

1995

## Language and communication enhancement for two-way education : report

Ian G. Malcolm  
*Edith Cowan University*

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**LANGUAGE AND  
COMMUNICATION ENHANCEMENT  
FOR TWO-WAY EDUCATION  
REPORT**



**IAN G. MALCOLM**

Cover Painting:

Untitled Silk Textile

Marribank Co-op

Aboriginal Artists Tina Hansen & Fay Farmer

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Cultural continuity, in contemporary expression.

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*“...Yungagees  
- da’s sort of a real way  
of sayin’ goanna ...”*

Interviewee, Age 13  
“Yamatji1” School

# Project Team

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# Executive Summary

## Project Background

Indigenous Australians command many languages including autochthonous (Indigenous) and contact languages (creoles and Aboriginal English). This project is concerned with the majority who speak English, especially those who speak English as a first language, in an Aboriginal English variety.

The project was developed by Edith Cowan University in cooperation with the Education Department of Western Australia as a response to an increasing demand from teachers of Indigenous students for help in providing for their needs as speakers of Aboriginal English. It was funded from the DEET National Priority (Reserve) Fund to enable the University to develop course modules in Aboriginal Education.

## Aboriginal English

Aboriginal English comprises a spectrum of varieties, some more strongly influenced by Aboriginal vernaculars and creoles and some by the English of the wider Australian community. In this project the focus was on varieties spoken in predominantly monolingual situations. Its features were identified, in relation to the likely processes of their derivation, as simplification, nativization and transfer.

## Aboriginal Education

This project promotes bidialectal education as an appropriate basis for the education of speakers of Aboriginal English. It associates this concept with “two way” or “both ways” education by stressing what teachers and others can learn from Aboriginal people through understanding the way of approaching experience and knowledge which is reflected in their dialect and the way it is used.

## Modelling Research

The project proceeded from modelling research towards the mentoring of teachers as researchers of their own students’ language and bidialectal curriculum innovators. The modelling of research was carried out in 9 schools in diverse areas of Western Australia which were visited by the research team.

## Mentoring Teachers

18 teachers from the nine schools attended an intensive mid-year training programme where mentors introduced them to the linguistic data from their own schools and how it had been obtained and analysed. The teachers were also helped in interpreting Aboriginal English and its significance and in developing bidialectal education approaches. They were given practical

linguistic and curriculum assignments to carry out in the following semester as well as reading assignments culminating in a presentation of research and assignment outcomes in the final term. For this, depending on the quality of work done, course credit was granted.

## **Course Modules**

As an ongoing outcome of the project, course modules in Aboriginal English and in Bidialectal and Two Way Education were developed and approved for offering from 1996 within a Graduate Certificate of Arts in Language Studies (Aboriginal), a Graduate Diploma of Arts in Language Studies (Major in Teaching Standard English as a Second Dialect) or a Bachelor of Education.



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# Acknowledgements

A project such as this which is attempting to be the first of its kind makes heavy demands on the trust and commitment of many people. It was decided from the beginning that the principle of operation would be one of voluntary commitment. No teacher or school participated except by self-nomination. A debt of gratitude is owed, then, to the Principals of the eleven schools from the Education Department and the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia and to the 20 teachers who were at some stage involved in the project. (Ultimately, nine schools and 18 teachers, all from the WA Education Department, were able to participate fully in the project.)

Although we have agreed to maintain confidentiality with respect to the names of the schools, teachers, and students associated with the project, their willing involvement, which made it possible, is warmly acknowledged.

I am particularly grateful for the unstinting commitment of the members of the research team (listed on page iv), all of whom gave generously of their own time to make it a success. Secretarial assistance was also provided at various times by Judith Gedero, Shirley Doornbusch and Ingrid Vasulin. The project also benefited from the oversight of the Aboriginal and Islander Research Steering Committee at Edith Cowan University whose members are Troy Pickwick, Simon Forrest, Graeme Gower, Len Collard, Jill Milroy (Centre for Aboriginal Programmes, University of Western Australia) and Jennifer Sabbioni. The project was part of the programme of the Centre for Applied Language Research of Edith Cowan University, which provided administrative assistance through its Manager, Dr Alastair McGregor. Special mention should be made of Alison Hill, whose expertise and energies have been essential in preparing this report for publication.

Finally, acknowledgement is gratefully made of the enabling provision made by the Department of Employment, Education and Training, the Faculty of Arts at Edith Cowan University and the WA Education Department which meant that time and resources were available as required to make the whole project come together.

Ian G. Malcolm  
Project Director



# Preface

The project which is reported on here arose out of the convergence of a pressing need on the part of education systems and a helping initiative on the part of the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET). The need revealed itself in the Western Australian Advisory Committee for Non-English Speaking Background Students, where, in 1993, unprecedented demands on the part of teachers for help with the English language needs of Aboriginal students were being faced; the helping initiative came in the form of the invitation by DEET to universities to apply for funding assistance for new course modules in areas of national priority, of which one was Aboriginal Education, under the National Priority (Reserve) Fund.

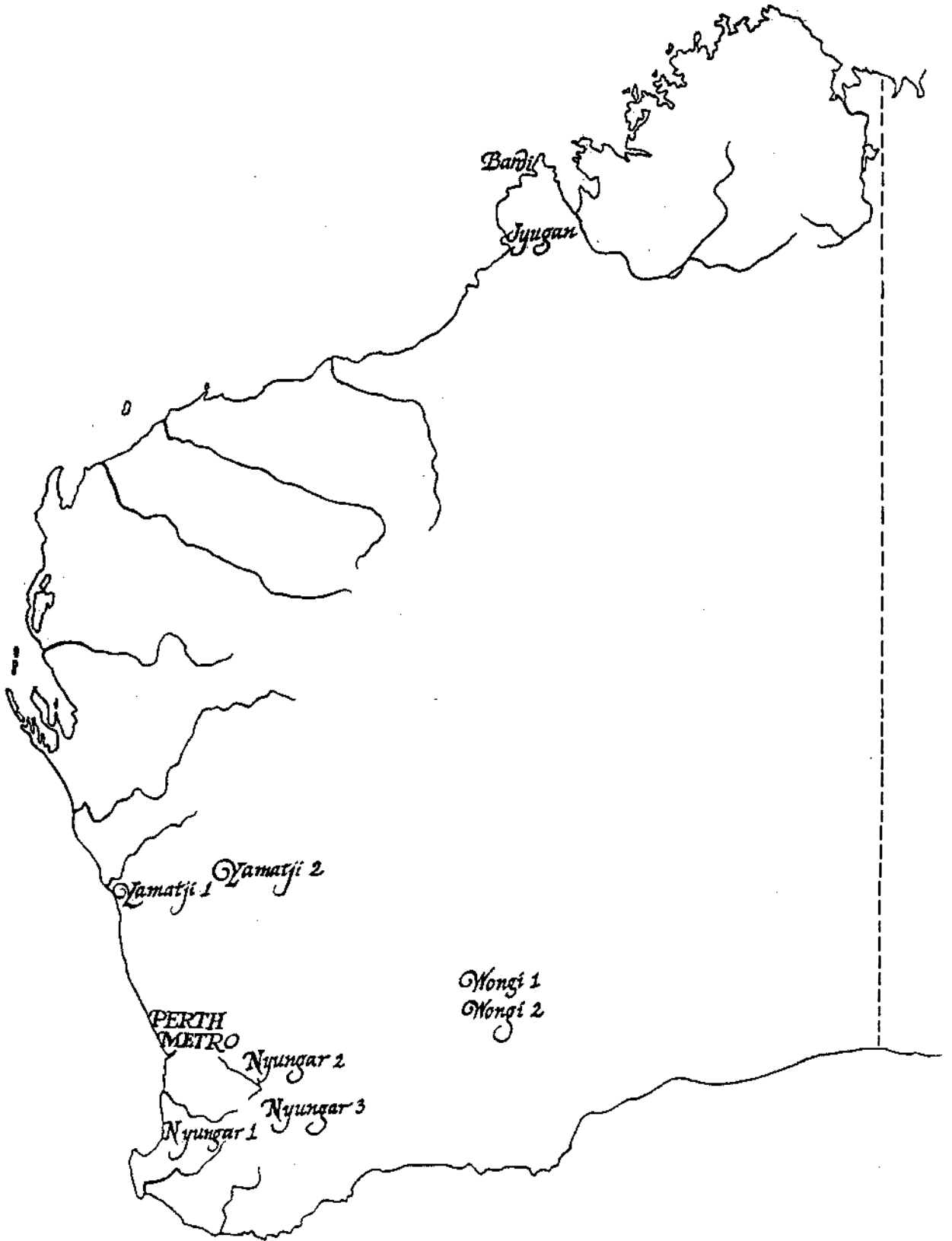
A plan for a new approach to teacher development, based on action research, was jointly worked out by a representative of Edith Cowan University and an officer of the W.A. Education Department. The intention was to bring linguistics to bear on the situation faced by the teachers, not by talking about it in theory but by using it to untangle the complexities of the bidialectal contexts in which the teachers were working. It was assumed that, if linguistic data gathering and analysis were modelled for the teachers, they would soon be able to become researchers of their own situations and to develop pedagogical strategies based on research input which would equip them better for working effectively with Aboriginal students.

The application for funding was successful and the project ran through the school year 1994. Extensive teacher development was carried out and, as agreed, new course modules were developed as an ongoing element in courses offered to graduate students of Edith Cowan University in both the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Education.

It is the intention of this report both to provide a full account of the way in which the contract undertaken with DEET was fulfilled and, beyond this, to provide a resource document for use in ongoing teacher development work in bidialectal education, a field which we believe holds a considerable potential for enhancing the educational experience of Aboriginal students but which has hitherto been left largely undeveloped in Australia.

— Ian Malcolm

Professor of Applied Linguistics  
Edith Cowan University  
Mount Lawley, 16th June, 1995.



# *Location of Schools involved in the project*

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# CHAPTER 1

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Introduction to the Project and Report

The past two decades have seen a tremendous amount of debate and changing perspectives on the education of Indigenous people. In particular, there appears to be an overall trend towards policies of increasing involvement of Indigenous Australian\* people in educational decision-making and giving greater recognition to Indigenous culture in the education of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. The recent *National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (Commonwealth of Australia, 1995) provided strong support for the arguments of Indigenous groups in favour of "two-way education" or "both ways education" as a way of bringing an Indigenous perspective into the education of Indigenous students (Yunupingu, 1990; Harkins, 1994).

A few attempts have already been made to put this educational philosophy into practice, although as we shall see in Chapter 2, the concept of two-way education is subject to differing interpretations at present. However it may be worked out in detail, it is clear that much of the burden of its success rests upon providing classroom teachers with the ability to put it into practice. Two-way education, according to the interpretation adopted in this project, depends upon non-Indigenous teachers having:

- a) respect for the two cultures which come together in the experience of Indigenous students;
- b) awareness of the nature, development and communicative conventions of English as used by Indigenous students (*ie.* their culturally distinctive "way" of approaching, understanding and expressing knowledge)
- c) capacity to apply this in developing educational strategies and curricula appropriate to two-way education (*ie.* education which incorporates a respect for both Indigenous and mainstream ways of learning).

The present project focuses on the role of communication in facilitating two-way education for students whose first language is Aboriginal English. It arose out of concern expressed by the State Advisory Committee for students of Non-English Speaking Background (NESB). The committee noted that many Western Australian non-Indigenous teachers who were aware

\* In most of this report, the term "Indigenous" will be used to acknowledge both Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. However, we also attempt to use terms at the appropriate level of specificity. Where possible, people and regions are referred to by their local names - *eg.* Nyungar country. For the sake of consistency with current linguistic terminology, the term "Aboriginal English" will be used with reference to the speech variety used by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander<sup>2</sup> people, including the Western Australian school children whose learning is the focus of this project.



needed help in understanding Aboriginal English and developing two-way strategies on that basis. (The equally crucial role and training of Aboriginal Education Workers will be discussed in the conclusion of this report).

As with the general population, the majority of teachers are unaware of the nature of Aboriginal English. They may mistake it as a product of attempts to learn English as a second language or, by trivialising its differences from standard English, fail to recognise its impact upon every aspect of schooling. The Western Australian *Review of the ESL Curriculum in Government Schools* (Herriman, Oliver & Mulligan, 1990) found, for example, that teachers often mistakenly identified as "NESB" children who actually came from Aboriginal English-speaking homes (p.103). Alternatively, they were unable to identify precise differences between Aboriginal English and "General Australian English". As Malcolm (1980, p.39) found some years ago, Aboriginal English differences tend to be perceived primarily in terms of accent. Aboriginal English is frequently perceived to be 'corrupt' or 'broken' English in need of correction, rather than a distinct, fully-functional dialect alongside which the Standard Australian English dialect may be added. Aboriginal English is not only integrally related to the identity of Indigenous students; it is a fundamental medium for the Indigenous Australian world view which they bring to the classroom.

This confusion is not surprising, given that it is only in the past decade that Western Australian government education policy documents have acknowledged that many Indigenous children need help to learn English as a second language, let alone as a second dialect. The recent rise in the profile of Aboriginal English through projects such as the recent national publication *Langwij comes to School* (McRae, 1994) is, however, contributing to the raising of awareness and increasing appeals for specific help in this area.

Given the research in Aboriginal English which has accumulated in Western Australia since 1979 (Blumer, in progress; Gollagher, 1994; Kaldor & Malcolm, 1982, 1991 *etc.* ; Malcolm, 1979, Muecke, 1981 *etc.* ), the present project came at a moment where demand for professional development and the expertise to provide it happily coincided. From the initial funding submission, prepared by the present author in consultation with Yvonne Haig, of the Department of Education, the project has been a collaborative one, with powerful potential for ongoing effects - which are already being realised in the wake of the project itself. It has more than fulfilled its original aim of developing a new course module in "Language and Communication Enhancement for Two-Way Education".

The remainder of this chapter will present a more detailed account of the project and the context out of which it arose, beginning with its background in government policy, systemic initiatives and relevant teaching and research at Edith Cowan University. Chapter 2 will present the research context with respect to Aboriginal English and Bidialectal and Two Way education, while Chapters 3 and 4 provide an account of the research and professional development outcomes, including the development of course modules for continuing pre-service training in Aboriginal English and Bidialectal Education.

It is hoped that the report will provide the reader with both an accurate account of what took place during the present project and a guide to future professional development activities. It will be seen that the project was successful not only in creating a model for ongoing teacher development and the resources to carry it out, but in already initiating a chain-reaction of positive change amongst teachers of Indigenous students in this State.

## 1.2 Government and Institutional Context

### 1.2.1 Providers of Education to Indigenous School Students

Most of recent policy from Commonwealth and Western Australian educational sources with respect to Indigenous education has begun to take up the theme of fostering Indigenous cultural difference while providing access to "mainstream" opportunities. However, grasping and implementing principles of enabling Indigenous self-determination and valuing Indigenous cultures is obviously a difficult process.

#### *National Reports and Policies*

Indigenous students' experience in education has historically been variously represented by Government policy as "disadvantage", "inequity" or "discrimination", but generally the former. Numerous reviews have highlighted the position of severe disadvantage occupied by Indigenous people with respect to other groups in Australian society. The *National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (Commonwealth of Australia, 1994b, p.2) claims that educational experiences of Indigenous Australians have improved over the past five years, particularly with respect to participation at the primary school level. However, in 1993 Year 12 apparent retention of Indigenous students nationally was still only just over 25 per cent - a rate equivalent to that for all Australian students over twenty years ago. In the Northern Territory, the rate was less than 11 per cent, while the Western Australian rate was less than 24% (Commonwealth of Australia, 1994a, p.59). While Indigenous participation in TAFE is increasing rapidly, the courses being studied are mainly vocational and preparatory (Commonwealth of Australia, 1994b, p.30).

With respect to actual achievement at primary school, quantitative measures reported in the *National Review* indicate that only "about one in five Aboriginal and Torres Islander primary students achieve at levels above the average for students as a whole. Overall, about 45% of Indigenous primary school students have significantly lower [*ie.* below one standard deviation from the mean] levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy, compared to about 16% of other Australian students" (Commonwealth of Australia, 1994b, p.24). These kinds of differences continue in secondary school (p.25).

As the *National Review* recognises, participation is not simply a matter of numbers. The lack of participation and academic achievement by Indigenous students as a whole is an indication of their sense of alienation from the school culture - an alienation which is also a reflection of an even broader context. Australian Indigenous peoples face far greater barriers than any other groups in Australian society with respect to access and equity in relation to the whole range of government services (Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1992). The impediments are not simply structural (p.5); historical and cultural factors form a constant background to any interactions between Indigenous people and people representing government institutions (*cf.* Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1994). Plain racism is a continuing problem; as the National Inquiry into Racist Violence found, it is evident amongst teachers and educational institutions just as in other members of society (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1991, p.348; *cf.* Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, 1991).

## Chapter 1

In the context of these wider indicators of alienation and discrimination, it is all the more clear that education must address root issues which are raising barriers between Indigenous students and potential opportunities to gain useful knowledge and skills. Two-way education has a key role both in empowering Indigenous students and communities and enlightening non-Indigenous teachers and students, but for this to happen on a comprehensive level it has to be made relevant to bidialectal and bilingual Indigenous people alike.

Up until the last couple of decades, government policies in Aboriginal Education were overtly assimilationist. With respect to language and literacy, the overriding concern was for all Indigenous students to acquire competence in oral and written Standard Australian English (SAE). An underlying assumption in many contexts was that they would become monolingual in SAE, at least outside their homes. The rationale behind this was ostensibly to equip Indigenous students to gain equal opportunities for participation in general Australian society.

There were two major problems with this approach. The first is that assimilationist assumptions are now seen to be unacceptable, from a moral and ethical point of view. As we will see, official policies have shifted dramatically in the direction of recognizing and valuing cultural and linguistic diversity. The second problem is that from a pragmatic point of view, assimilation simply did not work, because the denial of Indigenous linguistic and cultural identity in schools in fact inhibited Indigenous students' ability to acquire knowledge and skills of the dominant culture. Apart from the general situation of alienation mentioned above, this is most obvious in the case of many Indigenous students who have struggled through school simply because their schools have failed to recognise that English is not their mother tongue.

Bilingual programmes have been developed to address the needs of these students, although Commonwealth ESL funding for Indigenous students has only been available since 1984. Where such programmes have been initiated, for example in the Northern Territory, the main thrust of school systems has tended to be towards utilising bilingual programmes as stepping stones to monolingual English classrooms rather than to build up truly bilingual settings. However, policy-makers have recently become more aware of the importance of maintaining traditional Indigenous languages, both at Federal and State levels (see for example Goal 17 of the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy*; Commonwealth of Australia, 1989). The *National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* states categorically that "[l]anguage is an essential part of a person's identity and is of critical importance in the transmission of cultures" (Commonwealth of Australia, 1994b, p.32), and its recommendations follow accordingly.

Policy and practice with respect to Aboriginal English has tended to lag behind bilingual education. Around a decade ago, government reports began to recognise that Indigenous children who spoke an English dialect at home were also educationally disadvantaged - partly because of the lack of recognition of Aboriginal English as a true dialect with its own "distinctive speech patterns" (Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts, 1984, p.60). The recent *National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* provides a clear mandate for assistance to Indigenous ESL and "ESD" [*ie.* SESD] speakers, especially in view of the priority most Indigenous people themselves assign to their children's learning of English (p.33). It recommends

*That education providers identify those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander preschool, primary and secondary school students whose first language is Aboriginal English, a Kriol or an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language and ensure that they are provided with at least the same levels of literacy and English as a second language support and assistance provided to non-indigenous students whose first language is not English.*

(Commonwealth of Australia, 1995, Recommendation 25)

As with the earlier bilingual programmes, the emphasis has tended in the past to be upon acquisition of "mastery over the more formal varieties of English", to quote the *National Policy on Languages* (Lo Bianco, 1987, p.116). The *Australian Language and Literacy Policy* acknowledges that Aboriginal English 'has social values and cultural properties equivalent to those of Australian indigenous and creolised languages' (DEET, 1991, p.9), but it also states:

*For the purposes of the ALLP, Aboriginal English is regarded as a variety of Australian English, not as an Aboriginal language in need of maintenance. Children who speak Aboriginal English may need ESD methodologies to learn Standard Australian English.*

(DEET, 1991, p.10)

The distinguishing feature of the most recent Commonwealth documents addressing ESL/SESD concerns is that they place English competency in the context of other goals related to the maintenance and valuing of Indigenous culture and, equally fundamentally, Indigenous participation in educational decision-making.

The *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy* (AEP), endorsed jointly by all governments in 1989, was developed specifically "to achieve broad equity between Indigenous people and other Australians in access, participation and outcomes in all forms of education by the turn of the century" (Commonwealth of Australia, 1989, p.7). While the aim expressed is to ensure equality of opportunity, some people have perceived the intent of the AEP as assimilationist. However, the Task Force responsible for its development also stressed that

*the most challenging issue of all is to ensure education is available to all Aboriginal people in a manner that reinforces rather than suppresses their unique cultural identity.*

(Commonwealth of Australia, 1989, p.7)

Consequently, two of the Common Goals of the AEP relate to supporting the maintenance and use of Indigenous languages and enabling Indigenous students to appreciate their history, cultures and identity. Following on from the AEP, the National Review argues that compensatory measures [such as ESL teaching] to ensure numerical participation are not enough in themselves. Instead:

*A special effort must be made to ensure that education includes, rather than excludes the distinctive aspirations, needs, circumstances, knowledge and cultures of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders.*



(Commonwealth of Australia, 1994b, p.25).

Perhaps the most comprehensive expression of this ideal is found in the idea of "both ways", or "two ways" bilingual or bicultural education. This approach will be examined in more detail in Chapter 2, but for the present it is worth noting the strong official recognition of the concept in sources such as the AEP and the National Review:

*Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders argue strongly that their cultures, knowledge and values should be given equal respect and importance to those of non-indigenous Australia in education systems. They recognise the importance of the skills and knowledge that non-indigenous Australia has to offer but without a reciprocal recognition of their skills and knowledge, the education provided for them is incomplete and lacks cultural relevance. Their response has been the development of 'both ways' education systems. 'Both ways' education is an innovative approach that calls for equal respect for both indigenous languages, knowledge and ways of organising learning contexts, and for English language and knowledge-based learning in educational institutions.*

(Commonwealth of Australia, 1994b, p.45)

The rationale behind this approach is not only motivated by the need for more effective teaching practices and strategies. A central finding of the National Review is the need for Indigenous people to exercise self-determination in relation to educational decision-making, having input into the planning, delivery and evaluation of school education services.

In order to achieve these aims and others, the documents stress, first, the importance of having teachers and systems who are aware of and responsive to the needs and aspirations of Indigenous people. Various reviews have stressed the need for employment of teachers with more knowledge and experience of work with Indigenous students. The National Review recommends that, among other measures, employers of teaching staff should

- *provide inservice courses in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness, counter-racism and teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for all staff, especially those posted to institutions;*
- *give priority to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness and counter-racism courses in inservice professional development plans of all educators;*
- *give priority to the employment of teacher graduates who have completed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies courses as part of their teacher education course*

*(extract from Recommendation 11)*

With respect to language, as far back as 1984, the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts recommended

*that inservice training should be provided for teachers in schools with significant numbers of Aboriginal children. This training should include instruction about*

*'Aboriginal English' dialects and how they are different from Standard Australian English, and ESL/EFL and bidialectal teaching methodologies.*

(Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts, 1984, p.226)

A further measure in support of two-way education (and incidentally, one critical to the national goal of reconciliation), relates to education for non-indigenous students. The AEP aims "to provide all Australian students with an understanding of and respect for Aboriginal traditional and contemporary cultures" (Goal 21). The National Review recommends more specifically:

*That courses aimed at improving non-indigenous Australians' understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional and contemporary cultures be made a mandatory element of the curricula of courses at all levels of education.*

(Recommendation 27)

Such courses are of course valuable not only in the production of future teachers but in improving the relations between Indigenous students and their classroom peers and increasing Indigenous students' sense of their own value.

A third area of support for two-way education is research. The National Review (Commonwealth of Australia, 1994b, p.46) recommends funding of research into "local explorations of two-ways education models" and the funding of innovative proposals in education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It includes in this the trialing of local delivery of two way education and stresses the necessity of endorsement of research by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or organisations. Recommendation 33 of the Review also advocates the maintenance of databases on a number of indicators including information about literacy attainment levels and language spoken at home, in order to assess needs for ESL or bilingual education.

### ***Western Australian Government Policy***

As in other states, acknowledgment of the needs of ESL and SESD Indigenous students has come relatively recently, as a result of both changes in national policy and local initiatives. Goals of the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy* are being implemented through the Western Australian cross-sectoral *Aboriginal Education Strategic Plan* (Western Australian Strategic Planning Group, 1992) and thence through the *Aboriginal Education Operational Plan* (Ministry of Education, WA, 1993). Other local contributions include the Curriculum Review of ESL (Herriman, Oliver & Mulligan, 1990), the 1991 Social Justice Policy promulgated by the then Ministry of Education (which specifically promoted the concept of "two-way" bicultural education though not so much bilingual education), and the recent Task Force on Aboriginal Social Justice (1994).

We have already described the confusion of Western Australian teachers regarding Aboriginal English, highlighted by the Curriculum Review of ESL. In addition to language issues, the review also highlighted the need to enable teachers to address Indigenous learning styles and the role of bilingual and bicultural education in [English] language development (pp.114-

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121). As a result of such needs, the ESL review recommends training programmes for teachers, students and administrative staff (p.108).

The Western Australian Aboriginal Education Strategic Planning Group (1992) has confirmed the need in Western Australia for greater awareness by teachers of Indigenous culture in general. The Group reviewed Western Australian teacher education in 1990 and found that at that time there were no compulsory core units in Indigenous Studies in award courses in the State, except for the Aboriginal Studies major at Edith Cowan University. (1992, p.8). The Group agreed that compulsory curriculum units for all Teacher Education students must be "an absolute priority", and it recommended a strategy of employment preference for teachers with Aboriginal Studies units (p.11). This situation is slowly improving.

### *Departmental Initiatives in Indigenous ESL and Literacy*

The Education Department of Western Australia is implementing a number of programmes which have a bearing on Indigenous ESL and literacy, as laid down in the *Aboriginal Education Operational Plan 1993-1995* (1993), including programmes such as Aboriginal Studies and Aboriginal Languages. These are supported by professional development for teachers involved, with an emphasis until recently upon Aboriginal culture and learning styles. Five programmes of particular relevance to the present project are the *Critical Steps* Project, the *English Language and Numeracy* programme, the Aboriginal Education Specialist Teacher (AEST) Programme, the Homelands Project and the Language Nest Trial.

#### *Critical Steps*

Teaching of English as a Second Language to Indigenous school students takes place within the context of the *Critical Steps* project. Needs highlighted by this project in the area of Standard English as a Second Dialect were a particular catalyst for development of the present project, and hence we will describe the project in some detail.

The Aboriginal Education Operational Plan 1993-1995 defines the purpose of *Critical Steps* in the following way:

*The ESL programme is designed to facilitate the learning of Standard Australian English (SAE) by Aboriginal students who have an Aboriginal language or dialect as their first language. Aboriginal students should acquire both oral and written competency in SAE and develop a positive attitude towards SAE.*

Ministry of Education, WA (1993, p.64).

In practical terms, as outlined in the 1995 Update on the Critical Steps Project, the project aims

*“to empower teachers to address the particular needs of Indigenous students by helping teachers*

- *develop more appropriate teaching techniques*
- *identify and define the Aboriginal students' language background in order to inform programming*

- *gain a better understanding of Aboriginal culture and how it relates to Education*
- *to encourage greater support of ESL programmes in schools.”*

(Critical Steps Update, 1995)

The project was initiated by the ESL Unit, and now runs collaboratively across the Student Support Branch (the ESL unit and Priority Country Areas Programme), the Aboriginal Education Branch, District Education Offices and the schools. Formal involvement of the ESL Unit in Indigenous Education began in 1990, in response to the State Curriculum Review of ESL (Herriman, Oliver & Mulligan, 1990) and the change to incorporation by Commonwealth Programme guidelines of Indigenous students into the National Equity Programme in Schools (NEPS) funding category. Initially, the ESL unit appointed a School Development Officer to assist students in the Kimberley and Kalgoorlie Education Districts, and then an additional officer was appointed to the Kimberley in 1991. These officers worked collaboratively with the school staff to address the needs of NESB Indigenous students.

As a result of the effectiveness of these programmes, demand increased and the programme was progressively expanded, in the form of *Critical Steps*. Currently, *Critical Steps* employs a centrally-based ESL/Aboriginal officer to assist schools and oversee the running of the project. The programme services the Goldfields and the Kimberley Education Districts, providing each District with a School Development Officer and visiting teachers. The officers continue to work collaboratively with school communities, working in classrooms with teachers and collecting, collating and distributing effective strategies identified by the teachers. They also function as networkers and providers of professional development in ESL and, more latterly, SESD.

*Critical Steps* addresses the needs of Indigenous students learning English as a Second Language as well as [Standard] English as a Second Dialect by focussing on points of transition in schooling which have been identified as particularly difficult for these students. These "critical steps" are from

- Pre-school to year 1 (Entry to formal schooling)
- Year 4 to Year 5 (Transition to senior primary)
- Year 7 to Year 8 (Transition to high school)
- Year 11 to Year 12 (Transition to post-compulsory)

In 1994/1995, 2899 Indigenous students were being assisted through this programme, some of whom spoke Kriol as their first language, and others who speak Aboriginal English as their first language/dialect. Because of the lack of awareness of English-based speech varieties, to which we referred above, the actual proportions of speakers of these varieties are presently unknown. Many of the targeted students live in isolated communities and have a high degree of transience. Many of the teachers involved in the programme are recent graduates, and few have pre-service training in ESL or SESD methodology.

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### *English Language and Numeracy Programme for Aboriginal Students (ELAN)*

ELAN supports implementation of the mainstream K-7 language and literacy programme, *First Steps*, in schools with a significant enrolment of Aboriginal students. The programme incorporates activities designed to correspond to Indigenous learning styles. The *First Steps* developmental continua are used to map children's development in reading, writing, spelling and oral language.

### *Aboriginal Education Specialist Teachers (AEST) Programme*

The AEST Programme is a collaborative teaching model where classroom teachers have the support of a coordinator to address the learning outcomes of Aboriginal students through action research on cross-curriculum literacy, ESL, SESD and cultural understandings in their classrooms.

### *Homelands Project*

The Homelands Project is designed to produce culturally appropriate materials in homeland and outstation communities who do not have access to schools. It aims to establish an effective mode of delivery and improve the significance of education in Aboriginal homeland and outstation communities.

### *The Language Nest Trial*

A new project is trial of "Language Nests" currently taking place in three Aboriginal preschools in the Pilbara. This initiative is in response to the Task Force on Aboriginal Social Justice (1994) recommendation on adapting the Te Kahango Reo concept from New Zealand.

### *Catholic Education Commission Policy and Initiatives*

The Catholic Education Commission deals with a large number of Indigenous students whose first language is not Standard Australian English, particularly in its schools in the Kimberley. Its policy on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, developed on the initiative of regional Catholic Education Aboriginal Committees, clearly affirms the importance of recognising Indigenous culture and language in Catholic schools (Catholic Education Commission of WA, 1994). It is a contributor along with the other education providers to the Western Australian *Aboriginal Education Strategic Plan*, but it has also led the way in developing policies and programmes to deal with Indigenous bilingual students and, more latterly, students whose first language is Kriol or an Aboriginal English dialect.

Specific initiatives include provision of an ESL teacher in each of the Kimberley schools, and Resource Files aimed at making the curriculum more appropriate to the context. "Two-Way", bilingual and bicultural, learning is central to the philosophy of education guiding Kimberley Catholic Schools, and inservicing of teachers into the concept takes place accordingly. (For details, see Kimberley Catholic Education Language Team, 1988).

An innovative Professional Development course, *Fostering English Language in Kimberley Schools (FELIKS)* ; Catholic Education Office, Kimberley, 1994), has recently been developed by the Catholic Education Office in Broome to train teachers for the teaching of

Standard Australian English to Indigenous children who are speakers of Kriol and/or Aboriginal English. While the teaching of Standard Australian English as a second dialect is the primary aim, *FELIKS* aims to encourage the multilingual/multidialectal facilities which Indigenous children have often already gained in their own communities. Once teachers put their *FELIKS* training into practice, their students should become able to code-switch between Standard Australian English, Kriol and Aboriginal English according to the appropriateness of their use in different contexts.

There has been a useful exchange of ideas and strategies between staff of the present project and *FELIKS*, and some of the professional development strategies are similar. The *FELIKS* professional development package explains what Kriol and Aboriginal English are and how they differ from Standard Australian English in sounds, grammar, vocabulary and social usage, and it provides examples of the communication breakdowns which occur as a result of these differences. Teachers are provided with strategies for helping their students to discriminate between the two languages/dialects and to develop competence in Standard Australian English.

## **1.2.2 Edith Cowan University and Indigenous Education**

Preceding sections of this chapter have demonstrated the increasing awareness of Western Australian Indigenous students' needs and the efforts of the school sector to address them. We turn now to the developments at Edith Cowan University which contributed to the present project.

### ***General background***

From the perspective of project members from Edith Cowan University, the impetus for the present project arose out of an ongoing involvement in teaching and research both by and for Indigenous people. As well as its ongoing programmes for the training of teachers of Indigenous students, the university has a history of programmes for Indigenous students themselves, dating back to the 1974 inception of the Aboriginal Teacher Education Programme and currently including programmes such as the Aboriginal University Orientation course and the Rotating Regional Centre Programme.

There is a strong emphasis on consultation with Indigenous people both within and outside the university community. All of the university's programmes relating to Indigenous people, including research, teaching and other special programmes, are overseen by an Aboriginal Consultative Council (ACC). The ACC consists of thirteen Indigenous members from all regions of WA and includes one Torres Strait Islander representative.

### ***Educational Initiatives***

Edith Cowan University runs a number of courses in Aboriginal Education, Aboriginal Studies, and Aboriginal language studies. Some of these courses involve field trips to Indigenous communities and schools.

Kurongkurl Katitjin School of Indigenous Australian Studies and the Department of Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies offer courses in Indigenous Studies to both Indigenous

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and non-Indigenous students. Kurongkurl Katitjin offers an Aboriginal Cultural Studies minor, while the Department of Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies offers the Associate Diploma and Bachelor of Arts (Pass degree and Honours), the Graduate Diploma of Arts in Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies, and the postgraduate research degrees of Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy.

Indigenous Education is a specialisation of the Department of Teaching and Curriculum Studies, in the Faculty of Education. Studies in Aboriginal Education are an integral component of the compulsory core of the Bachelor of Arts (Education) and the Bachelor of Education, and postgraduate students are supervised in Indigenous Australian research topics.

The Language Studies Department has offered an Aboriginal Language Studies minor since the early 1980s. A Ngaanyatjarra intensive language course was conducted in January this year. The University's initiatives in Indigenous linguistics include projects such as "Teach yourself Wangkatja", the first audio-visual self instructional course in an Indigenous Australian language, and the Nyungar language revival course and publications developed through the Bunbury Campus.

The University has had a considerable involvement in Distance Education, both for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Provision of inservice *in situ*, along the lines of the course developed through this project is therefore a natural extension of its activities.

### ***Indigenous staff***

Kurongkurl Katitjin ("coming together to learn") was created in July 1994 as an extension of the scope of the former Department of Aboriginal Programmes. Indigenous people make up a clear majority of the staff. As well as running its own programmes, Kurongkurl Katitjin provides assistance to other Departments running programmes relevant to Indigenous education. The Head of Kurongkurl Katitjin, Associate Professor Simon Forrest, is a member of the team conducting the present project. Indigenous staff are also employed in other Departments including the Department of Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies.

### ***Research***

A number of staff at Edith Cowan University conduct research in the areas of Indigenous language and Indigenous education. The research mentioned here is by those staff members directly involved with the present project.

Ian Malcolm's research into Aboriginal English forms the basis for methodology and input in the present project. A brief description of his work in this area can be found in Chapter 2. Some of the other research projects to which he has recently contributed include:

- an examination of the relationship between language and culture in the Australian Public Service as it affects the interaction between APS officers and clients of non-English speaking (NESB) and Indigenous backgrounds, with a view to improving access and equity ;
- oversight of a review of Australian Indigenous language development and maintenance needs and activities;

- a study of linguistic and cultural factors affecting communication between non-English speaking background students and Edith Cowan University staff.

