year 12 school situated in the community of Galiwin'ku on Elcho Island in North East Arnhem Land 550 kilometres east of Darwin in the NT. The school dates its origins back to 1942 when Ella Shepherdson ran the first classes under a tree. As numbers grew, a small school was built in 1949. With continued growth, the school became a Community Education Centre in 1976.

The school has a strong history of Indigenous involvement in teaching and leadership positions including the appointment of Rose Guywanga as the first Indigenous principal in the NT in 1992.

Today the school has an enrolment of over 600 students, located at the hub school at Galiwin'ku and eight Homeland Centres; two located near the north end of Elcho Island and six more located on the mainland to the south and east of Elcho Island. The students have access to high quality facilities including library, a new senior secondary block and extensive ICTs and multi media resources.

Based on the current enrolment, the school has a staffing structure has total of 60 staff which includes FTE teachers (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous), Indigenous Assistant Teachers and a range of administrative and ancillary staff. Shepherdson College is a designated Bilingual School with Djambarrpuynngu, a predominant (but not the only) local Yolngu Matha language being the language of instruction.<sup>38</sup>

The case study of Shepherdson College was completed through a site visit in late November 2006.

### Indigenous Language Programme

#### *Policy*

As a designated Bilingual School under the NT's Two Way Learning Programme, Shepherdson College teaches children initially in Yolngu Matha and as their confidence and literacy skills develop, teaching and learning also occurs in English. Children's progress in learning is based on their age and abilities and is not limited by their lack of English. Based on this understanding, the bilingual education programme is both a language programme and an academic programme.

There is a high commitment within the school to thinking, planning, teaching, assessing, reporting and making decisions through a 'two way' process which promotes learning for everyone and equally values Yolngu culture and traditions and Western skills and knowledge as well as the development of language skills to enable access to both ways of learning. To reflect this commitment, the school

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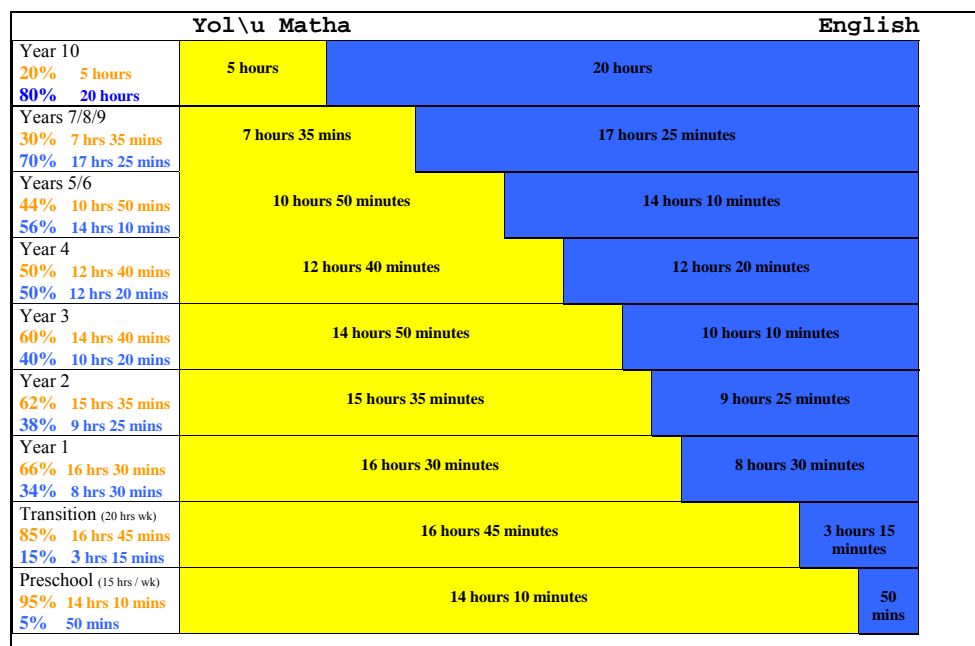
<sup>38</sup> Djambarrpuynngu is one of approximately 50 Yolngu languages and dialects of North east Arnhem Land and 14 language evident on Elcho Island. It is the language which most people have in common at Galiwin'ku.

has adopted the following definitions to differentiate between Two Way Learning and Bilingual Education:

- *Two Ways* – A school which emphasises equally, development in both cultures. Specific goals and expectations in cultural learning including language, are clearly defined.
- *Bilingual* – A school which emphasises equally the development of language skills in both languages.

### *Bilingual model*

The Indigenous language programme at Shepherdson College follows the 'Step Model' in which initial teaching and learning occurs mostly in the children's first language with learning in English progressively increasing as children move through the school. The rationale for this approach centres on children gaining the foundations of literacy and formal learning in a community language and, as they become confident in the school environment, using their growing literacy in their first language as the 'hook' to begin learning in English as well as continuing to learn in their own language; transferring the knowledge they have of literacy in their first language to a English as a second language. Figure 7.1 provides an illustration of the manner in which the 'step model' is applied at Shepherdson College.



**Figure 7.1 Step model applied at Shepherdson College**

Within this overarching model there is provision for some flexibility based on factors such as:

- whether the subject material lends itself more to Western or Yolngu concepts;
- the availability of relevant and appropriate resources; and
- whether there is a Yolngu or Balanda (non-Indigenous) teacher in the classroom.

In the early years of primary school teaching and learning is both 'in and through' Yolngu Matha. That is, literacy sessions focus on teaching children to read and



write in Yolngu Matha and other areas of the curriculum are delivered through Yolngu Matha.

For example, the current timetable for students in transition reveals literacy sessions which incorporate Yolngu Matha:

- songs and sentence readers;
- pre-writing activity;
- stories; and
- phonics – writing sounds.

Similarly, the Year 2/3 timetable shows activity which includes Yolngu Matha:

- shared reading;
- writing skills;
- individual reading;
- reading skills;
- group writing; and
- individual writing.

Both programmes show evidence of literacy development being achieved through a mix of phonic instruction, use of readers which progressively extend from highly predictive and repetitive text to more open ended narratives and 'language experience' where specific stimuli such as bush trips are used to develop shared or individual written stories which are in turn used for shared or individual reading activity.

Through the upper primary/middle years of schooling teaching 'in and through' Yolngu Matha transitions into 'teaching in and through' English. As a result, Yolngu Matha is timetabled for one hour per day in secondary school.

#### *Yolngu Matha literacy sessions*

The Indigenous Languages and Culture (ILC) component of the *Northern Territory Curriculum Framework* (NTCF) is the key guiding resource for the implementation of the Yolngu Matha literacy programme. The ILC includes language and culture outcomes for both Indigenous Language Maintenance and Language Revitalisation programmes.

Drawing on the guidelines established in the ILC, Shepherdson College has established a Structured Language Arts Programme (SLAP) for the critical area of literacy in the junior primary area. SLAP covers: Listening and Speaking, Reading/Viewing and Writing. To support the programme a range of 'Teacher Packs' have been developed incorporating:

- student workbooks;
- teacher guides;
- sentence readers which progress from highly predictive text focussing on starting letters to less predictive text that incorporates more complex phonics;
- lists of sight words drawn from the readers; and
- extension materials.

Throughout 2006, the school's Literature Production Centre has been progressively updating the reading materials. This has included the involvement of local artists to create illustrations to complement the text for each reader.

While use of the SLAP material extends into Years 1, 2 and 3, Yolngu Matha literacy sessions beyond Year 2 tend to centre on themes and the use of focused texts. In these classes a text, appropriate to the students' reading level, is used as the basis of a range of language, literacy and activities over a number of lessons. That is, the themes and subjects which are evident in the readers are used to:

- reinforce and further develop knowledge and understanding of Yolngu Matha;
- build students' literacy skills through key teaching points drawn from the text; and
- form links with other KLAs and other literature based around the themes arising from the text.

#### *Middle years programmes*

With the literacy focus shifting to literacy in English, the emphasis in Yolngu Matha programmes in the Middle Years shifts to 'project' oriented activity. The project work involves teachers and students negotiating a topic such as aspects of kinship, clans or the land with a view to students undertaking research related to the selected topic. With the support of teachers, teacher assistants, Elders and other community members as well as the materials housed in the school library, the students develop posters and/or power point summaries of their learning which are then presented to their class.

The projects provide the opportunity for students to develop deep knowledge and understanding of Yolngu culture with the expectation that this deeper knowledge will be reflected in a more sophisticated use of Yolngu Matha in both written and oral presentations.

#### *Senior secondary students*

In 2006, eight senior secondary students have been studying Yolngu Matha as part of the Australian Languages Units 1 and 2 offered through the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA).<sup>39</sup> The SSABSA modules provide students the opportunity to continue their learning of Yolngu Matha and to learn about the surrounding languages of the region and their relationship with the language of study. Students also learn about the wider picture - the original languages of Australia in general and what has happened to them since colonisation.

#### *Cultural lessons*

Most classes, particularly junior primary, also have Yolngu culture lessons under the banner of the Studies of Society and Environment key learning area. Ten units of work have been developed in the junior primary area for this purpose. For other students, Yolngu culture is the focus of 'Culture Weeks' which are held at the end of each semester. The activities involve students, teachers and assistant teachers interacting with community members including parents, Elders, Clan leaders and

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<sup>39</sup> The Northern Territory Certificate of Education is auspiced through SSABSA.

other individuals both at school and excursions. Culture week activities include spear making, basket weaving, story telling, discussions of land and clan relationships, songs, painting, dances, visits to clan ‘country’ and hunting trips.

#### *Involvement of Indigenous People*

In addition to a number of fully qualified Indigenous teaching staff, the school employs approximately 20 Indigenous staff as in-class tutors, assistant teachers, grounds staff and inclusion support assistants (for students with a disability).

The assistant teachers employed at the school mainly speak Djambarrpuynu as their first language although some belong to different clans. The Djambarrpuynu clan members who are employed at the school play a custodial role in relation to language teaching and closely guard against any misuse of the language.

In addition to paid staff, the school makes extensive use of volunteers from the community who are regularly involved in class programmes, bush trips and other excursions and cultural activities based at the school.

### **Observations**

Three lessons were observed during the site visit; part of class rotations in the Middle Years, a Yolngu Matha literacy session with students in Years 2/3 and a Yolngu Matha literacy session with a Transition class.

#### *Middle Years*

As part of the Middle Years Cultural Programme, students completed a bush trip focusing on the theme for the Term, Water. The students were accompanied on the trip by teachers, Indigenous teacher assistants and community members (Elders). The students split into groups (based on their tribal and clan background) to accompany the Elders to ‘their’ country and listen to stories about that ways in which water fosters interconnectedness between each group.

In order to reinforce the learning arising from the bush trips, students participated in a range of rotating activities on the following day. Activities included:

- viewing a video recording of the bush trip;
- recounting the stories told by the Elders and painting an aspect of the story – paint and paper; and
- retelling stories in own words and illustrating an aspect of the story.

While not specifically identified as ‘language lessons’ the rotating classes clearly had a language focus in that the classes:

- were delivered in Yolngu Matha language
- highlighted specific aspects of Yolngu Matha vocabulary and language conventions; and
- required students to use Yolngu Matha language to record the retelling of the Elders’ stories.

#### *Year 2/3*

The focus of the lesson centred on recounting the activity associated with a bush trip to locate a food source (yams) and then digging, cooking and eating the food.

The lesson was introduced with a whole class discussion about the writing task which required students to record in their own words the sequence of activity based on the following prompts:

*Diltjipuy Ngatha*

|         |        |
|---------|--------|
| Yol?    | Who?   |
| Wanhal? | Where? |
| Nha?    | What?  |
| Nha?    | What?  |

The class then split into two groups. The first group discussed with the teacher the sequence of activities undertaken during the bush trip. This discussion was aided by a series of photographs which the children placed on the floor in the correct sequence. As this occurred, the teacher prompted the discussion by asking the students to recount (in YM) “*Who was doing what?* and *Where did this occur?*”

At the same time, the remainder of the class worked on A3 sized sheets of paper which were segmented to enable the students to write a description of the activity and then illustrate each of the key steps. Resources to support this activity included:

- key vocabulary related to the bush trip listed on butcher’s paper at the front of the class;
- individual spelling booklets to support attempts at unknown words; and
- personal dictionaries containing the correct spelling of words derived from the spelling booklets.

In supporting students to complete the tasks, the class teacher and teaching assistant made teaching points, with individuals and groups, associated with sight words and lists of common vocabulary, phonic elements (beginning letters and letter relationships) and syllabification.

*Transition class*

As with the other classes, the focus of the lesson centred on recounting key aspects of a recent bush trip related to the current theme of ‘Water’. The lesson was introduced by a shared reading of a ‘water’ story followed by a class discussion of a photograph which was taken during the bush trip.

The photograph showed an Elder ‘painting up’ in preparation for telling a story about water as it related to the background of a specific clan. The discussions, therefore, focus on both this activity as well as the key features of the Elder’s story.

After this discussion, the students drew an illustration of an aspect of the story. The details of each illustration were recounted to the teacher/assistant teacher who then wrote a sentence on each sheet.

At the end of the lesson, the illustrations were collected with the view to binding them together for the purpose of a class story which would then be used as an aid to future lessons.

## **Programme outcomes**

### *Two Way Review*

As a Two Way Learning School, Shepherdson College is required to meet the NT DEET requirement to participate in a review and accreditation process every two years. The externally moderated review process aims to:

- evaluate the effectiveness of the school's programme and its use of additional resources in improving overall student learning outcomes and meeting community expectations; and
- provide advice and future directions for improving the overall programme over the next two-year period.

The most recent review of Shepherdson College was completed in Term 3, 2006.

The review report provides a reconciliation of the progress achieved in fulfilling the recommendations identified in the previous review (2004) and detailed descriptions of:

- language use and school programme organisation;
- teaching of Indigenous Culture and Language Maintenance;
- teaching of Oracy and Literacy in English;
- teaching of Mathematics;
- student progress;
- management of staff development; and
- community involvement.

The report concludes with a set of recommendations and corresponding action plans to guide the implementation of the programme over the next two years.

At the time of the review, the school was unable to access data from NT DEET to provide evidence of student progress. However, it is noted that a recommendation has been identified to track student learning outcomes in the future:

That the school enters students' outcomes data into its own database as well into eTool [NT DEET resource] to enable longitudinal tracking of individual students' attendance and outcome levels.

The school's 2005 Annual Report notes that Shepherdson College significantly improved the number of students reaching national benchmarks in numeracy, reading and writing from the previous year, while the Year 5 and 7 students remained the same as previously or fell away slightly.

The Annual Reports also notes significant improvements in student attendance when compared to the preceding two years. However, this improvement in attendance has negatively impacted on the school's performance in the NT standardised testing programme Multi-levelled Assessment Programme (MAP). That is, improved attendance rates have meant more students sitting MAP tests but this often means that students who have had poor or irregular attendance at school in previous years sitting tests with corresponding lower levels of learning, lowering the schools overall performance in these tests.

In addition, the MAP testing will always score students in bilingual schools at lower levels as a result of its focus on English literacy particularly for students in Year 3. That is, while students may well be ‘literate’ in their first language (Yolngu Matha) the testing programme only tests literacy in English which for students at Shepherdson is either a second language or a foreign language.

