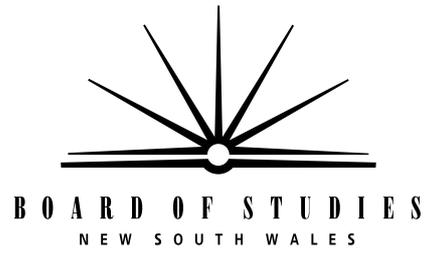




TEACHING ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES

Case Studies



Teaching Aboriginal Languages

Case Studies

Published by Board of Studies NSW
GPO Box 5300
Sydney 2001
Australia

Tel: (02) 9367 8111
Fax: (02) 9367 8484
Internet: <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>

ISBN 0 7313 4263 1

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Acknowledgements

Many schools and communities have contributed to the development of these case studies. This document gives advice and guidance from Aboriginal Elders and community people. Throughout the development the Board of Studies had close consultation with the NSW Aboriginal Languages Committee, the Department of Education and Training and the NSW State Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) Inc.

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Dunghutti/Gumbayngirr nations
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Schools

Bowraville Central
Shepherds Park SSP
Brewarrina Central
St Joseph's Primary Walgett
Walgett High
Yipirinya School NT

Introduction

Since the release in 1998 of the *NSW Aboriginal Languages Interim Framework K–10*, the Board of Studies NSW has received many requests from schools and communities wishing to establish Aboriginal language programs in their communities. In particular, they wanted to know how other schools and communities had designed and resourced suitable programs.

As a result of these requests it was decided that one way to assist these schools and communities would be through sharing the experiences of individual schools. The case studies in this publication have been provided so that schools and communities in NSW wishing to establish an Aboriginal Language program can gain from these experiences.

The revival and maintenance of Aboriginal languages in NSW has become more and more accepted and appreciated by schools and their communities as a process which will enhance reconciliation, particularly in the school environment. Many communities across NSW have expressed their willingness to be involved in this process. In some areas community people are reviving their languages through training programs offered by the Department of Education and Training's TAFE sector and by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. This training is then directed back into the school environment for the teaching of students in their language.

The programs described in the case studies have all been designed and operated in partnerships between the local Aboriginal communities and the school staff. Some of these programs have the added advantage of being assisted by Language Centres where the community people come into the schools to teach. The case studies aim to assist schools and communities to establish their own Aboriginal language programs.

Used in conjunction with the *NSW Aboriginal Languages Interim Framework K-10* and the video 'Talkin Language' released by the Department of Education and Training, the case studies will be valuable tools in the setting up of Aboriginal language programs.

About the Case Studies

The NSW Aboriginal Languages Interim Framework K-10 suggested four different types of programs that might be developed by schools and communities.

1 First Language Speakers

In first language speaker programs, students are speakers of the language. These programs will extend and develop students' language skills and may include the development of specialist skills such as interpreting and translating. They may be conducted as immersion programs.

2 Second Language Speakers

In second language speaker programs, students may have some background in the target language and culture, but they are probably not using the language on a day-to-day basis within the community. The language, however, is likely to be used reasonably widely. The students may be Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal.

3 Language Revival

Language revival is a general term that covers the following three program sub-types:

- Language enhancement
- Language maintenance
- Language reclamation.

4 Language Awareness

These programs teach those vestiges of the language that remain and the cultural context of the language. A language awareness program can be developed in any language, but this kind of program may be all that is possible in situations where language loss has been severe and documentation is poor.

About the Schools

Bowraville Central

Bowraville Central School Gumbayngirr Language program was chosen because of its success and the involvement of the Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative (MALCC). The Gumbayngirr people are trained at the MALCC and they then go to schools within their language area and teach the Gumbayngirr language.

Shepherds Park SSP

Shepherds Park SSP program was included because of its unique situation: this is the first program to be taught within a Juvenile Justice Centre. Unfortunately the program is no longer in operation. This program was unique in that it was trying to cater for the needs of students who came from all over NSW.

Brewarrina Central

Brewarrina was included because of its close contact with the Brewarrina Museum, and because it has a large number of Aboriginal students. Brewarrina Central is also catering for the two different Aboriginal Languages of its area, which are Muruwari and Ngemba.

St Joseph's Primary, Walgett

St Joseph's was chosen because of its commitment to the surrounding schools within its area. St Joseph's is the facilitator for the Walgett High, Walgett Primary, Koolyangarra Pre-School, Walgett TAFE and Goodooga Central schools programs. St Joseph's also produces many of the resources for all of the programs.

Walgett High

Walgett High School was included because the Yuwaalaraay/Gamilaraay language was being offered as a component in Years 9 and 10 and a language module was being offered as part of the Local Studies course in Years 11 and 12.

Yipirinya NT

The Yipirinya Language Program in the Northern Territory is included to show the way in which a first language speaker program operates. It provides an example of how such programs are designed and structured and how community people are involved in all areas of the program and the school itself.

NSW communities and schools are a long way from offering first language speaker programs. However, more and more communities and schools are looking at the establishment of Aboriginal language programs as an avenue for the revival of Aboriginal languages within NSW and as a way of promoting reconciliation.

Case Study 1

School:	Bowraville Central School K–10
Aboriginal Community:	Gumbayngirr
Language Teachers:	Michael Walker Mardi Walker Ken Walker Roy Ballangarry
Program Name:	Gumbayngirr Language Program
Principal:	Les Cross
Number of Students/Grades Involved with the Program:	K–5 Group — 15 students 6–10 Group — 10 students
Classroom Teacher:	Paul Le Cerf

This case study report was written by
Paul Le Cerf
Bowraville Central School

Gumbayngirr background

The Gumbayngirr language group area extends from Mt Yarrahappinni in the south to Grafton in the north and west to Guyra. The Gumbayngirr people of Bowraville are very active and they are concerned about the preservation of their culture and identity. There is a strong sense of community. Many people attend the TAFE annexe in Bowraville to improve their literacy skills and to use computer technology. The Land Council is also active. Many of the local Gumbayngirr people have achieved high levels of sporting skills, especially in rugby league and golf. There is a local Aboriginal dance group and an Aboriginal tour company offering guided tours of culturally significant places. Most Gumbayngirr people in the Bowraville area live in town or on the Mission, which is on the edge of town. There is a strong bond with the past and a widespread desire to resurrect elements of the culture that have been lost. The popularity of bush foods, traditional dance and the development of the Gumbayngirr language program are evidence of this.

Harry Buchanan (Maruwanba Maruungga) was born in 1898, not far from Bowraville, at Valla. He died in 1980, highly respected by both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people of the Nambucca Valley. He generously shared his stories on tape with many people, including linguist Diana Eades. Some Gumbayngirr Elders formed the Gumbayngirr Language and Culture Group in 1986 to share what they knew of their language and culture. Sadly, by 1992 only one of the Elders remained.

The public speaking of the Gumbayngirr language had been suppressed throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the language came close to being spoken only by the Elders when children were not present. By the late 1980s only a few speakers remained in the Nambucca Valley. The Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative was then formed. Members of the Muurrbay Co-operative dedicated themselves to transcribing the tapes of Harry Buchanan, compiling a Gumbayngirr dictionary, and learning and teaching the language to other Gumbayngirr people.

Bowraville Central School — background

Bowraville Central School is a K–10 school situated in the Nambucca Valley on the mid-north coast of NSW. The school has an enrolment of approximately 250 students in K–6 and 150 students in 7–10; around 10% of the student population is Aboriginal.

The Bowraville Township has a population of 1000, with several thousand more in the surrounding area. Several hundred Gumbaynggirr people live in the area.

Who was involved in the planning phase?

The following groups were involved in the planning:

- the Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness (ASSPA) Committee of Bowraville Central School
- the Aboriginal Education Worker
- Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative
- Head Teacher (Secondary)
- Aboriginal Studies teacher (Secondary)
- Principal.

Planning commenced once staff became aware of the expertise available through the Muurrbay Co-operative. All the Aboriginal language teachers have relatives at the school. Parents were contacted through the ASSPA Committee and students were surveyed — positive responses were received from both parents and students. The staff was asked if Aboriginal K–6 students could be released from class to join secondary students during their double period of Aboriginal Studies.

Several Bowraville people who played important roles in the Co-operative accepted an invitation to conduct language lessons at Bowraville Central School in 1994 on a voluntary basis. These classes were timetabled as part of the secondary Aboriginal Studies elective, with all K–10 Aboriginal students eligible to attend for two periods (80 minutes) per week. The Aboriginal Studies teacher (Secondary) was also present during the language lessons.

The Gumbaynggirr teachers were keen to use their newly developed skills in a teaching situation; what started as an occasional language lesson quickly became a regular part of the school program in 1994. (The teacher's work remained strictly voluntary until late 1994.)

What were the objectives of the program?

Cultural pride: the Gumbayngirr language program provides a focus for Aboriginal students, bringing them together and enabling them to experience the uniqueness of their culture. Not only does this have benefits for the development of language skills but it is also a significant factor in raising cultural pride and self-esteem. The four Gumbayngirr teachers are positive role models for students.

Revival of language and culture: the loss of language devastates culture — reclaiming lost cultural elements must start with revival of language. Language gives distinct cultural identity. Bowraville Central School was fortunate to be able to have access to the skills and expertise of the Muurrbay Co-operative in 1994.

Reinforce aspects of culture taught in other lessons: although elements of Aboriginal culture are emphasised in each key learning area's (KLA) unit of work (craft, music, art, food technology, wood technology and dance), we saw the language program as a unifying factor that would be able to tie all these together and provide impetus for the future development of other programs at our school.

Development of a group identity based around culture: the Aboriginal students at our school have benefited from being together as a group in the school environment. This engenders a positive attitude to schooling and is especially important for those students experiencing difficulties in other KLAs. (Bowraville also operates a Homework Centre for Aboriginal students on Tuesday from 3 pm to 5 pm. Most Aboriginal students attend.

Links between school and home: many Aboriginal people have had negative schooling experiences in the past. This program seeks to break this past nexus by showing parents/guardians/caregivers that schooling can be culturally relevant as well as providing survival skills and vocational relevance. This is 'Take Home Schooling': we ensure that students have worksheets and tapes to take home. All homes have been given a tape of Harry Buchanan speaking fluent Gumbayngirr to Diana Eades. Parents are invited to attend lessons; approximately 30 adults are attending evening Gumbayngirr lessons at the local TAFE.

Career paths for Aboriginal teachers: having established the program and had it operating successfully for several years, the school has had many enquiries from other schools and ASSPA committees to implement the program. With training, development and dedication the language teachers have reached a stage where they can now operate at more schools than just Bowraville Central School. Hopefully, this will continue and lead to the development of career paths for Aboriginal teachers. Initially, teachers worked on a voluntary basis but, as a result of a submission in late 1994, Bowraville received a grant and teachers have been paid since 1995.