Dr Metcalfe's research centres on Indigenous linguistics, anthropology and education. He is presently developing a Bardi dictionary with reversal and semantic categories.

Dr Partington's past and current research includes:

- Indigenous and non-Indigenous students' interpretations of classroom events;
- linguistic and social relationships between teachers and pupils of Indigenous descent;
- Special Aboriginal Schools teaching practice.
- Teachers' and students' views of school discipline procedures.

Associate Professor Forrest collaborated with Dr Partington on the study of students' interpretations of classroom events. Other projects to which he has contributed include:

- a joint research project with the National Trust of Australia (WA) to research the Indigenous Histories of two National Trust properties in the South-West of the state.
- a project investigating reasons for the retention rate of Indigenous students at Edith Cowan University
- a cooperative research project between the Geraldton Regional Community Education Centre, the Education Department of WA and Edith Cowan University, contributing to a national project into the alienation of children in the middle school years.

### ***Links with the Department of Education Student Support Branch***

The present project emerged particularly as a result of links between Edith Cowan staff and the ESL Unit of the Department of Education's Student Support Branch. Ian Malcolm has been a member of the NESB Advisory Committee since its inception in 1992. This representative committee was formed to advise and support the delivery of educational services to NESB students, and in this capacity it has also tackled the needs of ESL and SESD Indigenous students.

## **1.3 Project Overview**

### **1.3.1 Aims**

The two fundamental aims of the present project were:

- 1) To help teachers better to understand Aboriginal English and to see, through it, distinctively Indigenous ways of approaching experience and knowledge.
- 2) To help teachers, through the principle of two-way education, to develop the capacity to provide learning experiences which exploit Indigenous ways of



organising and expressing knowledge while also promoting the appropriate use of standard English as a second dialect by Indigenous learners.

### **1.3.2 Intended Outcomes**

In order to pursue the above aims, the project was set up to achieve the following specific outcomes:

- a) Development of a course module, “Language and Communication Enhancement for Two-Way Education” as an ongoing provision both within academic courses of Edith Cowan University and within professional development activities for the Education Department of Western Australia, the Catholic Education Commission, and perhaps other clients nation-wide.
- b) Skills, awareness raising and assistance towards higher qualifications and accelerated advancement for the 20 participating teachers
- c) Demonstration of the feasibility, or otherwise, of developing a research-base in applied linguistics for two-way education for Indigenous students.

As we will discuss in Chapter 5, the project in fact yielded two new units and a new Graduate Certificate course.

### **1.3.3 Methodological Philosophy**

The implementation of the project was characterised by an emphasis on Action Research, participation by Indigenous people, and collaboration between institutions involved in Indigenous Education. While the collaborative aspect has been mentioned at other points in this Chapter, the other two emphases are worth a brief discussion.

#### *Action Research*

A central feature of this project was its use of an action research approach to educating and assisting teachers. Changes in teaching practice and curriculum tend to be difficult to achieve when they require changes in teachers' values or their style of interaction with students, as in the case of the present project. Cause and effect is often unclear, and the time and effort required may appear too costly for gains which are only dimly perceived. Action research overcomes this by providing a solid foundation of planning, monitoring, measuring and revising classroom practice and curriculum developments.

The action research cycle involves reflection on the issues to be addressed, followed by observation and data gathering and then modifications to the setting in order to improve practice. Further observation is made of the impact of the change to see if more modifications are needed. This approach to change can provide the teacher with a process which enables control over the situation. Teachers can clearly see what effects they are having and acquire a sense of the value of their new approaches.

The teachers who participated in the present project received direct input on Aboriginal English and Indigenous ways of thinking and learning. This provided the basis for their own

discovery through action research of the reality of Aboriginal English in their own context, which in turn motivated changes in attitudes and recognition of Aboriginal English in the classroom. The systematic nature of Aboriginal English could be seen first hand, not only in their own school but across the spectrum represented in the project. In addition, identification of specific linguistic data provided a sound basis on which changes could be made in teaching practices and curriculum.

### *Indigenous participation*

Fundamental to the idea of "two-way" education is the recognition of Indigenous people as both decision-makers and resource persons in themselves. In recognition of the importance of Indigenous ownership of their dialect and what is done with it, an Indigenous academic was one of the members of the research team, and participating non-Indigenous teachers were encouraged to work in association with Aboriginal Education Workers attached to their schools in carrying out their action research.

### **1.3.4 Who was Involved**

As has been noted at the beginning of this chapter, the project was developed collaboratively by the Education Department of Western Australia and Edith Cowan University, through the NESB Advisory Committee of the Education Department. The Catholic Education Commission also took part, mainly in a supportive role.

#### *Edith Cowan University*

The present project was a logical extension of the ongoing research and training activities in Indigenous language and education at Edith Cowan University which were described above.

Edith Cowan staff who were involved on the Research Team included Project Director, Ian Malcolm (Professor of Applied Linguistics); Dr Toby Metcalfe (lecturer in the areas of Indigenous education and linguistics); Associate Professor Simon Forrest (Kurongkurl Katitjin); Dr Gary Partington (Lecturer in Multicultural Education); and three research assistants (Terry Wooltorton, Paul O'Malley and Alison Hill).

Considerable ongoing effort was made to obtain an Indigenous research assistant, but the person appointed was unfortunately unable to continue with the project due to unforeseen external circumstances.

#### *Education Department of WA*

The Education Department of Western Australia contributed

- access to schools for research;
- a cohort of 18 teachers for the pilot programme;
- release of participating teachers for two blocks of 1 week's intensive training and for 2 days in vacation and professional development time respectively;
- consultancy with respect to course design.

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The research team itself included two Education Officers from the ESL Unit of the Education Department: Yvonne Haig and Patricia Konigsberg. These team members took responsibility for much of the liaison between the research team and the participating teachers, including initial representation to regional offices, selection of schools and contacting of potential participants.

### *Catholic Education Commission*

Previous cooperation between staff of Edith Cowan University, the Education Department and the Catholic Education in the development of professional inservice such as the *FELIKS* programme (see section 1.2.1 above) continued through the interest of the Catholic Education Commission in the present project. A teacher from a secondary Catholic school was originally to take part in the project, and recordings were made of the speech of Indigenous students at the school. Unfortunately involvement of the school could not be taken further due to unforeseen changes in staffing. However, Ms Aileen Hawkes of the Catholic Education Commission contributed to meetings of the research team as the Commission representative.

### *Participating Teachers and Schools*

The project aimed to train around twenty teachers from ten schools. After some teachers were forced by external circumstances to withdraw, the project was left with 9 schools and 18 teachers who followed the project through to completion.

Participating teachers were selected on the basis that their schools represented:

- 1) a variety of regions of Western Australia
- 2) regions where it was anticipated that a stabilised variety of Aboriginal English would be spoken.
- 3) areas where Indigenous languages or heavy creole would not be strongly present
- 4) areas of some geographic separation so that the data gathered would reveal to the teachers both the *consistency* of Aboriginal English across the state and some of the *regional variants*

Throughout this report, the schools represented are referred to by names indicating the main group of Indigenous people in their regions, with the exception of “Perth Metro”, a state school in Perth, where people from many different backgrounds live. We have adopted spellings which are in common use, although it should be noted that there is variation within regions with respect to pronunciation and therefore spellings. The names given to the other nine state schools which commenced the project are: Nyungar1, Nyungar2, Nyungar3, Wongi1, Wongi2, Yamatji1, Yamatji2, Jyugan School and Bardi School. The teacher at Bardi School unfortunately had to withdraw after the data collection process.

While the project aimed to target recent graduates (though graduates with some experience of teaching Indigenous children), some of those who participated in this pilot project had many years of experience in Indigenous education. Four of the 18 participating teachers were ELAN teachers (see section 1.2.1 above). All of the teachers contributed a substantial commitment of time and effort, including giving up a week of their holidays for intensive instruction and spending many hours on the gathering, transcription and analysis of linguistic

data and the development of new curriculum materials and teaching approaches. In spite of this requirement, the number of requests from potential participants was well in excess of the places available - evidence in itself of the degree to which teachers were anxious for help in this area.

The teachers themselves benefited from the project in several ways:

- 1) Professional Development to improve their competence in providing two-way education to Indigenous students.
- 2) Ongoing consultancy as required with experts in Aboriginal English and curriculum.
- 3) Action Research Packs for analysing their students' English and developing two-way curricula.
- 4) Credit, as approved by Edith Cowan University, towards post-graduate awards.

In addition, their travel and accommodation for in-service sessions were subsidised.

### **1.3.5 Project Structure**

A complete timeline for the project is included in Appendix 1. The project took place over one year and fell into four main overlapping phases: research, mentoring, course development and project evaluation and reporting.

#### ***Modelling Research***

During this phase, the Research Team selected and contacted the schools and teachers, undertook literature searches and then visited schools to collect data, transcribed and analysed the data and constructed collection and analysis tools which could be used by the teachers in their turn. The Team followed an action research process themselves as they trialed materials and modified them for use by the teachers.

#### ***Mentoring Teachers***

This phase involved the teachers in a concentrated week of training at Edith Cowan University during the mid-year vacation, followed by further individual study and action research in their own schools. Mentors from the research team assisted them as they put into practice in their classrooms their new understandings of Aboriginal English and Bidialectal Education. As part of this process, they used the procedures developed by the Team to conduct their own linguistic research in interviews with their students. They also developed and trialed bidialectal strategies and materials in their own classrooms. Further inservice in their own regions in October provided them with the opportunity to present the outcomes of their work and submit material for assessment. At the end of the year, teachers were thanked for their involvement and provided with an indication as to the university credit which their efforts had earned them.

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### *Course Development*

Two new units were developed on the basis of team members' input into the mid-year inservice as well as the action research work packages in Aboriginal English and Bidialectal Education which the teachers completed. These are:

LST4144 Aboriginal English

EDU4569 Two Way Learning and Bidialectal Education

These have proceeded through the course approval process at Edith Cowan University and are now ready for implementation in External mode in second semester of 1996. Along with two other units, they will constitute a Graduate Certificate of Arts in Language Studies (Aboriginal), and they will also be available in a Graduate Diploma of Arts in Language Studies (Teaching Standard English as a Second Language).

### *Project Evaluation and Reporting*

The collation of material and writing of this report took place during the first half of 1995. As was mentioned at the beginning of the report, it is hoped that this report will serve a dual function, providing necessary information for accountability, as well as a guide for those wishing to undertake future professional development in this area.

Evaluation was ongoing during the project, particularly to provide input into further phases of the cycle of action research. The main formal evaluations during the course of the project relied upon participant responses to evaluation sheets after the two inservices. Assessment of teachers' work was also taken into account.

The project was particularly successful in raising teacher awareness as to the reality of the dialect spoken by their children. Out of this awareness flowed changed ways of listening to the children as well as new strategies for teaching and assessing them. Although not all participating teachers were able to complete the formal requirements which would have earned them course credit (usually because of the other pressures of teaching commitments), all teachers involved in the project gained significant skills and understandings. Team work and support from the school Principal were also shown to have a significant influence on the ability of teachers to put into practice what they had learned.

Perhaps the most significant and encouraging outcome, evident in the feedback received from teachers, was their desire to share with other teachers the importance of the new knowledge which they had gained. Judging by the continued increase in professional development requests since the completion of the project, a chain reaction of increasing awareness and desire to pursue new strategies has already been set in motion.

# CHAPTER 2: ABORIGINAL ENGLISH AND EDUCATION

In this chapter, we will draw upon the research on Aboriginal English to provide an introduction to the nature and usage of the dialect. We will then describe the context of bidialectal education, particularly as it relates to Aboriginal English. While there are some analogies with bilingual education, we will see that bidialectal education, especially when it aims to promote two-way learning, requires a slightly different approach.

## 2.1 Aboriginal English

### 2.1.1 Definition

Aboriginal English can be simply defined as:

a range of varieties of English spoken by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and some others in close contact with them which differ in systematic ways from Standard Australian English at all levels of linguistic structure and which are used for distinctive speech acts, speech events and genres.

Aboriginal English is a dialect of English, and so it shares many features with Standard Australian English (SAE). But there are also many features which are not shared with SAE, and which may in fact be shared with Indigenous languages or Indigenous creole languages.

As a dialect, Aboriginal English is systematic, governed by its own linguistic rules. But since it is also *non-standard* (that is, not *codified*); there may be considerable variation from place to place, person to person, or even within the speech of an individual. There are many varieties of Aboriginal English in different parts of Australia but we will refer to them as a single dialect, since they share key features not only at all levels of linguistic structure but in the ways they are used.

Because it is a non-standard dialect, known to belong to a group of people outside the dominant group in Australian society, Aboriginal English may be stigmatized by speakers of Standard Australian English (and even sometimes by speakers of Aboriginal English themselves, if they have internalised some of the norms of the dominant culture). This is related to the fact that Aboriginal English is not just a collection of alternative forms for saying the same things as the equivalent Standard English forms; it is a marker of Indigenous identity. It has been maintained as a distinct variety because it is particularly suited to embodying what Indigenous people want to say to one another in an Indigenous context, adapting and using English to express an Indigenous world view (*cf.* Malcolm, 1995). As a result, Aboriginal English is integrally related the identity and culture of Indigenous people.

It should be noted that Aboriginal English is systematically different from Standard Australian English at *all* levels; it is not just a matter of accent or speech production. Aboriginal speakers are not speaking Aboriginal English if they are simply using a different phonology; they may well be speaking Standard Australian English with an Aboriginal accent. A more detailed linguistic definition of Aboriginal English can be found in Kaldor and Malcolm (1985, p.225).

Finally, it can be seen that we are using Standard Australian English as the chief referent when describing the distinctiveness of Australian Aboriginal English. SAE has been loosely described as "that dialect which is spoken by native-born non-Aboriginal Australians" (Collins & Blair, 1989, p.xii), but for the purposes of this project, we are focussing particularly on variation from the *grapholect* (written dialect) of SAE. As Ong (1982, p.108) notes, it is the grapholect, in the case of a language having a written form, which is used as the norm for popular judgements of what is "correct" grammar and usage, and acquisition of the grapholect (in this case, of English) tends to be the chief concern in a Western educational context. (Not surprisingly, of course, the grapholect also happens to be closest to the dialects of those who have the most power and status in a society). Furthermore, Ong argues that the resources of a grapholect are considerable in comparison to purely oral dialects, because it preserves the sharing of consciousness of millions of persons not only in the present but from the past, in ways that are simply not possible in an oral medium. While the relative merits of oral-based versus literary-based cultures are a matter of keen debate, it is clear that the desire for Indigenous children to gain a truly two-way education - including access to "secret English" (see below) - focuses on the grapholect of English. Connections between dialect and education will be further discussed below.

## 2.1.2 Historical origins of Aboriginal English

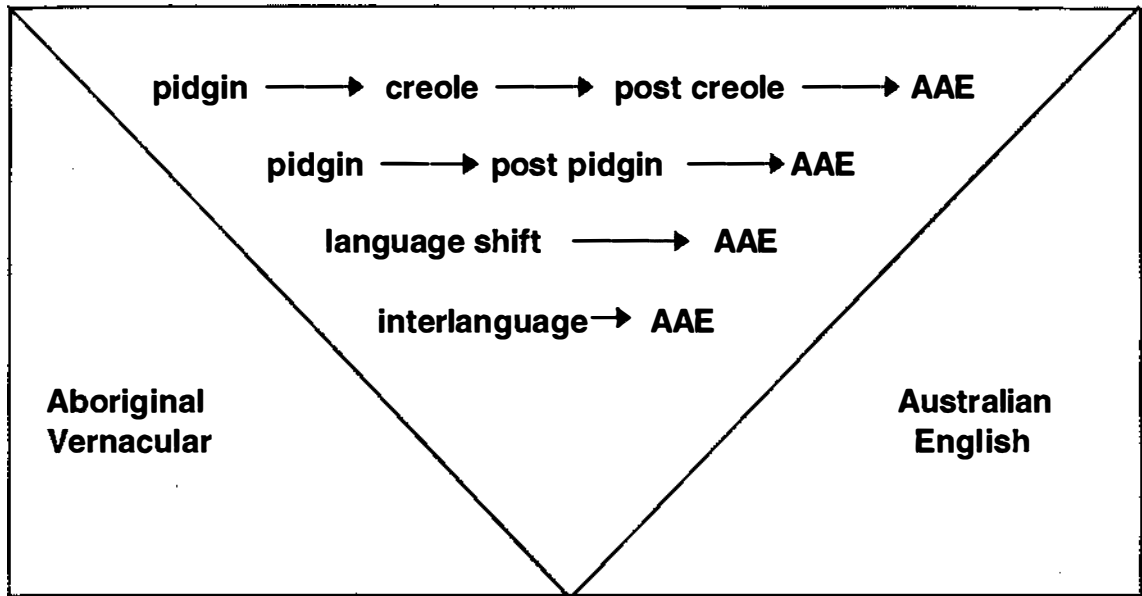
Aboriginal English varieties have historically arisen out of highly diverse processes working independently or in combination with one another. These processes include:

- 1) processes of pidginization/creolization/decreolization following language contact - particularly in Northern communities (Kaldor & Malcolm, 1991; Sharpe, 1975).
- 2) processes of pidginization and depidginization in communities where creoles did not develop.
- 3) the residual effect of language shift in communities where indigenous languages are no longer spoken (*cf.* Donaldson, 1985).
- 4) interlanguage construction by individuals learning English as a second language in contexts where indigenous languages are spoken.

Like other varieties of English, Aboriginal English has been affected by language transfer at various stages of its development. The sources from which transfer has occurred at one or more of the levels of linguistic structure include:

- other varieties of English, both standard and non-standard, as well as temporal dialects (that is, words and structures which are no longer used by other speakers of Australian English)
- traditional Indigenous languages
- creoles.

These processes are summarized in Figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1: Possible antecedents of Australian Aboriginal English**

(Adapted from Malcolm, 1994b, p.6)

Aboriginal English is often confused with pidgins and creoles, so we need to clearly distinguish between them. While Aboriginal English, as we have seen, developed out of numerous different historical processes and situations, pidgins and creoles arise in quite specific circumstances. A *pidgin* is a contact language developed to make possible communication between speakers of mutually unintelligible languages. It is a simplified code (Mühlhäusler, 1974), adapted to meeting the immediate communication requirements of crosscultural exchange, but not spoken as a mother tongue by either party. Pidgins lack the full complexity of grammar and vocabulary which a language requires to adequately service all the interactive and expressive needs of a cultural group.

In communities which brought together Indigenous people from a number of mutually unintelligible languages, pidgins grew into complex new languages to meet the communicative needs of children who grew up speaking pidgin as a first language at home (J.W. Harris, 1991; Mühlhäusler, 1991). Such a new language is known as a *creole*. In the north of Australia today, many Indigenous Australian people speak a creole language such as Kriol as well as other languages, sometimes including Standard Australian English. In these areas, Aboriginal English developed as part of a continuum between the creole language and relatively standard forms of English (Kaldor and Malcolm, 1991). In the south, however, where contact with the English-speaking community was more continuous, it is likely that Aboriginal English developed without the intermediate process of creolization or even, in some cases, pidginization, though it would have been influenced indirectly by pidgin and creole through other varieties.

There is a difference between the ways in which Aboriginal English and creoles are perceived and used by their speakers. Australian creoles are generally spoken only between creole-speaking Indigenous people and often identified, though not always, as separate from English.



In contrast, Aboriginal English is usually identified by Indigenous people as a form of English, and although its primary use is as a medium of communication between Indigenous people, it is commonly in evidence in a less broad form in communication of Indigenous speakers with non-Indigenous people.

### 2.1.3 Contemporary varieties of Aboriginal English

Aboriginal English is often viewed as a continuum from creoles to SAE. But as Kaldor and Malcolm (1991, p.72) point out, many varieties do not fit easily on such a continuum - which is not so surprising when we consider the range of historical processes described above. Instead, there may be a number of continua accounting for variety in Aboriginal English, according to geography; town/camp differences; sociolectal considerations; second-language interlanguage; developmental/acquisitional continua; stylistic continua, and so on.

The relationships between different languages and forms of speech used by Indigenous people are represented in Figure 2.2. This diagram attempts to show that Aboriginal English is the product of many linguistic influences and that it may be spoken with a “heavier” (*ie.* more creole-orientated) or a “higher” (more standard English orientated) style by the individual speaker, according to the situation. It may also be subject to transfer from varieties of English or Indigenous vernaculars within the repertoires of the speakers.

In the classroom, teachers will therefore find forms of Aboriginal English reflecting a wide variety of backgrounds. Kaldor & Malcolm (1982, p.78) note that they may encounter Indigenous students:

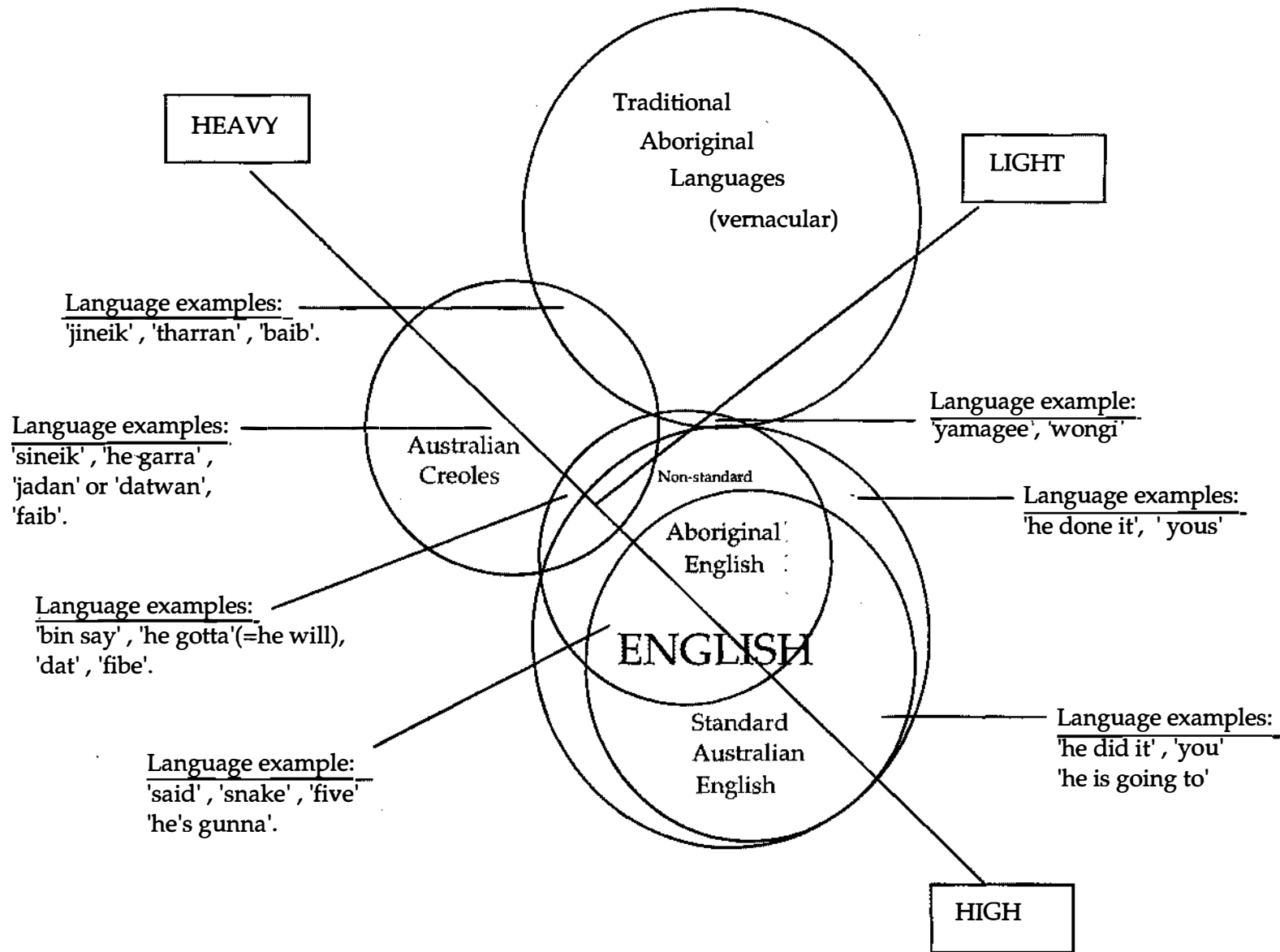
- whose mother tongue (dominant language) is an Indigenous Australian language
- whose mother tongue is a creole (Kriol) variety
- whose mother tongue is a variety of Aboriginal English located on a continuum between creole and SAE
- whose mother tongue is SAE
- who are bilingual / bidialectal in any combination of the above languages / dialects.

### 2.1.4 Linguistic features of Aboriginal English

The features described below are taken from a variety of sources, including Kaldor and Malcolm (1982, 1985, 1991), Harkins (1994), Koch (1985), and the present project. As we hinted above and will discuss below, the unique formal features of Aboriginal English are not simply due to mechanical transfer of the forms of Indigenous Australian languages. They exist because they serve the function of expressing a different way of seeing reality.

#### a) *Phonological*

Australian Aboriginal English makes use of a different phonemic system from that of SAE. For example, it does not put phonemic boundaries in the same places as SAE and may not distinguish between some sounds which are distinct in SAE. Most, but not all, of these



**Figure 2.2: Aboriginal Language Use**

(Source: Ian Malcolm & Patricia Konigsberg, in consultation with Joyce Hudson)

## Chapter 2

differences can be traced to the differences between the sound systems of Indigenous languages and Standard English. Common features include:

- i) With respect to consonants: interchangeability of certain fricatives, affricates and stops, grouping of voiced and unvoiced equivalents - *eg.* "pinish" (finish); "shase" (chase); "dat" (that); "dock" (dog)
- ii) Simplification of interposition in consonant clusters - *eg.* "mitter" (mister); "emiya" (emu)
- iii) Variable use of initial /h/ - *eg.* "Hauntie 'Ellen" (Auntie Helen)
- iv) Wider allophonic range of some vowels than in SAE
- v) Absence of some word-initial consonants and vowels which would be used in standard forms - *eg.* "we'as" (we was); "bout" (about)
- vi) Reduction of the second element in some diphthongs.

### **b) Grammatical**

Some features of the systems of Aboriginal English are governed by less complex rules than the corresponding forms for Standard English, while others are more complex. These patterns may reflect the structures of Indigenous Australian languages, although as we pointed out earlier, some also reflect other historical processes such as pidginization, creolization and second-language learning. In Chapter 3 we will introduce three processes, simplification, nativization and transfer, to sum these up. Common features include:

- i) Distinctive markers of plurality - *eg.* use of expressions such as *lots, big mob, alla*, instead of the SE plural marker -s.
- ii) Possession expressed by juxtaposition of possessor and possessed, rather than use of SE -'s or possessive pronouns.
- iii) Use of a broader range of pronouns than the Standard English system to enable greater specification (see Kriol-influenced forms mentioned below). Use of the invariant third person pronoun `e (for *he, she, it*)
- iv) Insertion of pronouns after subjects.
- v) Differences in spatial marking, as shown in the use of distinctive preposition and adverb forms and distributions.
- vi) Non-use or variant use of articles.
- vii) Morphological and functional distinctiveness from SAE with respect to the expression of verb tense, person and aspect.
- viii) Expression of negation through negating the noun rather than, or in addition to, the verb and through emphatic forms, *eg. never, naah.*
- ix) Marking of questions by intonation or tags (*eg. init?*), rather than by use of auxiliaries and subject-verb inversion.

Some features are particular to specific areas. For example:

- ii) Kriol- influenced pronouns, - *eg.* highly specific forms used instead of the Standard English form *us*: "minyu" (me and you), "mintupala" (the two of us, excluding you), "mela" (several of us excluding you), and so on.
- iii) Alternative question word formations
- iv) Post-clausal extension with adjective - *eg.* *she 'ad little bike, yellow one.*
- v) Marking of transitive verbs (*ie* verbs having an object) - *eg.* "we seeim buffalo"
- vi) Use of "bin" as a past tense marker or a verb. Use of "did" as past tense marker.
- vii) "Gotta" used to mark future tense, or in place of *with*.
- viii) Distinctive suffixes to mark possession - *eg.* "Michael-for father" (Michael's father)
- ix) Use of the expression " 'e got" in the sense of *there is* - *eg.* " 'e got big long school there"
- x) Use of "One" as indefinite article - *eg.* "we was talking to one Wongai".
- xi) Omission of copula (various forms) - *eg.* "What your name?" "that not a cow"
- xii) Use of "la" or "longa" in locative or allative function - *eg.* "go la nother tree".

### c) *Vocabulary / Semantics*

Aboriginal English contains many words not found in Standard Australian English. They originate out of a number of different processes:

- i) Compounding of nouns - *eg.* "fire-smoke", "eye-glasses".
- ii) Adoption of bound morphemes from Indigenous Australian languages - *eg.* "Ronku brother" (Ron's brother).
- iii) Inclusion of own derivational suffix, such as use of "time" to modify nouns or form adverbial expressions - *eg.* "long time", "all-time".
- iv) Neologisms formed from English words *eg.* "ownlation" (own relation)
- v) Transfers of words from Indigenous Australian languages, creole or from English via Indigenous Australian languages

There are also semantic differences evident in individual words which appear to be the same in Standard Australian English and Aboriginal English. For example:

<i>Word form</i>	<i>SAE translation</i>	<i>Abl E translation</i>
"dust"	remove dust	overtake
"half"	half	a piece/part
"law"	(unspecified) law	Aboriginal law
"solid"	heavy	highly acceptable
"language"	(unspecified) language	Aboriginal language

This surface similarity causes a significant problem of "transparency", as Sandefur (1991) refers to it in his discussion of Kriol. It is common for teachers and other speakers of Standard Australian English to mistakenly believe that they are having no problems understanding what Aboriginal English speakers are saying - and vice versa. Harkins (1994, p.182) also discusses this problem under the heading of "the pseudointelligibility trap". Embarrassing examples of the results of this process are amply described in the *FELIKS* materials (1993; see below) and *Langwij comes to school* (McRae, 1994).

The issue of meaning is much broader than this, however. Harkins (1994, Ch 6) presents a detailed discussion of the issue of semantics in the use of English by Indigenous people at Alice Springs. She makes a useful distinction between form and meaning, and notes that there are four possible relationships between the two. The first is where two groups (Indigenous and non-Indigenous speakers) use the same form with the same meaning. The second is the use of the same form with a different meaning, as in the examples above. The third is where a different form is used for the same meaning (Harkins' example is "*them horses*" for "*those horses*", p.147). The fourth case is where a different form is used for a different meaning, as in the case of the dual pronouns. It is the clearest example of the meeting of two very different world views, where the English has had to be adapted in order to express a meaning which is otherwise untranslatable.

Harkins mentions a variety of ways in which the people at Alice Springs adapt English to fit it into their traditional classificatory systems. For example, cases of "same form, different meaning" may be due to extension of the English term to cover a different range or scope of meaning. Amongst other words, Harkins (1994, pp.148-149) mentions the use of *fire* to cover not only fire, but firewood (lit or unlit), firesticks, matches and electric heaters - indicating a semantic field common to Arrernte and Luritja. Another example is the categorization of things in the natural environment which are grouped according to their relation to people, rather than standard English taxonomies (eg. *meat* = 'live game' or 'meat'; p.150). On the other hand, Harkins reports that Indigenous speakers often compound English words (eg. *rain-water* vs *flood-water*) to achieve greater specificity approximating the use of terms in their Indigenous language systems (p.154).

We have concentrated on the examples of individual words, but as Harkins (1994, p.169) shows, the interactions of form and meaning take place at the syntactical level as well. And broader still, it influences the use of language in the broader context, such as the selection of particular forms for particular people or situations. This takes us into the realms of discourse features and sociolinguistics.

### 2.1.5 Discourse and Sociolinguistic features

The realm of speech use with respect to Aboriginal English is a vast one which is only beginning to be described and can only be touched upon here. What is clear is that, as with the features of Aboriginal English described so far, there is much continuity to be observed here between Aboriginal English and traditional Indigenous languages. We will look firstly at aspects of discourse.

### *Discourse in Aboriginal English*

There is a wide range of forms of discourse in Aboriginal English, reflecting both the heritage of traditional oral genres and the innovations of contemporary Aboriginal English speakers as they adapt to new situations. Various elements of Aboriginal English discourse are described in Malcolm (1994b).

One of the most important of these forms is the oral narrative. Muecke (1981) undertook a study of the story forms used by men in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, and identified six kinds of story sequence which regularly occurred: law, payback, hunting, bugaregara (Dreaming story), travel and devil story. Some of these forms, especially the travel and devil story, have been found amongst Western Australian Aboriginal schoolchildren in previous studies by Malcolm and also some of those who were interviewed during the present project.

A common concern amongst non-Indigenous teachers is that accounts presented by Indigenous children lack structure. Unfortunately, this is generally due to lack of awareness on the part of the teachers of the unique and often intricate structural features of oral discourses; the problem is often not lack of structure, but conformity to a different set of norms about how to construct a narrative (*cf.* Eggington, 1990). For example, Malcolm (1994b) noted that the 'default' narrative form amongst Wongi children on the fringe of the Western Desert seemed to be a 'tracking' structure of alternating moving and 'stopping' (that is, staying). This was particularly the case when they were telling 'sand' stories (Malcolm, 1980-2), in which the movements of the persons in the story are inscribed in the sand as the narrator tells the story. It is possible that this technique is reflective of the way in which Indigenous narratives have traditionally been particularly linked to the spatial geography of the land, rather than being organised chronologically (*cf.* Muecke, 1981, pp.176-7). The strength of the structure is such that it may be applied to situations which might not appear to European people to be intrinsically 'nomadic' events, such as a girl's description of going for a swim with her friends.

Aboriginal English narratives make use of distinctive discourse features which are particularly suited to oral genres. These include the use of repetition, parallelism and direct speech switching. Repetition has various purposes, such as expressing emphasis or suspense and providing structure to the narrative. It also increases the redundancy of the communication as appropriate for oral genres (Ong, 1982). Repeated verbs may be used to indicate length or continuation of action (Eades, 1992).

Parallelism involves restating something in a different way. It can be used not only for emphasis but to structure an entire narrative - expressing cause and effect in an intricate manner. Direct speech switching is a technique in which speech is quoted verbatim without introduction and often presented in a kind of dramatic reconstruction of the event. This representation of directness can have great dramatic effect, aided by the use of other techniques to directly involve the listener, such as use of a range of distinctive question tags such as *init?*, *ana?*, *ini?*.

### ***Sociolinguistics of Aboriginal English***

To be competent in the use of Aboriginal English, speakers need to have a comprehensive grasp of the wide variety of sociocultural contexts in which it is used and the kinds of speech that are appropriate for each. This involves every aspect of Aboriginal English, from the degree of 'heaviness' of dialect/accent (eg. Sansom, 1980) to the appropriate kin terms, to the genres which are required. Victor Hunter, from Derby, provides some fascinating glimpses of dialect-choice in Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm (1982, appendix).

As with other non-standard Englishes (eg. Baugh, 1987), Aboriginal English involves a greater degree of internal variation than does Standard English. It is also spoken often in contexts where code-switching takes place between Aboriginal English and other dialects or languages, based on both topic and person (Harkins, 1994, p.27; Harris, 1991).

And as Eagleson (1982, p.156) points out, there is ample evidence that even children have a strong consciousness of the appropriate register to use. Teachers have been complaining for years that having managed to teach their Indigenous students to use the 'right' English (ie. Standard English) in the classroom, they could not prevent them from reverting to Aboriginal English in the playground (Brumby, 1977). It should be clear by now that these views are based on a misguided idea of the superiority of Standard Australian English, but furthermore, teachers have overlooked the evidence of Indigenous children's often sophisticated facility in choosing the appropriate dialect for the appropriate context. Indigenous children often grow up in contexts which are at least bilingual/bidialectal, if not multilingual (as in the case of the Yipirinya school community studied by Harkins, 1994), amongst cultures who have a long history of valuing linguistic virtuosity.

Sansom (1980) demonstrated how crucially important "the word" continues to be, in an Aboriginal fringe dwelling community in Darwin which is based around Aboriginal English. Information - words - are a political and socio-economic resource, and what is said and how it is said has far more significance than words have in the communication of non-Aboriginal people. The people of "Wallaby Cross" use Aboriginal English as their chosen mode of communication, but more than that, as a marker of their identity as a group. Within this Aboriginal English setting, they choose from a very wide range of styles of speech depending upon the context.

