

**INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN SOUTH
AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS: ISSUES, DILEMMAS
AND SOLUTIONS**

March 2002

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Whilst there are many similarities between the situation of Indigenous languages in New South Wales and South Australia, there are some important differences. One obvious difference is the presence and influence of Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara and related dialects in South Australia, which are amongst the 'strongest' and most widely spoken languages in the country. But South Australia also has a range of languages spanning the entire spectrum. As in NSW, some of these languages are undergoing something of a revival through efforts in schools and community language projects.

Indigenous Languages in South Australian Schools

Indigenous languages had a role within schools from the very early days of the colony of South Australia with the establishment of the school at Piltawodli on the banks of the Torrens River on December 23 1839. German missionaries, Christian Teichelmann and Clamor Schürmann, and later Samuel Klose taught Kurna children to read and write and to recite prayers and sing hymns in their own language.

Throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century, other South Australian languages were taught in mission schools. These include Ramindjeri at Encounter Bay (1840s), Parnkalla (Barnjarla) at Port Lincoln (1849), Yarlalde at Raukkan, otherwise known as Point McLeay, (1857) and Dieri (Diyari) at Kilalpaninna (1867) in the state's northeast and finally Pitjantjatjara at Ernabella Mission in 1940¹.

Pitjantjatjara programs expanded into other communities in the northwest of the state in the 1960s and 1970s² as new communities were established and school programs introduced. The Dunstan Labor government adopted bilingual education policies in 1965/66 and, over time, engaged several linguists in the production of some Pitjantjatjara language materials (p.c. Bill Edwards, March 2002). In 1985 the state government gave additional support through the appointment of a linguist, teacher linguist and Anangu literacy workers, and the establishment of a Literature Production Centre at Ernabella. Primers, readers and a community newspaper for all the schools in the northwest (Pipalyatjara, Amaṭa, Ernabella, Fregon, Mimili and Indulkana) were produced at this centre. These programs ceased in 1992 following demand by the Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara Education Council for English-only programs³.

¹ See Gale (1997) for further details.

² Schools taught in Pitjantjatjara commenced at Fregon (1961), Amaṭa (1967/68), Indulkana (1969/70), Pipalyatjara (1976), Mimili (soon after 1973) and Kenmore Park (possibly 1977) (pc Bill Edwards, March, 2002).

³ In 2002 a reconsideration of the wisdom of the English-only programs is taking place, and a dialogue between Anangu educators and community and the Anangu Educations Services (AES) has commenced.

It wasn't till the late 1970s that Indigenous languages were first introduced into the wider educational arena. A number of teachers who had taught in the northwest introduced Pitjantjatjara into schools in Victor Harbor and Adelaide, while others did the same in Port Augusta. Some of these programs were ad hoc and short-lived being entirely dependent on the particular teacher who implemented them; others have been more sustained over time. The Victor Harbor program, for example, has been a one hour per week, elective of one-term's duration, offered each year to one of the year seven classes at the school prior to an exchange visit to Fregon, for over two decades⁴. The Adelaide programs have been delivered as broader, school based Languages programs. Alberton has offered its Pitjantjatjara second language learning program continuously, to the entire student body, through the Languages Learning Area, since 1988. Alberton is one of the many departmental schools to have sought program stability and withstood the negative impact of staff turnovers by actively recruiting teachers and Aboriginal Language and Cultural Specialists who can continue the teaching and learning⁵. Despite this, program success does remain dependent on individuals to a large degree. However, in education generally, and in Indigenous education in particular, languages included, personal relations mean much to program success, and the role of individuals is not likely to change in this regard.

It is only comparatively recently that languages other than Pitjantjatjara have been considered for teaching in schools. In the mid to late 1980s Ngarrindjeri and Narrunga language kits were produced (Kirke, 1987) and workshops were held to support the introduction of revival programs. Most of these early attempts to introduce revival programs in Ngarrindjeri and Narungga were short-lived due to unresolved orthography issues and criticism of the materials by community members. Kurna programs first introduced in 1989-1990, were more durable, as was a Ngarrindjeri program taught in Adelaide⁶. Kurna programs will be discussed in more detail later in this paper.

In recent years there has been strong and sustained growth of Indigenous language programs in South Australian schools. In 2001, nine of South Australia's Indigenous languages were taught in 84 programs at 62 sites to more than 3,000 students of which nearly half were Indigenous (Wilson & Tunstill, 2001).