Other factors: the establishment of the program was driven by the deep-seated desire of the school staff to continue the process of reconciliation.

What were some of the major issues to consider?

One of the major issues concerned how to structure material for K–10 classes that have a wide range of ages and abilities. This problem was overcome in 1995 when two classes were formed, K–5 and 6–10. In 1994, however, teachers started from a low resource base with a mixed ability class. The resources that were in use included flashcards, examples of conversation and role-playing. During 1994 three to four language teachers supervised about 15 students, therefore individual help was readily available. Some funding for development of resources was provided through the ASSPA Committee. A classroom teacher supported the language teachers — in 1994 this was the Aboriginal Studies (Secondary) teacher.

In the planning phase and in the initial implementation phase the issue of resources was important. Staff members were concerned that the language teachers may not have had enough appropriate resources. These fears proved groundless as the Co-operative received help and funding for the preparation of high quality resources.

Another major issue is that these lessons are only available to Aboriginal students. This was a request made by the language group, which has been fully supported by the school. The teachers believe that the Gumbayngirr language needs to be learnt by the people themselves. This relates to the issues raised in the background and rationale of this case study. Bowraville Central School feels that Aboriginal ownership of the Gumbayngirr language program is an important factor.

What aspects of the program would you like to highlight?

Timetabling

Since the start of 1995, Bowraville Central School has received grants to pay its Gumbayngirr teachers and to help resource preparation.

The program operates for four periods on a Wednesday morning from 9 am to 12 noon. It is a Central school so the group is divided as follows:

- K–5 — 2 periods
- 6–10 — 2 periods.

The Aboriginal Education Worker (AEW) is present at all four periods.

A classroom teacher (Program Co-ordinator) is present for two periods (1 period for K–5 and 1 period for 6–10).

Two, three or four Gumbayngirr teachers are present. Around 15 students are in the K–5 group and 10 students are in the 6–10 group.

Programming and resources

The teachers determine the structure of lessons, although the Program Co-ordinator from the school helps with suggestions regarding lesson structure and format. The regional LOTE Consultant has been helpful in providing ideas for the delivery of certain lessons. Some ideas for lessons were based on those conducted by the Pitjantjatjara language group in South Australia.

Writing and reading are given emphasis, especially with the older age group.

The Gumbayngirr teachers have developed their own range of resources. They have their own computer and printer, high speed dubbing facility, laminator and photocopier. Resource quality is extremely professional. The Muurrbay Co-operative has produced many books, tapes and artwork relating to history and culture.

Resources used to date include;

- tapes of conversation
- written conversations/flashcards
- animals/names
- a Gumbayngirr language dictionary (an ongoing project currently containing 2000 words)
- Gumbayngirr/English comic books
- taped songs for students to sing
- body parts
- cloze activities
- traditional/Dreamtime stories
- video and audio tapes of children

Cooperative learning approaches work well in the classroom; peer tutoring also plays a vital role. Most lessons are delivered in a fairly traditional way, ie in a classroom with teachers at the front. However, excursions to Dreaming sites, guest speakers and also role-playing prove popular.

There are no tests/evaluations during lessons; this is to prevent the idea of ‘failure’ entering the lessons. Students are very keen — it is one of the few times that they actually run to class! Many students, especially in K–5, have achieved high levels of word recognition and have correct pronunciation. It is very rewarding to see how successful the program is.

What has been achieved?

Since the start of 1998 the program has had Board of Studies endorsement as a School Certificate subject: students can be accredited with either 100 or 200 hours on their School Certificate.

This has become a high profile program: various media (newspaper, radio, and television), language consultants, other schools and ASSPA Committees have shown interest.

The language teachers have been swamped with requests to implement similar programs in other schools in the area — the teachers have wisely resisted the temptation to try to do too much. They feel that, though they are competent, they still have a lot to learn and need the time in their week to study. Nevertheless, the teachers have made time to teach another class of infants and primary students and a class of adults one night per week.

Apart from developing a genuine interest in Gumbayngirr language and culture on the part of students, parents and teachers, one of the major developments has been the creation of career paths for Aboriginal teachers. The education system is becoming an environment in which Aboriginal people can achieve.

Bowraville Central School derives a lot of pride from the success of this program, especially from the fact that it is owned and operated by the Gumbayngirr people, who helped save this language.

The Bowraville Central Program Coordinator is developing more resources for the program, as are the teachers. The future looks good — interest is high, students and parents are keen and the Government is making funds available.

The Gumbayngirr people spent thousands of years developing their language. Diana Eades, Harry Buchanan, the Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Cooperative and many others played a vital role in saving the language for future generations. Bowraville Central School is proud to take part in this process.

Case Study 2

School:	Shepherds Park SSP
Aboriginal community:	Wiradjuri Country – Wagga Wagga
Language Teacher/s:	Elvira Wighton
Program Name:	Wiradjuri Language Program
Principal:	Dave O’Grady
Number of Students/Grades Involved with the Program:	There are at times a range of numbers and ages. Usually around 10 in the class. All male and usually over 14 years old.
Classroom Teachers:	Elvira Wighton Albert Burgman

This case study report was written by
Albert Burgman,
Learning Skills Advisor
Ngungilanna Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Centre
Charles Sturt University

Wiradjuri background

It seems the Wiradjuri were a conglomerate of peoples who shared cultural and language similarities. Although there were dialectal differences determined by location (as with the Lachlan River Wiradjuri), they viewed themselves as one group and defined themselves linguistically as ‘Wirray-dyurray’. In this way, they distinguished themselves from other groups bordering their lands such as Ngiyambaa, the Gamilaraay, the Yuwaalaraay, the Yuwaaliyaay, and others of closely genetically related languages whose names were formed from their words for ‘no’ and ‘having’. These ‘no-having’ languages are again distinguished from the southern ‘no-no’ languages. To the east, the Great Dividing Range provided a linguistic and geographic border.

Within a broader perspective, Wiradjuri is a Pama-Nyungan language. Typically of these languages, it is an agglutinating suffixing language with a free word order but a preferred neutral construction of subject-object-verb, and in restricted situations operates under an initial prominence principle.

The invasion of Wiradjuri lands by non-Aboriginal people began in 1813 with the crossing of the Blue Mountains. What began as a respectful welcoming of visitors deteriorated within a few years to open warfare as occupancy by non-Aboriginal people led to competition for land, water and natural resources. An important Wiradjuri leader was Windredyne, who led a large-scale resistance until his death in about 1829. Poisonings, battles and extermination parties, combined with smallpox and leprosy, severely reduced the population of the Wiradjuri. Epitaphs remain to these events; for example, Poison Waterhole and Massacre Island near Narrandera.

What was left of the population underwent severe dislocation; the children were separated from their parents and put in homes, and families were shifted from one location to the next, thus severing ties to land, language and culture. As a result, the teaching of Wiradjuri as a first language had stopped by the early years of this century. The last people to speak the language were the parents of today's oldest people.

In spite of the extent of this destruction, there are still some people today who know some parts of the language, and nearly everyone knows a few words, such as 'malang' (money: a semantic extension of stone) and 'bundhii' (fighting stick). Furthermore, the Wiradjuri community has a continuing interest in reclaiming its language. This is highlighted by the Wiradjuri Council of Elders' support for a dictionary project being undertaken by Elder Stan Grant senior and Dr John Rudder, by the Council's support for the Wiradjuri language program being run at Shepherds Park School, and by its support for a submission to ATSIC for a Wiradjuri Language Centre.

Shepherds Park SSP – background

Shepherds Park School is based at the Juvenile Justice Centre at Wagga Wagga. Numbers within the Centre vary, but there are around 30 students at any one time. Large proportions of these students are Aboriginal and all are male. The catchment area for the Centre is the whole of country NSW. As the students are only there for the length of their terms, the student population tends to be very transient.

Who was involved in the planning phase?

Cecil Grant	Wiradjuri Elder
Stan Grant	Wiradjuri Elder
Elvira Wighton	Wiradjuri Elder
Debbie Evans	Education Centre Koori Representative
Leonie Brown	Aboriginal School Liaison Officer
Dave O'Grady	Principal of Shepherds Park School
Albert Burgman	Teacher/Linguist

What were the objectives of the program?

The program aims to achieve:

- development of cultural pride
- revival of language and culture
- creation of pilot Wiradjuri language classes in other settings
- development of lessons appropriate for the students.

What were some of the major issues to consider?

The program was discontinued after a period of six months. There were a number of reasons for this:

- The students came from a number of backgrounds. Few were Wiradjuri; those who weren't Wiradjuri usually resented being forced to learn a language that wasn't theirs.
- The classes were compulsory. All Koori students had to attend the classes regardless of their feelings towards learning, towards indigenous languages in general, and towards Wiradjuri in particular. These were often students with learning difficulties put in a situation they were not comfortable with.

- The make-up of the group was continually changing. As terms being spent by the students at the Centre were varied, there was a continual stream of new faces. There was always someone to start at the beginning. There was no continuity.
- The language program was given a low priority in the school timetable. It was in the last period of Wednesday and Friday — the worst times for concentrated language learning — and sometimes taken off the timetable for reasons such as a football match, a dance group's performance or painting of a reconciliation bus. This is not to say that the other activities were not good or necessary, only that they came at the expense of language learning, which had a secondary status.
- The Wiradjuri teacher was often away because of the terminal illness of her mother. There was little consistency in presentation of lessons, and they often became bogged down as no material was to be presented if there was no Wiradjuri teacher in the room.

What aspects of the program would you like to highlight?

The program was based on materials suitable for upper secondary students with a range of literacy standards, though tending towards low levels. Mixed abilities and no resources meant that materials that could be used at a range of levels had to be developed for each class. Furthermore, because the available Wiradjuri resources are only at a word level, we were restricted to exercises based on themes such as body parts, plants and animals, using materials such as flashcards, find-a-word, crosswords and word matching. Greetings were also taught and could be extended into role-play situations.

A lot of work on the research of Wiradjuri needs to be done and ratified by the Wiradjuri Council of Elders in order to have an agreed-upon grammar. Being able to use sentences in the classroom would allow a greater range of teaching situations. Activities such as songs, role-playing and developing dialogues and plays could be used by the students outside the classroom, in contrast to what is merely a list of words being rote learnt.

Programming and resources

There was one hour of preparation time prior to each class. This was enough to do photocopying, collect pens, pencils and paper and run through the lesson. However, a few extra hours were set aside on Sundays to work out the topic, develop a lesson plan, and make resources for the lessons during the week.

All resources had to be made as we were essentially using a Wiradjuri dictionary as the basis of our teaching. This was very time consuming.

What has been achieved?

The Wiradjuri program at Shepherds Park School will not continue in the foreseeable future but there were a number of positive outcomes of the program.