There are many indications of the continuity of indigenous culture in the ways in which Aboriginal English is used. For example, various researchers have documented continuity in norms of avoidance of particular kin (eg. Eades, 1988). Silence remains an important feature (Malcolm 1980-2, p.85). The indirectness of speech continues to be maintained - especially with respect to the avoidance of direct requests and refusals (Eades, 1982, 1988). Ways of talking about the future follow similar distinctive norms (Eades, 1984). Features particularly pertinent to cross-cultural communication are documented by Harris (1980, 1990) and von Sturmer (1981).

#### **2.1.6 Functions fulfilled by Aboriginal English**

Aboriginal English has fulfilled diverse functions from early forms to the present day. Mühlhäusler (1987) provides a detailed description of the development of Western Australian Indigenous Australian peoples' uses of pidgin and pidgin-derived varieties of English, some

of which are described below. The contexts and uses of Aboriginal English in Western Australia have included:

i) *Early Contact with European People.*

eg. Aboriginal-white interlanguage in the South-West from 1829 to the 1900s.

ii) *Employment.*

Aboriginal English was used from 1900 in both bicultural situations, as with pastoralists, and multicultural situations (eg. with Afghans in the camel industry - Carnarvon, Marble Bar, Japanese and Malay divers and European employers in the pearling trade - Shark Bay, Cossack, Roebourne, and then Broome).

iii) *Contact with other Aboriginal People*

From 1900 on, Aboriginal English functioned as a lingua franca for example amongst Aboriginal prisoners brought to Rottnest Island and subsequently diffused as a result all over the State.

iv) *A marker of Aboriginal Identity*

From the 1950s onward, Aboriginal English began to be recognised as a means of identification, a kind of "linguistic skin". It now serves to differentiate its speakers from those of those of Standard Australian English and provide an expression of solidarity between Aboriginal people (eg. Hampton, 1990). Because of this, it is resistant to the pressures of stigmatization and attempted "correction".

The importance of this function of Aboriginal English is reflected in the use of words from Indigenous languages even by Indigenous speakers who generally use SAE (Eades, 1988). Australian Indigenous people describe Aboriginal English as 'easy' 'simple' 'slack' or 'straight' English, 'blackfella English', or 'blackfella talk' (Sandefur 1983; Malcolm, 1992), while SAE is 'flash' language which breaks solidarity (eg. Eagleson, 1982, p.155).

v) *The language of enculturation.*

Where Indigenous children grow up in monolingual English Indigenous contexts, English functions as the language by which they are enculturated in into their Indigenous world view.

vi) *A Medium for Artistic Expression*

Since the 1960s, cultural expression in the Aboriginal English medium has flowered, not only in oral genres but in written literature (Eagleson, 1982; Kaldor & Malcolm, 1991). In Western Australia as elsewhere in Australia, growing numbers of Indigenous writers are choosing to write in Aboriginal English in various genres, including autobiography, poetry and drama (eg. Davis, 1982; Ward, 1991). Furthermore, these works are gaining recognition in the wider community and institutions including the Education Department.



Today, Aboriginal English is primarily used in communication either between, or initiated by, Indigenous people in Indigenous social settings for Indigenous purposes. As such, it complements Standard Australian English; each has its uses in particular spheres.

### 2.1.7 The World of Aboriginal English

Having seen how Aboriginal English constitutes a distinct variety of speech both in form and use, we will recap by highlighting the phenomenon underlying these differences - the differential construction of reality by different language varieties. We will also sum up some key features of Aboriginal English relevant to the classroom.

At the simplest level, we have seen how Aboriginal English inhabits a different world of sounds. Distinctions which are important in SAE may be filtered out as irrelevant in Aboriginal English, while extra sounds, such as vowels between consonants, may be necessary in Aboriginal English. The sounds of English are also utilised distinctively in Aboriginal English for prosodic purposes - for example, the common use of vowel lengthening ("*loooooong time*") to indicate length of time or distance, or emphasise superlatives.

We have also seen that Aboriginal English grammar and vocabulary often incorporates distinctions and categories which express important cultural realities, for example through the development of highly specific pronouns and English-based equivalents of traditional kin terms. The use of dual pronouns reflects the importance of duality in Aboriginal cultures (*cf.* Elkin, 1970, p.705). The use of kin terms - by adults as well as children - retains the structure of social relations in Indigenous society. Sometimes Aboriginal English contains special translations of Aboriginal language terms - *eg* "cousin brother", used to address male parallel cousins (Eades, 1988, p.102), or "granny", used in the south-west to refer to either male or female.

With respect to discourse, Muecke (1981, p.255) has commented on the importance of the use of Aboriginal English to take on functions formerly served by traditional languages. In the face of rapid social change, Aboriginal people of the Kimberleys are using the Aboriginal English discourse forms to actively participate in change and interpret it according to their own Indigenous ideology.

In a similar fashion to traditional language speakers, Aboriginal English speakers value economy of expression. Words are not used to complicate matters, but to deal with matters in a simple and straightforward way. Therefore there is a resistance to too much talk; to speakers of Aboriginal English, the SAE vocabulary is over-verbose. Aboriginal English speakers also resist the use of 'big words'; SAE uses many words which are not part of the regular spoken vocabulary of Aboriginal English.

Silence also has its own place. For speakers of SAE, silence is usually taken to mean resistance - especially in a classroom context. But for speakers of Aboriginal English, it is more a matter of 'if you have nothing to say, don't say it!'; in a sense, words have more value than in SAE. This relates also to the ongoing importance of ownership of knowledge in Indigenous culture (Malcolm, 1980-2).

Because of the continuing value of orality, meaning itself is primarily orally apprehended. Aboriginal English speakers are sensitive to all the aspects of non-verbal as well as verbal communication, and oral-based strategies such as repetition are critical to the transmission of meaning (See further Malcolm, 1995c). Context is critical to understanding the meaning of Aboriginal English speech, and this lies behind many of its characteristics, even down to the use of pronouns without clear referents (*eg.* Eagleson, 1982, p.152).

The conceptual system which Aboriginal English embodies emphasises different elements from those which are emphasized in Standard English. Aboriginal English foregrounds aspect, duration, dual number, participant relations and oral art. But it backgrounds elements which are seen to be important in Standard Australian English, such as gender, existence, plurality and abstracted qualities.

And finally, we have seen that the Aboriginal English systems of discourse and sociolinguistics are significantly different from those which set the norms of communication in Standard Australian English. From the standpoint of Aboriginal English speakers, the world is a very different place from the Standard English world generally inhabited in the classroom.

### 2.1.8 Aboriginal English in the Global Context

Aboriginal English is only one of many dialects of English which have developed throughout the world. Of these, some are regional dialects which have developed amongst peoples for whom English has been a first language for centuries. At least 60 pidgin or pidgin-related varieties of English which are the product of contact between speakers of English and speakers of other languages, generally in a colonial situation, are thought to be in current use (Todd, 1984, p.4). Some English dialects are standardised (*ie* codified), while others are not; some are stigmatised, and others not. The degree of acceptance of a dialect is generally a reflection of relationships between dominant and subordinated groups in the societies concerned. It is complicated by the fact that even in countries such as Great Britain where native speakers of different English dialects supposedly share the same culture, dialect prevalence interacts with class (Cheshire and Trudgill, 1989).

Perhaps the most famous study promoting the recognition of a non-standard, stigmatised dialect, is Labov's (1972) study of Black Vernacular English, in the United States. He vigorously refuted the notion, popular in white educational circles at the time, that BVE was an 'impoverished' dialect whose child speakers were 'verbally deprived'. His own work demonstrated the systematic nature, functionality and wide expressive scope of the dialect.

Sometimes, it is not only standard English speakers, but dialect speakers themselves, who have negative feelings about a dialect (Malcolm, 1995). For example, the "Indianness" of Indian English has been established for over thirty years (Kachru, 1965), yet it remains subject to deprecatory attitudes and attempts on the part of the elite to 'maintain standards' (Dasgupta, 1993, p.203).

In each country where non-standard dialects of English are spoken, the issue arises as to what official recognition should be given to the dialect and what place it has in education. In Singapore, Singapore English has become virtually the native language of many younger people, with its own continuum from 'basilect' (least standard) to 'acrolect' (most like

standard English). As a result, there is ongoing conflict over the kind of standard English / Singapore English which should be used in school texts, for example (Newbrook, 1993). Just as in Australia, educators of dialect speakers overseas find the issue of classroom communication breakdown remains a pressing problem. For example, Sato (1989) presented evidence that children who were speakers of Hawaiian Creole English (HCE) better comprehended HCE texts than Standard English texts. She also reported differences between their norms for communication and those which structured classroom participation.

The development and recognition of English dialects across the world provides clear support for grassroots recognition in Australian education of the distinctive dialect of Australia's Indigenous people. Australian language planners such as the Aboriginal Languages Association have for several decades recognised the status of Aboriginal English as a 'modern Australian Aboriginal language' (Sandefur, 1983). Programs such as the present project not only have a valuable local impact, but they can make a significant contribution to the efforts of many other countries to tackle the issues raised by language and dialect diversity (See Chapter 5).

### **2.1.9 Research history**

The history of research into Aboriginal English has generally been dominated by educational concerns. Earlier studies and policies were orientated towards identifying areas in which Aboriginal English was seen to lack features essential to Standard Australian English, in order to develop teaching strategies to make up this "deficit". The emphasis in more recent research has been on endeavouring to study Aboriginal English as a complete system in its own right and to establish ways in which it embodies Indigenous Australian ways of seeing the world.

The first serious study of Aboriginal English took place during the 1960s Queensland Speech Survey. E.H. Flint, of the University of Queensland, directed the team of researchers who conducted this survey with the aim of "describing all the varieties of English spoken in Queensland" (Alexander, 1965, p.1; see also Flint, 1968; Ready, 1961; Alexander, 1968; Dutton, 1964, 1970 *etc.*). In fact, they succeeded in partially describing and comparing dialects spoken, using mutual intelligibility with Standard English as the basis for classification and focussing mainly upon phonological and grammatical divergence from Standard English. In the late 1960s, Queensland was the site of another large-scale study, this time aimed at examining and addressing the language educational problems of Indigenous Australian children in the early primary school years (Department of Education, Queensland, 1972). Once again, the focus was upon Standard English processes which caused them "difficulty", so that these "errors" could be corrected.

In the early seventies, linguists and others began to report on Aboriginal English elsewhere in Australia, including Western Australia, as we will see below. In the Northern Territory, Elwell (1979) studied English spoken as a second language by Yolngu at Millingimbi, while Sharpe (1977) examined the Aboriginal English spoken by children at Traeger Park school in Alice Springs, focussing particularly on phonology and grammar. Elsewhere, Eagleson (1982) analysed the speech of high school-aged Aboriginal children in Sydney and concluded that while the forms used by Aboriginal speakers did not differ greatly from those used by non-Aboriginal speakers, sociolinguistic features were important in expressing urban Aboriginal culture and identity. Fesl (1977) looked at Aboriginal English in Victoria.

In the eighties, the focus of concern broadened from the formal, systematic features of Aboriginal English to the more sociolinguistic and semantic elements of language use. Eades (1983, 1991) conducted a comprehensive study of South East Queensland Aboriginal English, demonstrating how Indigenous Australian people were using Aboriginal English to express their own meanings and serve their own functions in contexts in which Standard English would be inadequate. Sansom's (1980) ethnographic study of the interactions of fringe dwellers in a Darwin camp revealed a similar complexity of language usage.

Walker (1983) studied the "naturalistic" English of Aboriginal children at Traeger Park Primary School, Alice Springs in order to compare their use of language with that of non-Aboriginal children and other Aboriginal children from a more traditional setting. His rather rigid analysis scheme led him to the conclusion that Aboriginal children were only able to use English for a restricted range of communication - a conclusion and approach which has since brought heavy criticism on the grounds of its decontextualised, 'deficit' perspective (Harkins, 1994).

Studies of cross-cultural communication have provided an important source of data on Aboriginal English. Koch (1985) identified areas of communication breakdown in land claim hearings. Misunderstandings arose from both sides due to phonological, grammatical and semantic difference between Standard English and what he termed 'Aboriginal Pidgin'. Eades (1992, 1993) has also contributed recently to this area, and her emphasis on the importance of the pragmatics of Aboriginal English speech was underlined by the use of her pragmatic analyses in an Aboriginal defendant's legal appeal. Von Sturmer (1981) described pragmatic features central to Indigenous Australian communication in more general cross-cultural contexts.

Harkins (1994) conducted a detailed study of Aboriginal English in and on behalf of the Yipirinya School community in Alice Springs. As in Eades' work, the involvement of local Aboriginal people in the development of the study was crucial. The study is also particularly important in the way it presents Aboriginal English within a multilingual context instead of the usual dichotomous context presented, of Aboriginal English vs Standard Australian English. Harkins demolishes "deficit" ideology by her demonstrations of ways in which Aboriginal English is used to express complex concepts. As we have seen, her multi-level analysis of the expression of meaning is particularly valuable.

In Western Australia, Douglas (1976) produced the earliest description of Aboriginal speech varieties in the South-west, based on data which he actually collected between 1938-44. He described a "continuum" of speech ranging from the remnants of original Nyungar dialects to more Standard Australian English forms, and he used the term "Neo-Nyungar" to describe the varieties in between Nyungar and Standard Australian English. His description of "Neo-Nyungar" illustrates something of the range of Indigenous speech varieties in Western Australia which were outside the scope of the present project. Douglas suggested that the form of speech used by an Aboriginal speaker depended upon the speaker's 'adjustment to the European-Australian culture'. He did point out, though, that an individual also made continual speech adjustments depending upon the person being addressed.

Further north, Geytenbeek (1977) illustrated the likely effects of language interference from the Nyangumarta language upon Nyangumarta children speaking English. As we have noted above, the learning of English as a second language is certainly one origin of Aboriginal

English, but the influences producing Aboriginal English are much broader than simple interference.

Studies in the late seventies and eighties by Kaldor and Malcolm have provided us with what is to date the most detailed picture available of Aboriginal English in Western Australia. From 1973 to 1977, Kaldor and Malcolm (1982, 1985, 1991) carried out an extensive survey of the speech of Western Australian Aboriginal primary school children on behalf of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, as a result of which they identified a wide range of phonological, grammatical and semantic features of Aboriginal English. In the early eighties, they collaborated again in a study (as yet unpublished) of the development of English verb structures in Aboriginal children's speech.

In conjunction with the earlier study, Malcolm (1982, 1993) conducted a sociolinguistic investigation into classroom communication between teachers and Aboriginal children. In view of the differences we have discussed above, it is not surprising that he found a constant mismatch between the communication systems of the teachers and children, with continual breakdowns in classroom process as a result.

Other recent studies are continuing to broaden the knowledge of Aboriginal English use amongst Western Australian Indigenous adults as well as children. Muecke (1981) studied narratives spoken in English by Indigenous people in the North West and identified a range of discourse forms and features commonly used in Aboriginal English. Blumer (pers. comm) is currently completing a study of the range of lects from Kriol to English in a Kimberley community in the North West.

This brief overview of Aboriginal English research has highlighted study of a variety of aspects of the dialect. Given the action research techniques piloted in the present project, it is possible for individual teachers and schools to extend this general knowledge in their own specific situations and regions. However, Aboriginal Education will also benefit significantly in the long term by more academic studies which look at Aboriginal English in its broader community context, which provide a more comprehensive survey of regional variations, and which add to our understanding of the more sophisticated elements of language use.

## **2.2 Approaches to Indigenous Education**

As we saw in the first chapter of this report, education for Indigenous Australians is an area in which there is unanimous agreement on the need for better approaches. The present project was based upon the premise that recognising the forms of communication owned by Indigenous people is a critical part of developing strategies for education which are appropriate and desired by Indigenous communities themselves. In the rest of this chapter, we will consider developments in the education of Indigenous Australian children, focussing particularly upon the interaction of dialect and education.

### **2.2.1 From “deficit” to “difference”**

For most of the history of European education for Indigenous people in Australia, the educational difficulties encountered by Indigenous students have been viewed in terms of deficits in their own abilities or upbringing - a perception which was interrelated with the

general ideology of assimilation (McConnochie, 1982). Their use of a non-standard dialect is no exception to this. Australian education planners and practitioners have often perceived dialect diversity in terms of dialectal 'inferiority' and linguistic 'deprivation' - reflecting similar views to those which were vigorously contested by Labov and others in the United States, for example (see above). As a result, the provision made for dialect speakers has often been along the lines of 'compensatory' education, in which the supposed linguistic 'deficit' was remedied by strategies aiming to give them full competency in the 'superior' standard form.

One serious outcome of the 'deficit' hypothesis arises when teachers assume that a lack of linguistic conformity to the standard English variety is an indicator of poor cognitive development. For example, Harkins (1994, p.54), observed that teachers assume that an "omission" of a Standard English linguistic marker from Aboriginal children's English (for example, markers of gender in pronouns, or of plurality in nouns) may be evidence that they have not mastered, or are incapable of mastering, the underlying concept. Not only does this reinforce the lower expectations which teachers have tended to have with respect to Indigenous students, but as we noted earlier in this chapter, it also highlights the lack of awareness of teachers of the linguistic (and cognitive) mastery which their students are manifesting through the alternative dialect.

Eagleson (1983, p.134) notes that the presence of stigmatised non-standard forms can easily blind listeners to the standard forms and linguistic complexity which are also present, and he gives examples where non-standard forms are in fact more precise (eg you *yous* ; p.135). Consequently, he stresses the importance of seeing students in a range of situations before making judgements about them and their ability to code-switch.

While we have already seen that teachers tend to focus upon the grammatical and phonological evidences of dialect, the conflict of dialects in the classroom is responsible for much more extensive communication problems which also lead to mistaken impressions of Indigenous students' capabilities. The discussion of Aboriginal English above has demonstrated that "the world of Aboriginal English" encompasses every element of speech use, including the norms governing genres, appropriate social interaction and how to comprehend meaning - how to learn.

Malcolm's (1993) studies of classroom interaction showed that effective involvement of Indigenous students in classroom lessons was constantly stymied by the very organizational structure within which classroom interactions are set up to take place. Due to control and initiation of communication lying entirely with the teacher, Indigenous students lost the opportunity to initiate and control interactions in the manner to which they were accustomed, and as a result they withdrew or made bids to communicate which were viewed as inappropriate. Again, teachers often interpret such withdrawal or as a reflection of Indigenous students' deprived background or inadequate social skills - or they may interpret 'shyness' as a 'cultural' characteristic. But in fact, 'shyness' is frequently a consequence of students realising that they have entered an alien environment governed by unknown norms, in which their customary communication strategies are not working and their teachers and peers are perceiving them to be incompetent (Malcolm, 1989, p.133; Malin, 1990).

To counteract the "deficit" ideology, which thrives in the restricted context of the classroom, some studies have been made of Indigenous children's communication in both Indigenous languages and Aboriginal English in Indigenous contexts (eg. Jacobs, 1990; Malcolm, 1993).

Such studies have revealed areas (such as oral narrative) in which Indigenous children appear more “advanced” than non-Indigenous children - in contrast to teachers’ perceptions of Indigenous children’s communicative ‘backwardness’. This can be explained by the differential emphasis on particular communication skills for children reared in different cultural settings, and by the absence of the inhibiting factors of cross-cultural communication which characterise the classroom.

We have noted above the fact that Indigenous children frequently belong to communities which value linguistic facility. As Harkins (1994, p.29) remarks with respect to the children of Yipirinya school, their living environments are “anything but a linguistically impoverished environment for children. The linguistic environment is, if anything, so rich as to be confusing.” It would seem logical, then, for schools to seek to create opportunities where the different communicative strengths of Indigenous students receive due recognition and have the freedom to develop further, complementing new skills developed in Standard English contexts.

Bilingual and bicultural education programs such as those run by the Northern Territory Department of Education have attempted to make use of the linguistic resources of Indigenous ESL students, adopting the principle of ‘starting where the learner is’. Such programs have themselves been accused of assimilationist agendas, such as using the first language as a bridge to English and phasing out use of the first language (Fesl, 1993). But stated policy, at least, has changed from overt assimilation towards valuing and aiding learning of both Indigenous language and culture as well as that of English (NT Department of Education, 1986). Similar efforts for speakers of Aboriginal English have been slower in developing, but bidialectal education has slowly been developing by analogy with bilingual education.

## 2.2.2 Bidialectal education

Bidialectal education had its origins in the 1960's attempts to assist speakers of Black English Vernacular in the USA. Teaching Standard English as a Second Dialect (TSESD) emerged in the midst of the debates over ‘deficit’ vs ‘difference’, in which the main assumptions were that students needed access to standard English to function adequately in society, and that furthermore, standard English should be both the object and medium of instruction and evaluation. TSESD was seen to be an advance on previous “compensatory” programs for two reasons.

The first reason is it came down on the side of difference rather than deficit. As Feigenbaum (1970, p.88) stressed, “The term ‘different’ does not mean ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. There are no linguistic criteria by which a given language or dialect of a language can be proven ‘more wrong’ than another. Linguistics does not provide a means for determining the intrinsic ‘rightness’ or sophistication of a linguistic system”. (It is also worth bearing in mind, however, Ong’s discussion of the value of the grapholect, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter). Feigenbaum emphasised the development of ability to switch appropriately between dialects, depending upon the social context. The teaching of Standard English was not in order to replace a ‘deficient’ dialect, but to add the standard alongside it.

The other TSESD advance was the intention for teaching to be based on sound linguistic analysis which contrasted the non-standard dialect and standard English and identified appropriate learning activities and sequences (Wolfram, 1970). Thus, the non-standard dialect

was seen to have an identity of its own, although the emphasis was on its value as a legitimate foundation for the teaching of the standard dialect. It relied, of course, on the assumption that an accurate linguistic description of the first dialect would be available (Malcolm, 1992).

In Australia, bidialectal education was a far less prominent item of educational debate, although it has not been entirely absent (*eg.* Gardiner, 1977; Eagleson, 1983). The Van Leer Language Development Program of the Queensland Education Department (1972) was one pioneering attempt to teach standard English to Aboriginal English-speaking Indigenous children. While it stressed the need for teachers to avoid derogation of the children's Aboriginal English, the program was still implicitly structured around 'deficit' notions. Other attempts along the lines of TSESD have been made in Australia, but as with the Van Leer Project, they have met with limited success. This is in fact also the general pattern amongst overseas programmes (Edwards, 1989). There are a number of factors underlying this failure to achieve the potential of bidialectal education (Malcolm, 1995a).

First, as we have noted, TSESD has benefited from the analogy with TESOL. By emphasising that children who speak a non-standard English dialect are in a situation similar to those learning English as a second language, TSESD has added to the valuing of non-standard dialects as fully-functional linguistic systems. Teachers are to start where the learner is and add standard English as another code, rather than simply making a series of corrections of "bad English" (Sato, 1989). However, in the process, the TSESD approach has sometimes underestimated non-standard dialect speaking students' competence in English. The extent to which students use non-standard speech is often not so much due to lack of knowledge of standard forms, but their response to social factors, as noted below. As a result, teachers find themselves attempting to teach forms in an environment where their norms of use are strongly resisted.

Second, bidialectal education has often operated under a decontextualized view of language; it is assumed that "if you give two people the same linguistic forms you will bring about effective communication". The discussion of dialect 'transparency' above showed that this is by no means the case. We also saw that behind the forms and their specific meanings is the much bigger issue of the world view finding voice through a particular language variety. Teaching and learning difficulties caused by the mismatch of two different linguistic and cultural worlds can certainly not be solved by the simple replacement of non-standard dialect forms with Standard English.

Third, the attitudes of the dialect community, of educators and of policy makers have also worked against the success of bidialectal education. Speakers of standard English, including teachers, may stigmatise, trivialise, or homogenize differences between the dialects. We have already noted the focus of Western Australian teachers upon phonological features such as the dropped 'h', and their consequent dismissal of dialectal variation as 'accent' (Malcolm, 1980, p.39). Teacher's attitudes to the non-standard dialect are unlikely to be revolutionised simply by their being told to accept the dialect. Hence appropriate training and sensitising of teachers - and educational decision-makers - is crucial.

However, even with the full cooperation and sensitivity of those speaking standard English, dialect speakers themselves may consciously or unconsciously oppose the imposition of that 'standard.' It is possible to pursue bidialectalism as an end in itself, ignoring the fact that dialects embody unequal relationships between the groups who speak them. If we encourage individual social mobility through mastery of the standard without addressing wider socio-



political issues which have caused the stigmatising of the non-standard dialect in the first place, we either risk dividing and further disempowering the dialect community or, as most often happens, we encounter students' resistance to acquisition of a standard form which will alienate them from their own speech community. Even attempts to validate and use the non-standard dialect in the formal communication environment of the classroom may be seen by the dialect community as an unacceptable bid by the dominant group to take over their own dialect for its own purposes.

Once there is a positive view of bidialectal education, the actual implementation raises technical challenges, such as the fact that teachers are generally not competent speakers of the dialect, and in any case the specific dialect features may be difficult to pin down because of the very non-standardness of the dialect. This highlights the value of linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis of the dialect and of enabling teachers to conduct their own research into the specific linguistic characteristics of their students. The present project has concentrated on providing appropriate training to fulfil the latter.

Assuming that all the above hurdles are overcome, there remains, finally, the issue of what kind of English should be taught (even the concept of the 'grapholect' encompasses a broad range of language). Indigenous Australians have different perceptions of what kind of English might be acceptable, but they are increasingly expressing the view that the aim of bilingual/bidialectal education should be to enable them to gain control over their lives, within both their own and Western culture. As Mandawuy Yunupingu (1990) writes: "if you have control over both languages, you have *double power*" (p.5). Yet as Martin (1990) points out, "secret English" - the official/bureaucratic language of power - is largely not taught in schools, at least before the upper years, by which time most Indigenous students have left school. For bidialectal education to work, it is vital that the product it aims to deliver, let alone the method adopted, is in accord with the desires and expectations of Indigenous Australians themselves. This brings us to the importance of a 'Two-way' education process.

### 2.2.3 'Two-Way' learning and a bidialectal perspective

Patrick McConvell (1982) first encountered the use of the term 'two-way' by the Gurindji people of Daguragu (Wattie Creek), in the Northern Territory. This was in 1974, before the introduction of bilingual education programs into the NT, and McConvell is very clear that this phrase arose from the indigenous peoples' own troubled experiences of 'one-way,' or 'only *kartiya* (European) way' education. This 'two-way' concept - also later expressed by Mandawuy Yunupingu (1990, p.5) as 'both-ways' - has come to express a system in which both European and Indigenous cultures are to be taught. But, as Gurindji leader Pincher Nyurrmiyarri explained, it also refers to 'two-way' in the sense of "an exchange between the Europeans and Aborigines involved" (McConvell, 1982, p.62). In this way, 'two-way' education marks the reversal of what has historically been a one-way imposition of non-Indigenous culture upon Indigenous people. The significance of this development can be seen in the adoption of the concept by government policies, as we saw in Chapter 1.

It is important, however, to note that the 'two-way' label is one which is being subjected to a variety of applications, some of which may simply be European co-option of the original term. Therefore, before we consider the application of 'two-way' principles to bidialectal education, we need to listen to what Indigenous people are saying about 'two-way' education.

*Indigenous views of 'two-way' education*

McConvell (1982) records that for the Gurindji, the 'two-way' alternative to 'one-way' power relations in the school would involve:

*i) Discussions and negotiations between teachers and Departments and community over policies and programs, rather than having them imposed only from the white side;*

*ii) Two-way exchange of knowledge. Thus the Aboriginal people involved in the school would make an effort to learn and understand the aims and methods of the European programs, whilst the European teachers in turn would make an effort to learn about the language, culture and aspirations of the Aboriginal people.*

*A further aspect of the 'two-way' school as seen by Pincher was in relation to re-establishing a healthy relationship between the younger and older generations of Gurindji, healing rifts that had developed in the transmission of traditional knowledge, largely through the interference of schools in the process.*

(McConvell, 1982, p.63)

The emphasis in two-way schooling, then, is not simply advocacy of bilingual schooling, but a desire for biculturalism. It is about a sharing of knowledge, and of the power linked in with that knowledge, both in terms of what is taught and how it is taught, as well as ensuring that Indigenous communities and parents have more control over what is happening in their children's schools.

Concerning the effect that the 'one-way' imposition of English language by the missionaries at Yirrkala had, Mandawuy Yunupingu writes:

The missionaries didn't realise that when they stopped us speaking yolngu language in the school, they were stopping our way of thinking. How could we use our yolngu thinking if the school was run by balanda with balanda language?

(Yunupingu, 1990, p.3)

In contrast to such a one-way cultural and one-way language based intervention, Faye Matjarra, Charles Manydjarri, Gwen Warmbirrbirr and Nancy Djambutj of the Yolngu at Milingimbi have the following to say about the form of bilingual education practiced at their school (very much in the spirit of 'both ways'):

There is nothing wrong with English. We still need it to communicate to the wider world. Through bilingual education we will learn good English. The other thing we need is our own culture. This means respect of the law and tradition and customs and the sacred things. This is our foundation and where we were planted. When we go to other places, we will be able to show our skills to other people, *balanda* or *yolngu*, so they will understand us better. Bilingual education in the schools will help us keep our culture.

(Matjarra *et al*, 1987, p.45)

And to further represent the importance of "double power" for the Yolngu:

We want to preserve our language and culture through reading, writing and making books, but we know we need English to help us to fight keep our traditions, and sometimes we need to use English as a language of convenience.

(Yunupingu, 1987, quoted in Harris, 1990, p.12)

It is worth mentioning, before we leave this section that Jean Harkins (1994) has noted a different, but not wholly unrelated use of the term 'two-way' in the multilingual context of Yipirinya school, in the town camps of Alice Springs. Yipirinya school is a project initiated and controlled by Aboriginal people in the camps. It is unique in that it grew from an extension of traditional education arrangements to incorporate non-Aboriginal elements, rather than the other way around. The aim was to provide their children with education in both their own Aboriginal cultures and Western culture. The camp communities are characterised by very rich linguistic diversity, and the people are anxious to maintain that multilingual heritage. But at the same time, they see English as a bridge between the two cultures - a "two-way" *language*:

The Yipirinya School Council, seeing English as a key part of the educational program, wanted to investigate the uses and characteristics of English among town camp people.. and [to investigate] what people could do to expand their competence in English as a "two-way" language, the way they wanted to use it, while at the same time "keeping their own language strong."

(Harkins, 1994, p.5)

Thus, the Yipirinya Indigenous people are eager to expand their English competence, since it provides the medium for transmitting Indigenous information and values to the non-Indigenous world as well as getting things of value from that world.

We have discussed Indigenous Australian understandings of what 'two-way' or 'both-ways' education is, and could be, in a bilingual situation. However, by its very nature as a concept interrelating two different cultures, the 'two-way' idea is open to negotiation both by Indigenous people and, to some degree, by non-Indigenous people, providing that the non-Indigenous input is guided by and subject to Indigenous influence and/or participation. Having noted this reality, it is helpful to examine the flurry of interchanges between two key non-Indigenous people, both of whom have a deep and long-standing commitment to improving the educational environment of Indigenous children.

### *The cultural separation debate*

Stephen Harris is now perhaps the best-known non-Aboriginal champion of two-way schooling. He has written extensively about Aboriginal learning and teaching styles, and suggested ways in which they can be incorporated into classroom teaching. His views on the separation of cultural domains have, however, evoked a certain amount of controversy. He has expressed the belief that:

The nature and degree of difference between Aboriginal and European culture is so great that the only honest conclusion we can arrive at is that they are largely incompatible. The two cultures are antithetic - consisting of more opposites than similarities. They are warring against each other at their foundations. Recognising

and accepting the truth of the term 'incompatible' was for me in this study the point of theoretical liberation and the starting point for a more effective educational theory to be applied in Aboriginal schools.

(Harris, 1990, p.9)

Because of the pressures which are brought to bear upon Indigenous culture and identity by constant interaction with a dominant Western culture, he has argued that 'two-way' education should ideally involve cultural compartmentalization of the school: Western teachers teaching Western concepts in Western ways (although with some modifications to take account of learning styles *etc.*), and Indigenous teachers doing likewise in their own "cultural domains", in separate classes. However, while he advocates cultural compartmentalization as far as practicable, he does emphasise also that "the Aboriginal domain must be broad and must incorporate aspects of Western culture in which Aborigines have become deeply involved" (Harris, 1991, p.23). Or as the Indigenous teacher Murphy Roberts succinctly puts it, "they are not separate paddocks" (quoted by Harris, 1990, p.80).

McConvell has argued that by emphasising the "incompatibilities" between Indigenous and Western cultures in terms of "lists of polar opposites" (such as 'compartmentalization' versus 'relatedness,' 'linear' versus 'cyclical' or 'past continuous' time conceptions; 'doing' versus 'being' - 1991:14) Harris is setting the scene for Indigenous people to be victims of white stereotyping once more. McConvell continues by observing that:

The conflict between cultures is all the more deep-seated to Harris (1990:21) because it occurs at the level of different 'world views,' 'thought paths' and it is this which is emphasised rather than the conflicts between blacks and whites over control of land, control of family members and other urgent sociopolitical questions.

(McConvell, 1991, p.15)

However, Harris (1991) maintains that in order to help students overcome major culturally-based difficulties with western schooling and keep their Indigenous identity intact, it is important to recognise the deep-seated areas of difference and take appropriate action. The main way to avoid a simple deficit perspective is to have an equal respect for both cultures, as well as to ensure that Indigenous parents and communities have real power in school decision-making. Harris also adopts a fairly strict stance on the definition of 'two-way' learning, aptly critiquing the use of the term for "almost anything connected to Aboriginal schools which has elements of both Aboriginal culture and Western culture" (Harris, 1993, p.11), as well as re-emphasising the fundamental elements of Indigenous initiative and control.

There are problems with both poles of the debate, especially when they are viewed from the perspective of the needs of speakers of Aboriginal English. For the majority of Indigenous students, who fall into the bidialectal category, it is practically impossible to attain the extent of cultural domain separation which Harris advocates. Yet it is also clear that even in the bidialectal context, there are significant cultural differences - alternative ways of seeing reality - which McConvell would apparently run the risk of minimising. This discussion is jumping ahead, however, since it is necessary first to establish the extension of the 'two-way' concept to bidialectal education.

***'Two-way' and bidialectalism***

So far, we have seen the 'two-way' notion in educational contexts in which Indigenous and non-Indigenous people communicate in a bilingual situation as at Yirrkala, or Daguragu. However, it can also be applied to the bidialectal situation, since, as has been argued throughout this chapter, Aboriginal English provides the means of enculturation of most Indigenous children into Indigenous ways of thinking, just as traditional languages do for their speakers. Hence they face similar issues of coping with two worlds of meaning.

If teachers are to help their Aboriginal English-speaking students to gain the benefits of both their Indigenous culture and the predominantly non-Indigenous culture of the school, it is essential for them to attempt to incorporate Indigenous ways of thinking and learning into their school programmes to create a bridge between the two worlds. The central 'two-way' concepts of Indigenous participation and decision-making, the establishment of an exchange of knowledge which goes both ways, and an emphasis on preserving the continuity of Indigenous cultural transmission can all be incorporated within a bidialectal context. On the other hand, an essential contributor to the recognition of culture is the recognition and sensitive nurturing of the language variety which embodies this culture - Aboriginal English. Hence the aim of the present project has been to enhance communication in the bidialectal situation in order to fulfil the linguistic pre-requisite of two-way education. How this was accomplished, including a more detailed statement of the proposed approach to two way learning for bidialectal Indigenous children, is described in the following chapters.

# CHAPTER 3:

## MODELLING RESEARCH

The research activities of the Project Team were notionally concentrated in the period from January to April 1994. But in fact throughout the project, the Research Team remained two steps ahead of the participating teachers, developing material for their use on the basis of the research carried out in the first half of 1994, as well as continuing action research performed in parallel fashion. During the July inservice, team members and teachers worked on some analyses together. This cycle of research, feedback and further development proved to be highly productive, and it was a valuable learning exercise for everyone concerned - especially the participating teachers, of course.

### 3.1 Literature Survey

The first objective of the literature survey was to enable an inventory of features of Aboriginal English to be used to guide the elicitation to be carried out by the research team and the teachers. Western Australian research, especially that of Kaldor and Malcolm (1982, 1991), was the main source of both anticipated dialect features and elicitation procedures. Literature searches also provided sources for reference material included in the first work package later forwarded to participating teachers, for lecture input in the inservice course, and for material included in the second chapter of this report. The broad categories of literature surveyed included works on Aboriginal English; Bidialectal Education; Kriol and Torres Strait Creole; Indigenous Education; semantics of Aboriginal English and Indigenous Language; writings by Indigenous people; and Indigenous Communication (see References).