Despite this growth, the recent relocation of just two teachers from Adelaide to Anangu schools on the Pitjantjatjara-Yankunytjatjara (P-Y) lands shows the extreme fragility and vulnerability of these programs. The loss of these two persons has resulted in the cessation of the Pitjantjatjara program at Alberton Primary, Adelaide High and several other schools. Programs in the two named locations were especially important in terms of the profile of Indigenous languages in schools. The Alberton program was one in which the School Council had elected to teach Pitjantjatjara as the school language to all children alongside of a Russian mother tongue program. Usually Indigenous languages are taught as the mother tongue programs alongside of another major language taught to all children. At Adelaide High School Pitjantjatjara was being taught in a Stage 1

⁴ See Gale (1994)

⁵ The Alberton program is not being offered in 2002, due to circumstances explained later in the paper.

⁶ Rhonda Agius' program at Mansfield Park PS.

program at Year 11. Both these schools remain committed to delivering Pitjantjatjara programs. Hopefully this gap will be addressed during 2002, or in 2003.

Curriculum Initiatives

The development of Indigenous language learning materials began in the tertiary sector with the preparation and teaching in the late 1960s of a three-week language-laboratory style course in Pitjantjatjara, designed for people who wanted to learn the language in preparation for work in the Pitjantjatjara lands. The publication of *Wangka Kulintjaku* (Kirke, 1984) and *Wangka Wiru. A handbook for the Pitjantjatjara language learner* (Eckert & Hudson, 1988) represents a major development in the provision of language learning materials. The language in these resources is oriented towards the ways in which Pitjantjatjara is spoken within the P-Y lands. Curriculum materials for schools first appeared with the publication of *Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Stage A – Years R-2* (DETE, 1994a; 1994b). By contrast with *Wangka Kulintjaku* and *Wangka Wiru* the language used in the Pitjantjatjara Stage A curriculum is pitched at usage within the context of schools and urban Australia. Numerous loanwords for colours (such as *puluwana* ‘blue’) and school items (such as *ruula* ‘ruler’) are included. Western fruits (such as *kiripitja* ‘grapes’) appear alongside of bush foods (such as *kampurarpa* ‘bush raisin’) (DETE, 1994: 42). Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara curriculum Stage B – Years 3-5 and Stage 2 Years 6-9 have also been written and exist in draft form (DETE, forthcoming a; forthcoming b; forthcoming c; forthcoming d). In addition, a *Pitjantjatjara Schools’ Songbook* (EDSA, n.d.) has been in use over the last two decades and has proved to be extremely popular. Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara audio or audiovisual materials have not been produced for use in the school sector. The only language learning tapes are those used in association with the Pitjantjatjara course at UniSA (discussed later). Numerous video resources have been produced by Ernabella Video and Television (EVTV) for internal consumption in the P-Y Lands. Some of these are useful resources for school programs. Also a major archiving project, Ara Iritja, is underway in Adelaide. This project has amassed a huge resource of photographic, written, audio and video material, some of which would be useful in the production of school-oriented resources.

Arabana and Adnyamathanha syllabus frameworks are currently being published through the department’s Curriculum Directorate after the intense involvement of speakers of the two languages in the development phase; along with two generic print texts and the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara syllabus frameworks, these are the main (*Aboriginal Languages Update*, No.1 March, 2002: 2). Draft syllabus frameworks are already well-advanced. Syllabus frameworks for other languages taught are yet to be written, though local materials and program outlines exist.

The Australian Indigenous Languages Framework

The Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA) commenced work in 1993 to introduce Indigenous languages into senior secondary education. The Australian Indigenous Languages Framework was a national initiative and in 1994 several languages in South Australia, Victoria and the Northern Territory were taught for the first time in accredited programs at senior secondary level. Languages taught included ‘strong’ languages such as Pitjantjatjara, Eastern Arrernte and Yolngu Matha, but also

languages in revival mode, including Kurna in South Australia and Yorta Yorta in Victoria. The role that AILF programs can play in strengthening and maintaining Indigenous languages is discussed in Mercurio & Amery (1996).

The AIL Framework (SSABSA, 1996a) is a truly innovative curriculum initiative that laid down a blueprint for the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. It established a range of program types to accommodate the entire spectrum of Australian Indigenous language situations. The Framework is supported by illustrative programs (SSABSA, 1996b) and a textbook (SSABSA, 1996c).

