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Language problems and Aboriginal education

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LANGUAGE PROBLEMS AND ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

Edited by
Ed Brumby & Eric Vaszolyi



Aboriginal Teacher Education Program
Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education



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FOREWORD

Effective communication must be an essential feature of any teaching/learning situation and it follows that considerable difficulties arise when teacher and learner speak different and mutually unintelligible languages or dialects. This, unfortunately, is the situation in which many, if not most, Aboriginal children and their teachers throughout Australia find themselves. This classroom situation reflects, of course, the difficulties and frustrations experienced on a wider scale by many Aboriginal parents and Aboriginal communities, and those outsiders who work with them. The problem is compounded further by the fact that few teachers or others who work in Aboriginal areas are given any training in linguistics and the few resources available to them are written in linguistic jargon which in itself represents yet another language.

The Aboriginal Teacher Education Program was established at Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education with funds from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in order to provide specialist training in the teaching of Aboriginal children. One of the many projects initiated by the Program has been the provision of materials for teachers and others interested in gaining a greater appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal languages and dialects of English and the implications of language difference for the classroom. This volume is the result of one of these projects.

I recommend this book to all teachers of Aboriginal children and to anyone interested in working with or coming to know Aboriginal people — not only because it provides information about Aboriginal languages and dialects of English, but also because it deals with several important and highly relevant issues such as bilingual education, the teaching of English as a second language and the relationship between culture, language and the classroom.

Ian Viner,
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs,
March, 1977.

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INTRODUCTION

This book is meant to be a gap filler.

When the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program was established at Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education in 1974, teaching staff were confronted by a number of knotty problems. Perhaps the most formidable of these was the shortage, and in some cases, the sheer lack of instructional materials suitable for teacher education with a heavy Aboriginal emphasis. This was only too evident in the area of linguistics studies.

Australian Aboriginal linguistics and related issues have been rather uncommon in teacher training institutions, and for this reason alone, the initiators of the program had to start from scratch. If you want to teach/learn French, German, Italian or other modern languages, there is no shortage of textbooks, dictionaries, phrase books, grammars, recordings and the like. We had to start with virtually nothing.

Admittedly, a lot of ink has been spilt on various issues in Aboriginal linguistics but, more often than not, in a highly academic manner which makes it esoteric, nay incomprehensible to the linguistically untrained — and our trainee teachers just cannot scrutinize the subject in such a depth as to find their way easily in the maze of present-day linguistics.

To change this situation we had to commence producing some relevant instructional materials for and by ourselves. Concurrently we endeavoured to collect selected writings on language issues by linguists and educationists. There have been quite a few good (and sometimes excellent) papers hiding humbly in various professional and non-professional journals or still awaiting publication; talks given at seminars or conferences and then remaining unrecorded;

manuscripts lying in drawers filled with valuable information inaccessible to the public. Some of these materials have been available to undergraduates who have ready access to good libraries in the metropolitan areas. However, correspondence students in the country and particularly those living off the beaten track, had to make extra efforts to obtain such materials and for all that the outcome was often disappointing and frustrating.

This is how the idea of this volume was born.

The contributors, all of whom were most generous with the fruits of their labours, represent a wide range of experience and involvement in various aspects of linguistics and Aboriginal education, and each contribution represents an individual approach and response to a particular issue. While, at the outset, there was no 'master plan' as it were, we are delighted that the collection covers such a broad range of the many and various problems facing educationists, linguists and language planners.

In accordance with accepted educational practice, the sequence runs from the general to the specific — from a general overview to the nature and aspects of particular Aboriginal languages and dialects of English and the problems faced by teachers and children; the issues confronting language planners; problems and issues in bilingual education; and, finally, some specific hints, approaches and ideas for teachers.

There is, as always in a volume of this kind, some overlap in the information and ideas presented. This, of course, reflects and emphasizes the underlying similarity of the problems confronting teachers and Aboriginal children in widely scattered parts of Australia.

Many people have contributed to or assisted in the preparation of this volume and to all go our heartfelt thanks. Particular mention should be made of the efforts of Maureen Gooder who typeset all of the text, Wilma Peters, designer and paste-up artist, and the many people in the Printing and Publications Department at Mount Lawley College who helped in the final production. Our special thanks too, to Mount Lawley College and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs whose co-operation and assistance made it all possible.

Ed Brumby
Eric Vaszolyi
March, 1977.

1**LINGUISTIC GENOCIDE****A.J. Grassby**

I have been listening to requiems for language training in Australia for some years and it is true that teaching of second languages in Australia in recent years has declined dramatically. In fact an authority on modern language teaching in Australia stated recently that language learning in Australia at best faced a bleak future as the prospect of Australia as the last monolingual society in the world becomes a reality.

The facts of the situation are certainly dismal. We have reached a new low in language training perhaps dramatically instanced by the fact that in 1952 51% of Leaving Certificate students in New South Wales studied French. Twenty years later this was reduced to 11% while Latin had almost disappeared, German also dropped while our neighbourhood languages, Indonesian and Japanese, are being taken by no more than 3% of students.

On a national basis although student numbers have increased by 30% in the past 8 years, the number of language students dropped by nearly half.

Perhaps even more dismal is the way in which we have been able to practise language genocide when we look at the Aboriginal nations.

The sands of time have been running out for the whole of this century in relation to Aboriginal languages. Of the original 600 only 202 have survived. Those which have become extinct since 1788 span a great part of the continent. In fact, Aboriginal language genocide is complete in the area bounded by Adelaide, Broken Hill, Mount Isa, Townsville, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, as well as the whole of Tasmania and the South West of Western Australia, although about one-third only have survived

some of them are now spoken only by a few people and could well become extinct within the next decade or two.

An examination of the great wealth of European languages which has been dissipated over the past 188 years shows that the heavy hand of colonial conformity not only destroyed 400 Aboriginal languages but nearly every other community language also.

It is interesting to note that in the first decades of the 19th century the colonial government had great difficulty in communicating adequately with the great bulk of the European population.

A head count in the early 1840's indicated that 70% of them came from one country and had one tradition and mostly one language although not all had one religious background.

They happened to be Irish who were first to succumb to colonial conformity and who a century later have almost entirely lost their original language and have not replaced it with another second language but have joined the ranks of the monolinguals.

The next major group who lost their native tongue were the Germans who began some of the earliest ethnic schools in the history of Australia. The first recorded German ethnic school was in the 1830's.

After the hysteria generated by two world wars and the even more powerful influence of Australian isolationism again there was achieved almost complete linguistic genocide by the time World War II had ended.

Another major group in the community which lost a great deal of its language tradition comprised the Australians of Italian birth or origin who number more than 1 million people in Australia.

These major groups have been followed by a host of others who have withered before the march of colonial conformity.

You can test this by asking Mr Pat O'Donohue if he knows any word of Irish or many a man named Schultz or Frauenfelder who know not one word of German and I sadly recall several Salvestros and Catanzaritis who know not one word of Italian.

It is not necessary to be part of big ethnic groups to maintain the language. I attended the St. David's Day Dinner in Sydney this year, it was the first I had ever attended and in an audience of several hundred only 2 people did not speak Welsh. These 2 women felt inadequate and truncated because the cut and thrust of many a conversation eluded them. They did not know enough to understand. To understand a culture it is necessary to know something of the language. The flavour of life comes out in language.

It is often said that to make love you don't need to know the language but I would submit that the best language workshop of all is bed. This of course has restricted application but there is no doubt in my mind that a second language gives a second dimension to life, love and the pursuit of happiness.

It always seemed to me to be paradoxical that the administrations of the last century set their faces so sternly against any second language yet the ruling classes in Britain were almost all trilingual. Without exception the aristocracy would have both French and Latin and many also had German.

But this was of course a mark of the ruling class to which the monolingual lower orders were not admitted. It has always provoked in me a great sense of amusement that some of the most challenging and spicy descriptions and dialogue in literature were reserved exclusively for the multilingual ruling class who insisted they appear in French or Latin in case they corrupted the lower orders.

As it was in England so it was practised in Australia and while the tradition has been disposed of in England it persists here. It has been recognised by the British Government and people that monolingualism is a hindrance and an inhibitor of development and so the British child begins his second language at 8 years in contrast we begin at 12 if we begin at all. This is a sad reality so far. The United States has adopted a Bilingualism Act of 1968 which recognised for the first time in American history that the use of a child's mother tongue can have a beneficial effect on his education.

We have lost languages, we have lost language skills, we have dissipated the treasure of culture of generations in a few short years and it all sounds as if I support the view that Australia will soon be the only monolingual society on earth.

Paradoxically however, just as we have hit the lowest level of language performance I believe the prospects have never been brighter to give Australian children a second language in an effective way for the first time in our history.

I believe we have the prospect of catching up with the rest of the world and giving our children an equal opportunity.

One of the best initiatives in this sphere has been the bilingual education program in schools in the Northern Territory. The objective enunciated in December 1972 to have Aboriginal Australian children living in distinctly Aboriginal communities given their early education in their first language is already bearing fruit. The bilingual programs in the Northern Territory have extended to 17 schools and today 13 Aboriginal languages are in use.

I also want to warmly commend the schools in the Darwin area carrying out experimental programs in the teaching of ethnic languages in the past 2 years. The languages taught are Greek, Italian, German and French and since the arrival of refugees from East Timor, they have added Portuguese, Mandarin Chinese, Indonesian and Haka, the Chinese dialect of Timor.

Recently in Sydney more than 200 teachers, educationists, representatives of Parents & Friends and Parents & Teachers came together for a conference workshop on ethnic languages in the primary and infant schools. It was the most effective attack on language problems I have yet seen organised.

The enthusiasm leads me to believe that the objective of having a second language training available to all Australian children on enrolment in primary school can be achieved before long.

There are other initiatives in other States and the very fact that the Queensland Modern Languages Teachers Association has brought us all together in the First National Conference is a tribute to the forward looking teachers concerned and their association and I warmly commend them for it.

It is not too late by any means to rescue Australia from the drift to monolingualism. We have not yet squandered our language resources. There is a new awakening among people themselves indicated by the fact that 100,000 children in Australia attend ethnic schools particularly to develop their language skills and these cater for 25 languages.

I don't believe Australians will put up with a situation in which they are the last in the world.

We now have a new urgency in recognising the need for bilingual education.

Following the mass migration program of the last quarter century 700,000 children are enrolled in Australian schools whose first language is not English. They are not to be disadvantaged and if we are to take advantage of their initial language learning then we must adapt our education to recognise this major facet of a multi-cultural Australia.

Multi-cultural Australia is with us now. It gives us opportunities to become what an Australian poet described as the "newest encampment of hope" or return to what he called "sunburnt neurosis".

2

ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES: TRUTHS AND FALLACIES

Eric Vaszolyi

Camping in the Kimberleys a few years ago, I happened to meet a group of tourists from the eastern states. Mostly middle-age or elderly people, they looked awfully respectable and awfully middle-class, lavishly equipped with binoculars and expensive cameras and seemed very keen on discovering the legendary Kimberleys from an air-conditioned bus in a few hours. We had a brief chat and they asked me what I was doing up there. Learning that my job was recording Aboriginal languages, they did not seem to rate me very highly and eventually a rather Victorian-looking lady concluded the conversation somewhat disparagingly. She said that I could not have very much to do, after all, because the Aborigines' speech is but a sequence of inarticulate babbling sounds which does not make much sense, anyway. They talk like monkeys, her ladyship declared with self-assurance.

It is, of course, pointless to make much noise about a stupid statement like this and jump to conclusions. However, it makes me wonder how many more white Australians share the same, or similar, views on the Aborigines' native tongue. To be more specific, I wonder how much the average Australian with an average amount of education would know about the Aborigines in general and their languages, in particular. Surely it is common knowledge that Aborigines speak, or spoke, a language profoundly different from English and, just like non-British migrants from overseas, they have to learn English which they pick up with various degrees of proficiency. Their white-skinned fellow-Australians generally make no effort to acquaint themselves with any language other than English, so why should they bother about the Aborigines' "lingo"? Particularly as the "lingo" is generally believed to be "primitive", therefore inferior. (The logic of such a

reasoning is very simple. A two-hundred-year old tradition of racial discrimination branded Aborigines as primitive, hence every constituent of their life and culture is primitive, be it their tools, weapons, religion, customs or, for that matter, language. It seems grossly overlooked that the white man's reason for holding such an absurd view is sheer ignorance.)

However, even people with no racial prejudice are generally uninformed about the Aborigines' vernacular. Firstly, there is no such thing as the Aboriginal language. Aborigines represent an astonishing variety of languages, some of which seem to be groups of related dialects while others are as distinct idioms as, say, English is from Chinese. Further revealing our ignorance, we still do not know the actual number of these languages with a reasonable degree of certainty. It is assumed (but not evidence) that in Captain Cook's days there were as many as up to 500 separate languages in Australia. It is certainly a fact that in the past 200 years their number has been drastically reduced and scores, if not hundreds, of them died out irreplaceably. Yet even in 1975 we do not know exactly how many have survived. Surveys and assessments of Aboriginal languages are very often controversial. However, it seems justifiable to say that there are well over 100 viable native languages and a lot more dialects in this country. In Western Australia we have up to 50 distinct Aboriginal idioms.

It is common knowledge that Aboriginal society differs fundamentally from our western-type industrial civilization. The diversity in social organization, in turn, bears upon the language situation as well. European languages are what I would call national languages, spoken by large communities (indeed often many millions of people) and standardized by literacy and the media. In contrast, Aboriginal society has what I call tribal languages, spoken and transmitted by small speech communities: a tribe which represents a distinct language may consist of only 50-60 individuals; a few hundred people (200-500) seems to have been a probable average; and the largest tribes may have had as many as 1,000-2,000 members at the most. Aboriginal tribal groups never developed literacy, therefore their languages have been handed down from one generation to another through oral tradition. It seems plausible that even in the olden days, prior to British colonization, most or all Aborigines spoke several native languages as a result of regular meetings and inter-marriages amongst neighbouring tribes. The phenomenon of speaking several languages (technically termed multi-lingualism) facilitated a vivid cultural interaction and prevented rigid segregation of different tribes.

Let me emphasize again that Aboriginal languages are not, and

have not been, primitive in any sense of the word. They have been perfectly adequate means of communication to facilitate the continuity of Aboriginal society in this country for over 25,000 years. Professional linguists, experts in their job, have now abundant evidence to prove this. Compared with other, and more prestigious, languages (such as English), the grammatical structure of Aboriginal languages reveals no inadequacy or primitiveness whatsoever. Indeed, we are faced with an impressively large number of intricate grammatical devices which can, in their own way, express the same thoughts and channel the same messages as the languages of so-called civilized nations. In addition, it has to be emphasized that the grammatical structure of these languages is perfectly satisfactory to function on in our days or in the future; they need no alteration or improvement to serve present-day communication.

The vocabulary, or lexicon, of native languages is another story. Again, there is a general fallacy that Aboriginal languages, believed to be primitive, have a rather limited stock of words, a few hundred or so altogether. This is totally ridiculous. Aboriginal languages have sizeable vocabularies which are as extensive and elaborate as those of European and other languages. The nature of Aboriginal lexicon is, however, different; I should perhaps say, inevitably so, and for a very simple reason. Technically speaking: a lexicon is culturally determined. In plain terms it means that, for instance, a tropical population would have no words for 'snow' or 'ice' whereas Eskimos living in the Arctic have no terms referring to tropical plants or beasts of the jungle. The vocabulary reflects what is relevant to a people speaking a given language in a particular environment and age. For instance, English has a very elaborate set of terms connected with sea and sailing since Britain has for ages been connected with the sea and sailing. Bedouins in the desert may not even have a word for ship; but they have an extensive stock of words referring to camel and activities associated with that animal. Such a terminology is naturally missing from English. Aboriginal lexicon reflects a very refined and detailed description of a hunting-gathering society, its natural environment, economic activities, religious beliefs, social organization and institutions and lots of references and concepts relevant to Aboriginal people.

Naturally, they did not develop terms for, say, sewing machine or television for they did not have them. In this sense, but only in this sense, Aboriginal vocabularies are not prepared to cope with a western-type technological civilization which has been brought in from outside and forced upon the nomadic hunters of yesterday. There is a discrepancy between our concepts and the

Aborigines' life in the bush but it is not a deficiency inherent in Aboriginal conceptualization or verbal communication. And, unless Aboriginal languages are doomed to extinction, they can make up for what they have not developed before. In other words, these languages, given a chance, can expand and modernize their vocabularies by either borrowing from English or enlarging the native lexicon to match present-day requirements. This process has indeed begun without any purposeful language planning or language engineering on our part. For example, Wunambal people in the Kimberleys had not seen aeroplanes before Japanese bombers paid a few memorable visits to Darwin and the Kimberleys in 1942. Since then the aeroplane has become an everyday feature which the Wunambals call *kandjal*. It is an old native word which in the first place means 'eaglehawk'. As the need arose, the people simply transferred this term to the aeroplane. Another example: in the same language the policeman is called *yirgalngari*. It is also an indigenous word: *yirgal* means 'rope' or 'chain' and *yirgalngari* 'the man with the chain', recalling the grim memories of the not-too-far past with arrested Aborigines chained up by policemen. The word *banman* used to refer to tribal medicine-men; nowadays medical doctors (in, say, the Derby hospital) are simply and logically called *banman*. *Moduga* 'motorcar' is clearly borrowed from English and so is *midjin* 'mission' and scores of other words (likewise, in English we talk about *spaghetti* which is Italian or *kindergarten* which is German or *anorak* and *kayak* which come from Eskimo).

To sum it up, Aboriginal languages are, or would be, able to function and facilitate communication in a changed and changing Aboriginal society. The crucial question is, however, whether or not these languages have a fair chance of survival under the present circumstances, when traditional Aboriginal society is disintegrating, or has disintegrated, under the pressure of a technology-oriented civilization. In some areas where Aboriginal groups are not outnumbered by white Australians and where they represent more or less compact communities, it seems practicable to maintain Aboriginal languages. The Western Desert language and its dialects (Pitjantjatjara, Ngaanyatjara etc.) can be mentioned as an example. It is still spoken by a large Aboriginal population over a vast area (stretching from Kalgoorlie via Leonora, Laverton and Warburton Ranges over to Ernabella in South Australia and up to Docker River in the Northern Territory). In two centres (Warburton and Ernabella) the language has been introduced in a bilingual education programme which appears to be reasonably successful. Primers and other, secular and religious, books have been printed in Pitjantjatjara and Ngaanyatjara, thereby raising

them to the rank of literate languages. Similar projects under similar conditions are under way in the Northern Territory. In Western Australia, yet another literacy programme has been implemented for Walmatjari spoken in the Fitzroy Crossing-Quanbun-Camballin-Looma area; qualified linguists are currently working on literacy projects at Mowanjam Community near Derby and also in Roebourne, Port Hedland and La Grange Mission. The Njigina and Kitja languages are now an integrated part of the curriculum in the Roman Catholic schools in Derby and Wyndham, respectively. More often than not, however, the situation is much more complicated than to simply facilitate the maintenance and development of native languages. This holds good for most of the Kimberleys and the Pilbara in Western Australia.

With the onslaught of colonization, most Aboriginal groups throughout this country have been displaced and disintegrated, forced to abandon the land of their fathers and settle down in missions or town reserves or on pastoral stations as a cheap local labour force. In any present-day type of Aboriginal settlement, there is a considerable fluctuation of residents: people are coming and going, take up a job at one cattle station and then leave for another; visitors turn up to a town reserve or mission for a while and then go back to another station or reserve or mission. The mobility of Aboriginal populations has gradually and forcibly increased during the last decades and, sweeping away territorial and linguistic boundaries, resulted in an intensive demographic diffusion. Let us take Derby (W.A.) for an example. The townsite used to belong to the Njigina tribe now dispersed on cattle stations or missions and reserves in the Broome-Derby-Camballin area. In turn, the Derby town reserve accommodates displaced Aborigines from a number of places, such as:

1. Walmatjari of the Fitzroy Crossing area and originally from the Great Sandy Desert, a good 200-500 miles in the south-east;
 2. Bunaba, from the upper Fitzroy River area, some 250-300 miles away;
 3. Djerag, from the East Kimberleys, some 400 miles from Derby;
 4. Mangala, from the north of the Great Sandy Desert, over 200 miles in the south;
 5. Bardi of the Cape Leveque and Sunday Island area;
 6. Ngarinjin of the Central Kimberleys, over 200 miles away.
- This variety of people and languages is further increased by the

population of Mowanjum Community (until 1974 Mowanjum Mission) near Derby. The Presbyterian Mission was founded in 1911 in Worora country, viz. Kunmunja, in the Western Kimberleys, a good 200 miles north of Derby. Later several Wunambal and Ngarinjin families (of the Central and Northern Kimberleys) were also admitted to the Worora camp before the whole community shifted down to Derby. The population of Mowanjum represents three languages not indigenous in the Derby area and very different from those mentioned above.

All put together, in Derby we have at least eight indigenous languages spoken by minor in-groups within the Aboriginal society. Suppose there is a suggestion to create literacy or introduce a bilingual education programme for Aboriginal children in Derby. Any such proposal will have to face a number of knotty problems. Firstly, it is just impracticable to develop all the eight languages represented in Derby. If so, which one should be selected and given priority? Should a choice rest only with the Aboriginal community or should it also involve educationalists and other interested outsiders? In either case, however, would any one Aboriginal language receive popular support, that is would it be accepted and spoken by the majority of local Aborigines?

Would they be prepared to appreciate a decision which favours one (or a few) of several languages, thereby dooming others to an unfavourable position and eventually, let's spell it out, to extinction? Would any such interference benefit the advancement of the Aboriginal community in the long run? How would it affect various age groups within the Aboriginal community, with particular regard to the younger generation and especially school-children? Now, leaving all these rhetorical questions unanswered, we might as well take a different approach, irrespective of whether or not it resolves the problem. The importance of English for Aborigines is undisputable, whether a first or a second language. Once it is agreed that English is a must for every citizen of this country, regardless of race, nationality or descent, the questions arise whether or not it is justifiable to salvage, nay develop, languages spoken only by a tiny minority of individuals? Should we, or should we not, take a perhaps cruel but certainly pragmatic approach which might seem to be an unappealable verdict of history, anyway? In other words: if quite a few Aboriginal tribal languages are bound to disappear from the scene of 20th century, why should any attempt be made to save them? True enough, one might say. But again, what about the damage, possibly and likely done to the people concerned, mainly on a psychological plane? Aboriginal citizens of this country have been deprived of

their land, their traditional way of life, their culture, their value system, their identity — and we should frankly admit, of their native tongues as well. Now, do we or do we not accept the old truth that to have one's own language is the root of human dignity? Or put it differently: are we or are we not prepared to offer human dignity of a higher degree to our Aboriginal fellow-citizens, to make up for all the humiliating deprivations imposed upon them in past and present?

In conclusion, a few points to sum up what has been said so far.

Firstly, let us emphasize it again that Aboriginal languages are by no means inferior to any other language, be it English or French, Chinese or classical Latin. They are indeed highly intricate devices which facilitate human communication quite adequately and convey a wide range of thoughts, sentiments and messages between individuals and communities.

Secondly, Aboriginal languages have been spoken and handed down by small communities, indeed amazingly small by European standards. It is partly for this reason that they could not resist the onslaught of a majority language (English in this case). As a consequence of the linguistic confrontation, hundreds of native languages have died out in the past two centuries. Linguistic disintegration has been part of a general cultural disintegration in Aboriginal society.

None the less, quite a few indigenous languages have recently received special attention and been studied for academic and/or practical purposes. Several of them are being revitalized and introduced in literacy and bilingual education projects which are reportedly quite successful. There is hope that at least in areas with compact Aboriginal population and without profound European-Australian influence, they can be developed to serve as carriers of literacy and printed publications, too. If so, at least some Aboriginal languages will be saved for posterity and given the same status as the only recognized official language in Australia: English. At the same time it seems quite predictable that dozens of yet surviving Aboriginal languages are bound to disappear as a consequence of the continuous disruption of old tribal and linguistic bonds.

3

LANGUAGE AND WORLD VIEW IN ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA

Eric Vaszolyi

Driven by the instincts of self-preservation and race preservation, man has always been forced to come to grips with his surroundings. In an ever-lasting search for food and shelter, safety and security and also in a hope of abundance and happiness, Homo Sapiens has had to assess his own potentials and limitations. Man has had to relate himself to other people and come to terms with them, thereby finding his place in human society; and over and above, he has had to find his own place in the immense universe of which he is but a tiny part. Life has always required a continuous physical as well as mental effort of people to survive. In this process, man is faced with a multitude of questions and has to answer them in one way or other. Who am I and what is my destiny on the earth between the cradle and the grave? What is life all about? How can I live as a social animal with other human beings in accepting, supporting or confronting them? How can I understand the stars and the winds, the tide and the ebb, growth and decline and, ultimately, death? From childhood to old age, we always have to face a non-stop flow of questions and to answer them either by ourselves or by accepting other people's explanations. In other words, we all develop certain concepts and beliefs concerning the individual, the society and the universe; that is, we all have a philosophy or world view to explain life and make it meaningful.

It is common knowledge that different individuals may hold different views on the same issue, in other words they represent different philosophies of life. Throughout history, individuals and societies have propounded quite a variety of ideas, maintained or abandoned by posterity. Some philosophies may seem to be better than others: it appears to us that they explain life

more profoundly or plausibly than others. Most of them, I believe, are neither better nor worse — just different, depending on place and time, cultural background and vested interests of individuals or social groups. I also believe that we frequently incline to view our own philosophy as preferable and indeed superior to others. This holds good for individuals as well as for societies. Further, a difference of philosophies may, and often does, bring about friction and conflicts between persons and groups. Is the generation gap, a disagreement of young and not-so-young, anything else but a conflict of different world views? Is racial or religious discrimination not a clash of divergent philosophies and the underlying motives and interests? Do we not tend to look at our own concepts and judgements as the best or at least better than most others? Do we not feel resentment when we have to accept the validity, and perhaps superiority, of a reasoning which differs from ours?

Aborigines and non-Aborigines in this country have evidently represented two widely different civilizations, therefore two absolutely different philosophies, so diverse indeed that the confrontation between them puzzled and bewildered both parties. The white man came here with his firm and arrogant belief in his own absolute superiority, with a belief in his undisputable right to intrude, conquer and force other races to appreciate all that. His intrusion was nicely concealed under self-deceit and hypocrisy which made him believe in his historical mission of spreading civilization. In this process the white man's philosophy, his religion, his value judgements, his concepts and expectations have been forcibly imposed upon the Aborigines who, in turn, have been pressed to accept all that unhesitatingly, nay gratefully.

Because of his own misconceptions, it has hardly ever occurred to the white man that the Aborigines might also have their own philosophy which, in its own way, proves to be coherent and understandable. Nor did it occur to the white man that no policy of assimilation or integration can be successful without a sympathetic understanding of the black man's sentiments and philosophy.

Before touching upon certain features of Aboriginal world view, we must understand that it had, through millenia, developed against a specific economic and social background: the existence of a semi-nomadic hunting and food-collecting society. Such a society must have a very intimate knowledge of nature, indeed much more intimate than the average man in our society has. The nomadic, wandering way of life calls for an extensive mobility which, in turn, does not facilitate an accumulation of material

goods; on the contrary, it only necessitates a minimum of personal possession which can easily be carried from one camp to another. The bushman's conceptions of valuable or useless, good or bad, time and distance are all determined by his specific way of life and they may, and do, differ from what we believe important in the world of computers and supersonic jets.

One striking feature of traditional Aboriginal world view is, or was, the unimportance of numbers and numbering. We find it hard or just impossible to comprehend. We count, measure and weigh everything. Our principal idols, such as money and machines, all rest on a pedestal made of figures and calculations. For an Aboriginal hunter, however, figures and counting are irrelevant. When he is hungry and gets a kangaroo, his problem is resolved. If he is lucky and kills two, that makes a pair. When a hunting party sets fire to the bush and kills a number of kangaroos so that the whole camp have a feast with plenty of meat, that is a 'big mob'. There is no point in counting them; the actual number would not make any difference since there is an abundance and that is what counts. Likewise, the hunter must have a perfect skill to be successful and must also have a few simple but effective weapons (spear with a spearthrower, boomerang, a wooden club or just a handy stone) — but neither the first nor the second necessitate any mathematical device or calculation (unlike firearms). To my knowledge, most Aboriginal languages have a word for 'one' and 'two', also for 'some' or 'a few' as well as for 'much' or 'many' — and that was perfectly sufficient before the white man entered the scene and counted everything up. It may be a point of interest to mention that Australian Aborigines do not stand alone with their reluctance to worship figures as we do. Quite a few hunting-gathering tribes in America, Africa, or Asia are, or were, similarly unconcerned with arithmetic. Some have words for 'one', 'two' and 'three'; others can count up to five and others again up to seven. One of the Samoyed tribes in Northern Siberia also has a term to denote 'ten' and 'twenty'. The former comes out of a form which originally meant 'hands-two' (i.e. ten fingers) whereas the second is derived from the word 'man' (i.e. ten fingers plus ten toes = twenty).

All this makes me think that Aborigines have no inborn inability to count. In the olden days they simply did not have to, because it was irrelevant to them. In recent times, I think, the lack or inadequacy of education has, to a great extent, been responsible for their incompetence in mathematics. However, not too long ago I had a twenty-five old Aboriginal assistant who was as good at maths as any educated young man of his age. At the same time I endeavoured to teach elementary arithmetic to a few men aged 35-50 and they did make a reasonable progress.