### **Commentary on Master-Apprentice Model**

The principal and staff at Shepherdson see the Master-Apprentice Model as being particularly relevant and useful to the school in terms of:

- reflecting the school’s own emphasis on bringing younger Indigenous staff into the school through part time or casual positions to assist with succession planning. That is, the school recognises that younger members of the community do not necessarily possess the confidence or skills to immediately step into the role of Teacher Assistants but by becoming involved in voluntary, casual or part time work at the school these attributes can be acquired through training and mentoring by the current more mature Indigenous members of staff; and
- supporting the retention of minority languages within the community. As noted previously, Djambarrpuynu is only one of the languages spoken in the community and while the school recognises the importance of providing opportunities for students to speak and learn their own language, it cannot realistically provide for all Yolngu Matha languages within the school. Therefore, the Master-Apprentice Model may also provide the means for maintaining other languages within the broader community.

### **Critical success factors**

#### *Teamwork*

To be successful, the Bilingual programme at Shepherdson is highly dependent on Balanda teachers and a Yolngu staff working together in a team. In the junior classes it is particularly important for this teamwork to centre on shared planning and the Balanda teacher supporting the skill development the Yolngu teacher assistant to enable the TA to deliver the literacy programme. In this sense, the Balanda teacher must assume the role of the teaching trainer and facilitator. While still remaining ultimately responsible for the teaching and learning programme, without the required language skills and understandings of cultural subtleties Balanda teachers are ultimately dependent on Yolngu teacher assistants to be the agents of delivery and each party has particular roles and needs in this process. As literature developed by the school suggests:

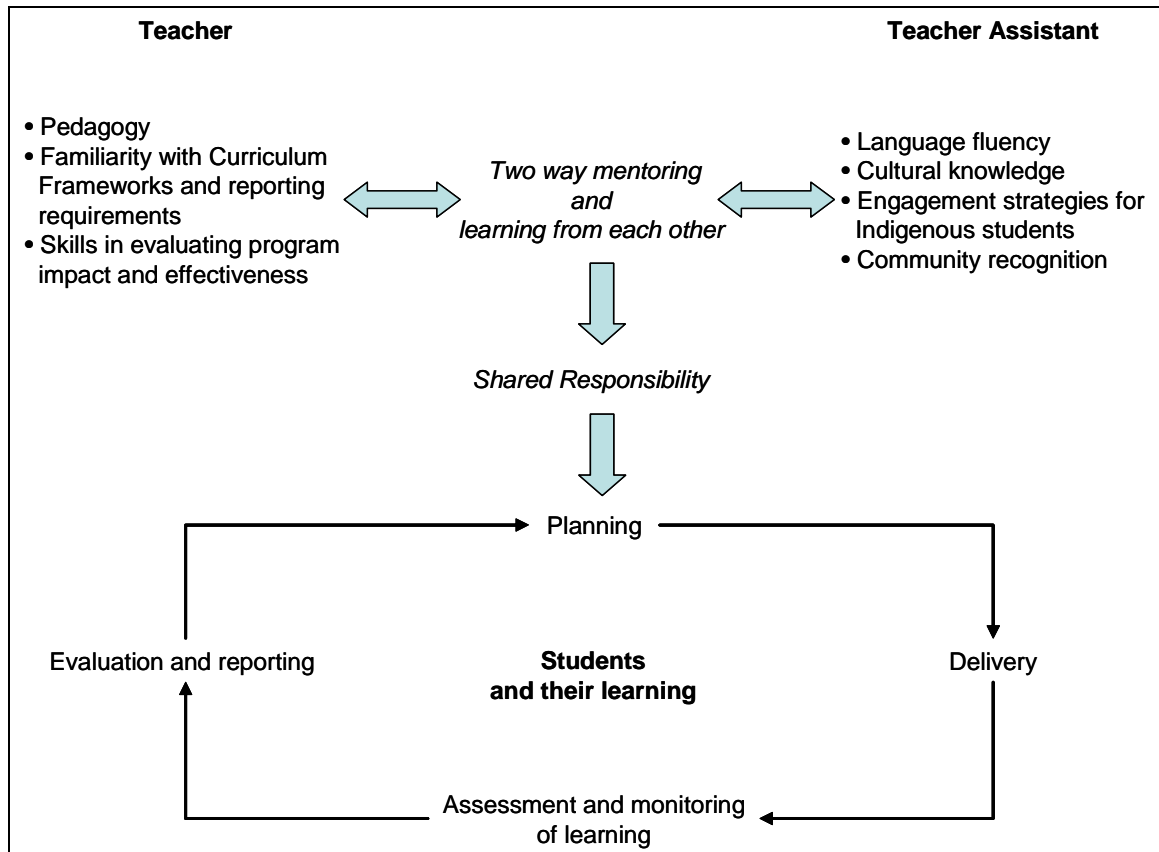
Besides teaching children, teachers have a shared responsibility for adult education for Assistant Teachers .... and it is equally important for teachers to learn from assistant teachers about students, families and Yolngu culture.

Where it works well, both the teacher and assistant teachers are equal partners in the planning, delivery and assessment of learning as well as providing support to each other and learning together for the betterment of their own professional growth and the children in their care. As Figure 7.2 shows, the relationship interacts on two levels:

- through the two way mentoring and learning from each other which occurs between teachers and teacher assistants; and

- through the intersection of this relationship with the shared responsibility for student learning.

In essence, both the teacher and the assistant teachers undertake a dual role as both adult learners and facilitators of each other's learning.



**Figure 7.2 Teamwork in Bilingual Schools**

While shared teaching (in Yolngu Matha and English) and teaching predominantly in English becomes the norm the further students progress through the school, the teamwork relationship, between Balanda and Yolngu staff remains critical at all levels. To assist in achieving this outcome, all staff are required to participate in a 'Learning Together' professional development session each week. The focus of these sessions may vary from assessment, to moderation, language, teaching and learning strategies or programme development. However, the critical element of the session centres on the title, 'learning together' where the background skills, experience and knowledge of both teachers and teacher assistants are applied to the learning situation.

#### *Staff induction*

In order for the teamwork model outlined in Section 3.4.1 to work effectively, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff are involved in a comprehensive induction programme on appointment to the school.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> NT DEET also provides induction programs for new teachers to Territory school which is specifically targeted at teachers who will be working in remote Indigenous communities.

Information and discussion sessions focus on a broad range of pertinent topics including:

- What is bilingual education?
- working in teams: the role of the teacher and the role of the assistant teacher;
- the language programme at Shepherdson College; and
- programming and planning lessons.

Additional sessions are also provided to meet the separate needs of Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff. For example, cultural awareness training and Yolngu Matha basics for non-Indigenous staff and official forms, behaviour management, student welfare and health issues in education for Indigenous staff.

While the school's approach to induction assists new staff to assimilate into the school, it does not guarantee success. This is particularly an issue in the recruitment of non-Indigenous staff whereby the school has historically experienced new comers who have no knowledge of Bilingual education.<sup>41</sup> For some of these teachers, the transition to a shared teaching/mentoring role becomes a significant issue. Where this occurs, school leaders report a discernible change in the behaviour of the Yolngu staff.

Many vote with the feet ..... [and] absenteeism increases which only compounds the ill-informed views of some new teachers, particularly those with minimal experience in Indigenous communities.

In response to this issue, Shepherdson College has developed a brochure which is sent to new teachers on appointment. The brochure provides an overview of the school's Bilingual Programme and outlines the school's expectations of teachers in terms of working in teams, participation in professional development and contribution to the education of other adults on the staff.

#### *Specific training and development for Yolngu staff*

Negotiations between Shepherdson College and BIITE have led to a Memorandum of Understanding being established and the appointment of a full time position for an adult educator at the school. Previous to this, delivery of adult education for Indigenous staff at Shepherdson College was through either visiting lecturers from BIITE travelling to Elcho Island, or people from the school travelling to BIITE. Travel costs and other difficulties normally associated with distance education meant that these arrangements were found to be unsatisfactory.

Currently there are 28 Indigenous staff enrolled with BIITE at Shepherdson College, 20 from the Hub school and eight from the Homeland schools. The staff are enrolled in Certificate III and IV Indigenous Education Work.

While some of the course content is covered through workshops and interactions with BIITE staff, a significant proportion of the training is completed through practical classroom-based activity. As a result, the BIITE lecturer assumes a

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<sup>41</sup> In some instances new teachers have had no knowledge of the school's bilingual programme until they have arrived at the school.



largely facilitatory role, supporting the learning which arises from interactions between teachers and assistant teacher and the assistants' role in each classroom.

Through this approach the following outcomes are clearly evident:

- Assistant Teachers' learning is continuous and formally supported by school staff and visiting professional development facilitators;
- BIITE accreditation requirements are directly linked to everyday work practices;
- there are improvements in progression through BIITE courses leading to expected increases in course completions; and
- evidence of improved support for all teachers working in a team teaching environment.

#### *Role of the Teacher Linguist*

The role of the teacher Linguist is complementary to the learning achieved through the BIITE course and critical to supporting the teamwork relationships across the staff. To this end, the teacher linguist meets regularly with Yolngu staff to support their learning and refine language teaching skills. At the same time, the teacher linguist also plays a critical role in the induction of non-Indigenous staff and supporting their work as adult educators. In some instances, this role extends to interventions in situations where class teachers are experiencing difficulties in operating in a team environment. More positively, the teacher linguist also contributes to non-Indigenous teachers' knowledge of Yolngu Matha and Yolngu culture through staff meetings, professional development sessions and out of hours courses.

Concurrent with this role is the oversight of resource development and use of resources in classrooms. Due to the absence of a Materials Production Supervisor for significant parts of 2004/05 there has been a backlog in the development of resources which is now being overcome. Significant progress has been made in updating the resources and adding new material such as big books and taped stories to the collection.

#### *Areas for improvement*

As a means to foster continuous improvement in its language programme, Shepherdson College has identified the vernacular and English literacy of the Yolngu staff as a skill area which needs constant attention. With a particular focus on improving skills in reading and writing, the school is addressing this issue through professional development sessions and its relationship with BIITE. At the same time, the school is also supporting Yolgnu staff to access and complete qualifications to sustain succession planning into the future.

Other relevant improvements listed in the recommendations of the Two Way Review Report include that the school:

- investigates and implements strategies that improve the way it undertakes team planning, including regular times for team planning in the school timetable;
- develops a scope and sequence for teaching Yolngu Matha language and culture;
- develops a database for the pooling of teacher resources;

- sources and adapts scope and sequence documents for oral language including grammar; and independent writing including phonics/spelling and grammar;
- develop and use bilingual resources to support the planned use of Yolngu Matha and ESL in the teaching of NT Curriculum Framework Mathematics;
- provides professional development and support to enable ESL teaching strategies to be applied in all subject areas; and
- professional development in Two Way and Bilingual Theory is provided for new staff and is ongoing for all staff.

### Lessons Learned

The key lessons learned from the Shepherdson College case study centre on:

1. An overall sense of programme effectiveness. Just as the school and its facilities are an impressive contrast to the rundown nature of some schools in remote settings, so too are the programmes which were being delivered. The Indigenous language programme at Shepherdson mirrors effective literacy teaching practices evident in other schools in metropolitan and regional locations throughout Australia. The only differences being the language of instruction (Yolngu Matha rather than English) and two adults sharing responsibility for programme delivery.
2. The critical importance of induction and relevant professional development in school settings that experience high levels of staff turnover. Shepherdson College is highly aware that the success of its programmes depends on the effectiveness of the working relationship that is evident between teachers and teacher assistants. For Indigenous language programmes to be successful, the complementary skills and knowledge of each party need to be regularly revisited and reinforced.
3. Building on induction and professional development, the need to recruit staff who are predisposed to working in a team environment is also an essential ingredient for success.
4. While the cultural programme which was in operation during the site visit may have artificially highlighted the importance of understanding the link between language, culture and the land, it is nevertheless highly evident that one cannot be realistically taught in isolation from the other. Students at Shepherdson clearly learn about their culture and clan relationships through Yolngu Matha. At the same time, stories, bush visits and Yolngu culture provide the vehicle to developing vocabulary, recording learning in Yolngu Matha and developing understanding of grammatical conventions.

### Key resources

Key resources used by the Shepherdson College to support its Indigenous language programme include:

- Background materials** McMahon, F., & Murray, F. (1999). Bilingual Education: Looking for the Big Picture in *Journal of Australian Indigenous Issues*.
- Graham B (1999) Growing into Bilingual Education: Jottings from the Journey in *Journal of Australian*

- Indigenous Issues.*  
Harris, S. (1977). Have you manners adapted from *Yolngu Rules of Interpersonal Communication in Developing Education* 4, 5.
- Literacy teaching** NT Curriculum Framework – *Indigenous Languages and Culture.*  
Shepherdson College *Structured Language Arts Programme* Sentence Readers and Workbooks.
- ESL Teaching** NTDE (1995) *Walking talking texts: A programme for teaching and learning English as a Second Language.*
- Review guide** NT DEET *Two Way Learning Schools Review and Accreditation Process: Handbook.*
- Other** Locally produced Big Books, Little Books and other books written and illustrated by Indigenous people.

## **7.5 St Mary's Primary School (Bowraville)**

### **Introduction**

This section documents the Gumbaynggirr language programme that was offered at St Mary's Primary School, Bowraville to students in Years 3 to 6 in 2006.

The information for this case study was collected during a two day visit to the school in December 2006. The visit involved discussions with school staff (principal, deputy principal, Gumbaynggirr language teachers, and regular classroom teachers), classroom observations, and the collection of school and parish documents. Additional information about the school's language programme was obtained during discussions with staff at the Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative and in follow-up emails and telephone conversations with relevant people.

### **School profile**

St Mary's is a small Catholic Primary School in an economically depressed town on the Mid North coast of NSW. Ninety-six percent (49) of the students are Indigenous. The school is part of the St Mary's (Our Lady Star of the Sea) Parish Nambucca Valley and is a member of the Lismore Diocese school system. The school is located in what was identified in the Vinson Report (2002) as the seventh neediest community in NSW.

The Catholic Church has a long history of working with the Gumbaynggirr people in the region, although much of its earlier work, as with much church involvement with Aboriginal people across Australia, resulted in dispossession, disempowerment, feelings of hopelessness and resentment.

In 1919, St Mary's was the first school to offer education to Aboriginal children in Bowraville, although negative experiences of school over many years led to mistrust of the system. Many grandparents of current students remember their time at St Mary's when the school was segregated with a fence which separated white and black students. Indigenous students did the gardening and cleaned the toilets and the Church. It was not until the 1960s that Indigenous students were integrated into the main school and encouraged to attend school past third class.

In recent years, the Catholic Church has worked hard to redress the education, employment, health, and housing disadvantage that has built up over many years because of its earlier oppressive policies. In 1978, it was the first school in the Lismore Diocese to employ an Indigenous Teacher Aide. The school currently employs more Indigenous than non-Indigenous staff, many of whom are parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles of the students. Indigenous staff are being trained so that they have skills they can share with the community.

The school's Indigenous Home Liaison Officer helps promote attendance by following up on missing children, using the school van to deliver and pick up permission notes from parents, and driving students to sporting events and

medical appointments. Although the school is the poorest in the diocese, it supports students to compensate for their own disadvantaged backgrounds in a number of ways. It keeps school fees very low (they are often not paid); it runs a school nutrition programme; it maintains a supply of clothing that students can borrow for school outings, school photos, and special events (where they feel embarrassed or shame because of their clothing). It has accepted the generous support of St Claire's College, Waverley to enable a ratio of one computer to every two students and to allow use of the computers by young people and adults at the weekend.