To this point in time there are still only a handful of AILF programs operating in Australia, mainly due to a lack of teachers and resources. Also at senior secondary level there is intense competition between elective subjects and timetabling restrictions might prevent students from studying Australian Indigenous languages. One recent AILF innovation, the intensive Stage One summer school held in December 2001 is worthy of serious consideration in the NSW context. This program is discussed in more detail below.

The basic principles of AILF have been adopted by TAFE in Queensland and by the junior years of education in South Australia. However, because AILF was developed specifically for senior secondary level there is little by way of a progression of learning. It is designed to accommodate learners with no prior study or exposure to Indigenous languages.

Intensive Stage 1 Year 11 AILF program

In December 2001, SSABSA ran an intensive Stage 1 Australian Indigenous Languages summer school focussing on three target languages:- Pitjantjatjara, Ngarrindjeri and Kurna. This course was attended by about 20 students from a range of schools, mostly spread across the metropolitan area, but also from some outlying areas such as Ceduna on the West Coast.

This model of program delivery has the huge advantage in that it gives access to students who are enrolled at schools where Indigenous language programs are not offered. Many Indigenous students are scattered across a range of metropolitan and country schools as lone individuals or in small groups. Most of these schools have no chance of ever being able to offer an AIL program, at least not in the short term.

National LOTE Statement and Profile

The national Statement and Profile for Languages Other Than English was an attempt to define the Languages (or Languages Other Than English as it was known then) Learning Area. Whilst Indigenous languages are addressed to some extent in the Statement, this curriculum initiative failed to address the needs of revival programs within the Profile⁷. Despite appeals from individuals working with Indigenous languages to consider other aspects of language use, the LOTE Profile focussed exclusively on communication goals,

⁷ Some Pitjantjatjara exemplar material was include within the Profile document.

reflecting the ideology of the Australian Language Levels (ALL) guidelines (Scarino et al, 1988).

South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability (SACSA)

The South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability framework (DETE, 2001) outlines scope and standards for each of the eight Learning Areas that drive the curriculum in South Australia, from Birth to 10⁸. It broadened the focus of language learning to include Understanding Language and Understanding Culture strands, in addition to Communication. SACSA built on the Pathways Project Scope and Sequence which outlined a flexible sequence of the learning specified in the LOTE Statement and Profile (Curriculum Corporation, 1994). SACSA has fixed a set of standards applicable at various stages throughout the years of schooling. In 2001 Angela Scarino of the School of International Studies at UniSA obtained additional funding to develop Scope and Standards for Non-Alphabetic Languages (Chinese and Japanese) and for Australian Indigenous Languages. Both these sets of languages were not served well by the existing document. Subsequently a small team of curriculum writers and researchers worked to develop an Australian Indigenous Languages Scope and Standards document (DETE, forthcoming e) that is to be an integral part of the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework. As the name suggests, the document sets out to specify the scope of the area of learning covered by Australian Indigenous Languages programs in South Australian schools, and to set year-level based standards that teachers in these programs should teach to, and more particularly standards that learners should achieve, at the different year levels from Reception to Year 10. The document also includes an introductory section which contextualises the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages and informs the reader about a range of issues therein.

Given that the AIL SACSA materials are by their nature generic for all of the (currently) nine Aboriginal languages offered through department programs, the approach taken has perhaps inevitably resulted in the development of an 'idealised' set of standards for a second language Indigenous languages program. The challenge for the immediate future will be the development of language specific interpretations of the generic standards. In South Australia at the present time curriculum development is described as being a 'seamless', ongoing process of curriculum renewal, and the opportunity to pursue such language specific elucidations will be presented. The scope and standards described in the AIL SACSA materials may not be achievable at the present time by the majority of programs⁹, but ideally would be attainable at a later date as the program grew and developed and as resources were produced. In the interim, it will be up to the respective program planners to determine what is achievable for their particular program at this point in time.

My own misgivings about the idealised set of standards were conveyed to the consultants who prepared the report on the Draft document (Erebus, 2001: 25). I wrote that:

⁸ Year 11 and 12 studies are the domain of the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA).

⁹ See the section following on program types.

I am not convinced that the document takes the best approach by choosing to set out the scope and standards for an idealised Indigenous second language program. Is this the best way to guide the numerous language revival programs that operate in different languages, each with a different set of available resources, operating in different contexts? Some of these languages are changing rapidly as they develop and grow. Languages are never static, but in some of these language revival contexts, language change is both quantitatively and qualitatively different to other language contexts.