One final word on this issue. The fact that Aborigines did not count does not mean that they did not account for things when needed. Pastoralists have long had the experience that a native stockman may well hesitate when he has to give the actual number of bullocks in a paddock. "Maybe 10. . . maybe 20. . ." he might say. A few years ago I foolishly asked an old man on the Derby town reserve how many people lived there at that time. The question took the old chap by surprise and he hesitated. "Maybe 20. . ." he mumbled "maybe a hundred. . ." he tried again; and then suddenly he straightened up and said conclusively: "No, it's a million." But the other side of the coin is that the same people can describe each beast in a herd by a characteristic feature and thereby account for them. A turtle farm manager told me some time ago that one of his native labourers named several hundred turtles individually although he had no idea about the numerical total of the stock. This reminds me of an old experience when a great many years ago I met an aged Samoyed reindeer herdsman who could count up to five or so and naturally could not tell exactly how many beasts he had in a herd of several hundred. But he did know, and did account for, each beast in the mob by the age, size, sex, colour, a funny marking on the ear, the shape of the horn, the way of hopping or grazing about and other individual characteristics. When some of the animals strayed away, he set out to find them. He did not know how many were missing; but he did know exactly which ones were missing.

The traditional Aboriginal view on time is also different from our concept. We measure time by seconds, minutes, hours, days and so on. We have developed a special industry to manufacture gadgets called clocks and watches and without these gadgets we would be absolutely confused. For us 'time is money': a very revealing adage by itself. We are more or less in a perpetual state of rushing to and from (particularly in cities) depending on our timetables and schedules. Time — our time — is our own invention to serve our own benefit — but by now we have indeed become enslaved by this formidable brainchild of our civilisation.

It is untrue that Aborigines have no sense or concept of time. They do. In the Kimberleys (W.A.) for instance, Aboriginal languages do have words for 'time' as such. But again, they do not measure and divide time the way we do. Minutes, hours, days, weeks or years are irrelevant to a hunter or fisherman. He has to go out for game or fish when the appropriate time comes: at dawn or before sundown, and it just does not matter to him whether it is 4.15 a.m. or 6.32 p.m. It is likewise irrelevant to him how long he has to stay out waiting for his prey: whether it is half an hour or four hours, does not matter; what does matter is that he has got

to kill a kangaroo, a turtle, a goanna or fish in order to fill up his guts and to do so he has to take his time. Some time ago I ran a crocodile farming venture with an Aboriginal crew in the Northern Kimberleys. Frankly, my wristwatch was more often than not redundant. We had to adjust our movements to the moon phases, to the time when the tide came in or went out, to the crocodiles' mating and nesting periods, to the conditions of the dry and the wet season and other relevant factors. Minutes and hours or even days just did not matter in our business.

Aboriginal languages clearly distinguish present, past and future. Further, distinction is made of today versus yesterday and the day before yesterday as well as tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. If an event took place more than a couple of days ago, it was simply *before* or *long ago*; if something is going to happen in the future, it is *later on* or *afterwards*. Apparently, what really matters is the present: there are Aboriginal words referring to time *early in the morning* or *later in the morning*, at *midday*, in the *afternoon*, *evening*, *early at night*, or *later at night*. Very often the same word means *today* as well as *now*: these two concepts coincide for lots of Aborigines. The coincidence is reflected in Aboriginal English and we may find it confusing. For instance, when an Aboriginal person has agreed to do something now, we expect the action instantly and if it does not come off, we blame the person for breaching his/her promise. However, it might be the case that the poor fellow meant some time *today*, in other words not right now, instantly, but some time later during the day.

Time is relative, even in our society, and so is distance. What is near enough for an adult, may be terribly distant for the very young or the very old. Naturally, we measure distance, just like anything else, by accepting certain units of length which are arbitrary and a matter of convention or agreement. Until quite recently, for instance, we had inches, feet, yards and miles; now we have millimetres, centimetres, metres and kilometres (and all my admiration to anyone who can tell me off-hand how many millimetres is 5'6"). Different nations in different ages developed different systems. Nomadic peoples and tribal societies normally recognize the notion and significance of distance as much as we do but may not measure it the way we do. Naturally, the Aborigines have not developed any such system based on figures and mathematical calculations. Nor have American Indians, Zulu tribes in Africa or islanders in the Pacific. Nevertheless they have a fairly good idea of how far you can get by walking from morning till midday or if you keep wandering from new moon to full moon. Kilometres or miles mean nothing to them but the distance

between one waterhole and another, between a creek and the next one or the way from such-and-such a rock to the billabong — well, that is relevant and meaningful to them.

Let's have a glimpse again at the evidence of Aboriginal languages: in terms of references to relative distance they outdo English or French or German. Briefly, in English we refer to *this* or *that*. Aborigines have a variety of words corresponding to these two demonstratives. Reference is made to the following distance relations: 1. *this* one tangible, within reach; 2. *this* one, not tangible but within talking distance; 3. *that* one, within the range of a stone or spear or throwing stick; 4. *that* one outside such a range but still visible; 5. *that* one beyond sight but within the boundaries of someone's tribal country; 6. *that* one, beyond such boundaries: very far away. Now, these distinctions are no doubt more refined than a plain *this* or *that*. We often smile when an Aboriginal person, after some hesitation, makes a tentative statement like 'little bit far away' or 'little bit long way' but the poor fellow cannot express a notion for which he has several distinct terms in his mother tongue — without English equivalents.

The Aboriginal society of yesterday did not share our view on the importance of material possessions and accumulation of goods. Without refrigeration, it was impossible to store, for instance, meat. It had to be obtained every day again and again. On hunting or fishing, digging yams or collecting edible plants one must be mobile and only needs the most essential equipment; anything else is a nuisance. Thus property has quite a different significance for white and black Australians. As a result of the Aboriginal society structure and kinship system, the procurement and distribution of goods also followed elaborate patterns quite different from ours. Before the disintegration of his traditional society, before the destructive effects of deprivation, alcohol, poverty, prostitution and crime, the Aborigine did look after his extensive family which comprised several generations and quite a number of people. In turn, when he became feeble, the others looked after him equally well. The law of reciprocity and a fair go for all was an integral part of the Aboriginal philosophy of life.

Last but not least it should also be mentioned that Aborigines have had a coherent and sophisticated set of concepts to explain and interpret the natural as well as the supernatural. They believed in a spiritual existence prior to physical birth and following biological death. Through the ages, successive generations of Aborigines reflected upon the evolution of natural species, the globe and the universe and in their mythological stories they elaborated their views on all that. Aboriginal world view postulated an essential unity and harmony of nature in which man is a

part but not a pinnacle or not a ruler. Man is one of the natural species, an animal — and other animals may act like man, they may fulfil human functions; indeed some of them played a very important part in creation. For Aborigines our planet had always existed; they did not recognize a chaos prior to creation. But the earth had been barren and unpopulated until Koya, the freshwater crocodile and Banar, the bush turkey emerged from the mist of times and set out for a walkabout (I am referring specifically to mythology in the Kimberleys). As they wandered along the earth, in a sometimes co-operative, sometimes competitive fashion, they invented and created creeks and rocks, trees and animals, heavenly bodies and human creatures, all that can be found on the surface of the earth. That was *lalay kala* : in the Dreamtime, very long ago, which is, however, part of the present as the universe has always been an integrate unity. Koya, the freshwater crocodile and Banar, the bustard also created the Wondjinas, the ever-present spirits who regulate life and nature. The mythology of the Wondjinas with the associated rock paintings and ritual performances as well as oral tradition is unique to the Kimberleys. I think it represents a magnificent and most valuable constituent of what we are so proud of: the Australian heritage.

To conclude, Aborigines and non-Aborigines in this country have represented two rather different philosophies of life which developed for specific reasons and against different backgrounds. It is a matter of opinion whether one is necessarily superior and the other is necessarily inferior: I have expressed my own doubts about the validity of any such ranking or ordering.

The fact remains that Aborigines are, and will continue to be, pressed to accept an entirely different lifestyle with an entirely different philosophy and value system. They have no choice. The minimum that non-Aborigines should do, as a gesture of sympathetic understanding, is to acquaint themselves with Aboriginal views and attitudes. Without such an understanding the contest of white and black society is an unfair game. With such an understanding we will be able to avoid lots of frictions and conflicts and, by a common effort, pull down the walls separating white man from the black one.

4

THE KIMBERLEYS: A LINGUISTIC VIEW Eric Vaszolyi

The Kimberleys division in north-western Australia is bordered by the Fitzroy River in the south, the Ord River in the east and by the Indian Ocean and Timor Sea in the west and north. It is an area of some 140,000 square miles with a population of about 15,000. At least half of this total are aboriginal Australians. Geographically, the highlands of the Kimberleys differ greatly from the adjacent barren lowlands of the Great Sandy Desert. It is a rocky country with high ranges and extended plateaus intersected with hundreds of creeks and rivers. The abundance of water bears a great deal on the fauna and flora in the area which is a paradise to a hunting-gathering native population. Only after having seen the arid wilderness of the desert in the south can one really appreciate the plentiful supplies of fresh water and natural food resources in the Kimberleys.

Such a land of plenty could in the past support a comparatively large population. Just how large it was before the onslaught of colonisation is not known. Some authorities assume that it amounted to thirty thousand and possibly more. The white man entered the scene in the 1800's and drove in sheep and cattle. There was a shortlived goldrush at Halls Creek in 1886. Frontier towns and outposts rose and the indigenous population, decimated by disease and punitive expeditions, decreased. "The number of aborigines shot by the settlers, miners and the police can be only guessed. Hundreds of men, women and even children were shot down..." (Biskup p.20). Soon the first missions were founded (Beagle Bay 1890, Kalumburu 1908, Kunmunya 1911). The last reported massacre of Aborigines took place in 1926 at Forrest River ("Actually, two hordes of the Andedja tribe had been virtually annihilated by the settlers and the police" comments

Biskup p.85). In the late 1930's a few indigenous groups still kept nomadizing in the bush. By the end of the 1940's they were all pressed into town reserves, mission settlements or pastoral stations.

Through the ages, the indigenous people developed a culture representative of and unique to the Kimberleys. While sharing basically the same lifestyle as the Aboriginal population over most of Australia, they differ considerably from their neighbours, the desert-dwellers in the south and the coastal tribes or islanders of Arnhem Land in the east in many ways. Perhaps the best known feature of this regional culture is the magnificent galleries of cave paintings centring around the cult of Wandjina, the spirits in the cloud, appearing in a helmet-like round headdress, with their eyes wide open but without a mouth. Much less is generally known about another integral constituent of the indigenous culture: language. Even now, after a century of cultural disruption and the onslaught of English, there are up to about twenty distinct languages spoken in the area. Some of these are akin as much as, say, Spanish to Portuguese and Italian or English to Dutch and German. Others (even adjacent idioms) can be as diverse as English and Chinese. However, most of them differ profoundly from the overwhelming majority of aboriginal Australian languages outside the Kimberleys. For all that, each vernacular is as intricate and highly sophisticated as any 'major' language such as English or French or classical Latin. A randomly selected example, taken from Wunambal, may well illustrate thus:

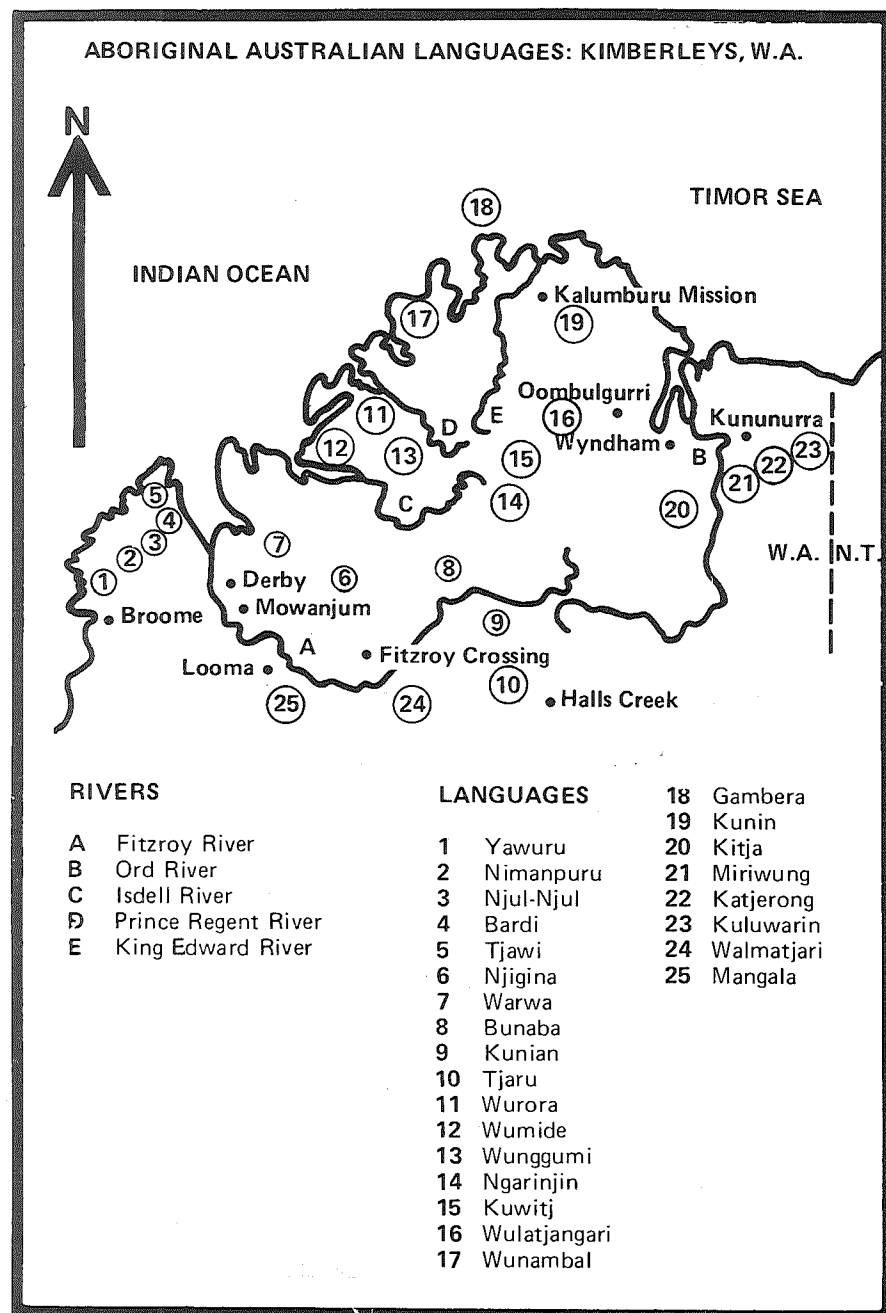
KU — NGA — R — MINTA — NGI — YANGA — MIYA — TIYA

thee	I	Plural Marker	take	Past Marker	Direction Marker	Dual Marker	Emphatic Marker
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A brief analysis may be illuminative. Firstly note that the example, segmented for the reader's sake, is one single coherent word made up of eight constituents (to which six more might be added). Secondly, the base of the construction is the fourth bit. It is a verb root (meaning *take*) preceded by several particles (technically called *prefixes*) and also followed by several more (linguistically called *suffixes*). The very first particle refers to 'you' or rather 'thee' (i.e. second person singular object). The following one means 'I' (i.e. first person singular subject). The next is a so-called plural marker referring to the preceding particle and the two together mean 'we'. Then comes a verb root meaning 'take', followed by a so-called past tense marker and the two combined

should be read as 'took' (i.e. the past tense of 'take'). If it ended here, the whole sequence would mean 'we took thee'. There are, however, three more attachments. The particle *-yanga-* indicates the direction of an action and can best be translated as 'from there' or 'from that side'. The penultimate constituent is a so-called dual marker. (In English there are singular and plural numbers; Aboriginal languages also distinguish a dual number and some have a trial number as well). It relates to the subject 'we' which is thereby qualified as 'the two of us'. The last particle can be best described as an emphatic modifier (consider the emphasis in English sentences like 'He did write a letter' or 'It was a jolly good idea') and refers to the verb which can now be interpreted as 'did take' instead of a plain 'took'. All put together the whole word, *kungarmintangiyangamiyatiya* means 'the two of us did take thee away from there'. It will also be noted that a single Aboriginal word, incorporating a number of particles, corresponds to a full English sentence.

The map gives the reader some idea of the main language units and their approximate location prior to and at the beginning of colonial rule. Some of them had been in contact with one or another neighbouring group but had been isolated from others. Thus we know about ancient social and cultural bonds between Wurora and Ngarinjin, on the one hand, and these two vis-a-vis Wunambal, on the other, whereas none of these established any close contact with, say, Njigina or Bunaba which, in turn, had traditionally interacted. As a result of colonisation, the patterns of traditional Aboriginal habitation have dramatically changed in the Kimberleys. Large groups of indigenous people have been displaced and forced to move often hundreds of miles away from their ancestors' country. The Wurora and Wunambal people, for instance, have been dispersed and had to take refuge either at Mowanjum Mission near Derby or at Kalumburu Mission in the northernmost Kimberleys. After their removal the whole north-western coast and adjacent islands became virtually deserted. Several indigenous groups have physically disappeared. Others have escaped extinction but lost their identity, including the heritage of a native language, and merged with survivors from other clans or tribes in town ghettos or missions or in the 'native quarters' of pastoral stations. To illustrate the resultant situation, it will suffice to mention Derby as an example. The townsite and its environs used to belong to the Warwa and Njigina people (the latter dispersed in the area whereas the former are virtually extinct by now). In their stead, Derby accommodates Aborigines of the following tribal affiliations:



1. Bunaba from the Fitzroy highlands, some 150-200 miles away.
2. Mangala from the north of the Great Sandy Desert, over 200 miles in the south.
3. Walmatjari, also from the desert.
4. Djerag from the Eastern Kimberleys, some 400 miles away.
5. Bardj of Sunday Island and One Arm Point.
6. Ngarinjin from the Central Kimberleys, over 200 miles away.
7. Wurora of the Western Kimberleys, south of the Prince Regent River, some 200 miles north of Derby.
8. Wunambal of the Northern Kimberleys, over 400 miles away.

The direct result of this forcible migration, along with general human pauperization, has been a partial or total loss of cultural heritage including the vernacular. Many Aboriginal children fail to acquire any indigenous language (wrongly believed to be inferior) whereas often they pick up only a minimum of English which does not enable them to fully and meaningfully communicate with people outside the camp. Thus they are stuck in the vicious circle of a spiritual and intellectual breakdown from which they would like to escape. But there is no alternative.

However, recent developments hold out hopes for a better future. The policy of self-determination opens up a new prospect for Aboriginal Australians and a physical, spiritual and intellectual revival seems to be on hand. In the Kimberleys, too, new independent communities have developed at One Arm Point, Looma, Oombulgurri and elsewhere and Aboriginal identity is no longer a thing to be ridiculed or be ashamed of. Linguistic rehabilitation is part of this process of revitalization. It is a welcome change to see that children are made aware of the values of their Aboriginal vernacular and encouraged to use it both at home and in school (in particular, some Roman Catholic schools and missions in the region should be credited for this initiative).

A breakthrough has recently taken place at Fitzroy Crossing where a literacy program in the Walmatjari language has been implemented. Walmatjari has thus become the second literate Aboriginal vernacular in Western Australia (after Ngaanyatjarra at Warburton Ranges). People can now read and write Walmatjari and a number of pamphlets and books, both secular and spiritual, have been printed. The idea has fast caught on. The people at Looma have also initiated an adult literacy class in Walmatjari which too is now part of the curriculum in the community school at Qanbun. Other vernaculars can also be developed along the same lines.

Indeed, the communities at Oombulgurri (near Wyndham) and Mowanjam are, with the aid of trained linguists, currently working on alphabets for Wunambal, Wurora and Ngarinjin, respectively. At La Grange Mission (south of Broome) Karadjari, Mangala and Njangumada are studied and taught. Children chatting in Njigina can be heard in the Holy Rosary school at Derby whereas Kitja conversation classes have been introduced in the Wyndham convent school.

So far so good. After a century of deprivation and discrimination, it appears in the Kimberleys (and elsewhere) that Aboriginal Australians are no 'dying race'. Given a chance, their culture and languages are viable realities and indeed constituent parts of what we proudly call the Australian heritage. Hopefully, it is not unjustifiable optimism to believe that the truth of Aristotle's old adage comes true in this part of the world: "To have one's own language is the root of human dignity."

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5 THE NOTION OF BALANCE IN MANTJILTJARA GRAMMAR James Marsh

During the checking of some portions of the Bible which had been translated into Mantjiltjara², my language helper and I were discussing the words of Jesus in John 14:13: "I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son." The phrase "ask in my name" was familiar to the language helper as an English expression of dubious meaning, but unknown in his own language. He was uncertain of the accuracy of the way the phrase has been translated, and suggested a literal translation of "to ask" plus a locative suffix on "my name". I asked him what this expression would then mean to the "old people" in camp. "Oh, they wouldn't have a clue what it meant!" he replied. When I explained that we wanted to make the expression meaningful to the people who had never heard it before, he exclaimed in English, "You mean it has to rhyme!"

By this reply, this Aboriginal man was expressing two ideas important, not only to the linguist, but also to any other person wishing to sympathetically understand Aboriginal views and attitudes. The first idea is relevant to anyone who learns a foreign language, especially a non-European language. That is, he can construct an utterance using the correct sounds, and the utterance can appear to be grammatically acceptable, but it fails to communicate meaningfully to a native-speaker of the language because it was not expressed in terms of experiences within the culture. The key to success in this area is for the learner to continually remind himself that he is a learner and that the proper concepts will be eventually grasped if he perseveres. He should also be aware that the people with whom he wishes to communicate are usually eager enough to share their language with him to continue patiently teaching him, even if he does appear to be remarkably

slow at times!

The second idea reflects the view of Stanner (1970:314) when he states that "the more one sees of aboriginal life the stronger the impression that its mode, its ethos and its principle are variations on a single theme — continuity, constancy, balance, symmetry, regularity, system, or some such quality as these words convey." To the Aboriginal mind, balance, regularity, and system — "rhyme" — are synonymous with meaningful communication. These patterns of balance are observed, not only in the daily experiences of the Aborigines, but in the grammar of the languages that verbalize those experiences. The purpose of this paper is to briefly present some observations on the patterns of balance and system in the grammar of Mantjiltjara.

From the smallest meaningful parts of the grammar, Mantjiltjara exhibits balance, chiefly by means of repetition or amplification of a basic part.

The verb stem *ka-3* 'take' is probably related to the nominal *kaka* 'mother's brother (i.e. uncle)'; while the verb stem *ma-* 'get' appears to be related to *mama* 'father', as well as the verb stem *mama-* 'grab something from someone'. The verb stem *pu-* 'hit' is seen in the word for 'older brother', *pupu*. Each of these relationship terms suggests a characteristic behaviour of these relatives in relation to a particular individual, particularly during an older boy's initiation into manhood.

The vocabulary, or lexicon, reveals many examples of reduplication with the subsequent result of new or extended meanings. The word *miji* 'blood' is reduplicated to produce *mijimiji* 'red' with a descriptive meaning. The word *warrinyji* 'young initiated man' becomes pluralized, *warrinyjiwarrinyji* 'many young initiated men', through reduplication. Reduplication produces a meaning of intensification in *wujuwujulpa* 'very narrow' (from *wuju* 'narrow'). The verb stem *paka-* 'get up' has the meaning 'quickly get up' when it is reduplicated: *pakapaka-*. Among the many concepts expressed by reduplication are the onomatopoeic representations of a sound, as in *ngilarngilarn* 'a noise'; areas related to sight, smell and the other senses, as in *palypaly* 'blurred' and *manymany* 'a doggy smell'; temporal ideas such as *kuwarrikuwarri* 'now' and *rukaruka* 'late afternoon'; and many plant and animal names, such as *kurtakurakurtakura* 'a plant species' and *pinypiny* 'a bird species'. There are many words in the lexicon that appear to be reduplications, but their non-reduplicated base cannot be isolated. For example, *parnparn* 'a warm place' appears to have *parn* as a base that has been reduplicated, but the form *parn* is in fact meaningless in isolation.

A noun in a noun phrase may have one or more modifiers. Noun modifiers include determiners (e.g., *kuju* 'singular, one'), demonstratives (e.g., *ngaa* 'this, close'), adjective-like nominals (e.g., *walyku* 'bad' and *yalta* 'cold'), nominals with one (or more) of the many relativizing suffixes (e.g., *maju-warta* 'big-characterizer' and *puri-ngka* 'shade-locative'), and a verbal stem which is suffixed by a relativizing particle (e.g., *yanku-nyjan* 'go-relativizer' and *punka-ljaku* 'fall down-predictive'). All of these modifiers are viewed as either relative clauses or reduced relative clauses. That is, in the sentence,

- | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. <i>jarntu-lu</i> | $\emptyset - \emptyset$ | <i>marumaru-lu</i> | <i>pajarnu</i> | <i>martu-</i> |
| dog-case | he-him | black-case | bit | man-case ⁴ |

'The black dog bit the man.'

the modifier 'black' is interpreted as a relative clause, 'which is black' and the sentence means

2. 'The dog, which is black, bit the man.'

Similarly, in the sentence,

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| 3. <i>martu-lu</i> | $\emptyset - \emptyset$ | <i>nyarra-lu</i> | <i>yanku-nyjan-ju</i> |
| man-case | he-it | there-case | go-relativizer-case |
| <i>wakarnu</i> | | <i>yapuwija-</i> | |
| speared | | kangaroo-case | |

'The man going there killed a kangaroo.'

the relativized verb *yanku-nyjan* is interpreted as 'who is going' and the demonstrative *nyarra* 'there' is interpreted as a reduced relative clause 'who is there'. The sentence would then mean

4. 'The man, who is going (and) who is over there, killed a kangaroo.'

The amplification of the head noun in a noun phrase by relative clauses or reduced relative clauses has the effect of paraphrasing the original topic of the noun phrase and producing an internal balance within the phrase. This interpretation appears to most accurately reflect the speakers' reaction to their own language.

Within the sentence, balance is achieved through an obligatory grouping of bound person markers following the first word of a sentence.

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| 5. <i>pungu</i> | <i>-laju-jananya</i> |
| killed | we-them |

'We killed them.'

In (5), *-laju-jananya* serves as a "bookkeeping device" to indicate the participants in the sentence. Although (5) is a complete sentence, it could only be fully understood if the context were known to the hearer, e.g., the context of hunting for a type of large lizard, *maruntu*. Sentence (5) can be expanded to (6) to indicate more specifically who the participants in the action are.

6. <i>pungu</i>	<i>-laju-jananya</i>	<i>ngayutin-ju</i>	<i>maruntukaja-O</i>
killed	we-them	we-case	lizards-case

'We killed the lizards.'

Thus, the bound pronoun *-laju* is equivalent to the free pronoun *ngayutin* and the bound pronoun *-jananya* is equivalent to the noun *maruntukaja*. In fact, the nouns of the expanded sentence may be interpreted as another instance of amplification or repetition.

The remaining two areas of the grammar to be discussed are by far the most interesting in regard to balance and system. These are the paragraph and discourse. Nine distinct paragraph types have been identified in Mantjiltjara and three classes of discourses. The paragraphs are fitted together in systematic ways to produce the different discourses. Although the grammatical connectives such as *ka-* 'and then' and *palunyajanu* 'after that' are somewhat limited in number, they do provide one of the clues for determining new paragraphs in certain discourse classes. Change of speaker or topic can also provide clues for paragraph breaks when there are no overt grammatical connectives in the discourse. Among the sub-types of the Narrative Paragraph is the Narrative Cyclic Paragraph which clearly illustrates the sense of balance and fondness of repetition in Mantjiltjara.⁵

7. A. After that, we were sitting down.
 B. We went for food.
 B*. We got food for ourselves.
 A*. We were sitting down to eat.

Both the first and the last sentences of this paragraph refer to the same event, sitting down. Sentence B* is a paraphrase of sentence B.

Other representative paragraph types also illustrate this balance.

Amplification Paragraph (Paraphrase Sub-type):

8. A. His father was put face-downwards.
 A*. He died.

Sentence A is a euphemistic way of stating that a person has died.

Amplification Paragraph (Factoring Sub-type):

9. A. The man was standing/watching.
 B. He was standing.
 C. He was watching them.

The verb in A 'stand/watch' is a single verb expressing a dual activity, whereas the verbs in B and C are different verbs expressing the singular activities of 'standing' and 'watching' respectively.

Amplification Paragraph (Negated Antonym Sub-type):

10. A. He is not an old man.
 A*. He remains a young man forever.

'Not an old man' in sentence A is equivalent to 'a young man' in sentence A*.

The final grammatical unit to be examined is the discourse. Three discourse types are posited for Mantjiltjara: Narrative, Dramatic and Expository. Discourses vary in length from single paragraph stories to lengthy accounts. But whatever the length, or subject, the features of event, repetition, balance and unity are reflected in the flow of the discourse.

The Aboriginal world view⁶ appears to analyse reality largely in terms of events. There is a harmonious world in which the events of the ancient creation period (the Dreamtime) and the present period in which these events are regularly re-enacted are welded into a balanced whole. These events appear to be spatially related rather than temporally related. Movement from one event to another characterizes the stories of daily activity told about the campfire, as well as the most basic of the myths of creation: they usually begin with some form of the verb *ya-* 'go'. Along with this feature of mobility, the concept of reciprocity is a recurrent theme. Stanner (1970:315) notes that "nearly every social affair involving goods... is heavily influenced by egalitarian notions; a notion of reciprocity as a moral obligation; a notion of generously equivalent return; and a surprisingly clear notion of fair dealing, or making things 'level'..." These notions of reciprocal action and motion from one event to another are apparent through the analysis of the discourse.