In 2002, to support student retention in education, a Middle School Annexe of the Coffs Harbour Campus of John Paul College was set up at St Mary's to ease the transition of the students from Primary to Secondary schooling. Links were developed with St Vincent's College, Glebe and St Ignatius College, Riverview and a number of students from St Mary's have gained full boarding scholarships to continue their education at these schools. The responses of students and parents to these scholarship opportunities have been overwhelmingly positive. In the words of one parent of a scholarship holder:

This is like a dream. My boy now has opportunities that we could never have given him. Coming to St Mary's was the first best thing and now going away for school and mixing with lots of other people, - he has learnt so much. And the language programme was a big part of what set him on the right track.

### **The Gumbaynggirr language programme**

The principal of the school provided an overview of the language programme in this way:

So what's exciting about the Gumbaynggirr programme? It's been a battle but it's been my pet since I've been here. What we found is that Muurrbay<sup>42</sup> has been doing an excellent job in reviving the language and everyone was pouncing on their graduate speakers, so poor things, we'd throw them in front of a class. They had no teacher training – it was mayhem. They burnt out, felt very insecure, intimidated, and it wasn't pleasant for them at all.

So after a few years of trying that, we cottoned on to the idea of using a linguist/language teacher (Julie Long) to work with a Gumbaynggirr speaker (Michael Jarrett). There's no funding for this within our system – it's absolutely hard. I fund it through our EISIP funding, but that's at the loss of aides in classrooms.

So they (Michael and Julie) are allowed an hour in the morning where they work together in planning lessons, how to slot them in, getting the whole curriculum together, the units, the assessments.

What we had prior to this was the kids getting vocab, vocab, vocab. But now they are getting tag endings, they are putting sentences together. Julie and Michael are using fabulous strategies and learning so much all the time.

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<sup>42</sup> See next section

And what has really paid off is that we now have a much stronger link with Muurrbay.

*Muurrbay and the Many Rivers Aboriginal Language Centre*

The contributions of Muurrbay and the Many Rivers Aboriginal Language Centre (MRALC) are crucial to the Gumbaynggirr language programme at St Mary's.

The following information about the Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative has been adapted from information available on the Muurrbay website ([http://www.muurrbay.org.au/about\\_us.html](http://www.muurrbay.org.au/about_us.html)) and from information provided during a visit to Muurrbay.

Muurrbay began in 1986, when Gumbaynggirr Elders decided to revive their language in order to hand it down to future generations of Gumbaynggirr people. The Elders worked with linguist, Brother Steve Morelli, to rebuild the language. The first Gumbaynggirr language course was offered in Sherwood, west of Kempsey.

Muurrbay is based in the old church at Bellwood, Nambucca Heads where Gumbaynggirr language classes began in 1997. Muurrbay continues to grow as a centre for Aboriginal community activities, providing classes in Gumbaynggirr language, arts and cultural practices, specialised workshops, and community meetings. The centre is accredited as a Registered Training Organisation through the NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB).

Muurrbay's purpose is to support Aboriginal people, particularly Gumbaynggirr, in the revival and maintenance of their language and culture. To further its work, Muurrbay has developed strong partnerships and links with local schools, state education authorities, Aboriginal organisations and councils, and the Nambucca Shire Council. Muurrbay is in the process of finalising a revised edition of the Gumbaynggirr dictionary.

Muurrbay works in conjunction with the Many Rivers Aboriginal Language Centre (MRALC), which provides strategic support for Aboriginal communities of the northern and central coasts of NSW who want to revitalise their languages.

Two staff members of Muurrbay and the MRLAC are responsible for the St Mary's Gumbaynggirr language programme. Julie Long is a linguist at the MRLAC, working mainly in language education and IT support. Michael Jarrett is a qualified teacher and a student of the Gumbaynggirr language. He is employed by MRLAC as a language researcher. Julie and Michael are together responsible for the K-6 Gumbaynggirr language programme at St. Mary's.

The Gumbaynggirr language programme at St Mary's draws on appropriate cultural content, and introduces students to increasingly complex language structures through a variety of activities such as conversations, songs, stories and

games. Although one aim is to make classes lively and fun for the students, there is an imperative to meet syllabus outcomes.

There is a team approach to programming whereby the Gumbaynggirr community teacher works closely with the school language teacher and Muurrbay language researchers/linguists. The team approach also involves team work amongst all of St Mary's staff. For example, the language teacher described this scenario:

The team model means that the contribution of people like Uncle Baz (one of the school's AEOs) sometimes sis in on classes and he has a lot of ... like the language has been lost but the culture has not. And he can inject that into the language classes. And then that helps me because I don't know all that although we've got stories and stuff at Muurrbay but he's a Bowraville man and there's stuff that is still the old tradition that persists. It mightn't be said in language any more but he knows the culture. So that is a great part of the team ...we do this, he adds that. It's true of other people too. They will throw an idea at you and off you go.

The students have sung traditional songs in Gumbaynggirr at local events such as the opening of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs office in Coffs Harbour, the Native Title conference, a book launch at Muurrbay, and the opening ceremony at a Xavier Rudd concert. Of this last event, the school principal said:

It was an amazing experience for the children and they performed with great pride and professionalism. To watch these children grow from the shy and shamed kids they were three years ago to the kids we saw standing tall and proud in front of 2000 people is very rewarding. With this sort of cultural pride these kids give us all great belief and hope for the future.

### *The language learning programme*

The Gumbaynggirr language learning programme at St Mary's was developed with the support of Muurrbay, the Many Rivers Aboriginal Languages Centre, Bowraville Central School, and the Australian Government Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (through the Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records Programme).

The following description of the language programme is taken from documentation compiled by Julie Long, one of the Gumbaynggirr language teachers at the school.

There are eight units of work (themes) in each of three stages. Each stage progresses and builds on the work of the previous stage.

The programme document is presented in three formats (Unit Focus, Lesson Plans, Unit of Work Template) for each stage in each unit of work, as follows:

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <i>1. Unit Focus</i> | Overview of Unit<br>Outcomes from Syllabus that are addressed in Unit<br>Vocabulary Items<br>Immersion Ideas for communicative skills |
|----------------------|---|

Teaching and Learning Activities for achieving the desired outcomes

This format can be used by teachers to supplement their own lesson plans on a given theme. The teaching and learning activities can be browsed for ideas for planning units of work on a theme. The flash cards, blackline masters, games and other activities can be incorporated into these units.

**2. Lesson Plans** Sequential lesson plans covering one term's work (at one lesson per week) and incorporating all the ideas within the Unit Focus section.

This format allows teachers to use the document as a stand alone programme with a two year rotation (eight units in total – four units per year) and includes all necessary resources, worksheets and flashcards to use in the classroom.

**3. Unit of Work Template** The Unit of Work Template is based on the NSW BOS "Advice for Programming and Assessment" document.

This format can be used by teachers to submit to their school principal as their programme for a given term and is a good guide or reminder of what will be taught, learnt and assessed in any unit.

Space precludes presenting full details of the learning programme but we provide an example of a lesson outlines for Stage 1 for one of the themes (Animals) and an overview of a unit outline for Stage 3 (Family and Daily Life).

**Stage 1 lesson plan**

**Purpose:** To teach names of animals and consolidate previously learnt words for environmental features; to expose students to location words; and to expose students to locative endings on nouns.

**Greetings:** Begin with the usual greetings and questions and answers. *Waarru yarrang ngiinda?* Who are you? *Waarru nginundi bijarr?* What is your name? *ngiinda yarrang buurrgi darruy?* How are you? (Lit: You there body well?), *Ngiinda darruy* You good? *Juuda nginundi jindaga?* Where's you sister? *Juuda nginundi gaguga?* Where's your brother? *Juuda ngiinda ngayinggi?* Where do you live? etc.

**Morning warm ups** *Birrmadi yilaa* (Running on the spot) – *balama, garrada, balama* (slow, fast, slow)  
*Ngiima Jiina* (Touch toes)  
*Garraji Winda* (Star Jumps)



### ***Stage 3 Unit Outline: Family and Daily Life***

*Listening and Responding:* Organise and respond to key ideas from spoken texts in familiar contexts.

*Reading and Responding:* Organise and respond to key ideas from written texts in familiar contexts.

*Speaking:* Interacts with others by sharing key points of information in Gumbaynggirr language.

*Writing:* Writes texts to present key points of information in Gumbaynggirr language.

*Making linguistic connections:* Identifies patterns and features of Gumbaynggirr language by making comparisons across languages.

*Moving Between Cultures:* (1) Demonstrates awareness of cross-cultural influences on language and culture. (2) Demonstrates understanding of significant cultural values and practices in Aboriginal communities.

*Vocabulary:* (1) Revision of vocabulary from stages 1 and 2. (2) Pronouns (simple pronoun chart).

*Useful Phrases for the Unit:* Revise useful phrases from units 1 and 2.

#### *Teaching and Learning Ideas and Activities for Achieving Outcomes*

- Revise vocabulary from stages 1 and 2.
- Song – Ngaya song (to help learn pronouns).
- Discuss the difference between English pronouns and Gumbaynggirr pronouns – (singular, dual and plural; inclusive and exclusive). Cover all parts of the pronoun chart giving examples of how each is used.
- Model sentences on the board getting students to supply correct pronouns. Give a good variety of pronouns particularly focussing on those that differ from English.
- Give sentence worksheets to students to fill in correct form of pronouns. Work the first couple of sentences out as a class to make sure everyone has got a grasp of the concept.
- Model a story of a family outing (e.g., to the beach or town). Include different family members with a few different activities. Using the model on the board as a guide, get students to write their own simple story using the names of their own family members. Stress correct use of pronouns.

*Example: My family went to the river. Mum, dad, granny and the kids got up and dressed and then walked to the river. The kids swam and the adults sat and talked. We ate food and drank water. We walked home and lay down and slept.*

Use these stories to script conversations about “My family outing” and role play these scripts.

- Listening exercise: Have students draw picture to instructions (e.g., the family at the beach. Give instructions of what to draw in language – Father

is swimming, mother is lying down, brother is eating, the sisters are playing in the sand, etc)

- Use games like pac-man and strip bingo to reinforce use of tag endings on nouns

*Immersion Ideas for Unit:* Use learnt useful phrases and responses for non-English conversation.

*Assessment:* Assessment at Stage 3 level will be done mainly through observation. With some activities this observation will be incidental (cultural awareness, etc); others will be more formally observed (pronunciation, knowledge of vocabulary, question and answers in immersion, etc). Written tasks and student books will be used to assess grammatical concepts.

*Evaluation:* What went well? What didn't work? What improvements / additions can be made? What needs to be considered for next week?

*Lesson Plans:* Break teaching and learning activities into nine lesson plans – each lesson will include immersion time, revision of what was learnt in previous lesson (through games), song, introduce new learning, and an activity to reinforce new learning. Each lesson will build on the lesson before.

### **Systemic support and resources**

There is constant effort at St Mary's put into sourcing funds for the various activities of the school and for the resources needed for its programmes, including for the Gumbaynggirr language programme. Funding provided by the Australian Government through the Schools Languages Programmes is available to NSW Catholic schools. According to information on the Catholic Education Commission, NSW website:

The objective . . . in the allocation of School Language Program funds is to assist NSW Catholic schools and their school communities to improve the learning outcomes of students K-12 who are learning languages other than English, including Indigenous languages.

But funding from such sources is insufficient. The principal described the situation in this way:

School fees at St Mary's are \$12.50/wk for one child, \$17 for 2 and \$21 for 3 or more. We work off a fees base of about \$11,000 so we are very, very dependent on grants and donations and that's why we link with some city schools. We are constantly pursuing money. We don't have a clear budget because we don't have enough money to say there is X for this and X for that – we don't know what is coming next week. But we are fairly good at promoting ourselves. Like last year there were some South African people who had heard of the school and they wanted to make a link - like with African – native African people . . . I'm not sure really what they wanted really. But anyway they came up and took some video and then ran an auction in Sydney amongst the ex pat South Africans and raised \$17,500 which they gave to us. And consequently we bought things we needed. So much of this job is just finding money.

Strong support for the school's language programme and access to a range of resources flows from the strong links between the school, Muurraby, MRALC, the NSW BOS and the NSW DET Aboriginal Languages Unit. For instance, Gumbaynggirr language teachers, other staff at St Mary's, and staff at Muurrbay and MRALC have participated in BOS Workshops, which are offered by BOS Project Officers who work intensively with a range of school/community teams on Aboriginal language programs. The workshops are described on the BOS Aboriginal Languages website in this way:

Each year the Board's Project Officers work intensively with a number of school/community Aboriginal language program teams. The projects are implemented by holding a series of workshops with each team in each term. Each workshop is constructed so as to provide support in meeting the three main project objectives:

- opportunities to learn the language
- learn about language teaching methodology
- planning and programming as a team.

A summary of the usual workshops in each term follows:

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| Term 1 | Two-day workshop to set individual objectives, as well as meeting the three main objectives and develop a team identity                 |
| Term 2 | Two-day workshop to continue to meet the three main objectives and individual project objectives, as well as developing a team identity |
| Term 3 | Three-day sharing workshop where all school/community teams working with Board Project Officers come together to share experiences      |
| Term 4 | One-day workshop to carry out reflection of the project and evaluations   |

### **Best practice/innovative features/ critical success factors**

Three key features contribute to the success of the language programme at St Mary's.

First, the support provided by the Muurrbay and the MRALC enhances programme quality by providing appropriately trained teaching staff. The strong links with Muurrbay and MRALC also strengthens community backing for the programme through the work of these centres with communities in the region.

Second, the Gumbaynggirr language programme at St Mary's fits within the context of the school's social justice vision. In particular, the vision, energy, and commitment of the principal to make a difference in the lives of the students and their families – to break the cycle of poverty and powerlessness experienced by many of the schools' students and their families – has created a context in which the Gumbaynggirr language programme can thrive. The principal has fostered this commitment amongst her staff.

A school climate has been developed whereby parent and community trust in the work of the school has grown exponentially in recent years. Typical of comments made by parents is the following:

It's like a drop in centre, this school. The parents come and have coffee and a chat and so on, and students who used to come here come and use the computers in their holidays. There's a much more positive attitude now than before – more respect for our culture. That's all because of what the principal has done.

There have been differences in the school since the language has been introduced. Harry, my son, addressed an assembly of the whole school at Riverview recently – he couldn't have done that before. It was being at St Mary's as well as learning the language that built his confidence.

The principal has made a big difference, and teaching the language. We know the school respects our culture. The culture is being brought back in through the language. It's used to open different functions and ceremonies. Some parents go with the school to these functions and hear the openings. This school in particular has very good rapport with the parents. Better than in most schools. Our parents are much more involved and committed. It's a small school and that makes a difference too.

The model of school leadership displayed aims at the empowerment not only of the students, but also of their families and community. One parent described her feelings about the language programme in this way:

The first time I heard my daughter speak the language it brought tears to my eyes. I missed out but now it's come back in this school. The people appreciate the fact that a language is being revived. Parents know that the school obviously respects our culture. The culture is being brought back in through our language...within this school community there is great respect, not so much in the other schools though.