The pragmatic approach taken by the writers, in specifying just one set of statements for all Indigenous language programs, is realistically all that is possible. But I think we should bear in mind the need for detailed research and syllabus development in each of the Indigenous languages taught in schools. This syllabus and program development is the real priority. The scope and standards must be allowed to grow out of the programs themselves. They must reflect the reality of both what is, and what is possible.

I really don't think, that at the current stage of development of language, programs and teachers, we can expect the Australian Indigenous Languages Document to achieve much more than it does. We should probably now put this document aside and get on with the real work of developing the programs themselves.

Whilst there are some benefits to be derived from the work on the SACSA project, this project did not grow out of concerns identified as priorities by those closest to Indigenous languages programs. This is a constant problem. Demands by education systems that are driven by mainstream concerns detract from urgent work that is most needed by the programs. A consequence of this can be that communities lose faith in departments and the people who work within them, and that departments thus lose critical contributors, typically older people¹⁰.

The Teaching of Kurna

Kurna is the language of Adelaide and the Adelaide Plains. It was documented reasonably well by German missionaries in the mid nineteenth century. They produced a sketch grammar and vocabulary (Teichelmann & Schürmann, 1840) and a more extensive vocabulary with hundreds of translated sentences (Teichelmann, 1857). Several short texts written by Kurna children educated in the school at Piltawodli on the banks of the Torrens River have also been discovered (see Amery, 2000: 97-100).

Though some wordlists had been included in *The Kurna People* Aboriginal Studies curriculum (EDSA, 1989), the first creative use of the language in recent times was the writing of several short songs in a National Aboriginal Languages Program (NALP) funded songwriters workshop. These were published in a songbook (Ngarrindjeri, Narrunga and Kurna Languages Project, 1990). Several workshops were held over the

¹⁰ Whiles the AIL SACSA document was being written, one of the few remaining Arabana speakers passed away. He had been working on the development of the Arabana syllabus framework. In the course of this work he had developed a keen sense of appreciation of the requirements of school programs. Consequently his death consitutes a huge loss to the language and to Arabana language programs.

next few years. Kurna was introduced into Kurna Plains School in 1992 as the school's language program. At that time few resources existed. They consisted of the missionary grammar (Teichelmann & Schürmann, 1840), the songbook and some expressions, translated nursery rhymes and short stories that had been produced in workshops in 1990 and 1991. The teachers had little knowledge of the language themselves, and by their own admission were just a few steps ahead of the students (Cherie Watkins in the *Warranna Purruna* video, DECS, 1997).

Beginning with songs proved to be an excellent strategy to introduce the language, especially as there was no ongoing funding. Songs are stand-alone products. It is far easier to learn language through the medium of song, rather than spoken language. Many of the songs written were exceedingly popular with children and their families.

By 1994 Kurna programs had been introduced into virtually all levels of education from preschool to tertiary level. However, there is something of a gap at secondary level. A compulsory 10-week Kurna language module is taught in Year 8 at Fremont-Elizabeth City HS and then again at Year 10 (as a Stage 1 AILF program). And Kurna is taught to adult students doing senior secondary studies at Para West Adult Campus. Currently Kurna is not available anywhere at Year 9 level, though it is hoped to bridge this gap with a Kurna elective in the near future. Much work remains to be done in terms of developing a progression of learning of Kurna throughout the years of schooling. The senior secondary courses are accelerated programs, assuming no prior learning.

Whilst there are no sound recordings of the language itself and little has been retained within the oral traditions of the community, the language is not simply being re-introduced as a relic. Rather it is being modernised and developed for use in the 21st century for a range of language functions in accordance with the ways in which Kurna people are using the language. Thus a range of new terms, such as *mukarndo* 'computer', *warraityatti* 'telephone', *turraturrarndiappetti* 'photocopier' and *tampitirkandi* 'to read', have been developed. A base-10 number system has also been developed enabling counting into the millions (see Amery, 1996 for details). Some expressions, such as *Mappakurru burlturniappendo!* 'Empty the rubbish bin!' (Amery, 2000: 136-137), have been developed for use within classroom contexts, thus enabling the language to be used to some extent as the medium of instruction. A range of expressions have also been developed for use within sporting contexts (see Amery, 1997: 71-73), thus creating a real-life context for use of the language that gives its users something of an edge over their opponents.