### 3.2 Data Gathering

Members of the Project Team visited all nine schools in May 1994. These visits were undertaken for several different purposes: to enable the team to see the school first hand, to meet the staff involved with the project, to gather data on the children's speech, and to be available for consultancy as required. With these aims in mind, they carried out a number of different activities:

- 1) Team members *met with the Principal* to outline their intended activities and obtain access to teachers, Aboriginal Education Workers and students. Where possible, they used the opportunity to obtain any general information about the school and community, as well as relevant observations about Indigenous students, their English and their communicative behaviours.
- 2) Team members *met with the teacher(s)* who had volunteered to participate in the project and explained the purpose of the visit. In cooperation with each teacher (and, if appropriate, an Aboriginal Education Worker), they determined which child or children would be selected for individual and group recording.

- 3) *Individual interviews* were conducted and recorded with each of the selected individuals in turn (see below). Each child was then asked if they would like to invite two or three friends to come back at an appointed time to talk about anything that interested them.
- 4) *Group interviews or conversations* were conducted and recorded (see below).
- 5) Where possible, with the help of Aboriginal Education Workers or other supportive persons, an informal meeting was arranged with *interested members of the Indigenous community* to talk about Indigenous children and the use of languages and English dialects in school.
- 6) Team members also sought opportunities to observe and where possible record *naturally occurring speech events* such as in leisure time activities involving Indigenous students.
- 7) Any available *written work* by Indigenous children was sought from participating teachers.
- 8) On the basis of the tables shown in 3.2.2, team members interviewed (separately) the participating teachers and Aboriginal adults (all of whom were Aboriginal Education Workers) to provide input to be used later as a basis for end of project evaluation.

At this stage, the role of the participating teachers was simply to take note of the research process (as well as, of course, to be interviewed).

### 3.2.1 Language Data Elicitation

The principal data elicitation techniques used were individual and group recording sessions with children and supporting interviews with the teachers and Aboriginal Education Workers. Individual interviews had the advantage of greater standardisation, aiding comparison with other children in the same controlled conditions and ensuring that linguistic features prone to dialectal variation were examined. However, some features cannot be elicited by the more formal means used in such an interview, and hence the group interviews formed a complementary strategy.

#### *Individual Interviews*

Selection of children was on the basis of teacher recommendation (and their own consent) as being speakers of a distinctive form of English. Depending on the time available, a minimum of one to three children were selected for each participating teacher.

The interview took place, where possible, in a quiet, undistracted, relaxed place in the school precincts. Two tape recorders were used, and the interview followed a prepared schedule.

After a brief warm up, the children were invited to answer five questions on a two-line story which they heard on tape, and then to repeat 22 sample sentences which incorporated features which dialect speakers would be predisposed to modify when repeating. Because speakers will often automatically 'translate' such sentences into their own dialects, this technique is commonly used by researchers studying children's language and the speech of second language learners. An accurate 'translation', rather than simply the repetition of a few isolated words, is also an effective indicator of the fact the speakers are comprehending what they are hearing, even though they do not reproduce it in identical form. Further discussion of the use

**Table 3.1: Individual Interview****1.0 WARM UP**

Help the child to feel at ease with any appropriate introductory remarks. Then ask:

- 1.1 You're [name] are you?
- 1.2 Have you got any brothers and sisters?
- 1.3 Where do most of your relations come from?
- 1.4 What do you like most at school?

**2.0 STORY**

I'd like you to listen to a very short story and then answer some questions about it. Okay?

Listen carefully.

(Story on tape: "Two kids were playing when they heard a noise. It was a big goanna. They chased it a long way but it got away.")

Now, here are some questions about the story:

- 2.1 Who is the story about?
- 2.2 When did the two kids hear a noise?
- 2.3 What made the noise?
- 2.4 What did the kids do?
- 2.5 What happened to the goanna?

(Play the story again if the child can't recall the answers.)

**3.0 SENTENCE REPETITION**

Now I'm going to play the tape again and each time you hear someone talk I want you to say after the tape what the person on the tape is saying.

- 3.1 This is a hot place.
- 3.2 The teacher's car's a Toyota.
- 3.3 If you drop an egg it breaks.
- 3.4 Those boys have gone home.
- 3.5 He gave me a dollar.
- 3.6 Dogs often scratch themselves.
- 3.7 Most books are made of paper.
- 3.8 Why are they always fighting?
- 3.9 His team came last in the race.
- 3.10 When he'd finished he handed his work in.
- 3.11 There's water in the hole.
- 3.12 Those horses are too tired for work.
- 3.13 All my wishes have come true.
- 3.14 The road goes past the school.
- 3.15 My sister said she saw a ghost.
- 3.16 When we were walking home we found some money.
- 3.17 Can you swim?
- 3.18 He asked if he could have my pen.
- 3.19 After supper we aren't hungry any more.
- 3.20 Stephen brought his dog to school.
- 3.21 The fruit that he picked are in the basket.
- 3.22 My brother works on a station.

**4.0 CLOSING**

That's great. Do you want to ask me anything before you go back to class?



of this technique, along with other useful elicitation techniques, can be found in Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm (1981, pp.198-202). The guide for individual interviews is reproduced in Table 3.1. The tape to which the children were responding was recorded by an Indigenous child who spoke a minimally accented standard English.

### ***Group Interviews***

The group recording sessions aimed to provide a context in which the speakers would be relaxed enough to interact in such a way that there would be minimum suppression of their dialect speech features. As a result, they were extremely loosely structured and, where possible, they were recorded in the absence of a teacher or team member. The aim was for the initiative to pass to the group themselves so that they could talk about common experiences, feel free to interrupt one another and generally speak as naturally as possible. Ideally, the group interviews took place in an informal setting, preferably out of doors, lasting up to half an hour.

The members of each group consisted of three or four friends selected by the child recorded individually, most of whom were Indigenous, but a few of whom were non-Indigenous. The inclusion of non-Indigenous children in some of the groups was on the principle that the use of vernacular speech on the part of the Indigenous children would be enhanced rather than inhibited if they were free to select their accustomed friendship groups.

The group were told that they could talk about anything they liked, with the research team member present or absent as they wished. They were reassured that their conversation would be kept confidential and told that the tape was part of a project to help us see how people talk in different parts of the State. Table 3.2 lists guidelines for gentle prompts which a team member could use if they were present for the recording.

**Table 3.2 Group Interview Prompts**

- 
1. Ask each person their name and if they have any nicknames
  2. Invite them to tell you about some things they have done together.
    - Maybe fishing or hunting or exploring or some other form of play
    - Maybe something done during the school holidays
    - Maybe some school based activity
    - Maybe things they do when they go to one another's place
    - Maybe something funny, or dangerous.
  3. Get them to talk about places they like to go and what they have done there.
  4. Ask them if they have ever had any scary experiences (*eg.* involving "devils")
  5. Get them to tell you about people they all know and what they are like (especially people that are funny or interesting or clever).
  6. Invite them to tell a story and then hear it back on the tape  
(the story could be "true life", traditional, or one they have read or heard in school).
  7. If all else fails, invite them to tell about a movie/video they have seen.
-

### 3.2.2 Adult Interviews

The interviews with teachers and Aboriginal Education Workers were designed to elicit knowledge of and attitudes towards the children's dialect. The basic framework for the interviews was provided by the lists of questions shown in Tables 3.3 and 3.4. The first schedule was seeking to obtain a classroom perspective and the second an Indigenous community perspective.

**Table 3.3 Questions For Interviews With Teachers And AEWs**

- 1) What (if anything) is distinctive about Aboriginal children's use of English
  - a) in school
  - b) out of school.
  - i) in speech, and
  - ii) in writing
- 2) Can you describe any situation in which there has been a communication difficulty or breakdown between you (or another teacher) and an Aboriginal child?
- 3) Do any children stand out for their language/communicative behaviours? How?
- 4) We would like to talk with one or two children (on their own) who are as far away as possible from non-Aboriginal children in the way they use English. Could you suggest who we might choose?
- 5) Have you observed that, when they are not being supervised or controlled, the Aboriginal children engage in any particular kinds of behaviour with respect to language? (*eg.* any particular games, yarning, word play, name-calling, role playing, code-switching *etc.*).
- 6) Are there any differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children's speech behaviours? (Do non-Aboriginal children use features similar to those used by Aboriginal children?).
- 7) How do Aboriginal children react to your (the teacher/AEW) directions in the classroom?
- 8) Are there any situations in the classroom where Aboriginal children engage in extended free-flowing language? (*eg.* recounting an event, story telling).

## 3.3 Language Analyses

Throughout this stage of preliminary research, analysis tools were reviewed and refined in order to produce user-friendly methods which would be appropriate for novice teachers.

### 3.3.1 Analysis Procedure:

#### *Transcription of tapes*

The tapes of the individual and group interviews were transcribed according to the conventions generally adopted for representing Aboriginal English - what Kaldor and Malcolm (1991) describe as 'impressionistically modified' conventional English orthography. This method is particularly suited to non-linguistic users, such as the teachers at whom this project is aimed.

**Table 3.4 Interviews with AEWs and Community Members**

- 1) Do you think the Aboriginal children have any problems with school language?  
What problems do they complain about?
- 2) What languages are spoken by children going to this school?
- 3) In what contexts do they use language?
- 4) Do you think there is anything wrong with the way the children use English?
- 5) Within the Aboriginal community and in the homes of Aboriginal children are there any special things that are done involving language? (*eg.* telling traditional stories, telling ghost stories, telling bedtime stories, using language for fun, using language to put down "posh" people, telling jokes in Aboriginal English, singing, memorising, play-acting).
- 6) After a group activity, *eg.* going on a picnic or bushwalking *etc.*, where and how do people sit down and talk about their experiences?
- 7) What do you think the school should be doing to help Aboriginal children in their use of English?
- 8) What do you think about Aboriginal children being encouraged to keep up two forms of English, one for school learning and the other for use in Aboriginal contexts?
- 9) If the teachers understand more about the kind of English Aboriginal people use among themselves, do you think they will be more sensitive to the needs of Aboriginal children in learning school English?

***Conceptual framework for analyses:***

Analysis was carried out on the basis of knowledge of dialect features gleaned from earlier research, whilst leaving room for new categories to emerge. In order to help teachers to be able to relate the linguistic features of the dialect to the processes which had brought them about over the history of language contact between Indigenous people and white English speakers, the features were all summed up in three categories: "Simplification", "Nativization" and "Transfer". We provide here both technical definitions and the rule-of-thumb definitions which were given to teachers to facilitate their use of the categories.

***a) More technical definitions:***

**Simplification**

the process whereby a language may come to be used with a general lack of inflectional morphology and grammatical transformations (Schumann, 1982) and with a reduced lexicon resulting in increased multifunctionality of forms and decreased redundancy. It may be evidenced in the second language development of individuals (*interlanguage*) or in the development of contact language forms within a speech community (*pidginization*).

## Nativization

the process whereby a language may come to be used in a way which is native to a particular people or place (McArthur, 1992, p.682), as is the case in the divergent linguistic development which leads to the development of regional and social dialects or the development of a pidgin into a creole, or to an individual language learner, as is the case when the learner "creates an internal representation of the language he is acquiring" (Andersen, 1984, p.78). Nativization (by contrast with simplification) operates to produce an equally or more complex system but not in the direction of the target or originating language.

## Transfer

the process whereby a language or variety may come to incorporate features of another language or variety to which one or more of its speakers have access. It may occur at the levels of pronunciation, morphology, syntax, vocabulary or idiom.

### *b) More rule-of-thumb definitions:*

Simplification is where features which are normally present in standard English are not normally present in Aboriginal English.

Nativization (or Invention) is where Aboriginal English displays features which are not found in other varieties of English.

Transfer is where features which are found in other languages or varieties are borrowed into Aboriginal English.

### ***Analysis Tools:***

Analysis tools were developed to enable team members to summarise the features of Aboriginal English speakers' language in a form which would be accessible to the teachers. These were based around the three categories just described, and enabled descriptions based on individuals, groups (*eg* schools) and cross-school comparison.

#### *a) Profile Sheet*

A *profile sheet* was developed on which features of each kind could be entered, so that the state of the individual's dialect could be quickly summed up and compared with profiles of other children. An example can be found in Appendix 2.

In addition, a summary sheet of questions was developed to facilitate interpretation of the profile, as shown in Table 3.5:

**Table 3.5 Interpreting The Profile**

1. What element/s of language exhibit most divergence from Standard Australian English (SAE)?
  2. What is the nature of the divergence from SAE? (Simplification, Invention, Transfer)
  3. Do Aboriginal English and SAE forms co-occur?
  4. If so, is there any apparent basis for the way they are distributed?
  5. If transfers occur, where do they come from? (Kriol? Non-Standard Australian English? Temporal Australian English dialect? Contemporary SAE, etc.)
  6. Is there more than one Aboriginal English alternant for any form?
  7. If so, is there any apparent basis for the way they are distributed?
  8. What meaning discriminations seem to be given less prominence than in SAE?
  9. What meaning discriminations seem to be given more prominence than in SAE?
  10. Assuming the profile represents the SAE end of the child's dialectal continuum to what extent would you see this child as bidialectal (i.e. possessing SAE as one of his/her English dialects)?
- 

*b) Analysis Framework*

Also, a comprehensive *analysis framework* document was developed to enable profiles to be assembled for all the children studied in a given school, and to enable schools to be compared with one another. A complete framework with examples can be found in Appendix 3. This tool was modified several times as new data emerged. It will inevitably require further revision in future, but the Project Team agreed that to do so before development of a broader data base would be premature.

*c) Cross-school Comparison*

On the basis of the assembled profiles and frameworks, a composite picture across schools was developed which was forwarded to all teachers after the July Inservice course. A summary of this data can be found in Appendix 4.

### **3.3.2 Summary of linguistic findings**

Due to time constraints and the necessity of modelling analysis techniques for a group who were (with a few exceptions) newcomers to linguistics, the analyses tended to focus upon the more formal elements of speech rather than broader, more complex discourse features. The richness of some of the speech samples, especially in the narrative genre, demonstrated that the latter would be a fruitful area of investigation, given more time. Further inservicing on the different genres and narrative techniques used by Indigenous speakers (see below) should provide teachers with the necessary insight to identify their use by some of their students (In the present project, some teachers in their action research activities did in fact notice a 'tracking' structure being used by their students).

We would emphasise that the data which were gathered and analysed are not intended to be seen as complete linguistic studies of Aboriginal English in each region, and the comparisons between schools are necessarily tentative. However, in the absence of other data, these profiles form a useful basis for identifying key features in the various regions. Furthermore, the project had added value for the participants because the samples were specific to their own students; they provided the basis for strategies which were immediately relevant to communication in their own classrooms. Perhaps their most important role was in demonstrating that Aboriginal English does exist as a distinct dialect, and many features were used in a relatively standard way across the State.

### *Individual Interviews*

Interview data were obtained from the 9 participating schools as well as one other, in Bardi country, which was available only for the initial data collection. A table containing the responses to each of the questions in the individual interviews is presented in Appendix 5. Since the individual interviews were structured around the same elicitation input, they may be readily compared among the 56 students and 10 schools from which data were obtained. The following analysis does not include consideration of the phonology (though phonological features are documented in table in Appendix 4) or of the discourse features.

### *Some of the Most Widespread and Common Dialect Features*

#### (a) Simplifications

- i) Invariant 3rd person singular personal pronoun *e*
- ii) Invariant indefinite article *a* (as in *a egg*)
- iii) Unmarked 3rd person singular present tense ending, especially on the verb *go* (as in *the road go*)
- iv) Non-use of auxiliary in the passive (as in *most books made...*)
- v) Invariant “was” (or “as”) as auxiliary in past continuous (as in *we (w)as walking*)
- vi) Retention of the present tense of the verb in a conditional clause (as in *asked if he can have...*)
- vii) Absence of past tense marking on certain verbs, especially where that marking would create a consonant cluster (as in *pick, ask, finish*)
- viii) Absence of the copula, especially where the complement or extension is remote from the subject (as in *The fruit that he picked [are] in the basket*).
- ix) Non-discrimination of case in the demonstrative pronouns, with the form *them/dem* commonly favoured over *those*

#### (b) Nativizations

- i) Reanalysis of personal pronoun *his* to the form *he's*
- ii) Tendency to use the personal pronoun form *they* where the standard variety uses the demonstrative adjective *those*
- iii) Lexical variants [*h*]*aks* for *ask*; *take off* for *run away*

### Chapter 3

- iv) Strong tendency to extend the use of the verb to *be* as an auxiliary for forming the present and past perfect tense (rather than *have*)
- v) Tendency to extend the use of the verb to *get* to contexts where the standard variety uses other verbs (as in *get too tired; his team got last*)
- vi) Use of the pronoun *e* to form existential statements for which the standard variety requires *there* (e.g. *E's water in the hole*)

#### (c) Transfers

- i) Relative pronoun *what* from non-standard non-Aboriginal English (as in *the fruit what he picked*)
- ii) Negator *ain't* from American non-Standard English
- iii) Certain Kriol-related features, especially in the Kimberley (*alla*; transitive suffix *-im*; possessive adjective *im*)

#### *Some of the Most Variable (and possibly developing) Features*

- i) Definite and indefinite articles:

The forms *a* and *the* vary with respect to their presence or absence and their substitution for one another. They may also occur redundantly.

- ii) Word final -s:

There is a frequent tendency to shift word-final -s to an adjacent word, as in *wish haves* for *wishes have*; *day waters* for *there's water* and *roads go* for *road goes*.

- iii) Reflexives:

There are four major variants commonly used for the reflexive pronoun *themselves*. These are *theirselves*, *theirself*, *themself* and *theyself*

- iv) Prepositions:

The locative prepositions *in*, *at* and *on* may be interchanged or absent.

#### **Group Interviews**

The analysis of the group and informal taped interactions could not be carried out at the same level of detail as that of the individual interviews. These sources gave evidence of interactional features such as tag questions (e.g. using *ana?*), spacers (e.g. *ting*), distinctive formulaic expressions (e.g. *the sun started comin' down; den we went Geraldton like; then 'e cooked it up a bit, cooked 'is legs up; dat's the Aboriginal way*), oral genres with distinctive discoursal features (e.g. *and after that, we was walkin', we kept walkin' along...*) and increased lexical transfers from traditional sources (e.g. *yungagees- da's sort of a real way of sayin' goanna*). Many of these features were specific to particular areas and the participating teachers- once they became aware of them- took considerable interest in documenting them and informally eliciting for more of them.

### 3.4 Results of Adult Interviews

Overall, the teacher interviews tended to reveal attitudes and beliefs similar to those discussed at the beginning of this report. The English used by Indigenous children was seen as different, but the form of English which they produced was seen as 'improper', 'incorrect', or 'confused'. In comparing the English used by Indigenous and non-Indigenous children, the teachers also tended to focus on the issue of form. They generally used simple terminology to describe the difference, for example: "Little words are left out"; "join words, drop letters off words".

Another major concern was with speech and sound production. Teachers often commented on problems with speed, loudness, tone and clarity - perhaps indicating that the actual delivery of speech was the main factor in miscommunication rather than issues associated with grammatical construction or meanings. Interestingly, teachers did not address the semantics of Aboriginal English, except in so far as some indicated that their children lacked understanding of complex English. It is possible that teachers actually overestimated their own comprehension of what their Indigenous students were saying, due to the 'transparency' problem which we described in Chapter 2.

A list of comments made by teachers and Indigenous adult interviewees in response to each of the key interview questions may be found in Appendix 6. Some of the comments were incorporated into a questionnaire used at the end of the project to assess the extent of change in teachers' knowledge and attitudes (See Chapter 5 and Appendix 8).





# CHAPTER 4: MENTORING TEACHERS

The Mentoring phase covered a number of ongoing activities focussed around two intensive inservice courses, in July and October. In between the two inservice courses, participating teachers were required to complete three work packages which were assessed either during the October inservice or on the basis of material submitted by mail. From the time of the July inservice course, all teachers were paired up with the mentors, who were to maintain contact with them for the rest of the year and to visit their school in the final term.

## 4.1 Inservice 1: The July Course

The July inservice course consisted of one week's training of teachers, based on the research data. Project funds covered transport and accommodation costs to enable all 18 participating teachers to come to Perth for the inservice. Members of the research team present included two University linguists, two University Aboriginal Education specialists, two specialist curriculum staff from the Education Department and two research assistants.

### 4.1.1 Aims and Objectives of the July Inservice Course

#### *Aims*

1. To help teachers better to understand Aboriginal English and to see, through it, distinctively Aboriginal ways of approaching experience and knowledge.
2. To help teachers, through the principle of two-way education, to develop the capacity to provide learning experiences which exploit Aboriginal ways of organising and expressing knowledge while also promoting the appropriate use of standard English as a second dialect by Aboriginal learners.

#### *Objectives*

1. To help teachers to gain an awareness of the features and functions of Aboriginal English and of their significance.
2. To promote in teachers the development of an understanding that the distinctive variety of English spoken by Aboriginal students is (like standard English) a dialect in its own right.
3. To sensitise teachers to the experience of language rejection.
4. To give teachers specific understanding of the varieties of Aboriginal English spoken by students in their own schools and to provide them with the tools and training to investigate these varieties further.
5. To set the knowledge of Aboriginal English against the background of wider research into nonstandard dialects and the educational response to them.

6. To explore the concept of two-way education in relation to Aboriginal English speaking children.
7. Within the framework of two-way education to review, evaluate and, as appropriate, adapt existing resources in language arts and other selected areas for use by participating teachers.
8. To develop curricula and teaching strategies sensitive to the linguistic, semantic and pragmatic features of Aboriginal English.
9. To provide a resource pack for use by participating teachers over the coming term which will assist them in action research on Aboriginal English and in the development and trialing of two-way educational approaches.

## 4.1.2 Course Programme

The week's work consisted of a range of lectures, workshops and case study sessions. The program for the entire Inservice is found in Table 4.1. The first two days focussed upon Aboriginal English and the next two days on Aboriginal learning, while the final day aimed to reach some finality on two way education and help the teachers to develop objectives for their ongoing research and development programme for the rest of the year. Training modules were developed on the basis of prior research, previous training experience and priority areas identified during the research phase of the project. They are summarised below:

### *Day 1 ABORIGINAL ENGLISH*

#### *Session 1: What is Aboriginal English?*

(Presenter : Professor Ian Malcolm)

1. Definition  
“A range of varieties of English spoken by many Aboriginal people and some others in close contact with them which differ in systematic ways from standard Australian English at all levels of linguistic structure (sounds; word forms; syntax; vocabulary; meanings) and which are used for distinctive speech events, acts and genres.”
2. Description of features of Aboriginal English at all levels referred to in the definition  
(Main source: Malcolm, I.G. and Vos, V. (1993) “Exploring difference: Aboriginal students and literacy.” Paper delivered to the State Reading Conference, Perth).
3. Development of Aboriginal English as a contact variety.  
History of pidginization, creolization, decreolization.  
Illustration in the present dialect of features relatable to 3 processes:
  1. Simplification
  2. Nativization (or Invention)
  3. Transfer (from SAE, non-standard English, creoles, vernaculars)
4. Development of Aboriginal English in the individual child.

Presentation and discussion of data from the project by I.Malcolm and S.Kaldor “The development of English verb structures in the speech of Aboriginal primary-schoolchildren” (as presented to the NLLIA WA Symposium on Child Literacy and ESL Research, Claremont Conference Centre, ECU, 1993).

**LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION ENHANCEMENT FOR TWO WAY EDUCATION :  
IN SERVICE COURSE PLAN**

		<b>MONDAY 18 JULY</b>	<b>TUESDAY 19 JULY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY 20 JULY</b>	<b>THURSDAY 21 JULY</b>	<b>FRIDAY 22 JULY</b>
		<b>ABORIGINAL ENGLISH</b>	<b>USING ABORIGINAL ENGLISH</b>	<b>ABORIGINAL LEARNING</b>	<b>TWO WAY LEARNING</b>	<b>WHERE TO FROM HERE?</b>
9.00 -	1	<b>What Is Abl E?</b> - Features - Development IM	<b>Abl E and English</b> - Distinguishing dialect features from mistakes - Problem of "transparency" IM	<b>Traditional Learning</b> Aboriginal SF	<b>Retrospective</b> PK TM YH	<b>Project review for Term 3</b> TM
10.00	2	<b>What is Abl E Like in My School?</b> - Survey Results Team	<b><u>Abl E and Abl Langs</u></b> TM	<b><u>Two-Way Bilingual Ed</u></b> Learning & TM	<b><u>Aboriginal Education History and Policy</u></b> TM PK YH	<b><u>First Steps and Aboriginal Students</u></b> T PK YH
10.45	<b>Morning Tea</b>					
11.00	3	<b><u>Case Studies</u></b> A detailed look at the English of one child 5 Groups	<b><u>Abl E &amp; Speech Use and Classroom Discourse - What Goes Wrong and Why?</u></b> IM	<b>Experiences of Aboriginal Learners</b> SF & Panel	<b><u>Simulation: Language Rejection Class</u></b> CG Language class ESL <b><u>strategies</u></b> Workshop YH PK	<b>Working with Mixed Groups</b> PK YH
12.00	4	<b><u>What Does Abl E Show us About Thinking?</u></b> IM	<b><u>Abl E and Writing</u></b> IM	<b><u>Teaching &amp; Learning with Minority Group Learners</u></b> GP	<b><u>Jigsaw: 4 curriculum areas</u></b> GP YH	<b><u>Inservice Roundup</u></b> <b><u>Cross-school linguistic comparisons</u></b> TM
1-2	<b>Lunch</b>					
2-3.30	5	<b><u>Gathering Data on Abl E in My School</u></b> Workshop Team	<b><u>Analysing Abl E Data In My School</u></b> Workshop IM	<b><u>Looking at Curriculum the Aboriginal Way</u></b> Workshop GP	<b><u>Role Play</u></b> Workshop GP	

## Chapter 4

### *Session 2: What Is Aboriginal English Like in My School?*

(Presenter : Professor Ian Malcolm)

1. Presentation and discussion of blank School Framework Form  
(i.e., detailed listing of features commonly found in Aboriginal English, grouped under the headings of simplification, nativization and transfer).
2. Discussion of a sample completed School Framework Form from one of the participating schools.
3. Distribution of School Framework Forms for all schools represented among the participants, as completed by the research team.
4. Initial responses to these forms.

### *Session 3: Case Studies*

(Presenter : Professor Ian Malcolm)

This session was conducted in school-based groups, with team members assisting (where possible, team members were matched to teachers from schools which they had visited or analysed).

1. Distribution and discussion of blank individual interview data sheets
2. Distribution and discussion of an individual interview sheet completed by the research team for one of the children of one of the teachers in group
3. Similar discussion for each other individual child studied relevant to the group concerned.

### *Session 4: What Does Aboriginal English Show Us About Thinking?*

(Presenter : Professor Ian Malcolm)

1. Discussion of the ways in which Aboriginal English can be seen as representing reality differently from standard Australian English  
  
(Main source: Malcolm, I.G. (1994) "Aboriginal English and Standard English: Making Connections". In G. Steff (ed.) *TESOL: Making Connections*. Proceedings of the 1994 ACTA-WATESOL National Conference. Perth: Australian Council of TESOL Associations/ Western Australian Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages).
2. Five pointers to the distinctive way in which Aboriginal English represents reality:
  - i) Economy of expression:
  - ii) Meanings are primarily orally apprehended:
  - iii) Context dependency:
    - key to economy of expression
    - paralinguistic and kinesic dimension
    - inseparability of language from the speaker (ie a "high context" culture)
  - iv) Foregrounding and backgrounding: Aboriginal English foregrounds aspect, duration, dual number, participant relations, oral art  
Aboriginal English backgrounds gender, existence, plurality
  - v) Aboriginal construction of discourse - eg. "Tracking" structure

(Main sources:

Malcolm I.G. (1994) Discourse and discourse strategies in Australian Aboriginal English. In *World Englishes* 13 (3), 289-306.

Malcolm, I.G. (1994) Aboriginal English inside and outside the school. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics* 17 (2), 147-180.)

### *Session 5: Gathering Data on Aboriginal English in My School*

This consisted of a workshop session lasting one and a half hours, in groups consisting of one or two schools.

1. Outline of linguistic elicitation procedures:
  - (a) conducting and recording an individual interview:
    - the interview schedule
    - elicitation techniques
    - use of the tape recorder
  - (b) conducting and recording a group interview
    - presentation and discussion of the procedures sheet
    - illustration from a model recording
2. Outline of data recording and analysis procedures:
  - (a) transcription procedures and convention
  - (b) analysis:
    - recognition of dialect features
    - identification of features according to the framework
    - recording of features on individual and group data sheets
  - (c) interpretation:
    - presentation and discussion of the sheet "Interpreting the profile"
3. Completing/extending analyses provided by the research team
4. Comparing profiles across schools
5. Practice:
  - listening to tapes for recognition of dialect features
  - classification of features recognised
  - transcription of group interview and other tapes
  - recognition and classification of features in transcriptions

## **Day 2            USING ABORIGINAL ENGLISH**

### *Session 1: Aboriginal English and English*

(Presenter : Professor Ian Malcolm)

1. Aboriginal English complements standard Australian English
  - Each has its own best spheres of operation
  - Aboriginal English is the only variety which can perform some functions:
    - convivial talk in informal Aboriginal settings (*nb* 'flash' talk is sanctioned)
    - establishing a common sense of Aboriginal identity ('linguistic skin')
    - providing the medium for certain genres, eg sand story, tracking narratives
    - ironic humour (illustrate from Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm, 1982:236-238; with tape)

2. Aboriginal English is continuous with standard Australian English
  - there is a continuum between the varieties
  - the style of speech of an Aboriginal person may vary between 'heavy' at the Aboriginal end and 'high' at the other end
3. Aboriginal English is deceptively similar to standard Australian English - like Kriol, it is deceptively 'transparent' to the SAE speaker

(Illustrate from pp.123-4 of Sandefur, J. (1991). The problem of the transparency of Kriol. In I.G. Malcolm (ed.) *Linguistics in the Service of Society: Essays to Honour Susan Kaldor*. (pp.117-129). Perth: Institute of Applied Language Studies, Edith Cowan University.
4. Aboriginal English is not creole
  - creole (or Kriol) is not English, although it has been derived from English
5. Aboriginal English is not standardised
  - hence it has no written norms
  - hence it has many variant forms, including standard Australian English variants
  - hence it has no agreed orthography (so we sometimes modify spelling)
  - hence it is controlled by the people who speak it.
6. Aboriginal English is not something which can be 'corrected' (except in the case of performance errors, which may equally occur in the production of standard Australian English speakers).
7. Aboriginal English is not a restricted code
  - it can be seen as an expanded code (Harkins, 1994)
8. Aboriginal English is not to be seen as the outcome of any one linguistic or cultural influence: it includes influence from Aboriginal vernaculars, SAE, non-standard Englishes, world pidgins and creoles, temporal dialect, etc. (Illustrate with diagram).

### *Session 2: Aboriginal Education and Aboriginal Languages*

(Presenter : Dr Toby Metcalfe)

This session sought to provide a basis for a better understanding of Aboriginal languages and their relationship to interlanguages, the concepts of 'interference' and 'transfer' in the learning of second languages and the relevance of these understandings to educational programs.

The group worked through some practical exercises in the analysis of a number of texts from the Bardi and Ngaanyatjarra Aboriginal languages. Summaries of the nature of the languages at the phonological, syntactic, semantic, discourse and communicative levels were drawn out from the data and compared with corresponding English language levels. The relevance of these patterns to the formation and structure of pidgins, creoles and 'Aboriginal English' was explored drawing examples from interlanguages from Western Australia and the Northern Territory in particular.

Some basic principles were then drawn out in relating this understanding of Aboriginal languages and interlanguages to educational programs for Aboriginal children.

*Session 3: Aboriginal English, Speech Use and Classroom Discourse:  
What goes wrong, and why?*

(Presenter : Professor Ian Malcolm)

1. Some conventions of speech use in Aboriginal English  
(Main source: Malcolm, I.G. (1980-82). Speech use in Aboriginal communities: a preliminary survey. *Anthropological Forum* 5 (1), 54-104).
2. Functional varieties of speech act and the ways in which teachers use them to structure classroom discourse
3. Illustration of the failure of the “Individual Discussion Routine” as a means of structuring discourse with Aboriginal children.  
(Source: Malcolm, I.G. (1982). Verbal interaction in the classroom. In Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm: *English and the Aboriginal Child*. (pp. 165-191). Canberra: Curriculum Development Centre.
4. Threats to face in the ways classroom discourse is managed  
(Source: Malcolm I.G. (1991) ‘All right then, if you don’t want to do that...’. Strategy and counter-strategy in classroom discourse management. *Guidelines* 13 (2), 11-17.)

*Session 4: Aboriginal English and Writing*

(Presenter : Professor Ian Malcolm)

1. Distribute examples of writing by Aboriginal students and invite comments on their features.
2. Then distribute the same texts with all dialect features marked, so that writing errors may be distinguished from dialect features.
3. Problems of Aboriginal English speakers with writing:
  - a) Dialect features
    - relatively few dialect features may be responsible for a high frequency of deviation from standard English written conventions
    - are appropriate or inappropriate according to the audience for whom the communication is intended; therefore teachers should seek to develop a sense of audience in their students as a guide to style shifting.
  - b) Context dependency
    - a basic characteristic of Aboriginal English and incompatible with the contextual mobility which much writing requires
    - shown in:
      - assumption of common knowledge with the reader and consequent use of frequent indexical or inexplicit references, including the use of the definite article for items whose prior relevance is non-recoverable
      - lack of description of context (Aboriginal English tends to foreground action and participants rather than setting and purpose, and it is common in many written genres of standard Australian English to start with setting or purpose).
  - c) Punctuation
    - a by-product of a sense of awareness of the unseen audience



d) Cohesive Ties

Aboriginal English makes heavy use of a very small number of conjunctions, especially 'and' and 'after'. It tends to string sentences together by simple addition, which results in a text which lacks the cohesive structure which writing requires.

e) Genre

In the absence of other familiar alternatives, the Aboriginal child may well fall back on the "tracking" framework as a default structure for all extended speaking and writing

f) Spelling

Spelling errors are not particularly frequent in Aboriginal students' writing and where they do occur they are often associated with differences in pronunciation between Aboriginal English and standard Australian English.

4. Some recommendations for the teaching of writing to Aboriginal English speakers:

- a) decide what genres are appropriate for Aboriginal-way writing
- b) decide what genres are appropriate for Other-way writing
- c) with both Aboriginal-way and Other-way writing, help students to overcome their habits of context dependency
- d) help the students to picture the reader and punctuate for the person they imagine
- e) emphasise the difference with respect to social roles and situations which underlies the linguistic and generic differences between Aboriginal-way and Other-way writing
- f) encourage students to avoid Aboriginal English features when doing Other-way writing: one way to do this is to develop a 'two-way' dictionary
- g) provide the students with good models of **both** Aboriginal-way and Other-way texts.

*Session 5: Analysing Aboriginal English Data in My School.*

(Presenter : Professor Ian Malcolm)

This session consisted of a workshop in school-based groups with their mentors in which the analysis procedures demonstrated in the previous workshop were further practised on the basis of tapes of speech from the schools concerned. The intention was that at the end of this workshop the teachers would have sufficient confidence to carry out their own analyses of further data from their students, following the procedures demonstrated by the research team.

**Day 3 ABORIGINAL LEARNING**

*Session 1: Traditional Aboriginal Learning*

(Presenter : Associate Professor Simon Forrest)

This was the first of two sessions presented by Aboriginal people to provide Aboriginal perspectives on the issues covered at the Inservice. This session included details about Aboriginal social structure, culture and kinship both in a traditional setting and urban environment. Future directions for Indigenous education were also discussed.

### *Session 2: Two-way Learning and Bilingual Education*

(Dr Toby Metcalfe)

Assumptions and principles underlying bilingual education and two-way Aboriginal schooling were suggested and discussed.