Third, there is a clear understanding of the necessary components of a successful language programme. For instance, in 2005 when several local schools expressed an interest in introducing Gumbaynggirr language classes they did not proceed because of the lack of Gumbaynggirr language teachers. In response to this need, Muurrbay developed a course that not only helps students learn Gumbaynggirr, but that also assists them in developing skills in *how to teach language*. Muurrbay staff recognise that simply knowing some Language is not enough; people need to develop their teaching skills before they can work successfully with children in classrooms.

The benefit for St Mary's is that the language programme is staffed by teachers who understand this and who are also supported by the traditions of Muurrbay and the MRALC. In this respect, the principal commented that:

In the first two years we went through three or four different teachers. But since we've hit on this model, it's been a consistent team. It's been a win-win for everyone, actually. Through working here, Julie now works at Muurrbay with Anna Ash. And the community people know that even

although she is a whitefella she can work with Aboriginal people. So now she's doing what she loves at Muurrbay.

Michael works at Muurrbay as well now, and this is what's really exciting. As a training provider, they are now using their last module, which they hadn't used so far, to actually do teaching training. So we can overcome that problem. So it's not only having Gumbaynggirr speakers now; it will also be people with some sort of teaching skill. So it's like its shifting from reviving the language to revitalising it and that's really exciting.

Uncle Kenny (Chairperson, Muurrbay Board of Directors) called in the other day, and said they've actually taken it a step further now so that, say, if Michael's sick they want us to ring Muurraby and they will send a replacement. So that we are using the pool of all the people there.

The rigour of the programme at St Mary's is enhanced by staff understanding of general principles of language teaching. Classroom teachers commented that not only were the children learning Gumbaynggirr, but that their English language skills had increased as they were introduced to how languages worked – notions of syntax, structure, and grammar were being applied to English in ways teachers had not been able to get children to apply before. In the words of one teacher, “students now have some vocabulary to use in our discussions about the English language.”

### **Sustainability of the programme**

Of the programmes in the schools visited for this project, the programme at St Mary's is probably the most likely to be sustained for the reasons described above. In particular, the strong links with Muurrbay and the MRALC provide both cultural support and quality teaching for the programme. In turn, both the cultural and educational aspects of the work in schools of Muurrbay and MRALC is enhanced by their strong links with the NSW Aboriginal Language Research and Resource Centre, the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, the NSW BOS, and the NSW DET.

## 7.6 Willowra Primary School

### Introduction

Willowra is a remote Indigenous community 340 km north east of Alice Springs in the NT. The community has a population which varies between 150 – 200 people. The vast majority of the population are Warlpiri speaking people with a small minority of non-Indigenous teachers, medical staff and council workers and their families. The community is serviced by a community council workshop, school, medical clinic and store.

Willowra School has an enrolment which varies between 36 and 42 children. There is no pre school in the community but the school welcomes participation by children in the 3 years to Transition age group so long as it involves parental support; viz parents attending with young children.<sup>43</sup>

School facilities include a main wing which incorporates three classrooms, library, canteen and administration area/staffroom. The school also has a standalone language centre.

The school places a strong emphasis on health and nutrition. On arrival at school, students shower and dress in clean school uniform. The school provides subsidised breakfast and a cooked lunch for each student and teachers reinforce messages about clearing nasal passages to assist with hearing as part of school routines.

Warlpiri language is taught at Willowra as part of the NT DEET's Bilingual programme. Willowra is also part of the Alice Springs East Group School<sup>44</sup> which incorporates nine other schools in the Alice Springs region with the leadership of a Group School principal and support of a group school registrar and a shared teacher who provides time release to staff to comply with the current conditions of the EBA.

The case study of Willowra School was completed through a site visit in late November 2006.

### Indigenous Language Programme

#### *Staffing*

As a designated Bilingual School, Willowra is staffed with a Teacher Linguist and Indigenous Literacy Worker which is additional to the staffing entitlement of three teachers, three teaching assistants and 0.5 administration/maintenance and 0.5 cleaner. The school also makes use of CDEP funding and relief teacher funding to employ additional community members as Teacher Assistants and Part-time Instructors (PTIs).

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<sup>43</sup> During the site visit a number of parents and grandparents were present at the school with young children.

<sup>44</sup> Groups Schools are a governance structure established by Northern Territory DEET to reduce the administrative burden on small remote schools.

*Two Way Learning Programme*

As a designated Bilingual School under the NT's Two Way Learning Programme, the school teaches children initially in Warlpiri and as their confidence and literacy skills develop, teaching and learning also occurs in English. Children's progress in learning is based on their age and abilities and is not limited by their lack of English. Based on this understanding, the bilingual education programme is both a language programme and an academic programme.

*Philosophy*

Willowra School's Mission Statement expresses a desire to run a two way language and cultural programme which provides chances for students to learn the skills and knowledge necessary for them to live, work and enjoy both Yapa (Indigenous) and Kardiya (non-Indigenous) cultures. The strategies adopted by the school staff to fulfil this objective include:

- showing respect for the languages and cultures of Yapa and Kardiya;
- learning and teaching together as a team in both languages;
- acknowledging and respecting people's differences and planning and catering for those differences;
- communicating openly with students, staff and the community to resolve problems where they arise; and
- providing a two way language and cultural programme:
  - in which students learn by doing, talking and presenting in both languages;
  - where there is learning and teaching about and through both languages and cultures as well those within the wider world;
  - where content and strategy ideas are drawn both from the NT Curriculum and the local Community.

*Programme structure*

Over the last three years the delivery of the Warlpiri language programme has shifted from discrete lessons being delivered by the assistant teachers and the literacy worker with support of the teacher linguist to a fully integrated programme involving all staff.

The integrated nature of the current programme originates from a need which became apparent in the school's English programme. In this instance, the English programme was faltering due to the absence of key personnel, "... when they were not there the programme could not run." The solution centred on shared planning and delivery so that if one member of staff was absent others would be able to 'pick up the running' in order for the programme to continue. The success of this approach saw it quickly being applied to other areas of the curriculum but in particular to the Warlpiri language programme.

Key features of the programme structure include:

- a weekly bush trip (held on a Wednesday morning) which provides the impetus for much of the thematic work which follows particularly in Warlpiri Writing;
- extensive involvement of community members, including older women supporting the programme as paid part time instructors and CDEP workers

which enables all teaching staff to be organised into four teaching teams: writing, reading, spelling and early-literacy skills;

- the same theme being used across the school in both languages and in all learning areas with the same strategies being used for teaching and assessment in both languages and all learning areas; and
- whole school planning sessions at the end of term, including one with School Council in addition to teaching team meetings which are also formally held each term with informal discussions continuing throughout the term.

### *Literacy cycle*

The ‘Ann Morrice Literacy Cycle’ provides an overarching framework to guide planning and programme delivery. Literacy Cycles are a structured teaching methodology to foster literacy skills. The cycle provides scaffolding for programme planning to enable the development of integrated unit plans and teaching in literacy blocks.

The Literacy Cycle builds a word bank based on a stimulus and associated discussion. The word bank is used for spelling activities and modelled writing by teachers. Teaching sessions focus on the conventions of writing and reading skills as they relate to word bank and modelled writing. The cycle culminates in students writing their own sentences or stories using the words from the word bank (as well as other known vocabulary) whilst interacting orally with teachers about their writing and then reading what has been written to an audience (class, other students assistance teacher, teacher or other adult).

### *Observations*

A number of Warlpiri literacy sessions were observed over the two days of the site visit. Most of the lessons were held in the second session of the school day which has been allocated to the Warlpiri programme. In these sessions, the students rotate through a range of planned activities as illustrated by the text which follows.

### *Sign stories*

A property of the Warlpiri language is that it has a parallel sign language. Children need to learn both the sign language and the spoken language. Working in groups with community members (older ladies/PTIs) the aim of this session centred on providing students with sufficient signing skills to enable them to convey a simple story. For each of the three (age-based) groups which rotated through the sequence of activity included:

- demonstrations of signing by the community members with students practising the signs as they were demonstrated;
- students experimenting with their own sequence of signs and receiving feedback on the execution of the signs from the community members;
- students finalising their sequence of signs to show three steps in a simple story based on:
  - i) an animal – commonly a snake, kangaroo, lizard or bird (invariably with descriptors of the type within each species such as a blue tongue lizard or an emu or budgerigar for a bird);
  - ii) an action – such as running, climbing, digging or sleeping; and



- iii) a location – such as in the water, under a rock or up a tree.
- students ‘performing’ their sign story and recounting it aloud to enable it to be captured on a digital camera.






To reinforce the learning the students also had the opportunity to document their story with printed photographs of them executing the signs attached to their writing.

#### *Read and retell*

The focus of the session was the Warlpiri text, *Wirriya jarra kurlu* a big book which features ‘sand story’ symbols and accompanying Warlpiri text. The teacher and students read the story together (aloud) as a stimulus with the teacher pointing out the key points and subtle features of each symbol. On completion of the shared reading, the students wrote their own variation of the story using Warlpiri symbols and Warlpiri text.<sup>45</sup> The completed stories were then read aloud to the other students in the group.

Traditionally, the symbols are drawn in sand to convey the required message. When used in conjunction with each other, the symbols build up a story which can then be decoded by others. Table 7.2, provides an illustration of a sample of Warlpiri symbols.

**Table 7.2 Warlpiri symbols**

| Symbol  | Word     |         |
|---|----------|---------|
|   | Warlpiri | English |
|  | karnta   | woman   |
|  | kurdu    | child   |
|  | wati     | man     |
|  | warlu    | fire    |
|  | maliki   | dog     |

Source: Warlpiri Triangle Workshop Report 2006, BRDU, Yuendumu

#### *Shared reading – symbols*

In this session, each student had their own copy of a familiar text which was illustrated with Warlpiri symbols rather than pictures. The students sat in a circle with a teacher and teacher assistant and read the story together. The emphasis

<sup>45</sup> The class teacher scribed the story for a disabled student

within this session centred on word recognition and the correct pronunciation of the Warlpiri words.

#### *Shared reading and singing – signs*

The session focused on a text with a familiar song that was graphically illustrated with images of Warlpiri signs. The students and staff sang the song together while making hand signs and referring to the sign images in the booklet. The assistant teacher tested student learning by requesting students to repeat some signs and say the corresponding words. The session concluded with the students and staff singing the song together without the aid of the booklet.

#### *Spelling*

Students worked in a group with their teacher dictating words from a familiar Warlpiri text. The students use individual white boards to make attempts at spelling the word. Once each child has completed their attempted spelling, the students share their efforts and the teacher provides the correct spelling of the word if any students misspell the word

#### *Letter recognition and writing*

This session for younger students (Transition/Year 1) was introduced with a shared text written in Warlpiri and English.<sup>46</sup> On completion of the shared text, the students broke into small groups to undertake activities related to the Letter(s) of the Week ‘T’ and ‘V’. The activities included:

- locating words beginning with ‘T’ or ‘V’ from lists of Warlpiri words displayed in the classroom and copying the words onto a large sheet of paper;
- cutting and glueing letters to an A4 sheet; and
- practise in writing each letter through a worksheet containing outlines of each letter.



#### **Commentary based on the observations of the Warlpiri language programme**

While there is nothing particularly innovative about some of the activities described above, they are nevertheless illustrative of the comprehensiveness of the Indigenous language programme at Willowra. Indeed spelling, letter recognition and writing and shared reading mirror the everyday activities evident in literacy programmes in primary classrooms throughout Australia. The point here is that these activities are conducted in Warlpiri with non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous teachers and assistants working together to deliver a well organised and systemic programme.

Although reading, writing and spoken literacy in Warlpiri and literacy in English remain fundamental to the school’s programme the students at Willowra are clearly developing mastery in aspects of literacy in a language which has a

<sup>46</sup> *Healthy Kids: A school exercise programme* Illustrated by Celia Adams Bilingual Resource Development Unit

different basis for being literate to that which is understood for Australian English. For Warlpiri children, literacy is based on traditional forms of communication; oral - aural exchange, hand signs and symbols drawn in the sand - combined with latter day developed written language (using the English alphabet) and reading. This difference between literacy in Warlpiri and literacy in standard Australian English is largely unrecognised in broader discussions regarding literacy as it relates to Indigenous students.

In acknowledging this variation, the main role of school remains focused on developing literacy in conventional print in Warlpiri leading to literacy in English print. While hand signs and symbols are valued for their own sake as cultural knowledge, they are not considered to be an alternative to developing skills in conventional print, first in Warlpiri, then in English.

### **Assessment and monitoring of learning**

Individual learning plans have been established for each student as the basis for monitoring and planning for student learning.

They enable us to plan according to learning styles, strengths and gaps in learning..... Using the learning plans provides an evidence base about what we know about the child; not what we think we know.

The learning plans at Willowra are supported by a range of assessment and monitoring strategies including:

- observations;
- continuous assessment records which are maintained for each student and moderated in whole staff meetings;
- running records in Warlpiri and English
- profiling against the NT DEET EsseNTial Learnings; and
- annotated work samples covering writing, reading and mathematics in both Warlpiri and English

### **Professional development and networking**

In addition to the professional development derived from the in house 'learning together' sessions, staff at Willowra school enjoy the benefit of their relationship with other schools in the local area particularly through the *Warlpiri-patukurlangu Jaru* (our Warlpiri language) network which involves Lajamanu, Yuendumu, Nyirripi and Willowra Schools.

Most recently, the schools have come together for a three day workshop in Yuendumu Community using funding sourced through IESIP. The focus of the workshop centred on moderation of student learning.

With the understanding that moderated assessment of Warlpiri literacy outcomes is essential for high quality teaching and learning, the workshop provided the opportunity for professional development for Warlpiri staff and non-Indigenous teachers involved in Two Way Learning programmes build staff capacity for sustaining the Warlpiri curriculum.

The need for greater understanding of NT Curriculum Framework Indigenous Languages and Culture outcomes and indicators was identified in a previous Warlpiri Triangle workshop<sup>47</sup> and teachers agreed that translating the outcomes and indicators into Warlpiri would help to achieve this outcome. To this end, an exercise in translating a sample of outcomes into Warlpiri and then back again into English was completed over the two workshops ensuring that the translations are true to the original meanings and that they make sense when someone reads them.

For the remainder of the workshop, participants were involved in observations of teaching practice using a pre recorded video and extensive moderation activity using work samples from each school at a range of levels of student learning. Working in groups, teachers discussed each piece of work and noted which outcomes had been met, with reference to the indicators.

As a validation exercise, each group took the samples of work another group had worked on. They discussed each piece of assessed work and noted if they agreed with the assessment or not and why or why not. The whole group then discussed difficulties in assigning assessment levels.

The moderation workshops enable and promote partnerships and increased rigour in assessment across the Warlpiri schools. As a number of Warlpiri teachers are also BIITE students, in Teacher Education, Own Language Work and Early Childhood courses, the workshops also enabled BIITE lecturers to participate in the moderation workshop to provide focused support for Warlpiri staff in relation to teaching, learning and assessing Warlpiri.