The following brief Narrative Discourse illustrates the cooperation necessary for survival in a harsh environment. The grammatical pattern of balanced statements lends itself to expressing perfectly this reciprocity.

11. A. When the old people lived in the desert in the east, they would build fires by friction.

- Then they would leave them.
- B. Then they would go for kangaroos.
- C. Some of the people would stay down on the flat plain.
- D. The rest of the people would go some distance away.
This group would climb a hill.
They would cause the game to start running.
The kangaroos would run straight toward the people waiting on the plain.
- C*. Then the ones waiting would send their spears flying at the kangaroos.
- B*. They would take the game back to camp.
- A*. There at camp, other people would start a fire.
Those Aborigines would make a fire.

The balance and cyclic nature of the various paragraphs in this discourse is obvious. It begins and ends with references to fire building. In sentence B the participants leave the camp to begin hunting and in sentence B* they return to the camp with the desired game. The cooperative activities of the two groups of hunters is illustrated in the balance of C, D and C*.

The exchange between speakers in a simple dialogue might be considered the ideal example of reciprocal activity. Such dialogue is a feature of the Dramatic Discourse which presents an event by recalling the conversation of the participants, or the conversation that the narrator imagines he would hear during such an event.

- 12 A. We are going to get a kangaroo.
Let's go to the hills to hunt it.
- B. Keep on looking at those kangaroos there!
- C. Did you spear it?
- C*. Yes.
- D. Where did you hit it? In the stomach?
- D*. Yes.
- E. Now, put it on your shoulders.

In these beginning episodes of a Dramatic Discourse, there is obviously a great deal of non-verbal activity taking place which is not reported in the speeches. After the order to watch the kangaroos in sentence B, is the immediate question of C, 'Did you spear it?'. In the real situation, this would have been the extent of the conversation, since once the game is within sight, there would be no verbal conversation until the animal had been speared or had escaped. Although the replies of the second participant in this discourse are minimal, the sense of balance and reciprocity is nonetheless maintained.

The Expository Discourse is exemplified by the following

discourse which explains the symmetrical patterns of the kinship system at Jigalong.

13. A. This is the way we Aborigines are grouped:
Purungu, Milangka, Karimarra, and Panaka.
- B. A Purungu man will take a Milangka wife.
Their children will be Karimarra.
- C. A Milangka man will take a Purungu wife.
Their children will be Panaka.
- D. A Karimarra man will take a Panaka wife.
Their children will be Purungu.
- E. A Panaka man will take a Karimarra wife.
Their children will be Milangka.
- F. Avoidance relations for Panaka people are in the Milangka group.
- G. Avoidance relations for Karimarra people are in the Purungu group.
- H. Avoidance relations for Milangka people are in the Panaka group.
- I. For Panaka people it is the Milangka group.

The balance and cyclic nature of this discourse pattern is an ideal vehicle for displaying the social structure of the Aborigines, that "network of enduring relations recognized between people" (Stanner 1970:310).

Vaszolyi (1975a:6) has emphasized that "Aboriginal languages are not, and have not been, primitive in any sense of the word." He also states that there is an "Impressively large number of intricate grammatical devices" in Aboriginal languages operating within a patterned structure. In this overview of Mantjiltjara, I have illustrated some of the devices used for expressing the notions of balance and system, and the occurrence of these notions on all levels of the grammar. I trust that in the process I have helped to broaden the reader's understanding and increase his appreciation of Aboriginal languages.

In conclusion, I would like to suggest that the repeated occurrences of the notions of balance and system in an Aboriginal language should not appear at all strange among a people who exist in a "system whose first principle is the preservation of balance" (Stanner 1970:315) — a system in which things "rhyme".

NOTES

1. The material in this paper is abstracted from Marsh (forthcoming). I would like to thank Joyce Hudson and Marjorie Marsh for valuable comments on an earlier draft of this paper.
2. Mantjiltjara is one of the two main dialects spoken at Jigalong, Western

Australia (lat. 23° 24' S and long. 120° 46' W) and is given the reference number 56.2c in Oates and Oates (1970). Katutjara (reference number 56.2a in Oates and Oates) is the other main dialect. Both dialects are classified by O'Grady, Voegelin and Voegelin (1966:38) as belonging to the Wati subgroup of the southwest group of the Pama-Nyungan family of Australian languages. (See Wurm (1972:127) for significant linguistic features of this sub-group.) Since the 1940s, when a mission station was established at a former supply depot and camel breeding yard along the "No. 1 Rabbit Proof Fence", there has been an ever-increasing degree of interaction between these two groups. For the purposes of this paper, I have referred to the language spoken at Jigalong as Mantjiltjara. As a matter of fact, Mantjiltjara, spoken by people mainly from the region of the Canning Stock Route north of Lake Disappointment, and Katutjara, spoken by people from the areas south of Lake Disappointment toward Lake Carnegie, are going through a period of linguistic homogenization. Although no formal comparative study of the dialects has as yet been undertaken, there appears to be an emerging "communalect", referred to by the Aborigines at Jigalong as *martu wangka* 'Aborigine talk'. For further details on the history of Jigalong and the interaction of the groups there, see Tonkinson (1974).

The material for this paper is from data collected under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics between 1967 and the present. The findings on discourse and paragraph are from Marsh (1970a, 1970b) and those on other grammatical levels are from Marsh (forthcoming).

I wish to thank the people of Jigalong for sharing their language with me, thus allowing me to discover the beauty and order that exists in the patterns of that language.

3. The transcription of Mantjiltjara words in this paper follows the practical (literacy) orthography which is based on the phonology of Mantjiltjara described in Marsh (1969). There are seventeen consonant phonemes: p, t, j, rt, k, m, n, ny, rn, ng, l, ly, rl, r, rr, w, y. There are three short vowels a, i, u, and three long vowels, aa, ii, uu. It is to be noted that digraphs indicate a single sound.
4. -lu (or -ju following a word ending in a consonant) is the case marker which marks the subject of a transitive verb. (representing a zero morpheme) signifies that the object of a transitive verb lacks an overt case marker, i.e., it is phonologically null. The modifier of a noun is marked with the same case as the noun it modifies, e.g. 'dog' and 'black' are both marked with -lu in (1).

Neither the bound subject pronoun 'he' nor the bound object pronoun 'him' have an overt manifestation in the sentence, i.e., they are both

phonologically null and are therefore symbolized in the sentence by Ø. (See (5) and (6) below for the discussion on bound person markers.)

5. Although the use of repetition is not considered stylistically inappropriate as it is in English composition, there is a penchant for the use of synonyms in Mantjiltjara. If a speaker of Mantjiltjara has used the word *yapu* 'rock' in a sentence in a discourse, the next occurrence of that concept in the discourse will most likely be expressed by *purli* or *yalyi* — terms for 'rock' gleaned from neighbouring dialects.
6. For additional information on Aboriginal world view see Elkin (1969, 1970), Stanner (1970), and Vaszolyi (1975b).

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6

LOOKING AT ENGLISH THROUGH NYANGUMARDA-COLOURED SPECTACLES

Brian B. Geytenbeek

1. Introduction

The following notes were prepared originally as a basis for discussion with school-teachers of South Hedland Primary School, who were keen to help local Aboriginal children do better in their school-work. Many of these children came from the "Twelve Mile" Aboriginal Community, where the Nyangumarda language forms a major part of their linguistic background. (Nyangumarda is spoken by about 700 people in the areas around Port Hedland and Marble Bar, and along the coast towards Broome.) The rules and patterns of this language interfere considerably with the children's hearing, understanding, and use of English.

Although Nyangumarda differs from the other Aboriginal languages in the Pilbara Region, its rules and patterns, and the culture it is closely allied with, are much more like those of these other languages than they are like those of English. The notes may therefore be helpful to teachers in a far wider area. If they enable anyone to understand their Aboriginal pupils a bit better, build better relationships with them, and help them to make a better job of their schooling with less wear and tear on the nerves of everyone concerned, these notes will have served their purpose.

For convenience we have lumped these few thoughts under the broad headings of Pronunciation and Grammar. Much could also be said about the influence of the Aboriginal culture on the children's schooling, but we have restricted these notes to linguistic matters.

2. Pronunciation

Children with an Aboriginal language in their background can be expected to have trouble hearing and saying some English

sounds, because those sounds are not in their Aboriginal language. The following chart (somewhat oversimplified) highlights the main trouble spots. It shows the 24 consonants of English, with boxes around four "families". Members within the families are loosely related either by the position in which they are made in the mouth, or by the shape of the tongue when making them. The underlined letters in the lists of words beneath the chart give the key to the linguistic symbols used.

p	t	tʃ	k
b	d	dʒ	g
f	θ	ʃ	
v	ð	ʒ	
		s	
		z	
m	n		n
w	y	l	r
pat	pat	catch	kettle
bat	pad	cadge	get
fat	path	fresher	
vat	that	pleasure	
		bus	
		buzz	

In Nyangumarda the "t" family does not exist. The children may have learned to say some of them more or less correctly, or they may mix them up, or substitute the ones they can say for the ones they can't,

To complicate matters further, in Nyangumarda there is really only one member in each of the other three families, and that one may dress up as one or more of the others within its family from time to time. That is, a child may be able to say a "b", but in his mind he thinks he is saying a "p".

The "f" and "v" are not found in Nyangumarda, though two sounds very like them, made by blowing between the lips, are. These two, however, are merely disguises for "p" in Nyangumarda, and so the children will often substitute a "p" for an "f" in English, not realising that a change like this in English is not just the optional disguise that is in Nyangumarda, but actually

changes the meaning of the word. For example, it changes "fat" into "pat".

In fact, when "p", "b", and the two that sound like "f" and "v", are all acceptable substitutes for "p" in Nyangumarda, and when "t" and "d" both stand for "t", one can see that to an untrained Aboriginal ear the following English words can all sound the same:

pat	pad	bat	bad
fat	fad	vat	

At the end of a spelling test the child might be forgiven for saying, "vad enough"!

Of course, this principle works the other way, too. English speakers trying to learn Nyangumarda will find that, like many Aboriginal languages, it has two more "families" of consonants that do not occur in English. One family is pronounced with the tongue further forward in the mouth than the "t" family, and the other with the tongue further back. Nyangumarda thus has three "l"s, three "n"s, and three "t"s, but the untrained English ear cannot hear the difference:

ngalYi (neck), ngali (we two), and ngali (diarrhoea)

will all sound like the one word. Likewise:

mitYi (gold), miti (tick), and miṭi (run)

will all sound like the one word. Merely shifting the tongue a few millimetres when making one of these "l"s, "n"s, or "t"s can produce hilarity or horror in the hearers. So please be patient with your pupils if they mangle your English — there is a good reason for the strong probability that they will!

One other English letter that does not occur in Nyangumarda is "h". It is made in such a way that often the children will say one without knowing that they have done so. Thus they may put "h"s in or leave them out quite at random.

There are other sounds in English which may give the children trouble because although they do occur in Nyangumarda they do not occur in the same places in words as they do in English.

Probably in most (if not actually all) languages in the world there are rules to the effect that some of their letters may occur in the middle of words but not at the beginning, or maybe not at the end. English is no exception. Consider the distribution of the "ng" sound in English. It occurs in the middle and at the ends of words, such as "singing" and "think" (spelled "think"), but it never begins a word in English. Children given the Maori name of Ngaire

just have to put up with being called Naire or G-Naire. Of course, it doesn't really bother them, because whether a person pronounced their name with an "n" or an "ng" they would not notice any difference. They would hear an "n" in both cases, because their brain has programmed out the possibility of an "ng" occurring at the beginning of a word in English.

The same principle applies to Nyangumarda children, for whom "ng" at the beginning of a word is quite a common thing, but "p", "t", and "k" never occur at the end of a word. Nor do "b", "d", and "g", which are, you remember, permissible disguises of "p", "t", and "k" respectively. Thus we find a tendency to either omit these letters when they occur at the end of English words, or to add a vowel after them. So "mud" becomes "mud-a", and "pig" becomes "pigipig-i".¹

There are yet further restrictions on where letters may occur within words in their languages. Some letters may not occur alongside certain other letters, or perhaps they may occur on one side, but not on the other side, of them. In English we look at a word like "think" (think), and see "ng" and "k" side by side in that order, but in no English word will you ever find them side by side in the opposite order, "k-ng". In Nyangumarda we can have "l-k", as in "punulku", meaning "little boy", but we never find the sequence "k-l", which happens to be fairly common in English. Any word ending in "k" which can take the suffixes "-ly" or "-less", for instance, will produce it. Perhaps some Australians have a grudge against the sequence "l-m" in "film", because folk from some areas of the eastern states normally pronounce it "fillum". At any rate, it helps us to see that our Nyangumarda friends can be forgiven if they have trouble pronouncing some consonant sequences in English.

There is further cause for potential trouble with consonant sequences, partially underlying what has just been said above. In Nyangumarda there are only two types of syllables:— those made up of a consonant plus a vowel, and those made up of consonant plus vowel plus consonant. Let's code these as CV and CVC. Words can be made up of either of these syllable-types, or any combination of them. Notice, however, that no matter how you put these two types together, you never get more than one consonant at the beginning or end of a word. The only places where you can get two consonants side by side are in the middle of words. Three consonants side by side is impossible. And no words can start with a vowel.

This means that English words like "straw" (CCCV), "ants" (VCCC), and "strands" (CCCVCCC) are potential trouble-spots.

The common reaction to this sort of things is to insert vowels between the consonants, and/or to leave one or more of the consonants out — particularly the ones that are hard for a Nyangumarda person to say. So we get:

“tore” for “store”

“tan” for “stand” or “stands”

“correckly” for “correctly”

Add stress to the first syllable of the word, which is normal for Nyangumarda, and we get:

“pulisiman” for “policeman”

“turan” for “strands”

“buloke” for “bloke”

“axpulain” for “explain”

Do you see the *purobule*?

So far we have dealt mainly with consonants. Vowel sounds can be full of surprises too. Let's look at the Nyangumarda letter “a”. It actually covers a wide area of vowel sounds, from something like “e” as in “egg” through “a” as in “cat”, and “u” as in “cut”, to “o” as in “cot”. Its particular sound at any given time depends upon the consonants that happen to be alongside it at the time. You might therefore say that the Nyangumarda letter “a” has several sets of clothes, which it wears on different occasions. Following “y” and the three members of one of those “families” of consonants that we mentioned as not being in English, it sounds like “a” as in “cat”. Following “w”, especially if it is then followed by an “l”, “ng”, or “k”, it is likely to sound like “o” as in “cot”. Much of the time it will sound like the “u” as in “cut”. Same letter, several different sounds. Same person, but in working clothes on Friday, sports clothes on Saturday, best suit on Sunday. To find “a” as in “cat” in between “w” and “l” (where it ought to sound like “o”) is like meeting your friend playing tennis in his Sunday suit. It seems a bit out of place.

Nyangumarda has only three vowels, “a”, “i”, and “u”. Each of them has its various sets of clothes, or disguises, as we called them for the consonants. Each of those three vowels has several sounds inside its own box. Now English has about 17 “vowels” (depending on what dialect you speak, and how you analyse them). Most of them show up easily if you put them between the letters “p” and “t” or “b” and “d”: peat, pit, pet, pat, putt, put, pot, port, part, bayed, bide, bowed, etc. It is obvious therefore that English can pose real problems for a Nyangumarda person.

What are merely changes of clothing for “a”, “i” or “u” in Nyangumarda nearly all turn out to be different vowels, different people, in English. If an Aboriginal pupil confuses “pin” and “pen”, “got” and “cut”, or “letter” and “ladder”, it is not because he is singularly dense, but just that his brain has been trained to ignore the slight variations in sounds that distinguish those words in English, because in his own language they do not change the meaning. They are therefore irrelevant, though they may sound a little odd when used out of their usual Nyangumardian place, as if the speaker has a strong whitefeller accent. From the other side of the picture, a teacher is likely to feel a little annoyed with (if not rather superior to) an Aboriginal child who “talks English with such a strong Aboriginal accent”. To correct his pronunciation, and his understanding of English, the child needs to learn that in English these slight variations of sound are not irrelevant. They are important, because they do change the meaning in English. He needs some well-informed and sympathetic help so that he can re-programme his brain to pay attention to these sounds when he is speaking or listening to English.

Whatever methods a teacher may choose to use in helping a Nyangumarda child towards good English pronunciation, he should try to avoid giving the child an inferiority complex about his Nyangumarda system of pronunciation, since that system is perfectly correct — for Nyangumarda. It is not the system that is wrong, but his application of it to a different language. A Frenchman learning not to nasalise his vowels in English must nonetheless continue to nasalise them in French.

3. Grammar

We all know that language-patterns learned in childhood die hard — especially if they are being promulgated by the child's parents or peer-group. Our eldest child learned to say “I are not” and “I were not” from the Aboriginal children amongst whom she spent the first four years of her life, on an Aboriginal station in New South Wales. For the next few years we were living in well-educated white societies, where no-one used these ungrammatical expressions. Nonetheless, she succeeded in infecting our second child with them, and he in turn infected our third, who was still using it until he started primary school, even though the other two had been broken of the habit well before then.

This would seem to indicate that the bad English grammar that our young Nyangumarda friends often use will be well ingrained, and hard to replace. However, it may be helpful to know that much of it is actually perfectly good Nyangumarda grammar.

It is not their grammar system that is at fault, but their application of Nyangumarda grammar rules to the English language. To train them to instinctively use English grammar rules when speaking English will probably need sets of drills specifically designed to overcome each trouble spot where the Nyangumarda grammar interferes with the English.

Not all the children will have the same amount of trouble at the same spots, but here are some likely ones – all being promulgated by their parents and grandparents, many of whom are not themselves likely to change their ways of speaking English at this late stage, so will continue to be a virile source of “infection”.

3.1 Word-for-word substitution

A common way of learning another language (though not recommended) is to learn a lot of vocabulary, think of what you want to say in your own language, and then substitute the words of the other language for the words of your own. You might call it “goods-train talk”, where you line up your own sentence like a goods-train, with a truck for each word, and then empty out your own word and put in the other language’s word as you come to each truck along the line.

There are several things wrong with this sort of approach to speaking another language. One is that the order of the words is likely to be different. Another is that the other language may need more words than your own for that sentence. When your own sentence runs out of trucks to put words in you are likely to assume that you have said all that you wanted to, without realising that you really need to add some more trucks for the extra words needed in the other language. Thus you will hear:

3.2 Omission of words

“Where John?” for “Where is John?”

“What you doin?” for “What are you doing?”

The verb “to be” in Nyangumarda functions quite differently from the way it functions in English. The words “is” and “are” are not needed in the above two sentences in Nyangumarda, so speakers who try translating them word-for-word into English, not having “goods-trucks” in which to put “is” and “are”, are likely to leave them out.

3.3 Wrong words

The question, “Who is name?” shows this lack of the verb “to be” (as well as the lack of “h”), and another trap: in English we say “What”, not “Who”, in this context (though “Who is he?” would be correct). Similarly “What for you doin’ tha?” which

is good Nyangumarda, overlooks the fact that though when told to do something we might say “What for?”, in this particular case the correct English word to use is “Why?”

3.4 Prepositions versus suffixes

English is famous (or infamous) for its prepositions, with their often numerous and even contradictory idiomatic meanings. Nyangumarda has no prepositions. It uses suffixes instead, adding these onto the end of words. Thus we have:

mungka-lu	stick-with	“with (a) stick”
maya-nga	house-at	“at (the) house”
pulowa-pa kuyi-pa	flour-and, meat-and	“flour and meat”

Notice that Nyangumarda does not need the words “a” (or “an”), and “the”. Also that the suffix “-pa”, roughly translatable as “and” in the above phrase, occurs twice where in English it would only occur once.

3.5 Word-order

Differences in word-order (or suffix-order as it more commonly is in Nyangumarda) show up clearly in Nyangumarda verbs.

“I used to ride horses”

“horse ride do-past-habitually-I-they-object”

“He and I would have made you two do it long ago”

“do-past-unrealised event-long ago-he and I-you two-object”

(The words between hyphens represent the suffixes). This all sounds very confusing to an English speaker, but perfectly normal to a Nyangumarda speaker. We need to remember that the converse is also true. English sentences look perfectly normal to us, but may sound very confusing to a Nyangumarda person. It is therefore not to be wondered at if he misses some parts of the meaning of a sentence, with or without realising it. If he does suspect that he has not fully understood, he may well be tempted to take a flying guess at what was intended, rather than ask for the sentence to be repeated. Many Government offices, employers, doctors, nurses, etc. etc. have been frustrated by assuming that because an Aborigine talks English he must also understand it.

3.6 Pronouns

Widespread in this area is the use of “he” to stand for “he”, “she”, and “it”. This is because the Aboriginal languages have only one word which covers all three. It is somewhat disconcerting to a white person to have a girl pointed out with the statement, “He’s my sister”! This point will probably need a lot of attention, because while a child uses “he” for “she” in the school play-

ground, class-room, or anywhere else, he will draw ridicule from white children. The resultant shame is likely to make the child draw back into himself and his Aboriginal group more than ever.

3.7 Politeness

There are no separate words in Nyangumarda for "please" or "thank you". These concepts are conveyed by adding a suffix "-kurra", which indicates that the speaker is being respectful. Many languages around the world function in this way, and many a European, ignorant of the fact, has jeered at the rudeness of the people "who have no words for 'please' or 'thank you'".

3.8 Either/or

The alternative possibilities expressed in English by 'or' are not expressed that way in Nyangumarda. To ask a person "Do you want a pen or a pencil?" may have them expecting to receive both. If a child shows confusion over an "either/or" choice, you could mention the two things, then ask "Would you like the pen? Would you like the pencil?" Or you could hold the two items out in separate hands and tell him to take one of them.

3.9 If . . .

"If" is a small word with a big effect on overall meaning. "If the engine oil is dirty, change it", has resulted in a brand-new lot of oil being drained from an engine, not long after someone else had already changed the engine's oil. There is no word for "if" in many Aboriginal languages. Maybe the Aborigine in this instance did not hear the word "if", or did not know its meaning and decided to ignore it. In that case, he would have registered the sentence as an instruction: "The engine oil is dirty. Change it!"

3.10 Time relationships

Words which relate two events together in time may also be misunderstood — "while", "during", "before", "after", "when". For instance, there is no word for "before" that we know of in Nyangumarda. This is no great loss, since one can achieve the same result using "after" by merely changing the order of the events in the sentence. "I will do it before I go to town", becomes "After I do it I will go to town".

3.11 You gotta . . .

In some way we have not yet traced (unless "-kurra" has been confused with "gotta"), at least one Nyangumarda way of saying, "Please may I have . . ." comes out in English as "You gotta give me . . ." Many a white person, hearing, "You gotta give me . . ." is likely to reply promptly and heatedly that, "I don't gotta do any

such thing!" A child sternly reprimanded by his teacher for asking for a pencil in this polite (but to us offensive) way is likely to wonder just what went wrong.

We heard of an Aboriginal Council, discussing problems with the missionary administrators, using the expression, "You gotta do such-and-such", when what they were translating from their own language was really the equivalent of a tentative suggestion, "Do you think it would be a good idea to do such-and-such?"

3.12 Teaching style:

This is not strictly a matter of grammar, but is none-the-less a very important part of communication. We notice a considerable amount of repetition in Nyangumarda, and it is found in many other Aboriginal languages also. We are not qualified at this stage to describe it in detail, but will merely quote a couple of examples, one from a Western Desert dialect, the other, from Hebrew.

"And this bus went along and became in need of water. And we in vain were pushing it. We left it and were sitting there. Sitting there we were eating food. We ate and saw that the boss had come. And the boss came and said, "That bus has a cracked head."

"Happy is the man who refuses the advice of evil men,
Who does not follow the advice of sinners,
Or join those who make fun of God.
Instead, he enjoys reading the law of the Lord,
And studying it day and night.
He is like a tree that grows beside a stream;
It gives fruit at the right time,
And its leaves do not dry up.
He succeeds in everything he does.

But evil men are not like this at all;
They are like straw that the wind blows away.
Evil men will be condemned by God;
Sinners will be kept apart from the righteous.
The Lord cares for the righteous man,
But the evil man will be lost forever."

(Psalm 1, Today's English Version)

We are not suggesting that all teaching should be done in poetic style. However, you will readily recognise the re-statement styles in the two passages just quoted. In the first, the last part of one statement is picked up and used as the first part of the next sentence. In the Hebrew Psalm each main thought is re-stated once

or twice, with either a positive or a negative thought that re-inforces the main one.

The ancient Hebrew psalmists were masters of teaching style. There is evidence that the modern Aborigines are also masters of the art. One thing that the two races observed is that new information must not be proffered too rapidly to be grasped. Often we have noticed white people giving instructions or information to Aboriginal people in rapid progression, as if they were operating a teletype machine. We strongly suspect that using a normal English style in a class-room may catch Aboriginal children unawares. They may not be used to new information being supplied one piece after another. They expect the second statement to be in some way a re-statement of the first, and by the time they have realised that it wasn't, the third, fourth or fifth statement may already be in their ears.

No doubt there are many other angles of interference between English and Nyangumarda grammar, because the two languages are so extremely different from one another. Different individuals may have mastered different facets of the overall problem. Many of the children from "Twelve Mile" Community are not fluent speakers of Nyangumarda (or of English), and it may well be that their bad grammar is not the result of their translating from Nyangumarda into English, but merely the result of them using English the way they have always heard it used. In either case the result is the same — they need well-designed help, and a sympathetic teacher may be the deciding factor that helps the child overcome the cumulative effect of the numerous linguistic obstacles in his path, and find acceptance and a useful life in an English-speaking society.

7

ALICE SPRINGS ABORIGINAL ENGLISH

Margaret C. Sharpe

1. Introduction

In 1975 a request came from Traeger Park Primary School staff and parents of Aboriginal pupils in Alice Springs for study of the English used by Aboriginal and part-Aboriginal children in Alice Springs. The English used by the children would be classified as a dialect of English, not a separate language, and on the whole the differences are of the order which could be found in English dialects in the U.K. or America.

English used by whites in Alice Springs differs a little from English in some parts of Australia, but is most similar to Queensland English: statements are often said with rising rather than falling pitch at the end, and the tag question *eh* is quite common. A common word or phrase borrowed from the local Aboriginal English is 'mobs' or 'bigges' mobs' (the secretary may hand you three letters and tell you she has mobs of letters for you today!).

2. Phonology

Aboriginal children fluctuate in their English use between a standard close to broad Australian and a form slightly different. Firstly, there is fluctuation in sounds between standard English sounds and others more like those in the Aboriginal languages of the area. The fricative *h* is often dropped. It does not occur in Aboriginal languages and it is wrongly inserted only rarely. Most Aboriginal languages lack fricatives *f*, *v*, *th*, *s*, *z*, *sh*, and affricates *ch*, *j*, so these are often replaced by stops in Aboriginal English: *f* and *v* are replaced by *p* and *b*; *th* is replaced by an interdental stop (like our *th*, but with the airstream stopped) and *s*, *z*, *sh*, *ch*, *j* are replaced by *t* or *ch* (or a *ch*-like sound). Sometimes, particularly with the sibilants *s*, *z*, etc., there is substitution of one

sibilant for another, or use of s for English th, so we sometimes hear nasing (nothing), shiraffe (giraffe), shuck it away, checrets (secrets), etc. Voiceless stops (p, t, k) may replace voiced stops (b, d, g) word finally. This is reflected in written work — children may spell 'bed' *bet*, and 'had' *at*, etc. w is often pronounced in a way such that it sounds like r.

Secondly, consonant clusters are reduced in many words. A final consonant is often dropped, and a vowel might be inserted between two word-medial consonants. Hence 'emu' becomes *imiyu*, 'Piggly Wiggly' (a supermarket) becomes *piggəly wiggəly* (where 'ə' indicates the unstressed neutral vowel in, for example the in the cat), and final d's and t's after n are often dropped. So we have *can'*, *don'*, *han'*, *didn'*, *foun'*, *aroun'*, etc. Interestingly, a final d, though often omitted phrase finally, may reappear in a phrase if the next word begins with a vowel, and it sounds as though it is part of the following word. So we have phrases such as *roun dan roun dan roun*, and *hans dup* (hands up)!

Thirdly, the vowels in Aboriginal English differ a little from standard English vowels. Where standard English has three short front vowels as in *pit*, *pet* and *pat*, Aboriginal English only has two as in *pit* and *pat*. Hence, one writes with a *pin* (or *biro*) or *pinsil*, and hangs out the clothes with *clothes pigs*. (To add to the confusion of the uninitiated, you can go and pick *wil' pigs* from the wild fig tree.) The short e before a voiced consonant in standard English is actually longer than the short e before a voiceless consonant, and Aboriginal English uses a different vowel sound here, hence *eygs* for *brikfis*, and *fly a fleyg*. As in broad Australian English, the first part of the vowel glide in such words as *down* and *out* is like a in *cat* (but longer), but also the w off-glide is often omitted, so 'out' in Aboriginal English often sounds rather like 'at' in standard English (and 'at' is pronounced more like *æt*, with the neutral vowel). These differences sometimes cause the type of communication problems Australians and Americans have with each other.