Some assumptions underlying bilingual education:

1. Educational programs must reflect language and culture
2. Positive self-esteem is essential to effective learning
3. Literacy programs must be developed on an adequate base of oral language
4. Initial literacy is best introduced through the first language of the children
5. Basic literacy skills are transferable

Principles of two-way Aboriginal schooling:

1. Education is best delivered through two-way or both-way schooling
2. Schools should have a significant role in the maintenance of Aboriginal language and culture
3. The best conceptual framework for two-way school organisation and curriculum design is culture domain separation
4. Aboriginal management at all levels is essential

Concepts involved in Two-way Language and Communication Enhancement were then related to a number of antecedent educational approaches: Bilingual and Bicultural Education; Two-way Aboriginal Schooling and Two-way Learning; FELIKS (Fostering English Language In Kimberley Schools).

### *Session 3: Experiences of Aboriginal Learners*

(Presenters: Assoc. Prof. Simon Forrest, Caron Farmer, Helen Humes, Penny Barnard)

This session involved a panel of Indigenous people who gave details about their educational experiences from primary school to university study. Each panel member gave different personal insights into their personal education experiences. Caron Farmer and Assoc. Prof. Forrest were able to give a unique perspective as former primary school classroom teachers.

### *Session 4: Teaching and Learning with Minority Group Learners*

(Presenter : Dr Gary Partington)

This session identified the factors influencing students' learning in cross-cultural contexts. In particular, the following issues were considered:

1. The teaching learning situation is a social situation. What factors affect it?

2. What options do students of different backgrounds and characteristics have in the teaching learning situation? (eg. strive to comprehend, give up, resist)
3. Impediments to success for:
  - (a) Middle class Anglo students and
  - (b) Typical Aboriginal students at participants' schools.
4. In a cost-benefit analysis of the teaching-learning situation, how do the Aboriginal and Anglo students compare? eg. success at school, satisfying social relationships, development of basic literacy and numeracy, potential ridicule, identity crises.
5. What can the teacher do to improve learning for Aboriginal students?

The session also included information on Aboriginal Learning Styles, based particularly on the work of Stephen Harris (1980) at Milingimbi, and a summing up of the most effective ways to meet the needs of Indigenous students:

*Session 5: Looking at Curriculum the Aboriginal Way*

(Presenter : Dr Gary Partington)

In this session, participants worked together to identify ways in which teaching strategies could be modified to accommodate cultural differences. Content covered:

1. Reference: Hudspith, S. (1992). Examples from methods used by teachers.
2. Problems of Aboriginal students.
3. Relating problems to cultural and structural factors.
4. Presentation of a model of the teaching learning process.

**Day 4**            **TWO WAY LEARNING**

*Session 1: Retrospective*

Dr Gary Partington provided an overview and synthesis of the previous three days of the course.

*Session 2: Aboriginal Education History and Policy*

(Presenters Dr Toby Metcalfe, Yvonne Haig, Patricia Konigsberg)

Participants were provided with a historical overview of successful Aboriginal Education Programs and strategies.

Some resources were examined and discussed during the session. Participants were encouraged to look at other resources which had been put on display around the room.

The Social Justice Policy of the Education Department of Western Australia was summarised. Participants were familiarised with the Student Outcome Statements and the eight related learning areas. Recent literacy development trends within the WA education system were critically analysed. This included the First Steps and the Stepping Out projects.

The group then looked at the Australian Language Levels Project materials and how issues raised could successfully be integrated into existing programs.

*Session 3a: Simulation: Language Rejection Class -*

(Presenter: Carol Garlett, Department of Education)

Carol Garlett's session was one of the highlights of the workshop. She presented a 'potted' autobiographical account of her family, her community and her personal history in delightful 'Nyungar' English. The audience enjoyed the experience, but also felt uncomfortable when asked to join in as a chorus from time to time and to answer questions on the content of the presentation. Not only were they treated to an uninhibited 'barrage' of Nyungar English with features which recur frequently in 'Aboriginal English' at the phonological, syntactic and semantic levels, but they were given glimpses into the social and cultural contexts of language enlivened by the sense of humour of Nyungar speech. The session provided participants with a better insight into how Aboriginal English speakers might feel in an environment where their home language was being rejected.

*Session 3:b Language Class ESL Strategies (workshop)*

(Presenters - Yvonne Haig, Patricia Konigsberg)

The group looked at language theory and how this fitted in with the structure, the curriculum and strategies used in the classroom. Recent trends in ESL research were discussed and successful teaching and learning activities were brainstormed.

*Session 4: Jigsaw - 4 curriculum areas.*

(Presenters - Dr Gary Partington, Yvonne Haig)

Participants engaged in a group jigsaw activity using the four curriculum areas of Maths, Social Studies, Science and Health and Physical Education. First, participants were asked to brainstorm strategies they had found worked particularly well with Indigenous students. They were asked to identify what these Strategies had in common and to generate characteristics. The jigsaw activity then consisted of brainstorming three sections in small groups:

- 1) Facilitating factors (*ie.* what factors could be identified by the group as being facilitative. What were Aboriginal students particularly good at.)
- 2) Barriers (*ie.* What elements acted as a barrier? What could be identified as barriers in all aspects of program delivery, curriculum and cultural considerations?)
- 3) Classroom implications (*ie.* With the two issues above in mind, what is it that could be changed to better suit the needs of Aboriginal students?)

*Session 5: Role Play*

(Presenter : Dr Gary Partington)

In this workshop, various participants were assigned roles in a 'mixed' classroom, with detailed instructions on roles for Anglo students, Nyungar students and the teacher. Non-role-players observed and noted events which were of significance in the lesson. In the debriefing session, role players described their experiences, intentions and instructions, after which all participants discussed appropriate strategies for avoiding the situations which had occurred.

## DAY 5 TWO WAY EDUCATION

### *Session 1: Course preview*

(Presenter: Dr Toby Metcalfe)

In this session, participants were provided with further details on the structure of the project, the units being developed, what the tasks that they would be carrying out after the July Inservice, and how their work would be assessed.

### *Session 2: FIRST STEPS and Inclusivity of Aboriginal Students*

(Presenters: Annabelle Clarke, Patricia Konigsberg & Yvonne Haig)

The group looked in detail at the oral language continuum of First Steps and discussed inherent problems with respect to Indigenous students. These included the differences between standard English and Aboriginal English genres, and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children's patterns of language development. The fact that language development does not equate with cognitive development was emphasised.

### *Session 3: Working with Mixed Groups*

(Presenters: Yvonne Haig, Patricia Konigsberg)

Participants were asked to brainstorm the following question in four rotating groups:

*How do you cater for cultural, linguistic, experiential and development differences in your class?*

The specific titles of each group were as follows:

- Group 1: Year levels (age differences)
- Group 2: Aboriginal and others (cultural and linguistic differences)
- Group 3: Ability Levels (differences in academic achievement)
- Group 4: Differences in life experiences.

Participants contributed very valuable and helpful suggestions. Some of the issues were discussed. Work done by the participants was typed up and distributed for future reference.

### *Session 4 Wrap up of the Inservice*

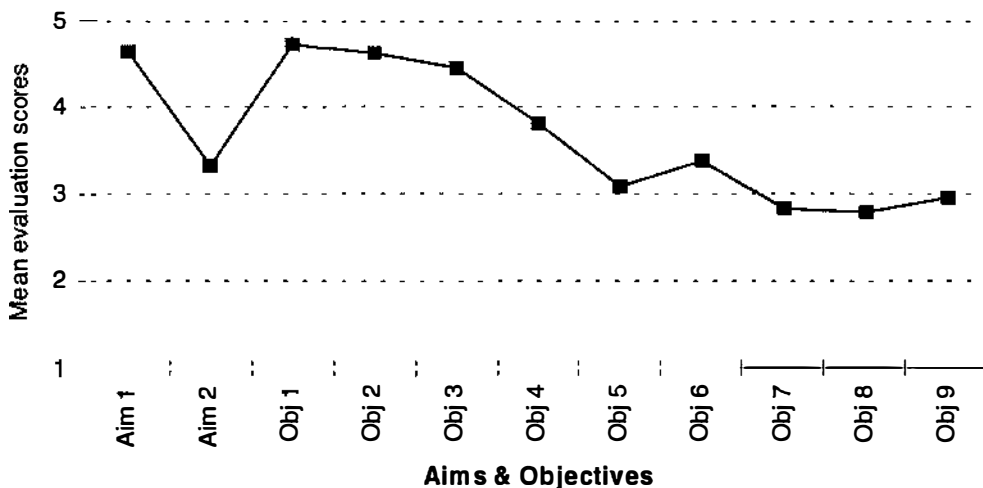
This session continued the discussions in Session 1 and considered the development of a two way curriculum package and objectives for Term 3. The group also compared the results of the linguistic analyses across schools and completed evaluations sheets based upon the objectives of the inservice course.

## 4.1.3 Evaluation of the July Course

Evaluation of the July Inservice course was assisted by the use of a questionnaire which participants completed on the final day of the course. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which each of the Aims and Objectives (See Section 4.1.1) was achieved by the course, on a scale from 1 (low achievement) to 5 (high achievement). The results are

summarised in Figure 4.1 below. Written comments were also obtained regarding each of the objectives.

Participants were generally very positive about the inservice course overall, particularly with respect to the knowledge they had gained about Aboriginal English and the experiences of Aboriginal learners. It was felt that the two way learning concept could be spelled out in more detail, and they would have liked some more specific strategies and practical teaching techniques/resources. This feedback assisted development of the packages which they were to receive in September, but it also highlights the need for more resources to be researched and developed in this area - a point which will be addressed in Chapter 5.



**Figure 4.1: Evaluation of achievement of July Inservice Aims and Objectives**

## 4.2 The Work Packages

Following the inservice course, the teachers were sent three work packages to complete during Term 3, in preparation for the final visits of their mentors to their schools in Term 4. All teachers were expected to participate at an equal level, although only those who wished to be (and to claim credit for units) were assessed. During this period, the mentors kept fairly consistent contact (within the constraints of distance), advising the teachers on procedures and then making arrangements for the October inservice.

### 4.2.1 Autonomous Learning Package (Reading Component)

#### *Content*

This first package consisted of directed readings in linguistics and Aboriginal education, together with questions requiring written answers. The readings were designed to set in a

wider national and international perspective the linguistic and educational input which had been provided by the inservice course.

The work package was sent to teachers in two sets. The first set consisted of six readings in linguistics which were sent to participating teachers as pre-reading before the July inservice. The second set of readings concerned curriculum issues, and they were sent in conjunction with the Two-way education package in September. All of the readings are listed in Appendix 7, along with sets of questions provided with each of the readings in order to help participants to focus upon the key issues in the reading.

### ***Assessment***

Participants submitted written answers to the questions on the readings, and these provided a basis for assessment of their uptake of information. Their work was submitted along with the products of the other two work packages at the October inservice (see below). The team utilised a set of suggested answers to the questions in their assessments. These are included in Appendix 7. Teachers' work was assessed according to three grades: satisfactory/ deferred/ unsatisfactory.

## **4.2.2 Linguistic Work Package**

### ***Content***

This package required the teachers to carry out action research on the model which had been given by the research team and, optionally, to go beyond it. In particular, they were to a) record, analyse and interpret the speech of some of their students; b) record, analyse and interpret their own classroom interaction with Aboriginal pupils; c) gather and analyse some of their Aboriginal students' written work. Two additional options were also included: d) carry out a comparative analysis of the informal English of one Aboriginal and one non-Aboriginal child, and e) (with permission) analyse adult Aboriginal speech/writing.

The instructions sent to teachers are reproduced in Table 4.2. The data collection and analysis forms to which it refers are those which have been discussed in Chapter 3. While teachers followed the same general guidelines as those the research team had used, they were free to adapt procedures as appropriate, depending upon the context in which speech data were available. In at least one school, teachers changed the sentences for repetition to some which they felt would be more relevant to their students.

**Table 4.2: The Linguistic Work Package****Aims**

1. To give you experience in eliciting, recording, transcribing and linguistically analysing oral and written language data from children in your class or School.
2. To provide you with fuller information on Aboriginal English in your school as an input to two way curriculum development.
3. Optionally, to enable you to understand the English of Aboriginal pupils in the light of how it varies from that of non-Aboriginal pupils and/or Aboriginal adults.

**Tasks****A. Oral Language**

1. Select (with appropriate permission) up to four individual Aboriginal children whose use of English you wish to investigate.
2. Using the form and procedures demonstrated by the research team, record an "individual interview" with the selected children.
3. Using the procedures demonstrated by the research team record group interactions of a duration of up to 1 hour.
4. Optionally, record free speech of the children as appropriate opportunities arise.
5. Transcribe the material recorded.
6. Analyse the speech recorded according to the system learnt in the Inservice Course.
7. Produce
  - a) individual profiles for each child selected, on the individual analysis sheets
  - b) a school profile on the school framework sheet.
8. Compare your findings
  - a) from child to child
  - b) (optionally) between Aboriginal children and non-Aboriginal children or Aboriginal adults
  - c) with the findings obtained by the team.
9. Interpret your findings

**B Classroom Interaction**

1. Record interactional sequences in one or more lessons involving Aboriginal pupils
2. Transcribe the recording into separate speech acts (i.e. functional units)
3. Report on how
  - a) the Aboriginal pupils participate in the interaction
  - b) you participate in the interaction
4. Suggest how the interaction could have been improved.

*cont'd...*



*Continued from previous page ....*

### C Written Language

Set some writing by your Aboriginal children in at least two different genres. Analyse the writing to show

- a) dialect features
- b) errors
- c) characteristics of the genre

### Reporting

Prepare a comprehensive report on all of this for presentation in a 1 hour session at the in-service course in October. The work should be completed by 21 October together with handouts or transparencies for use in the group presentation.

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### *Assessment*

Teachers' work on the linguistic work package was assessed on the basis of their preparation of materials and presentation during the October inservice of tutorials based on their work. Their input was assessed according to three grades: satisfactory/ deferred/ unsatisfactory.

## **4.2.3 Bidialectal Education Work Package**

### *Content*

The third package required the teachers to carry out curriculum innovation on the basis of what they had learned about Aboriginal English. They were asked to identify an area of need among their Aboriginal students, develop appropriate response based on two-way learning principles and keep careful records of how the changes had affected both themselves and the students. Instructions given to teachers are presented in Table 4.3.

A crucial part of the package was a paper detailing principles to guide teachers in adapting existing curricula for two-way learning. It is reproduced at the end of this section

### *Assessment*

As in the case of the linguistic work package, teachers' work on the two-way work package was assessed on the basis of their preparation of materials and presentation during the October inservice of tutorials based on their work. Their input was assessed according to three grades: satisfactory/ deferred/ unsatisfactory.

**Table 4.3: Bidialectal Education Work Package****Aims**

1. To apply knowledge of Aboriginal English to the ways in which interaction and learning take place, for Aboriginal English speakers, in classrooms
2. To develop procedures to ensure the acceptance of Aboriginal English as part of the repertoire of its speakers and the exploitation of the Aboriginal ways of structuring experience, which it represents, to benefit the school learning of speakers of Aboriginal English
3. To develop procedures to assist Aboriginal English speakers in acquiring competence in standard Australian English where appropriate.

**Tasks**

1. Choose a particular curriculum area and/or a particular class and develop strategies for two-way learning, which will encompass
  - a) Acceptance of AE
  - b) Learning through Aboriginal Ways
  - c) Bridging Between SAE and AE.
2. Keep a diary for at least 4 weeks recording how you have implemented the above strategies and what the effects have been on you and the children.
3. Record a short portion of a lesson in which strategies for two-way learning are being employed and analyse the interaction.
4. Take one curriculum area and show how you would modify your programming in it over a given period (not more than one month) to make the learning two-way.

**Reporting**

Prepare a comprehensive report on all of this for presentation in a 1 hour session at the in-service course in October. The work should be completed by 21 October together with handouts or transparencies for use in the group presentation.

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## *An Approach To Two Way Learning For Bidialectal Aboriginal Children*

### *Preliminary Notes*

1. Nothing that is recommended here with respect to Aboriginal English is intended to override the wishes of Aboriginal people themselves who are the custodians of Aboriginal English.
2. It is presupposed that any educational programme for Aboriginal children will be undertaken in consultation with Aboriginal people and as a positive response to their aspirations.
3. The term “Aboriginal English” should be used with due care. It should not be assumed that it has the same meaning to everyone who hears it, and, with respect to this project, it should only be used in the way we have defined and explained it. Thus, it is not implied, for example, that Aboriginal English is spoken by all Aboriginal people.

The approach to bidialectal education which is advocated here involves three fundamental principles (“the ABC of bidialectal education”):

A: *Accepting* Aboriginal English at school

B: Providing support for speakers of Aboriginal English in *Bridging* between Aboriginal English and Standard Australian English

C: *Cultivating* opportunities for speakers of Aboriginal English at school to learn through Aboriginal ways

### **Acceptance of Aboriginal English**

The principle of the acceptance of Aboriginal English is in fact part of a wider principle of the acceptance of the language all children bring with them into the education system.

Acceptance of Aboriginal English does not mean accepting its appropriateness for all purposes, but accepting its legitimacy as an English dialect and its appropriateness for some purposes, including some activities which go on at school.

It follows from the principle of acceptance that the use of dialect features will not be confused with the making of errors and that no attempt will be made to eliminate the use of dialect features by Aboriginal English speaking children.

It follows from the principle of acceptance that the teacher and the non-Aboriginal children in the class should be able to understand Aboriginal English but not that they should use it.

It follows from the principle of acceptance that the child who speaks Aboriginal English will not be required by the school to use that dialect for any purpose for which he/she chooses not to use it.

In keeping with the principle of acceptance, it is suggested that teachers determine, in consultation with Aboriginal community members for their own situation, which speech events at school are appropriate to be carried out by Aboriginal English speakers (if they so desire) in Aboriginal English. A suggested preliminary list is:

- one-to-one interactions with Aboriginal classmates
- small-group work
- giving news before a group of Aboriginal classmates
- informal discussions or reporting on Aboriginal life and culture
- small-group interactions with the Aboriginal Education Worker
- extra-classroom activities in the open
- private diary writing

### **Bridging Between Aboriginal English and Standard Australian English**

It is assumed that the object of producing competence in Standard Australian English is fundamental to the education of all children in Australian schools.

Under the principle of Acceptance it was noted that some speech events taking place at school might be appropriate for the use of Aboriginal English. It is clear that others are appropriate only for the use of Standard Australian English. Some suggested examples are:

- giving news to the whole class (where the members are not all Aboriginal)
- formal teaching and learning
- classroom interaction involving the teacher
- all written work except diaries and creative writing in Aboriginal settings
- all communications with school administration
- textbook-based learning

It is necessary for the Aboriginal English speaking student to receive help in bridging between Aboriginal English and Standard Australian English for such speech events. This must be done without implying that Aboriginal English is an inferior form.

The following suggestions are provided as a guide to appropriate bridging strategies:

1. Achieve awareness of difference (first, the teacher must have the awareness, then the teacher must be able to draw the difference to the child's awareness)
2. Provide access to alternative models. This may be done, for example, by
  - developing a bidialectal dictionary
  - developing a list of "Aboriginal way" speech events common in the area, e.g. "spirit stories", "sand stories" etc.
3. Encourage the achievement of "both-ways" competence rather than SAE competence.
 

Ask, "Who can do it both ways?"

(Expect non-Aboriginal children to be one-way speakers)

4. Provide some contextual support for switching between varieties, for example,
  - a) point left for the SAE form and right for the Able form
  - b) highlight the contextual reasons for the appropriateness of SAE when requiring it.

Develop a guide to “Aboriginal-way” and “Other-way” contexts, e.g.:

<b>Aboriginal Way</b>	<b>Other Way</b>
home	shopping
playground	talking to non-Aboriginal adults
bush	government offices, hospitals
	police
with friends	with strangers
Aboriginal meetings	town meetings
talking	reading, writing and talking

5. Never require a non-Aboriginal child to produce Aboriginal English, but expect them to understand it.
6. Modify expectations with respect to “Standard practice” in classroom behaviour
  - allow for group response and collaborative activity
  - allow for less teacher-individual questioning
  - deemphasise individualism

### **Cultivating Learning Through Aboriginal Ways**

Learning through Aboriginal ways means learning to see and to put things the way in which Aboriginal English speakers do, as shown in their dialect. As a guide to doing this, 7 procedures are suggested.

**(i) Personalise**

Relate learning to the personal sources from which it comes and to the personal applications which it has.

**(ii) Localise**

Relate learning to the known environment of the children and about which they already have the language to talk.

**(iii) Aboriginalise**

Where there is an alternative Aboriginal perspective on an area of learning (e.g. history, botany, cosmology, kin and community relationships) give equal weighting to this perspective.

**(iv) Economise**

Avoid “big words.” Actively practise with the class ways of expressing ideas with less verbosity.

Find ways of rewarding children for economy in speech in appropriate contexts.

**(v) Memorise**

Recognise the features of oral expression which are memory-supports, like parallelism and repetition and give credit to these in verbal production. Make links with the early English literature which reflects the time when English was used in a basically oral culture (e.g. ballads). Encourage and use realistic and echoic language as appropriate. (See further, regarding primary oral cultures, Ong (1982)).

**(vi) Contextualise**

Recognise that Aboriginal English speakers are used to using language in a shared context. Ensure that what you are talking about can always be grounded in a known context.

**(vii) Prioritise**

Note that Aboriginal English characteristically foregrounds certain aspects of experience in favour of others. Recognise that the Aboriginal English speakers may focus on the spatial relations, movement, duration, participants and participant relations in an event or story rather than, for example, on the existential, numerical or gender specific aspects. Adapt your way of looking at what is important in an event or story to theirs.

## 4.3 Inservice 2: The October Visits

### 4.3.1 Overview

The two day October Inservice took place during visits by mentors to teachers in their respective regions (either in their schools or regional offices). It provided the opportunity for:

- 1) Review of the school contexts from the point of view of the use of Aboriginal English.
- 2) Tutorials and presentations by participating teachers based upon the work they carried out to complete the linguistic and two-way work packages.
- 3) Discussion of teachers' responses to the readings in the Reading Component.

In some cases, the inservice sessions were attended by other school staff members, including Aboriginal Liaison Officers and Aboriginal Education Workers.

Following the inservice, participants received a questionnaire and rating sheet to assist evaluation. Since these referred to both the October inservice and the project as a whole, they will be discussed in Chapter 5.

### 4.3.2 Work package submissions and presentations

The work presented by teachers varied considerably in content and scope. In some schools, they had covered a great deal of work, while others found themselves hampered by lack of

time and other factors. Some teachers had difficulty gaining access to Aboriginal students, partly because some students did not want to make an issue of their Aboriginality.

The variable experiences of different teachers highlighted the importance of peer support and the value of collaborative work. Support from the school Principal is clearly essential. Teachers in some schools were hampered by resistance or lack of support from other staff, which contributed eventually to their inability to fulfil course requirements.

On the other hand, other participants encountered enthusiasm on the part of their colleagues, and rose to the occasion. Teachers in one school completed the linguistic work package very competently but found that implementation of their joint curriculum package in their classes was not possible (the nominated Aboriginal students had left school). Instead, they prepared a professional development programme for use with teachers at the school and invited the Deputy Principal to attend the briefing on it.

Mentors comments on submissions and presentations noted:

- Some good linguistic analyses; others less sophisticated.
- Multiple applications to learning (modification of curriculum frameworks, applications to readers, writing of readers, topic work, audio and videotapes).
- In areas where difficulties had been encountered, the October visit helped to restore motivation.
- Some things too ambitious - classroom interaction not completed.

### ***Examples of Participants' Approaches to the Work Packages***

#### ***Example 1***

One course participant who was an ELAN teacher at Perth Metro school developed a valuable curriculum package for use by teachers who are using First Steps and used her new knowledge to inform and change the directions of curriculum delivery within her school. She offered two strategies to address the issue of acceptance of Aboriginal English:

- i) Using the list of dialect features to identify any Aboriginal English features that occur in an Aboriginal student's writing sample when plotting the class on the First Steps continua, to avoid inaccurate descriptions of dialect features as errors and consequent misinterpretations based upon the continua.
- ii) Overt recognition and acceptance of Aboriginal English features in classroom writing - avoiding excessive teacher correction and modelling SAE through her own comments. Ensuring that other adults involved in conferencing processes are aware of the nature of Aboriginal English and the need to practise acceptance.

Other strategies, proposed to promote learning through Aboriginal ways, addressed writing in different genres such as in diary-writing, newstelling, recount, and maths journals. These included:

- i) Provision of a variety of narrative and informational texts to demonstrate appropriate models of Aboriginal English and SAE

- ii) Promotion of interaction with the Aboriginal Education Worker, who could model writing strategies.
- iii) Invitations to parents and others to informal sessions where students can share and discuss their writing.

To address the need for Bridging between Aboriginal English and SAE, she suggested:

- i) informal interactions where teachers/AEWs draw the children's attention to the differences between AE and SAE.
- ii) Creation of a bidialectal dictionary
- iii) Identification of Aboriginal English in cultural stories and in students' writing, recording any existing SAE equivalent alongside.

### *Example 2*

A pair of teachers in at Nyungar3 Highschool developed a document which summarised the most commonly occurring features of Aboriginal English at their school and provided a guide for further data collection in order to promote acceptance of the dialect and adaptation by other teachers at their school. The profile was based upon data collected in a study of 15 Aboriginal students carried out to fulfil the requirements of the Linguistic Work Package. While this focussed upon grammatical and phonological features, their inservice presentations on students' speech also included examples of Aboriginal structuring devices such as "tracking".

### *Example 3*

A team of Year 1 to 3 teachers at a Wongil school constructed a curriculum package including elements such as:

- i) four texts based upon children writing and speaking in Aboriginal English about their experiences. These also included a modelled example of SAE.
- ii) worksheets for modelling SAE to the class
- iii) cross curriculum explosion charts written for each text, detailing lesson ideas for each curriculum area.
- iv) a review and adaptation of a previous term's programme, and explanation of the choice of a more appropriate text.

The teachers reported that the programme they had developed was highly successful in that:

- the children were highly motivated, more confident in giving their opinion and comments, and wanting to use their knowledge in other areas
- the children achieved success in all areas of language, particularly oral language, and wanted to write more in all areas
- the activities were relevant because they were context based
- the children accepted their teachers more because the teachers accepted them and what they had to say



## Chapter 4

- the teachers concerned were motivated towards producing further materials and strategies applicable to Aboriginal children.

For their programme analysis, this team chose to analyse the English Language Focus Points documents used by most teachers to plan their yearly programme. They identified objectives which needed adaptation to address Aboriginal children's needs in language learning.

The team also produced detailed analyses for the Linguistic Work Package which brought to light new features which had not been recorded in the original research stage. These included new content words, in particular words used to describe relationships. Some of their prior assumptions were challenged; for example, they had expected phonological reduction of medial "h", but it rarely occurred, although initial "h" was frequently omitted. In their discussion of their data collection techniques, they wrote:

*The group recordings of the children during classroom sessions were effective not only in showing us the language features being displayed but also how we as teachers were reacting to language, children and the general classroom demeanour. The recordings were valuable teacher(ing) evaluation tools and motivational tools for the children. They enjoyed being recorded and being allowed to record their work on audio tape.*

### Example 4

A Jyugan country teacher tried several strategies to bridge between the two cultures in her teaching. One popular activity was sand tray printing, during which one student exclaimed "Hey I can do this at home!"

### Example 5

One teacher transcribed and analysed a tape made by an Aboriginal Education Worker.

## 4.4 Final Assessment of Participant Outcomes

The minimum requirements of participating teachers were:

- a) Attendance at professional development
- b) Presentation of two tutorials
- c) Demonstration of knowledge of readings.

Teachers were assessed overall according to four grades: Incomplete, Satisfactory, Highly Satisfactory and Outstanding. Their results were moderated by a meeting of the Project Team, and the final distribution of grades was as follows:

Incomplete: 9 participants

Satisfactory: 1

Highly Satisfactory: 3

Outstanding: 4

As far as Edith Cowan University was concerned, exemption from units was determined on a pass/fail basis. Eight participants were recommended for exemptions from both the linguistics and education units, and one other participant was recommended for exemption from the linguistics unit.

At the conclusion of the Mentoring stage of the project, participants were sent letters of thanks and credit information.



# CHAPTER 5: OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT

This chapter will sum up the project by looking at the variety of outputs and outcomes which were produced. These encompass:

- the development of courses for ongoing professional development and training
- the specific benefits and outcomes achieved by teachers who participated in the project, and their evaluation of the project as a whole
- further ongoing outcomes of the project, in relation to professional development, research activities and dissemination of project results

We will also address future directions for research and professional development which arise out of the present project.

## 5.1 Course Development

As stated at the beginning of this report, a major aim of this project was to develop course modules which would provide teachers with an Aboriginal perspective on communication and education. On the basis of the experience with the pilot group of teachers, new units have indeed been produced, but furthermore, they have been incorporated into specialist awards for teachers who wish to undertake more substantial study at a graduate level. Teachers who achieved course credits by working with us on the pilot project will be able, if they enrol in the relevant awards, to be exempted from either one or two units.

Two new units, each equivalent to 45 hours of study, were developed in the course of the project, one in Aboriginal English and the other in Two Way Learning for Aboriginal English speakers. These units are to be made available on campus at Edith Cowan University, but also in the external mode, to enable them to be taken by teachers working in remote areas. Multimedia presentation will be used for the external units.

By combining these units with appropriate existing units, teachers taking them may complete a specialist award in bidialectal education for Aboriginal people, either at the level of a Graduate Certificate (4 units) or of a Graduate Diploma (8 units). Alternatively, the units may be taken as part of a Bachelor's degree in Education. These courses are a collaborative effort between the Faculties of Arts and Education. They have the full support of both, and approval from the University for introduction from February, 1996.

The new unit outlines and Graduate Certificate course description are reproduced below.

### 5.1.1 Unit: LST4144 Aboriginal English

This unit provides an introduction to Aboriginal English as a dialect of English and a grounding in the techniques of data elicitation and analysis which are associated with the

## *Chapter 5*

research-based study of Aboriginal English. It provides a theoretical framework within which the range of varieties of Aboriginal English may be understood and introduces the student to the wider field of the international study of pidgins, creoles, world Englishes and non-standard dialect studies.

Prerequisites: None.

### ***Objectives***

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

- 1) recognize and identify features with respect to the phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexico-semantic and discourse levels of analysis which characterise Aboriginal English as a distinctive dialect of English;
- 2) identify speech acts, speech events, genres and norms of communication which are associated with the use of Aboriginal English.
- 3) appreciate the experience of speakers of Aboriginal English as members of a community whose speech variety is generally not accepted in education or in the community at large;
- 4) relate the present form of varieties of Aboriginal English to the socio-historical and linguistic processes which have been associated with their development;
- 5) employ appropriate field techniques to elicit Aboriginal English speech data;
- 6) analyse spoken and written samples of Aboriginal English in a linguistically-informed way.
- 7) account for the similarities and differences which relate Aboriginal English features to features of other creole-related varieties, and of developmental continua within Australian English.

### ***Unit Content:***

- 1) Concepts and terminology for the linguistic study of dialect.
- 2) Survey of research findings on the features of Aboriginal English at the levels of phonology, morphology, syntax, lexico-semantics and discourse.
- 3) Survey of research findings on the use of Aboriginal English in society, including its speech acts, speech events, genres, norms of communication and place within the wider linguistic ecology of Australia.
- 4) Outline of common structural and semantic features of Australian Aboriginal languages.
- 5) Pidginization, creolization and decreolization as processes and as factors in the historical development of contact varieties in Australia.
- 6) Simplification, Nativization and Transfer as principles for the interpretation of the variation in Aboriginal English.

- 7) Aboriginal English as a medium for the expression of Aboriginality and an alternative way of organising reality to that provided by Standard Australian English.
- 8) Other creole-derived Englishes and their study (in particular, Vernacular Black English, Hawaiian English, British Black English, Maori English).
- 9) Field techniques for the elicitation of dialect data.
- 10) Approaches to the analysis and interpretation of field data on Aboriginal English.
- 11) Aboriginal English in literary and other writing.

### ***Teaching and Learning Processes***

Lectures, tutorials, guided reading assignments, linguistic analysis workshops, field exercises in data collection, interactions with Aboriginal community members.

### ***Assessment***

Tutorial presentation based on field work	30%
Essay	30%
Examination	40%

### ***Text***

No required text. (The present report will form part of the input into the course).

### ***Significant References***

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- Ward, Glenyse (1987) *Wandering Girl* Broome: Magabala Books.
- Ward, Glenyse (1991) *Unna You Fullas*. Broome: Magabala Books.

### **5.1.2 Unit: EDU4569 Two-way Learning and Bidialectal Education**

This unit applies the principles of bidialectal education and two-way learning to the needs of learners who speak Aboriginal English. It locates bidialectal education among the approaches to the English language education of non-standard dialect speakers and examines the relevance of the concept in Australia. The Aboriginal concept of two-way learning is explained and related to bidialectal education. On the basis of a knowledge of the linguistic and cultural characteristics of Aboriginal English use, principles are proposed and illustrated for the modification of primary and secondary curricula to meet the needs of bidialectal Aboriginal learners.

Prerequisites: None.

#### **Objectives**

On completion of this unit students should be able to:

1. demonstrate a clear understanding of bidialectal education as an approach to the instruction of students who speak a non-standard dialect of English.
2. appreciate the Aboriginal concept of two-way learning and apply it to the situation of the learner who is a speaker of Aboriginal English.

3. recognize the ways in which Aboriginal English approaches knowledge and communication differently from Standard Australian English;
4. apply strategies to the presentation of learning materials and experiences for Aboriginal students which will capitalize on the ways of thinking and communicating which are appropriate to Aboriginal English.
5. develop ways of enriching the curriculum for non-Aboriginal learners through the appropriate use of Aboriginal ways of approaching and communicating knowledge;
6. provide learning experiences for Aboriginal English speakers which will be effective in bridging the gap between their first dialect and the standard dialect required in the wider society.
7. employ appropriate procedures for evaluating language and learning on the part of learners who speak Aboriginal English.

### ***Unit Content***

1. Aboriginal English as a distinctive system for the understanding and organization of knowledge and reality.
2. The language education of speakers of non-standard dialects: a critical survey of approaches.
3. Bidialectal education: principles and procedures.
4. Aboriginal aspirations for education and the 'two-way' learning concept.
5. Principles for the modification of curricula to enable a two-way bidialectal approach to be taken.
6. Aboriginal classroom communication and the modification of classroom discourse to favour two-way education.
7. Development of strategies for bridging between the two dialects of bidialectal learners and of mixed classrooms.

### ***Teaching and Learning Processes***

Lectures, teaching workshops, group discussion, guided reading assignments, observation and case study work in classrooms with Aboriginal students.

### ***Assessment***

Tutorial presentation based on curriculum innovations	30%
Essay	30%
Examination	40%

### ***Texts***

No required text.



### **Significant References**

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### **5.1.3 Graduate Certificate of Arts in Language Studies (Aboriginal)**

The Graduate Certificate of Arts in Language Studies (Aboriginal) will incorporate both of the above units in addition to two existing units: ACS2201 Working with Aboriginal People, and ALS1100 Aboriginal Languages of Australia. The former unit is serviced by Kurongkurl

Katatjin School of Aboriginal Studies, while the School of Language, Literature and Media Studies is responsible for the former.

### ***Aims and Objectives***

1. To promote language awareness with regard to Aboriginal languages and Aboriginal English within the Australian community.
2. To give access to research-based knowledge which will enhance communication between speakers of Aboriginal languages and Aboriginal English and members of the wider Australian community.
3. To apply linguistic knowledge and methods of inquiry to the development and delivery of educational programmes for learners who speak Aboriginal languages or Aboriginal English.
4. To provide a context and knowledge base on which bidialectal approaches may be reviewed and effectively employed in Aboriginal education.

### ***Course Structure***

ALS 1100/4100	Aboriginal Languages of Australia
ACS2201/4201	Working with Aboriginal People
LST4144	Aboriginal English
EDU4569	Two Way Learning and Bidialectal Education

### ***Entrance Requirements***

Students must be graduates with a recognised tertiary qualification.

### ***Existing Unit Descriptions***

#### ***ALS 1100/4100 Aboriginal Languages of Australia.***

This unit is an introduction to the study of Australian Aboriginal languages. It provides a basis for approaching the learning of any particular Aboriginal language, as well as for undertaking further studies in linguistic analysis of Aboriginal languages generally. The content of the unit is concerned with communication in Aboriginal communities, the use of Aboriginal languages, the role of Aboriginal language informants in passing on knowledge of their languages, and the complex structures which typically characterise the original indigenous vernaculars as well as the more recently developed creole languages which are spoken across the north of Australia.