I have advocated what I refer to as the 'Formulaic Method' for the reintroduction of languages such as Kurna, whereby an inventory of preformed language chunks and well-formed expressions are introduced progressively and used whenever the appropriate situation arises. See Amery (2000: 206-219; in press) for a discussion of this and other approaches. The Formulaic Approach has been applied to some extent within school programs.

Numerous worksheets and other teaching materials have been produced over the last decade. Teachers develop their own teaching plans. Some efforts were made to develop a

systematised Year 8 program, supported by the South Australian Secondary School of Languages (SASSL). However, there is still no published Kurna syllabus or curriculum. Kurna language reclamation has been documented in detail for the period 1990-1997 in Amery (1998) together with the inclusion of a wide range of sample materials in a compendium volume. Amery (2000) is an abridged published version of this PhD thesis minus the sample materials.

Departmental Support

The Department of Education, Training and Employment currently employs two full-time Curriculum Project Officers, Aboriginal Languages. Their role is outlined in the latest *Aboriginal Languages Update* (No.1, March 2002: 1-2). I include the description of their work below as it appeared in the newsletter:

- supporting the teaching and learning of Australian Indigenous languages in school and centre programs — in 2001, in excess of 3000 Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in 84 distinct programs, between 62 sites, in 9 Indigenous languages
- promoting the teaching and learning of the languages in terms of program types, in order to link outcomes more closely with target language situations — first language maintenance, second language learning, language revival (revitalisation, renewal, reclamation, renewal), language awareness
- developing language specific syllabus frameworks and other generic texts
- offering targetted conferences, workshops, personal contacts
- maintaining a national and intrastate network of relevant Indigenous and non-Indigenous stakeholders
- conducting research into Indigenous languages, in relation to program support, syllabus writing and other specified needs
- maintaining a watch on developments in Indigenous languages education globally, to inform departmental Languages policy development
- encouraging and support regional clusters of schools offering Indigenous languages
- fulfilling administrative duties pertinent to the Australian Indigenous languages field eg, maintaining statistical and other records relevant to the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages
- servicing the Aboriginal Languages Standing Committee, which addresses issues of departmental protocol in relation to Indigenous languages, Aboriginal Language and Cultural Specialist personnel issues, and the like
- developing Australian Indigenous Languages (AIL) equivalents of departmental curriculum initiatives — for example, the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability (SACSA) framework for Australian Indigenous Languages
- supporting and/or delivering Languages retraining (Kurna and Pitjantjatjara) per the formal departmental program which seeks to increase the number of trained Languages teachers, including French, German, Indonesian and so on, in its ranks.

The Project Officers, Aboriginal Languages maintain a web page http://www.nexus.edu.au/divisions/lmc/aboriginal_languages/resources.htm which provides a listing of useful resources in the nine languages currently taught in South Australian schools. Most of the resources listed are available from the Languages and Multiculturalism Centre (LMC) Resource Centre.

Comprehensive statistics on Indigenous language programs in schools have been maintained over the last five or six years, and informally since about 1993. This is a critical task in terms of monitoring the programs, but also for promoting Indigenous language programs. Certainly McConvell & Thieberger (2001) found that the South Australian statistics produced embodied best practice in Australia and should be emulated elsewhere. A few minor improvements could still be made by including some information on the history of the various programs (date of commencement, interruptions to the program, specific problems faced, nature of teaching materials etc.).

DETE also hosts an Aboriginal Languages Standing Committee, formed in December 1997, which includes a wide range of stakeholders both inside and outside the department including representatives from Yaitya Warra Wodli (South Australia's Aboriginal Languages Centre), the Department of State Aboriginal Affairs and the tertiary education sector. The committee has established working parties which have produced papers on intellectual and cultural property rights (DETE, 2000a) and personnel issues (DETE, 2000b) and has set up a register of Aboriginal Language and Culture Specialists.

While the earlier Aboriginal language programs commenced in spite of the system, South Australia has done a reasonable job during the last decade in fostering the development of existing programs and the expansion of programs into additional schools. But South Australia is a large state and two project officers can do only so much. One crucial area which the Department of Education Training and Employment has not adequately recognised is the provision of linguistic support. Nor is there much recognition beyond those working in the immediate area, of the crucial role that linguists play in the development of programs and resources.