3. Simplifications of English Grammar and Phonology

Unfortunately in some ways, certain forms in Aboriginal English are the same as forms in the immature speech of children from a standard English speaking environment. This fact, combined with communication problems across a cultural barrier, can lead some people to speak of a 'language deficit' or 'language retardation' in these children. Differences there certainly are, and some deficits there may be (and from the Aboriginal angle there may be some deficits in standard English also), but the deficits do not lie in this area. If a child says *I goin* (or *I goin'*) for 'I'm going', we was

going for 'we were going', a apple for 'an apple', two woods for 'two pieces of wood', or 'e for 'he, she, it', there is no concept limitation involved, only a simpler or regularised grammar.

One simplification of English is that the articles *the* and *a* are unchanged in pronunciation before vowels, hence a apple and the orange. Another simplification is the existence of two front short vowels instead of three, as mentioned above. In only a few words does this produce homonyms ('pin', 'pen' in one case) and even then the context usually makes the meaning clear, and does so well enough that we can often not notice that the Aboriginal speaker is using short i in many words where standard English has short e. These differences mainly become noticeable only when a person is listening for sounds not sense.

4. Contraction Rules

Aboriginal English has certain rules for elision and contraction which differ from those in standard English, or which are used more commonly than by standard English speakers (who will use some of them in casual speech, but may well deny they do). A frequent example is the optional assimilation of the *th* of *the* to the preceding consonant of a preposition, so we often have:

onna table (where the geminate consonant indicates consonant length)

alla people

inna book

atta shop etc.

Usually the vowel of *the* retains the neutral quality and the forms can be distinguished from *on a table*, *all a people*, etc. But although it is sometimes not clear which was meant, it is a mistake to suggest on such a basis that Aboriginal children confuse *the* and *a*, just as it would be to take a recorded sample of casual speech by a standard English speaker (who does the same occasionally) and use it to prove he doesn't know when to use *the*.

A further frequent example is elision of *w* in *was*, *went*, and *want* after *I* and other pronouns, so we get

I- z goin'

we' z walking along when

I'nt a icecream etc.

These elisions do not occur in standard English, nor in Queensland Aboriginal English to my knowledge. However the contraction of *want to* to 'na occurs among standard English speakers speaking informally, occasionally in adults and frequently in children, but

only after I. In Aboriginal English 'na can occur after any pronoun, e.g.

'e'na go toilet

you'na see my pictures etc.

There are traces in Aboriginal English reminiscent of an older pidgin English once used in the area, and still extant among some older people on the settlements. The most obvious are expressions like **there-look**, **cookum**, **kilim** (hit it), and **bin** for past tense (also used by some camp children here). However, these are traces only, and Aboriginal English in Alice Springs is English, not a creole or pidgin.

One of the most obvious grammatical differences is the frequent use of the masculine pronouns **he**, **him**, **his** (usually with no initial aspirate) for all persons, male and female. The feminine pronouns **she**, **her** ('er) are often replaced by 'e, 'im, 'is, and very occasionally a child over-corrects and does the reverse. To a student of languages who knows there are many languages which do not distinguish gender in pronouns, this is a minor problem, but to the average white Australian it is either funny, ludicrous, or a major mistake. Another difference is the frequent omission of the verb 'to be' in the continuous present tense, and the use of **was** in the past for plural persons. So forms which occasionally occur in casual speech among standard English speakers, such as **I going**, **he laughing**, are frequent in Aboriginal English. So is the omission of the verb 'to be' as a copula in such sentences as '**this (is) a big one**'. These differences are more noticeable when they occur in written work than in speech. The same can be said for the use of **come** for 'came', and the very common **I got** for 'I've got'.

Future tense in Aboriginal English is indicated as in standard English by 'I'll or **gonna** (or **going to**) and also by **gotta**, which in this use loses any sense of compulsion. 'Used to' is commonly pronounced **nused to**.

Another grammatical difference is that many mass nouns in standard English are count nouns in Aboriginal English. So we have:

two woods

they makin' lots of dusts

there's timbers

they got lots of irons (for 'pieces of iron', or 'iron')

my wood is bigger ən yours

'e go paints on 'is face

and one more that almost fits this pattern,

I got seven families (for 'I've got seven in my family')

There is also some apparently arbitrary confusions of singular and plural forms, singulars being used for plurals (e.g. **two boy**) and vice versa, and similar confusion in tense forms of verbs (past for present and vice versa). It would seem that differences such as these are more apparent in written than spoken work. This may be more an indication of uncertainty in handling reading and writing, or an overcorrection, than indication of language difference or pattern. Use of the most common subordinating and co-ordinating conjunctions seems fairly standard (**as**, **but**, **because**, **if** and **or**). Prepositions are mostly used correctly, but there are indications of some different conventions, e.g.

He went for get some water.

He got sore from that horse trod on him.

Both of these could be transfers from Aranda, the most common ancestral language of Alice Springs Aboriginals and part Aboriginals.

5. Conclusion

The data I obtained were gleaned by eavesdropping among children in informal situations, and tape recording unstructured conversations between two or more children in my presence (sometimes conversing with me). From this I have taken 1700 lines of speech which will be concordanced by computer, that is, each word will be listed alphabetically in its context. From this sample, by internal comparison among Aboriginal children, and by cross comparison with samples of white children's speech in Alice Springs and elsewhere, I will be able to say a lot more about the relative frequency of standard and non-standard English forms, and more importantly, gain a better understanding of word use in broader contexts, and the concepts expressed. There is evidence that the language is a little simpler than standard English, but until this further analysis is done, my impressions that their English is adequate for school concepts is tentative. Certainly there is evidence that individual children show some rather unexpected gaps in simple vocabulary, but at this stage I would strongly suggest that the deficits most children show in the school situation are not due to language limitation, but probably due to cultural barriers, and lack of books, interest in them or facilities for reading in their homes.

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8

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION
OF ROPER CREOLE

Margaret C. Sharpe
and John Sandefur

1. / Introduction

Most Aboriginals resident at Ngukurr (Roper River Settlement) speak a contact vernacular which they refer to as Pidgin English, or sometimes now as Roper Creole. The language is the first language for the younger people, and the usual language of communication for the old people. The language is technically a creole, or what DeCamp (1971) calls a 'post-creole continuum'.

Most readers have some idea of what a pidgin is from New Guinea Pidgin. A creole is a pidgin language which has become first language to a group. It is usually mutually unintelligible with its 'donor' language in normal speed conversation, and must be learnt as a foreign language, even though it might be a moderately easy foreign language to learn. When a creole is spoken by a group which is in constant interaction with the dominant group whose language is the donor language, it may become a 'post-creole continuum'. In this case, the usual pattern is that older speakers speak a vernacular more like the original pidgin in sounds and grammar, younger ones speak a vernacular more like the donor language, but all speakers vary their creole, speaking their more conservative form among themselves, and their more dominant language influenced variety to people from the dominant culture, unless of course, as is true of many, they speak the dominant language also.

Such is the case with residents at Ngukurr, Bamyili (near Katherine), Bagot Settlement (Darwin), cattle stations south of the Roper River, and Aboriginal communities down the Stuart Highway as far as the Barkly Highway, and along the Barkly Highway. The older pidgin type survives for Aboriginal use with

non-Aboriginal language speaking people at Papunya and elsewhere in Central Australia. Older Aranda people at Hermannsburg and Areyonga speak a form of pidgin when communicating with English speakers. A speaking and hearing knowledge of Roper Creole can be quite an asset for whites even in these places. Knowledge of the creole also gives some insight into the structures of some Aboriginal languages.

The creole spoken at the cattle stations (e.g. Nutwood Downs, Hodgson Downs) is more conservative than that at Ngukurr, which is again more conservative than that at Bamyili. The language has added significance today in that both Ngukurr and Bamyili communities want the creole used for initial literacy in the schools.

Data on which this article is based are from two sources: my own visits to Ngukurr and cattle stations nearby between 1966 and the present (primarily for work on the Alawa language); and work of John Sandefur of the Summer Institute of Linguistics whose primary interest is the creole itself.

2. Phonology

The most conservative form of creole has phonemes patterned after the old Aboriginal vernaculars of the area, with consonants b, d, j (alveo palatal stop, a little different from English j), rd (retroflexed stop), g; m, n, ny (alveo palatal nasal), rn (retroflexed nasal), ng (velar nasal); l, ly (alveo palatal lateral), rl (retroflexed lateral); r (as in English), rr (flapped or trilled); w and y; and three to five vowels. Some old vernaculars of the area had three vowels, i, a, u, and at least one had four, i, e, a, u; the most conservative and oldest creole forms reflect this. The vowel a, normally like the vowel of 'but', sounds like that in 'cat' after alveo palatal sounds (j, ny, ly, y), and like that in 'cot' after velar sounds (g, ng, w). The most English-like creole forms have the full range, or almost the full range, of English consonant and vowel sounds; hence the decision on orthography is quite involved. Hopefully by the end of 1976 consensus on the spelling conventions will be reached.

Examples of variation in pronunciation are shown below:

biya — spiya 'spear'
 jabi — sabi — savi 'know, understand'
 sap — shop 'shop'
 emini — hementi 'how many'
 jiribala — thribala — thribala 'three'
 jarre — tharre 'there' (from that way)
 jineg — sineg — snek 'snake'
 namu — nomo 'no'

3. Intonation

Intonation patterns are similar to English patterns, and convey the same nuances, with one addition. The additional pattern is used to describe some continuing action. Pitch rises mid-sentence, usually on a verb, and is maintained at a high level on a lengthened vowel or on repetitions of a word. The sentence is then concluded with a statement intonation (either falling finally, or rising slightly, as in Australian English). Laryngealisation can often be heard on the high-pitched segment.

ay bin wed wed wed wed wed wed najing. — 'I waited for ages, but nothing (came).'

4. Word Forms

Consonant clusters were avoided word or syllable initially in old pidgin (or 'heavy' pidgin, as speakers themselves call it). In English borrowings i or a harmonising vowel was usually inserted between the consonants of an initial cluster, hence silib or jilib 'sleep'. Stress usually is placed on the syllable which is stressed in the donor language, but there are exceptions. Stress is the same as English in 'dilib: 'tea' (from tea-leaf), 'jilib: 'sleep'; it is different in 'ginu: 'canoe' and 'gila: 'galah'. There are of course words borrowed also from Aboriginal vernaculars and elsewhere, hence ngugu: 'water' (also wada), nyugurr: 'sacred, secret' (also sikrit), gabarra (or hed): 'head', and barrawu (from Malay): 'boat'. Some English based words are used with different meanings in creole. Hence old pidgin bingga: 'arm, hand, finger', ay 'eye, seed, point, small orifice', daga 'fruit of plant (edible or not), vegetable food', waitwan 'white, light yellow'.

5. Adaptation of English Words

English words adapted into Roper Creole (often with meaning shifts as noted) follow several patterns, which appear to have applied at different times historically, in the general order shown below.

1. Older words are adapted to the phoneme system of the Aboriginal languages, with no initial or final consonant clusters, except in the words bla/blanga 'for, belonging to' and brable 'real, really'. Single syllable words, other than auxiliaries, function words and clitics, are shunned.

naum/nomo: 'no, don't'
 wanim/wanem: 'what'
 -bala: (adjective suffix) (from fellow)
 nogudbala: 'bad' (from no good)
 dumaj: 'very' (from too much)
 buji: 'if'

dumarra: 'tomorrow'
 jilib: 'sleep'
 dilib: 'tea'

2. Some words are adapted to a system with a fourth vowel *e* added (Alawa has this phoneme). Sometimes this phoneme arises from contraction of *ay*.

laygim/lequim: 'like'
 gowe: 'go away'
 wanim/wanem: 'what'
 bujiged: 'cat' (from pussy cat)

3. Some words where the English has *s* allow fluctuation of *s* and *j*; others, including those where English has *j* or *ch* etc., and some where English has *s*, allow only *j*.

sineg/jineg: 'snake'
 silib/jilib: 'sleep'
 basdam/bajdam/bajam: 'beforehand' (from past time, former form preferred)

but

buji: 'if' (from suppose)
 binji: 'stomach, belly' (from English, cognate with binge)
 dumaj: 'very' (from too much)

4. Some words are adapted to a five vowel system, and initial consonant clusters are allowed.

spiya 'spear'
 stori 'story'
 olmen 'old man'

6. Nouns and Pronouns

The only nouns overtly pluralised in the creole are **olmen**: 'old man' (plural **olmenolmen**), and **olgamen**: 'woman' (plural **olgolgamen**). Adjectives are usually marked by suffixed **-bala** or **-wan**.

Pronouns are shown in Table 1. Except for the first person (excl.) singular pronoun, there is no variation in form between nominative and oblique, object or possessive. *a/ay* may be used for subject, and *may/mayn* for possessive. *mi* may be used in all positions. Away from Roper River the dual distinction is sometimes missing, and the forms *mibala*, *yu(m)bala* and sometimes *imbala* are heard. *yumob* is more common than *yuwalabad* at Ngukurr, and *yuwalabad* at the cattle stations.

A reflexive pronoun **mijalb** (invariant for all persons) and reciprocal pronouns **gija** 'each other' and **mijamed** 'together' exist.
olmen bin lujim mijalb: 'The old man died.' (lit. 'lost himself')
yu wandi bogi mijalb la riba?: 'Do you want to swim by yourself in the river?'

yunmi gadimab mijalb.: 'We go our own ways.'

alabad bin gilimbad gija.: 'They were continually killing each other.'

dubala med gija.: 'They (two) are mates.'

dubala bin go la riba mijamed.: 'They (two) went to the river together.'

Table 1. Pronouns

	singular	dual	plural
1st person (incl.)	yunmi	—	yunmalabad/ minalabad/wi
1st person (excl.)	mi (etc.)	mindubala	melabad/mibala/wi
2nd person	yu	yundubala	yuwalabad/uybala/ yumbala/yumob/yu
3rd person	im	imdubala	alabad/al/de/je

7. Possession

The possessor is indicated by a preposed pronoun or noun, or (usually) preposed **bla** plus pronoun or noun, e.g. **mayn ay** 'my eye', **yumob mani** 'your money', **im asbin** 'her husband', **blanga im blekbala** 'his fellow countryman', **bla wi** 'ours'.

8. Verbs Transitive and Intransitive

Most transitive verbs are distinguished from intransitive verbs by the suffix **-um -im**; the vowel is usually /u/ unless following a syllable containing the vowel /i/. Clitics **-ab** 'up', **-dan** 'down', **-ad** 'out', etc. and the continuous suffix **-bad** follow the **-um** suffix.

mi go 'I am going'

mi gaman 'I am coming'

dubala bin tok la mi
 'they talked to me'

im bin basaway 'he died'

ay bin jidan 'I sat down'

im bin buldan 'he fell down'

mi abun 'I have it'

mi gilim 'I (will) hit it'

mi kukum 'I am cooking/will cook it'

yu garrim? 'have you got it?'

mi bin megimbad 'I was making it'

im bin jinqinad la wi
 'he was calling out to us'
 jangodanwe 'west' (from sun
 go down way)

but ay gibid yu mani 'I give
 you money' (no -um)

9. Tense

Past tense is marked by bin (also used as a past tense copula), and future by andi.

Past: im bin gilim mi. 'He hit me.'

Present: mi jabi. 'I understand.'

Future: im andi jilib jaya. 'He will sleep there.'

Continuous aspect is shown by the suffix -bad on transitive verbs or by reduplication on intransitive verbs.

im bin megim ginu. 'He made a canoe.'

im bin megimbad ginu. 'He was making a canoe.' (not finished)

im bin kray. 'He cried.'

im bin kraykray. 'He was crying.'

Moods are indicated by words as follows:

wandi 'want': im wandi go la riba. 'He wants to go to the river.'

labda 'must': im labda lug la dakta. 'He must see the doctor.'

gin 'can': a gin bajimab. 'I can bring it.'

gan 'cannot': yu gan go la mi. 'You can't go with me.'

urldi 'used to' (past, occurs with bin): im bin urldi albim mi.
 'He used to help me.'

yusda 'used to' (habitual past, occurs without bin): mi yusda
 legim im. 'I used to like it.'

alde 'always' (repetitive): alabad alde bleble. 'They are always
 playing.'

nomo 'not' (negative): yu nomo bin albim mi. 'You didn't help
 me.'

10. Clauses and Sentences

As in English, the subject of the clause precedes the verb if any, and the object if any follows the verb. Other "case" relations are signalled by:

bla/blanga genitive 'belonging to, pertaining to, for the purpose of'
 la/langa locative 'to, in, at, with (accompanitive and instrumental)'
 garrim instrumental 'with (accompanitive and instrumental)'
 burrum ablative 'from'

maskidu bin idimab mi 'the
 mosquitoes were biting badly.'

To indicate location more specifically, phrases such as
 la dab la 'on top of', langa lid la 'in front of',
 biyan la 'behind', guluja 'near', binji la 'facing',
 bagbon la 'facing away from' are used.

Clauses may be related by juxtaposition, the links being indicated by intonation; seven conjunctions also occur: an 'and', bat 'but', buji/bunyi 'if', anles 'unless', dumaji 'because', wen 'when', and weya 'where', while, that, who when'. weya parallels the 'relative conjunction' in some Aboriginal languages; it shows the clauses are related in action and time but in itself has no very clear meaning. Other conjunctions parallel their English counterparts in function.

Sentence words and interjections, i.e. words which can stand alone, include yuway 'yes', nomo 'no', najing 'nothing, no', gurdi 'oh dear!', yagay 'ouch!', bobala 'poor thing, what a shame' (bobala also has adjectival use, as in bobala mi 'poor old me'). In addition, wal 'well' may introduce a sentence, jaldu 'that's all' can conclude one, binij/finish can indicate the end of an action, and ngi or intit is the tag question marker (uttered with rising pitch).

11. Text Examples

Four texts are appended, to indicate the use of the language. Number 1, very short, is extracted from conversation with a man who spoke no English, after two of us, white women, had attended the women's part in the Kunapipi ceremony. Texts 2 and 3 are from one man, number 2 on his arranging of a service at a cattle station, and number 3 his account of hitching a ride to Katherine from Nutwood Downs. Number 4 was collected by Sandefur, and is a discussion by two men on the grounding of the supply barge. The speaker of texts 2 and 3 spoke good English also, and the two speakers in text 4 spoke fair English.

Text 1

olgomen ol yumob gelele olwe

The old women, all of you were always giving the gelele call
 melebad olbibul bin dog qud binji brabli yu bin album
 we old people were really happy (that) you assisted
 jad seremani.
 that ceremony.

Text 2

... jabia, jodbala wi abum. wi abum jodbala.
 a service, a short one we'll have. We'll have a short one,
 namu langbala, jumaji san. jan barnim orayd.
 not a long one, because of the sun. The sun is hot, OK.
 burrum jaya alabad — melabad bin abum jabis — finish.
 After that they — we had a service
 wad abad mani. melabad bajimab bla yu? wal, buji
 What about money? Shall we fetch it for you? Well, if
 yulabad layq. ay gan bulimad langa alabad. im blanga
 you like. I can't take it to them (?). It's
 yumbala mani. namu mayn. ay gan digidad burrum yulabad;
 your money, not mine. I can't take it from you,
 anles yulabad gibid me mijalb. namu mayn. im
 unless you give it to me yourselves. It's not mine. It
 blanga jerj. wandi qu la jerj, bla
 belongs to the church. It'll go to the church, for
 album gandri bla yunmalabad. ay bin laygajad.
 helping our country. I (explained it) like that.
 orayd melabad bajimab. alabad im bajimab, burrum langa
 OK we'll fetch it. They fetched it and put it on
 debul. abda jad waya melaban finish. ay bin gejim.
 the table. After that we finished. I took it.
 ay bin degim la may camp. ay bin burrm langa pouch.
 I took it to my camp. I put it in (my) pouch.
 melaban silib. aba wig naja sandi muwa.
 we slept. After a week, there was another Sunday.
 melabad bin abum sabis.
 We had a service.

Text 3

dagbala na, dagbala na. jen, jen ledi im bin dalim me,
 It was dark then. Then the lady told me,

o olmen, olmen, jarran bas im andi gamab abas nayn.
 "Oh old man, old man, that bus is going to come at 9.30."
 o wal du led fo mi, du co — du cul nayd daym.
 "Oh well, too late for me, to co — too cold nighttime,
 gulbala. ay bin dog. o yunmi wed. maydbi yunmi
 it'll be cool", I said. "Oh wait, maybe we'll
 bayndim muwa naja drag. wal im bin bayndim jad dubala
 find another truck. "Well, she found those two
 men, bin gamab goda wid. dubala bin lodimab, degim la
 men, they came (?) (?) They loaded it up and took it to
 kajarran. fo reskos, reshos. dubala bin shibdi
 Katherine, for racecourse — race horse. They moved and
 megim rum bla mi. ay bin jagum sweg jaya, ebrijing mayn,
 made room for me. I threw my swag in, all my things,
 jaldy wi bin gu, wi bin drabbling raydab la larrama.
 OK We went, we were travelling right up to Larrimah.
 an wi bin sdop jaya fo lil wayl dubala bin dringgimbad,
 and we stopped there for a while. They were drinking
 jad drongbala strong drink, drongbala dronggimbala ngugu
 that strong drink, strong intoxicating water
 wada. balgim wada (Sharpe:) balgi? (Roberts:) balgim.
 water. bad (?) water balgi? balgim.
 nugudbala des yuno. megim gu sili. andaburrgiyunu
 Bad taste you know, makes them silly (Alawa) After that
 ngulujala — dubala bin danim da lilwan
 we went (a long way), they turned there(?) a little, and
 bin hidim wadi. lim. (Alawa) duwi nari. im bin blagim
 hit a tree, a limb. (Alawa) leaning out. It (?)
 mi iya. an jad wadi rayd jaya. (Alawa) nambarla
 me here, and that tree was right there. He said/it did(?)
 gada nari. o wi gula dri jaya (Alawa) nari.
 where it was. We were angry (?) that the tree was there.

wi bin jes misdim, wi bin andi ged gild jaya,
 We just missed it; we almost got killed there,
 an jad nugud.
 which was no good.

Text 4

I: wat dat bod bin du? C: wijan? — o im gada
 What did that boat do? Which one? — o it got a
 hol in im. the rekan. I: baj? C: im stakin
 hole in it they reckon. The barge? It's stuck in
 tha send. I: weya dijan iya? C: roj
 the sand. Whereabouts (lit. 'where this here') Rose
 riba im jidanlabat — la sengran. maidbi im
 River it's sitting at, on the sand. It's possibly
 gada hol — I: jeya, win a bin yaya im bin stak
 got a hole. There, when I was there it got stuck
 jeya langa that mawoth, weya im bin lo tayd. C: The
 there at that (river) mouth, at low tide. They
 rekan im gada hol dumaji. (Text edited
 reckon it's certainly got a hole that's why. at this point.)

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9

THE PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY VERNACULAR-SPEAKING ABORIGINAL CHILDREN WHEN ENGLISH ONLY IS USED AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

W.H. Douglas

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to illustrate some of the problems associated with the monolingual approach to the education of Aboriginal children. It does not set out to cover all of the problems experienced by vernacular-speaking children when English only is used as the medium of their primary formal education. By revealing some of the main areas of difficulty, though, it is hoped that bilingual education will be seen as a valuable tool for overcoming many of the problems.

2. Defining The Pupil Groups

The kinds of problems Aboriginal children face when they are being educated in English differ according to their differing linguistic backgrounds. Aboriginal children beginning their primary education may be divided into two major groups:

2.1 The monolinguals:

a. Those speaking only some form of English. (A group not covered by the title of this paper.)

b. Those speaking an Aboriginal language.

2.2 The bilinguals (or multilinguals):

a. Those who speak the vernacular fluently and English fluently.

b. Those who speak the vernacular fluently but English poorly.

c. Those who speak the vernacular poorly, but English fluently.

d. Those who speak neither language fluently — a category, unfortunately, into which many Aboriginal children in Western Australia seem to belong.

Although these groupings may appear as arbitrary cuts in a continuum, they do represent significant groupings of the types of pupils which teachers face in Aboriginal and part-Aboriginal schools. Groups 2.1a, 2.2c and 2.2d are all special groups which probably occur outside the scope of this paper, although group 2.2c may be included at certain points.

3. Defining The Problem Areas

Aboriginal children's schooling may be affected by many forces. For the vernacular-speaking child, the child most likely to have been brought up in a traditional Aboriginal community, there is, for example, the drastic cultural shock experienced when he first goes to school. The child who knows little or no English when he begins his formal education takes generally a year or two before he knows enough English to understand what the teacher is attempting to teach him. By this time he probably dislikes English and is ashamed of his own mother tongue. Then there are many social and psychological problems as well as some economic ones which affect the child's school life and the attitudes which are exhibited towards him in the early periods of his formal education. We cannot deal with such problems in a short paper, but must concern ourselves with those coming into the realm of linguistics and especially with those associated with the use of a foreign language as the medium of instruction in Aboriginal schools.

Linguistic trouble spots may occur in any or all of the dimensions of language — phonological, grammatical, lexical. Examples will be chosen from each dimension.

The cause of the problems in each of these areas, it should be realized, is not to be found in any paucity of the linguistic structure of the Aboriginal language spoken by the child. Each of the several hundred (an estimated 300 extant) Aboriginal languages is a complex highly-structured language with an extensive vocabulary covering the multitudinous concepts of thought shared by the speakers of the language. Nor should we think that the fault lies with the structure of present-day spoken English. Of course, we must confess, that written English poses many problems. But, even granting this, it is not the inconsistent orthography which presents the greatest difficulty, but the method of teaching. Here is the crux of the difficulty — a teacher is using one linguistic code to communicate formal education to a child who already has been "programmed" to respond to and to use an entirely different communicating medium. Friction, frustration or communication interference occurs where there is incongruity of overlap between the codes.

4. Phonological Problems

Probably the chief reason for problems here lies in the fact that there is not a sufficient overlap between the phonemic systems of the language spoken by the Aboriginal child and that of the English-speaking teacher.

Space would forbid the adequate description of the many aspects of the phonemic system of a typical Aboriginal language and the comparison of such with the phonemic system of standard Australian English. Such a description would need to cover, not only the inventory of phonemes, including those of length and stress, but also the distribution of the phonemes in syllables and words and the intonational patterns and other phonological features of both languages. It may be helpful, though, to chart the phonemes of the two languages side by side for comparison. For this purpose, modified symbols of the International Phonetic Association will be used. The Aboriginal language chosen is the Western Desert language, probably the most widely spoken language in Aboriginal Australia.

A brief glance at these charts will reveal that while there is a partial overlap of the phoneme inventories of the two languages, there is obvious lack of overall congruence. Although the child himself may have no theoretical knowledge of the phonemic structure of his language, all foreign speech sounds are interpreted through this previously acquired phonemic grid. On the other hand, it is possible that the teacher has little or no knowledge of the phonemic system of English, much less a knowledge of the structure of Aboriginal languages, so he could remain quite unaware of the linguistic problems he poses for the child.

These phonological problems may be physical or psychological or a combination of these.

4.1 The Physical Problems are generally associated with conditioned reflexes in the vocal apparatus. The tongue of the child goes automatically to the points of articulation to produce the significant sounds of his mother tongue. His lips round or unround, open or close, his vocal chords vibrate or remain static and silent according to the patterns set by the speech to which the particular Aboriginal community responds. When the English-speaking teacher represents new sounds to him — the speech sounds of English which do not correspond with the phonemes of his own language — it appears to the child that the teacher is unable to produce the sounds correctly. He then proceeds to mimic the sounds or to produce the nearest equivalents possible in his own language.

THE PHONEMES OF THE WESTERN DESERT LANGUAGE

Consonants:

Manner of Articulation	Point of Articulation				
	Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Retroflex	Velar
STOPS	p	t	t	t̡	k
NASALS	m	n	n	ɳ	ŋ
LATERALS		l	l	ɭ	
CENTRALS			r	ɻ	
SEMI-VOWELS	w		y		

THE PHONEMES OF ENGLISH

Consonants:

Manner of Articulation	Point of Articulation					
	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Alveo-palatal	Velar Glottal
STOPS	p' b			t' d		k' g
AFFRICATES					tʃ dʒ	
FRICATIVES						
flat		f v	θ ð			h
grooved				s z	ʃ ʒ	
LATERAL				l		
NASALS	m			n		ŋ
SEMI-VOWELS	w			r	y	

THE PHONEMES OF THE WESTERN DESERT LANGUAGE

Vowels:

HIGH:	short long	i ii		u uu
LOW:	short long		a aa	

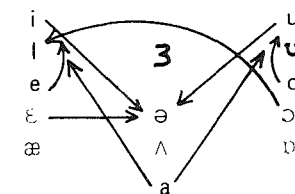
THE PHONEMES OF ENGLISH

Vowels:

HIGH:

MID:

LOW:



Diphthongs indicated by arrows.

For example: Fricatives occur in English, but not in the Western Desert language. The Desert child when faced with the sounds /f/ and /v/ of English will probably observe that the lips are involved in the production of these sounds. The labial sounds closest to these in his language are the voiceless, unaspirated stop, /p/, and the voiced semivowel, /w/. When he produces for "finger" what sounds like *pinger* (actually /pingka/) and for "fire" what sounds like *byre* (but actually /paya/) the teacher may be tempted to think he needs remedial treatment. The problem is multiplied, however, for English has eight fricatives and several affricates (i.e. stop plus fricative combinations functioning as single phonemes /tʃ/ and /dʒ/) and other affricate combinations such as -ks-, ps- and -ts-. The child who pronounces "fish" as *bitch* (or /pitji/) and "fence" as *bench* (or /pintji/) is doing no worse than the English speaker who pronounces the Western Desert dialect, Pitjantjatjara, as "Pitch-'n-jarra" or /miri/ meaning 'dead' as /miri/ meaning 'skin'.