#### ***ACS2201/4201 Working With Aboriginal People***

This unit aims to equip students with a range of conceptual and skill-based tools for critically analysing and developing ways for working with Aboriginal people from different communities.

### **5.1.4 Graduate Diploma of Arts in Language Studies (Major in Teaching Standard English as a Second Dialect)**

The Graduate Diploma of Arts in Language Studies is an existing course at Edith Cowan University which provides specialist training for teachers in such areas as Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, Teaching Languages Other Than English and Teaching Reading/Language Arts. It has a core of four units in linguistics which are common to each of these major streams.

Approval has been gained to enable the four units of the Graduate Certificate in Language Studies (Aboriginal) to serve also as four units within the Graduate Diploma of Arts in Language Studies, comprising a major stream in Teaching Standard English as a Second Dialect.

The Graduate Diploma of Language Studies with the major in Teaching Standard English as a Second Language will be able to be completed in a minimum of one year's full time study and will involve the following units:

*Core Units:*

- LST 4181 Principles of Language Analysis
- LST 4283 Psycholinguistics
- LST4285 Sociolinguistics
- LST4289 Discourse, Grammar and Meaning

*Elective Units:*

- ALS 1100/4100 Aboriginal Languages of Australia
- ACS 2201/4201 Working With Aboriginal People
- LST4144 Aboriginal English
- EDU4569 Two Way Learning and Bidialectal Education

Both the Graduate Certificate and the Graduate Diploma Course will be available from 1996 in external mode.

In addition, students will be able to access the units which have been developed through this project by incorporating them in a Bachelor of Education.

## **5.2 Ongoing Outcomes**

The level of ongoing activities is an indicator in itself of the success of a project. The present project seems to be having a ripple effect in terms of continuing awareness raising, and demand for professional development is increasing at a rapid rate.

### *Continuing teacher action research and awareness-raising*

Teachers are continuing to make use of the training they have received:

- some teachers are continuing to obtain student speech samples, utilising the analysis techniques which were imparted through the professional development program.
- teachers are using the knowledge acquired to devise / design and implement a bidialectal approach to teaching. They are working on the curriculum and language use within the classroom.

Teachers who were involved in the program are already "spreading the word". Examples:

- teachers have a strong foundation on which to advocate on behalf of Aboriginal English-speaking students when other staff express "deficit" views.
- some of our participating teachers have been proactive in involving their whole staff in professional development on issues relating to Aboriginal English.
- interest and information are spreading spontaneously through departmental networks.

In addition, general awareness of the needs of Aboriginal English-speaking students in both rural and urban contexts is increasing, as is evidenced by the exponential increase in professional development requests from schools to the Education Officer concerned. The past year has seen a new development in that calls for help are now coming from teachers in the South West, in addition to the ongoing demand from the Kimberley, Goldfields and Central Desert areas.

### *Ongoing Professional Development Activities*

During the course of the project, records were kept of ongoing professional development which took place as a result of the project. As a result of the many requests for professional development from teachers around the state, the Education Department's ESL Unit has already organised further inservicing in ESL / SESD for teachers of Aboriginal students. One intensive course held over five days in January 1995 attracted 52 teachers and again proved to be very successful. Members of the Project Team contributed alongside additional Departmental staff.

The ESL Unit has also undertaken further professional development activities for First Steps, ELAN, Aboriginal Education Specialist Teachers and Aboriginal Education Workers addressing the issue of Aboriginal children's English. Several inservice presentations at individual schools have been attended by all school staff, who have generally been very receptive.

In view of the increased levels of activity in this area, Western Australian providers of professional development in Aboriginal English are agreed on the need to coordinate their professional development activities and are looking at ways to facilitate this.

***Establishment of Bidialectal Planning Committee.***

The Education Department of Western Australia has established a Bidialectal Planning Committee to assist policy development. In order to develop an appropriate policy statement, the committee is organising a forum to be held in the near future to canvass views regarding the use of Aboriginal English in schools.

***Continuing university and departmental research initiatives***

The present project has highlighted a number of needs for further research (see below), some of which, it is hoped, will be addressed by several research possibilities are being actively pursued for funding next year. Perhaps the most significant of these is a proposal for a substantial collaborative project, developed by the Education Department of Western Australia and Edith Cowan University. Following upon the success of the present project, the collaborators hope to build on the insights and training techniques gained by further action research and application of two-way education for Aboriginal students.

Subject to funding, the proposed project will include the training of Aboriginal Liaison Officers and Education Workers to carry out research which will feed into development of curricula incorporating knowledge gained in Aboriginal English and two-way learning. Particular attention will be paid to acquiring data on more complex features of Aboriginal English which were beyond the scope of the present project, such as genres, semantic fields and particular registers.

It is worth pointing out that the linguistic data gathered in this project have already provided a useful extension to previous knowledge of Aboriginal English spoken by Western Australian Aboriginal school children. An application to pursue further research on the history and present day expression of Aboriginality and English is currently under consideration by the Australian Research Council.

***Dissemination of project results***

As was indicated at the beginning of this report, the report has been written with the intention of providing a document which will be useful both for purposes of accountability and as an aid to future providers of professional development in Aboriginal English and Two-way Learning.

Throughout the project, team members from the Department of Education have provided regular reports their Departmental management and the Aboriginal Education Branch, as well as issuing information to anyone else requesting it. The present report will be disseminated through the Aboriginal Education Branch to schools with significant populations of Aboriginal students, and it will also be provided to all other Branches of the Department having input into the areas of language and literacy.

Academic communication channels are also being utilised. Articles describing the project have appeared in *Campus Review*, Edith Cowan University's research publication, *Quest*, and the Faculty of Education Newsletter produced by Bunbury campus. Advertising for the new courses is currently in preparation.

The project is already having an influence beyond local networks. There has been active information exchange between this project and others investigating Aboriginal Education interstate. In addition, the project is proving to be relevant to education providers overseas who are faced with similar tasks in responding to the diversity of their clients. It has already been received with interest at several international conferences on language and literacy, resulting in a number of requests for further information.

The project report has been considered by members of the Edith Cowan University Aboriginal Research Steering Committee, and their feedback has been incorporated into the final version

## **5.3 Formal Evaluation of the Project**

Because of the action research nature of the Project, evaluation was an ongoing process. The key formal inputs were one evaluation form completed by participants at the end of the July Inservice, and a questionnaire and evaluation form which they completed at the conclusion of their involvement in the project. We have already discussed the responses of participants to the July Inservice Evaluation Form. Hence, what follows is a description of responses to the final questionnaire and evaluation form, along with additional oral feedback received from both teacher participants and team members.

### **5.3.1 Final Evaluation Form**

The final evaluation form consisted of a number of statements addressing each component of the project. Participants were asked to rate the programme on each of the items, on a scale from 1 (lowest rating) to 5 (highest rating)... It is reproduced in Appendix 9, along with a figure summarising the ratings given to each item. The ratings provide a useful overview of the comparative effectiveness of different aspects of the project, but they should be interpreted in conjunction with the more detailed responses acquired through the final questionnaire and oral feedback received.

### **5.3.2 Final Questionnaire**

The aims of the project with respect to the participating teachers, as shown in 1.3.1, were concerned with assisting them towards acquiring:

- a better understanding of Aboriginal English;
- a greater capacity to appreciate Indigenous ways of approaching experience and knowledge;
- a capacity to provide learning experiences for Aboriginal students which recognize their dialect knowledge and promote the learning of standard English.

The questionnaire provided for teachers near the end of the project (see Appendix 8) mirrored was intended to evaluate the project's effectiveness in achieving these objectives by sampling their perceptions with respect to:

- Aboriginal English;
- Aboriginal perceptions of communication in relation to the classroom, and
- the ways in which the project had influenced their thinking and practice.

The questionnaire had three sections. Section 1 (questions 1.1-1.10) was concerned with how the dialect difference between Aboriginal English and standard English was perceived. Its ten items were developed on the basis of the initial interviews conducted with the teachers on the first team visits to the schools. Ten comments which had been made by teachers about Aboriginal children's speech or speech use were quoted in the questionnaire and teachers were invited to respond to these comments in terms of their perceptions at the end of the programme. The comments used all represented a monodialectal perspective in the way in which they viewed Aboriginal English. Simple agreement with them at the end of the project would indicate a failure of the project to meet its objectives. On the other hand, responses showing heightened linguistic and cultural awareness could be taken as indicative of achievement of the project's objectives.

Section 2 of the questionnaire (questions 2.1-2.5) was concerned with the teachers' response to Aboriginal perceptions of the kind of communication which goes on in the classroom. Its five items were all derived from comments made by Aboriginal Education Workers in their interviews during the initial team visits to the schools. In the questionnaire these comments were presented to the teachers for comment. It was assumed that an openness and ability to accommodate to the perceptions of the Aboriginal Education Workers on the part of the teachers at the end of the project would show that the kind of cultural awareness sought by the project was in evidence and that rationalisation of or resistance to Aboriginal perceptions would show the opposite.

Section 3 of the questionnaire (questions 3-6) provided an opportunity for teachers to specify directly the benefits, or otherwise, which the project had achieved for them, in terms of improved understanding of Aboriginal English, appreciation of Aboriginal ways of approaching experience and knowledge, skills of linguistic data gathering and analysis and pedagogical insights.

### *Analysis of Responses*

This analysis is based on 13 questionnaire forms returned by the participating teachers. Although 18 teachers participated in the project, some filled in the forms jointly and one teacher did not return a form and was not able to be contacted.

#### *Section 1: How Dialect Difference is Perceived*

Table 5.1 shows in column 1 the linguistic or sociolinguistic features of the children's speech behaviour which were focused on by the teachers in the initial interview, in column 2 the ways in which the teachers described them, and in column 3 the response made by the teachers to these descriptions at the end of the course.

**Table 5.1: Teacher Perceptions of Dialect Difference**

Feature commented on in initial interview	Description used in initial interview	Comment made at end of project:							
		Agree		Disagree		Alternative explanation		No comment	
		n.	%	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
Phonological difference	"They slur their speech"	3	23	3	23	5	38.5	2	15.5
Different phonemic range/distribution	"Letters are dropped off words"	6	46			6	46	1	7.5
Distinctive speech rhythm	"They speak fast and run words together"	4	31			7	54	2	15.5
Question marking by intonation	"They use statements instead of questions"	4	31	1	7.5	6	46	2	15.5
Alternation of variant forms in verb morphology	"They confuse <i>was</i> and <i>were</i> "	4	31			8	61.5	1	7.5
Non-use of inversion (e.g. in questions)	"They say and write things back to front"	3	23			7	54	3	23
Variable occurrence of some function words	"They miss words out of their sentences"	2	15.5			10	77	1	7.5
Variable tense marking	"They make improper use of tense"	4	31	1	7.5	7	54	1	7.5
Non-use of address forms/ eye contact	"It's hard to know when they are talking to you"	2	15.5	4	31	6	46	1	7.5
Different response time	"They are slower to react to a request"	2	15.5	1	7.5	9	69.5	1	7.5
Totals		34	26	10	7.5	71	55	15	11.5

The responses of the teachers show that there was a much stronger trend towards providing an alternative interpretation of the communicative behaviour of the children (55%) than towards simply endorsing the monodialectal judgment which had been recovered from the earlier interviews (26%). This suggests that the teachers were working from a basis of greater linguistic and cultural awareness rather than stereotyping. This interpretation is confirmed when the content of the teachers' responses is examined. Although the explanations given by the teachers might in a number of cases be contested, they show a willingness to understand the children's behaviour on a consistent basis rather than simply to label it. The following illustrate such responses (numbered according to the questions in the questionnaire to which they were responding):

#### Linguistic explanations:

- 1.1 "Children don't confuse 'was' and 'were' but [it] is part of their Aboriginal English"
- 1.4 "Different phonological system of Aboriginal English"



- 1.5 “Aboriginal English is an ‘economical language’ only using words that are necessary”
- 1.6 “Subject-verb ordering is not always as in standard English”
- 1.7 “Word formations- simplification”
- 1.8 “Transfer”

Cultural explanations:

- 1.3 “Questioning is culturally inappropriate”
- 1.5 “The children see not need for embellishments”
- 1.9 “Cultural difference: no eye contact, soft voice”
- 1.11 “Aboriginal people are comfortable with a longer ‘wait time’”

Other explanations:

- 1.2 “Many children speak quickly. Also speech is slurred often due to health problems.”
- 1.4 “The children speak and write as they hear the sounds. Many sounds are not occurring in their native language.”
- 1.5 “Important parts included”
- 1.8 “Agree, but so do white kids”.

*Section 2: How Aboriginal Views of Classroom Communication are Received*

Table 5.2 lists the five comments from Aboriginal Education Workers, taken from the initial interviews, to which the teachers were invited to respond. Responses have been classified according to whether the teacher simply accepted or endorsed the comment, denied or rationalised it, projected some change of her own behaviour in response to it, or made no response to it. The results shown on Table 5.2 show that, with very few exceptions, the teachers were respectful of the views put forward by the Aboriginal Education Workers and were prepared to detail ways in which they might accommodate to them. While it cannot be claimed that the project *produced* this mindset on the part of the teachers (indeed, their volunteering to participate in it showed that it may well have existed at the beginning), it is consistent with the objectives of the project that such attitudes were shown by the teachers at the conclusion of the project.

Some examples of responses of the teachers to items in this section of the questionnaire are:

- 1.1 “Since having this pointed out I have witnessed it on numerous occasions and try to avoid it”
- 1.2 “Teach explicit differences between Aboriginal English and SAE”
- 1.2 “Teachers don’t match teaching to Aboriginal students’ world view- modify content appropriately”
- 1.3 “Use of AEWs as bridging the gap. Teacher must work hard at developing relationships with Aboriginal students.”
- 1.4 “Invite people in to share oral telling of stories”

1.5 “Children need to learn when to switch from SAE to AE. It is important to be able to use both languages completely in order to make way in Australian society.

Respect for AE at school will assist the transition.”

**Table 5.2 Teacher Responses to Aboriginal Perceptions of the Classroom**

Aboriginal Perceptions (from AEW interviews)	Teacher Responses:							
	1. Acceptance (only)		2. Denial or Rationalisation		3. Offering of strategies to accommodate		4. No comment	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
2.1 “Teachers use words that children and parents don’t understand”	2	15.5			10	77	1	7.5
2.2 “Teachers teach what they have decided beforehand”	1	7.5	3	23	8	61.5	1	7.5
2.3 “With an Aboriginal teacher I think they’d feel freer to say things”	3	23			9	69.5	1	7.5
2.4 “Aboriginal people should be putting down more stories”	6	46	1	7.5	6	46		
2.5 “If children use SAE at home, parents get angry and say ‘You’re not at school’”	2	15.5	1	7.5	9	69.5	1	7.5
Totals	14	21.5	5	7.5	42	65	4	6

### *Section 3: Teacher Self-Assessment of Project Outcomes*

Table 5.3 shows the way in which the participating teachers evaluated the project in terms of its outcomes for them in the areas of understanding of Aboriginal English, insight into Aboriginal ways of approaching experience and knowledge, skills at linguistic data collection and analysis, and capacity to implement two way education.

Overall, the responses show that, in all areas except linguistic data gathering and analysis, most teachers saw themselves as benefiting significantly from the project, while all but one of the teachers claimed to have benefited in linguistic skills to some extent. The responses show that the area of most significant gain was in understanding of Aboriginal English. The second area, that of gaining insight, through the dialect, into Aboriginal ways of approaching experience and knowledge, is less tangible and less accessible through existing research. This may well be the first major teacher development project to address the area. It is, then, to be seen as a positive result that most of the teachers considered that what they had learned here had been of benefit.

**Table 5.3: Teachers' Assessment of Benefits Gained from Project Participation**

Area Specified	Teacher Responses:							
	1. Significant Benefit		2. Some Benefit		3. No Benefit		4. No Comment	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
Understanding of Aboriginal English	10	77	1	7.5	1	7.5	1	7.5
Insight into Aboriginal ways of approaching experience and knowledge	6	46	3	23	2	15.5	2	15.5
Linguistic data gathering and analysis skills	4	31	8	61.5			1	7.5
Pedagogic skills in two-way education	5	38.5	3	23	2	15.5	3	23
Totals	25	48	15	29	5	10	7	13

The area where the response was least strong (though there was over a 60% expression of benefit) was that of pedagogical skills in two-way education. This is understandable, in view of the fact that the disciplinary base of the project was in linguistics rather than education and that the intention was to get the linguistic understandings right before making the pedagogical applications. There is room for further teacher development projects to build on what this one has done by developing the classroom implications of bidialectal education further.

### 5.3.3 Further Comments

Teachers were also given the opportunity to provide further feedback on the project by means of self-initiated comment on or accompanying the questionnaire forms. A summary of the points made, as well as oral feedback received, is as follows:

#### (a) Matters Commented on Positively

- “great learning experience”
- value of working cooperatively with other teachers
- personal and professional development gained
- desire to be kept in touch with outcomes and further developments
- desire to do a further extension course
- desire to have the programme extended to other teachers
- readings were a useful means of gaining more understanding from the articles
- workload was fair for two units credit

**(b) Matters Commented on Negatively**

- the project was 'light on' in dealing with classroom practice
- need to provide examples of good practice
- need more help with classes where Aboriginal students are in the minority
- answering questions from the readings seen as "pointless"
- heavy work load involved
- requirements of work tasks not provided early or clearly enough.

Teachers at one school felt that although they had been given a lot of help with oral language, the course had not adequately developed the use of written text. They felt they lacked knowledge of how to deal with students' writing, or how to help their students deal with written text.

Overall, experience has vindicated the targeting of this project at teachers who are already teaching Aboriginal children, rather than simply pre-service training. Motivation is an important factor; as far as possible, change in this area needs to come from the classroom teachers themselves, rather than imposing such a programme from above. As the team from Wongi1 said in their submission,

*A programme such as this will only be successful if the teacher is willing to accept Aboriginals, their language and their culture, and not be afraid to go beyond the norm and try new methods of learning and teaching.*

But for those who are motivated, a project such as this has obviously provided the means for exciting explorations of new ways to meet the needs of their Indigenous students.

## **5.4 Directions for the future**

### **5.4.1 Ongoing Inservice Work**

In accordance with the evaluation data obtained from the participating teachers, further inservice work needs to be provided, targeting both teachers with prior knowledge (such as those involved in this project) and teachers who need a programme similar in objectives to this one.

In further inservice work based on the model provided by this project, attention needs to be given to the needs expressed by the participating teachers for:

- a realistic workload for the participants
- fuller input on the Aboriginal approaches to knowledge and experience
- greater integration of linguistic knowledge with classroom needs
- special attention to the needs of teachers whose Aboriginal students constitute a small minority of the class.

At the same time, the many strengths which have been recognised in the project in its present form should be incorporated in further work with similar objectives.

## 5.4.2 Future research needs

### *Insights into two-way teaching methodology*

As was noted in Chapter 4, there is an urgent need for further research into bidialectal two-way teaching, both at a theoretical and a methodological level. What methodologies are useful for keeping code-switching going? At present there is much confusion at a theoretical level, and a survey analysis of the various "two-way" ideas and theories of bilingual/bidialectal education is needed to provide a solid foundation for practice. What kinds of genres are there? There is a strong need for new strategies to address these issues.

There is also a need for a survey of *two-way practice* state-wide, Australia-wide. This would include evaluation of available materials against theoretical criteria for real 'two-way', 'Aboriginal way' learning. Since Aboriginal English and culture interacts with educational processes at all levels, such research needs to take into account issues such as the culture of the classroom, the influence of school structures on educational development, and the effects of Outcomes statements in moving curriculum decision-making from syllabus writers to practitioners in the classroom.

The relation of the Aboriginal English dialect to Aboriginal cultural studies needs to be investigated. Research is also needed into ways of increasing the effective utilisation of Aboriginal English by Aboriginal teachers in classrooms.

## 5.4.3 Participation of Indigenous staff and community members

### *Community Participation*

Introducing more Aboriginal language and Aboriginal English into schools will require more participation by Indigenous people. Use of voluntary contributors is one way, but on the ground it often presents logistical and other difficulties which cannot be overcome. Alternatively, the Western Australian Aboriginal Education Strategic Planning Group (1992, p.16) recommended a strategy of "employment of Aboriginal community members in programs related to Aboriginal history, culture and languages" (p.16). As we saw in Chapter 1, there is a strong drive towards greater Indigenous participation at both Federal and State levels.

### *Utilisation of Aboriginal Education Workers and Aboriginal Liaison Officers*

Future consolidation of the gains produced by this project would be greatly assisted by more effective utilisation of Aboriginal Education Workers. The kind of training developed in this project has the potential to address the culture gap which can occur between AEWs and classroom teachers, partly as a result of their separate training. In view of this, further professional development should aim to increase the role of Aboriginal Education Workers as resource persons in two-way learning by training paired teams of AEWs and classroom

teachers (as recommended by Aboriginal Participation in Schools Decision Making (WA Ed Dept policy). By training both in the same context, we can immediately produce a genuine 'two-way' environment in which the contributions of members of each culture are valued equally. It should be noted that the development of this area may also have implications for the writing of Competencies for AEWs.

In addition to this, training could be further enhanced by the inclusion of Aboriginal Liaison Officers from the appropriate districts in a fully collaborative approach. ALOs have an important role in feeding back what is happening in the community, and hence they may be critical to ensuring that programs for the use of Aboriginal English are endorsed and understood by parents, and that attitudes to language use at home and school are complementary.

### *Aboriginal Researchers*

Steps need to be taken to encourage the participation of Aboriginal people in research into Aboriginal English in Western Australia. Provision of scholarships to study or work full time on research projects might be a way to approach this.

#### **5.4.4 Conclusion: Inclusivity of Indigenous students**

Finally, the chief aim of this project has been, by means of the research, inservicing and course development, to achieve a raising of awareness of the reality and classroom implications of Aboriginal English. The paradox is that it is by the recognition of difference in Indigenous students' communicative worlds that we can achieve greater inclusivity and equity in education, along with the continued maintenance and development of Indigenous culture and identity.

This chapter has demonstrated the success which has been achieved - and the ongoing challenges which await future efforts. The Project and the establishment of the courses in Aboriginal English and Bidialectal Education for Two-way Learning have set the scene for continuing classroom innovation to which we look forward with anticipation.



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# **Appendix 1**

## **Project Timeline**



## Review of Tasks 1994-1995

<u>Date</u>	<u>Research Team</u>	<u>Participating Teachers</u>	<u>Education Department</u>
February 1994	Formation of research team		Appointment of 2 members to research team
	Preparation of project information sheet		Contacting schools and teachers
March 1994	Selection of 9 schools and 18 teachers		
	Appointment of research assistant (1)		
	Initiation of literature searches		
April 1994	Preparation for data elicitation		
	- individual schedule		
	- group schedule		
	- teacher interviews		
May 1994	-Aboriginal adult interviews		
	Appointment of research assistant (2) (Aboriginal)		
	Data gathering visits to all 9 schools	Observation of data gathering interviews	
	Transcription of tapes		
June 1994	Analysis of linguistic data from schools		
	Development of autonomous learning packages		
	Planning of July inservice course		
July 1994	Inservice course: 1 week's training based on research data	Inservice course: 1 week's training based on research data	
	Organisation of mentors for participating teachers		

*cont'd ...*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Research Team</b>	<b>Participating Teachers</b>	<b>Education Department</b>
August 1994	Development and forwarding of comparative analyses across schools	Progressive work on autonomous work package	
	Determination and forwarding to teachers of work packages (a) Linguistic (b) Educational	Progressive work on linguistic (action research) work package	
	Analysis of teacher and adult Aboriginal interview data	Progressive work on education (2 way learning) work package	
		Ongoing contact with team mentor	
September 1994	Preparation of unit and course outlines for University approval	(As for August)	
	Determination of evaluation procedures for teachers and project		Initial meeting to establish bidialectal education consultative group
October 1994	Second Inservice visit to schools - tutorials - evaluation	Inservice presentations to research team (some submissions to follow by mail)	Joint inservicing of Aboriginal education specialists with project team
December 1994	Finalisation of evaluation of teacher input and sending out of letters of thanks and credit information		
January 1995	Further assistance with Education Dept. inservice work		Further joint inservice work with team
February 1995	Analysis of evaluation forms	Project evaluation forms due to be returned	
	Appointment of research assistant (3)		Meeting of Project members with Executive Director Student Services on follow up to project
	Progressive drafting of Project Report		
March 1995	Ongoing work on Project Report		Establishment of collaborative team to seek funding for continuation of research

(cont'd)

Date	Research Team	Participating Teachers	Education Department
May 1995	Project Report due for completion		Research application for 1996 due for submission
February 1996		Credit may be claimed towards up to 2 units in Graduate Certificate of Arts in Language Studies (Aboriginal) or Graduate Diploma of Arts in Language Studies (Bidialectal Education Major)	



## **Appendix 2**

### **Individual Profile Sheet**









# **Appendix 3**

## **Analysis Framework**

[ DATA SOURCE: Indiv (no. ) Group (no. ) Other

SCHOOL:

FEATURE	SAE	n	Abl Eng FORM	n	OTHER Abl Eng ALTERNANTS	n
<b>Simplifications</b>						
<b>1.00 Non-occurring forms</b>						
1.1 Verb 3 person singular present (-s)	he eats					
1.2 Verb past tense: regular (-ed)	he waited					
1.3 Verb past tense: irregular (eg come)	he came					
1.4 Verb auxiliary 'have' with perfect	he <u>has come</u>					
1.5 Verb auxiliary 'have' with past perfect	he <u>had come</u>					
1.6 Verb auxiliary 'be' with present continuous	he <u>[i]s coming</u>					
1.7 Verb auxiliary 'be' with past continuous	he <u>was coming</u>					
1.8 Verb auxiliary 'be' with passive (present)	it <u>[i]s taken</u>					
1.8.1 Verb auxiliary 'be' with passive (past)	it <u>was taken</u>					
1.9 Verb copula 'be' with 'there'	<u>There is/was</u>					
1.10 Verb copula 'be' with singular subject	<u>it is/was</u> hot					
1.11 Verb copula 'be' with plural subject	<u>they are/were</u> sad					
1.12 Noun: plural (-s)	two dogs					

**FEATURE**

**SCHOOL:**

(Simplifications - contd.)

**SAE**

**n**

**Abl Eng FORM**

**n**

**OTHER Abl Eng ALTERNANTS**

**n**

1.13 Noun: plural (-es)

two watches

1.14 Noun: possessive ('s)

John's bike

1.15 Pronoun: possessive

their

1.16 Article: definite

the ball

1.17 Article: indefinite

a ball

1.18 Gerund or participle

**2.0 Non-occurring functions**

2.1 Differentiation of past tense from past participle

we saw/we have seen

we seen

2.2 Subject-verb agreement in plural auxiliary

we were going

we was goin(g)

**3.0 Syntactic reduction**

3.1 'YES/NO' questions with 'be' or modals

Can I go now?

I can go now?

3.2 WH questions

Where are you going?

Where you goin(g)?

3.3 DO questions

Do you want it?

You want it?

3.4 Reported speech (backshifting)

He said we could

He said we can

3.5 Conditional

If you talk you're out

You talk you ('re) out

**FEATURE****SCHOOL:****(Simplifications - contd.)****SAE****n****Abl Eng FORM****n****OTHER Abl Eng  
ALTERNANTS****n****4.0 Phonological reduction**

## 4.1 Non-occurring phonemes

4.1.1 Initial h

house

'ouse

4.1.2 Medial h

behhind

be'ind

4.1.3 Initial

4.1.4 Other

## 4.2 Consonant clusters

Esperance

Esperan

## 4.3 Liaisons between vowels

an egg

a egg

**FEATURE**

**Nativization**

**SCHOOL:**

**5.0 New Forms**

- 5.1 Verb: invariant past/completion marker 'bin'      see 1.2, 1.3
- 5.2 Verb: invariant question forming tag, eg. 'ana'      isn't it? don't you?  
(etc)
- 5.3 Verb: invariant negator 'nothing'                      is/does not
- 5.4 Pronoun: personal invariant 3 pers. sing. 'e'            he/she/it
- 5.4.1 Personal invariant 3 per s/pl im                      it, they
- 5.5 Pronoun: analytical possessive 'he's', 'e's'              his (her/its)
- 5.6 Pronoun: non-analytical possessive  
( 'Stephen for car' )    Stephen's car
- 5.7 Pronoun: reflexive    Themselves
- 5.8 Phonological reconstruction ('aksed', 'its  
mean')

**SAE**

n

**Abl Eng FORM**

n

**OTHER Abl Eng  
ALTERNANTS**

n



## FEATURE

*(Nativization cont'd)*

### 6.0 New Functions

6.1 Plurality in 2nd pers. pronoun ('yous', 'yufella')

6.2 Duality in the pronoun ('yunmi')

6.3 'Emphatic definite article' (dat)

6.4 'Emphatic indefinite article' (one)

### 7.0 New Structures

7.1 Pre-clausal extension ('Emu egg, I bin eatin em')

7.2 Post-clausal extension  
( 'We seen a big snake, big green one')

### 8.0 New Content Words

8.1 Simple (eg 'jar' = scold)

8.2 Compound (eg 'liar-say' = say falsely)

### 9.0 Content Words with Semantic Shift

(eg granny = grandfather/grandmother)

## SCHOOL:

SAE	n	Abl Eng FORM	n	OTHER Abl Eng ALTERNANTS	n
-----	---	--------------	---	--------------------------	---

you

we

the

a (n)

I've eaten emu eggs

We saw a big green  
snake

**FEATURE**

*(Nativization cont'd)*

**10.0 New discourse features**

10.1 Spacer “thing”

10.2 Denial form “Na” “not”

<b>SCHOOL:</b>					
<b>SAE</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Abl Eng FORM</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>OTHER Abl Eng ALTERNANTS</b>	<b>n</b>

**FEATURE****SCHOOL:**

<b><u>Transfer</u></b>	<b>SAE</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Abl Eng FORM</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>OTHER Abl Eng ALTERNANTS</b>	<b>n</b>
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**11.0 Intralingual Transfer**

## 11.1 Transfer from non-standard English varieties

11.1.1 Verb: irregular past tense (eg 'he brang')	he brought					
--	------------	--	--	--	--	--

11.1.2 Pronoun: relative ('the one what...')	the one that					
--	--------------	--	--	--	--	--

11.1.3 Pronoun: 'intrusive' ('my uncle he...')	my uncle...					
--	-------------	--	--	--	--	--

11.1.4 Pronoun/adjective: demonstrative (Them ones...)	Those ones					
---	------------	--	--	--	--	--

11.1.5 Phoneme substitution ('singin')	Singing					
--	---------	--	--	--	--	--

11.1.6 Verb negation						
----------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

## 11.2 Transfer from SAE

11.2.1 Phoneme addition: overgeneralised initial h ('hopen')	open					
---	------	--	--	--	--	--

11.2.2 Article (def)s overgeneralised						
---------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

11.2.3 Article (undef) overgeneralised						
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

11.2.4 Plural-s: overgeneralised						
----------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

11.2.5 preposition						
--------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

11.2.6 discourse marker "just"						
--------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

**FEATURE***(Transfers cont'd)***SCHOOL:****SAE****n****Abl Eng FORM****n****OTHER Abl Eng  
ALTERNANTS****n****12.0 Interlingual Transfer**

## 12.1 Transfer from Aboriginal languages

12.1.1 Bound morphemes (eg Arthurku)

Arthur's

12.1.2 Free morphemes (eg Yamagee)

Aboriginal

12.1.3 Phonemes (eg flapped r)

r

12.1.4 Prosodic features  
(eg 'lo..o..o..o..ng way', 'Toyota')A very long way  
To'yota

## 12.2. Transfer from pidgin/creole

12.2.1 Bound morphemes (eg, 'eatim', 'tupela')

eat, two

12.2.2 Free morphemes (eg 'bog<sup>ie</sup>' 'mela')

swimwe (but not you)

12.2.3 Phonological substitutions

FEATURE <i>(Transfers cont'd)</i>	SCHOOL:					
	SAE	n	Abl Eng FORM	n	OTHER Abl Eng ALTERNANTS	n
<b>13.0 Not yet determined</b>						
13.1 "Like, Fremantle"	?		Hedge? Echo of questioner?  Elipsis (I like Fremantle)?			
13.2 "Go put 'em in the fridge"	go and put them in the fridge		SAE? US English?			
13.3 "We drew on them"	we drew on them		developmental overgeneralisation?			
13.4 "It's got a squares on"	it's got squares on it		hyper correct use of article?			
13.5 "I have my grandmother on my Dad's side lives in Albany"	My grandmother on my Dad's side lives in Albany		fusion of 2 structures?			

## **Appendix 4**

### **Cross-School Comparison**

## Cross-School Linguistic Comparison

Feature	Schools								
	Y1	Y2	Jy	W1	W2	N1	N3	N2	PM
<b>SIMPLIFICATION</b>									
<b>1.00 non-occurring forms</b>									
1.1 V 3per sing pres (-s)	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
1.2 V past tense reg. (ed)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
1.3 V past-irreg (eg come)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
1.4 V aux 'have' with perfect	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
1.5 V aux 'have' w/past perfect	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
1.6 V aux 'be' w/ pres continuous	X	X				X		X	X
1.7 V aux 'be' w/past contin	X	X		X		X	X	X	
1.8 V aux 'be' w/passive (pres)		X							X
1.8.1 V aux 'be' w/passive (past)		X							
1.9 Verb copula 'be' with 'there'						X		X	
1.10 V copula 'be' w/sing subject	X		X				X	X	
1.11 V copula 'be' w/plural subject	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
1.12 Noun plural (-s)	X	X		X				X	X
1.13 Noun plural (-es)		X							
1.14 Noun possessive ('s)		X							
1.15 Pronoun possessive		X					X		
1.16 Article definite	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
1.17 Article indefinite	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
1.18 Gerund or participle	X				X				
1.19 Preposition		X		X	X			X	
1.20 Past participle								X	
<b>2.0 Non-occurring functions</b>									
2.1 Differentiation of past tense	X	X			X		X	X	
2.2 Subject-verb agree in plu aux	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2.3 Omission subject pronoun		X						X	
<b>3.0 Syntactic Reduction</b>									
3.1 Yes/No quest w/ 'be' or modals		X		X				X	
3.2 WH questions		X			X	X		X	
3.3 DO questions	X	X							
3.4 Reported spch (backshifting)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
3.5 Conditional	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
3.6 pronoun object		X						X	
3.7 conjunction								X	
3.8 embedded question		X						X	
<b>4.0 Phonological reduction</b>									
<b>4.1 Non-occurring phonemes</b>									
4.1.4 Initial h	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.1.2 Medial h	X					X		X	
4.1.3 Final	X				X			X	X
4.1.4 Other	X			X	X			X	
4.2 Consonant clusters	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
4.3 Liaison between vowels	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

	Y1	Y2	Jy	W1	W2	N1	N3	N2	PM
<b>NATIVIZATION</b>									
<b>5.0 New forms</b>									
5.1 Verb invar past/compl marker `bin'		X				X			
5.2 Verb invariant question tag : `ana',		X				X		X	
5.3 Verb invariant negator `nothing'	X	X							
5.4 Pron. pers invar 3 pers. sing. `e'	X	X		X	X	X		X	
5.4.1 Pers. invariant 3 pers s/pl `im'		X				X			
5.5 Pron ana possess. `he's', `e's'	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
5.6 Pronoun non-ana possessive									
5.7 Pronoun reflexive	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5.8 Phono recon(arkst, it's mean)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5.9 verb: future									
5.10 adverb: sometime									
5.11 verb 'as = was									
5.12 passive : got + past tense									
5.13 reanal. indef pronoun `everone'							X	X	
<b>6.0 New functions</b>									
6.1 Plural in 2 pers pron (yous, yufella)								X	
6.2 Duality in the pronoun									
6.3 Emphatic definite article (dat)	X	X				X			
6.4 Emphatic indefinite article (one)	X	X				X			
<b>7.0 New structures</b>									
7.1 Pre-clausal extension		X					X		
7.2 Post-clausal extension		X				X		X	
7.3 clause final `there'									
7.4 thematization								X	
<b>8.0 New content words</b>									
8.1 Simple (eg. `jar' = scold)						X			
8.2 Compound (eg `liar-say' = say falsely)	X	X						X	
<b>9.0 Content words with semantic shift</b>									
		X				X		X	
<b>10.0 New discourse features</b>									
10.1 Spacer ``thing"	X	X		X		X			
10.2 Denial form "Na", "not"				X		X		X	
10.3 tag form `boy'		X							



<b>TRANSFER</b>	<b>Y1</b>	<b>Y2</b>	<b>Jy</b>	<b>W1</b>	<b>W2</b>	<b>N1</b>	<b>N3</b>	<b>N2</b>	<b>PM</b>
<b>11.0 Intralingual transfer</b>									
<i>11.1 Trans from non-standard English varieties</i>		X							
11.1.1 Verb irreg past tense (he brang)	X	X				X		X	
11.1.2 Pronoun relative (the one what)	X	X	X		X				
11.1.3 Pronoun intrusive (my uncle he)	X	X				X	X	X	X
11.1.4 Pronoun/adj demonst(them ones)	X			X	X	X		X	
11.1.5 Phoneme substitution (singin')	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
11.1.6 Pro form t(h)ing								X	
11.1.7 Phoneme subs development								X	
11.1.8 verb negation		X		X			X	X	
11.1.9 verb : inceptive									
11.1.10 tags & vocatives `mate' `man'								X	
question tag `you know'		X							
future modal `gonna'		X							
<i>11.2 Transfer from SAE</i>									
11.2.1 Phoneme addn Overgen initial `h'	X	X	X			X	X		X
11.2.2 Article (def) s overgeneralised	X	X					X	X	
11.2.3 Article (indef) overgeneralised				X	X		X	X	
11.2.4 Plural s overgeneralised		X		X	X			X	
11.2.5 Preposition	X			X	X			X	
11.2.6 Discourse marker `just'	X	X					X		
<b>12.0 Interlingual transfer</b>									
<i>12.1 Transfer from Aboriginal languages</i>									
12.1.1 Bound morphemes (eg Arthurku)									
12.1.2 Free morphemes (eg Yamagee)		X						X	
12.1.3 Phonemes (eg flapped r)									
12.1.4 Prosodic features (eg lo..ng way)				X	X				
<i>12.2 Transfer from Pidgin/creole</i>									
12.2.1 Bound morphemes (eg `eatim')		X						X	
12.2.2 Free morphemes (eg `bogie', `mela')									
12.2.3 Phonological substitutions	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	x

## **Appendix 5**

### **Individual Child Interview Responses**

## Linguistic Analysis of Individual Child Interview Responses

Schools: Ba Jy Y2 Y1 W1 W2 Ny3Ny2Ny1 PM Comments

WARM UP										
1.1 You're [name] are you?										
1.2 Have you got any brothers and sisters?										
<i>my brother the youngest</i>		(copula del)							1	cf 3.1
1.3 Where do most of your relations come from?										
1.4 What do you like most at school?										
STORY										
2.1 Who is the story about?										
<i>dem two....</i>		(demonstrative for definite article)								See 3.4 (3) and 3.12 (3) D
<i>kid...</i>		(non occurrence for noun plural -s)								See 3.7 (W1:2) I/D
<i>two childrens</i>		(hypercorrect noun plural -s)						1		Transitional form I/D
2.2 When did the two kids hear a noise?										
<i>when they playing</i>		(past continuous without aux)								See 3.16 (Ny1:2) I/D
<i>when they was playing</i>		(past continuous without aux agree't)		1	1		1	1		See 3.16 (All areas: 23) Strong D
<i>when they 'as walking</i>		(as above with "'as" variant aux)							1	NB also found in W & Y. See 3.16 D
2.3 What made the noise?										
<i>dat big goanna</i>		(demonstrative for definite article)								Only occurs once in singular (3.14) D
<i>goanna</i>		(non occurrence of definite article)		1			2			See 3.22 I/D
<i>goanna, big one</i>		(post-clausal extension)								Not elicited by this means
<i>biig</i>		(prosodic emphasis on adjective)						1		Not strongly present. Genre-specific
2.4 What did the kids do?										
<i>dey bin chase...</i>		(bin aux)								Not elicited by this means -
<i>...long way</i>		(adverb with prosodic feature) (non occurrence of article)					2			May be restricted to Western desert
<i>'eey run</i>		("'eey" variant pron; less explicit verb)		1						
<i>chased the goanna far away (far away = [a] long way)</i>							1			New occurrence of this variant.