Small groups were and remained interested and were proud of their increasing knowledge. An interesting case was one student who would always sit in the furthest corner looking the other way or doing something else. After a few weeks, I sat and had a quiet talk with him and, to my surprise, he started reeling off everything we had done in class.

We were able to develop teaching strategies that may be applicable in other situations, eg flashcards, find-a-word, match-the-word and role-playing.

The Aboriginal Language Officer from Mount Austin High School observed several of the lessons and has successfully included Wiradjuri language in her program for the Koori students there. There was no resistance to learning Wiradjuri there.

The lessons from the Shepherds Park School situation can be used as a guide for future classes.

The interest in the language by Wiradjuri adults and the children of Mount Austin High School suggests that these are the places where the language program should begin. The logical step is to teach those who want to learn. Perhaps special night classes could be undertaken, even under the auspices of TAFE or Riverina Community College.

Elder Stan Grant's suggestion of a committee of Wiradjuri people to discuss issues and come to agreements regarding grammar, for ratification by the Wiradjuri Council of Elders, would enable the development of resources based on this information.

Research is continuing into the language. Elder Stan Grant and Professor John Rudder are continuing their efforts. I have produced two papers — one is an overview of the grammar, and the other is a talk which discusses some of the issues that the Wiradjuri people may need to deal with in making decisions about their language.

Ideally, a Wiradjuri Language Centre would be established to be a holding place for all language materials relating to Wiradjuri, to conduct research, to develop resources and programs for teaching Wiradjuri, and to act as a centre for the teaching of Wiradjuri.

Case Study 3

School:	Brewarrina Central
Aboriginal Community:	Muruwari/Morowari/Ngemba/ Paakantji
Language Teachers:	Paul Gordon Brad Steadman Isaac Gordon
Program Name:	Muruwari/Morowari-Ngemba Aboriginal Language Program
Principal:	Ruythe Dufty
Number of Students/Grades Involved:	Years 7–8 involving 27 students
Classroom Teacher:	Helen Pinchen

This case study report was written by
Brad Steadman
Isaac Gordon
Paul Gordon
Helen Pinchen

Muruwari and Ngemba background

The Muruwari language group extended from Cunnamulla in south-east Queensland to the northern bank of the Barwon River, the site of present day Brewarrina. Today no-one speaks the language fluently in a daily context but people still mix words with Aboriginal English. The last speakers of the language helped to record the language and it is on this information that the Muruwari section of the program is based.

Members of the Brewarrina community who identify with this language group are keen to see it preserved and reclaimed.

The Ngemba language group extends from Brewarrina in the central north of NSW to Wilcannia in the state's west, to Sandy Creek in the south. Some people put Ngemba together with Ngiyampaa, which extends to Wilandra Creek. The words of both groups are similar but the southern group has a softer pronunciation and the north is described as being 'heavy in the tongue.'

The land on which Brewarrina stands spans land identified as belonging to both of these groups (either side of the river) and because of this, these are the two languages taught at Brewarrina Central School.

The school acknowledges that there are a large number of Paakantji people in the community but in accordance with the guidelines contained in the *NSW Aboriginal Languages Framework K–10* the languages taught are those of the land.

Brewarrina Central School — background

Brewarrina Central School is a K–12 school serving the community of Brewarrina. It is situated in the central north-west of NSW and has a population of approximately 160 students in K–6 and 70 in 7–12. The student population is 95% Aboriginal.

The township is on the banks of the Barwon River. The surrounding area is used mainly for sheep, cattle and wheat farming, with some cotton farming.

There are Aboriginal people from a number of language groups in the area, as a result of government policies and the existence of a mission outside of town. Brewarrina has a total population of approximately 1,500 people, 60% of whom are Aboriginal.

With the release of the *NSW Aboriginal Languages Framework K–10* there has been an increasing emphasis on the learning and revival of language, with a new program being developed for LOTE in Year 7 and resources being developed for use in the infants school. This transition year has been difficult, with the appointment of a new coordinator and demands on the Aboriginal Languages staff from other areas. Funding has also been difficult, with the reduction of money available through ATSIC. This had allowed indigenous staff to remain in the area for their work outside of school time.

Who was involved in the planning phase?

The possibility of introducing an Aboriginal Language program was first examined in 1991 after a visit from linguist Tamsin Donaldson. By 1995 Brad Steadman had been employed by the school to collate resources in the hope that a course could gain approval and begin in 1996.

In 1996 Paul Gordon, a Ngemba man, and Bruce Shillingsworth, a Muruwari man, were employed by the school to work on the program. Beth Finlayson was the co-ordinating teacher and she came to the position with a background in LOTE. A video was produced as a teaching aid in 1996. This focused on the concept of learning from the past in order to face the future. Learning who they were and to what language group they belonged was a key component of the language program when it began. There was a movement towards reclaiming lost cultural heritage as well as learning language. Students traced family trees and discovered their connections to the land and to each other.

While some community members have reservations in regard to their children learning these languages, they prefer them to learn an Aboriginal language rather than a European one, which has little application to their lifestyle.

The teachers have been Brad Steadman and Paul Gordon, who have been learning the languages themselves. It is a sad situation that there are no first language speakers in the community. This is a revival program.

The languages as a LOTE component have been taught since 1996. There is a plan to introduce the languages into the infants classes in 1999, but this is dependent on funding. We are looking at the Dhunghutti program from Kempsey as a model for the infants program.

What were the objectives of the program?

In general, the program at Brewarrina Central School aims to:

- assist the Brewarrina community in the revival of Murawari and Ngemba languages
- maintain the remnants of the languages currently used in the community
- reclaim language and culture using archives and historical references
- increase awareness of the existence of the target languages in the wider community.

In accordance with the *NSW Aboriginal Languages Framework K–10*, the program seeks to:

- support the revival and maintenance of the target languages
- reinforce cultural identity and self-esteem for Aboriginal students
- recognise and appreciate the diversity of Aboriginal languages, beliefs and attitudes
- appreciate the contribution of Aboriginal languages to Australian culture
- promote a sense of personal achievement in the use of target languages
- develop the understanding that respect is integral to understanding cultures
- work towards the future acceptance of Aboriginal languages as a valid subject for study.

Some specific objectives are described below.

Reclamation of culture and identity: this is best summed up in the expression ‘if you don’t know where you come from, you can’t know where you’re going’. Students are encouraged to explore their unique past in order to have self-determination for the future. We believe that valid lifestyle choices can only be made through self-discovery.

Revival of language: a people’s language allows them to think in ways which are unique to that group. Some thoughts, feelings, ideas and attitudes cannot be translated into another language in a way which conveys subtle meanings and inferences.

Assist in the transition to school: the use of familiar words which still exist as a part of Aboriginal English allows students to feel more at ease and familiar in an unfamiliar setting.

Development of positive self-image: reinforces a positive view of Aboriginality as a rich and diverse heritage.

Forge links between school and community: the use of community members to teach the language and have discussions with parents encourages a relationship based on mutual respect.

Provide role models for students: interaction with community members who successfully integrate their Aboriginality into their working lives without sacrificing ideas, beliefs and principles which are important to themselves as members of an Aboriginal community.

Raise the awareness of non-Aboriginal persons to the diversity and richness of local Aboriginal culture: many non-Aboriginal Australians living in rural communities are unaware of the history of the area and likewise unaware of the cultural differences which can be expressed by means of language. The program raises awareness of these issues by demonstrating the continued existence of language and its viability.

The program seeks to develop in students the skills to:

- use correct protocol when using Aboriginal languages
- communicate with other speakers of the target languages
- use a target language and understand the associated culture
- continue to research and learn the target language
- use technology to record and communicate their knowledge.

In using Aboriginal languages we seek to give students an understanding of:

- Aboriginal viewpoints on the relationship between the people and the land
- the complex nature of Aboriginal languages and the systems which govern them
- the secret/sacred nature of some words and concepts
- the unique aspects of Aboriginal languages
- reasons for the disappearance of some Aboriginal languages
- spelling conventions in Aboriginal languages
- linguistics and differences between languages.

As a result of their work in the program, students will:

- use words and phrases from the target languages in oral stories
- use words and phrases from the target languages in written stories
- demonstrate their understanding of Aboriginal language, beliefs and customs
- research and report on the contribution of Aboriginal Australians to Australian culture and life
- construct family trees
- make books which can be used as language resources in junior classes
- visit local sites and write/record a report on those visits
- use the local museum to research local history and report on the research
- use computers to process and share information
- use video cameras to record information and ideas.

What were some major issues to consider ?

The wishes and needs of the community were the main considerations and this continues to be the case. Some parents felt that since neither of these two languages were their own language they did not want their child to learn them. The alternative for LOTE was German or French and all parents decided they wanted their children to learn these languages even less.

Currently, there are no students whose parents have approached the school for an exemption from the languages course. Should this happen the student would be faced with doing the LOTE component by correspondence.

The issue of how to deliver information was discussed in depth. At present we have a program which consists of going into the bush for one week and then writing a report on this outing, using computers, the following week. This has served a number of purposes, for example:

- keeping records of the program
- providing a resource for future classes
- making assessment of successes easier
- integrating technology into the students' learning
- improving students' literacy.

We find that this approach provides a balance between classroom and non-classroom learning and that over time students have begun to enjoy both.

Funding and resources are a continuing challenge. In 1999 we are including a planning phase with release time to work with community members to develop more resources based on the local area. This is necessary in order to build on the work done in previous years. Where resources were previously outsourced, we now seek to develop our own resources, which are more in tune with the local area. Funding for staff has been an issue, and is under review.

What aspects of the program would you like to highlight?

In 1998 the program operated for two periods per week for each of Brad Steadman's and Paul Gordon's programs and included an all day visit to Noreen Lake. Students were included in a day trip for the opening of Gundabooka National Park.

Brad Steadman taught Year 7 at the beginning of the year and the class covered such things as family trees, names of body parts and animal and tree names.

Paul Gordon taught Year 8 in a program that built on their previous knowledge and added further Dreaming stories and names of things and language in context.

Both groups went on outings and much of the learning took place in the bush with consolidation during weeks when the groups stayed at school.

In the second semester of 1998, Brad and Paul were involved in activities which meant that they could not get to school regularly. Their work took them interstate on occasion and they were unavailable for class time. In response to this, Isaac Gordon and the coordinating teacher took the classes. The structure of one week at school, one week out evolved so that we could take advantage of Brad and Paul when they were available and provide follow-on activities when they were absent.

The Aboriginal Education Assistant and a community member are present in all language lessons, along with the coordinating teacher.