Where the teacher knows the vernacular, or enough about linguistics to understand the child's problem, he will be able to demonstrate to the child the actual point and manner of articulation of each of the sounds presenting difficulties.

Unfamiliar combinations of sounds also present production problems to the vernacular-speaking child. In languages which have strong structural patterns of consonant-vowel or consonant-vowel-consonant syllables, the consonant clusters found in many English words present pronunciation hurdles to Aboriginal children (and much more so to the adult vernacular-speakers!). English words beginning with *sk-*, *sn-*, *tr-*, and *str-* are typical problem spots. The words *dress*, *bread* and *trousers*, are almost unrecognizable by the English-speaker when they are adapted to the phonemic system of an Aboriginal language. (In the Western Desert these may occur as /turirpa/, /purilypa/ and /tawitji/ respectively.)

Just as the English-speaking teacher may have difficulty in pronouncing simple Desert words as *manngu* 'nest' and *ngarnngi* 'frog', so the Desert child will find difficulty with simple English words such as *jam*, *hot* and *snake*, because of the occurrence of final non-permitted consonants and of other sounds and combinations not found in his language.

4.2 The Psychological Problems which a vernacular-speaking child may find on this phonological level are so closely tied up with the physical ones it is difficult to disentangle them. An amusing anecdote is quoted by W. Edwards (1967), Superintendent of the Ernabella Mission. It reads:

"Every school day for three years we have done 'sounds'. Yet these sounds are still so strange to them that, when I spell out P-I-T and ask, 'What does that say?' someone will answer, 'Bed'. I go over it again: 'Now listen — P-I-T. It says pit.' Then I ask, 'Can anyone tell me what a pit is?' 'Yes. Dat fer stleeping!' says one of the boys."

The problem here, of course, is that psychologically the Desert language speakers do not recognize any contrast between voiced and voiceless stops, nor between aspirated and unaspirated stops. So the words *bit*, *pit*, and *bid* all sound the same. When it is remembered, too, that there are only three vowel positions (*a*, *i*, and *u*) it can be seen that a Western desert child would have great difficulty in recognizing any differences in the list: *bit*, *bet*, *beet*, *pit*, *pet*, *peet*, *bid*, *bed*, *bead*, because, to him, there are no distinctions between the vowel sounds, *i*, *e*, *ee*, and *ea*. Sometimes, it is the English-speaking teacher who does not recognize the differences between allophones in his own language; for example, the difference between the two *p* sounds in the English word *paper*. (The first is aspirated, the second unaspirated — like the Western Desert /p/ sound. Hold a piece of paper in front of

the mouth while saying the word *paper*; the difference between the two *ps* will be obvious!)

5. Grammar Problems

Some Aboriginal languages have quite complex grammatical structures. Others, such as the Western Desert language and the language of the South-West, have comparatively simple structures. Whether simple or complex, though, the grammar systems of Australian Aboriginal languages differ from that of English. This may be illustrated in the aspect of word order and inflection.

English relies on word order fairly heavily to indicate grammar relationships. For example, in the sentence, *The man hit the woman*, we know that *the man* is the subject or actor and *the woman* is the object or goal of the action, because of their order in relation to the verb. Aboriginal languages, generally, indicate grammar relationships such as subject, object, location, time, manner, and indirect object by the affixing of grammatical markers. This means that word order is not so important for indicating these relationships; but it can be used for other purposes, such as for the indication of focus. The sentence, *The man hit the woman*, may be translated into the Western Desert Ngaanyatjarra dialect as — *watilu minyma pungu*. This reads literally, *man woman hit*. However, the word for *man* (*wati*) is followed by the subject marking suffix — *lu*, so there is no doubt as to who is the one carrying out the action. It will be noted that the verb comes finally. This is usual but not necessary. To change the word order of this sentence to *minyma pungu watilu* (literally, *woman hit man*) would not change the grammatical relationships, for *the woman* is still the object or goal of the action, and *the man* (still retaining the subject marker) is the subject or actor. In this form, however, the focus has changed so that an English translation would appear more like a passive construction — namely, "The woman was hit by the man." Depending on the context, though, it could equally well be translated, "He hit the woman, the man did."

On the other hand, there are preferred orders in some cases. For example, in noun phrases the descriptive or adjective may follow the noun instead of preceding it as in English. The English sentence, *The big man is sitting on the ground* may be translated into the Western Desert language as, *wati purilka parangka nyinarra* (literally, *man big ground-on sitting*).

The problems which a vernacular-speaking child faces when he attempts to transfer to a different grammatical system could be eased considerably if the teacher could explain to him, in the local vernacular, just what are the differences.

6. Lexical-Semantic Problems

In this dimension, of course, we are touching the whole conceptual bases of the two languages concerned in the teaching process. Restricting ourselves to linguistics as best we can, the problems facing the vernacular-speaking child in this dimension are based, chiefly, on the lack of correspondence between two different lexical systems.

In describing an Aboriginal language, one needs to redefine well-known categories of speech such as noun, verb, adjective and pronoun. Descriptive systems involving colour, size, number and state, pronominal systems, also tense, mood and aspect may all show lack of correspondence between the two languages. When the teacher announces, "You must" the children may be forgiven if they hesitate to puzzle over whether he means **you singular**, **you dual** or **you plural**, for the native pronoun system is likely to distinguish between singular, dual and plural with inclusive and exclusive forms of the dual and plural. In the third person it may be necessary to indicate whether the person is close to the speaker, at mid-distance, or at a distance away from the speaker, or whether he is not now visible but previously referred to by the speaker.

Examples may be drawn from the non-correspondence of body-part vocabulary, kin-relationship terms, food categories, intermarrying systems, the use of metaphors, rhetorical questions, idioms and other figures of speech. By the time the vernacular-speaking child reaches school, he has the rudiments of a cosmology already in-built, but all of this is despised and rejected by the "English-only" teaching approach. As Emeritus Professor A.P. Elkin (1964) stated —

"... The method of teaching English directly to non-English speakers without using the latter's language as a medium, has not proved as successful as was hoped. It is satisfactory for the first year or two with reference to concrete objects and situations. To go further, however, a bridge is needed between indigenous concepts and those the teacher seeks to introduce; and unless the local language is used as the main structure of that bridge, the children are apt to flounder and seem unable to go beyond rote achievement."

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10

ABORIGINAL PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN AND CLASSROOM SPEECH: SOME PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

Ian Malcolm

This paper represents a move towards establishing parameters for the sociolinguistic study of classroom communication involving Aboriginal children in Western Australian primary schools.

In common with many other children of minority cultures in developed countries throughout the world, Aboriginal children in Western Australian schools are on the whole not deriving from their schooling benefits commensurate with their needs, the aspirations of their people, or, in many cases, the painstaking labours of their teachers.

This educational failure has been attributed to such factors as poor teaching, irrelevant curricula, innate inability of the children, cultural deprivation of the children, and linguistic difference or deficit of the children.

While some of these explanations are probably true in some cases, the answers that they give to the educator are at best partial, and many teachers and Aboriginal pupils continue to go through the motions of an education which both have resigned themselves to regarding as futile, though, mercifully, relieved by frequent absences and a premature conclusion.

There is room for new light to be thrown on the experience of the minority child in the classroom, though simplistic and single-answer solutions to his problems should be held in suspicion.

Promise of such new light might be seen in some of the writings which have appeared in the '70's as a number of scholars have approached classroom study from a sociolinguistic perspective.

The development of sociolinguistic theory in the 1960's and 1970's in papers by such writers as Hymes, Labov, and Fishman, is well known. They have helped to redirect attention from speech form to speech use, with the accompanying goal of describing communicative (rather than simply linguistic) competence. They and others, like Cazden and Gumperz in the U.S.A., and Barnes, and Sinclair and Coulthard in Britain, have shown a new kind of interest in classroom speech data.

The teacher's speech has shifted from being the unique focus, and it has been studied rather in relation to pupil speech. Pupil expectations are recognized as equally relevant to teacher intentions. The particularities of interchanges have not been classified with a view to quantification and then dismissed (as in some previous studies). Rather, interactions have been closely studied as indicators of communication strategies. In the interpretation of utterances, there has been, following Searle, a concern to distinguish the speech act from the sentence which is used to perform it, so that what has been called the "illocutionary force" appertaining to classroom utterances may be recognized. For example, "Who's talking?" may well be not a question but a direction, requiring silence.

Where the classroom speech community is heterogeneous, this has become a special motivation for study — not so much in order to reveal structural interference between dialects, as to reveal cultural mismatch, showing itself in differing communication rules, especially with regard to educational situations.

In some studies, a clear distinction has been made between language as a means of classroom interaction and language as a means of learning (Barnes, 1969; c.f. Cazden, 1974). It has been suggested that the latter can be realized in a register specific to learning, and in some cases specific to particular subjects. The use of such a register may have an inhibiting effect on pupils' speech in the classroom. Some research has shown that non-standard-dialect-speaking children have far greater linguistic competence than the classroom reveals. (e.g. Labov, 1972)

There has too, up to a point, been a recognition that the classroom is a uniquely structured speech situation where rules of communication obtain which may be relative not only to the educational domain, but to teacher-class interaction. This is, as Cashden has put it, "a situation typically of unequal language exchange, both in type and in balance" (1972, p.111).

There is reason to believe that sociolinguistic rules of interaction which govern interchanges in the wider community may be modified, or perhaps even suspended in the classroom with its unique composition and role relationships. Schegloff, in his study of sequencing in conversational openings, based on data derived from telephone calls (1972) refers to "calling the roll" in the school context as an illustration of the S-A (summons-answer) sequence. According to the principle of "conditional relevance", a response is always to be expected if a summons is given. Recalling experience in school, he notes:

"Teachers who saw a student physically present but not attentive to the official environment might make the fact observable to the public there assembled by calling a student's name and allowing all to see that he did not answer by standing up and establishing his availability. In that way then, the properties of a summons-answer sequence could be employed not only to establish availability or unavailability but to proclaim it to all who could see". (1972, p.373).

Thus, Schegloff shows how the classroom situation, with its peculiar role relationships and incorporation of a "public there assembled" gave rise to a particular act on the part of the teacher derivable from more general sociolinguistic rules of the community, but let us add, not repeatable outside of this context.

The terms "the official environment" and "all who could see" used by Schegloff are not random. They refer to two factors which contribute to the uniqueness of the classroom situation: it is "official", or recognized as subject to its own situation-specific rules of interaction, and it is public. Whatever is communicated there has an implicit or explicit audience. Thus, one could anticipate that expectations derived from extra-classroom interaction rules might at times be let down. Is there, for example, a classroom rule which negates Schegloff's rule of the nonterminality of a summons-answer sequence? Whereas the calling of one's name in the wider speech community as Schegloff has pointed out, always anticipates an answer like "Yes" or "Yeah" or "What?", it would be likely that such a response in the classroom would be considered impertinent, and that the summons is more often than not intended to be followed by silence. Again, what Schegloff has called "assent terms", such as "uh huh", and "yes" which an answerer inserts into the flow of speech addressed to him, seem to be totally absent from classroom interaction (at least as spontaneously volunteered by the listener).

The classroom then, is a unique situation. Part of its uniqueness derives from the fact that it is structured for learning, with the adult-teacher assuming the initiating and controlling role in the

learning experience (with greater or lesser explicitness) and with the child-pupil assuming the responding role. (There may, of course, as Barnes has pointed out be a tension between teacher and pupil for control of the learning). But more basically, the uniqueness of the classroom derives from the fact that it consists of up to thirty, or perhaps more, co-present participants, whose presence bears on every communicative act that takes place there.

As a unique situation, we may assume the classroom to be also a unique speech domain, characterized by its own *linguistic routines* — a term suggested by Hymes (1971) and defined as "sequential organizations beyond the sentence". Any child joining the classroom community will need to be socialized accordingly: he will need to acquire a sociolinguistic competence to enable him to function effectively in that environment. He will need, for the period of his schooling, to be able to participate in and understand the linguistic routines of the classroom. The child, as Bernstein, Elvin and Peters (1966) have put it, has to be transformed into the pupil. The teacher in the early grades of primary school is well aware that such socialization should take place, and spends a good deal of her time seeking to impart it. Progressively as the child moves through the grades, what was overtly verbalised by the teacher is assumed.

This process of socialization must be undergone by every child. The minority-culture child may, however, be subject to *sociolinguistic interference* on account of rules peculiar to him which he has internalised in contexts not common to the teacher or the other children. In his case, apparent resistance to required linguistic routines of the classroom may be impossible for the teacher to interpret accurately. Such a child may also suffer (as Gumperz and Hernandez-Chavez, 1972, p.102, have pointed out) by being deprived within the classroom of the expressive flexibility afforded him elsewhere by code-switching.

I have suggested thus far that a sociolinguistic orientation may be fruitful in study of classroom language relevant to Aboriginal children and their educational problems. As far as I am aware, this approach has not hitherto been applied to such a study.

I wish to proceed now to outline some of the ways in which I have begun to apply this approach to the interpretation of data gathered in Western Australian classrooms in 1973 and 1974 as part of a pilot study of Aboriginal English.

This material was gathered in visits of two to three weeks duration to primary schools in four widely dispersed parts of Western Australia where a large proportion of the school enrolment is Aboriginal: Leonora, Derby, South Hedland and Katanning. Like

Gumperz and Barnes, I was not concerned to record entire lessons. My focus was on interactions and linguistic routines. Where possible I was present while the material was being recorded. Where teachers preferred it, I stayed outside the room during the lesson and discussed the tape with the teacher afterwards. I recorded extensively outside of the classroom, both in groups of pre-arranged composition and with individuals. It is not the object of this paper to discuss the data from these interviews, though I shall comment on some informal extra-classroom sequences which I recorded.

For the purposes of this paper, I wish to make observations on the data which are relevant to three aspects of communicative competence in the classroom:

1. the linguistic socialization role played by the teacher;
2. the speech strategies employed by the teacher in communication with Aboriginal children;
3. the characteristics of Aboriginal children's use of English in the classroom.

I do not claim to offer a complete inventory under any of these headings, but simply to indicate what the data are throwing up at this point in a continuing study.

1. Classroom Linguistic Socialization Role of the Teacher.

The teacher, as we have observed, must regulate the patterns of interaction in a unique language domain where the co-presence of a body of children has a bearing on every speech act. The basic two-party conversation rule referred to by Schegloff: "one party at a time" will find its realization in the multi-party classroom through the acceptance of conventions of interaction made explicit and upheld by the teacher.

In the fulfilment of this role, we may observe the teacher performing at least six distinct functions.

First, to employ the terminology developed by Sinclair and Coulthard in their analysis of classroom discourse, he must determine and uphold priority among those pupils who respond to an eliciting act — or, more simply expressed, he must have a clear basis for choosing among the children who offer an answer or response. In extract 1 from the transcripts, the Grade 1 teacher, in her opening meta-statement, is giving the children the cue as to how they will qualify to have their response bid accepted. They must sit straight and quietly. In the second extract, the cue given is "Hands up". On this occasion a non-verbal response is all that is required, so no individual needs to be nominated. Later, however, the teacher performs a further eliciting act and Richard bids to

respond. He is nominated, but is hesitant in response, and the other children reaffirm their response bids by keeping their hands up. However the teacher upholds the priority of Richard who has been nominated to respond, and they must put their hands down. The same teacher acts similarly in extract 19.

Secondly, the teacher may determine in advance who is to respond, and it is part of his function to uphold the priority of that nominated person to respond. This is illustrated by the third extract, in which a further noteworthy feature is the teacher's apparent question which has the illocutionary force of reproof for non-observance of the relevant rule of interaction.

The fourth extract illustrates a third socialization function performed by the teacher: establishing acceptable paralinguistic and kinesic behaviours to accompany classroom discourse. In this Grade 1 class, the children singing their song to the class must stand up straight to do so, and Chris who is in the role of receiver must do likewise.

Paradoxically, he is standing in his place and not sitting, as a punishment. In the hubbub which ensues the children's item, the teacher restores order by commanding the whole class to stand up (a strategy also revealed in Sinclair and Coulthard's data). Incidentally, the illocutionary force of "beg your pardon" is worth noting. It is in fact a directive for silence.

In the fifth extract we see the teacher performing a function which is also illustrated in the example we have just considered: establishing acceptable patterns for the child as addresser of the class. In this case, it is a "news" session, common in Western Australian primary schools. The children offering news must frame it in politeness formulas which in this case are highly artificial and awkwardly negotiated by the child. This speaker was a European Australian, in it is no accident that in this class the Aboriginal children did not normally volunteer to contribute to news sessions.

Likewise, the teacher performs the role of establishing acceptable patterns for the classroom as the receiver of spoken communication. Often the role of the class in the speech event is as witness, rather than direct participant. However, many teachers insist for a good deal of the time on maintaining the class as a "single focus" communication situation rather than one in which several conversations may proceed at the same time. Thus, as in extract 6, the "one party at a time" rule is enforced. Extract 6 also illustrates the relating of classroom socialization rules to "manners". As Arnold (1973) has observed, it is often at essentially the level of etiquette that teachers conceive of their socialization role.

A sixth function which teachers perform with relation to socialization — again partly illustrated already — is that of providing incentives for behaviour conducive to classroom order. Sometimes such incentives are negative; on other occasions, as in extract 7, at least on the surface, they are positive.

2. Teacher Speech Strategies

We have suggested that the role of the teacher as controller of the learning experiences of the classroom also predetermines the kinds of communicative acts which will occur there.

A basic verbal strategy of the teacher is questioning. Teachers' questions have been carefully analysed and classified by Barnes (1971). The most basic distinction he draws is between "open" questions where the teacher is genuinely seeking information from the child, and "closed" questions where he is predisposed only to accept an answer which is already in his mind. Extract 17 provides an illustration of a teacher engaged in open questioning. The children's responses are eager and linguistically well-formed. By contrast, in extract 8, the teacher is being far more selective in the responses he will accept, and the children are accordingly more inhibited.

The teacher of Aboriginal children is frequently confronted with a response on the part of the child which requires special interpretation. Sometimes it is a single word from which the intended statement or question must be imaginatively reconstructed. Sometimes it is a statement which needs to be given a "reading" which bears little relation to its surface structure. The experienced teacher may develop effective strategies for dealing with such cases of potential communication breakdown, often "monitoring" his reading of the child's meaning for the benefit of the child and, where relevant, the rest of the class. An example of such a strategy is seen in extract 9, where the teacher correctly interprets the child's meaning as the reverse of what his response superficially implies.

Again, the teacher may adopt strategies to cope with the inability or unwillingness of the child to respond in more than single word utterances. The teacher in extract 2 offered a non-verbal means of responding. The teacher in extract 10 provides the structure for the child and waits for him to slot his single word response into it. Sinclair and Coulthard, in referring to such a strategy in the use of barristers cross examining witnesses describe it as "verbal bullying". In the use of some teachers it would no doubt be aptly so described.

Another very common teacher strategy is that of repeating the child's response. I found myself frequently falling into this habit

as an interviewer. It is illustrated, for example, in extracts 7 and 18. Though the repetition sometimes fulfils the function of making a softly spoken utterance audible to the class, (or in my case, the tape recorder) it often would seem to fall into the category of what Gumperz has called "pedagogical style" — an overexplicit form of speech which he suggests Blacks are likely to respond negatively to, associating it with the style of welfare investigators (1972, p.104).

3. Aboriginal Children's Classroom Use of Language

Finally, if only to offer them as subject for further investigation, the following characteristics of Aboriginal children's speech use may be noted from the data:

In continuous speech to me, identified in the role of teacher, but interviewing outside the classroom, Aboriginal children showed a tendency to repeat the openings of sentences and phrases, as illustrated in extracts 11, 12 and 13. Sometimes the repeated openings may be interpreted as a form of hypercorrection, as in extract 11 where the child deems it necessary to make explicit the antecedents of his pronouns. Sometimes, as in extract 13, the child appears to repeat himself while he gropes for words.

Extracts 14 and 15 illustrate the Aboriginal English habit of avoiding the question and request forms of standard English. Fortunately Miss Secombe was able rightly to interpret the apparent imperative in extract 15.

Many writers on the classroom speech of non-standard dialect-speaking children have referred to their frequent use of single-word answers. Aboriginal children are no exception here, as extract 16 illustrates. Labov and others have related the single-word response to the child's recognition of unequal power structures in the classroom. Barnes has related it to the content of the teacher's questions. Both explanations could be relevant here.

In extract 17 we see children who have initiated their own topic of discussion going rather beyond the single-word answer in discussing it. Cazden (1972) has reported on studies which would lead us to expect this. In extract 18 it seems that the child's single word answer was related to the abruptness of the teacher's question. Her second response was more elaborated.

It is common for teachers to report that Aboriginal children do not speak at all in response to elicitations they provide in the classroom. This reluctance to talk is paralleled by other groups of minority cultures, in particular American Indian children. It is sometimes interpreted by teachers as shyness, and sometimes

as "giving the cold shoulder" (Schegloff, p.368). I have, however, observed that minimal communicators in the classroom at large will volunteer communication when in a small group and unthreatened. Then, when he assumes a receiver role the teacher is likely to find that the child tries to monopolise talk, to the exclusion sometimes of coherence and sometimes as in extract 19, of his competing friends.

In some circumstances, the Aboriginal child may have the answer the teacher wants to hear, but will withhold it until the teacher accepts a bid from another child. Then, under cover of the other child, he will speak. I have observed this in my own group interviews as well as in the classroom. I have called it shadowed answering.

A similar tendency is to speak after another child when he speaks, gaining confidence from his utterance, but not creating a new one. This is illustrated briefly in extract 22.

Extract 21 shows another common response — the Aboriginal child's volunteering of information by other than verbal means.

Hymes, Barnes and Cazden have all called for the development of a theory on which to base sociolinguistic study of the classroom. We have attempted in this paper to move towards the analysis of speech data in the Aboriginal classroom on basically Hymesian principles.

It seems that an investigation of the classroom as a domain of language behaviour encompassing successive ranges of linguistic routines which are formally possible, which are feasible, which are appropriate and which actually occur, will provide a fruitful orientation to the study of the classroom communication involving Western Australian primary school level Aborigines. In the course of such research, progress may be made towards the theoretical refinement that has been called for.

Such a study would hopefully provide access to that supplementary knowledge about the classroom which is prerequisite to the modification of teaching materials and strategies called for in Aboriginal education.

EXTRACTS FROM TRANSCRIPTS

1. Grade I (6 year olds)

(The teacher is going to select children to sing "Old Macdonald Had a Farm" before the class)

Teacher: I'm going to pick the tallest, straightest, quietest person to come out and be our animals.

X: Me.

Teacher: You're not the tallest straightest quietest person in the class are you? Now stand up straight Chris (L 21 (2))

2. Upper Primary Remedial

Teacher: Hands up if you've ever been on a bus.
 Douglas: Me.
 Teacher: Hands down. Whereabouts? Oh, of course you've been on the school bus. But who's ever been on a bus in Perth?
 Richard: Me.
 Teacher: Richard could you tell me something about it?
 Richard: Um we went.
 Teacher: Hands down while he's talking. (KM 7)

3. Grade I (6 year olds)

Teacher: What was the second one Christine?
 Several: Dog
 Teacher: Who did I ask?
 Who's the third one Joy? (L 21 (2))

4. Grade I (6 year olds)

Teacher: Chris stand up straight or you can come out here and I'll hold you up straight/thank you/are you ready? Stand up nice and tall . . . (The children out the front sing their song) Right that's very nice/ Animals you can all sit down/thank you very much. (Talking)
 Beg your pardon? I'm still waiting for everyone to be quiet/ standup nice and tall like a pin/you're a funny bent old pin Chris . . . (L 21 (2))

5. Grade III/IV 8, 9 year olds)

Donna: Good morning Mrs Purser and girls and boys well yesterday when I got home from school mum said that in the paper well these two boys I forget I forget what town they were in well they were walking along and they found a dead body of a woman thank you Mrs. Purser girls and boys for listening to my news. (KM 4)

6. Grade I (6 year olds)

Teacher: Be quiet that's enough/Chris what would you like to be when you grow up?
 Chris: Working.
 Teacher: Oh you'll have to say it louder than that I can't hear
 X: 'e might be work.
 Teacher: Especially with people like you being so bad mannered. I think you must have left your manners in your pocket.
 (26 utterances later)
 Teacher: Adele what would you like to be when you grow up?
 I'm sorry I can't hear you because there are so many people with bad manners aren't there David? Did you leave your manners at home today? . . . (L 21 (2))

7. Middle Primary Remedial
(Thomas is being inattentive)

Teacher: Thomas don't you want to be a helper? (HM 13 (2))

8. Grade III/IV (8, 9 year olds) (John and Robert F. are Aborigines)

Teacher: . . . Usually in a town like this they'd have a small hospital but this one's a very big one/Why was it built very big? Gaye?
 Gaye: Because of the mine.
 John: Lots of people.
 Teacher: That's right John/'cause there's lots of people too/What sort of people were there?
 Robert F: White fellas
 Teacher: Mm?
 Robert: Mine Workers
 Teacher: That's right Mineworkers (L)

9. Teacher: Now Thomas/are you going to sit over in the opposite desk all by yourself or are you going to work nicely there?
 Thomas: Sit Miss Secombe.
 Teacher: Mm? Going to work nicely there are you? . . . (HM 13 (2))

10. Grade IV (9 year olds)

(A reading lesson. The teacher is taking Harold for reading in a small group)

Teacher: Good, Harold, What was the shawl like?
 Harold: Don't know.
 Teacher: Just read it. What was different about the shawl? What —
 Harold: Green leaves green leaves round.
 Teacher: Right. Green leaves, and what else?
 Harold: Stems.
 Teacher: Stems of
 Harold: Flowers.
 Teacher: So would she have looked very pretty, a little baby wrapped up in flowers and leaves? And what would the people think? That would make them think she came from the
 Harold: Fairies.
 Teacher: Fairies and spirits. What's the word synonym for fairies beginning with sp. . . ?
 Harold: s- sprites - s
 X: s- spirits - s
 Teacher: Sprites. Good boy Harold. (KM 1)

11. (Peter aged 13 is showing the linguist over the place where he lives.)

Peter (to L): They gone/some people gone out fishing and some/the kids they gone up to Willowbridge . . . (DMO 1 (2))

12. Paula (to L): And we was going'/we was goin' bush (L4B)

13. (Gerald, aged 11 is talking to the linguist at the hostel where he lives)

Gerald (to L): Then/then/then we/then we went and in the mornin' we went and and we and and we went buy some chick chicken and we thing dinner out . . .

14. Peter (to L, asking to take a photo):
 I'll take a photo, eh?
 I can take it now?
 I take it

Peter (to L, referring to tape recorder):
 Shall I put it on now? (DMO 1 (2))

15. Middle Primary Remedial

Thomas: You ought to give me two one of those/over there Miss Secombe
 Thomas: Miss Secombe you ought to give me them two over there
 Teacher: Which two?
 Thomas: That one over there. (HM 13 (1))

16. Grade VI/VII (Jackie is 13 years old)

(Jackie has modelled a tent. The rest of the class is working. Teacher is addressing Jackie individually).

Teacher: Tell us about this please Jackie/It's meant to be what?
 Jackie: A tent.
 Teacher: A tent is it? Yes and it's got a nice fence around it/What colour is your tent?
 Jackie: Blue.
 Teacher: Yes/and what colour is your/what's your fence made of?
 Jackie: (inaudible)
 Teacher: Mm pardon?
 Jackie: Wood
 Teacher: Wood/good/right (L 11)

17. Grade III (8 year olds)

- X: We gone to Giekie Gorge.
 Teacher: Have you? Where did you go?
 Several: We bin. I bin.
 Teacher: Hand up who else has been/Right. What was your story Malcolm?
 Malcolm: We bin in the boat to Giekie Gorge.
 Teacher: You went in the boat did you? Who else went in the boat?
 X: I did. Miss Bailey. We went in the boat.
 Teacher: Gary.
 Gary: We went in the boat and we caught some barramundi.
 Teacher: Barramundi did you?
 X: We caught three. (DT 4 (1))

18. Grade VII (12 year old)

- Teacher: What have you got there Colleen?
 Colleen: Pot.
 Teacher: Mm
 Colleen: And a frying pan.
 Teacher: And a frying pan/yes (L 11 (1))

19. Middle Primary Remedial

- Douglas: Miss Watson I
 Teacher: Yes Douglas
 Douglas: I I climb right up to the top an' I up the top it's really cool an' I had a drink.
 Karen: Yeah so did I.
 Douglas: An' when you look down I feel like that I'm in a parachute.
 Karen: An' dizzy.
 Noelene: Miss Watson.
 Karen: Wind's a bit blowy
 Noelene: HHH one time H Bluff Knoll S
 Karen: * * an' I saw a snake S
 Teacher: You climbed up Bluff/um when Karen's/when one person's talking the other can listen.
 Karen: Miss Watson Miss Watson at at at the mountains I
 * * a snake
 Doug: Miss Watson
 Teacher: Look Douglas you're interrupting
 Karen: About that long Miss Watson (KM 7)

20. Grade III

(In the hostel, Karl has volunteered a story for the Linguist)

- Karl: Me and Basil and Michael and Kookie and Robert and Kelman Cleebby was thinging and/er thing/Basil was doing somersault in in the water/in in* swimming in the creek and a and we bin go back home a/ and we bin play thing paddy melon fight in creek, in Laverton creek.
 *at this point another child offered the word "swimming" (L 4B)

21. Grade III/IV (8, 9 year olds)

- Teacher: Who's ever been in a flying doctor plane?
 Johnny: I bin
 Teacher: You've been have you John? What happened to you?
 Johnny: (gesture)
 Teacher: You had a sore? Oh and they took you to hospital. (L)

22. Middle Primary Remedial

- Teacher: Do you want a game?
 X: Yeah I wanta
 Xb: Yeah I wanta (HM 13 (1))

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11

TWO AUSTRALIAN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAMS: A LINGUIST'S VIEW

Susan Kaldor

1. Introduction

For the majority of its population, Australia is a geographically large, homogeneous speech community in which the average speaker can travel thousands of kilometres in any direction and be sure that wherever he stops, he will find speakers with whom he shares the same range of speech varieties and verbal repertoires. Language problems appear, in the main, relevant only to the lives of members of various minority groups and to the lives of those who communicate frequently with non-English-speaking members of such groups. However, in recent years, Australian governments have considered the language problems of two broad categories of speakers to be of sufficient importance to warrant the establishment of long term language education programmes. These broad and heterogeneous categories of speakers are: (a) migrants whose mother tongue is a language other than English and (b) Aborigines. The purpose of this paper is to examine and compare the language education programmes directed at each of the above-mentioned categories of speakers from the point of view of language planning theory and with special reference to the implications the programmes have had for Australian linguistics.