NB: Anticipated variants are in bold.

Schools: Ba Jy Y2 Y1 W1 W2 Ny3Ny2Ny1 PM Comments

2.5 What happened to the goanna?																					
<i>e got away</i>	(invariant 3 pers sing pronoun)		1							2	1									2	Strongly present (see also 3.3) but may not cover form.
<i>e bin get away</i>	(bin aux)																				See 2.4
<i>...get away</i>	(unmarked simple past tense)	1																			See 3.10 (2 cases) 3.16 (1 case). 3.21 (5 cases - involves consonant cluster) I/D
<i>e runned/goed away</i>	(overgeneralised simple past tense ending)	1	1																		2 cases I/D
<i>e took off</i>	(dialect lexical form)	1																			Strong lexical variant
<b>SENTENCE REPETITION</b>																					
<b>3.1 This is a hot place</b>																					
<i>this a hot place</i>	(non occurrence of copula)																				Not elicited by this means. (but see 3.11 (1 case); 3.21 (12 cases);, 3.2 (4)) I/D
<i>...the hot place</i>	(definite for indefinite article)	3	1			1	1	2													Inter-dialect [def to indef 8 (Jy, Ba, W, Ny3); indef to def 4 (3 (3.11) Y1, W2, PM; 1 (3.9) PM)]
<b>3.2 The teacher's car's a Toyota</b>																					
<i>the teacher car</i>	(unmarked noun possessive)	1																			Not widespread I/D
<i>car a Toyota</i>	(non-occurrence of copula)		1	1						1											See 3.1. A variable feature I/D
<i>car, e a Toyota</i>	(double subject)					1															Not wide-spread. (cf. 3.6). I/D
<i>car's Toyota</i>	(non-occurrence of indefinite article)	1	1					1	1												Variable feature I/D
<b>3.3 If you drop an egg it breaks</b>																					
<i>you drop...</i>	(conditional without if)	1								1											Not strongly present I/D
<i>a egg</i>	(invariant indefinite article)	2	3	2		2	2	3	1												2 Very strongly present (17) D
<i>it break</i>	(unmarked 3rd person singular present)			2		2															1 Variable but common on 'go' (3.14) D
<i>e break[s]</i>	(invariant 3rd person singular pronoun)		2							1	1(i)										See 2.5 e= it D
<i>s break[s]</i>	(metathesis)	2								1											Linguistic insecurity{s}. cf. 3.10, 3.11, 3.13, 3.14 I/D

## Schools: Ba Jy Y2 Y1 W1 W2 Ny3Ny2Ny1 PM Comments

3.4 Those boys have gone home																		
<i>dem boys</i>	(case unmarked in demonstrative pronoun)				1		1											
<i>dem boy</i>	(unmarked noun plural)																	See 2.1 Not common I/D
<i>they've gone home</i>	(double subject)	1																See 3.2, 3.6 Not common I/D
<i>boys gone</i>	(non occurrence of aux in perfect tense)	2																3 Perfect is a variable feature cf 3.10, 3.13. D
<i>they boys</i>	(personal pronoun for demonstrative pronoun)							1										cf 3.6, 3.11, 3.12 Widespread I/D
<i>are gone</i>	("are" for "have" in present perfect tense)			1	1			1	2(?)									Not observed before. Strong trend (reanalysis?) D
<i>is gone</i>	(as above, less subject verb agreement)	1		1														cf "are gone" (above) I/D
<i>alla boys</i>	(non-standard indefinite adjective)	2																Kimberley indef. adjective D
<b>3.5 He gave me a dollar</b>																		
<i>a one dollar</i>	(redundant 'one')																	Not elicited by this means -
<i>bin give</i>	(bin aux in simple past tense)																	See 2.4. Not elicited by this means -
<i>give</i>	(unmarked past tense)																	No evidence unmarked past for this verb
<i>e gave</i>	(invariant 3 pers sing pronoun)			1		2	1			1								cf 2.5 Strongly present D
<i>he give-im</i>	(transitive suffix)	1																Kimberley feature (Kriol transfer) I/D
<b>3.6 Dogs often scratch themselves</b>																		
<i>dog</i>	(unmarked noun plural)																	See 2.1 Not strongly present I/D
<i>dog, they</i>	(double subject)																	See 3.2, 3.6. Not strongly present. I/D
<i>theirsself</i>	(variant forms of reflexive)		1	3	1		1	1										8 widespread variant - strong marker D
<i>theysself [deysself]</i>				1		1	1											4 cf 3.12 strongly present - strong m. D
<i>theirselves</i>		1	1	1	1(fs)	1						1	1	2				8 widespread variant - strong mark. D
<i>themsself</i>			1	1	1					1				2				7 widespread variant - strong marker D
<i>themselve</i>										1								1 Transitional variant I/D
<i>dem</i>		1																1 transitional variant I/D

Schools: Ba Jy Y2 Y1 W1 W2 Ny3Ny2Ny1 PM Comments

3.7 Most books are made of paper												
<i>most books made</i>	(aux deletion in passive)	1	1	1		1	2			1	1	Widespread feature D
<i>most books, they</i>	(double subject)											See 3.2, 3.4 Not common. I/D
<i>book</i>	(unmarked noun plural)					2						See 2.1. Not common I/D
<i>alla books</i>	(nonstandard indefinite adjective)	1										See 3.4 Pervasive Kimberley feature D
<i>dey books</i>	(nonstandard possessive adjective)			2								cf 3.6. Strong in Yamatji2 I/D
3.8 Why are they always fighting?												
<i>Why they...</i>	(Wh question without aux)						1				1	Not strongly present D
<i>Why are dem fightin?</i>	(nonstandard case marking in pronoun)							1				Transitional feature I/D
<i>all day fighting</i>	(reanalysis of "always")			1								Reanalysis; lexical variant ?
3.9 His team came last in the race												
<i>He's [E's] team</i>	(nonstandard 3 pers sing poss pron)		2	1	3	2	1	3	2		4	Very strong marker (18) D
<i>come</i>	(unmarked past tense in strong verb)	1										cf 3.5 Not strongly present I/D
<i>got last</i>	("got" for "came")								1			Not strongly present
<i>in a race</i>	(indefinite for definite article)										1	See 3.1 Linguistic insecurity I/D
3.10 When he'd finished he handed his work in												
<i>he finished</i>	(past perfect without aux)					2		1			1	Past perfect, like present perfect. is variable in occurrence D
<i>finish</i>	(unmarked past participle)	1	2			1	2					Common (nb cluster - cf 3.21) I/D
<i>hand</i>	(unmarked simple past, weak verb)				1				1			Not strongly present. cf 2.5
<i>he's work</i>	(nonstandard 3 pers sing poss pron)			1	1			1		3		Strongly present. cf 3.9
<i>was finish[ed]</i>	("was" for "had" in past perfect tense)									1		Conforms to trend in 3.4. D
<i>he's finish[ed]</i>	(as above, with aux unmarked for past)	1	1	1	2	1	1	2		1	2	Strongest past perfect variant. I/D

## Schools: Ba Jy Y2 Y1 W1 W2 Ny3 Ny2 Ny1 PM Comments

3.11 There's water in the hole																								
<i>there</i>	(non-occurrence of copula, existential)																			1	Not strongly present I/D			
<i>e got water...</i>	(non-standard substitute for There is)																				Not elicited by this means. -			
<i>dat hole</i>	(demonstrative for definite article)																				cf 2.3, 3.14 Not strongly present D			
<i>E's/I's water</i>	("E's/I's" for "There's")	1									1	1									Not strongly present I/D			
<i>He water</i>	("He" for "There" without copula)	1																			Another variant of 'E's' I/D			
<i>a hole</i>	(indefinite for definite article)				1																1	Linguistic insecurity. See 3.1 I/D		
<i>day waters</i>	(metathesis)						1															Linguistic insecurity. cf 3.3, also 3.4. I/D		
<b>3.12 Those horses are too tired for work</b>																								
<i>them [dem] horses</i>	(demonstrative adj unmarked for case)	1			1																	Persistent trend. I/D		
<i>horse</i>	(unmarked plural on noun end. in s)																					Not in evidence -		
<i>those horses they</i>	(double subject)																					Not common. See 3.2, 3.4, 3.6, 3.15 I/D		
<i>horses too tired</i>	(non-occurrence of aux in pres contin.)	1							1	1											1	Pervasive dialect feature D		
<i>get too tired</i>	("get" for "are")								1													Slight tendency towards use of inchoative rather than existential (cf. 3.9) D		
<i>for the work</i>	(redundant definite article)	1																				Linguistic insecurity with articles I/D		
<i>they horses</i>	(personal pronoun for demonstr. pron.)				2																	Pervasive variant (see 3.4, 3.11) D		
<b>3.13 All my wishes have come true</b>																								
<i>wish</i>	(unmarked plural on noun end. in sh)																					Not in evidence. -		
<i>they have</i>	(double subject)																					Not common. See 3.12 I/D		
<i>wishes come</i>	(non-occurrence of aux with perfect)	1			1																	2	Confirms weakness of perfect (3.4, 3.10)D	
<i>has come</i>	(perfect aux without subj. agreement)				1																		Pervasive variant. cf 3.3 I/D	
<i>are come</i>	("are" for "have" as perfect aux)																						3	Further evid. of "have" to "are" shift. D.
<i>wish haves</i>	(metathesis)	1																					1	Transitional feature I/D

Schools: Ba Jy Y2 Y1 W1 W2 Ny3Ny2Ny1 PM Comments

3.14 The road goes past the school												
<i>go</i>	(unmked 3 pers sing on strong verb)	1		5	3	1	1	2	3			Very strongly present D
<i>dat road</i>	(demonstrative adj for definite article)											Not strongly present except in plural (3.12) 1 D
<i>a road</i>	(indefinite for definite article)											cf 3.12, 3.1 Linguistic insecurity with articles. 1 I/D
<i>roads go</i>	(metathesis)	1					1					Linguistic insecurity with {-s} I/D
3.15 My sister said she saw a ghost												
<i>my sister say</i>	(unmked simple past on strong verb)								2		1	Not strongly present I/D
<i>my sister, she</i>	(double subject)						1					Not common. See 3.13 I/D
<i>she seen</i>	(past participle form for past tense of "see")											Not in evidence -
<i>see</i>	(unmarked simple past on "see")	1										Transitional form I/D
<i>seed</i>	(overgeneralised past participle form)				1							Transitional form I/D
3.16 When we were walking home we found some money												
<i>we was walking</i>	(non observance of subj agreement in be aux)	1	1	2	4	3	2	2	3	4	2	23 cases. V. pervasive dialect marker D
<i>we walking</i>	(non-occurrence of aux with past continuous)										2	Transitional form I/D
<i>we find</i>	(unmarked simple past on strong verb)	1										Not strongly present cf 3.15, 3.5 I/D
<i>we bin find</i>	(bin aux on simple past)											Not elicited by this means. -
<i>find-im</i>	(transitive suffix)	1										cf 3.5 Kimberley feature - transitive suffix I/D
<i>we 'as walkin'</i>	("as" variant aux with past continuous without subject agreement on the aux)			1	1							cf 2.2 Pervasive in south and east D
3.17 Can you swim?												
<i>you can swim</i>	(non-reversal in yes/no qn with modal)											Not elicited by this means -
<i>you can swim, ana?</i>	(non-standard tag question)											Not elicited by this means -
<i>you swim?</i>	(question with intonation but no aux)											Not elicited by this means -







## **Appendix 6**

### **Adult Interview Responses.**

# ADULT INTERVIEW RESPONSES

## Interviews with Teachers

**QUESTION 1** *What (if anything) is distinctive about Aboriginal children's use of English*

### *Syntax*

Students tend to miss words out of sentences.

They do not speak in a pattern which is similar to ours. Little words are left out.

Say and write things back the (sic) front

### *Grammar*

They tend to use statements instead of questions *eg.* "I go to the toilet".

Confuse *was/were/is etc.*

Improper use of tense.

Long sentences, no use of punctuation

Join words, drop letters off words

"is" deletion

Pronouns *eg.* "mela", " 'e said 'e comin' after"

### *Speed*

Language is spoken very fast and words run together

Speak very quickly

Fast talking

### *Loudness*

They speak very loudly when in conversation with each other

Loud

Some children speak softly - causing minor problems when newstelling.

### *Tone*

The tone is either happy or angry - quite emotive, not sort of monotone.

### *Failure to speak.*

Or they don't speak at all.

## Clarity

Slur their speech

## Language choice/vocabulary

Use a lot of slang and swear words.

Use Aboriginal language with English

Varies from SAE to strong Aboriginal English (eg. *git 'ome*)

Aboriginal English in school but especially out of classroom.

### **QUESTION 2** *Can you describe any situation in which there has been a communication difficulty or breakdown between you (or another teacher) and an Aboriginal child?*

A number of the children are from the “lands communities” where Aboriginal language is still the first language, and English is very limited. Complex commands are often not understood. Visits to doctor - barriers and breakdown in communication and understanding. Reports are often misunderstood by parents.

Lack of understanding by Aboriginal children and parents re: testing, special groups, speech pathology

When you don't know they are talking to you because they show no visual communication towards you. *ie.* they don't look at you when they are talking, so it's hard to know when they are talking to you.

Sometimes they speak so quickly and blend the words together which makes it difficult to understand them. Or else they mumble (only some kids).

Yes when I first started teaching here, when students dropped their “h”. Also between students like employing physical means of communicating instead of using social courtesies like oral communication.

Word study lessons hearing and repeating sounds.

only with a student with hearing difficulties. Most students are happy to repeat a sentence or a question if asked.

### **QUESTION 3** *Do any children stand out for their language/communicative behaviours? How?*

I find the girls get very vocal when they get upset or angry and talk fast and all at once. Boys do sometimes, but not as often.

Aboriginal children do because culturally they do not hear or can say certain sounds. This is reflected in writing and spelling.

Some! Some are very shy and speak into their shoes. Some are perpetually aggressive.

Language behaviour is particularly different where children have other brothers and sisters in school.

**QUESTION 5** *Have you observed that, when they are not being supervised or controlled, the Aboriginal children engage in any particular kinds of behaviour with respect to language? (eg. any particular games, yarning, word play, name-calling, role playing, code-switching etc.)?*

Yes - Name calling, yarning - they sometimes try speaking their own language and see if they know any words not known by others.

Similar to non-Aboriginal children in role play, vying for leadership, etc. The children also appear to talk more in their own language.

Yes! Teasing, name calling.

Yarning, playground games, teasing, contradicting, echoing.

Especially in the playground - name calling, role playing, story telling.

**QUESTION 6** *Are there any differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children's speech behaviours? (Do non-Aboriginal children use features similar to those used by Aboriginal children?)?*

There are only 3 non-Aboriginal children out of 69 in the school. The speech of those 3 reflects Aboriginal influence.

Yes.

Non-Aboriginal students tend to use English in a more correct manner.

Aboriginal children leave out little words of sentence. eg. Where you been? Intonation is used.

Non-Aboriginal students tend to have a better use of English. Some non-Aboriginal students use Aboriginal words commonly used. eg. *Unna* (confirmation).

**QUESTION 7** *How do Aboriginal children react to your (the teacher/AEW) directions in the classroom?*

Most are cooperative although they are, on the whole, slower to react to a request.

95% immediately. Children with hearing problems, like any children, need reminders.

They have to be repeated many times.

Generally very happy to follow instructions and fit in with class actions.

**QUESTION 8** *Are there any situations in the classroom, where Aboriginal children engage in extended free-flowing language? (eg. recounting an event, story telling)?*

Certain topics - weekends, going bush, funny incidents. Oral language sessions. Certain subjects - Art, craft, science, gardening -> spontaneity. Emotional incidents - fighting, anger.

Responding to interesting stories, especially in small groups. Story telling - especially going bush.

Drama.

Not really.

Oral language games and activities. Maths and reading games. Language experiences, eg. cooking, Shared Book Experiences -> discussion.

being a 'practical' teacher where students are working with their hands, students are often involved in free flowing conversations. Also students like to recount their stories about what they did on the weekend, etc.

## **Interviews with AEWs and Community Members**

**QUESTION 1** *Do you think the Aboriginal children have any problems with school language? What problems do they complain about?*

Teachers use words that children and parents don't understand. Children get bored and play up.

Kids do have problems with school language. A lot of the children sit there and day dream. They don't listen to what the teacher says.

Some kids are shy - don't want to be teased or ridiculed for the wrong answer.

**QUESTION 2** *What languages are spoken by children going to this school?*

In the playground especially, the kids use "Aboriginal way of talking" rather than speak in the "white man's English".

Yeh, it's a kind of Nyungar English... The kids probably use a lot of that at school you know. (in the playground and in the classroom).

**QUESTION 3** *In what contexts do they use language?*

Aboriginal English is used when talking with other Aboriginal kids, AEW.

**QUESTION 4** *Do you think there is anything wrong with the way the children use English?*

Home is different. If children use SE, parents get angry and say "You're not at school now".

I don't think so. I think as long as they get the message across and they're being understood then I don't think there's anything wrong with it.

**QUESTION 5** *Within the Aboriginal community and in the homes of Aboriginal children are there any special things that are done involving language? (eg. telling traditional stories, telling ghost stories, telling bedtime stories, using language for fun, using language to put down "posh" people, telling jokes in Aboriginal English, singing, memorising, play-acting)?*

Use of AE is relevant for some schools, not others.

Yes I think there's a lot of that going on. That's a very important part of Aboriginal living. Just telling stories, ghost stories. Ghost stories or medicine man - Kadaitcha. And cracking jokes about them (white people), and government people. (welfare people).

**QUESTION 6** *After a group activity, eg. going on a picnic or bushwalking etc., where and how do people sit down and talk about their experiences?*

Yes. They comment about it and they also say something like "Yes, I can remember this sort of thing happening because my grandparents told me or my mum told me, or things to that effect.

**QUESTION 7** *What do you think the school should be doing to help Aboriginal children in their use of English?*

More resources. Aboriginal people should be putting down more stories - art or photos. Big books made in school.

Use of resources such as concept keyboard and ELAN programme are good.

It would be nice if somebody Nyungar could come in and speak or teach these children Nyungar language.

**QUESTION 8** *What do you think about Aboriginal children being encouraged to keep up two forms of English, one for school learning and the other for use in Aboriginal contexts?*

No future for non standard.

I think they're doing it now anyway. I think that they have their form of English at home - Aboriginal English - that they speak. And as I said before, as long as people understand, or the message gets across, then there isn't a problem.

**QUESTION 9** *If the teachers understand more about the kind of English Aboriginal people use among themselves, do you think they will be more sensitive to the needs of Aboriginal children in learning school English?*

They teach what they have decided to beforehand. Kids not learning can hide in large class.

Absolutely Yes.



*(Q. Do you think it would be easier for the Aboriginal kids if the teachers knew a bit more about Aboriginal English? )*

I think it would in the sense that the Aboriginal be more accepted. The kids would feel at home a bit more. I think because they got this language on their own that we must be different, something like that.

*(Q. What sorts of things would they need to know?)*

English is the second language for most Aboriginal people, and it was borne upon us. The wider society out there speak the language and so we should speak the language. People should also realise that the Aboriginal people do have their own language, and understand that as well.

But I think it's (Aboriginal English) is for teaching you, like if you are with an Aboriginal teacher I think they'd feel more freer to say things.

*(Q. Do you reckon the kids should have Aboriginal teachers?)*

No. I think that they should be taught both. But, yeah, I think that the other kids should know what they're talking about as well.

*(Q. Do you think the teachers should learn Aboriginal English?)*

I don't really think that they have to learn but it's good for them to know.

# **Appendix 7**

## **Autonomous Work Package**

### **Questions and Answers to Readings.**

# Language & Communication Enhancement for Two Way Education

## Linguistic Component: Questions on the Readings

### *Reading No.1*

**Yunupingu, Mandawuy (1990). Language and power: the Yolngu rise to power at Yirrkala School. In Christine Walton and William Eggington (Eds.) *Language: Maintenance, Power and Education in Australian Aboriginal Contexts*. (pp.3-6). Darwin: Northern Territory Press.**

1. Yunupingu notes that the power of the traditional Aboriginal teacher lay in his knowledge of a language which the others did not know. Some Aboriginal people think that white people have a “secret” language which they keep from Aboriginal people. Does this help us to understand the commonly expressed complaint of Aboriginal people that teachers and others use too many “big words”?
2. Yunupingu implies that a people’s language is their means to a “way of thinking”. Does Aboriginal English preserve a way of thinking that is different from that which is appropriate to Standard English? If so, how?
3. If the introduction of bilingual education brought the Yolngu people “power *inside* the classroom” (p.4), can the introduction of bidialectal education do the same for bidialectal Aboriginal people?
4. Should a bidialectal programme involve conferring more power on Aboriginal adults associated with the school by letting them run school meetings using their own dialect and having white people attend only by invitation, or is this appropriate only in the context of a bilingual Aboriginal community?
5. To Yunupingu, BOTH WAYS education means the Aboriginal people have “control over both sides of the curriculum” (p.5). Is this practicable in a setting where Aboriginal students form just a fraction of the school population?
6. If we regard English as “a language of convenience” (p.5) for Aboriginal people, what should it consist of?

### *Reading No.2*

**Trudgill, Peter and Hannah, Jean (1982). English and North American English: Grammatical, Orthographical and Lexical Differences. In *International English*. (pp.43-68) London: Edward Arnold.**

1. The authors distinguish two types of morphology, *inflectional* and *derivational*. What is morphology and what is the difference between inflectional and derivational morphology?
2. Trudgill and Hannah provide comparative lists of English English and North American English words which differ in morphology. Note how the morphological differences between these two Englishes are quite different from those between VBE and North American English pointed out in the article by Barnitz (1980). Why should this be the case?
3. What is an auxiliary verb? Consider the ways in which modals (a-h on Trudgill and Hannah’s list) differ from “do” and “have” in the way they operate in Standard Australian English and Aboriginal English.
4. Is the count noun mass noun distinction (p.59) observed the same way in Aboriginal English as in Standard Australian English?
5. Can you identify and give examples of the following forms:

regular verb	indefinite article
irregular or strong verb	indefinite pronoun
past participle	possessive pronoun
infinitive	adjective
copular verb	adverb
collective noun	intensifier
definite article	preposition
subordinator?	

### **Reading No.3**

**Kaldor, S. & Malcolm, I.G. (1982) Aboriginal English in country and remote areas: a Western Australian perspective. In R.D. Eagleson, S. Kaldor and I.G. Malcolm (Eds.) *English and the Aboriginal Child*. (pp.75-105). Canberra: Curriculum Development Centre.**

1. What is *pidgin* and how does the linguist's use of the term sometimes differ from the usage in local areas?
2. What is a *creole* and how does *decreolisation* occur?
3. What factors determine the movement of a speaker of Aboriginal English in one or other direction along the continuum of English that he/she commands?
4. What is the strongest influence on the phonology of WAACE (Western Australian Aboriginal Children's English)
5. How does the word stress pattern of WAACE differ from that of Standard English?
6. Kaldor and Malcolm provide a reasonably full list of examples of features of WAACE. Which of the features they mention do you find in your data? Which features in your data are not mentioned by them?
7. Which speaker, out of the 5 quoted by Kaldor and Malcolm on pages 100-103, has a dialect (or idiolect) which approximates most closely to the form of Aboriginal English you have observed in your school?
8. Pages 103-105 show that many features of WAACE are also found in the Northern Territory and Queensland. How can you account for this?

### **Reading No.4**

**Eades, D. (1993) *Aboriginal English. Primary English Notes 93, Primary English Teaching Association.***

1. What is a dialect?
2. Is standard English different from colloquial English?
3. Eades suggest that, in some areas, English was Aboriginalised, that is, Aboriginal people "made English into an Aboriginal English". Is this the same thing as we have called "nativisation"?
4. Compare what Eades says about the use of heavier and lighter varieties of Aboriginal English by the same speaker with what was said by Kaldor and Malcolm (1982) and reflected on in question 3 on that reading.
5. If it is impolite to ask direct questions about substantial or personal matters, how is it possible to get such information from an Aboriginal English speaker?
6. If telling rather than *asking questions then answering them* is the way in which little children are socialised in Aboriginal society, how can we learn from this in the way in which we conduct classroom discourse?
7. For what kind of Aboriginal learners does Eades recommend an ESL programme?

### **Reading No.5**

**Barnitz, John G. (1980) *Black English and other dialects: sociolinguistic implications for reading instruction. The Reading Teacher, 33 (7), 779-786.***

1. Barnitz (p.780) gives examples of variation in pronunciation, usage and vocabulary across regions of USA. Can you give examples of each of these kinds of variation (a) across different parts of Australia (b) between standard Australian English and Standard British, American or New Zealand English?
2. Barnitz argues that language is "socially stratified" (p.780). In Australia can you give examples of pronunciation, usage and vocabulary which identify the speaker (a) with respect to social class (b) with respect to ethnic group (not including Aboriginal)?

3. Which of the following features of Black English listed by Barnitz are also characteristic of varieties of Aboriginal English:
  - consonant cluster simplification (eg. “des” for “desk”)
  - l-deletion (eg. “toe” for “told”)
  - invariant “be” for states of being (eg. “I be pretty”)
  - be deletion for particular instances (eg. My friend pretty today”)
  - past tense marker deletion (eg. “walk” for “walked”)
  - existential “it” (eg. “It[’s] a man in our yard”)?
4. Barnitz observes (p.781) that “many of the features of VBE can also be common among White speakers of Standard English in informal rapid conversation (*gonna, betcha, walkin’*). Is there a corresponding overlap between Aboriginal English and Standard Australian English? Can you give examples?
5. Barnitz also observes (p.781) that some features of VBE are common among lower socioeconomic White speakers. We have observed that this is also true of Aboriginal English in Australia. Can you give some examples?
6. Are you aware of any “communication styles” peculiar to Aboriginal English speaking, corresponding to such VBE styles as “playing the dozens”, “sounding”, “shucking”, “jiving” and “stylin’ out” (Barnitz, p.782)?
7. What are the main problems with the “dialect text” approach to teaching dialect speaking children to read (*ie*, using texts which are written in their dialect)?
8. What is the main objection to delaying reading instruction for dialect speaking children until the standard dialect (*ie*. Standard English) is learnt?
9. Barnitz recommends that children be expected to read Standard English texts but “pronounce the words and use the sentence patterns of their dialect” (p.783). Is this blurring the difference between their two dialects? Is it appropriate to express a text that has been written in Standard English in Aboriginal English? Should the style of reading depend on the nature of the text?
10. Barnitz provides five implications of dialectology for the teaching of reading. What are they?
11. What are the three principles of the Language Experience Approach, and what are its advantages for teaching dialect speakers?
12. What is, and what are the advantages of, the Experience-Text-Relationship method? How would you use this with Aboriginal children?

### **Reading No.6**

**Malcolm, Ian G. (1992) English in the education of speakers Aboriginal English. In J. Siegel (Ed.) *Pidgins, Creoles and Non-standard Dialects in Education*. (pp.11-26). Occasional Paper 12, Applied Linguistics Association of Australia.**

1. What are some of the reasons for and against teaching Standard English to speakers of a non-standard dialect of English?
2. What is bidialectalism?
3. How can you account for the fact that most teachers asked by Malcolm to describe Aboriginal English referred only to its phonological features?
4. Do Aboriginal English speakers generally want to talk the way white people do? Why or why not?
5. In what ways is the lack of standardisation of non-standard varieties an advantage to their speakers?
6. Provide examples of the ways in which non-standard dialect speakers may make strategic use of their repertoire of forms. Have you found examples of this among Aboriginal English speakers in your area?
7. In view of the quote from Le Page (Malcolm, p.9), would you agree that Aboriginal English speakers, when speaking Aboriginal English, do not normally make errors? If this is the case, it would seem that the introduction of Standard English into their schooling is what brings about their linguistic errors.

In other words, the errors are school-induced rather than learner-induced. If that is the case, what difference should it make to the way we teach them?

8. If Aboriginal English differs from Standard English in that it is far more context-dependent, how can we make Standard English more context dependent in the classroom so that the transition we are expecting of Aboriginal English speakers is not so great?

## Linguistic Readings Questions: Guide to Answers

### *Reading 1 (Yunupingu, 1990)*

1. The idea of “secret” language is particularly relevant to Aboriginal culture (pertaining, in particular to the traditional custodians of sacred knowledge) and this has been carried over into the Aboriginal perception of the language associated with knowledge and power in White society. The language of the school amounts to a secret language when it employs vocabulary and concepts which are inaccessible to Aboriginal people outside the school. “Big words” may simply refer to this kind of language. To be accessible, and acceptable, to Aboriginal people, teachers need to employ a language which does not make them feel excluded.
2. Yunupingu clearly sees Aboriginal language as facilitating an Aboriginal way of thinking. Just as this can be applied to Aboriginal languages, it can also be applied to Aboriginal English, which represents a modification of English which suits Aboriginal speakers and Aboriginal contexts. This modification involves processes of simplification, nativisation and transfer. For example, the gender distinction in pronouns is not maintained because Aboriginal speakers do not want to be forced to foreground the sex of the person referred to when making anaphoric reference (simplification), etc.
3. Yes, because it enables them to exercise the linguistic skills which they possess and not to be judged only against the norms of standard English.
4. This would be an ideal situation, but it can only happen where the community members do not feel intimidated by standard English speakers. Clearly, it would require the Aboriginal community members having, and being aware of having, genuine autonomy with respect to educational decisions regarding their children.
5. Probably not in the same way. To some extent, every situation needs to be negotiated by the teacher with the students and the parents involved. Where Aboriginal students form just a fraction of the school population, both ways education should involve at least their variety of English being recognised, understood and built into the education process, so that they have equal educational opportunities with standard English speakers.
6. If English is regarded as a “language of convenience” for Aboriginal people, it should become for them a tool to enable them to achieve through it certain goals which they set for themselves. It should be seen (at least in the standard variety) as a part of an overall linguistic repertoire which also incorporates other varieties which will achieve different objectives for them.

### *Reading 2 (Trudgill and Hannah)*

1. Morphology is concerned with the ways in which word forms may change to express differences in meaning. Inflectional morphology is used, for example, in English to form verb tenses (eg. *cal* /*called*). Derivational morphology is used to change a word from one word class into another (eg. *hospital* = noun/*hospitalise* = verb).
2. English English and North American English were once the same, and have diverged over time because of the geographical separation of the speakers. VBE and North American English have come about through the coming together of speakers of different languages (African and English), and the formation of a pidgin and creole based on English. The pidginisation and creolisation processes result in a kind of language change different from that which simply occurs over time.

3. As Trudgill and Hannah say, an auxiliary verb “does not exist as an independent verb in a sentence but must combine with a lexical verb to form a verb phrase”. (p.46) Eg., “He *has* eaten”.

	<i>SAE</i>	<i>ABLE</i>
Modals:		
	<i>shall</i>	I will, I'll
	<i>should</i>	I'd
	<i>would</i>	I'd
	<i>must</i>	I must
	<i>used to</i>	I used to
	<i>ought to</i>	I ought to
Do:	Do you want this?	You want this?
Have:	Have you got...?	You got...?

4. No. Mass nouns and count nouns may be treated alike in Aboriginal English, eg. “big mob water”.

5. regular verb	:walk	indefinite pronoun	:one
irregular verb	:see	possessive pronoun	:his
past participle	:spoken	adjective	:big
infinitive	:(to)take	adverb	:nearly
copular verb	“ she <b>is</b> pretty	intensifier	:better
collective noun	:tribe	preposition	:in
definite article	:the	Subordinator	:as long as
indefinite article	:a, an		

### **Reading 3 (Kaldor and Malcolm, 1982)**

1. A pidgin is a reduced form of a language, used as an auxiliary form of communication in a contact situation. In local usage, a creole is commonly referred to as a pidgin.
2. A creole is a language which is developed when a pidgin becomes the first language of a speech community. Decreolisation occurs, when, under the influence of the dominant language from which it was derived, a creole becomes progressively more like that language.
3. The main factors are the occasion and the person spoken to.
4. The strongest influence on the phonology of WAACE is that of the sound systems of Aboriginal languages.
5. “Stress often falls on the first syllable of the word where it would be on another syllable in SAE. Secondary stresses of SAE become very weak, so that even words which have the stress on the first syllable in SAE may sound different” (p.84).
6. The answer to this depends on the data you have gathered.
7. Again, this can only be answered by you.
8. The origin of Aboriginal English has been by way of direct or indirect influence of pidgins and creoles in various parts of Australia. In addition, the dialect has been diffused widely through the mobility of Aboriginal people.