#### *Bilingual programme support*

The Indigenous language programme at Willowra benefits from the support and mentoring provided by a highly skilled and highly qualified Language Resource Officer who is based in Alice Springs. The Language Resource Officer delivers guidance to a number of schools through:

- site visits to work with teachers, assistant teachers, teacher linguists either one on one or through whole staff professional development sessions to assist with programme planning and delivery;
- support and guidance in the development and use of language teaching resources;
- interactions with community members to draw together information and understanding about local language issues;
- facilitation of shared knowledge and skills through workshops involving a number of schools; and
- remote telephone and email contact on an as needs basis.

An example of the impact of this role centres on the outcomes of a recent workshop which was conducted over three days at Willowra in November 2006. IESIP funding, the workshop brought together teachers, teacher assistants and teacher linguists from Lajamanu, Yuendumu, Nyirripi and Willowra schools and Tennant Creek Language Centre to undertake moderation of Warlpiri literacy across the participating schools.

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<sup>47</sup> Funded through DEET and Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT) resources

The workshop activities included:

- sharing teaching and learning practices in aspects of literacy including spelling, reading and Warlpiri writing;
- gaining a deeper understanding of the underlying purposes of writing as well as providing participants with opportunities to explore and improve their own skills as writers;
- translating a sample of the NT Curriculum Framework (NTCF) Indigenous Language and Culture (ILC) Outcomes and Indicators from English into Warlpiri and back into English to ensure that the essential features of the outcomes and indicators are understood within the context of both languages; and
- moderation of students' work across a range of levels.

As a direct outcome of the workshop, participants were provided with a range of effective teaching strategies, developed a greater understanding the requirements of the NTCF ILC and developed a shared understanding of the features of student work which align with the indicators and outcomes listed in the NTCF.

A sample of responses from the participant's evaluations provides an indication of the value they ascribe to professional development of this type:

- Sharing how different schools teach writing helped us.
- Seeing how classroom groups and routines work is helpful.
- Translating the NTCF helped us to understand it.
- We learned a lot about the NTCF.
- We learned about how to assess children's work.
- At first doing the translation was frightening because it was new, but once we got going it was really good – it helped us to understand the indicators.

A further benefit of the workshop centres on the involvement of lecturers from BIITE. As a number of Warlpiri teachers are also BIITE students, in Teacher Education, Own Language Work and Early Childhood courses the BIITE lecturers participation in the moderation workshop provided clear linkages between professional development auspiced through NT DEET and the ongoing delivery of the Indigenous teacher education programme delivered by BIITE.

### **Warlpiri Education and Training Trust**

The Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT) has been established by traditional landowners and the Central Land Council to direct a portion of their negotiated payments from the Newmont Mining Company – to be used to improve educational outcomes in Warlpiri communities with respect to education and training. The WETT Advisory Committee brings together the Central Land Council, Newmont, the NT and Commonwealth education and training departments, and community members. This committee serves as a collaborative forum with the potential to coordinate education across the Warlpiri region.

WETT funding is seen as complementary to existing funding regimes and has been applied in a number of ways to support education including:

- support for the production of Warlpiri bilingual materials;
- support for Warlpiri schools to enable country visits;

- payments to Elders and community members to be involved in school activities; and
- vehicles and trailers for four Warlpiri schools to take students on country visits.

### **Commentary on Master-Apprentice Model**

Two key points are made by the staff in relation to the merits of the Master-Apprentice model for Willowra School. Firstly, during the current term the school has endeavoured to foster the use of family groupings within the school programmes. The school views this as being both an important mechanism for achieving ‘buy in’ to school programmes as well as passing knowledge down from one generation to the next. Through this process older women may be seen working with young mothers (daughters and nieces) in school programmes; helping the children in their learning whilst at the same time passing on cultural knowledge from the older to the middle and younger generations.

Secondly, and in parallel, the school recognises the importance of succession planning and the need to ‘bring on’ the next generation of education workers. As such, the Master-Apprentice model is regarded as a useful means of developing the language skills of future Teachers and Assistant Teachers.

### **Critical success factors**

The standout feature of the language programme at Willowra School is the sense of teamwork and shared commitment to the programme which is evident in every facet of its operation. Moreover, this teamwork and commitment is not just confined to the teaching staff but extends to the senior members of the community who are involved at the school through a mix of voluntary support and PTI funding.

To foster this approach the school has extended whole school planning to form a more integrated approach to teaching which means:

- all teachers and students, including those within the Early childhood programme, work together at some point within the working fortnight;
- Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives are equally valued and equally evident in planning outputs and assessment practices including:
  - o Planning against the NT Curriculum Framework outcomes are recorded in both English and Warlpiri; and
  - o Yapa staff and Kardiya collaborate in profiling student learning;
- the links between Warlpiri and English language and Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures are strengthened through formal Learning Together Sessions and regular community meetings as well as less formal planning sessions involving Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff;
- The responsibility of the implementation of the Warlpiri Literacy Programme is clearly shared by all staff.

By establishing the four teaching teams, the school has enabled staff to focus on, and specialise in, one area of Warlpiri literacy. The same approach also accommodates staff absences and ensures continuity and progress across each stage of schooling and within each area of Warlpiri Literacy.

The rigour associated with assessment and monitoring of student learning is highly commendable. A schedule has been established for assessment and recording student learning in key areas such as Warlpiri, English and Mathematics. This is complemented by daily data gathering regarding attendance, regular self evaluations by students and whole staff moderation processes. In turn, the summative information derived from the assessment processes is used as the evidence base for reporting to parents. At the same time, the formative insights derived from the same processes are used to inform future programme planning.

Other critical success factors specific to the language programme centre on the weekly bush trips and associated use of multi-media. Both are integral to the literacy activities which occur on return to school. The experience on the bush trips provides the impetus for writing and subsequent spelling and reading activities and the multi media material assists recall and the sequencing of activity.

### **Lessons learned**

Two key lessons emerge from the case study at Willowra, one centring on the key drivers which underpin the effectiveness of the programme and the other related to what constitutes ‘literacy’ for Warlpiri speakers.

Firstly, unlike schools in some other settings, Willowra School does not have any difficulties in determining ‘what language’ to offer at the school as all Indigenous members of the local community are Warlpiri speakers. This fact has immediate benefits in terms of ‘buy in’ to the school’s programme as the interests of individuals or groups are not compromised by offering one language over another.

This situation certainly makes it easier for the school to garner community support for the programme. However, the evidence of community involvement would suggest that it is the school’s approach to drawing on the insights, knowledge and experience of community members and the shared commitment of all staff to the programme’s success which enables the programme to operate as it does. Teaching staff, teacher assistants, PTI staff and volunteers clearly share a common vision for the school. An effective Indigenous language programme is at the core of this vision with all parties working together based on a shared understanding of ‘what’ needs to be done and ‘how’ things should occur.

This message was reinforced in a meeting with community representatives where there was minimal response to questions about programme improvements. Rather, the clear message centred on “.... *don’t change it! The programme is good as it is. The children are learning their language and [through the language] their culture. This is what we want.*”

Secondly, while the school works towards literacy in standard Australian English for students as they progress from one year level to the next, English is their second language. First language literacy in Warlpiri is achieved through mastery across three domains:

- oral/auditory – speaking and listening;
- signs and symbols; and

- writing and reading (non-traditional aspects).

The literacy skills in Warlpiri are then transferred to English.

This level of complexity is largely unrecognised at a systemic level and in the broader community. Instead, judgments about literacy levels for Warlpiri speakers are largely determined by reference to mastery of language conventions in English.

### **Areas for improvement**

#### *Involvement of male community members*

The delivery of school programmes is achieved primarily through a feminised workforce. All the teaching staff are women, as are all the Indigenous teachers and assistants. While men assist with bush trips and camps, they are not currently involved in classroom programmes.

To achieve a greater gender balance in community involvement the school has identified the need to encourage greater involvement of male community members in its action statements for the period 2006-2007.

#### *Secondary education*

Although not an area for improvement directly related to the Indigenous language programme, it is worth noting that the success of the teaching and learning programme within Willowra school does not necessarily translate into effective secondary schooling outcomes for young people in the Willowra community.

As a K-6 school, Willowra Education Centre is highly effective in engaging children in learning and delivering quality education programmes with the Indigenous language programme being an integral driver of these outcomes. Equally the school has a systematic approach to planning, programme delivery and assessment and clearly benefits from community buy in and involvement in the policies and activities undertaken by the school.

However, the value of this positive educational environment is compromised by the lack of clear pathways for continued engagement in learning beyond the primary years. While some students enrol in secondary schools in Alice Springs or other locations, sustained engagement in schooling beyond the primary years is reportedly not strong.

Within the Willowra Community, adolescents and young men and women are encouraged to participate in activities conducted by the Central Australian Youth Link-Up Service (CAYLUS), Warlpiri Media and Tangentyere Council as well as interventions through the Mt Theo Programme.<sup>48</sup> Notably, some of this activity has included assistance to school programmes including video recording of bush trips, camp outs and some cooking for School Council and Reporting to Family nights.

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<sup>48</sup> An intervention programme to address petrol sniffing



However, while these programmes are seen as positive, community-based activities, they cannot equate to the ongoing education and training opportunities which are normally experienced by students in secondary school.

### **Key resources**

The Bilingual Resource Development Unit (or Printery), based at Yuendumu has been supporting Warlpiri programmes across the Tanami region since 1974. Key resources provided published by the Unit include:

- readers for students graded across seven levels;
- Warlpiri phonics charts;
- word charts including theme lists;
- exercise books;
- teacher resources; and
- maths materials.

In addition to grading, the reading materials for students are organised around designated themes and are available in varied sizes to support specific teaching and learning situations:

- A5 - small booklets which are used by students for personal reading and small group activities;
- A4 – books for use by teachers in class reading sessions; and
- A3 – larger books for use as big books in targeted teaching session

## 8 Discussion and Recommendations

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Any reading of numerous government reports that deal with Indigenous language matters going back over several decades makes it clear that there has been considerable effort put into thinking about the issues and coming up with sensible suggestions of a way forward. However, although there has been some progress in the implementation of policy to produce change, there are still many recommendations that have not been implemented.

Much of the past literature has examined Indigenous languages programmes as they exist in non-school environments. The purpose of this report has been to provide a snapshot of the current national situation in Indigenous languages education specifically as it relates to programmes in schools.

This chapter examines the implications for current policy and action in light of what we found in our examination of the literature and in the information we collected about:

- current State and Territory policies and practices relating to Indigenous languages in Australian schools;
- numbers and types of Indigenous languages programmes currently being delivered in schools in each State and Territory and how these are staffed and funded; and
- the range of training and professional learning options and/or teacher preparation courses available to teachers and speakers of Indigenous languages in each State and Territory to enable them to deliver such programmes in schools.

In reviewing past literature and in gathering information for this project, it appears that key principles have evolved that should guide the development of Indigenous languages programmes in schools if they are to be successful.

We present the following six key principles as a framework for our discussion of key issues and for the recommendations we make in relation to the development of policy and practice in Indigenous languages programmes in schools.

### *Key Principle 1*

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the first people of this country and their languages are unique to it. The capacity to learn these languages and support their reclamation and long term maintenance as strong and viable languages is of great significance to both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal Australians.

### *Key Principle 2*

Ownership of each Indigenous language belongs to a group of people who are its custodians; their language should only be taught in schools with their agreement.

*Key Principle 3*

School languages programmes should be developed and presented in partnership with the school and the owners of the language being taught.

*Key Principle 4*

Learning an Indigenous language and becoming proficient in the English language are complementary rather than mutually exclusive activities.

*Key Principle 5*

The primary responsibility for maintaining, revitalizing, or rebuilding Indigenous languages does not rest with schools, although schools may have an important role to play.

*Key Principle 6*

The most successful school language programmes will flow from a collaborative approach involving Indigenous communities, Indigenous Languages Centres, linguists, schools and teachers.

The remainder of this chapter has been divided into sections pertaining to the key issues that emerged during the course of this project. The discussion and recommendations are intended to inform further action undertaken at a national level to strengthen the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages in Australian schools

## **8.1 Purpose of teaching Indigenous languages in Australian schools**

A primary question to be addressed relates to the place of Indigenous languages in school curricula. Why should Indigenous languages be taught in schools?

This question requires a two-pronged answer. The first prong relates to the responsibility of schools to recognise and promote the place of Indigenous Australians as the nations' first people who have enriched modern Australian culture with their cultures and languages. Rigney (2002) describes the inherent place of Indigenous languages in the Australian psyche in this way:

A national Australian culture is inconceivable without Indigenous cultures and languages. Therefore Indigenous languages have relevance for all Australians and contribute greatly to the national identity. In this sense Indigenous languages are uniquely and irreplaceably Australian.

The ‘social good’ support by education systems and individual schools of the maintenance, revitalization, and rebuilding of Indigenous languages is in one sense a cultural activity that both supports Indigenous people in maintaining a sense of self and their culture of heritage and provides an opportunity for non-Indigenous Australians to achieve greater intercultural understanding. This notion of promoting the social good is also advanced in a paper that discusses the economic costs and benefits of Australian Indigenous languages (Mühlhäusler & Damania, 2004). These authors maintain that a

compelling reason for language preservation stems from the public good nature of benefits associated with Indigenous languages. Many of the benefits associated with maintaining Indigenous languages accrue to society at large, rather than the individual language speaker. As put by Nettle and Romaine (2000: 153) in their argument against letting languages die:

“Some, for instance, would say that other problems, such as eliminating poverty or protecting the environment, are more pressing concerns than the loss of languages. We will make the case that the need to preserve languages and the need for economic development in the world’s peripheral societies are not opposing ones, as widely supposed, but complementary aspects of the same problem. The idea that linguistic diversity should be preserved is not a sentimental tribute to some idealized past, but part of the promotion of sustainable, appropriate and empowering development. The problem of language death thus is a ‘good’ problem, in that solving it would mean solving many other urgent and interrelated problems at the same time”. (p.36)

However, the establishment of a language programme in a school or schools will not necessarily lead to the maintenance, revitalisation or revival of a language. In this respect, we need to take heed of Fishman’s (1997) comment that:

endangered languages become such because they lack informal intergenerational transmission and informal daily life support, not because they are not being taught in schools or lack official status.

Looking to schools and declarations of official status to assist endangered languages is much like looking for one’s lost keys under the lamp-post because that is where the most light appears to shine rather than because that is where they have been lost. Just as it is easier to see under the lamp post, it is far easier to establish schools and declare a language official than to get families to speak a threatened language to their children. Yet only the latter will guarantee transmission. (p.194)

Further, there is not agreement amongst Indigenous Australians about the role of the school with respect to Indigenous languages. For instance, contrast the following two views.

Schools are not the places for cultural and linguistic transmission, and we must stop looking to schools to save our languages. This is because the primary purpose of schools is for our children to obtain a mainstream, Western education, including full fluency in English. Schools will never be adequately equipped to solve the transmission imperative, and all we end up

doing is compromising our children's mainstream education achievement. Indeed, without full English literacy our children are then illiterate in their traditional language. (Pearson, 2007)

In some locations, schools play a crucial role as a delivery point for language projects which are initiated in, and controlled by, the community. These language programmes are of central importance to the students' academic progress, personal development and cultural pride. (FATSIL, 2004)

The second prong relates to the educational purpose of teaching a language other than English. The benefits of learning a language other than English have been variously described and researched. In general, the benefits relate to cognitive and academic, and to intercultural understanding. For instance, according to the National Statement and Plan, learning languages:

- enriches our learners intellectually, educationally and culturally;
- enables our learners to communicate across cultures;
- contributes to social cohesiveness through better communication and understanding;
- further develops the existing linguistic and cultural resources in our community;
- contributes to our strategic, economic and international development; and
- enhances employment and career prospects for the individual.