2. Migrant Education

2.1 Planners, Implementers, Aims

The term 'Migrant Education' has, over the past quarter century, come to stand for a variety of government-provided courses in English as a Foreign Language for migrants. Migrant Education was launched in 1947 as a service to "educate migrants in the English language and in the Australian way of life" (Department of Immigration, 1974). The Federal Department of Immigration,

established two years earlier to administer and promote Australia's massive post-war immigration programme, was the primary policy developer and managed and financed the scheme until 1974. The task of developing materials for student use, teacher training and for transmission by the media was originally performed by the Commonwealth Office of Education. All these functions are now in the hands of the Commonwealth Department of Education. In 1951 an agreement was reached between the Federal Government and the States to the effect that the State Education Departments would administer the programme by taking responsibility for enrolments, the appointment and supervision of teachers and the provision of classroom facilities. Table 1 illustrates the administrative structure of the programme.

The courses were designed to cater for the English language needs of migrants wherever possible from the time they decided to emigrate to Australia until they were ready to take their place in Australian society without the need of an interpreter. This necessitated a variety of different forms of courses, viz., instruction in source countries, on board ship, but most importantly, 'continuation classes' (evening classes in two weekly two-hour periods), and radio and correspondence courses for those for whom class instruction could not be arranged because of distances or other reasons.

In the early literature of Migrant Education the aim most frequently mentioned was the 'assimilation' of newcomers.¹ Later, 'integration' gained more currency as a term which reflects an acceptance of cultural diversity without prejudice (Department of Immigration, 1974). For either of these aims, a thorough working knowledge of the majority language and of the majority culture of the nation have been considered to be essential.

2.2 Target Population

The target population of Migrant Education, in the first twenty-three years of its operation, was adult migrants who needed help with their English. The needs of migrant children and young adolescents was over-shadowed by the more urgent need of workers and breadwinners; but it was also tacitly assumed that children would 'pick up' English more readily than their parents and that the average migrant child would, without much difficulty and without special provisions, take his place in the general Australian education system. As it was pointed out by several speakers at a recently held national conference on migrants and their communication needs (Australian Association of Adult Education, 1973), this did not prove to be the case. Some migrant children and young adolescents have been found to have consider-

able, in some cases, severe, communication problems in the Australian school system. In 1970 this need was also officially recognized and a Child Migrant Education Programme was instituted.

2.3 Initial Linguistic Context

Migrant Education was in every way a pioneering task for Australian educators in the late forties. At that time there were no departments of Linguistics at any of Australia's universities, no prior Australian experience in teaching English as a Foreign Language, and the handful of Australian linguists who worked in linguistic research and teaching had no professional organisation. Attention had only just begun to be focused on Australian English (Mitchell, 1946), a term, the mention of which, for some years to come, was to evoke an embarrassed smile from many Australians.

The developers of the programme had to look overseas for some guidelines in general language teaching principles and in the then fast expanding field of the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). The journals *Language Learning* and *English Language Teaching* and the works of individual scholars engaged on the building of TEFL theory and methodology provided important sources of ideas. Fries, Lado, Palmer, Hornby and Mackey are some of the prominent names that come to mind.

2.4 Early Problems and The Development of Method and Materials

Early problems were many and varied. Pittman, whose work was instrumental in the development of basic principles, method, materials and teacher training, described vividly (Pittman, 1952) some of the difficulties he and his collaborators had to face. An educational experiment had to be begun before the normal prerequisites of such experiments (classrooms, materials, qualified teachers) were available. Class populations were constantly shifting, teachers had to cope with classes in which there was a whole spectrum of different standards of English competence and of different linguistic, cultural and educational backgrounds among the pupils.

While it was possible to gain stimulation and ideas from overseas, the materials which had to be developed needed to be uniquely Australian, from the point of view of method suited to the teaching of mixed classes of migrants from any of the sixty source countries as well as from the point of view of sociolinguistic and cultural content. The materials which resulted, in the form of the Textbook, *English for Newcomers to Australia*,² the Radio booklets and Correspondence Lessons,³ reflected a lively new configu-

TABLE 1
PLANNERS AND IMPLEMENTERS OF MIGRANT EDUCATION

(Since June 1974 these functions also carried out by the Commonwealth (Australian) Dept. of Education.)

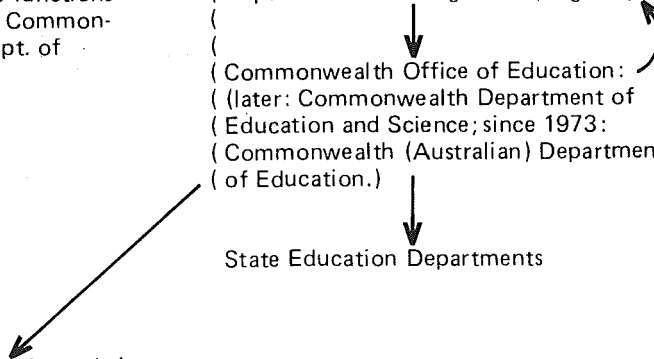
(Department of Immigration (original policy and finance)
(
(
(Commonwealth Office of Education:
((later: Commonwealth Department of
(Education and Science; since 1973:
(Commonwealth (Australian) Department
(of Education.)

(development of method,
professional advice to
Department of Immigration,
materials, research)

State Education Departments

(administration and super-
vision of courses)

Australian Broadcasting Commission
(production of programmes based on
teaching materials developed by
Commonwealth Office of Education)



ration of modern language teaching principles. This blend, which was developed specially for Australian conditions, has long since become identified internationally as the 'Australian Situational Method'. It has been characterized by the following features: meticulous grading of the material with concentration on sentence structure; the presentation and drilling of the material by creating 'natural situations' to suit the pattern to be taught, but controlling structural patterns within that situation; emphasis on aural/oral skills;⁴ maximum time given to students' oral practice, avoidance of translation and strict vocabulary control. The method has, over the years, been elaborated on the pages of the bulletin issued to teachers, *English . . . a New Language*, which has also included contrastive studies of English and a number of migrant languages as well as reprints of important articles on methodology.

2.5 Later Developments

As the success of the Migrant Education courses became widely known, the Commonwealth Office of Education was called upon by other government agencies to develop materials for other target populations. One of the earliest of such secondary developments was the preparation of materials for Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory in the early fifties. The syllabus was drawn up with special regard to content suitable for young Aboriginal learners, but was, in all essential ways, "strongly influenced by the content of courses developed for adult foreigners" (Ruhle, 1964). In the early sixties, a new demand arose: the English language needs of overseas (mainly Asian) students who came to Australia to study at institutions of higher education under the Colombo Plan, other fellowships or as private students. It was not long before Australian expertise was not only required for teaching English to overseas students, but also for providing training to teachers (Asian and other) in English as a Foreign Language. The University of Sydney was the first academic centre to recognize this need by the establishment of a diploma course in TEFL in 1957. Yet another development, the utilization of Migrant Education materials for the teaching of other languages in Australia as well as for the teaching of English and other languages overseas, must be mentioned (Anderson, 1965).

Within the Migrant Education programme itself, the most recent developments have occurred in four main directions: (1) taking instruction outside the school walls into the home and the work site, (2) the provision of accelerated, intensive and advanced courses, (3) the expansion of Child Migrant Education and (4) the development of research and evaluation especially in relation to Child Migrant Education (Migrant Education Programme Report, 1973).

2.6 The Involvement of Linguists

While the materials which have been developed within Migrant Education have a solid foundation in applied linguistics, the training of teachers within the programme itself has consisted mainly of exposure to TEFL and the situational method rather than of a broad introduction to general linguistics, although this situation has been changing and there is now an increasing awareness of teachers' needs for linguistics training. Academic research in such areas as the exploration of the relationship between linguistic theories and particular teaching practices, the assessment of alternative approaches to language teaching, general evaluation and the sociolinguistic validity of content, has been comparatively underdeveloped in relation to Migrant Education. The substantial amount of research that has been contributed to the programme by a handful of dedicated TEFL specialists has been mainly pragmatic and goal oriented. The success of the approach developed in the early years of the programme has largely been taken for granted and energies have been concentrated on the elaboration and perfection of that approach. Current work on the development of test materials for migrant children by the Australian Council for Educational Research represents a new research orientation involving the exploration of sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic aspects of second language acquisition by bilingual children.

2.7 Summing up Migrant Education

Migrant Education has been essentially a single-language education programme directed at monolingual (in other languages), bilingual and multilingual speakers. It involves the teaching of the national language in order to facilitate the integration of non-English-speaking migrants into the wider community. The Australian Situational Method which was developed within Migrant Education has been adopted in language teaching programmes in many parts of the world. Progression has been from adult target population to one including children and adolescents and from a target population consisting entirely of beginning learners to one including pupils whose competence in English is well advanced. Emphasis in teacher training has been on TEFL and situational method rather than on a broad foundation in general linguistics.

3. Aboriginal Bilingual Education

3.1 Planners, Implementers, Aims

As mentioned earlier, courses in Oral English based on Migrant Education experience were introduced for Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory in the fifties. However, it was only in

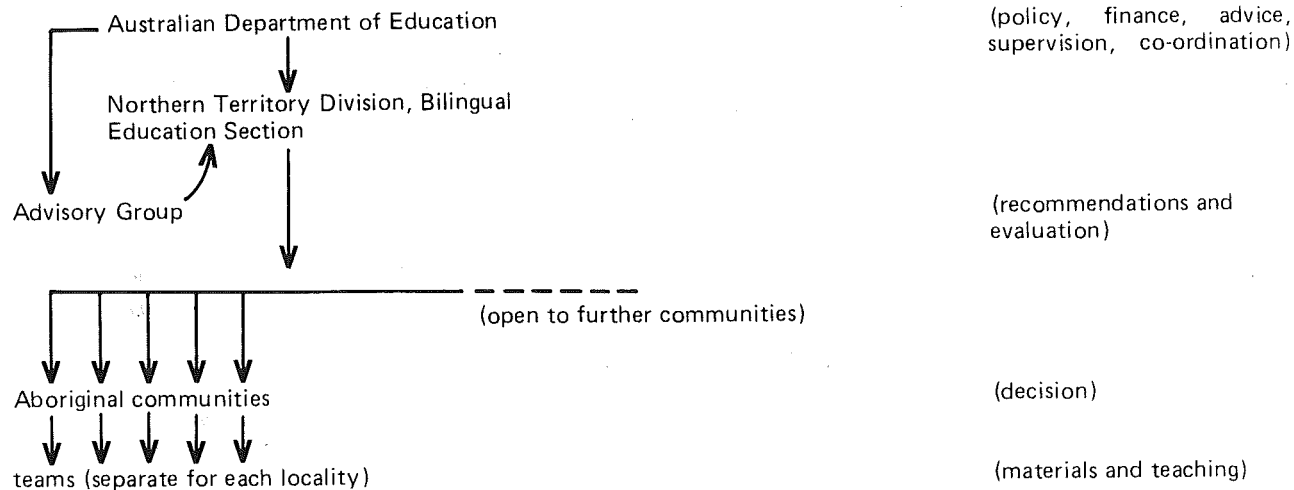
1973 that a language education programme specially designed to suit the communication needs of Aboriginal children living in Aboriginal communities was begun. Aboriginal Bilingual Education was launched in December, 1972, with a press statement by the Prime Minister that the Federal Government would "launch a campaign to have Aboriginal children living in distinctive Aboriginal communities given their primary education in Aboriginal languages" (McGrath, 1973). In January, 1973, the Australian Minister for Education established an Advisory Group, consisting of three educationists, which was to visit communities, survey resources and make recommendations. By March, 1973, the Australian Department of Education published a report prepared by this Advisory Group (Watts et al., 1973). By December, 1973, a further report was published, this time on the first year of the operation of the programme, in the course of which five schools in the Northern Territory of Australia had introduced bilingual education.

It should be mentioned at the outset that the full title of Aboriginal Bilingual Education is 'Bilingual Education Programme in Schools in the Northern Territory'. While the programme was undoubtedly envisaged as a 'campaign' towards the establishment of bilingual education for all Aboriginal children in Australia who live in Aboriginal communities and who speak an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue, the Federal Government could implement its policy directly only in the Northern Territory where it set up a Bilingual Education Section within the Northern Territory division of the Australian Department of Education. Aboriginal children do, of course, live in Aboriginal communities also in several of the States (mainly in Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland), but decisions relating to bilingual education need to be made separately by each of the relevant State Education Departments.

Within the Northern Territory itself, individual Aboriginal communities have been asked to make their own decisions as to whether they wish to introduce bilingual education for their children. Where their decision is positive, a team consisting of the Principal and teachers of the local school, officers of the Bilingual Education division, a resident (Summer Institute of Linguistics/or other) linguist and the School Council, implements the programme. The structure representing these arrangements is illustrated in Table 2.

The aims of Aboriginal Bilingual Education were stated in the recommendations of the Advisory Group (Watts et al., 1973) as the "optimal educational, cultural and social development of the Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory". Bilingual Education

TABLE 2
PLANNERS AND IMPLEMENTERS OF (ABORIGINAL) BILINGUAL EDUCATION



is thus seen as an essential means to attain the goal of the general development of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory.

3.2 Target Population and Programme Structure

The recommendations of the Advisory Group contain two basic models according to the availability of linguistically sound materials in the relevant languages. Where such materials exist, the programme begins at preschool level with the use of the Aboriginal language for most tasks and special time set aside for the introduction of Oral English. After preschool years, literacy is first established in the Aboriginal language. Literacy in English is begun only when oral fluency in English and literacy in the vernacular have been achieved. In later primary and post-primary years English takes over as the medium of the school subjects which are identical with primary school subjects taught to all Australian children. The Aboriginal language is retained for the special purpose of the learning of Aboriginal Language Arts and Aboriginal studies. Where no linguistically sound materials are as yet available, literacy is begun in English. Otherwise the second model is basically similar to the first.

While Aboriginal preschool, primary and post-primary children thus constitute the primary target population of Aboriginal Bilingual Education, courses have also been established in many places for adult Aborigines as an important supporting service.

3.3 Initial Linguistic Context

During the quarter century which elapsed between the launching of Migrant Education and that of Aboriginal Bilingual Education there had been much advance in Australian linguistics. The main developments may be summarized as follows: (1) Australian linguistics received great impetus through the establishment in the early sixties of two important research organisations, viz. the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and the Australian Branch of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. (2) Several Departments and sub-departments of Linguistics were established at Australian universities and other tertiary institutions, and (3) Australian linguists established close communication with each other through the formation of the Linguistic Society of Australia in 1967.⁵

Australian linguists working under the auspices of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the universities and other research institutions have, by now, produced a large body of valuable information on Aboriginal languages.

Australian linguistics as a research area has attracted linguists also from outside Australia in recent years. All these factors have contributed to a linguistic climate which is characterized by vigorous activity and a sense of urgency and challenge. Important advances have also been made in the study of Australian English.⁶ Thus for the planners of Aboriginal Bilingual Education there is a much larger amount of material available from Australian linguistic research than was available to the planners of Migrant Education. Overseas experience with bilingual education and literacy programmes is, of course, also drawn on — and here the contribution of Sarah Gudschinsky who conducted literacy workshops in Australia should perhaps be mentioned in the first place (Leeding, 1974).

3.4 Early Problems and Developments

Aboriginal Bilingual Education involves a broad spectrum of language educational activity as materials need to be prepared in a large number of languages. In the English component of the programme, work has to be carried out on the specific requirements of teaching English as a second language within a bilingual education system. In the Aboriginal component of the programme, difficult decisions have to be made concerning the choice and role definition of particular Aboriginal languages, the designing and standardizing of orthographies, the 'modernization' of vocabularies so the languages may fulfil new functions (Kaldor, 1976). Research priorities, teacher training, source materials and evaluation all require early attention. The multiplicity of languages in which bilingual education may be desired by Aboriginal communities adds to the complexity of the task. The recruiting and retention of teaching staff, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal is often a problem in view of the exceptionally heavy demands which the programme places on teaching personnel.

Materials are at present being prepared at each locality where Aboriginal Bilingual Education was introduced in 1973. These numbered five, representing five different languages. Plans for subsequent years have extended to a further eleven locations, involving some of the same five plus several further languages (McGrath, 1973). By March, 1975, fourteen schools had bilingual programmes involving twelve different languages.⁷ The more successful Aboriginal Bilingual Education is in a particular location, the greater the demand for further reading matter in the language.

As was the case with Migrant Education, once the programme was begun, rapid growth was inevitable. Materials are often prepared while teaching is already under way and the teachers are

learning about the new system at the same time as they are applying it.

The planners are well aware of the need for early evaluation and the development of instruments and techniques for this purpose is under way. In the meantime, reports from the schools in which Aboriginal Bilingual Education was initiated in 1973, speak of definite advances in children's attitudes to school, increased community involvement in education and of the enthusiastic support of the programmes by the teaching staff in spite of difficulties.

An indirect development stemming from Aboriginal Bilingual Education has been the growing demand for courses in Aboriginal languages. There are now several courses of this type in operation. They are taken by non-Aboriginal learners, by Aboriginal learners who speak English only and by Aboriginal learners who speak other Aboriginal languages but wish to learn one which is more widely spoken than their own.

3.5 The Involvement of Linguists

Australian linguists have been involved in Aboriginal Bilingual Education in a variety of ways from the start. One of the first recommendations of the Advisory Group (Watts et al., 1973) was the inclusion of linguists in all future planning. Resident field linguists have become members of implementing teams. Heavy emphasis is placed on the role of linguists in the **First Annual Report** which recognizes some seven phases of the work in which linguistic expertise is essential. It is interesting to note that during less than one year's experience with Aboriginal Bilingual Education some modifications had to be made to original plans to ensure an even greater participation, than had been originally envisaged, by linguists at the level of decision making.

Education in general linguistics for teachers of Aboriginal children is seen by the planners as a basic requirement and some local courses given by resident linguists have already been organized as an emergency measure.

Aboriginal Bilingual Education has, in the short time of its existence, also stimulated linguistic research in a wide range of areas of specialization, e.g. in psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, bilingual studies. Perhaps the most interesting development closely related to Aboriginal Bilingual Education is the establishment of a College of Australian Linguistics in Darwin which provides linguistics training for Aborigines to enable them to analyze and describe their own languages.

3.6 Summing Up Aboriginal Bilingual Education

Aboriginal Bilingual Education is a multi-language education programme directed at monolingual, bilingual and multilingual target populations of pre-school and primary school children. Its aim is the educational, cultural and social development of Aboriginal people through initial education and literacy in the mother tongue, with simultaneous instruction in English as a second language. The brief history of Aboriginal Bilingual Education is too short for an assessment of trends, but an upsurge of interest in Aboriginal languages and in linguistics can already be noted. Future developments will undoubtedly include linguistics training for all teachers of Aboriginal children.

4. Some Conclusions

The two major language education programmes in which Australia has so far engaged have had distinctly different histories: with different target populations, different aims and approaches, different government agencies being involved as planners and implementers. However, as has been seen, paths have already crossed and are even more likely to cross or even converge in the future. Developments in Migrant Education have already been utilized in the English component of Aboriginal Bilingual Education. It is likely that Aboriginal Bilingual Education experience will lead to the strengthening of the arguments of those who advocate bilingual education also for some migrant children (Rado, 1973).

The comparison highlights the need for the development of comprehensive language planning for the treatment of all language problems in Australian society.

Such comprehensive language planning would point up language problems of groups which are, at present, not catered for in either of the existing programmes. Aboriginal children whose mother tongue is a non-standard dialect of English have so far received inadequate attention at the national level, as have, in general, Aboriginal children who attend schools where they are in a minority within a 'standard'-Australian-English speaking school population.

Comprehensive planning would ensure the economical utilization and pooling of resources, of energies and expertise. For example, if courses in general (applied) linguistics — including components of English as a second language, Aboriginal linguistics, Australian English studies, the structures of the main migrant languages and developmental linguistics — were part and parcel of all teacher education in Australia, then any teacher could move freely into

either of the Government's present language education programmes or simply take his (her) place in any type of school in any part of the continent in the knowledge that he possesses a basic understanding of the language problems of all categories of speakers he may encounter in his work.⁸

NOTES

1. See e.g. 'The Provision of Migrant Education in Australia' in *English ... a New Language*, Vol. 5. No. 6. 1957.
2. The most recent version of this book is entitled *Situational English for Newcomers to Australia*.
3. The latter two were combined into one course in 1963.
4. In correspondence courses, too, wherever possible, oral English patterns have been taught through the medium of writing and reinforced by radio.
5. For further details see Kaldor, (1968). It is impossible in a brief review to do justice to the contribution to Australian linguistics of pioneering individual scholars such as A. Capell or to the untiring efforts made by individual missionaries, linguists and educators to promote interest in bilingual education at a national level.
6. See e.g. Ramson, ed. (1970).
7. See information leaflet issued by the Department of Education, Darwin.
8. Since this paper was written, some further changes in the structuring of Migrant Education programmes have taken place. Child Migrant Education, as from 1976, has been included in the programme of the Schools Commission.

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12

LANGUAGE PROBLEMS, LANGUAGE PLANNING AND ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

Susan Kaldor

The rapidly growing body of sociolinguistic writings on language planning¹ reflects an increased awareness by many people all over the world of the fact that language issues are of great importance in the life of nations, that they require close attention by governments and that governments need the advice of specialists for developing language policies. Such awareness has typically been more characteristic of the 'developing' nations (Fishman et al., 1968), than of the 'developed' ones. To regard language issues as matters of national importance is an attitude which is new to the majority of Australians. However, recently formulated policies in relation to Migrant Education and Aboriginal Bilingual Education² are gradually bringing questions of language into the public consciousness. This paper examines language problems and their treatment in relation to Aboriginal education. An attempt is made to outline a systematic framework in which potential and actual language planning for Aboriginal education may be investigated. Areas which have so far received inadequate attention will be specified within this framework.

Language problems in education may be defined as 'problems caused by differences in language, dialect, style (in sum, 'code-differences') between persons who need to communicate with each other in order to proceed toward the fulfilment of educational goals'. Such problems are likely to be experienced, at some stage, by all those who participate in Aboriginal education, directly or indirectly, both at the 'receiving' and the 'imparting' end of the educational process.

The Children's Language Problems.

Let us take first the 'receiving' end of the educational process, the target population of any educational programme directed at Aborigines, the Aboriginal learner. Aboriginal learners may be divided into (1) preschool, (2) primary, (3) secondary, (4) tertiary students and (5) adults who are potential or actual participants in adult education schemes. This paper focuses on the problems of Category No. 2 — the primary school child.

In order to function successfully in and outside school during his primary education, a child needs to be able to communicate successfully (a) with his parents, other kinsmen and generally members of his household, (b) his classmates, (c) children in other classes, in his own school or in other schools, (d) his teacher/s, (e) members of the wider community in the region and (f) members of the wider community outside the region. We may call such links the child's 'lines of communication'. If he has difficulties in any of these lines of communication due to differences between his language/dialect/style on the one hand, and the language/dialect/style of other persons in his environment, then the child may be said to have language problems.³

Aboriginal children in Australia may experience language problems along several of the lines of communication outlined above. The particular configuration for each child depends on a number of factors, viz. a condition which I shall call the child's own 'linguistic state' (whether monolingual in an Aboriginal language, bilingual in an Aboriginal language and a non-standard form of English, monolingual in a non-standard form of English, monolingual in 'standard' Australian English, etc.), the type of school he enters (whether education is monolingual or bilingual, whether the school population is predominantly Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal) and the position of the school in the wider community (whether in a large city, country town, in an isolated desert community, at a pastoral station, etc.).

Table 1 shows how language problems along the various lines of communication (shown here as a,b,d,c,e,f) may vary according to the children's linguistic state and the type of school they enter.

Thus, when a child who is monolingual in an Aboriginal language enters a monolingual (Australian English medium only) school in a community where his own vernacular is spoken and where the school population is predominantly Aboriginal and monolingual in the same language, he is likely to encounter language problems

only along lines of communication 'd' and 'f'. If he enters a bilingual school in the same community, then line 'd' has to be subdivided into two branches: line 'd₁', that connecting him with the Aboriginal teacher and 'd₂', that connecting him with the non-Aboriginal teacher. The child's language problems are then restricted to 'd₂'.⁴ If a child who is monolingual in an Aboriginal language enters a school which has a predominantly non-Aboriginal population, then he will experience language problems also along lines of communication 'b', 'c', and 'e', in addition to 'd' and 'f'.

Lines 'd' and 'f' are the paths which lead to further education in the majority language of the nation, 'standard' Australian English. Line 'd' is to be interpreted as comprising not only communication with the teacher, but also, passively, at the decoding end, with all writers and producers of textbooks and educational programmes in different media which reach the school. Line 'f' includes writers, speakers, producers, editors and others who are responsible for the general output of the mass media.

The Problems of Language Planners.

The planners' problems arise out of the realization that the children's language problems must be solved and that this is an issue of significance at governmental level.

The term 'planner' as used here refers to all those persons — politicians, administrators, linguists, educationists, anthropologists or other specialists — who are engaged in planning, designing, or advising on the design of education programmes involving language.⁵ It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss differences between the problems of each of these categories of persons in the course of planning processes — we shall be concerned only with broad goals which may be assumed to be relevant to all categories.

The requirements of language planning for Aboriginal education are shown in a summary outline in Table 2, where planning areas are related to various aspects of planning. The discussion which follows is an elaboration of this outline.

English.

Table 1 shows that almost every type of speaker needs help in the promotion of the flow of communication along lines 'd' and 'f', through the medium of 'standard' Australian English, hereinafter to be referred to simply as 'English'.⁶

The development of English has been of central concern to the various State and Commonwealth education authorities since the earliest days of Aboriginal education. However, the assumptions

TABLE 1
LANGUAGE PROBLEMS ALONG LINES OF COMMUNICATION 'a' — 'f'

	Monolingual (English) Education			Bilingual Education	
	School Population			Language same as child's	Language different
	Predominantly non-Aboriginal	Mixed	Predominantly Aboriginal		
Child's linguistic state					
Aboriginal language	b,c,d,(e),f	b,c,d (c),f	d,f	d ₂ ,f	(b),(c),d ₁ d ₂ ,(e),f
Non-standard English	d,f	d,f	(b),(c),d,f	—	—
Standard English	O	(b),(c)	(b),(c)	—	—
Aboriginal Language/Non-Standard English	d,f	d,f	d,f	d ₂ ,f	d ₁ ,d ₂ ,(c),f
Aboriginal Language/Standard English	O	O	O	O	(b),(c),d ₁ ,(e)
O = no language problems	d ₁ = communication with Aboriginal teacher			d ₂ = communication with non-Aboriginal teacher	
— = not applicable					

Brackets indicate that the child may have language problems only with certain sections of a category of speakers representing a particular line of communication, e.g. monolingual speakers of an Aboriginal language will have difficulties in communicating with only non-Aboriginal members of their regional environment.

NOTE: This table represents much oversimplification and can only serve as a rough indication of differences among groups. Divisions are, of course, not watertight (e.g. between 'mixed' and 'predominantly Aboriginal' or 'predominantly non-Aboriginal'). Relatively severe problems are shown, while relatively less severe problems are not (e.g. a speaker of non-standard English may have problems along 'b' and 'c' in monolingual schools, where the school population is predominantly non-Aboriginal, but these are not likely to be as severe as his problems along 'd' and 'f').

The above categories of speakers may be further subdivided into speakers with varying degrees of proficiency in either of the languages (see Douglas, 1973).

on which the teaching of English rested, have undergone drastic revision in recent years. Although the history of English teaching in Australia is probably well-known to all members of this audience, it is worth recalling it here for the purpose of further discussion. The earlier — and, in some parts of the Commonwealth quite recently held — philosophy was that English is acquired by all children alike in Australian schools no matter what ethnic and linguistic backgrounds they come from. Children were expected to 'pick up' the language of the school without any trouble, as, indeed, in some cases they did. This earlier educational philosophy has been, gradually and with varying timing in individual States, giving way to a new approach originally developed by the Commonwealth Office of Education for use in the Northern Territory. The new approach leans heavily on Australian experience in Migrant Education and is based on principles developed in the branch of Applied Linguistics known as the Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL).