### **Reading 4 (Eades, 1993)**

1. “A dialect is a variety of a language which:
  - can be understood by speakers of other varieties of the same language, and
  - differs from other varieties of the same language in systematic ways (these differences can be found in sounds, grammar, words and their meanings, and language use).” (p.1)
2. Not necessarily. (Standard English can be used colloquially).
3. I think that Eades is referring to the same phenomenon, though with our term “nativisation” we are referring primarily to its evidence in linguistic features.
4. Eades is referring to the same continuum of varieties which Kaldor and Malcolm (1982) discussed.

5. There should be a two-way exchange of information. One needs to be patient until the Aboriginal person is ready to share information.
6. It is more appropriate, when teaching Aboriginal children, to tell them things rather than to seek to extract things from them by questioning.
7. An ESL programme is appropriate for speakers of Kriol or Torres Strait Creole.

**Reading 5 (Barnitz, 1980)**

1. a) Some examples are:

Pronunciation” broad Australian vowels versus cultivated Australian vowels South Australian girls’ private school pronunciation of “school” with a short “u” sound

“Italian” tends to sound like “eetalian” when spoken by people of Italian origin.

variation in the stress placement on “kilometre” (1st or 2nd syllable).

Vocabulary: “port” (case) in Queensland  
 “bathers” (WA) vs “cossies” (NSW)  
 “polony”, “devon” and “stras” in various states

(many more examples could be given)

b)	<i>Standard Australian</i>	<i>UK</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>NZ</i>
	footpath	pavement	sidewalk	footpath (?)
	tram	tram	streetcar	tram (?)
	Have you (got)	Have you	Do you have	Have you (got) (?)

(again, may more examples could be given)

- 2.a) Pronunciation: “hope” vs “ope”

“something” vs “somethink”

Usage: “could have” vs “could of”

Vocabulary: “food” vs “grub”

- b) Pronunciation: “spawse” for “sparse” (Australian of South African origin)

Usage: “as I know” for “as far as I know” (Australian of Chinese origin)

Vocabulary: “field” for “paddock” (Australian of UK origin).

(just a few example to get you started)

3. consonant cluster simplification  
 be deletion for particular instances  
 past tense marker deletion
4. Yes, eg “You comin’?” “Gotta minute?”
5. Eg “youse”, “brang”, “I seen ‘er”.
6. Yes. Aboriginal English is used for joking at the expense of White behaviours and institutions, for telling sand stories, for certain kinds of abusive talk and name calling between children, etc.
7. The community doesn’t always accept dialect texts; there are many varieties of the dialect so that it is difficult to make a dialect text widely applicable; there are alternative methods of teaching reading which have stronger claims.
8. This would deprive the child of reading instruction for too long.
9. Barnitz’s proposal is useful insofar as it constitutes acceptance of the dialect spoken by the children, however it would result in incongruities in that what has been written in standard English is usually not appropriate to be spoken in dialect. It would be better to encourage students to use dialect for texts composed (perhaps by themselves) in Aboriginal English and Standard for texts composed in standard.



10. a) The use of the home dialect in oral reading is natural
  - b) The use of context must be encouraged (to help distinguish what, to dialect speakers, are homonyms)
  - c) It is important to interpret auditory discrimination problems of dialect speaking children with due regard to the dialect (and not to jump to the conclusion that children have psychophysical problems)
  - d) The nature of phonics generalisations may differ across dialects
  - e) The emphasis should be on communicating meaning, bearing in mind the cultural background of the child
11. The three principles of the Language Experience Approach are:
  - a) Reading is language based and involves close relationship of oral and written patterns
  - b) The most meaningful material for the child to read is his/her own material
  - c) Reading is a natural extension of the thinking-speaking-listening-writing process.

The advantages include the fact that

- a) It respects the communicative background of the dialect speaking children
  - b) It links the child's experiences to his/her oral expression, mapped onto written expression.
12. The Experience-Test-Relationship method involves moving from prior discussion of the children's knowledge and experiences to the reading of the text and then to a making of overt connections between the text and the children's experiences. It has the advantage of allowing for the different experiences that different children bring to a text. (You should add how you would use it with Aboriginal children).

### **Reading 6 (Malcolm 1992)**

1. For: access to the standard variety should give all children access to wider life opportunities; most parents want their children to learn Standard English.
 

Against: some say it is unachievable because non-standard dialect speakers do not identify with standard speakers; it could cause division within dialect speaking communities; some see it as an attempt to impose the standard of one class upon another.
2. Bidialectalism, or bidialectal education is an approach which takes non-standard dialects seriously and attempts to give their speakers specialised attention on the basis of linguistic knowledge of the dialect.
3. The teachers seemed to dialect with accent, and they identified some stigmatised features of non-standard non-Aboriginal speech in the speech of their Aboriginal pupils.
4. No, because standard English is seen to carry White identity, and Aboriginal English is seen to carry Aboriginal identity.
5. Lack of standardisation increases the options open to the speaker and thus opens up a greater stylistic range.
6. Non-standard dialect speakers may make use of their repertoire of forms to accompany shifts between speakers, to add to expressiveness, to convey an appropriate atmosphere, to enhance enjoyment of social interaction, to minimise conflict and to express group belonging.
7. Taking into account that Aboriginal English is not a standardised variety I consider that Aboriginal English speakers do not normally make errors when speaking that dialect. It is, then, appropriate to see their English errors as school-induced, in that they are caused by the attempt to get them to use a dialect with which they are not fully familiar. If we bear this in mind when we teach them, we will see the problem in the task and materials we are imposing rather than in the learner. This should cause us to recognise the need to develop bridging strategies to enable the Aboriginal English speaker to make the transition between the two dialects.
8. We should not expect children to make the conceptual leap between the language and a context other than their own. We should either ground what we are presenting to them (either in speech or in writing) in the context the children know, or we should build up the context at the same time as we introduce the language. Brian Gray's "concentrated language encounters" are one way of doing this.

A useful further guide to the implementation of what we are calling bidialectal education strategies is *Supporting English Language Acquisition*, published by the Department for Education and Children's Services, South Australia, 1994.

## Curriculum Component: Questions on the Readings

### *Reading No. 1*

**Malin, Merridy (1990). Why is life so hard for Aboriginal students in urban classrooms? *The Aboriginal Child at School*, 18 (1), 9-29.**

1. This article is about the way in which Aboriginal children who are regarded as skilled and competent by their parents come to be regarded very differently in school. On p. 9 of the article, the broad findings of the study are briefly outlined. In your own words, list these findings.
2. On p.10, Malin makes a generalisation concerning all Aboriginal students. Keep this in mind as you read the article. We will return to this item at the end. Ask yourself whether you agree that "it is not surprising 'in the light of what was observed' that Aboriginal children tend to do poor academically and drop out of school early".

### *Differences in Home Socialisation*

3. In her research, Malin studied both Aboriginal and Anglo families. What different values were emphasised in the two sets of families?
4. What difference in behaviour regarding seeking assistance was noticed?
5. What explanation did the Aboriginal parents give for "not dwelling on their own minor injuries or upsets, to be able to resolve their own disputes, and not to take themselves too seriously"?
6. What competencies did the Aboriginal children possess on entry to school?
7. How was the autonomy of Aboriginal children reflected in their parents' behaviour towards them?
8. Autonomy and affiliation are encouraged by Aboriginal parents. Describe in your own words how these attributes might be reflected in students' behaviours.

### *Autonomy in the Classroom*

9. Why would the Anglo students fit more comfortably into the classroom than the Aboriginal students?
10. With your own students, observe the difference in monitoring behaviour of the Anglo and Aboriginal students. Is there a difference in line with what Malin says? (Keep in mind that it might be difficult to detect, and take some time to become aware of the different ways of behaving of the students.)
11. Naomi, Jason and Terry weren't the only Aboriginal student in class. Why do you suppose the other five Aboriginal students in class adapted more readily to the need to monitor the whereabouts of adults in the classroom?
12. On p. 13 Malin intimates that it is the failure to fit in with the teacher's expectations that led to Naomi, Jason and Terry getting into trouble. This suggests that the problem is the teacher as much, if not more than, the child. To what extent should students conform to the teacher's expectations, and to what extent should the teacher modify his/her expectations to accommodate to the needs of the students in class?
13. The transcript of the Tracing Lesson indicates that Naomi behaves differently from other students in class. In your own words, describe the different priorities that Naomi has for participating in the classroom. Mrs. Evers is obviously frustrated by her behaviour. Given an understanding of the reasons for Naomi's behaviour, suggest how you would have handled Naomi in the Tracing Lesson.
14. From the point of view of the teacher, however, Naomi was making a significant social mistake in not deferring to the teacher's authority. What other mistakes did she make? What did she achieve?
15. On p. 17 Malin provides evidence of the greater autonomy of Aboriginal students in the class. In your own class it may be more difficult to identify significant differences in competencies because students are older, etc. Even so, endeavour to identify the strengths of the Aboriginal students in your class.
16. Note the 'components of Aboriginal student autonomy' on p. 18. To what extent are these components evident in your own classroom? (Note that some students may possess the attributes but others don't. Also, they may be possessed in greater or lesser degree.)

### *Affiliation in the Classroom*

17. Malin outlines the ways in which Aboriginal students express affiliation in class. Do they restrict this affiliation only to other Aboriginal students? What difficulties may such affiliation suggest for a teacher who is intent upon developing a strongly competitive environment?

### *Communication Difficulties*

18. Four major communication breakdowns are identified in relation to teacher-Aboriginal student communication. What are these, and what would you do about them if they were occurring in your classroom?

### *Micropolitical Processes in the Classroom*

19. One of the things Aboriginal students find difficult to cope with is classrooms where the teacher favours Anglo students and 'picks on' Aboriginal students. To what extent are the experiences described in this class typical of such a situation. What would you do if such a situation was developing in your classroom?
20. The teacher's expressed preference is for students who 'need' her. Given the autonomy of Aboriginal students, there is much less likelihood of her coming to like them as much as the Anglo students. How do you suppose this would be perceived by the Aboriginal students? How would they explain the differential treatment by the teacher?
21. Why does the teacher use the term 'micropolitical processes' to refer to the relationships that develop?

### *Repercussions*

22. List the repercussions under the headings *social* and *academic*.
23. Consider alternative strategies which the teacher could have used when interacting with the Aboriginal students. Why do you suppose she didn't use these alternatives?

### *Using Teaching Strategies as a means for Social Control*

24. By using teaching strategies to control these students, the teacher deprived them of opportunities for learning. This can be interpreted as a means of asserting domination over the student in order to make it clear who is in authority in the classroom, and bore no relationship to the learning needs of the student. Consider the extent to which such actions should be a part of the teacher's repertoire of controlling techniques, and suggest alternative ways of ensuring authority in the classroom.
25. What were the consequences of this controlling behaviour on the Aboriginal students (particularly on Naomi)?

### *The Students' Response to the Lack of Rapport*

26. As this was a Year One class, the students would tend to follow the teacher in her assessment of other students, so that the teacher's value judgments would be accepted as social fact. This is the case with the teacher's judgments of Naomi and the other Aboriginal students: other students responded predictably. And, in turn, the Aboriginal students' response was predictable. How do you suppose the teacher would explain the formation of an Aboriginal 'clique' in her classroom? To whom would she attribute the cause for the formation of this clique?

### *Implications and Conclusion*

Apart from the support and friendship of other students in class, what else did the Aboriginal students miss out on?

What are the implications of this study for your own teaching?

Now reconsider Malin's generalisation concerning all Aboriginal students. Ask yourself whether you agree that "it is not surprising 'in the light of what was observed' that Aboriginal children tend to do poor academically and drop out of school early".

## *Reading No. 2*

**Hudsmith, S. (1992). Culturally responsive pedagogy in urban classrooms. *The Aboriginal Child at School*, 20 (3), 3-12. (Note that the author is actually Sandra Hudspith).**

This article describes the characteristics of two teachers who utilise strategies which facilitate learning by Aboriginal students who otherwise would become alienated from school. In the introduction, the author refers to 'resistance', which means that students resist the efforts of the school to teach them. The author identifies cultural differences as a major factor in school failure.

### *Background to the Study*

1. You will note that there were three indications of success of the two teachers. You will be aware that these factors — behaviour difficulties, poor academic competence, and lack of parental support — are common problems.

### *The Teachers and their Classrooms*

2. What changes resulted when students entered Ms. Banks' and Mr. Wells' classes?

### *Incorporation of Aboriginal Learning Styles*

3. The two teachers did a number of things that contributed to effective education. Five categories are defined. The first of these, incorporating Aboriginal learning styles, is now fairly well known by most teachers of Aboriginal students. Identify the ways in which the Aboriginal learning styles were incorporated, and the activities that accompanied the methods.
  - Real-life experiences:
  - Context-specific situations:
  - Teacher-pupil equity:
  - Teacher-talk.
4. How do these activities differ from what goes on in the mainstream classroom?
5. Could activities of this kind be included in a classroom of mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students?

### *Incorporation of Aboriginal Socio-linguistic Etiquette*

6. The author notes that cultural differences in patterns of interaction between white middle class teachers and their minority students may be an important factor in school failure. Explain in your own words how Mr. Wells and Ms. Banks overcame the communication problem.
7. What difference can you identify between 'group talk' and what normally takes place in the mainstream class?
8. How would the values of a teacher accustomed to teaching mainstream students have to change in order to cope with the kinds of things done during the group talk activities?
9. What lessons are there in the account of group talk for the development of two-way communication in your classroom. Give attention to the following:
  - the ways in which Aboriginal English can be acknowledged, t
  - the teachers' use of vernacular,
  - the development of awareness of cultural differences.

What were the benefits of group talk from the students' point of view?

### *Utilizing Aboriginal Experience and Values*

10. What values were acknowledged and incorporated in the classroom?
11. What are the possible consequences of ignoring these values in the school?

12. What behaviours indicated that the students were being autonomous?
13. What behaviours indicated that the students were being affiliative?
14. Consider how you would find out what values were exhibited by Aboriginal students in your school, and the ways you could modify your instruction to incorporate these values in your teaching.

#### *Development of Affiliative Relationships with Students.*

Aboriginal children are brought up to adopt equal relationships with adults. This is in marked distinction to Western society, where the superior status of adults is impressed upon children quite firmly. The different values are a cause of considerable problems for Aboriginal students in school. You will notice that the two teachers in this article utilised a variety of strategies to develop a suitable relationship.

15. List the things that the teachers did which contributed to the development of affiliative relationships.
16. What aspects of the approach used by the teacher are consistent with your own experience of teaching Aboriginal students?

#### *Enhancing Self-esteem and Identity*

An involuntary minority is a group of people who, by birth, have characteristics that identify them as members of the group. Unlike voluntary minorities (religious group membership, for example) Aboriginals have no choice in membership. In part, membership is forced upon them by the influence of the dominant group in society. In other words, they are excluded from full participation in mainstream society by their physical characteristics. In part, this is a racist influence on these people.

As a consequence of this, the minority group rejects the elements of dominant culture that are forced on them, such as schooling, law, economy, and politics. This is what Ogbu refers to as the 'oppositional cultural frame of reference'.

17. Explain how the two teachers promoted Aboriginal identity in their classrooms.
18. Why would the development of Aboriginal identity be a valuable thing for the promotion of learning for these students?
19. What could you do to implement a stronger Aboriginal identity in your school?

#### **Reading No. 3**

**Trouw, N. (1994). An effective language program for urban Aboriginal children. In S. Harris & M. Malin (Eds.). *Aboriginal kids in urban classrooms*. (pp. 51-64)Wentworth Falls: Social Science Press.**

In this article, Trouw outlines the conditions necessary for success of Aboriginal students in school. She then describes how a program was developed to implement culturally appropriate education in a two-way learning context. As such, this article is very relevant to the LACE project.

Even though Trouw chose to work with early childhood students, the approach described is relevant to all levels of education for Aboriginal students.

1. On p. 51 Trouw refers to English as a second culture in preference to English as a second language. Why?
2. List the three tasks which Trouw sets herself. These are the sorts of tasks which you might consider for your school.

#### *Constraints to Learning*

3. With regard to the constraints on learning for Aboriginal students, note the similarity of findings among the various researchers. This suggests that their findings might be generalisable to Aboriginal people throughout Australia. Note also Enemuru's belief. This is consistent with Judith Kearin's view that Aboriginal child rearing practices have been remarkably resilient even in urban areas and many traditional values are perpetuated.

4. Distinguish between formal and informal learning. What are the principal ways in which each occurs?
5. Trouw identifies a couple of problems which Aboriginal children face in classrooms. What other demands do teachers make on students that for Western middle class students are quite acceptable, but which for students of other cultures may be quite difficult to accomplish?
6. What sort of classroom culture would be best for Aboriginal students? What sorts of behaviour would the teacher have to accept as 'normal' for this culture to be established?
7. The type of questioning used in classrooms reflects a body of values embedded in Anglo culture and not readily perceived by teachers or others. Consider the questions which you ask: What expectations do the different kinds of questions place on students? What sorts of understandings must they possess in order to respond appropriately?
8. What is strong talk? Explain how you would censure a student who infringes appropriate behavioural expectations in your class. Is this approach likely to have a negative effect on Aboriginal students?
9. Trouw refers to 'academically purposeful behaviour'. This requires metacognitive skills related to monitoring one's own progress in the tasks in hand. Students have to ask themselves questions such as "Do I understand what to do?" "Have I done this right?" "What is the next step to achieve the right answer?" "What information is relevant to answering this question?" and so on. Students who haven't learned these strategies will have considerable difficulty in monitoring their own behaviour in the classroom and will often be bewildered by what is going on.
10. Distinguish between contextualised and decontextualised learning. Even though formal learning is decontextualised, by using the above metacognitive strategies, students are able to see the relevance of what they are doing and monitor their progress against clear markers. Students who rely on concrete or visual markers only are unable to do this, and see little relevance in formal education. What sorts of things make learning contextualised?
11. Preliteracy skills are considered below. But what does it mean to be 'culturally literate'?
12. What do you suppose the 'distinctive view of what schools are for' is? Observe some of your students in their interactions and activities: To what extent do they differ from Anglo students, and to what extent do these differences indicate a relatively ineffective adjustment to school?

### *Teaching Strategies*

13. Note the dual approach recommended by Trouw. This is equivalent to the two-way learning recommended in this project. You should now examine the situation in your class or school to determine the extent to which informal learning strategies could be utilised, and also consider the extent to which the Aboriginal students would benefit from formal instruction in the skills of school learning.
14. When they learn something new, students need to be able to peg it to something they already know. If the new material is too far removed from current understanding, the students will be unable to cope with it, but if they are led through the material by someone else who already has attained the new material and can establish links with the students' prior knowledge, then they can go much faster and work on material that is further away from what they already know. This is what 'scaffolding' refers to. It is a strategy identified by a Russian psychologist, Vygotsky. It is a strategy used in First Steps and Stepping out. The 'natural learning' approach devised by Gray approximates this 'mediated learning' of Vygotsky, in that both approaches operate in the zone beyond what the student already knows.  
  
Indicate how the four step natural learning process differs from classroom learning. Why is this so? (In your answer, consider the premises on which classroom learning is based).
15. What are the benefits of the natural learning approach, according to Trouw?
16. Notice how Trouw needs to establish the skills and knowledge that Anglo students possess before she can effectively judge the performance of Aboriginal students. This is a sound approach: if the skills to be acquired are poorly understood, then instruction in them will be of limited value. You need to know the objective of your instruction. What does Trouw consider to be the necessary pre-literacy skills? (See Appendix 1).
17. Note the adapted classroom teaching strategies which Trouw identifies. You should be able to adapt these for your classroom regardless of year level. Why can't you just use Aboriginal strategies in the classroom?

18. What other strategies might be useful? Consider material from the other two readings: What characteristics of Aboriginal culture and learning may contribute to the need to adapt other aspects of the classroom?
19. Note that these strategies imply two-way learning. Trouw is endeavouring to foster decontextualised learning skills. Identify the components of her adaptations that contribute to this.
20. On p. 58 Trouw indicates how she would implement lessons in formal learning strategies. Why would she need to do this? How would you implement such a lesson in your classroom?
21. Note the methods of evaluating the effectiveness of the program which was implemented. To what extent would the three methods used have provided a comprehensive analysis of the program's effectiveness? How did the students change during the program?
22. What changes does the author intend making to the program? Why?
23. Think about your own situation. How would you go about implementing a similar program for the subject which you teach?

## Curriculum Readings: Guide to Answers

### *Reading 1 (Malin, 1990)*

1. a) Skills and characteristics which Aboriginal children learn at home do not fit the way the classroom is organised;
- b) Also, Aboriginal children's values and ways of communicating do not correspond.
- c) This results in low expectations on the part of the teacher and lack of rapport.
- d) Thus the students become marginalised socially and academically.
- e) Aboriginal students' successes are largely invisible.
- f) Aboriginal students' behaviour is seen as 'problem behaviour'
- g) As a result, Aboriginal students tend to drop out.
2. The article makes it seem almost inevitable that Aboriginal children (at least those with a 100% Aboriginal background) will drop out of school.
3. Aboriginal families valued autonomy and self-sufficiency plus concern for others. Anglo families valued children's dependency on adults.
4. Anglo children sought assistance from the teach and Aboriginal children sought it from one another.
5. They saw this level of independence as necessary to survive in a world hostile to Aboriginality.
6. Practical competence.
7. The parents tended not to restrict the individual autonomy of their children.
8. Autonomy, as shown in, for example, self reliance, self-regulation, observation skills, practical competence, ability to seek help from peers, caution in approaching new tasks, emotional and physical resilience. Affiliation, as in nurturing younger ones, keeping an eye on others, helping others, trusting peers.
9. Because they were more accustomed to having their behaviour closely monitored by adults.
10. *[must be answered differently by every teacher]*.
11. They had one non-Aboriginal parent and were therefore more exposed to white ways.
12. The article suggests (and I agree with it) that the teacher must be prepared to adjust to the pupil. This is especially essential in the early years of school socialization.
13. Naomi's priorities are: observing the task as performed by other pupils, getting it right, rather than getting it done in time. The teacher should have noticed what she was trying to do and valued that more than the time constraints.

14. Naomi took too long, talked too much with other students, spent too much time looking around, took it on herself to help another student, called out helpful advice to another student, gets out of her chair, gets distracted by the videocamera. She achieved a piece of work with evidence of careful colouring.
15. *[must be answered differently by every teacher]*
16. *[must be answered differently by every teacher]*
17. No, Aboriginal students do not restrict affiliation in class to other Aboriginal students. Affiliation will upset attempts at individualism and competitiveness.
18. The four main communication breakdowns are: I) Aboriginal students' delayed or cooperative answering of questions directed by the teacher to individuals; ii) Aboriginal students' expressionless response to reprimand; iii) Aboriginal students' disruptive affiliative behaviours; iv) dialect differences resulting in some teacher speech being not understood.
19. *[must be answered differently by every teacher].*
20. The teacher wants children who need her, and the Aboriginal children seem independent of her. Her response to the children is probably one of withdrawal. This would increase the Aboriginal students' insecurity in the classroom. The teacher is remote and difficult to relate to. The fact that the white children receive more attention and affection (because, to her, they are more open to it) would make the Aboriginal children feel increasingly marginalised.
21. The teacher is a gatekeeper of power and influence, and in the micro-culture of the classroom, can determine who gets what.
22. Social: more reprimands, more severe punishments, less acknowledgment of jokes, less acceptance of credibility. Academic: lower expectations, expression of surprise at good work.
23. The teacher could have treated the Aboriginal students the same as everybody else, but she was inhibited in doing so because of her perception of the way they treated her.
24. By using teaching strategies to control the Aboriginal students, the teacher compounded their educational problems, excluding them from participation, reducing their time on task, returning their work last, spending less time hearing their reading, excluding them from the advanced group in reading.
25. The Aboriginal students came to be ostracised by the other students, sought refuge in the company of non-Aboriginal students, became negative towards the teacher.
26. The teacher would be likely to see the Aboriginal students as forming a clique because they were a bad influence on one another. She would probably see it as threatening to her authority.

What else did the Aboriginal students miss out on?

- recognition of the skills they brought to school;
- recognition of the legitimacy of their culturally different ways;
- incorporation into the classroom community;
- equity with respect to educational opportunity.

### ***Reading 2 (Hudspith 1992)***

1. *[no answer required]*
2. Students truancy and suspension steadily declined, misbehaviour was rare, there was an ethos of affiliation, ease of interaction and affirmation of Aboriginal culture and individuality.
3. Real life experiences: excursion to Fogg Dam; supermarket shopping visit; camp to Oenpelli.

Context-specific situations: concentrated learning encounters; students as tour guides; students responsibility for shopping.

Teacher-pupil equity: students' rights extended to the right to use cultural patterns and to move freely about.

Teacher talk: "group talk" used with overlapping, or silence, permitted; questions asked to the group rather than individuals; acceptance of vernacular and use of it on occasions to make a point.



4. *[each teacher to answer on the basis of own experience]*
5. In my view some of these activities could be used in a classroom of mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, though there would need to be an understanding Principal.
6. They modified postural and linguistic requirements of communication so that Aboriginal styles were affirmed.
7. Group talk breaks all the rules of decorum and turn taking. It requires teachers to try out a new way of operating.
8. Such a teacher would need to recognize students' contributions as the most important thing, rather than the teacher's prepared agenda.
9. Aboriginal English can be used as a communicative medium on matters relevant to learning. In some contexts it may be appropriate for the teacher to slip into dialect, but this should not be necessary. The teacher's preparedness to use the "Aboriginal way" in classroom discourse is the significant factor.
10. Values acknowledged included: autonomy (of the Aboriginal child), affiliation, equity, responsibility of students to make decisions, sharing, the importance of the peer group.
11. Possible consequences of ignoring these values are the misinterpretation of student behaviours (like the responsibility to provide food to siblings during the break).
12. The students showed they were autonomous in exercising caring behaviours and in making practical decisions like moving outside when the air conditioning wasn't working.
13. The students were being affiliative in taking care of siblings, sharing and engaging in peer instruction.
14. *[to be answered by individual teachers on the basis of their experience]*
15. The teachers contributed to the development of affiliative relationships by: showing personal interest in students, knowing students' families and background experiences, involving Aboriginal parents in school life, letting them come on an excursion to the teacher's home, using humour.
16. *[to be answered by individual teachers on the basis of their experience]*
17. Bringing Aboriginal role models into the classroom; going on excursions to experience and affirm Aboriginal culture.
18. It shows how Aboriginality may be redefined and constructed through Western education.
19. *[to be answered by individual teachers on the basis of their experience]*

### **Reading 3 (Trouw, 1994)**

1. Her assumption was that the children were English speakers so the problem lay in the cultural demands which the Western schooling was making on the children, rather than on the linguistic demands.
2. a) establish a list of cultural factors which could constrain the learning of urban Aboriginal children;  
b) devise appropriate teaching strategies to overcome these constraints;  
c) implement a programme which was practicable within the school framework.
3. *[a comment, not a question]*
4. *Formal learning* is the predominant kind of learning in the Western education system and is dependent on exercising particular controls on the use of language.  
*Informal learning* is the mode of learning traditionally used by Aboriginal people and involves participation, observation and imitation rather than two-way verbal interaction for the transmission of information.
5. Some demands that teachers make on Aboriginal students which cause those students problems are:
  - a) expecting them to take risks by answering questions and reading aloud.
  - b) plunging them into new situations without giving them time to try things out.
  - c) expecting them to act as individuals independently of the group.
  - d) expecting them to respond positively to "strong talk"

- e) expecting them to treat adults in a different way from their peers
- f) using ridicule as a form of discipline.
6. Aboriginal students will be best suited by a classroom culture where students have to take responsibility for their own learning, where learning is contextualized, and where the pre-school experiences of the learners are taken into account.
  7. [*this question must be answered by each teacher for him- or her-self*]
  8. *Strong talk* is direct, deliberate talk, associated with fixed eye contact.
  9. [*a comment, not a question*]
  10. *Contextualized learning* takes place in the context to which it relates and is immediately applicable to everyday life, whereas *decontextualized learning* is learning which depends on the ability to abstract oneself from the learning situation.  
Learning can be contextualised by creating a context which will make it relevant to the learner.
  11. To be *culturally literate* means to be able to “read” the culture, that is, to have the cultural knowledge to enable one to make sense of what is going on in a given context.
  12. The Aboriginal child’s distinctive view of what school is for is likely to be derived from that child’s cultural experience. The child may see it as a place where ritualized learning must be passively received. The child may associate it with secret and restricted knowledge, rather than with the idea of exploratory learning.
  13. Trouw’s two ways were: to teach by informal strategies so that the children would be able to learn the formal system. [*The question asks the teacher to consider how this might be done*]
  14. The four stages of the “natural learning” process are (1) shared experience; (2) modelling; (3) negotiation; (4) self-performance. They differ from the usual approach to classroom learning, in that they do not expect performance from the child until the child is ready.
  15. According to Trouw, the benefits of the natural learning approach are that it removes the need for the child to take risks too soon, it prevents the teacher from dominating the learning situation and it creates a meaningful context for learning.
  16. The pre-literacy skills are of four kinds: motivational, linguistic, operational and orthographic, and are listed in detail on page 63.
  17. You can’t just use Aboriginal strategies in the classroom because the children need to build on their prior experience so that they will be able to cope with formal learning.
  18. You could look at, for example, affiliation strategies and “group talk”.
  19. Components of Trouw’s strategies which foster decontextualized learning skills are, *eg.*
    - shared experience
    - children’s involvement in lesson planning
    - avoidance of ritualistic behaviour.
  20. She would teach formal learning strategies by means of role play, and also by having Euro-Australian children to act as role models.
  21. The programme was evaluated by means of a) Trouw’s own observations; b) use of Clay’s system to assess oral reading; c) feedback from the classroom teacher. These do not provide a comprehensive analysis and would need to be supplemented by measures of oral and written communication and of the comprehension of content. On her basically informal measures Trouw was able to obtain evidence of change in the children.
  22. The author intends to extend the programme from a withdrawal one to a classroom one using team teaching. She also intends to include a writing component. Bringing them into the classroom is seen as necessary to prevent the students from becoming too dependent on the small group work rather than formal learning. Writing needs to be added to the programme because hitherto it has concentrated only on reading.
  23. [*a question for each individual teacher to answer*].

## **Appendix 8**

# **Evaluation Questionnaire**

## Questionnaire for Participating Teachers

1. The following observations about the speech of their Aboriginal children were made by teachers involved in this project towards the commencement of the data gathering. Assuming that you have observed the kind of behaviour referred to, please comment as to whether you now agree with the way it was interpreted, and, if not, how you would now interpret it and why it happens.

1.1 “They confuse *was* and *were*”

1.2 “They slur their speech”

1.3 “They use statements instead of questions”

---

1.4 “Letters are dropped off words”

1.5 “They miss words out of their sentences”

---

1.6 “They say and write things back to front”

1.7 “They make improper use of tense”

---

1.8 “They speak fast and run words together”

---

1.9 “It’s hard to know when they are talking to you”

10. “They are slower to react to a request”.

2. The following observations were among those made by AEWs or other Aboriginal community members in talking to members of the team on their first visit. How would you understand or respond to these comments and how might you accommodate to them in your teaching?
    - 2.1 “Teachers use words that children and parents don’t understand”.
    - 2.2 “Teachers teach what they have decided beforehand.”
    - 2.3 “With an Aboriginal teacher I think they’d feel more freer to say things”
    - 2.4 “Aboriginal people should be putting down more stories”.
    - 2.5 “If children use SAE at home, parents get angry and say ‘You’re not at school now!’”
  3. In what ways (if any) has your understanding of Aboriginal English changed through your involvement in this project?
  4. Has your work on Aboriginal English given you any insights into the ways in which Aboriginal people approach experience and knowledge? Can you elaborate?
  5. Do you now consider yourself capable of gathering data on Aboriginal English from you students and analysing it at a level appropriate to your teaching needs?
  6. What are the three basic elements of two way education as proposed in this project? Are you able to carry out strategies to implement them appropriately in your situation?
-

## **Appendix 9**

# **Final Evaluation Sheet and Responses**

**LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION ENHANCEMENT  
FOR TWO WAY EDUCATION  
Evaluation Sheet**

**Please rate the following areas from 1 to 5, where 1 is the lowest rating and 5 is the highest rating.**

**A. The project as a whole**

1. Planning and coordination of the programme \_\_\_\_\_
2. Clarity of statement of the aims and objectives \_\_\_\_\_
3. Value of the outcomes to you \_\_\_\_\_
4. Value of the outcomes to the more effective education of Aboriginal children \_\_\_\_\_
5. Clarity of outline of the stages of the project \_\_\_\_\_
6. Explanation of the content of each section \_\_\_\_\_
7. Understanding of your expected commitment to the project \_\_\_\_\_
8. Practicability of the timetable for the project. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Sufficiency of time to fulfil the requested tasks? \_\_\_\_\_

**B. The July in-service course**

1. Importance of the week-long course to the overall effectiveness of the research project. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Fulfilment of the Aims and Objectives of the course. \_\_\_\_\_

**C. The Readings with set questions**

1. Usefulness of the pre-circulated readings to an understanding of the project \_\_\_\_\_
2. Volume of readings and associated questions \_\_\_\_\_
3. Value of new knowledge gained from them \_\_\_\_\_
4. Effectiveness of the set questions in assisting your comprehension of the articles \_\_\_\_\_

**D. The Aboriginal English component**

1. Clarity of instructions for the carrying out of your tasks in this linguistic section. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Helpfulness of the research tools (the 22 sentences and the group frameworks) \_\_\_\_\_
3. Effectiveness of the analytical frameworks for mapping patterns of Aboriginal English \_\_\_\_\_
4. Effectiveness of the programme in deepening your understanding of the kind of language your children speak especially outside the classroom \_\_\_\_\_

**E. The Two-way curriculum component**

1. Effectiveness of the whole project in giving you information about two-way learning and curricula \_\_\_\_\_
2. Relevance of the concept to your situation \_\_\_\_\_
3. Value of the concept more generally in the education of Aboriginal children \_\_\_\_\_
4. Clarity of the instructions for the carrying out of this part of the project \_\_\_\_\_
5. Appropriateness and helpfulness of the set tasks \_\_\_\_\_

**CONCLUSION - Make general comments on any aspect of the programme, using another page or the back of this form if necessary**

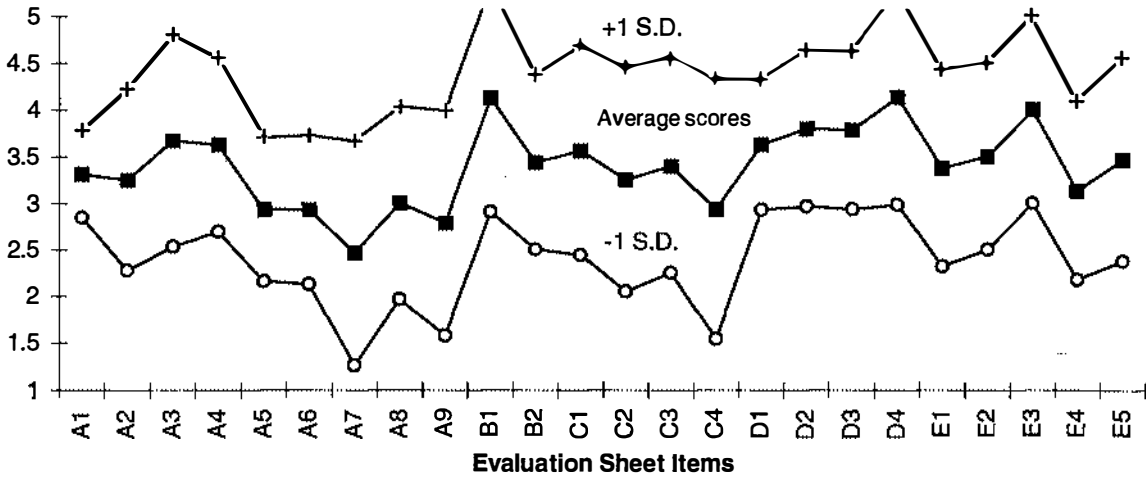
Should the project, or something similar to it, be repeated in 1995 and beyond with a different group of participants?

**YES/NO**

## Overview of Responses to Evaluation Sheet

The following graph represents the average ratings which participants gave to each item on the evaluation sheet shown on the previous page. Also plotted are the standard deviations of ratings, to provide a rough guide to the degree of spread of response for each item.

**Final Evaluation Items: Average Scores and Standard Deviations**



Comments and responses to the final question were overwhelmingly in favour of continuing and/or extending the present project.



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