Timetable

Term 1: I/My Family/Myself

Week 1	Family Tree — students research and construct their family tree
Week 2	Visits to the Brewarrina Fish Traps
Week 3	Goodooga Camp — week-long stay
Week 4	Recall and report on visit
Week 5	Parts of the body — construct wall charts and picture book
Week 6	Day trip to Angledool Mission/Lightning Ridge
Week 7	Recall/Report on excursion
Week 8	Family Members — words, connections
Week 9	Hospital Creek — story and implications
Week 10	Report writing

Term 2: Bush Food

Week 1	Red Tank — yabbying
Week 2	Recall and report — make readers from the story for infants classes
Week 3	Red Hill — identifying food plants looking at tracks
Week 4	Overnight stay at Gundabooka National Park
Week 5	Recall/Report
Week 6	Nellies Mount
Week 7	Recall/Report — picture book from photos
Week 8	Yambacoon — story of how it came to be – video
Week 9	Write and illustrate story book on computer recalling the story
Week 10	Museum visit re: food on the Mission — return to record and report

Term 3: Bush Medicine

Week 1	Review of previous work
Week 2	Museum — listen to talk about living in the bush and medicine
Week 3	Recall and report
Week 4	Lightning Ridge/Goondi — day trip
Week 5	Recall and report
Week 6	Red Hill — collect and press plants
Week 7	Sort out plants and write up pages for plant identification book
Week 9	Report
Week 10	Mission — yabbying/BBQ

Term 4: Our Community

Week 1	Recall and review previous term
Week 2	Yambacoona — take photographs
Week 3	Report with pictures
Week 4	Day visit to Narran Lake
Week 5	Construct maps of area/make resources for infants
Week 6	Walk around the town and river communities — take photos
Week 7	Use photographs to make up a set of Big Books for infants and story books for literacy
Week 8	BBQ at the Four Mile
Week 9	Overnight camp — to be determined

Programming and resources

The secondary LOTE course involves a number of elements. At present these are:

- traditional oral teaching
- mainstream western classroom teaching integrating the two knowledge traditions
- visiting significant sites — learning vocabulary and Dreaming stories
- researching family trees — finding out who they are and kinship ties
- keeping records for other students to read
- using current technology to process what students have learned.

During 1999 we intend to introduce the target languages into kindergarten. We aim to begin with simple songs which teach the names of the body and move from that informal beginning to the use of flashcards and other resources, which will be developed in line with the children's development in other areas such as literacy.

Resources to date

At present the Brewarrina Central School's language program has the following resources:

- sets of Ngemba story books and tapes
- Muruwari alphabet
- Muruwari dictionaries
- video of language program
- story/picture books made by students
- wall charts showing parts of the body
- charts showing family trees.

Student evaluation/assessment

Students are assessed using a personal portfolio built up during the course of the year. They are designated as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Satisfactory indicates that they have completed a minimum of 50% of set tasks.

Course evaluation

The course is assessed in regard to general student and community satisfaction and the attainment of outcomes and will be adjusted accordingly.

What has been achieved?

We have found that the use of literacy-based strategies together with the interest students have in this area has led to a marked increase in their ability to process information. Students are highly motivated to communicate their ideas and demonstrate their learning in this area. This has led to better report writing, that is, longer and more detailed reports with better grammar and spelling, and improved research skills. Students display longer concentration spans and are willing to persevere in order to find the information they want. These strategies have had significant flow-on benefits in other areas.

Students take with them into other areas of study sound skills in computing, research and report writing. They are therefore more prepared to attempt more difficult, less familiar subjects and are less threatened by new concepts.

In 1999 we are offering Aboriginal languages only in Year 7. This is in response to two factors:

- the availability of community teachers who are prepared to work with young people in school hours
- the wishes of those teachers to begin to teach the language to students at a younger age.

Students will have the opportunity to maintain the language they have learnt as they will be integrating it into Years 9 and 10 Aboriginal Studies. Students will complete their compulsory 100 hours of LOTE in Year 7. Year 7 students in 1999 will do this in the following ways:

- one day-long excursion per term to a significant site
- two periods per week in class, either in or out of the school or out with the community teachers
- one week-long excursion per year at a purpose-run camp.

It is planned that kindergarten students will be taught songs and games to learn Aboriginal languages from early 1999. As this class moves through the school, the program will be expanded to include their class and the class below them. It is hoped that by doing this these students will arrive in LOTE courses with a substantial body of knowledge. This strategy is aimed at Language Revival.

In the area of resources, we will be recording audiocassettes of the kindergarten songs so that they can be used during music/singing times other than dedicated language lessons. The group will also produce colouring and pasting resources suitable for kindergarten. It is envisaged that the Year 7 students will produce storybooks and pictures which can be used by the younger group.

Interest is surfacing again in the community and it is hoped that the above initiatives will encourage the interest of parents and community members in this area of the school and that this will give them the confidence to participate in other areas too.

We find that the Aboriginal languages program contributes significantly to our students' self-esteem and because we believe in the importance of their place in our school life we choose to continue to teach them in spite of the difficulties we face.

Sample reports from students

YAMBACOONA

Last week my Aboriginal language class we went to Yambacoona. We walked around and took some photos and looked and talked about Yambacoona and how to talk like Aboriginal people and how to say the words properly.

NARRAN LAKE

Last Wednesday Year 7 and 8 got aboard the school bus along with canoes to go to Narren Lakes for the day with Miss Pinchen, Mr Flanagan and Isaac Gordon. We left school at nine o'clock and arrived at Narran Lakes about 10.30. Then we all helped each other get the canoes off the trailer.

All of us put the canoes in the water and started to row across the other side but only Isaac Gordon, Isaac Pinchen, Mr Flanagan and Gail made it. When we all got back we had a BBQ and after that we all went swimming.

Some of us tried to walk across to the other side but as we were getting closer it looked like we were getting further away from the side that we were trying to walk to, so we decided to go back.

Then we all got out and got aboard the bus and went back home.

By Bobbie-Joe Gordon

ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE 1998 – YEAR 7

This year in Aboriginal language we traveled to many places such as... Yambacoona, Red Hill, Nellies Mountain, Cato, Tarrion, Red Tank, Mission, Weir, Narran Lakes and Gundabooka.

In term 1 we went to Red Hill and we were eating naipan and other bush tucker, We walked around for a while and Uncle Braddo told us what sort of bush tucker we were eating and told us how to say Aboriginal words. Our next trip was Yambacoona. We traveled out there with Uncle Paul and we sat down and had a rest while Uncle Paul told us a story.

In term 2 we went to Tarrion. My dad took our Aboriginal language class out to Tarrion and we were chasing sheep and we went for a long walk. We also went crayfishing out at the Red Tank. We caught about a bucket full and then when we went home cooked them. We also went to Red Hill again but this time we went out there to see the old aeroplane that had crashed and we also found old tins with names on them.

In term 3 there was a flood in Brewarrina. After the flood went down our Year 7 Aboriginal language class traveled out there to see where the flood was up to – it was up to the sides of the bridge.

In term 4 we went to the Mission with Year eight we went crayfishing but we only caught 2. We forgot the knife to cut the meat we also forgot the bucket so they used my lunch box. I caught a big yabby and Sam caught a little one. We went to the opening of Gundabooka National Park, where we saw Pam Allen, the NSW minister for the environment. Some boys from our school were in the dance group that danced the welcome dance.

We have had a busy year, but we have had fun and learnt a lot.

Ronnie-Lea Gordon

THE MUDDY LAKE

We all drove out to the lake for a swim. It was a murky sort of day. We went for a swim out in the lake but no sooner had we done that than something happened.

“Look!” said one of the boys

“Where?” we asked

“There” he said

Sure enough in the middle of the lake was a huge creature. We didn’t know whether to go or stay. We were frightened but we were curious too. In the end fear won and we ran for the bus.

“Get going” we all called. They took off like rocket! As we turned there was a huge mud man in the middle of the road. They planted his foot and we drove right through him there was mud everywhere. We stopped and got out to look, the mud monster was not to be seen.

But! Even today you can see where he was, the mud is still there. The End

Rashelle Hammond

YAMBACOONA

Last week our Year 8 class went to Yambacoona. Thomas and I threw Ikey off the side of the rocks because he was tottering on about some story in the Dreamtime. We laughed at him while he was lying down there half-dead ‘so we thought why not throw rocks on him but Miss Pinchen tried to stop us.

Thomas drilled her in the head with the camera. She fell on Rashelle, she screamed and Rebecca lost her balance too and fell down the side of the mountain. When we finally found her body it was all twisted and broken so Thomas threw her on the anthill.

During this time Ikey was climbing up the hill to save everyone from the clutches of Thomas and I. In the meantime I pulled a video camera out of my school bag and was taking shots of the mangled bodies of our fellow students lying in pools of blood on the ground.

Rashelle had escaped! We heard a scream coming from down at the bus! It was Rashelle trying to get in the bus but she cut her self on the broken glass. Thomas hog-tied her and we threw stones at her head to try and knock her out. We killed them all but Ike. We put him in a big fish tank and filled it with water we said “You act like a fish and we might not kill you” but after awhile, we buried him alive.

The End... or is it Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

Case Study 4

School:	St Joseph's Primary, Walgett
Aboriginal Community:	Yuwaalaraay/ Gamilaraay
Language Teachers:	Uncle Ted Fields, Laurence Dennis John Brown
Program Name:	Yuwaalaraay/ Gamilaraay
Principal:	(Brother)John Wright
Number of Students/Grades Involved with the Program:	Years 3–6, 20 Students

This case study report was written by
Brother John Gaicon
St Joseph's Primary
Walgett

Yuwaalaraay/Gamilaraay background

Yuwaalaraay and Gamilaraay are fairly closely related languages from the north of NSW. Towns in their area include Goondiwindi, Tamworth, Gunnedah, Coonabarabran, Narrabri, Walgett, Goodooga and Lightning Ridge.

The Walgett program decided to use the Yuwaalaraay language because it is one of the local languages, Uncle Ted Fields is the Elder with by far the most language and he is Yuwaalaraay, and there is the most information about Yuwaalaraay.

Corrine Williams collected a lot of Yuwaalaraay material in the late 1970s and also used previously collected material to write a *Grammar of Yuwaalaraay* which has been the basis of a lot of work.

A teacher/linguist works with John Brown and Laurence Dennis to help them learn the language and prepare programs. St Joseph's program works with other programs at Goodooga, Koolyangarra Preschool, Walgett Primary, Walgett High and the Walgett Campus of the Western Institute of Technical and Further Education.

St Joseph's School — background

St Joseph's School is a K–6 primary school with about 40 Aboriginal students in a total enrolment of around 190. The school and the Catholic Schools Office in Armidale are committed to the Yuwaalaraay and Gamilaraay language program and to Aboriginal education.

In 1996 there was an increase in Commonwealth Government IESIP (Indigenous Education Special Initiatives Program) funding to the diocese, and some money was made available for Brother John Gaicon to work part-time on language. Other money from CES employed the two language workers. Subsequently, ATSIC funded the language workers and Uncle Ted and some other expenses. The Goodooga program is very similar, funded by CDEP and ATSIC. It began at the start of 1997.