The field of TESL developed all over the world primarily to meet the demands of children whose mother tongue is a language other than English and who live in a country where the national language is a dialect of English. We need not go into the well-known principles on which TESL practices rest beyond recalling that the basic assumption of all second language teaching is that first and second language acquisition are fundamentally different processes and that the average learner who had acquired his first language 'naturally' in his social-cultural environment, does need specialist help in second language learning, when the circumstances of first language acquisition no longer apply and when he has to counteract the forces of interference from the mother tongue.

TESL methods were, until recently, not considered relevant to the language problems of the child whose mother tongue and only language is a non-standard form of English. In the past, in English-speaking countries and elsewhere where standard dialects were taught to speakers of non-standard dialects of the same language, such teaching used to be considered 'remedial'. The child's own dialect was regarded as a defective and distorted replica of the standard dialect. 'Incorrect' pronunciation, 'incorrect' grammatical and vocabulary usage were to be 'eradicated' and the child was to be taught to 'speak and write correctly'. Recent work with Negro children and children of other ethnic minorities in the United States has brought into focus the futility and often harmful consequences of the educational principle of 'eradication'. Specialists in the education of speakers of non-standard dialects now urge that the child's own dialect be regarded as a resource rather than an obstacle, a linguistic system in its own right in

TABLE 2
OUTLINE OF PROPOSAL FOR LANGUAGE PLANNING

Planning Areas			Aspects of Planning			
			Research priorities	Teacher training	Source materials	Evaluation
For monolingual and bilingual programmes	English (standard)	as a second language				
		as a second dialect				
For bilingual programmes only	Other languages	role definition				
		graphization				
		standardization				
		modernization				
		Co-ordination of two components of bilingual programmes				

which the child underwent his early cognitive development and which served him as an adequate means of communication in his immediate environment during the early years of his life. According to such new principles, the child is to be allowed to express himself freely, without fear of being branded a 'lazy speaker', someone whose own speech and whose parents' and friends' speech is inferior. The standard dialect is to be taught as a second dialect which the child at first associates with the school and later uses for various other functions in the wider community, while he can still continue to speak the non-standard dialect (e.g. Black English, Puerto Rican English, etc.) with his school mates, members of his family and other persons in his immediate environment. The child is made aware of the fact that there may be several dialects of a language and that there is no cause for anyone to be ashamed of his own. Such principles have resulted in the development of the educational/linguistic field of Teaching Standard English as a Second Dialect (TSESD) (Allen, 1968).

TSESD is still very much in its infancy. In the first period of enthusiasm specialists tried to adopt TESL principles. It soon became evident, however, that while the two teaching tasks have a great deal in common (viz. that they are both based on contrastive analyses between the learner's language/dialect and the target language/dialect, that the teaching of the target language/dialect must be structure-centred, that no value judgements must be attached to the learner's own mother tongue), they require different teaching methods and different skills on the part of the teacher (Allen, 1970). A child whose mother tongue is some form of English has little patience with repetitive drills which characteristically form an essential part of TESL methods. He does not get a sense of achievement when he takes a small step forward in acquiring standard English which to him does not seem as different from his own dialect or as novel as it would if it were a completely new and foreign language form.

A further difference between TESL and TSESD is that in the latter, the teacher is likely to meet with great sensitivity when referring to non-standard English in any form. Children and parents themselves often regard a non-standard dialect as inferior if, indeed, they recognize its existence, and may interpret any reference to it as mockery and insult.⁷

The importance of TSESD has been pointed out by Australian linguists (Flint, 1973) and some very valuable materials have been prepared for helping young children with their English language development along TSESD principles in Queensland (Department of Education, Queensland, 1972). However, TSESD as a field is

far from being widely known among Australian teachers. A great deal more information than is at present available will have to be collected on Aboriginal English in general and on Aboriginal children's speech in particular from all parts of Australia before further advances can be made in this field. Data are already available from some areas (Flint, 1968, Douglas, 1968, Sharpe, 1972, Department of Education, Queensland, 1972), work in other areas is under way (Kaldor, 1973b), but much more is yet to be done.

Other Languages

The use of languages other than English in formal education in English-speaking countries has emerged as a result of the realization that the teaching of English alone is insufficient for opening up lines of communication 'd' and 'f' with children who are monolingual or near-monolingual in a minority language. It was this realization which was instrumental in the formulation of the bilingual education programme for Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory in December 1972.

The launching of Bilingual Education in Australia came about at a time when a wealth of material based on overseas experience had already accumulated. Since, in the early nineteen-fifties, a group of specialists from all over the world agreed on the basic need of every child to begin formal education in his mother tongue (Report of the UNESCO Meeting, 1951), scores of bilingual education programmes have sprung up all over the world. The rationale for bilingual education is usually considered to be threefold: (1) bilingual education provides a continuation of the child's early experience 'with the world through language' and thus promotes cognitive development, (2) it promotes the child's lines of communication 'a', 'b', 'c' and 'e' and thus reinforces his ties with his own society and culture and (3) it 'builds a bridge' between the child's early experience in his mother tongue on the one hand and education in the medium of the national language on the other, thus aiding communication along lines 'd' and 'f'. For example, literacy in the mother tongue promotes literacy in the national language.⁸

While few linguist-educators would question the desirability of bilingual education for children on minority languages in certain settings, some warn about the "difficulty in translating bilingual education from theory to practice" (Sanchez, 1973). Just how complex a field is subsumed by the term 'bilingual education' has been aptly illustrated by Mackey who set up a typology distinguishing some 90 different types of bilingual education schemes (Mackey, 1972).

It is hardly surprising that difficulties arise when languages are

assigned functions which they had not fulfilled before. The Australian situation is no exception. The dimensions along which careful planning is required, are analogous to those outlined in the literature of language planning mainly in relation to national languages. These are: role definition, graphization, standardization and modernization.⁹ **Role definition.** When a language is assigned new functions, planners need to foresee, as far as possible, the role which the language may be expected to play in the life of communities, regions or perhaps as *linguae francae* in wider areas. They need to be familiar with the roles that individual languages play in given regions prior to planning; they also have to predict possible changes in these roles which may occur as a consequence of the launching of language programmes.

In the recommendations for the Northern Territory (Dept. of Education, Canberra, 1973) the matter of the selection of languages for Bilingual Education rested, understandably and justifiably, mainly on practical considerations. Bilingual Education was a major departure from former educational practices and the advisers¹⁰ had to do pioneering work in setting up a scheme within a very short time. Their report stated that, ideally, every child should receive his initial education in his own first language, but recognized that such an ideal cannot be achieved for all. The criteria employed for priorities were, firstly, the wishes of individual communities, and secondly, the concentration of a sizeable group of speakers of a single language, the availability of linguistic descriptions, of resident linguists (attached to missions or to the Summer Institute of Linguistics) as consultants and of Aboriginal teachers.

The role of the languages thus selected was seen mainly as a medium of early education, a language which provides the bridge between the child's first experiences and those gained in formal schooling, a language which thus represents cultural and linguistic continuity. For later years, the Aboriginal language was envisaged as a medium of education in the "Language Arts of that language and for Aboriginal Studies" (ibid p.11).

It may well happen, however, that, after a while, and particularly in successful programmes, some of the languages may assume a broader role. Children may well want to discuss topics relegated by the planners to the English component of the programme with their Aboriginal teacher, just as they may, on occasion, want to talk about 'Aboriginal matters' with their English-speaking teacher.

This brings up the question as to whether some Aboriginal languages are to be maintained and supported further than the role assigned to them in the present bilingual programmes would

require. If so, manpower and material resources may have to be pooled to concentrate on some of the languages which would then have to be developed as languages of education higher than the first few primary grades.

In the states where Bilingual Education has not yet been launched on a large scale, planners are in a position to decide on one of two alternative courses of action open to them, if they wish to introduce Bilingual Education. One is to support a small number of languages to a higher degree of development and thus define an increasingly significant role for them. The other is to give limited and minor support only to all languages in which Bilingual Education is desired by the community and feasible on practical grounds.

Languages may, of course, be supported by educational programmes other than Bilingual Education in the primary schools. Language courses which teach the Aboriginal language as a foreign language (TAFL?) to non-Aborigines or Aborigines who do not speak it — such as the Adelaide course in Pitjantjatjara and the Perth course in Ngaanyatjarra — may go a long way towards changing the role of particular languages. Adult literacy programmes are also most important factors in promoting language maintenance and development.

Graphization. This term was suggested by Ferguson (1968) to refer to the introduction and regular use of writing in a speech community. The very first step in graphization is the development of suitable orthographics. The graphization of Aboriginal languages to meet the demands of Bilingual Education was made possible by the great advances which had already been made in this field by the linguists attached to the Summer Institute of Linguistics and which culminated in a proposal for alternative choices of symbols for all areas of the continent (Leeding and Gudschinsky, 1974).

While the graphization of Aboriginal languages is thus, due to the vast amount of energy and expertise channelled in this direction by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, much more advanced than could have been expected within a year of the launching of Bilingual Education, many problems still remain.

The linguistic ideal for orthographies toward which most writers of literacy programmes strive is a strict phonemic alphabet.¹¹ However, as has been recognized by Leeding and Gudschinsky (ibid.), there may be various pressures at work in some communities which necessitate departure from this ideal and the use of partially allophonic (sub-phonemic) alphabets. This is likely to occur where speakers have some fluency in English and where they

are influenced in their conception of their own sound system by their acquaintance with the sound system of English. In some instances partially allographic alphabets may be necessary, for similar reasons, as certain letter combinations may lead to an 'anglicized' reading of the Aboriginal word. The particular choice of symbols may, for some dialects, depend on the orthographies of neighbouring dialects and may consequently not be the most appropriate phonetic approximation of the sounds which they symbolize.

All this is likely to lead to the development of scores of slightly different orthographies throughout the continent. A further complicating factor is that the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies standard for the writing of tribal and language names (A.I.A.S. 1973) differs from the Summer Institute of Linguistics conventions and recommendations.

As things stand at the moment, the graphization of Aboriginal languages must present a rather bewildering picture to the non-linguist. I cannot share the optimism of Leeding and Gudschinsky when they state that the difference between conventions "does not seem . . . to be a problem". It must be remembered that large numbers of linguistically untrained persons, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, will need to refer to both sets of standards. The linguist's recourse to a common phonetic framework for comparison is not available to the layman. Even linguists sometimes have to dig deep in their stocks of unpublished materials received from other linguists before they can make decisions about symbols to be used when referring to languages in which they are not area specialists.

Some of the symbols contained in the Leeding and Gudschinsky recommendation are likely to require modification.¹² Such modifications should probably be effected before orthographies become widely spread.

Thus, graphization is, at this stage, far from being a closed book. There is an urgent need for much further work in this area, particularly in helping educators and members of the general public (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal), to find their way around orthographic systems.

Standardization. There are three types of standardization processes relevant to language planning for Aboriginal education. These are: (1) intradialectal/intralanguage, (2) interdialectal and (3) interlanguage standardization.

Intradialectal/intralanguage standardization involves the identification and promotion of model speech and written varieties (Rey, 1963: 70) within one dialect or language. The Aboriginal

teacher and other members of Aboriginal communities will have to provide a rich stock of spoken and written language output for the development of such models.

Questions of interdialectal standardization may come up in the work of developers of literacy programmes as well as in the work of writers of teaching courses in Aboriginal languages for non-Aboriginal learners (TAFL) in areas where several dialects are spoken in the same speech community or in neighbouring speech communities. Some of these questions involve matters of 'purism'. Should the writer of texts and teaching materials keep dialects 'pure' where the speakers themselves mix dialects? Or should he 'codify' dialect mixture and thus promote the emergence of a new regional standard?

Interlanguage standardization relates to the development of uniform approaches to features which are common among the various languages. The similarity of the phonological systems of Australian languages made it possible to devise the orthographic standards to which we have already referred. Other areas which lend themselves to standardization are approaches to the teaching of reading (standardized approaches are already under way following methods developed by Dr. Sarah Gudschinsky) and the developing of new vocabulary. We shall discuss this latter area under the next heading, 'Modernization'.

Modernization. This term, as commonly used in the literature of language planning, refers to at least partial 'intertranslatability' of languages which require planned development, with 'developed' languages, in this instance, with English. The matter of modernization has so far not received attention in relation to Aboriginal education. Just how relevant this aspect of planning is to Aboriginal education, depends partly on the role definition of individual languages. Where further education in the vernacular is envisaged, some guidelines will undoubtedly have to be developed for the expansion of vocabularies. Even in cases where the Aboriginal language is used for limited functions only (viz. for initial literacy in the early years of primary school and thereafter for 'Aboriginal Studies'), some modernization processes will become necessary. New vocabulary is required simply to talk about school and classroom life and activity — a field of discourse new to languages which have, until recently, not been media of formal education. Some of the questions to which answers will have to be sought, are: From what sources will the new vocabulary items come? Where words are borrowed from English, what changes will they undergo?¹³

Co-ordination of the two components of bilingual programmes.

Much of the success of Bilingual Education depends on the effective co-ordination of the two components of the programme. The importance of co-ordination has received strong emphasis in published recommendations (Department of Education, Canberra, 1973 and Department of Education, Darwin, 1973). The fully qualified English-medium teacher has been allocated the responsibility of providing in-service help to the Aboriginal team member; both teachers have been encouraged to devise methods and set time aside for exchanging information and for developing common teaching strategies; headmasters have been assigned the task of co-ordinating the two components.

The role of educational linguists attached or to be attached to Departments of Education is going to be a crucial one in this respect. They will have an overview of all the problems and of the various approaches taken toward solutions. They will be in a position to establish links of communication between teaching teams and between Departments in various States. Hopefully, they will have some time left to keep abreast of advances in linguistic theory and practice overseas and at home. They will be the persons on whom planners will ultimately have to rely in finding the ideal balance between the two components of the programme.

We have so far considered the Planning Areas as set out on Table 2. In the final part of this paper, I propose to relate some Aspects of Planning to the various Planning Areas.

Research Priorities.

All the language education tasks outlined in the foregoing call for a vast amount of information concerning languages, dialects, language teaching method, language learning styles and many other topics. Some of this information is available, but much more is yet to be obtained. In order to pinpoint priorities, planners will be faced with the task of scanning and analysing the research output of such organizations in Australia as the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the universities, the teachers' colleges, the Commonwealth and State Education Departments as well as of overseas universities, and other research institutions. This task, once again, brings into focus the need for highly qualified educational linguists in positions where they can be of maximal assistance in language planning.

The type of research required in particular Planning Areas varies considerably.

TESL is a well developed field with a vast literature from all over the world. However, the specifics of teaching English as a second language to Aboriginal children in Australia need careful investigation. The research requirements of this planning area include the study of the sociolinguistic and linguistic characteristics and developmental sequences of the speech of the average Australian-English-speaking child; the contrastive study of standard Australian English and Aboriginal languages and the testing of various TESL methods and techniques from the point of view of their suitability in Aboriginal education.

TSED, being a much more recently emerging field, requires research not only in relation to its specific application in Australia, but in the very development of a comprehensive theory and methodology. The Australian experience with speakers of Aboriginal English may contribute significantly to the future shaping of this subfield of Applied Linguistics. As mentioned earlier, descriptive statements on Aboriginal English from all parts of the Commonwealth are a prerequisite to developing TSED methods and techniques.

As for Aboriginal languages, basic descriptive work is still lacking in some areas, while excellent materials exist in others. The basic interests of research organizations which sponsored work on Aboriginal languages in the past were different from those of Educational linguistics. From an educational point of view priorities must be given to languages which are assigned important roles in language planning.

As mentioned already, the questions of role definition, graphization, standardization and modernization have not yet been fully explored in relation to Aboriginal languages.

The importance of research on psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic aspects of first and second language acquisition by Aboriginal children must be stressed here as relevant to all planning areas. Cognitive categories, learning styles, patterns of language socialization, linguistic factors in problem solving are some of the topics in which significant research has already been undertaken.

Teacher Training

The importance of training teachers to enable them to handle children's language problems cannot be overemphasized. The best teaching materials and the most reliable research results are of real value only in the hands of the skilled and confident teacher.

Before we can consider the requirements of teacher training for Aboriginal education, it will be helpful to summarize the linguistic aspects of the teachers' tasks in all types of schools where different categories of Aboriginal learners are enrolled.

In the bilingual schools, the non-Aboriginal member of the teaching team has to help the Aboriginal teacher develop the Aboriginal component of the programme. He has to help in the preparation and editing of teaching materials in the language. He must have a knowledge of TESL and understand the specific interference phenomena which occur in his pupils' English speech and written composition. He has to understand the advisory linguist's recommendations and the rationale underlying orthographics and reading courses.

The Aboriginal teacher has the highly important task of imparting initial literacy the transition to English literacy depends heavily on how successful his work has been. He has to help the children develop their language and so build a bridge between a six-year-old's language competence and that of an adolescent in his mother tongue. He has to have insight into the English side of the programme in order to appreciate his pupils' general progress. He, too, has to understand the principles on which literacy materials are built and the advisory linguist's recommendations.

In the monolingual schools, the teacher has to have some knowledge of the structure of languages that are the mother tongues of his pupils.¹⁴ He has to be aware of the nature of the non-standard form of English some of his pupils may speak as their mother tongues. He has to be able to pinpoint the problem areas some children have with English, whether they are speakers of other languages, or of non-standard varieties of English. He has to be familiar with TESL and TSED principles.

In all situations, teachers must have some knowledge of developmental stages of language acquisition by the standard-English-speaking child, so they can evaluate language progress made by their bilingual or bidialectal pupils (the initially monolingual child, of course, gradually turns into a bilingual in the course of his schooling).

School heads have no fewer linguistic problems. Whether in charge of a bilingual or monolingual school, school heads increasingly have to deal with matters of language, as they guide, direct, help and co-ordinate the work of their teachers. They must be well aware of what goes on in relation to languages in their schools and in other Australian schools.

It is evident that the work of all teachers of Aboriginal children

requires a linguistic awareness not hitherto demanded of the Australian teacher. The teacher has to be able to make constant snap decisions in the detailed implementation of Commonwealth or State language education policies. Where such policies are well formulated and explicit, he has to translate them into everyday action. Where policies are non-existent or vaguely formulated, he has to take it upon himself to map out his own course of action to cater for his pupils' communicative needs.

It follows from the above that the more effectively problems are solved at the planners' end, the fewer the teachers' problems are going to be. The situation calls for massive and concentrated activity on the part of linguists in order to bring Linguistics to the school teacher in the form of (a) simplified texts in Applied Linguistics oriented toward the specific requirements of the Australian teacher, and (b) training courses, correspondence courses and in-service courses.

Whether there is a sufficient number of linguists around at the moment to fulfil such a demand, is a further question to be explored by planners. A recognition of the need for much personnel by Education Departments and other organizations could do a great deal to channel talented young linguists into the field of Educational Linguistics. Until recently, only on rare occasions could one encounter advertisements for positions in which qualifications in Linguistics were required, although it cannot be doubted that in many educational and administrative appointments such qualifications would have been of considerable value.

A number of teachers' colleges in Australia now offer courses in Applied Linguistics and some very important developments are getting off the ground involving the provision of linguistic training to Aborigines in a special college to be established for this purpose. However, there are still many teachers passing through various colleges throughout the Commonwealth who are not in any way exposed to Linguistics in the course of their training. Language planning in relation to Aboriginal education would be a simpler task if it could be assumed that every Australian teacher has had basic training in Applied Linguistics. The specific requirements of Aboriginal education could then be based on more solid foundations. If all teachers were trained, not as linguistic specialists, but as 'general linguistic practitioners' who understand the nature of languages and of language problems, they could address themselves to their tasks without constant recourse to the help of advisory linguists. There would be the added bonus of a better understanding of the standard English-speaking child's language development.

A basic course in Applied Linguistics would benefit teachers even if they are transferred to schools where there are no Aboriginal children. There are hardly any schools now in Australia where there are no children at all with some kinds of language problem.

Source Materials

The writing of source materials and texts for bilingual programmes is an area of lively activity at present. Readers are being produced in a number of Aboriginal languages. Here, once again, the role definition for particular languages could determine the extent to which materials are to be developed in them. Already, in some languages there is a demand for advanced reading materials. In others, progress is slower and such demands do not yet arise.

As mentioned earlier, some special materials in English are also available for use in both bilingual and monolingual schools. However, there is by no means an adequate choice of readers in English specially designed for Aboriginal learners of different categories.

It may be useful to examine also the ordinary readers which are used by all children in Australian schools from the point of view of the child with language problems. It is particularly important for such children that all reading materials be linguistically well graded and that their content should be sociolinguistically sound. All too often, readers contain discourse which would not be natural in a real life situation among speakers of standard Australian English. The monolingual English-speaking child can more readily dismiss such discourse as a manifestation of 'textbook language' (even if he does not consciously formulate such an opinion), as he can use the speech of members of his environment as models for everyday speech patterns. For the bilingual child, school readers should serve as models for the development not only of written, but also of oral-aural language skills.

Source materials for Aboriginal education must also extend to textbooks for the training of teachers. I have already touched on this problem under the heading, 'Teacher Training'. Suitable materials for training Australian teachers in Applied Linguistics are extremely scarce. The literature of Aboriginal linguistics is highly academically oriented. Much of the literature of English linguistics is steeped in controversy on highly abstract issues of linguistic theory. It is up to Australian linguists to 'translate' and simplify these complex fields so that textbooks for teachers can economically include all the essential information which has immediate relevance to classroom work.

Evaluation

Last, but not least, evaluation must form an integral part of any

planning programme. The recommendations for the Bilingual Education programme contained a plea for "...research... in the area of evaluation" (Department of Education, Canberra, 1973:59). I would like to conclude this paper by calling attention to the need for the continuing evaluation of the **total range** of educational activities related to languages and dialects in Aboriginal education. This would need to include language development programmes also in monolingual schools.

Evaluation can help planners in sharpening their definitions of goals (Rubin, 1971), in establishing orders of priority for the allocation of resources and in seeing achievements and frustrations in relation to long-range aims.

NOTES

1. See Rubin and Jernudd (1971).
2. For a comparison of the two, see Kaldor (1973a).
3. Differences in 'style' are to be interpreted as those over and above expected and acceptable differences between the speech styles of children and adults.
4. Brandl (1973) has, however, drawn attention to an intra-language problem arising out of bilingual education schemes: that of the child communicating with an Aboriginal teacher of his own community with whom he was previously in a different well-defined relationship possibly involving taboo restrictions.
5. Jernudd and Das Gupta (1971) mention that "the broadest authorization for [language] planning is obtained from the politicians. A body of experts is then specifically delegated the task of preparing a plan". The terms 'politician' and 'administrator' as used here include representatives and council members of Aboriginal communities.
6. While we are, at the present time, not in a position to refer to any authoritative linguistic description of 'standard' Australian English, it seems reasonable to assume that such a dialect exists and that it is used by the large majority of teachers and by the majority of students who communicate successfully with the teachers.
7. At a conference on TSED at Georgetown University a young woman objected to the use of the term 'non-standard English' as being discriminatory and insulting (Alatis, 1970: 197).
8. For a recent review of Bilingual Education in relation to the requirements of Aboriginal children, see Glass (1973).
9. In the use of the terms graphization, standardization and modernization, I follow the scheme developed by Ferguson (1968). I regard these as 'planning areas' rather than 'resultants of planning' as suggested by Fishman (1973). The topics which I discuss here under the heading 'role definition' are mostly dealt with under the heading 'selection' in the literature. 'Role definition' seems to me to be a broader, more

encompassing term than 'selection' which usually refers to selection for a single role, that of a national language.

10. Dr. B.H. Watts, W.J. McGrath and J.L. Tandy.
11. Although this ideal has been challenged in recent years as a sequel of new developments in phonological theory, no alternative suggestions have so far been proposed for literacy programmes. Yallop (1974) urges Australian linguists to collaborate with psychologists in carrying out research into the psycholinguistic aspects of alternative orthographic principles.
12. Dixon (1974) has pointed out some problem areas and has offered alternatives for some of the symbols.
13. Compare the words 'hospital' and 'kapaman' (government) in the Ngaanyatjarra Language Learning Course (Hackett, 1974).
14. These considerations, of course, apply to the language problems of migrant children as much as they do to those of Aboriginal children.

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13

BEYOND COMMON SENSE IN BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Stephen G. Harris

Introduction:

It is assumed that by now the widely known UNESCO statement² has achieved the status of "common sense" knowledge among those interested in the schooling of minority language groups. The term "common sense" here implies that although there is much that is sound in a common sense view, there is also the danger of oversimplification. Although strongly in favour of bilingual education, both educationally and in terms of the ethics of racial contact, I see a number of areas where an oversimplified approach to it can bring either some harm with the good or at least lessen the effectiveness of the use of the vernacular language in education. The "initial literacy in the vernacular" approach is not a panacea for all minority group educational problems. The article by Joy Kinslow-Harris (1968), probably the best single statement made on the value of vernacular education for Australian Aboriginals, was a profound call for a basic change in attitude towards the education of Aboriginals, and outlined sound starting procedures. While this paper strongly supports Kinslow-Harris's statement, it wishes also to extend understanding of some important theoretical issues.

1. Transfer and Maintenance Models of Bilingual Education

Most people who support the idea of bilingual education probably also support the principle of self-determination of ethnic minorities rather than their complete absorption or assimilation into the mainstream culture. It follows that those who are sympathetic to such ethnic minorities would not welcome any form of bilingual education that in fact became a powerful tool of assimilation. Two major models of bilingual education need to

be defined in broad terms. A **transfer** bilingual education model is one that utilizes the home culture and first language of the child merely as an affective emotional and linguistic **bridge** to the school culture and language of the dominant society. Here the specific aim is to transfer to education in the national language during the first two or three years of primary school. A **maintenance** model of bilingual education is one that seeks to maintain the use of both languages and cultures in some important ways (rather than as a public relations gesture) throughout the school life of the student. If it is true that the choice of what lifestyle a minority student will live should ultimately be left to him and his community and family, rather than to external political or educational forces beyond local control, then one of the major purposes of a maintenance bilingual program is to leave the choice open until a more real and free one can be made. To transfer to English by age seven or eight almost forces a choice at that young age (conscious or subconscious) because such an action by school authorities says to the child, "your language is kid's stuff — when the big people get into real school it is all in English" (along the lines of the proverb "what you do speaks so loudly that I can't hear what you're saying"). Any efficient transfer to an English-only curriculum is geared for life in a Western technological economy and the economic opportunities opened by this new education can, in some social contexts, effectively eradicate the original culture within a single generation. The following is an example of the fears of a scholar from an ethnic minority about the effects of transfer bilingual schooling programs on the children of his people, the Chicanos (Spanish Americans) of the United States:

"Thus, in direct contradiction to the usual program's statement of goals, the structure of 'typical' [transfer] programs can be expected to foster not the maintenance but rather the accelerated demise of the ethnic mother tongue.

This is to say that in most cases the ethnic language is being exploited rather than cultivated — weaning the "pupil away from his mother tongue in what amounts to a kind of cultural and linguistic 'counter-insurgency' policy on the part of the schools. A variety of the ethnic language is being used as a new means to an old end. The traditional policy of '**speak only English**' is amended to '**we will speak only English** — just as soon as possible and even sooner and more completely, if we begin with a variety of the ethnic language rather than only English!

In light of this, the benefits to the ethnic language and culture optimistically supposed by many to be somehow inherent in any bilingual education program, become suspect as one realizes that some (and today most) types of bilingual programs may achieve

much more effectively what the earlier monolingual policy could not do. . . ." and

"... The school has always been an institution representative of the powerful community interest groups and their mainstream beliefs. The majority of Chicanos simply do not at present have either the socio-political power or the detailed and clear policy on language and culture necessary for their indigenous varieties of language and culture to be recognized in an institution for social control such as the school, which in all societies is one of the traditional sites where the results of overt and covert socio-political and cultural conflicts are operationalized in what, in English, we somewhat euphemistically call 'school policies', rather than 'cultural politics'." (Kjolseth, 1972, pp. 109 and 111)

In a sense Kjolseth places too much responsibility on the school for language change. "School" is rarely so powerful a factor in language change apart from other social contexts (e.g. language use in the home, community, church, or for desired social mobility, etc.) and economic factors (e.g. job opportunities which require the national language and literacy). The social, economic and geographical realities for the Australian Aborigines are in many ways very different from those of American Chicanos. For example:

- a. Aborigines are dark in pigmentation, a fact that limits social mobility in terms of inter-marriage, etc.;
- b. they are geographically isolated for the most part away from the mainstream of life in the country in which they live;
- c. by cultural inclination, or opportunity in terms of local resources, their economic opportunities are limited.

In other words, the threat of vernacular language loss is not so acute for Aborigines in isolated Northern Territory areas as it is for Chicanos in urban America. However, the issue of whether a transfer bilingual program might "win the battle but lose the war" is sufficiently crucial to warrant the use of an example of the possible lethal nature of a simple transfer curriculum model of bilingual education among a culture closer to Australian Aborigines in terms of their contact situation than are the Chicanos — the Aleutian Indians.

In 1917, Lenin well knew the importance of language to people, so in the socialist revolution in the U.S.S.R. he could not afford to ignore the vernacular languages of the more than sixty powerful minorities in the Republics. So the drive for universal education included initial literacy in the vernacular for those minorities.