The Role of Linguists

Because of the paucity of published curriculum and resources, linguistic expertise is badly needed for most Aboriginal language programs in South Australia. Linguists can assist greatly in developing workable practical orthographies, in documenting languages, in making historical sources accessible, in assisting in the preparation of resources and materials, in developing and modernising the language (see Amery, forthcoming) and crucially in imparting their skills to local Indigenous peoples and teachers through facilitating workshops and on-the-job training. In my experience, grammars of languages and most historical materials are just too hard for teachers and Indigenous language and culture specialists to work with without explanation and assistance. Typically people might have a look at these materials and simply give up, putting them aside.

Linguistics is not so important for other languages because curriculum and resources already exist and we have a good knowledge of the contexts in which languages are used. Experience shows that those Aboriginal language programs which have access to and

support from linguists have grown and developed. I have discussed in some detail elsewhere (Amery, 2001; in press; forthcoming) the corpus planning needs of Indigenous languages and the role that linguists might play. I have argued (Amery, in press: 1) that language planning, whilst initially applied to major world languages, might have even more far-reaching application in language revival contexts.

Unfortunately little provision is made for input from linguists by education systems. In South Australia we are fortunate in having two curriculum officers with training and a good grasp of linguistics. But this fortuitous situation has come about more by accident than design. Wilson and Tunstill have, of their own volition, pursued a study of linguistics. Wilson undertook a Lit.B in Linguistics at UNE, while Tunstill undertook two intensive Summer Institute of Linguistics courses and has just commenced a PhD in Linguistics at Adelaide University. Unfortunately their job description does not include linguistics as an essential qualification or skill.

Tertiary Sector Support

Despite promising beginnings with the work of German missionaries who established the 'Adelaide School' of researchers (Simpson, 1992) and the later work of Tindale and Strehlow, South Australia lagged behind other states in the study of linguistics. Linguistics was established as a discipline at Adelaide University in 1993 with the appointment of Prof. Peter Mühlhäusler. However in a climate of cutbacks and restructuring in the tertiary sector in the 1990s linguistics has not been able to expand to any extent. This is not for want of trying. Mühlhäusler has tried to support Indigenous languages in the school sector. He was a member of the AILF National Steering Committee and has undertaken research projects for DETE (DETE, forthcoming f). Mühlhäusler and Amery have sought funds to establish courses that will support the professional development of teachers of Indigenous languages, though these submissions failed. However, they were successful in establishing a course in Kurna linguistics in 1997 with the assistance of a \$7,000 contribution from the Department for Education and Children's Services (now DETE). This course was subsequently moved to the University of South Australia in 2002.

Pitjantjatjara was the first Indigenous language to be taught at tertiary level in Australia. It was introduced into Adelaide University Continuing Education in 1966 (Downing, 1991: 28). Pitjantjatjara, now at the University of South Australia, has been taught continuously since its introduction, though it is now a mere shadow of its former offering. In the 1980s there were three semester-length courses, Pitjantjatjara 1, Pitjantjatjara 2 and Pitjantjatjara 3. In 2001, Pitjantjatjara offerings were reduced to Pitjantjatjara 1, taught on an external basis only, and a two-week Pitjantjatjara Summer School. The course materials are in urgent need of redevelopment. The tapes are dated and of poor quality. Whilst Pitjantjatjara was once the flagship for Indigenous languages in the tertiary sector, it now lags behind. Good resources have been developed recently for Yolngu Matha taught at Northern Territory University. A well-presented CD-Rom has also just been developed for Walmatjarri.

Efforts are underway now to establish a cross-institutional major in Indigenous languages drawing on existing course offerings at Adelaide University, Flinders University and the

University of South Australia, with the addition of courses on approaches and methods of teaching Australian Indigenous languages, field linguistics and archival research. The proposal is as follows:

Year 1 semester 1	Foundations in Linguistics	OR equivalent
Year 1 semester 2	Ethnography of Communication	OR equivalent
Year 1 Semester 1	Pitjantjatjara	
Year 1 Semester 2	Australian Languages: Issues and Debates	
Year 2 semester 1	Kaurna Language & Culture	OR other Indigenous language
Year 2 semester 2	Field Linguistics	OR Pitjantjatjara 2 OR Aust Lges: More Issues
Year 3 semester 1	Computer Assisted Language Learning	OR Language Maintenance & Language Planning
Year 3 semester 2	Teaching Indigenous Languages	

Bold indicates that this course is core for all students.

What can the Board of Studies do to support the teaching of Indigenous languages?

The Board can provide a framework, perhaps based on AILF, that is flexible enough to accommodate local initiatives in a wide range of contexts.

The Board might establish protocols for the introduction of Australian Indigenous Languages programs in consultation with Indigenous communities and representative bodies. Amongst other matters, these protocols should address issues of control over the programs and ownership of language products.