What were the objectives of the program?

Pride in identity: the hope is that students will be proud of their Aboriginal identity and proud of themselves as individuals. This has been achieved to a fair extent. Most students are proud of their language and are proud to use it on public occasions, when they have often sung in Yuwaalaraay.

Revival of language: it is expected that this revival will be limited since there is so much in today's world that has developed recently and for which the language has no words. However, there are an increasing number of occasions on which something is said in Yuwaalaraay. These may be formal occasions such as a recent book launch, or informal, as when Yuwaalaraay is used for everyday greetings.

Making school more relevant: the presence of Aboriginal content and Aboriginal teachers has a major impact on the school, and helps the children to experience it as friendly and relevant. There has been an improvement in attendance since the beginning of the program.

Increased awareness for non-Aboriginal people: the Aboriginal students perform on a number of school occasions and this helps make others aware of Aboriginal culture.

Increased Aboriginal involvement in education: it is hoped that language work will help more Aboriginal people get involved in other aspects of education, including teaching.

What were some of the major issues to consider?

To teach language or not? Which language?

The St Joseph's ASSPA supported both the teaching of language, and the choice of Yuwaalaraay. Subsequently other groups have followed. At the High School, Yuwaalaraay–Gamilaraay is taught, but the bulk of the information is Yuwaalaraay, since much more of that language has been recorded.

At this stage it has been decided to teach only the Aboriginal students in Years 3–6. This will be reviewed at the end of the year.

What aspects of the program would you like to highlight?

This is largely a Language Revival Program.

Below is the program being followed. Some of the units are still being written. There is extensive use of songs and games as part of the program.

There are 3 half hour classes each week for each class.

Year 3	Theme	Grammar
Unit 1	Greetings/Body Parts	Special sounds – dh, nh, rr, ng etc
Unit 2	People/Greetings	Writing - spelling
Unit 3	Common sayings	Writing continued
Unit 4	Animals	Pronouns – just a few
Unit 5	Food/Drink	Pronouns – a few more
Unit 6	Geography	Verbs – Future, y class
Unit 7	Spare	
Unit 8	Spare	

Year 4	Theme	Grammar
Unit 1	Revision, Qualities	Simple sentences – no verb
Unit 2	People 2	Pronouns
Unit 3	Birds 1	Verb – y class, other tenses
Unit 4	Camp/House	Suffix – gu
Unit 5	Cooking/Food	Verbs – y class, continuous
Unit 6	Tools/Weapons	Verbs – revision
Unit 7	Spare	
Unit 8	Spare	

Year 5	Theme	Grammar
Unit 1	Land/Sky	Suffixes – ga, - gu
Unit 2	Fish/River	Suffix – dhi
Unit 3	Trees/Plants	Verbs – 1 class
Unit 4	Dance/Song/Ceremony	Pronouns
Unit 5	Reptiles	Question words
Unit 6	Family/Kin 2	Ergative
Unit 7	Spare	
Unit 8	Spare	

Year 6	Theme	Grammar
Unit 1	Spirits/Wiringin	Verbs – rr and ng classes
Unit 2	Animals	Pronouns - revision
Unit3	Medicine/Rituals	Other suffixes
Unit 4	Tools/Artefacts	Other suffixes
Unit 5	Story writing	Revision
Unit 6	Story writing	Revision
Unit 7	Spare	
Unit 8	Spare	

Teaching resources have been developed. These include flashcards, bingo and songs. A teaching program and units are currently being developed. Linguistic resources include tapes, old written materials and *Grammar of Yuwaalaraay*. From these a wordlist and secondary textbook have been developed.

At this stage evaluation is informal, but the indications are very positive. Most children are keen to attend class, and teachers and parents have commented favourably on the impact of the classes.

What has been achieved?

There is widespread support for the language programs, and considerable progress has been made. The Walgett High Program is just one sign of this. For language revival to be firmly established, however, there needs to be:

- a group of people who are well trained in the language and able to continue their own learning of the language
- resources for these people to refer to
- courses for these people, and others, to attend.

A major recent project of the combined Walgett/Goodooga programs is to develop a Yuwaalaraay–Gamilaraay dictionary. Work on this has begun, but the progress will depend on securing funding.

Recently the combined programs also purchased a computer to produce sound material. This will be material edited from the tapes and new material, including songs.

The growth in the number of the programs and the success of individual programs indicates the need for language revival. The positive effects are visible in many areas, and with further experiences these effects will only increase. At the same time there is a need for more support if the future of these programs is to be secure.

Case Study 5

School:	Walgett High
Aboriginal Community:	Yuwaalaraay/ Gamilaraay and Ualaroi with some Ngemba
Language Teachers:	Marianne Betts and Daphne Murray
Program Name:	Yuwaalaraay/ Gamilaraay Program
Principal:	Mrs Anne McGee
Classroom Teacher:	Marianne Betts
Number of Students/Grades Involved with the Program:	Years 7–8, 25 Aboriginal Students

This case study report was compiled by
Marianne Betts
Walgett High School

Yuwaalaraay/Gamilaraay background

As can be seen from the map, the Gamilaraay area extends from Tamworth/Gunnedah in the south, east towards Inverell (but not including it), north to Boggabilla and west to Walgett. The Yuwaalaraay and Yuwaalayaay language groups extend from Walgett in the south, north to the Queensland border including Goodooga, Lightning Ridge and Angeldool and west to Narran Lake.

There are only a handful of Elders who still speak the language today. However, extensive recording of the language had been undertaken in the 1970s. These tapes have been used with the assistance of the Elders as well as case studies written by various linguists. The two language groups are very similar and it is thought that one may be a dialect of the other. At present the school can only offer these two languages as resources, and permission to teach more than one language has not been sought at this stage.

Parents have the choice of having children taught Aboriginal Languages or German for LOTE and at this stage there are 8 students who identify as Aboriginal studying German in a class of 25 Year 7–8 students.

This is the first year that Aboriginal Languages has been taught at Walgett High as a LOTE subject. Teacher Marianne Betts is still learning the language as is the AEA Daphne Murray. Marianne is a non-Aboriginal person but she has been given special permission by the Elders to both learn and teach the languages.

The Elders have encouraged the teaching of the languages to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and teachers to promote Reconciliation and keep the language alive. Therefore, the 9/10 Aboriginal Studies class has a language component implemented into each unit of work and the Year 11/12 Aboriginal Studies – Local Studies course also has a language module. Both of these subjects are taught by Marianne Betts.

The language program has started at the local preschool and at both Walgett Public School and Catholic Schools. The TAFE also conducts classes for adults. Hopefully, in years to come languages will be used on a regular basis throughout the school years for most children.

Walgett High School background

Walgett is a small rural town of approximately 2,300 people, of whom 60% are Aboriginal. The surrounding country is used mainly for sheep, cattle, wheat and cotton farming as well as opal mining. The Namoi and Barwon rivers meet near the town.

Walgett High School has approximately 170 students, of which 57% are Aboriginal.

Background of the language program

There has been intermittent work on maintaining and teaching these languages from northern NSW for some time. Recently a number of programs with a school–community basis have begun. These include programs at Toomelah/Boggabilla, St Joseph’s, Walgett, Goodooga (Central School and Pulkurru) and Walgett High School.

Over the years there have been community meetings about language, often at Toomelah/Boggabilla. In late 1997 a meeting organised by Meg Leathart led to a focus on developing teaching programs and resources using old material as a source of knowledge, as well as Elders. Those who attended saw the meeting as a major step forward. It was hoped to have a meeting in 1998, but it did not eventuate.

There has been considerable language activity in Walgett, largely under the patronage of Uncle Ted Fields. The program at St Joseph’s began in late 1996, with Uncle Ted, John Brown and Laurence Dennis as language workers and John Gaicon as teacher-linguist. The Goodooga program began the following February.

In late 1997 the community endorsed a High School program. It received funding from the Department of School Education and was developed in 1998, with Marianne Betts writing the Years 7–8 course, and she and John Gaicon developing a textbook. Also in 1998 there were a number of TAFE courses in Yuwaalaraay and Gamilaraay and the Koolyangarra preschool began teaching the languages. Walgett Primary also revamped its approach to language. 1999 saw the beginning of Yuwaalaraay and Gamilaraay teaching at Walgett High School.

Who was involved in the planning phase?

List of participants

- Elders of the Gamilaraay and Ualarai nations
- Community people
- Parents
- Teachers
- Students
- Principal

Walgett High School's Year 8 students study the mandatory 100 hours of LOTE. At present German is taught and this devalues the students' traditional language. The introduction of Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay as the languages taught at school would increase the students' self-esteem and would encourage community participation. It is important that students recognise their own language and develop a sense of ownership of that language under the guidance of the Elders.

What were the objectives of the program?

The program aims to develop:

- an appreciation of the importance of the languages of the Kamilaroi/Ualarai people
- a knowledge of the languages and those who speak, have custody over and identify with the language
- skills in communicating in Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay
- an appreciation of the complexity and diversity of Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay language in both contemporary and historical contexts.

Students will develop knowledge and understanding about:

- the relationships that exist between language, culture and spirituality
- the complexity, pronunciation, syntax and grammar of Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay
- the phonetic nature of spelling in Aboriginal languages.

Students will develop skills in:

- initiating and maintaining simple conversations
- expressing themselves with fluency and accuracy of pronunciation
- comprehending simple authentic texts.

Students will develop:

- an appreciation of the diversity of Aboriginal languages
- positive values and attitudes about language
- recognition of the cultural identity of speakers of Aboriginal languages.

Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- use Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay to describe kinship and relationships
- identify the speakers, custodians, stories and boundaries of this language
- describe the unique aspects of the language's pronunciation, spelling, grammar and syntax
- describe their wishes, needs, feelings and opinions in Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay
- outline simple forms of the language using a wide range of texts
- use the language to communicate with others, in oral and written forms
- appreciate Kamilaroi/Ualarai culture, beliefs, art and stories
- demonstrate increasing confidence in using Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay language
- demonstrate an understanding of the importance of Aboriginal languages.

What aspects of the program would you like to highlight?

Using the *NSW Aboriginal Languages Interim Framework K–10* this program fits into the following categories.

Language Enhancement – as there are a small group of speakers in the community and the language is being used and taught to a younger generation of speakers.

Language Maintenance – the language has a reasonable amount of usage within the community but it is no longer spoken 'right through' or in its full form.

Language Reclamation – because it is no longer spoken in its full form the program relies in part on historical documentation and archival material.

Modules

The Yuwaalaraay/Gamilaraay language program is based on eight modules; each module is unique in itself.