Liddicoat (2002) enumerates a number of educational outcomes of learning languages, all of which he proposes are central to the needs of students who will be required to participate in an increasingly interconnected world. These outcomes include:

- knowledge of the language and the ability to use it in communication with other people;
- understanding of the culture of another group;
- understanding one's own language and culture through comparison with another language and culture;
- knowing how to communicate in contexts where shared language resources between participants are limited;
- knowing how to communicate across cultural boundaries. (p. 30).

Fernandez (2008) discusses the benefits of second language learning in four broad areas: cognitive, academic, general educational, and intercultural.

There is no reason why Indigenous languages cannot provide similar benefits to students engaged in learning them in schools. Indeed, we frequently heard comments during our consultations to this effect.

In an exploration of the impact of language policy on endangered languages, Romaine (2002) notes that "much probably depends on the timing of policies and legislation. Planning in many domains, linguistic or otherwise, faces inevitable charges of *too little too late*" (p.17).

In light of the current context in Australia where there is intense focus on the education of Indigenous students, conjoined with substantial national debate about

the place of languages education in schools, it seems appropriate for policies to be developed that support the teaching of Indigenous languages in schools for the purposes of supporting language maintenance, revitalization, and rebuilding; in addition there is strong argument for placing them, where possible, on a similar footing to other languages taught in schools in terms of how we might understand their educational value.

In light of these purposes for teaching Indigenous languages in schools, we make the following two recommendations to aid National, State and Territory policy formulation with respect to Indigenous languages.

### **Recommendation 1**

That DEEWR and State and Territory education departments support the maintenance, revitalization, and rebuilding of Australian Indigenous languages by creating opportunities for students to learn an Indigenous language as part of the Australian Government School Languages Programme.

### **Recommendation 2**

That where there are ten or more students in any one school who speak an Indigenous language as their first language, they be given the opportunity to continue to learn that language either as part of the school's language programme or as part of a bilingual education programme.

## **8.2 Teacher preparation and support**

Skilled and qualified teachers are essential to the success of any programme offered as part of a school's curriculum (Hattie, 2003). Indigenous languages programmes in schools should have no less of a requirement in this respect. Sadly, this has not, and continues to be not the case in many instances – for a range of reasons, not least of which relates to inadequate teacher preparation and ongoing professional support.

Information gathered for this project indicates there is a paucity in professional learning opportunities for Indigenous languages teachers. Furthermore, it appears there is considerable variation across the States and Territories in terms of the nature or quality of initial training and ongoing professional learning possibilities.

A gold standard to aspire to in Indigenous languages education is that the Indigenous languages programmes in schools are staffed by teachers of the highest possible calibre. Generally speaking, the range of skills required by language teachers include language competence, sociocultural and other background knowledge, and language pedagogy (Nicholas, Moore, Clyne, & Pauwels, 1993).

More specifically, teacher competencies and standards have been developed worldwide for language teachers. Typical of these are the *LOTE Teacher Competencies for Professional Development* developed by the Texas Education Agency in 1997. This document lists the following generic skills for use by teachers as a personal assessment tool.

- The teacher knows the language.
- The teacher understands language pedagogy.
- The teacher has a thorough understanding of the culture(s) associated with the language and knows about the connections among the practices, products, and perspectives of the culture(s).
- The teacher understands the relationship between the practices and the perspectives of the culture(s) being studied as it concerns, for example: family life, social interactions, leisure pursuits, involvement with work, religion/beliefs, societal hierarchies.
- The teacher understands the relationship between the products and the perspectives of the culture(s) as it concerns, for example: products used in daily life (e.g., culinary items, religious artifacts, clothing), works of art (e.g., literature, the visual arts and architecture, drama, music, film), non-artistic institutions (e.g., government, systems of transportation, use of technology, systems of education, legal practices).
- The teacher understands the pedagogy of teaching culture.
- The teacher understands the connections between languages and other disciplines.
- The teacher is able to link the study of languages to other disciplines or subject areas.
- The teacher understands formal interdisciplinary programs.
- The teacher knows strategies for teaching content through the medium of the language (e.g., in immersion programmes and content-based courses).
- The teacher knows how to compare and contrast the features of languages (e.g., syntax, lexicon, phonology, non-verbal communication, etc.).
- The teacher understands the similarities and differences between the target culture(s) and that of the (majority language).
- The teacher understands how the language and the target culture(s) have affected and have been affected by other languages and cultures.
- The teacher understands the universality of stereotyping and is familiar with the stereotypes associated with the culture(s) being studied.
- The teacher knows ways to access and use the language and its cultural resources beyond the school setting.
- The teacher knows how to use the language for lifelong learning, personal enrichment, and career development.

In Australia, the Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations (AFMLTA, 2005) has developed a set of professional standards for language teaching. The standards are grouped under the following headings:

- Educational theory and practice
- Language and culture
- Language pedagogy
- Ethics and responsibility
- Professional relationships

- Active engagement with wider context
- Advocacy
- Personal characteristics

Such lists may seem daunting in the context of teaching Indigenous languages where the work in schools is, relatively speaking, in such an early phase. Nevertheless, such competencies and standards can guide thinking and planning for the education of teachers and teams of people who are responsible for the development of healthy Indigenous languages programmes in schools.

On the other hand, not all people involved in a school's Indigenous language programme need to be trained teachers. The FATSIL guidelines for Indigenous languages programmes note that in many successful language revitalisation environments, a language programme will have a team of people working together – community members, teachers, linguists. Ideally one of these people will have knowledge of theories and research on language acquisition and skills in effective language teaching methodologies but less formal roles may be usefully adopted by Indigenous people as, for instance, in Master-Apprentice type situations whereby the Master has an important role to play in providing the cultural background to the language and comment on its everyday use.

The FATSIL guidelines also note that trained classroom teachers have skills that they can pass on to community language teachers. These skills include lesson planning, creating age/stage appropriate resources and classroom management techniques. During the language lessons, classroom teachers can continue to be supportive of the community teacher by showing interest in, and being respectful of, the content of the lessons, and by being prepared to learn alongside the students.

In light of the above, we propose the following key actions be undertaken to strengthen the teaching of Indigenous languages in schools by developing a workforce that is competent across a range of skills.

### **Recommendation 3**

That teacher education departments in universities be encouraged to develop Indigenous languages units within undergraduate, post-graduate, and/or professional programmes.

### **Recommendation 4**

That universities and TAFEs offer scholarships for the training of Indigenous languages teachers as part of their scholarships programmes.



### **Recommendation 5**

That preservice Indigenous teachers, and in particular preservice early childhood and primary school Indigenous teachers, be provided with an opportunity to train in the teaching of their language of heritage. This training might be undertaken at other institutions or organizations such as TAFE institutions and Indigenous Language Centres. Credit should be granted for such undertakings.

### **Recommendation 6**

That DEEWR and State and Territory education departments provide incentives (e.g., scholarships, fee support, and time for study) to inservice teachers to retrain as Indigenous languages teachers.

### **Recommendation 7**

That each State and Territory education department develops a strategy for training Indigenous languages teachers. Possible strategies should include consideration of the WA model of preparation of Indigenous languages teachers (Aboriginal Language Teacher Training Course); courses offered by Indigenous Language Centres; and courses offered in the TAFE context.

### **Recommendation 8**

That individuals who do not have initial teacher qualifications but who have successfully completed a recognized course of training in Indigenous languages teaching be recognized as language teachers and receive all the benefits that normally accrue to a qualified teacher, including salary.

### **Recommendation 9**

That career pathways for Indigenous languages teachers be established within State and Territory education jurisdictions. The establishment of ongoing Indigenous languages teaching positions within schools will provide improved employment conditions for individuals and will enhance the sustainability of school programmes.

### 8.3 Resourcing Indigenous languages programmes in schools

One inhibiting factor over the years in establishing sustainable language programmes in schools has been the lack of a framework within which to teach the language. There often have been no materials, no one person who can provide a regular presence in the school to teach the language, and no person who has more than a smattering of the language to teach the students. In addition to an ongoing and adequate source of funding that must be available to schools and jurisdictions to further their work in Indigenous languages programmes, there is a need to think carefully about the development of robust and appropriate curricula and resources to support the implementation of those curricula.

**Curricula.** There is an increasing understanding of the need to have a strong curriculum that teachers can use to guide their work in Indigenous languages classrooms. Some States and Territories are more advanced than others in the development of curriculum and materials for their Indigenous languages programmes.

The South Australian DECS has well-developed Indigenous languages policies and accompanying Indigenous languages syllabuses and resources to support traditional language learning with language awareness, revival and/or maintenance focuses.

Key documents for government schools in WA are the LOTE Learning Area - LOTE Beyond 2000; Aboriginal LOTE Implementation Guidelines (Draft only); and the Aboriginal Education Operational Plan 2005-2008.

The NSW Aboriginal Languages K-10 Syllabus (2003) covers the teaching of Aboriginal Languages mandatory and elective courses from Kindergarten to Year 10. It is designed to promote continuity of language learning from primary to secondary school and caters for students with diverse backgrounds and needs, including those with special education needs.

There are three key documents that inform current policy and curriculum in NT DEET schools:

- Australian Indigenous Languages Policy – Policy and Guidelines Transition-Year 12;
- *Indigenous Languages and Culture* in the NT Curriculum Framework; and
- *Handbook for Aboriginal Bilingual Education in the Northern Territory*.

**Resources.** All teachers require a range of tools to assist them in teaching. One inhibiting factor for many Indigenous languages teachers can be the lack of physical resources on which to build their language programme. Indigenous languages have an oral not written tradition and this can be a barrier to implementing a robust programme in a school. However, Noel Pearson (2007) highlighted the importance of Indigenous languages moving beyond an oral tradition:

...Indigenous people must understand that Indigenous language transmission must move decisively from orality to literacy if there is to be long-term maintenance. This means that Indigenous children must be fully literate in the language of learning – English – in order to be literate in their own languages. Reliance upon oral transmission alone will not work in the long term.

The process of developing written materials for use in the classroom is an ongoing, time-consuming, and costly exercise that needs to be shared across individuals and organisations. The work of a Language Centre in this respect is invaluable to the work of a school, exemplified in the very successful model operating in the Nambucca region with collaborations between Muurrbay, the MRLAC, local schools, the NSW BOS, and the Aboriginal languages Unit of the NSW DET.

The current digital revolution provides an ideal opportunity to invest in the development of digital resources for the teaching of Indigenous languages. Several recent initiatives, as outlined in Chapter 4 provide good examples of the possibilities in this area.

**Coordinated activity.** It is clear that there has been much activity across Australia in terms of Indigenous languages programmes in schools, but the task has often been arduous and dependent on the hard work and commitment of individuals or small groups of people. In such a context, reinventing the wheel in the sense of each jurisdiction proceeding in isolation from the work of jurisdictions in other States and Territories is probably not the most judicious way to proceed. With the move towards a national curriculum, there may be scope to promote coordinated activity for Indigenous languages. This is not to say that there is not already considerable interchange between individuals in the States and Territories working in the area. There is quite a deal of cross-fertilisation, but the process is of necessity somewhat ad hoc.

Within the non-school sector, FATSIL was set up as a national body for community-based Indigenous languages programs in Australia. However, it was never intended that this group would provide a coordinating role for Indigenous languages programmes in schools.

In light of this situation, and to assist the States and Territories in the development of generic curriculum and resources that can be adapted for local contexts, we make the following recommendations:

#### **Recommendation 10**

That a dedicated percentage of the School Languages Programme funds be targetted for Indigenous languages. A system of accountability should be developed that requires States and Territories to report on how funds have been used for Indigenous languages programmes. School Languages Programme funds should be allocated on a triennial basis to enhance the quality and sustainability of programmes.

**Recommendation 11**

That DEEWR allocate funding from its Digital Education Revolution to support school Indigenous languages programmes. In keeping with the aims of the Digital Education Revolution, this funding should be used for the development of online curriculum content, conferencing facilities, teacher professional development, and community engagement.

**Recommendation 12**

That MCEETYA fund a position within DEEWR for a national coordinator of Indigenous languages programmes in schools.

The role of this person will be to promote the development of sustainable Indigenous languages programmes in schools; to facilitate networking of those involved in Indigenous languages teaching across States and Territories; and to be involved in policy coordination across government departments, in keeping with the whole-of government approach to Indigenous affairs. In particular this will involve working with DEEWR; the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts; the Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; and State and Territory education departments.

## 8.4 School and community links

Over a decade ago, McKay (1996) noted that language programmes in schools should be set up in such a way that control is vested in the Indigenous community, especially the local Elders, and that Indigenous community values (such as authority structures, goals and activity patterns) must be supported rather than overridden or undermined.

In our consultations, we found a similarly strong commitment to the importance of the role of community in school language programmes although there was much more of a focus on ‘collaboration’ and ‘consultation’ rather than on ‘control’. Nevertheless, there was a strong and universal message that school language programmes would not succeed without the endorsement and involvement of local community members.

Although there was absolute consensus on the need for school-community collaboration in setting up and maintaining a school language programme, it appears that schools sometimes have difficulty in identify ‘the community’ or the appropriate person or persons with whom they should be working.

In States and Territories in which the development of school Indigenous languages programmes are more advanced, guidelines have been prepared to

assist schools to follow appropriate consultation procedures. For instance, the NSW DET has produced the online guide *Introducing an Aboriginal languages program*.<sup>49</sup>

Who should learn an Indigenous language? Which language should a school teach? Both of these questions have sometimes presented as stumbling blocks to the establishment of robust Indigenous languages programmes in schools because there is not general agreement as to the answers.

Indigenous languages are frequently regarded in a fundamentally different way to large, world languages like English. Frankel and Janke (1998), in a report on Australian Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights, note that “Indigenous languages are usually regarded as owned entities in the same way that songs, ceremonies and land are owned. Languages describe the relationship between people and places including knowledge of natural features, plant and animals” (p.20).

One submission to Frankel and Janke’s investigation of Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights noted that:

much depends on the identity of the user, the context in which the language is used and the purposes for which it is used. Does the user receive financial gain or kudos through use of the language? Is the use of the language for educational purposes? Is the use of the language in the interests of the Indigenous community? Is the language used within the territory to which it belongs? Is the user Indigenous or non-Indigenous? If the user is Indigenous, is the user affiliated to the language group. (p.22)

In our consultations with a range of stakeholders in the States and Territories, there was not consensus about the place of Indigenous languages in schools. This lack of consensus is typified in an interchange in a focus group in one school we visited:

What about the white kids learning the language - is that a problem?

Well they say the white fellows shouldn’t learn it - it’s not their language. But, like XX, she’s a white lady and she can speak it better than me. I haven’t got any problems with the white people learning our lingo. But I think some people just wants to teach it to blackfellas. Some would feel the same as me – that anyone should learn it so you and me could have a conversation in my language.

The question of which language to teach in a school in which the Indigenous students in the school represent more than one language group can be similarly contentious.