The Board can support more detailed language-specific curriculum development, building on local initiatives. Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay, Gumbaynggir, Pakaantyi and Bundjalang would seem to be priorities. Wiradjuri, Dhanggati, Awabakal and Dharuk are also possible contenders for immediate curriculum development.

The Board can support the development of language resources (eg Grammars, dictionaries etc.)

The Board can develop flexible modes of delivery to cater for the needs of Indigenous students who are a small minority in mainstream schools. The AILF summer school might be a good model to follow.

The Board might consider funding regional linguist positions to serve a range of programs operating within several schools in the same area. For instance a linguist position might serve a range of program on the north coast, while another might serve programs across the entire Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay area.

The Board might consider engaging roving linguists based in Sydney that travel out to programs across the state trouble-shooting and running program planning, curriculum writing or resource production workshops.

The Board might create a register of local language and culture specialists who have indicated a preparedness to participate in the delivery of Indigenous language programs and who are accepted and supported by their communities to do so.

The Board might create a register of specialists, including ethnomusicologists, musicians, artists, performance artists, anthropologists, historians etc. who might be engaged for specific language projects.

The Board can create a network of programs across the state and maintain a flow of information through production of a newsletter, e-mail networks and web postings.

Professional development

Teachers of Aboriginal languages need to be informed by mainstream language teaching methodology and approaches. Teachers of other languages (eg German, Indonesian etc) are in a good position to assist. But they must have some appreciation of the special needs of Australian Indigenous languages.

In the early days of implementing AILF programs, we found that holding Professional Development for Teachers of Aboriginal Languages (PDTAL) workshops were a source of inspiration and motivation. The workshops provided an opportunity to share experiences, strategies and ideas. These PDTAL workshops were supported by a one-off Commonwealth grant during 1994-95. DETE has tried to continue this kind of professional development through Teachers of Aboriginal Languages Conferences (TALC) and workshops. This is something that the Board could set up and sustain, either at a regional level or on a statewide basis.

There is a need for a special accreditation process for Indigenous teachers of Australian Indigenous Languages. This might be built into this program of professional development.

Supporting Programs

There is an inherent tension between providing enough guidance and support for programs without being overly prescriptive and hence restrictive. There is a danger in stifling and constraining local initiatives. Yet guidance and direction is often sought from those who have knowledge and experience of other programs. At other times such guidance and direction from outsiders might be regarded as unwarranted interference, even though in reality it might be badly needed and could serve to help grow and develop the programs. Finding optimum ways of supporting programs can be a delicate and sensitive matter. We have often heard the comment made in South Australia that “no whitefella is going to tell me how my language should be” and people might take great offence at any attempt by linguists or others to “correct” grammar or language forms. It is often preferable to discuss similar examples from other language situations rather than attack issues head-on.

It is vitally important to put language materials in the hands of people as quickly as possible, even if all the complexities of the language have not yet been worked out. If we wait until all the linguistic problems have been resolved then the impetus may be lost.

Program Types

The Australian Indigenous Languages Framework identified a number of program types:- First Language Maintenance, Second Language Learning, Language Revival and Language Awareness. Language Revival programs were further subdivided into

Language Revitalisation, Language Renewal and Language Reclamation. These program types have since been adopted by McKay (1996), by TAFE in Queensland and DETE in South Australia. All program types are currently represented in South Australian schools except First Language Maintenance programs which might well recommence in the Pitjantjatjara/ Yankunytjatjara lands in the near future.

The NSW Aboriginal Languages Interim Framework K-10 (Board of Studies NSW: 1998) adopts similar program types to those specified under AILF, except that Language Enhancement and Language Maintenance have replaced the Language Revitalisation and Language Renewal subtypes of Language Revival respectively. It is unfortunate that the term Language Maintenance is used in this sense for situations where elements of the language are still used though it is no longer spoken in its full form. Language Maintenance has prior usage in AILF and other pre-existing classifications (eg McConvell, 1986) in application to measures to support 'strong' languages which are still spoken fluently by all members of the community. Dixon (1989: 32) emphatically rejects the use of language maintenance funds for language revival programs. I certainly do not agree with Dixon's position vis a vis allocation of funds. I include reference to Dixon here merely to show how most people use the term 'language maintenance' as a term contrasting with 'language revival'.