Module 1 – Greetings and Kinship

Content

- greeting people by name, kinship terms, marriage, class and age group
- location of tribal areas, ownership of language, lifestyle
- non-verbal greetings, avoidance rules, kinship pattern
- grammar – alphabet, spelling, pronunciation, pronouns, verbs and nouns.

Related activities

- make alphabet charts and pronunciation charts
- make maps of local tribal areas
- make a pronoun chart for first person only.

Module 2 – Activities and Body Parts

Content

- describing what you can do, eg swim, throw, run
- describing body parts and saying you hurt yourself and that someone is sick
- saying how many – numbers
- describing traditional games and activities, simple medicines and the role of the Medicine Man.

Related activities

- trace the outline of a body and label the body parts
- make a chart of local simple medicines
- collect samples of plants for simple medicines and make a display
- make traditional toys and play traditional games – give oral instructions.

Module 3 – Catching and Gathering Food

Content

- talk about catching, trapping food and using weapons
- talk about gathering, preparing and cooking food
- describe food division rules
- grammar – second and third person pronouns, noun endings, verb endings, directional words.

Related activities

- make a chart of tools and weapons and label; demonstrate their use with an Elder
- make a chart of foods and label
- gather simple foodstuffs and prepare for eating
- complete the pronoun chart.

Module 4 – The Weather

Content

- describe the weather, eg sunny, rainy, windy, hot, cold
- talk about an approaching storm
- describe the night sky
- describe climatic conditions of the region and the seasonal movement of the people.

Related activities

- make a star chart
- role play a weather forecaster and video the role play
- map the seasonal movement of the people
- make rainfall and temperature charts to complete during the year.

Module 5 – Technology and Shelters

Content

- ask and say where you live and what you live in
- talk about possessions and artefacts
- describe what materials are needed to make possessions
- grammar – verb endings, noun endings, abbreviated pronouns, conjunctions.

Related activities

- make models of the various traditional shelters
- demonstrate use of artefacts with an Elder
- identify trees used to make possessions, collect and display
- make wall charts of the different verb endings and noun endings.

Module 6 – Travelling the Countryside

Content

- describe the route to Narran Lake and the significance of Narran Lake
- describe the countryside en route to Narran Lake
- describe the flora and fauna
- grammar – verbs: progressive tense, sentence structure, time words.

Related activities

- add geographical features to the previously made maps and plot the route to Narran Lake
- organise an excursion to Narran Lake, noting the geographical features
- identify local flora and their uses as well as local fauna and their habitats
- make a photo display of the excursion and local flora and fauna.

Module 7 – Corroboree at the Lake

Content

- describe the colours of body paint
- identify the musical instruments and say who is playing them
- say who is singing and dancing and what they are singing about
- discuss the importance of religion, totems, music, dance, the role of the Elders and initiation.

Related activities

- decorate musical instruments such as boomerangs, clapping sticks and didgeridoo
- face painting using traditional colours and patterns
- learn to dance and play the instruments with an Elder or community member.

Module 8 – A Dreamtime Story

Content

- retell a simple Dreamtime story in Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay
- rewrite a simple Dreamtime story in Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay
- translate a simple Dreamtime story from Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay to English
- learn the legend of Narran Lake and other legends from the region.

Related activities

- make Big Books from the local legends, using Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay words, for the local primary schools
- create an artistic depiction of a Dreamtime story from the region
- record the stories on tape for use in schools, both in English and in Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay.

Student evaluation and assessment

- examinations and written tests
- other – family tree, toys, charts: tools, weapons and foods, star chart, models of shelters, photo display, art work, Big Books
- practical tasks – fieldwork, video presentation
- oral reports and presentations – talks
- written reports and presentations – research assignment.

Course Evaluation

- surveys, consultation, and anecdotal records.

Who will be involved in course evaluation?

- students, teachers, community, school curriculum committee.

Case Study 6

Yipirinya School, Alice Springs, NT

This case study report was written by
Leanne Cook and Kevin Buzzacott¹

Yipirinya is the true school of Alice Springs. It goes back to the beginning, to the caterpillar (Yipirinya) which travelled the Alice Springs country in the Dreamtime. The white schools are new. They don't go back to the beginning.

Traditional Owner, Mparntwe (Alice Springs)

The Community

Yipirinya School caters to children from about 18 town camps around Alice Springs as well as children who live in houses in town. The school is named after a type of caterpillar² which is found on tarvine, and which is one of the major Dreamings of the Alice Springs town area.

Alice Springs has a population of about 25,000, with Aboriginal people representing perhaps a fifth of this number. There are about 1,000 people living in the town camps of Alice Springs, but this changes with major events in town, such as the local show, ceremonies and other happenings out bush. There are many people who live most of the time in these camps, but there is a constant stream of visitors from bush communities.

Each of the town camps has a housing association, and these are grouped together under the Tangentyere Council, which provides many of the services to the camp communities. Most camps now have brick houses and some community facilities. Most of them also have Community Development Employment Programs (CDEP) to provide employment. The relatively few town camp residents with employment outside this program are mostly employed by the Aboriginal organisations around town. There are a number of these Aboriginal organisations providing a range of services — including health, legal aid, child and adult education and child care — to both town and town camp residents.

¹ Leanne Cook is the Literacy and Culture Centre Coordinator (teacher-linguist) at Yipirinya School. At the time of writing Kevin Buzzacott was the School/Cultural Director.

² Ayepe-arenye in the current Arrernte spelling system. The school name reflects an older spelling; the school was established before the spelling system was finalised.

The Language Situation

Alice Springs is the major centre for this region, and there are speakers of many languages living in the town camps and town houses. Following a 1987 survey,³ the following table shows the percentages of town camp residents and their best-spoken language:

Arrernte	39.7%
Anmatyerre	6.1%
Alyawarr	1 %
Kaytetye	1.4%
Pitjantjatjara	7.5%
Luritja	10.5%
Warlpiri	9.6%
English	23.4%
Other	1.4%

It is remarkable that Central Arrernte, the language of Alice Springs, has survived so strongly when many people would expect that, as in so many other places, a sizable and mostly non-Aboriginal town like this would mean loss of the local language. Despite some concerns that the language is changing, there are still many children growing up speaking Arrernte as their first language. This does not, of course, mean that the language is not at risk; the community clearly recognises that they need to work at keeping their language.

The table above does not show, however, the fact that a large minority of town camp residents have more than one language. Many, of course, are bilingual in English and an Aboriginal language, but there are also many who know more than one Aboriginal language as well as English. There would be almost no town camp resident who does not speak at least some English. The children at the school have fairly good English language skills, reinforced to some extent by the prevalence of English in the wider Alice Springs community.

Only a small minority of town camp residents have literacy skills in their own languages, and many do not have a high level of English literacy skills either.

All of the languages spoken in town are spoken in various bush communities in the region and are actively used in many of the schools in these communities, although only a few have formal bilingual programs. This means that materials developed in these schools and communities provide useful models and resources for Yipirinya.

³ Khalidi, N, 1987 *Social, Cultural and Economic Characteristics of the Aboriginal Population of Alice Springs* ms. Dept of Demography, Research School of Social Science, Australian National University.

The School

Yipirinya School is a non-government, community-controlled school with a unique history. Yipirinya School Council was formed in 1978 and volunteer teaching staff began teaching in the town camps in 1979. At this time the school was surviving on donations and fundraising activities while it attempted to secure proper funding. In 1981, the council formally applied to the Northern Territory Department of Education to be registered as an independent non-government school. The Minister for Education inspected the Yipirinya program and then rejected the application in 1982. In May 1983, Yipirinya School Council lodged its appeal against the Minister's decision in the Supreme Court and, in September 1983, the Minister for Education finally granted Yipirinya registration.

The establishment of the school was entirely the initiative of members of the Alice Springs town camp community in response to dissatisfaction with mainstream 'European' schools. These schools did not offer programs which positively supported the world view and cultural background of the children. In fact, the parents felt that the emphasis of the curriculum was too European. Parents feared that the children would lose their language and spiritual link with the land and that they would become too town-oriented.

Most people living in the town camps are tradition-oriented and they also felt that it was inappropriate for their children to be taught by strangers. It was felt that the children should be taught by people from their own family and that there should be a high Aboriginal presence throughout their schooling.

In addition, it was felt that mainstream schools were a source of humiliation for the children. Parents often recall how their children were teased by non-Aboriginal children because of their standard of clothing, their inability to cope academically and blatant racism. As a result, the children's attendance at school was minimal.

Yipirinya school has the following aims

- To produce people who can move freely with knowledge and confidence in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal societies. Yipirinya teaches the children English and other non-Aboriginal knowledge as well as maintaining and reinforcing Arrernte, Luritja and Warlpiri knowledge.
- To develop and extend children's oral language and literacy skills as well as reinforcing their Aboriginal identity, cultural knowledge, values and spirituality.
- To provide a familiar and open environment that fosters control of Yipirinya by the school community.
- To promote management of the school that reflects traditional Arrernte, Luritja and Warlpiri structures. The idea of 'two-way' education is hollow if it is not supported by a system of management which supports this philosophy.
- To promote Aboriginalisation of the school's teaching, administrative and other staff.
- To produce vernacular literature that integrates language teaching into a number of curriculum areas (eg mathematics, arts, crafts, cultural studies, science etc).

Development

Yipirinya's development can be seen in four stages:

Stage 1 (1979) – Decentralised schooling in the town camps in Western Arrernte, Central Arrernte, Luritja, Warlpiri (intermittently) and English.

Stage 2 (1980–85) – Vernacular classes in the town camps in the morning and teacher training and oral English in the demountable building on the Tangentyere Council site in the afternoon.

Stage 3 (1985–88) – The whole school moved to the demountable buildings at Tangentyere with graded English classes and ungraded vernacular classes. The post-primary students had English-only classes.

Stage 4 (since 1988) – The beginning of 'real' schooling at the permanent Lovegrove Drive site.

In the early stages of the school (when it was decentralised), lessons taught in the town camps were based on a bush trip with a story written in either English or vernacular languages and then translated into the other languages or English. This text was then made into duplicated story books with workbooks or kits being developed for teaching vernacular literacy skills. The same story and activities were used in teaching English literacy skills as well.

Sadie Williams, a Western Arrernte Aboriginal teacher, conducted a literacy survey in 1986 to monitor the success of this approach to teaching vernacular literacy skills. The survey results indicated that it was not a satisfactory way of teaching language. There were difficulties with the transport of teachers, suitable facilities, children wandering off, and social problems often related to alcohol. These factors did not make for a good learning environment.

The classes then shifted into the demountable buildings at the Tangentyere Council premises, where vernacular language was being taught by AnTEP⁴ students in the morning session. Planning and lesson preparation with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers took place in the afternoon. This period also saw the beginning of the thematic approach to teaching, with 'big books' and support materials being developed by literature production staff.

⁴ The Anangu (Aboriginal) Teacher Education Program of the University of South Australia.