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<sup>49</sup> Available at <http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/primary/languages/aboriginal/assets/pdf/Introducing%20an%20Aboriginal%20languages%20program.pdf>

Several arguments for the selection of a language to teach were put to us in the course of our consultations. First, it was proposed that the *strongest* language should be taught, strongest in the sense of either having the largest number of remaining speakers, or being the most developed in terms of its documentation (e.g., having a dictionary and other resources), or having competent Indigenous speakers of the language who were also competent in terms of teaching pedagogy. The second argument for choosing the language to teach was simply that it should be the language of the people on whose land the school was situated.

Whatever criteria are used for deciding which language to teach, there is absolute clarity about one point. No Indigenous language programme will succeed in a school unless there has been an extensive process of consultation and ongoing collaboration between the school and the relevant Indigenous community or communities.

**Recommendation 13**

That schools develop appropriate procedures (including sufficient time for consultations) to enable the school and the Indigenous community to work together to reach decisions on the teaching of Indigenous languages including decisions regarding the language to be taught and how the programme will be implemented.

**Recommendation 14**

That schools develop appropriate procedures for developing relationships with Indigenous Language Centres to enable the sharing of expertise and resources, and to strengthen the cultural context for their Indigenous languages programmes.

**Recommendation 15**

That the current movement towards the development of a National Curriculum be seen as an opportunity to develop a national curriculum framework for Indigenous languages. Any national curriculum framework must take account of local contexts and ensure that local cultural knowledge is embedded in each Indigenous language programme.

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## Appendix 1 Mapping Proforma for School Indigenous Languages Programmes

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### Survey of Indigenous Language Programmes in Australian Schools

Please use the accompanying proforma to provide information about Indigenous language programmes that are currently offered in schools in your jurisdiction.

The information should be returned by email attachment by **Monday 16 October** (sooner, if possible).

**NSW, Tasmania, Qld, WA** – please email to Nola Purdie ([purdie@acer.edu.au](mailto:purdie@acer.edu.au))

**ACT, NT, SA, Vic** – please email to Geoff Noblett ([gnoblett@phillipskpa.com.au](mailto:gnoblett@phillipskpa.com.au))

If you have any questions at all about the survey, please do not hesitate to contact Nola Purdie (03 9835 7481; 0400 554 342), or Geoff Noblett (03 9428 8600; 0402 031 583).

Your responses do not need to be long, but please be sure to provide enough information for us to get a clear picture of your Indigenous language programmes.

#### 1. YOUR DETAILS

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Name</b>         |  |
| <b>Organisation</b> |  |
| <b>Position</b>     |  |
| <b>Phone</b>        |  |
| <b>Fax</b>          |  |
| <b>Email</b>        |  |

## 2. TYPES OF PROGRAMMES

Please use the following information to complete the table on the next page

*Programme Type* (column 9)

|     |                            |   |
|-----|----------------------------|---|
| 1   | First Language Maintenance | Students are first language speakers of the language. These programmes extend and develop students' language skills and may include the development of specialist skills such as interpreting and translating. They may be conducted as transition to English programmes for students in the early years of schooling.                                    |
| 2   | Second Language Learning   | A strong language is taught to a wide range of learners (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) in the Languages area of learning — in much the same way as non-Indigenous languages are. Students have little or no assumed knowledge of the target language.  |
| 3   | Language Revival           | A general term that covers three subtypes:  |
| 3.1 | Revitalisation             | The language is still spoken by a small group of older speakers within the community. These language programmes aim to extend the use of the language into the younger generations of speakers. Indigenous students within these programmes will have considerable passive knowledge of the language.   |
| 3.2 | Renewal                    | The language is no longer actively spoken 'right through' or in its full form, but there are Indigenous people who actively identify with the language. Sufficient linguistic heritage remains within the community to develop a language programme.  |
| 3.3 | Reclamation                | There has been a break in the transmission of the spoken language, but there is sufficient evidence from historical documentation and archival material for language reconstruction and learning.   |
| 4   | Language Awareness         | The little bits that are known about a language can be incorporated into another area of learning (e.g., Studies of Society and Environment), but are not enough for sustained language learning. The focus is on teaching <i>about</i> Indigenous languages and on exploring socio-historical issues. Communicative fluency or competence is not a goal. |

*Teacher Type* (column 10)  
(Use multiple numbers if necessary)

- 1 = General teaching staff (non-language specialist)
- 2 = LOTE teacher
- 3 = Indigenous teaching assistant
- 4 = Volunteer community member
- 5 = Other (give details)

*Start Year* (final column)

Year in which the programme commenced.

|     | State/<br>Territory | Sector<br>(G, C,<br>or I) | School Name | School Address | Phone | Teacher<br>Contact | Language<br>taught | Programme<br>Type (1, 2,<br>3.1, 3.2, 3.3,<br>or 4) | Teacher<br>Type<br>(1, 2, 3,<br>4, or 5) | Year<br>Level<br>Taught | Student<br>Numbers<br>Indigenous | Student<br>Numbers<br>Non-<br>Indigenous | Start<br>Year |
|-----|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------|--------------------|--------------------|---|--|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--|---------------|
| 1.  |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 2.  |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 3.  |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 4.  |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 5.  |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 6.  |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 7.  |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 8.  |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 9.  |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 10. |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 11. |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 12. |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 13. |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 14. |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 15. |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 16. |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 17. |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 18. |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 19. |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |
| 20. |                     |                           |             |                |       |                    |                    |   |  |                         |                                  |  |               |

If there are multiple programmes in a school, or year levels involved in the programme(s), please use one row per programme or Year level.  
Add rows as necessary.



**3. RATIONALE AND POLICIES**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Briefly describe the rationale underlying the provision of Indigenous language programmes in your schools.  |  |
| Please list key policies and documents that relate to the provision of Indigenous language programmes in your schools.<br><i>Please indicate if these are available online or, if possible, have them mailed to ACER.</i> |  |
| Are there any requirements at a systemic or school level to offer Indigenous first language speakers learning experiences in their language?  |  |
| Are there any requirements at a systemic or school level to offer an Indigenous language as part of an Indigenous Studies course?<br><i>(Please indicate if this occurs at a particular year level)</i>                   |  |

**4. STAFFING**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Does your system or do your schools keep records of teachers and teaching assistants who are qualified to teach an Indigenous language? |  |
|---|--|

## 5. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>What training and professional learning opportunities are available to teachers wishing to teach an Indigenous language?<br/><i>(If appropriate, name the course and organisation)</i></p>                                |  |
| <p>What training and professional learning opportunities are available to Indigenous education workers/assistants wishing to teach an Indigenous language?<br/><i>(If appropriate, name the course and organisation)</i></p> |  |

## 6. RESOURCING

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>How are the following aspects of Indigenous language programmes funded?<br/><i>(e.g., special assistance or part of a school's general budget)</i></p> |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• staffing</li> </ul>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• resources (e.g., audio-visual materials)</li> </ul>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training or professional development for teachers</li> </ul>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training or professional development for Indigenous education workers</li> </ul>                                 |  |

**7. SUSTAINABILITY**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>Please comment on the sustainability of the Indigenous language programmes operating in your schools. (<i>e.g., What are the barriers to sustainability? What are the drivers of sustainability?</i>)</p> |  |
|--|--|

**8. QUALITY**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Please comment on the quality of the Indigenous language programmes operating across your system or in your schools (<i>e.g., What are the barriers to offering high quality programmes? What are the drivers of high quality programmes?</i>)</p> |  |
|---|--|

**9. OTHER COMMENTS**

|  |
|--|
| <p><i>Please make any further comments relevant to the project's key questions here (refer to letter).</i></p> |
|--|

Thank you for your assistance. It is greatly appreciated

## Appendix 2 Mapping Proforma for Indigenous Languages Teacher Training and Professional Development

---

### **Survey of Training, Professional Learning Options, and Teacher Preparation Courses/Units for the Teaching of Indigenous Languages in Schools**

Please use the accompanying proforma to provide information about any training, professional learning options, and teacher preparation courses/units offered at your institution that focus on the teaching of Indigenous languages.

The information should be returned by email attachment by **Monday 16 October** (sooner, if possible) to Nola Purdie ([purdie@acer.edu.au](mailto:purdie@acer.edu.au)) or faxed to the Australian Council for Educational research on 03 9835 7433

If you have any questions at all about the survey, please do not hesitate to contact Nola Purdie (03 9835 7481; 0400 554 342), or Geoff Noblett (03 9428 8600; 0402 031 583).

Your responses do not need to be long, but please be sure to provide enough information for us to get a clear picture of your Indigenous language courses or units.

#### **1. YOUR DETAILS**

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Name</b>                     |  |
| <b>Institution/Organisation</b> |  |
| <b>Position</b>                 |  |
| <b>Phone</b>                    |  |
| <b>Fax</b>                      |  |
| <b>Email</b>                    |  |

## TYPES OF SCHOOL INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES

**Please read the following information before completing the proforma below. This table classifies the types of Indigenous language programs that are currently on offer in schools across Australia. Please keep these classifications in mind as you describe the nature of the Indigenous language course or units offered at your institution, and the qualifications/outcomes obtained by the students who complete the courses or units.**

### *School Programme Types*

|     |                            |   |
|-----|----------------------------|---|
| 1   | First Language Maintenance | Students are first language speakers of the language. These programmes extend and develop students' language skills and may include the development of specialist skills such as interpreting and translating. They may be conducted as transition to English programmes for students in the early years of schooling.                                    |
| 2   | Second Language Learning   | A strong language is taught to a wide range of learners (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) in the Languages area of learning — in much the same way as non-Indigenous languages are. Students have little or no assumed knowledge of the target language.  |
| 3   | Language Revival           | A general term that covers three subtypes:  |
| 3.1 | Revitalisation             | The language is still spoken by a small group of older speakers within the community. These language programmes aim to extend the use of the language into the younger generations of speakers. Indigenous students within these programmes will have considerable passive knowledge of the language.   |
| 3.2 | Renewal                    | The language is no longer actively spoken 'right through' or in its full form, but there are Indigenous people who actively identify with the language. Sufficient linguistic heritage remains within the community to develop a language programme.  |
| 3.3 | Reclamation                | There has been a break in the transmission of the spoken language, but there is sufficient evidence from historical documentation and archival material for language reconstruction and learning.   |
| 4   | Language Awareness         | The little bits that are known about a language can be incorporated into another area of learning (e.g., Studies of Society and Environment), but are not enough for sustained language learning. The focus is on teaching <i>about</i> Indigenous languages and on exploring socio-historical issues. Communicative fluency or competence is not a goal. |

## 2. COURSE OR UNIT DETAILS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| What is the name of the Indigenous language course or unit offered at your institution? <i>(If more than one, please list all)</i>   |  |
| Who teaches the course or unit? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact name:</li> <li>• Qualifications:</li> <li>• Is this person Indigenous or non-Indigenous?</li> </ul>           |  |
| How long does the course or unit take to complete? <i>(Hours per week; weeks/semesters)</i>  |  |
| In what year did the course or unit commence? Has it been offered every year since then? If not, why not?  |  |
| Briefly describe the major objective(s) of the course or unit. <i>(If appropriate, please make reference to the Indigenous language classifications provided above)</i>                        |  |
| Please list key documents that relate to the course or unit <i>(e.g., handbooks, course outlines. Please indicate if these are available online or, if possible, have them mailed to ACER)</i> |  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Are there any institutional requirements for particular groups of students to undertake this course or unit as part of their studies?   |  |
| Does the course or unit focus on a particular Indigenous language ( <i>please name the language/s</i> ) or is it aimed at a developing general awareness about Indigenous languages?<br>( <i>If appropriate, please make reference to the Indigenous language classifications provided in the table above</i> ) |  |

### 3. STUDENTS AND STUDENT OUTCOMES

|   |                      |                          |
|---|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Who is the course or unit offered to?<br>( <i>undergraduates, general teachers, LOTE teachers, Indigenous education workers, Indigenous community members</i> )     |                      |                          |
| How many students will undertake the course or unit in 2006?  | Indigenous students: | Non-Indigenous students: |
| What do you anticipate the completion rate to be? (%)   |                      |                          |
| What qualification do the students obtain at the end of the course?   |                      |                          |
| What skills do you expect the students to have at the end of the course or unit? (e.g., level of language competence, pedagogical skills, cultural awareness, etc.) |                      |                          |

**4. SUSTAINABILITY**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Please comment on the sustainability of the Indigenous language course or unit operating in your institution. <i>(e.g., What are the barriers to sustainability? What are the drivers of sustainability? Staffing, resources, funding, student numbers?)</i> |  |
| Does the institution have any links with education systems or schools with regard to whom the course or unit is offered?   |  |

**5. QUALITY**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Please comment on the quality of the Indigenous language course or unit operating at your institution. <i>(e.g., What are the barriers to offering high quality programmes? What are the drivers of high quality programmes? Staffing, resources, funding?)</i> |  |
|---|--|

**6. OTHER COMMENTS**

|   |
|---|
| <i>Please make any further comments about the course or unit that are relevant to the project as outlined in the accompanying letter (e.g., strengths, limitations)</i> |
|---|

Thank you for your assistance. It is greatly appreciated



## Appendix 3 Proforma for Nominating Case Study Schools

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### National DEST Project: Indigenous Language Programmes in Schools: Proforma for Nominating Case Study Schools

Please use the accompanying proforma to nominate a school that demonstrates good practice in the provision of an Indigenous language programme. To nominate more than one school, please photocopy the proforma.

Your nomination(s) should be sent by **Monday 9 October**. Please email to Nola Purdie: [purdie@acer.edu.au](mailto:purdie@acer.edu.au). If you have any questions at all about it, please do not hesitate to contact Nola Purdie by email or phone (03 9835 7481).

Your responses do not need to be long, but please be sure to give us enough information to get a clear picture of the nominated language programme(s).

#### **Programme Features**

In making your nomination, you should consider the following programme features:

##### **1. Student outcomes**

- a. How well have students progressed in their language learning since involvement in the programme? For example, is there clear evidence of increased use and ability in the target Indigenous language?
- b. Has the number of students involved in the programme increased since its inception?
- c. What impact has the programme had on students' general engagement in school activities? For instance, have attendance rates improved since the programme began? Has student interest and achievement in other subjects improved since the programme began?

##### **2. Recognition and involvement**

- a. How well regarded is the programme by the local Indigenous community?
- b. How well regarded is the programme by other teachers in the school?
- c. Are members of the local community involved in the programme?
- d. Do partnerships exist between the school language programme and any community language programmes?

##### **3. Policy development, programme planning, and programme evaluation**

- a. Has any particular policy guided the development of the programme?
- b. What planning has led to the programme being implemented?
- c. Is adequate time devoted to the programme each week?
- d. How is the programme evaluated?

##### **4. Resourcing and sustainability**

- a. How is the programme funded? Is this funding on-going?
- b. Is the programme adequately resourced (for example, in terms of staffing; audio-visual language resources)?
- c. To what extent is the programme embedded within the whole school curriculum?

- d. How viable would the programme be if the current teacher(s) left the school?

### 5. *Teaching*

- a. Does the teacher have formal teaching qualifications?
- b. Is the teacher Indigenous or non-Indigenous?
- c. Are there any team teaching arrangements?
- d. Does a community member/parent assist the teacher?
- e. Is the teacher a proficient speaker of the language?