It is important to avoid using too many terms that mean more or less the same thing. I am responsible myself for introducing a few more terms with the AILF program types, but that was because existing classifications did not adequately account for revival contexts that we are dealing with in South Australia and other southern states. Classifications existing prior to AILF (McConvell, 1986; Johnson, 1987; Thieberger, 1988; and Sharpe & Thieberger, 1992) were developed for situations in northern and western Australia. Amery (1998: 33-43) discusses the use of terminology in some detail.

Just how useful are program types? They are certainly useful to linguists and curriculum planners. They have served as basic organising principle in South Australia in the collection of data on language programs and thinking about ways in which the programs might be supported. However, Indigenous peoples might have very different perceptions of their languages and language situations to those held by linguists. For instance, Point Pearce School classified their Narungga language program as First Language Maintenance. Narungga is a language for which no more than 800 words and 20 single clause sentences, revealing few grammatical structures, were ever recorded. As linguists, we would say that it was primarily a Language Awareness/Language Reclamation program, perhaps with some Language Renewal elements, but definitely not First Language Maintenance.

I note that whilst the NSW Interim Framework has adopted program types, few of the case studies (NSW Board of Studies, 2000) utilise them. The case studies are each identified by several parameters (eg Number of Students/Grades involved in the program) but Program Type is not one of the required parameters. Several case studies identify the program as Language Revival. Only the Walgett High program makes use of the subtypes noting that their program is all three:- Language Enhancement, Language Maintenance and Language Reclamation.

In NSW there is a big difference between the nature of a Awabakal or Dharuk program on the one hand, which are necessarily Language Reclamation programs, and Bundjalang or Gumbaynggir programs, which are probably Language Revitalisation programs (= NSW Language Enhancement), or at the very least Language Renewal (= NSW Language Maintenance). Most other programs in NSW will fall somewhere between these two points. It was these differences, where one program is based entirely or predominantly on historical sources while another is based primarily upon that which is still known and passed down within the community, that the program types were trying to capture. If the program types are to be useful, then people need to understand how the terms are used. This will only come through workshoping and increased awareness.

Choice of Language

Choice of language is often a heated issue. In recent years land-language associations have been given more recognition as a result of self-determination and Native Title. Many groups are attempting to reintroduce Indigenous protocols. However, as a result of dispossession, past policies, relocation of peoples and mixing of different language groups it is no longer clear in some centres as to who owns the land upon which a particular town or school is located.

The AILF project and DETE in South Australia have resisted identifying an ‘approved list’ of Indigenous languages which might be considered for offer in schools. Rather, communities and schools are free to implement a program in any language of their choice. In practice this decision will be constrained by availability of resources, particularly the availability of a community member prepared to come in and teach the language.

In complex multilingual situations, it might be best to introduce a Language Awareness program first that raises awareness of the regional language situation rather than choosing one language at the expense of others.

Often it is easier for a school program to mount a program in a language, such as Pitjantjatjara, which has more developed resources, but in many cases this contravenes the principle of teaching the local language. This might be alleviated by identifying the teaching of Pitjantjatjara as an interim measure until local resources can be developed and local persons identified who are willing to teach the language of the land. Elements of local languages might be incorporated into the school program alongside the chosen language. For instance, Kurna songs were introduced alongside of Pitjantjatjara songs and Pitjantjatjara language teaching in the program at Alberton Primary School in Adelaide.

A frequently recurring theme has been that a Pitjantjatjara program has often acted as a catalyst for the later introduction of local languages in South Australian schools. In fact, Pitjantjatjara was taught in Tasmania prior to the introduction of Palawa Karni, whilst Bundjalung served as a forerunner to local Ganai programs in Gippsland, Victoria. At Worawa College, Healesville east of Melbourne, Gupapuyngu from North East Arnhemland was taught prior to the introduction of Yorta Yorta and concurrently with

Yorta Yorta for a number of years. The teaching of a 'strong' language, such as Pitjantjatjara, can boost peoples' confidence and serve to motivate, as well as impart familiarity with and understanding of Australian languages. So long as this is viewed from the outset as an interim stage, or an adjunct to the revival program, the introduction of a 'strong' language might serve a very useful purpose.

Conclusion

In this paper I have attempted to sketch out the nature of Australian Indigenous languages programs in South Australian schools and the structures in place that support these programs. Further, I have discussed a range of problematic issues that need to be addressed in the delivery of these programs and have made a number of suggestions as to what the NSW Board of Studies might do in establishing and supporting Aboriginal language programs in that state.

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