Until 1991, the school was divided into three classes: lower primary, upper primary and post-primary. Each class consisted of children from each of the four language groups within the school. The upper primary class was taught vernacular literacy twice a week. The lower primary class was taken by four vernacular teachers and a non-Aboriginal teacher. The class was broken up into language groups and initial literacy skills taught to the children. Planning and lesson preparation were done after school, with all teachers for all subjects.

The following year, the school appointed two teacher-linguists, one responsible for planning with vernacular teachers in the junior section of the school and the other responsible for planning for the senior section of the school.

School Structure

The school program is now divided into Central Arrernte, Western Arrernte, Luritja, Warlpiri, English first language and a senior class. The senior class consists of children from all language groups who are aged 11 years and over. This class concentrates on further developing English literacy and numeracy skills in preparation for entrance into high schools in Alice Springs. There is also a childcare centre at the school with children from three to five years old attending (see figure 1 below).

The Central Arrernte class was merged into the English first language class for a year or so due to a lack of numbers in the Central Arrernte class, but it now has sufficient students to run on its own again. Each language group averages between 15 and 25 children at any one time.

Figure 1.

Senior class				
Western Arrernte	Central Arrernte	Warlpiri	Luritja	English First Language

Childcare				

Yipirinya School is divided into three sections. The school section is made up of the following positions: curriculum co-ordinator, non-Aboriginal teachers, Aboriginal teacher assistants, childcare workers and a community liaison officer. The Literacy and Culture Centre (LCC) has positions for a coordinator (teacher-linguist), literature production supervisor (LPS), LPS assistant, artists, four vernacular language teachers, four literacy workers and part-time instructors for cultural days. Each class is allocated an Aboriginal vernacular language teacher, an Aboriginal assistant teacher and a non-Aboriginal teacher. If vernacular teachers are not available to teach the class then the literacy worker for that particular language group assists in vernacular language classes and planning for cultural days.

The administration section is made up of an administration coordinator, accountant, payroll clerk, receptionist, secretary, canteen workers, drivers, caretaker, gardener, handyman and cleaner.

Each section has its own weekly meeting. Issues from the different sections — school, LCC and administration — are often passed on to Aboriginal staff meetings for discussion and approval. The staff meet as a whole every three weeks. Some issues are referred for further discussions to the school council, which consists of representatives from the town camps and community, elected at annual general meetings.

Over a period of time, the staff have developed ways of coordinating the different areas to deliver the teaching program. These are reflected in the accompanying diagram showing the organisation of the schools.

The Program

The school has a policy of 50% vernacular and 50% English language teaching in the classes, except for the senior class, which is all English. The balance between languages varies depending upon staff attendance and whether there is a vernacular language teacher in the class. Staff attendance is good although it has sometimes been a problem in the past.

Each language group participates in a culture program once a week. The culture days alternate between days spent out bush and days spent with community people in the school and are an integral part of the vernacular language program. They are organised by the Aboriginal teachers responsible for that language group and if preparation for the culture day is not done then the language group does not go. Last year, the Western Arrernte class went to Harts Range on an overnight trip to hunt for echidnas, the theme they were working on at the time. The Luritja class travelled to Titjikala the next term and the Warlpiri group also went on an overnight excursion. All classes also participate in relevant sporting and cultural events outside the school, for example, the Yuendumu Sports and the Barunga Festival.

English and vernacular are taught in separate parts of the classroom and the themes for each language are different. The themes usually incorporate all areas of the curriculum. For example, at one point in 1992 the following themes were being taught in the classes:

<i>Class</i>	<i>Vernacular theme</i>	<i>English theme</i>
Western Arrernte	Echidnas	Transport
Luritja	Me/body/feelings	Rules: Classroom/community
Warlpiri	Family	Seeds/plants/growing Things
Central Arrernte/EFL		Plants
Seniors		Flight

The following list of themes developed in Luritja illustrates the range available to classroom teachers.

Animals	
Birds	Tjulpu
Bush food	Mayi
Bush medicine	Arratja, itara, malu-malu, tulpulpa
Caterpillar life cycle	Wanka pinta-pinta
Day/night	Tjintu/munga
Echidna	Tjilkamata
Emu	Kalaya
Family	Waltja
Frog life cycle	Nganngi
Kangaroo	Malu
Me/body	
Me/what can I do	Nyaa ngayulu palyani
Tracks	Tjina
Traditional life	Irritija

These themes provide a good basis on which to build a language program (big books, small books, photos, posters and some worksheets) but need a lot more work to develop a comprehensive kit.

Each class is divided into two groups for language teaching. For example, in the Western Arrernte class the younger children learn Arrernte language when the older students are learning English. Dividing the children into two groups assists with the problems associated with the variety of ability levels in the one class.

Non-Aboriginal teachers do not use an Aboriginal language in the classroom and Aboriginal teachers do not interpret for them. Aboriginal teachers use only the language that is being taught at the time and try not to mix languages. The Aboriginal assistant teacher in the English first language class uses English only in the classroom.

Planning is done on two levels. Vernacular language and theme planning is done with the vernacular language teacher, literacy worker and teacher-linguist. This planning session is scheduled for two hours every week. Team planning for maths, science, art, SACE⁵ etc, is done with the teaching team for that language group; that is, the non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal teaching assistant. This planning session occurs daily for about half an hour during lunch or recess break.

⁵ Social and Cultural Education

When planning for a language theme, the vernacular language teachers use resources produced or developed in the LCC. Materials vary depending on the theme topic; big books, small books, posters, photos, worksheets, lesson plans and language games are usually available to support a theme. The concentrated Language Encounters approach is used to teach reading and writing (both languages) in the classroom. Negotiated texts developed by the classes are produced as ‘one-off’ type books which can be used by other classes in later years.

Recently, the school was involved in a spectacular production where each language group danced a story based on the vernacular theme in their class. The production was assisted by people from Brown’s Mart (Community Arts) in Darwin and a grant from the Australia Council. It provided the school with the opportunity to share the language and culture of the children with members of the wider Alice Springs community. It also encouraged people who would not normally visit the school to cross the threshold and to experience what Yipirinya School is all about.

The school has not yet developed a formal assessment policy, so assessment is classroom based. Teachers collect samples of children’s work and document their development in record folders. Vernacular teachers evaluate language lessons and the children’s progress at the planning sessions with the teacher-linguist.

An example: The Western Arrernte Class

The Western Arrernte class program involves three teaching staff in the classroom more or less full-time: a qualified English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher (with a Bachelor of Education), an Aboriginal vernacular teacher who has completed stage two of the AnTEP program, and an Aboriginal assistant teacher. There are about 22 students who attend regularly, but this can go up to 29.

The organisation of the vernacular and English programs can be seen in the class timetable. The timetable was organised at the beginning of the year and takes into account cultural days and grouping for maths (four groups). For this, the class is divided into two groups of younger students and two groups of older students. The younger students are taught basic mathematical concepts in Western Arrernte while the older children are extending their mathematical abilities in English.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Maths (4 groups – 2 in WA)	Maths	Culture Day WA all day	Maths	<i>Juniors:</i> WA Process writing/phonics <i>Seniors:</i> ESL
English Process writing/phonics	Language Development <i>Juniors:</i> WA <i>Seniors:</i> ESL		Language Development <i>Juniors:</i> WA <i>Seniors:</i> ESL	<i>Juniors:</i> ESL <i>Seniors:</i> WA Process writing/phonics
Art (English)	Theme Work WA (science, SACE)		Theme Work English (science, SACE)	Art (WA/English)

Key: WA = Western Arrernte, ESL = English as a Second Language, SACE = Social And Cultural Education.

Emphasis is placed on written language. There are daily sentences, and writing and art lessons are used for illustrating written work. Within the themes, texts are negotiated and form the basis of a range of follow-up activities in oral language, reading and writing.

When the Western Arrernte literacy classes are taking place two programs run separately. For example, the younger students are involved with Western Arrernte literacy while the older students are involved with English literacy. When the class is not involved in vernacular language work there is team teaching involving all three teachers, usually dividing the class into groups and taking a group each for maths or teaching art and craft. Other members of the community have been involved in planning the vernacular program depending on their availability.

Culture days are planned as an integral part of the language and cultural program and provide a stimulus for classroom work. Some weeks they are spent in the school with community people assisting, for example storytelling or tracking in the school yard; others are spent out bush with community people teaching traditional hunting, bush medicine, foods, sites, etc. Some excursions involve an overnight stay, such as the trip to Harts Range to hunt echidnas. Aboriginal teachers manage the children on bush trips, with the non-Aboriginal teacher taking a secondary role and, in some cases, not taking part at all. The decision about whether a particular cultural day will be spent out bush or in the school depends on the time of the year, the weather, availability of key people and the condition of vehicles and roads.

The Literacy and Culture Centre

The school has a Literacy and Culture Centre (LCC) where all materials to support the teaching of vernacular languages are developed in consultation with Aboriginal staff and school council members. The LCC also has materials in the four languages that have been produced by other schools and literacy centres, especially Yuendumu (Warlpiri), Papunya (Luritja) and Ltyentye (Arrernte).

The equipment in the LCC consists of two Macintosh computers, a laser printer, photocopier, darkroom and associated equipment, two video cameras (for loan for class use) a good quality still camera and a TV monitor and video player. A production room has been established with guillotines and book binding equipment for the use of all staff. This has been very successful and lots of books for the classroom have been made. With the staff, equipment and the occasional grant for special projects the LCC manages production and development of materials adequately.

The LCC has been successful in winning a grant for Initiatives in Languages Other than English for further development of the themes in all four languages. This will be the focus for 1993. The grant will help to increase the resources and materials which support the teaching of vernacular languages and culture in the school. It will also contribute to development of the audio and visual library in the LCC.

The LCC has a teachers' resource room where posters, teaching aides, theme kits and other vernacular materials are stored. All the books and videos in the LCC have been catalogued and are easily accessible to Aboriginal teachers for use in their programs.

There is storage for the videos which have been produced by the school to record important events in the history of the school, eg culture days, open days, NAIDOC Week activities, television interviews, etc. There are also commercially produced videos and the popular *Lookshow* produced by the Alice Springs Education Centre for children in bush schools in the southern region. These videos are catalogued and can be easily accessed by teachers. The collection of audio tapes has not been catalogued, but they are stored in the fire-proof room for protection.

The LCC has allocated four literacy workers to it, one for each language, a literature production supervisor (LPS) (who is Aboriginal), an artist, an LPS assistant and a teacher-linguist (who is the coordinator). The literacy workers have full-time positions and have a good level of literacy skills in their language. In 1993, the positions of the Luritja and Central Arrernte literacy workers have not been filled because there are not enough funds available.