### 6. *Other*

- a. In your view, what other features of the programme indicate that it is a programme of high quality?

## **Classification of Indigenous language programmes**

Please use the following classification system to classify the language programme in the nominated school.

### 1. *First Language Maintenance*

Students are first language speakers of the language. These programmes extend and develop students' language skills and may include the development of specialist skills such as interpreting and translating. They may be conducted as transition to English programmes for students in the early years of schooling.

### 2. *Second Language Learning*

A strong language is taught to a wide range of learners (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) in the Languages area of learning — in much the same way as non-Indigenous languages are. Students have little or no assumed knowledge of the target language.

### 3. *Language Revival*

A general term that covers three subtypes:

#### 3.1 *Revitalisation.*

The language is still spoken by a small group of older speakers within the community. Language revitalisation aims to extend the use of the language into the younger generations of speakers. Indigenous students within these programs will have considerable passive knowledge of the language.

#### 3.2 *Renewal.*

The language is no longer actively spoken 'right through' or in its full form, but there are Indigenous people who actively identify with the language. Sufficient linguistic heritage remains within the community to develop a language programme.

#### 3.3 *Reclamation.*

There has been a break in the transmission of the spoken language, but there is sufficient evidence from historical documentation and archival material for language reconstruction and learning.

### 4. *Language Awareness*

The little bits that are known about a language can be incorporated into another area of learning (e.g., Studies of Society and Environment), but are not enough for sustained language learning. The focus is on teaching *about* Indigenous languages and on exploring socio-historical issues. Communicative fluency or competence is not a goal.

### Nomination form

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Your name</b>  |   | <b>Contact (Telephone number or Email)</b> |  |
| <b>Nominated school</b>   |   |  |  |
| <b>School contact details</b>   | Address   |  |  |
|   | Telephone number  |  |  |
|   | Fax number  |  |  |
|   | Email   |  |  |
|   | Principal   |  |  |
| <b>Programme type</b><br>Please tick (✓) the descriptor that best illustrates the type of programme |   | <i>First Language Maintenance</i>          |  |
|   |   | <i>Second language Learning</i>            |  |
|   |   | <i>Language Revival – Revitalisation</i>   |  |
|   |   | <i>Language Revival – Renewal</i>          |  |
|   |   | <i>Language Revival – Reclamation</i>      |  |
|   |   | <i>Language Awareness</i>                  |  |
| <b>Please comment on the features of the programme in relation to the following criteria</b>        | Student outcomes  |  |  |
|   | Recognition and involvement                                   |  |  |
|   | Teaching  |  |  |
|   | Policy, planning, and evaluation                              |  |  |
|   | Resourcing and sustainability                                 |  |  |
|   | Other comments to support the nomination                      |  |  |
| <b>Other characteristics</b>  | State/Territory   |  |  |
|   | Sector (Government, Catholic, Independent)                    |  |  |
|   | Stage of schooling (Primary, Secondary, K/P/R-12)             |  |  |
|   | Setting – (Metropolitan, rural/regional, remote)              |  |  |
|   | Size of programme (Number of students enrolled/participating) | Indigenous                                 |  |
|   |   | Non-Indigenous                             |  |

Please return as an email attachment to Nola Purdie <[purdie@acer.edu.au](mailto:purdie@acer.edu.au)> by Monday 9 October

## Appendix 4 Organisations and Individual Consulted

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### Organisations and Individuals Consulted<sup>50</sup>

The following people and organizations were consulted about Indigenous language programmes in schools, and about teacher preparation, training and professional learning. Consultations were conducted via face-to-face interviews, telephone, and/or email.

#### Project Advisory Group

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Paul Bubb        | NT Department of Employment, Education and Training, representing the Government education sector and the MCEETYA Languages Education Working Party |
| May Kwan         | Independent Schools Queensland, representing the non-government education sector  |
| Kevin Lowe       | NSW Board of Studies, representing the Australian Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages                                     |
| Anne Pauwels     | University of Western Australia, representing Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities (DASSH)                           |
| Denise Wilkowski | Principal, Sanderson High School, representing the Australian Secondary Principals Association  |

#### Critical Friends

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Robert Ah Wing | Education Queensland                               |
| Denise Angelo  | Education Queensland                               |
| Chris Bain     | Education Queensland                               |
| Guy Tunstill   | SA Department of Education and Children's Services |
| Greg Wilson    | SA Department of Education and Children's Services |

#### State and Territory Education Jurisdictions

##### ACT

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Merril Land           | Catholic Education Office, Canberra and Goulburn Archdiocese |
| Michele Suen          | Association of Independent Schools of the ACT                |
| Kratai Visityuthasart | ACT Department of Education and Training                     |

##### NSW

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Ghislaine Barbe | Association of Independent Schools of NSW |
| Doreen Flanders | Catholic Education Office, Lismore        |
| Kevin Lowe      | NSW Office of the Board of Studies        |
| Jennifer Munro  | NSW Office of the Board of Studies        |
| Frank Pearce    | Catholic Education Commission of NSW      |
| Susan Poetsch   | NSW Office of the Board of Studies        |
| Mari Rhydwen    | NSW Department of Education and Training  |

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<sup>50</sup> We are aware that people within State and Territory education jurisdictions also consulted widely within their own organisations before providing us with information about Indigenous languages programmes.

*Northern Territory*

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Paul Bubb      | NT Department of Employment, Education and Training |
| Suzanne Brogan | NT Catholic Education Office                        |
| Cath Greene    | NT Department of Employment, Education and Training |
| Brenda Keenan  | NT Catholic Education Office                        |
| Helen Little   | NT Catholic Education Office                        |
| Greg O'Mullane | NT Catholic Education Office                        |
| Kath Phelan    | Association of Independent Schools of the NT        |

*Queensland*

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Tony Kitchen    | Queensland Catholic Education Commission                    |
| May Kwan        | Association of Independent Schools Queensland of Queensland |
| Camille Nielsen | Department of Education Training and the Arts, Queensland   |
| Tamara Romans   | Department of Education Training and the Arts, Queensland   |
| Jane Seolin     | Queensland Catholic Education Commission                    |

*South Australia*

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Carolyn Fortune | Association of Independent Schools of South Australia            |
| Ludgero Rego    | South Australia Commission for Catholic Schools                  |
| Louisa Rennie   | South Australia Commission for Catholic Schools                  |
| Guy Tunstill    | South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services |
| Greg Wilson     | South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services |

*Tasmania*

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Ronna Butler   | Catholic Education Office Hobart               |
| Tony Crehan    | Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania |
| Greg Lehman    | Department of Education, Tasmania              |
| Theresa Sainty | Department of Education, Tasmania              |

*Victoria*

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| James Atkinson  | Victoria Department of Education and Training  |
| Maree Dellora   | Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority  |
| Craig Holmes    | Catholic Education Commission of Victoria      |
| Bill Norris     | Association of Independent Schools in Victoria |
| Pinu Pudda      | Catholic Education Commission of Victoria      |
| John Page       | Victoria Department of Education and Training  |
| Sharyne Rankine | Association of Independent Schools in Victoria |

*Western Australia*

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Sandra Brogden | Catholic Education Office of WA (Broome) |
| Shane Glasson  | Catholic Education Office of WA          |
| Lola Jones     | WA Department of Education and Training  |
| Claire Leong   | Association of Independent Schools in WA |

Margaret Morcombe Catholic Education Office of WA  
 Lois Spehn-Jackson WA Department of Education and Training

*Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups*

Lionel Bamblett Victorian  
 David Ella NSW  
 Carol Garlett WA  
 Jo James Tasmania  
 Sue Murphy Northern Territory  
 Kaye Price ACT  
 Kathy Teague SA  
 Penny Tripcony Queensland

**Case Study Schools**

*Principals, teachers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Assistants, parents and community members from six case study schools*

Cable Beach Primary School  
 Ceduna Area School  
 Moorditj Noongar Community College  
 Shepherdson College  
 St Mary's Primary School  
 Willowra Primary School

**Participants, Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training Course, Kalgoorlie September 2006**

Roseanne Chiguna Bayulu Remote Community School  
 Melissa Drage Bluff Point Primary School  
 Stephanie Eades East Kenwick Primary School  
 Jan Mountney Australian Society for Indigenous Languages  
 Lisa Mourich West Northam Primary School  
 Kymberley Oakley Shark Bay Primary School  
 Dalisa Pigram Cable Beach Primary School  
 Belinda Riley Cable Beach Primary School  
 Debbie Rundle Hannans Primary School

**Participants, Aboriginal Languages Workshop, Bourke May 2007**

Principals, teachers, Aboriginal Education Assistants, and community members from:

Bourke High School  
 Bourke Public School  
 Brewarrina Public School  
 Hillston Central School  
 Muda Aboriginal Corporation  
 St Ignatious Primary School, Bourke  
 St Joseph's Primary School, Walgett  
 Wilcannia Central School

**Universities, and Technical and Further Education (TAFE) Institutes**

All universities (Schools of Education, Schools of Languages and Linguistics, Indigenous Units) and TAFEs from each State and Territory were contacted about

Indigenous languages courses and units offered to preservice and inservice teachers.

Responses (email, phone, face-to-face) were received from the following people:

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Rob Amery          | University of Adelaide                                      |
| Clair Andersen     | University of Tasmania                                      |
| Katrina Beer       | University of Ballarat                                      |
| Heather Bowe       | Monash University   |
| Peter Buckskin     | University of South Australia                               |
| Wendy Brabham      | Deakin University   |
| Yvonne Cadet-James | James Cook University                                       |
| Paul Chandler      | University of New South Wales                               |
| Anne Cosentino     | Chisholm Institute  |
| Pamela Coutts      | Macquarie University  |
| Leanne Cover       | Canberra Institute of TAFE                                  |
| Graham Dellar      | Curtin University of Technology                             |
| Alan Dench         | University of WA  |
| Toni Downes        | Charles Sturt University                                    |
| Robyn Dyer         | Wide Bay Institute of TAFE                                  |
| Marie Emmitt       | Australian Catholic University                              |
| Emma Errington     | University of South Australia                               |
| Kerry Evans        | Western Sydney Institute of TAFE                            |
| Rachel Freer       | Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE                              |
| Stephanie Fry      | Central Queensland Institute of TAFE                        |
| Mary-Ann Gale      | University of Adelaide/University of SA                     |
| Elaine Godden      | Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE                 |
| John Greatorex     | Charles Darwin University                                   |
| Carlie Groves      | RMIT University   |
| Barry Harper       | University of Wollongong                                    |
| Neil Harrison      | University of New England                                   |
| John Hobson        | University of Sydney  |
| Harold Koch        | Australian National University                              |
| Bill Louden        | University of Western Australia                             |
| John Maynard       | University of Newcastle                                     |
| Lyn MacKay         | James Cook University                                       |
| Don Maconachie     | University of the Sunshine Coast                            |
| Hayley McDermott   | Bond University   |
| Graham McKay       | Edith Cowan University                                      |
| Wayne McKenna      | University of Western Sydney                                |
| Marcia Langton     | University of Melbourne                                     |
| Vi McLean          | Queensland University of Technology                         |
| Jillian Miller     | University of South Australia                               |
| Christine Nicholls | Flinders University   |
| William Oates      | Central Queensland University                               |
| Dana Ober          | Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education        |
| Michael O'Neill    | Notre Dame University                                       |
| Jodie O'Sullivan   | University of South Australia                               |
| Nimal Parawahera   | Pilbara Institute of TAFE South Hedland, Pundulmurra Campus |

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Terry Pailthorpe   | Charles Darwin University                          |
| Doris Paton        | GippsTAFE  |
| Gary Pollock       | New England Institute of TAFE                      |
| Kaye Price         | University of Canberra                             |
| Ken Purnell        | Central Queensland University                      |
| Joann Pyne         | Mount Isa Institute of TAFE                        |
| Geoff Riordan      | University of Technology Sydney                    |
| Michaela Roberts   | Southbank Institute of Technology                  |
| Michael Rowan      | University of South Australia                      |
| Lynette Russell    | Monash University                                  |
| Suzie Sereda       | Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE, Logan Campus |
| Angela Singh       | University of Ballarat                             |
| Mona Tur           | University of South Australia                      |
| Linda Westphalen   | University of Adelaide                             |
| Claire Wyatt-Smith | Griffith University                                |

### Languages Centres

All Indigenous Language Centres from each State and Territory were contacted (email, phone) to provide information about the work that they did with local schools and about the Indigenous languages courses that they offered to support teachers of Indigenous languages. Responses were received from the following people:

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Anita Bedford          | Fitzroy Crossing Annexe of Kimberley Language Resource Centre          |
| Joy Bonner             | Nyanga Buranga Burangam  |
| Lauren Campbell        | Diwurrurru-jaru Aboriginal Corporation                                 |
| Dominique Castle       | Alice Springs Language Centre  |
| Coordinator            | Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Cultural Centre             |
| Desmond Crump          | Dhinawun Consultancy, Queensland                                       |
| Siobahn Casson         | Kimberley Language Resource Centre                                     |
| Terry Dunt             | Institute for Aboriginal Development, Alice Springs                    |
| Stan Grant             | Wiradjuri Language Development Project                                 |
| Fran Haintz            | Wangka Maya Pilbara Aboriginal Language Centre                         |
| Monney Hoey            | Magani Malu Kes  |
| Sharon Hume            | Wankanyi Ngurra Tjurta Aboriginal Corporation Language Centre          |
| Christopher Kirkbright | Wiradjuri Language Research and Teaching Centre/Sydney Language Centre |
| Daryn McKenny          | Arwarbukarl Cultural Resource Association Inc                          |
| Pat O'Connor           | Yugambah Aboriginal Museum, Language and Heritage Centre               |
| K.J. Olawsky           | Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Cultural Centre             |
| Paul Paton             | Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages                         |
| Paul                   | Yamaji Language Centre   |
| Bridget Priman         | North Queensland Regional Aboriginal Corporation Language Centre       |
| Anne Reynolds          | Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages                         |



John Rudder Wiradjuri Language Development Project  
 Ken Walker Many Rivers Language Centre, and Muurrbay Aboriginal  
 Language and Cultural Co-operative

**Other**

Anna Ash Many Rivers Language Centre  
 Faith Baisden Queensland Indigenous Languages Advisory Committee  
 Christopher Brocklebank Alice Springs Steiner School  
 Gwen Bucknall Indigenous Education and Languages Consultant  
 Brian Devlin Charles Darwin University  
 John Giacon University of Sydney  
 Anne Harvey Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia  
 Don Harvey Brewarrina Central School  
 John Henderson University of Western Australia  
 John Hobson University of Sydney  
 Julie Hodgkinson Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia  
 Rhonda Inkaraman Yipirinya School  
 Lester Irabinna Rigney Flinders University  
 Sally Jeavons Alice Springs Steiner School  
 Bill Lancaster Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
 Languages  
 Ken Langford Smith Yipirinya School  
 Graham Mackay Edith Cowan University  
 Barbara Novelli Hillston Central School  
 Brad Steadman Brewarrina Youth Centre  
 Kathy Teague Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia  
 Lia Tedesco SA Department of Education and Children's Services  
 Suanne Tikoft Yirara College  
 Tristan Tipps NSW Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource  
 Centre  
 Michael Walsh University of Sydney  
 Lesley Woods Hillston Central School