The literature production supervisor is currently training for an Associate Diploma in Art (part-time) and has a good level of computer skills. The teacher-linguist, who has had previous experience in this area and in curriculum writing, assists in planning the language program with the vernacular language teachers and coordinates the administration of the culture days, for example, organising the bus and the payment of community people assisting in the culture days.

Vernacular language teachers plan themes and weekly language lessons with the teacher-linguist and literacy workers. Linguists from the Institute for Aboriginal Development assist with correcting vernacular texts for Arrernte and Warlpiri once they have been worked through with the literacy workers and the teacher-linguist. Luritja texts can be checked within the school as the teacher-linguist has a good understanding of this language.

The school newsletter, *Yeperenye Yeye*, is produced twice a year and is sent to schools, organisations in Alice Springs and interstate and overseas subscribers.

Staff Development

The major aspect of staff development is the on-site teacher education program operating at Yipirinya School, the AnTEP run by the University of South Australia. There are currently 13 students enrolled in this program, which employs a full-time lecturer, with some workshops being run by lecturers from Adelaide, or casual lecturers engaged locally. There are also people studying at Bachelor College who plan to return to teach in Yipirinya.

People wanting to teach or to become literacy workers at Yipirinya School sit a vernacular test at the LCC. This test involves writing in English and vernacular as well as reading texts in both languages. If their skills are satisfactory, they are appointed for a probation time of three months and then given final approval by the school council for permanent employment. Literacy skills of Aboriginal teachers and literacy workers vary throughout the school.

Professional development sessions for Aboriginal vernacular language teachers and literacy workers are run by the teacher-linguist every second Friday morning for two hours. These sessions discuss issues and methodology relating to the teaching of language and culture within the school. They concentrate on language (looking at teaching methods and how to use them in the classroom), culture (planning for culture days, how and who to ask to assist with the teaching of certain areas), and material production issues (how to make Big Books and teaching aides; video and camera use).

Training for vernacular literacy is available from those literacy workers or vernacular teachers with strong literacy skills. Intensive courses were offered in the past by the local annexe of the Centre for Australian Languages Linguistics (CALL) at Bachelor College, but these are now only offered as part of a larger course. Two Warlpiri teachers are attending literacy courses with CALL this year with the possibility of taking over the vernacular language teaching position next year.

LCC staff have also been involved in workshops with the Arrernte Curriculum Materials Project which is coordinated by the Institute for Aboriginal Development and involves a number of schools where Arrernte is taught. LCC staff also cooperate with the Literacy Centre at Ltyentye Apurte Community Education Centre, and attend bilingual meetings with other NT bilingual schools which are held every few years. Non-Aboriginal teachers attend NT Department of Education workshops which are held in Alice Springs.

Program Evaluation and Further Development

The vernacular language programs are primarily evaluated by the vernacular teachers. It is from their observations that the LCC is able to develop more appropriate materials. Vernacular language lessons are evaluated and discussed in planning times. Culture days are also evaluated by Aboriginal teachers, and as a result of their evaluations follow-up language and culture lessons are taught in the classroom. However, the school is working towards developing a formal assessment policy.

The school is encouraging more community people to assist in the school language programs, and this is starting to happen as an extension of the culture day program. LCC staff are also planning to hold language group meetings so that community people can identify areas for future language and cultural development and to assist in the production of the theme kits.

Slowly but surely the school is beginning to develop a pool of potential employees for relief teaching for Aboriginal teacher positions and literacy worker positions in the school. This has meant that there is less stress on the non-Aboriginal teachers and the children when the assistant or vernacular teacher is on leave for cultural or training purposes.

The separating of children into language groups has made a marked improvement for teaching, organising culture days and generally managing classes.

GLOSSARY

AEW	Aboriginal Education Worker — employed by the Department of Education And Training.
AIATSIS	The Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.
AnTEP	The Anangu (Aboriginal) Teacher Education Program of the University of South Australia.
ASSPA	Aboriginal Students Support Parent Awareness, a DEET funded program for schools and communities.
Dislocation	The forced movement of an individual, family or community from one area to another. This often occurred after people had been dispossessed.
Elders	Recognition as an Elder is given to those who are custodians of knowledge and lore. Elders are those people chosen and accepted by their own communities as people who have the permission to disclose cultural knowledge and beliefs. Recognised Elders are highly respected people within Aboriginal communities. Proper consultation with local Aboriginal communities will direct schools to recognised Elders.
ESL	English as a Second Language.
LCC	Literacy and Culture Centre.
LPS	Literature Production Supervisor.
Missions	Living areas established by the Aboriginal Welfare Board and ruled under the provisions of the Aboriginal Protection Act.
NAIDOC	National Aboriginal Islander Days of Celebration.
Reserves	Areas of land reserved by the Crown for Aboriginal people; established in the 19th century.
SACE	Social and Cultural Education.
Stations	Living areas established by governments for Aboriginal people, on which managers and matrons controlled those Aboriginal people.

Resources

Map of Aboriginal Languages contained in this document (p 57).

Language groups	NSW	Northern Territory
	Dhunghutti	Alyawarr
	Gumbayngirr	Anmatyerre
	Gamilaraay	Arrernte
	Muruwari	Kaytetye
	Ngemba	Laynha Homelands
	Ngiyambaa	Luritja
	Paakantji	Pitjantjatjara
	Wiradjuri	Warlpiri
	Yuwaalaraay	Yipirinya
	Yuwaaliyaay	

Books

Harman, D & Henderson, J (eds), *Aboriginal Languages in Education*, IAD Press, Alice Springs, NT, 1994.

Board of Studies NSW, *NSW Aboriginal Languages Interim Framework K–10*, Sydney, 1998.

Organisations

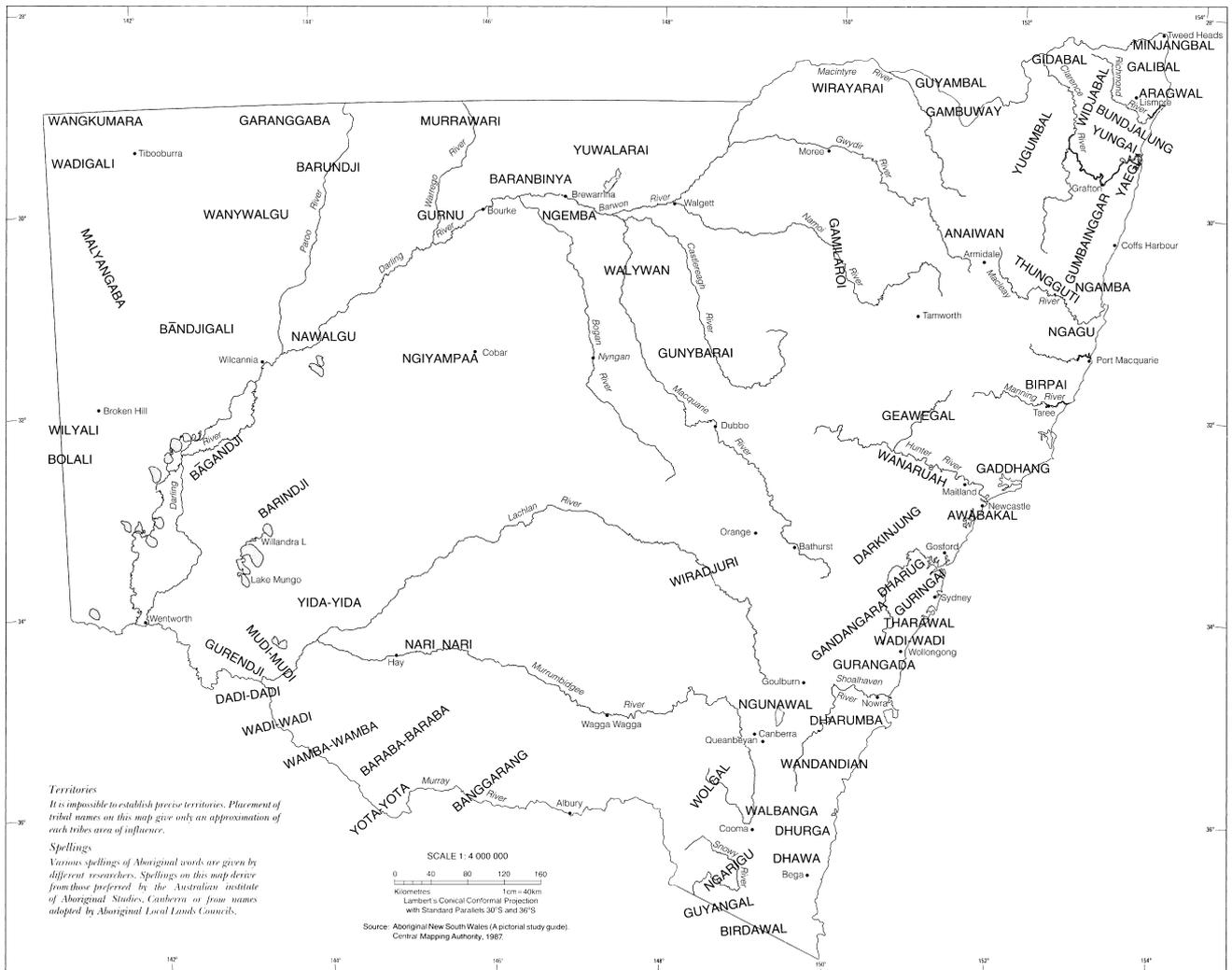
Aboriginal Land Councils

Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages – see page 57

Workbooks

- Gumbayngirr Semester 1 and 2 — texts
- *Yuwaalaraay – Gamilaraay Workbooks – Exercises based on Yaama Maliyaa – A Yuwaalaraay – Gamilaraay Textbook*, question and answer books available from St Joseph's Primary School, Walgett NSW.

The Language Groups of NSW (Spelling may vary from that in text.)



Schools offering Aboriginal language programs in NSW

Gumbaynggirr	
Bowraville Central School High Street Bowraville NSW 2449	Ph 02 6564 7162 Fax 02 6564 7801
Stuarts Point Primary School Banksia Road Stuarts Point NSW 2441	Ph 02 6569 0627 Fax 02 6569 0534
Nambucca Heads High School Centenary Drive, Nambucca Heads NSW 2448	Ph 02 6568 6777 Fax 02 6568 8318
Baarkinji/Barindji	
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St Theresa's Community Primary School PO Box 196 Willcannia NSW 2836	Ph 08 8091 5933 Fax 08 8091 5841
Gamillario/Kamilario	
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Toomelah Public School PO Box 134 Boggabilla NSW 2409	Ph 07 4676 2223 Fax 07 4676 2461
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Walgett Primary School Warren Street Walget NSW 2832	Ph: 02 6828 1077 Fax: 02 6828 1939
St Joseph's Primary, Arthur Street Walgett NSW 2832	Ph: 02 6828 1060 Fax: 02 6828 1591
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