The policy also aimed at national unity among the Republics, so the Russian language was promoted as a national language and the vernacular programs were designed for transfer to Russian. Many of these vernacular languages were, however, so large and powerful that they survived both the effects of the transfer-to-Russian bilingual curriculum model and the other aids to Russianization such as large scale forced migrations and constant rotation of large numbers of soldiers. As an example of the strength of some of these minority languages, the Georgian language group (which has a long literate history) still provides today for education from primary through university levels in Georgian. However, some of the smaller groups with no strong literate heritage suffered a different experience. The Siberian Yupik — the Aleutian Indian group mentioned above — (Spolsky, 1974, personal communication) under the impetus of Lenin's bilingual education policy had their first published book in Eskimo in 1932 (including, of course, photos of Lenin and Stalin). Because of their relatively small numbers and lack of political power, their transfer to Russian during the 1930's and 40's was rapid. (This was further aided by a change of script from Eskimo to Cyrillic, i.e. to modern Russian script). The last Eskimo publication, written in Cyrillic script, was published in the early 1950's, thus marking the "success" of the Russian transfer bilingual education program. Today most Siberian Yupik within the U.S.S.R. speak Russian and their Eskimo dialect is virtually extinct. However, members of virtually the same Siberian Yupik group on the American side of the Bering Straits today speak the Yupik Eskimo dialect as their first and major language. It will be interesting to observe what happens to this group as the effects of bilingual education programs, which have begun among some of the various Eskimo groups since 1965, become clear.

The above does not imply a prediction as to what will result from Australian Aboriginal bilingual programs. It is offered, however, to show that bilingual education is more than a matter of "education". It involves issues of political ethics and long term cultural identity. Curriculum planners need to be aware of the important differences between transfer and maintenance bilingual program models.

2. A Maintenance Model Involves Language Domains

One of the idealistic but naive hopes of those interested in the success of bilingual education is that somehow bilingual education helps a person become and remain "fully bilingual". Up to a point this contains some truth, but there are many degrees and patterns of being "bilingual". For example although bilingualism or even multilingualism is extremely common in the world, it is

relatively rare that the one person will have equal range and facility in different languages. In most cases two languages simply do not perform exactly the same functions in that person's life. What is more common is that a bilingual will vary in fluency in each language according to different social speech domains or functions. Fishman (1968, 1971) has developed this useful descriptive tool of "Language domains", which is a speaker's device to achieve language economy in a bilingual setting. (Although Fishman is responsible for developing domain theory, others before him, for example, Barker (1948) and Ferguson (1959) had discussed the subject — the latter under the term "diglossia".) Basically the idea in domain theory³ is that language use varies along three criteria: person, topic and place. For example, imagine a young bilingual person meeting with a priest who is also bilingual in the same two languages. If the meeting is in church, one language might be spoken (topic and place); whereas if both were playing a game, they might speak a different language (topic and place varies). Or if they are at an employment office seeking employment for the young man, they will choose the language carefully on the basis of one or more of those three criteria. However, all of the three criteria are not always pertinent. For example, in a study by Greenfield (1972) among Puerto Rican bilingual children in New York City, it was found that language use varied according to domain of interaction. Use of Spanish was primarily in the domain of "family", secondarily in the domains of "friendship" and "religion" and least of all in the domains of "education" and "employment" — while the reverse was true for their use of English. However, it was also learned that among these particular Puerto Ricans the domains were not decided from an interaction between the criteria of **person**, **topic** and **place**, but almost entirely according to the **person** being spoken to. This is probably the case also for those Australian Aborigines who still speak their vernacular as their first language.

In any case, the use of language domains remains a powerful tool in a maintenance bilingual schooling curriculum model (see John and Horner, 1971, p. 161). It is worth noting that domain usage as discussed here is in disagreement with part of **Recommendation 10** of Hale and O'Grady's (1974, p. 14) statement —

"Education has the goal of enabling an Aboriginal scholar to write or talk about literally anything under the sun, either in English or in his native tongue."

However, because domain usage is a naturally occurring linguistic economy, "the two languages [should not be] placed in competition in the same contexts, which is contrary to normal diglossia".

(Oller, 1974, p. 9-10) Furthermore, there seem to be psychological and language learning advantages to using the two languages in two different domains, especially in the early years:

"The psychological effects of compound bilingualism may be particularly critical during the age period between five to seven years when the role of language in cognition is just being established." (Cazden and John, 1971, p. 261)

Co-ordinate bilingualism, that is, usage of the two languages in separate domains, is the model used by Wayne Holm and staff at the Rock Point Navajo bilingual school. (Here the two criteria of "topic" and "person" mutually support domain usage; that is, Navajo teachers teach some subjects in Navajo and English teachers teach other subjects in English.) This policy does not mean that Navajo children are not exposed to successful bilingual models in the Navajo teachers; however, it does mean that these bilingual models have their effect in informal rather than formal classroom contexts. (There is also no overriding reason why the same teacher cannot teach two subjects in two different languages. However, in that case, "topic" would be the only criterion separating domains, which is a "weaker" situation.)

The use of different languages in different speech domains is probably a reality already in most Australian Aboriginal communities, for example, English for school (person, topic and place, but mostly person), and for white people (person and topic, but mostly person), versus the vernacular for home, most social interaction and ceremonies (person, topic and place, but again mostly person). Because of this current and functional reality, and because the school day in a bilingual school has no more hours than the school day in a monolingual school, the idea of language domains seems both practical and essential to a maintenance curriculum model of bilingual education. For those interested in seeing the maintenance model instituted for Australian Aborigines and who are discouraged about the practicality of the maintenance model because of the multiplicity of Aboriginal languages, the small numbers of speakers of each and the difficulties involved in producing materials for such small groups, they should remember that in spite of these facts, there are other facts mentioned under 1. a, b and c above, namely, their dark pigmentation lessening their social mobility, their geographical isolation and limited economic opportunities: all of which militate against the possibility of imminent assimilation. In other words, there is still good reason to accept this culturally pluralistic situation as it is and work towards the best bilingual/bicultural curriculum model available: the maintenance model.

Some comments are probably necessary about the materials needed to support a maintenance model. Because of our "Western" preoccupation with written material in schools, and because of concern about the difficulty and questionable function of writing a great deal of material in an Aboriginal language, we have perhaps been blinded to the fact that much learning can be done orally. Although a strong literature production department is essential in a bilingual school, much good teaching can be done by both direct oral communication and the use of tape recordings rather than by dependence on book libraries; and can be done visually by means of film and video tapes made in each school and preserved for new on-coming classes. Oral and visual technology (as well as printing technology) can enable the development of other than token subjects in the vernaculars in a maintenance program (for example, "the history of the Northern Territory" rather than "How the Crow Became Black" — "token" here meaning token in terms of school priorities). Media other than the printed word may also tap different learning modality potentials, for example, visual versus verbal, which may vary culturally (John, 1972) as well as from individual to individual in any one culture. The trend today in education generally (both in elementary schools and high schools) is away from an almost sole emphasis on the printed word (and any spoken word related only to printed material) to more use of oral language and manipulatable materials. Some of these methods are the presentation of projects using constructed materials rather than written reports, and the use of small group discussions rather than teacher lectures and student note taking. None of this lessens the teacher's need for written texts, notes or plans. Both the English and Aboriginal teachers in all domains will need to use writing in varying amounts, but the fact that we are now seeing that students can learn through many other means as well as through written texts, leaves room for the use of the vernacular in appropriate subject areas at higher levels in a maintenance bilingual program.

It will be noted that all the above discussion implies a preference for a policy of "cultural pluralism" over against vague (and assimilationist) notions of "social change" for Aboriginals.

"Our own belief is that educational research reflects underlying assumptions about the objectives of education. We join those who seek a kind of education that will provide a dual preparation for every Indian [in the above case, Aboriginal] child in what we hope will be an increasingly pluralistic society. His education should equip the young Indian with the minimum skills necessary for urban society, if he chooses to participate in it. And it must do this without neglecting his growth within his traditional

society, thus freeing him for the other choice of developing Indian life among Indians." (Cazden and John, 1971, p. 269)

3. Bilingual Education Involves Much More Than Language As Such

It is becoming more and more apparent that one of the oversimplifications of bilingual education is the belief that if you can only change the language of initial instruction the total purpose is largely achieved. It is true that initial instruction in the vernacular is probably the most basic and powerful tool of any bilingual education program, but the language switch is only one of several desirable aspects of such a program. The "education" part of "bilingual education" is as important as the "bilingual" part.

a) Type of Curriculum Design

There are a large number of analyses of different ways to place different emphases in school curricula for early childhood education. The various program designs may vary on a continuum between those on the one hand that emphasize specific prescribed learning objectives, limited pupil choice and initiative, and extensive teacher direction; and on the other end of the continuum are broadly expressed learning objectives, with much pupil choice and initiative, with the teacher's role becoming one of a facilitator of learning (which, incidentally, requires high teacher skill and much teacher initiative, but of a different kind). Another way of describing the continuum would be to call it one between intellectual skills versus an emphasis on the emotional and mental growth of the whole child; or content versus process. (There are, of course, many programs that span a large area across the middle of the continuum, for example, those designed by Weikart, Kamii, Nimnicht, Hughes, Montessori and many of the British infant schools). The point here is that in a bilingual program it is reasonable to expect that, in spite of the presence of two languages, the program will remain "Western" in orientation to the degree that its teachers are Western oriented and to the degree that the curriculum model is designed for Western teacher direction. In view of the current degree of "Western" teacher ignorance of natural Aboriginal learning contexts, the Aboriginal child will have scope to learn within the cognitive and social learning styles of his culture, and later his two cultures, if his learning is in a freer context than that allowed by direct instruction by a teacher. In other words, there is much that can be said in favour of an "open classroom" curriculum design to complement a bilingual education curriculum design. Both have a basic "child centred" philosophy, (which, of course, should not be confused with poor materials or sloppy teaching). The structure and purposes of the

b) Culturally Different Learning Contexts or Styles

During the growing concern for the education of ethnic and linguistic minorities in English speaking countries there have been several historical developments. Prior to the late 1950's the policy generally was to treat minority children as if they were the same as the Western monolingual English child. Then in the early 1960's came an emphasis on teaching English as a Second Language, thus recognizing differences. Then in the mid 60's, bilingual education commenced, followed by interest in bilingual/bicultural education in the early 70's, recognizing that neither language nor education can be separated from culture (I use the word "interest" here because most of us won't really grapple with what bicultural education might entail). Perhaps the next educational innovation for cross-cultural education will be the recognition, both theoretically and in educational practice, of the deep influence on the minority child of culturally different learning contexts. Although in its infancy, this subject is far too extensive to deal with here, but its main areas might be specified as:

i) The major modalities through which important amounts of learning are done may vary from culture to culture. For example, Vera John (1972) describes how the Navajo Indians use the visual modality as a very basic mode of getting important life information from the environment. This is in comparison to monolingual English speakers who use verbalization (either spoken or written) as the major mode of learning. It isn't that either group does not have facility in verbal forms of communication or in visual forms respectively, but that there is a kind of dominance resulting from different socialization practices within the two cultures. (Judith Kearin's work (1974) on visual memory is relevant here). Further research is necessary to discover what the dominant modalities might be for Australian Aboriginals and how to apply these findings in the classroom.

ii) In terms of the **social contexts governing the use of language**, Susan Philips (1972) has shown among the Warm Springs Indians of North Dakota (most of whom, in the younger generation, speak a dialect of English as their first language) the importance of culturally defined sociolinguistic rules for language use. She shows that although the verbal content of a language (i.e. syntax and vocabulary) might be well known, in different cultural contexts (for example, schoolroom versus playground or home) different rules will apply as to how, when, where, why and to whom language can be used. These usage rules are triggered by interpersonal communication expectations carried over from the child's home culture. This fact says two things to the teachers of

English in a bilingual program: firstly, that an ethnically different child may be reticent to use English for reasons other than that of not knowing sufficient content of English; and secondly, that oral English should be taught in socially meaningful contexts so that the sociolinguistic rules governing its usage may be learned, rather than merely its content. Obviously, this is one reason why it is necessary for children to be bicultural as well as bilingual, because it is in effective communication that language and culture are so mutually dependent. A third implication of Philip's work for Australian bilingual programs is that basic sociolinguistic research is needed to discover rules of interpersonal communication used by speakers of the Aboriginal languages, so that culture clash and misunderstandings originating in cultural differences in language usage rules, might be avoided.

iii) In terms of the **ethnology of learning** there is a good deal of research to be done. There are three broad types of learning contexts; **traditional informal education** (for example, learning subsistence skills); **non-institutional formal education** (for example, initiation) and **school learning**. (Scribner and Cole, 1973). In spite of all the anthropological research that has been conducted among Australian Aboriginals, very little focus has been exclusively devoted to the dynamics and contexts of transmission of knowledge and skills among Aboriginals traditionally, or to Aboriginal values and child rearing practices that affect learning. (Annette Hamilton's work (1970) is an exception in the latter area). These need to be systematically observed and then utilized in schools so that the transition from the purely Aboriginal home learning contexts to the bicultural school environment might be as smooth and productive as possible. (See Gay and Cole, 1967; Sintz, 1969). The third type of learning context, school learning, should also be examined in Aboriginal schools. Recently there has been a good deal of interest in "ethnologies of the classroom" (Dumont, 1972; Smith, 1972; Leacock, 1969; Flanders, 1967; Collier, 1973). There are now many research techniques available (perhaps the most graphic being the videotape and various behaviour coding strategies) that provide teachers with accurate objective feedback about how their behaviour is affecting the pupils in the classroom. Bilingual education should by its very nature be child centred, and for this to be so in practice, more awareness about present Aboriginal realities in these three types of learning is required.

iv) In terms of **environmental or spatial arrangement** of the learning context, Kritchevsky et al. (1969, p. 33-36) have hypothesized that classroom arrangements should vary according to the use and nature of space in the child's traditional culture. What

kinds of buildings are most suitable for Aboriginal schooling, or must it all be inside buildings? One of the most important environmental features that could affect an Aboriginal person's preparedness for learning might be the composition and positioning of the group of Aboriginals with whom he is at the time.

v) In terms of a person's **internal psychological structures** as this affects learning, Bruner, Olver, Greenfield et al. (1966), Luria (1971), Cole and Bruner (1972), Scribner and Cole (1973) and Cole and Scribner (1974) discuss "functional learning systems" and intellectual "orientations", and different experiences as these affect one's capacity for learning. The basic idea here is that traditional cultures deal only with subject matter that is actually present or at least familiar to all those present. In contrast the function of a Western school system is largely to teach children about either non-present or non-familiar concepts. When a child from a traditional culture goes to school he has to learn how to transfer concepts and generalize principles to novel situations. The majority of cross-cultural psychologists now seem to agree that people of all cultures have the basic component cognitive processes such as abstraction or inferential reasoning or categorization (Cole and Scribner, 1974, p. 193) but that these basic cognitive processes function in different ways in culturally different thinking systems. In other words it is not that the particular mental capacities are absent in different cultures, but that the functional systems (or how these capacities are combined and applied to problem solving) vary in important ways between traditional and technologically advanced cultures. Leaving the cultural mindset or the cognitive "crutches" of a homogeneous "tribal" culture, and moving into a second more complex, less predictable culture, and one less governed by tradition, may stimulate the generalizing of concepts. In other words, diversification of experience may force one to generalize to new contexts and new problems those concepts learned in traditional contexts. For example, it is well known from studies such as Cole, Gay, Glick and Sharp (1971) that tribal African children, after some formal schooling, quickly generalize cognitive capacities to new areas of experience, and develop the capacity to generalize underlying principles to non-context-specific tasks on various tests. All this says that a child needs to have Western type schooling experiences at least in some subjects (or domains) in order for Western type functional learning systems to develop.

In the light of the above, moves by some Aboriginal groups "back to the bush" to outstations to have extremely informal schooling with local teachers in charge, with perhaps some visits by white teachers (although within the rights of the Aboriginals

concerned, and desirable for other reasons) is not the best kind of bilingual education for them if, in fact, they want their children to develop mental functional systems that will allow them to compete later in Western school systems at higher levels.

4. The Place of Second Language Immersion Programs

There is available today apparently contradictory evidence of the results of "bilingual education", or at least schooling involving a second language. Some educators think that the success of such projects as the St. Lambert in Montreal, Canada (Lambert and Tucker, 1972) "proves" that children can do very well in school while doing all their subjects in a second and previously unknown language. This is an issue that cannot be solved on purely "linguistic" grounds. The question is: if the originally monolingual English speaking St. Lambert children were highly successful in schooling in a French immersion program (i.e. all school subjects taught in French) why is it that thousands of American Indians and Australian Aboriginals who experienced primary schooling in second language immersion programs largely failed dismally? We know that innate mental ability does not account for the differences. Perhaps what the St. Lambert experiment suggests to many people is that, all other things being equal, schooling in a second language does not provide insurmountable problems to a student. But all other things are not equal! The St. Lambert children came from upper middle-class homes; their parents actively took the initiative in asking McGill University to begin the experiment with their children, and the children came from homes where there was a well established tradition of schooling and literacy etc. It seems therefore, that where children come from homes of low socio-economic status with no tradition of formal schooling and literacy, that the vernacular language, **for strictly speaking non-linguistic reasons**, is the most effective social and psychological substitute for the absence of these dimensions in the child's background. In this context, social and emotional factors are more important than purely linguistic ones. This is perhaps the major purely utilitarian reason why use of the vernacular language in bilingual education is so important for most ethnic minorities. In discussing the St. Lambert experiment in Montreal, Bowen (1974, p. 14) says that:

"... this illustrates what I believe is the major point: that the choice of language as the medium... for educational purposes should be determined by social conditions. . . ."

In places such as Montreal and Culver City in California, to use just two examples in French and Spanish, the most appropriate language of instruction is the pupil's second language, where the

prevailing social conditions are suitable. However, in the case of American Indians and Australian Aboriginals, where many years of education through immersion in the second language has failed, the most appropriate language of instruction would be the pupils' first language (their vernacular) because, again, that is what is most suitable in terms of the social or psychological conditions that prevail.

Later in his paper, however, Bowen says:

"... the most promising way to develop bilingual competence, to make a person proficient in another language, is to use that language in a significant function. The most successful attempt to provide an adequate opportunity for bilingual skills that I am aware of, is an immersion program where early education is given fully or substantially in a second language." (p.21)

Experience has shown that where the students are socially and psychologically prepared for it, more of a second language is learned when children learn the content of significant subjects in that language rather than when they take the second language as a subject itself.

In the light of the social and psychological realities prevailing among traditional Australian Aboriginals today (and most American Indians) and in the light of what Bowen and others have noticed in favour of second language immersion programs, how can these apparently conflicting principles be reconciled? The reconciliation can probably be achieved by following a maintenance bilingual education program until the child is emotionally and scholastically well established in school, and then changing at, say, the 6th grade, to teaching English by immersion. After competence in English has been achieved, the students should then complete their high school education in a bilingual structure if possible, immersion in the second language having achieved its goal. (Spolsky, 1974, personal communication). So that the student will not be pressured out of his ethnic identity, or become a social misfit in his home culture, the goal is competence in the second language, not complete long term transfer to using the second language for all functions.

5. Teachers' Roles and Influence

One of the repeated observations from talking to teachers and looking at research studies is that the role of the teacher is really more powerful in the classroom than is the program design itself. In Smith's (1972) study, she examined eleven different schools that had different Head Start program designs. The purpose of

the study was to see how quite widely varying curriculum designs influenced the children's social-personal behaviours. One would have expected that Smith would have found marked differences in those programs' influence on the children's personal and social behaviour. However, she found no significant differences, and this seemed attributable mainly to teacher influence, both from the fact that most teachers incorporate their own curriculum variations into any program design and, secondly, by means of sheer influence of their personality, values and attitudes:

"... some observers feel that teacher behaviour varies more widely **within** different "models" or programmatic approaches than it does **between** different approaches." (Emith, 1972, p.39) [emphases mine.]

This influence of teachers has been emphasized elsewhere; for example, in the well known book *Pygmalion in the Classroom*, which describes the self-fulfilling prophecy, that is, children's performance will be greatly influenced according to the teacher's expectation and in response to teacher attitudes; and Kleinfeld (1972, 1973) who stresses how important the personal relationship between student and teacher is in Eskimo education.

It is probably appropriate here to raise the question of how effective a curriculum change will be without change in or of teachers. In other words, will the teacher's influence be so strong that a "new" bilingual program may be reduced to something very similar, from the student's point of view, to the old monolingual one? But what is the solution? One can't train a lot of new bilingual teachers overnight. One answer is to have more paid local teaching aides in the classroom with official recognition, and give them in-service training. (This practice began in the Northern Territory about ten years before "bilingual education" was introduced, but could be further extended.)

"A next-to-worst local bilingual teacher or aide (poorly trained in terms of Western teacher training) is better in a bilingual program than the next-to-best white monolingual teacher." (Spolsky, 1974, personal communication)

In other words, an exceptionally poor local teacher would be of little use, and an exceptionally good monolingual English teacher is still a very valuable asset, but neither case denies the general principle. Another answer is to decide how a monolingual Western teacher's training can be furthered towards more of an understanding of bilingualism while he/she is serving as a teacher. Basically, a bilingual education program requires teachers who are to some degree bilingual/bicultural. Granted, some formally qualified English speaking teachers are very useful assets in such a school,

but if they make no effort to learn some of the Aboriginal language (even if only greetings and praise terms) or if they don't spend any time informally in out-of-work hours with Aboriginal people, then their attitudes are probably such that in at least some ways they are negative influences on Aboriginal children, and unknowingly show disrespect for the Aboriginal language. One of the basic attitudes that would qualify a European teacher to be a part of a bilingual program would be, "I know these people have something valuable to teach me". The logical extension of this philosophy is that the sooner qualified Aboriginal teachers (possibly "qualified" in some compromise sense) become the headmasters of Aboriginal schools the better;⁴ for the sake of the government's good faith in proving genuine commitment to self-determination, and for the sake of the children who need models of the rewards of the new system:

"In New Mexico, to take a case in point, the fact that the administrators of the school, the owners of businesses and the people of high socio-economic status in general tend to be majority culture types while the people of lower socio-economic status like custodians and laborers are predominantly ethnic minority types, is a very loud fact that commands a lot of attention from the child and everyone else. The effort to change attitudes based on response to these sorts of realities is almost like trying to get people to stop believing in traffic accidents." (Oller, 1974, p. 15-16)

Finally, teacher attitudes are important to the success of any domain/maintenance bilingual curriculum model. Eduardo Hernandez-Chavez, a sociolinguist and educator of long experience in the Southwest of the U.S.A. said recently (1974):

"The use of language domains in bilingual schooling is the most powerful curriculum design towards maintenance of the minority language. However, if the teachers in the school do not show appropriate respect for the minority language both in word and deed, then the minority children will follow their lead attitudinally and a domain structure will be rendered powerless in the face of teacher (and hence student) attitudes that reveal a desire not to use the minority language for significant functions in the school."

Admittedly, the curriculum models and teacher behaviours are probably not as powerful a factor ultimately in minority language maintenance as other social, economic and political factors operating outside the schools. However, teachers and the schools are probably easier to change than these other factors; that is why it is important to understand what changes within teachers and schools are most important in this context.

6. Evaluation

a) Achievement, or Skills Tests

"Evaluation" and "planning" are two sides of the same coin. Any evaluation that does not cover all the areas outlined under "The aims of bilingual education" is too narrow. "Evaluation" is often used synonymously with "achievement tests". Achievement tests are manifestations of our Western technological society's preoccupation in schools with the child's repertoire of skills, rather than an interest in the whole child in terms of mental ability, social development, emotional maturity and so on. Teachers and administrators often give merely lip service to the needs of the "whole-man", while priority emphasis is given to teaching cognitive skills. This is not to say that achievement tests have no useful function.

They can be helpful if the tester is aware that achievement tests need to be testing **competence** not merely **performance**. (See Cole and Scribner, 1974, Chapter 8.) Competence is that broad base of relevant knowledge and the capacity to apply understanding in novel situations. It is not merely rote memory. For example, the Bereiter-Engleman inspired Distar program teaches basic arithmetic, English language and reading skills to "disadvantaged" children. The test results often gratify the source of the program's funds and often the teacher, but on closer examination it appears that the tests are largely circular, i.e. they test what has been taught — which can be more rote memory than growth in competence. The child's own productions or evidences of creativity reveal more of the child's competence than standardized tests do. For example, a story retelling task (John and Berney, 1970) (where the child is read a story accompanied by pictures, and is asked to retell the story in his/her own words, accompanied by the same pictures) reveals more of the child's language ability than, say, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (though admittedly the former is more difficult to score). Or in the area of second language testing, linguists have recently been turning away from discrete point tests (e.g. tests of grammatical items and vocabulary) to tests of integrative skills (e.g. close tests) because an understanding of the nature of language shows that words are not primarily processed as discrete units but are processed accumulatively (see both Oller, pp. 184-199; and Spolsky, pp. 164-176, in Oller and Richards, 1973). Another problem is that standardized test results are largely unintelligible. Macnamara (1974) suggests some more alternatives:

"In my own evaluation of a bilingual project I attempted to make myself intelligible by reporting samples of what children were able to do and estimates of how many could perform at that level or

better. So I included samples of the stories children told in French and of the passages they were able to read. This I did for the beginning and end of the year so that everyone could see what progress the children had made. I should have extended this to arithmetic and other subjects." (p.51)

b) Tests of Non-Cognitive Qualities

In spite of the emphasis on achievement tests there is some research on social-personal behaviours of young children. Withal (1960) and Smith (1972) have reviewed a number of studies that have tested such variables as self-concept and self-esteem, inter-personal adjustment, (that is, how well the child adjusts to the school setting, and to teachers and peers) and studies relating to autonomy and independence. Flanders' (1967) interactional analysis technique, which records interaction between teacher and students, measuring non-cognitive dimensions in the classroom, is one of the best known such tests. This area of testing falls within the "ethnography of the classroom" which is quite a new field of classroom evaluation where techniques for quantifying personal behaviours are being developed. This dimension deserves the effort necessary to streamline it into an efficient tool in the evaluation of Aboriginal classrooms.

c) The School in the Community

There are also implications of bilingual education that extend outside the classroom which no thorough evaluation can ignore if "school" is recognized as other than an end in itself. Bilingual education can affect, and be affected by, factors that extend far outside the school. Spolsky, Green and Read (1974) outline some of the other considerations which influence, or are influenced by, bilingual education, and suggest the breadth of context in which evaluation needs to be conceived:

- i) Linguistic considerations — what are the local language varieties and their roles in, and reactions to, bilingual education? What is the influence of public media such as radio, etc.? How are the major and minor languages tested? What is the nature and extent of language maintenance and shift, or development of language domains, and how are these facts reflected in school language use?
- ii) Psychological considerations — what has been learned about traditional cognitive styles? How are student attitudes and relationships being influenced, or pride in cultural heritage being affected by the bilingual school?
- iii) Sociological considerations — is anyone's socio-economic status changed because of the introduction of bilingual education?

Is the community structure influenced and what is the changing role of the school as a community factor? How is social mobility or access to the mainstream national culture influenced by the bilingual school?

iv) Economic considerations — how stable and generous is the source of funding? Has the government said with its right hand, as it were, that bilingual education is to be implemented, but with its left hand withheld the extra funds necessary to employ such specialized staff as linguists and literature producers, for example, artist/printers etc.? How does the school influence employment opportunities in the local community for program graduates and other older people? How does the school itself change as an employer after the introduction of bilingual education?

v) Political considerations — does the school have any connection with, or role in, various pressure groups? How does government policy and national ideology affect the school? Who controls the school? Is the school a local political symbol? What political content is there in the curriculum? Is the school a local political power base, and what is its role in political awareness?

vi) Religion/cultural considerations — how is the strength of local religion and culture influenced by the school or influencing the school? What is the cultural-religious content of the curriculum, and how are students and parents affected by this?

vii) Educational considerations — what is the availability of primary resources — Aboriginal and Western teachers; linguists, printers, adult education personnel; materials, equipment, etc.? What is the quality of scholastic achievement? What is the quality and relevance of education? What is the quality of teaching in both languages? How does the curriculum influence students and staff?

In summary, Spolsky et al. make the important statement:

"... our main purpose is to show how relatively insignificant educational considerations may be, both in the decision whether or not to establish a bilingual program and in the evaluation of a program's 'success' in reaching its goals." (p.3)

Definition of goals is obviously necessary prior to evaluation of any bilingual program, and the five goals for bilingual education in the Northern Territory outlined by Watts, McGrath and Tandy (1973, Chapter 1 and especially paragraph 1.2, p. 7-8) are not inconsistent with a broad context of evaluation as suggested by Spolsky et al. It will be interesting to see if future evaluations in the Northern Territory cover all five goals with equal thoroughness.

Finally, part of this broad context in which Spolsky et al. are suggesting bilingual education be evaluated, should be a commitment to the position: "education for what?" Our assumption in the Western world is that "school" is a necessary and good thing, and even if the seven broader considerations of Spolsky et al. mentioned above are kept in mind, focus is likely to be merely towards improving the quality of schooling as such. Because "education for what?" asks a question of the future, we tend to put it off, which we really can't afford to do. It is perhaps at this point that we should recognize the importance of the maintenance model of bilingual education; of the value of cultural and language domains and of the future security that might be contained for the Aboriginal in being a bilingual/bicultural person.

Conclusion

The vernacular language as used in the educational setting is necessary for communication (and communication is necessary to learning). It also carries enormously important messages in terms of inter-cultural respect, self respect, and as a statement that the minority vernacular is as "real" and as valuable in its own right as the dominant language. For these reasons the use of the vernacular in bilingual education is probably the single most important and powerful part of it. The purpose of this paper has been, however, to document two warnings. Firstly, that the use of the vernacular in school, although powerful and effective, is not a simple or common sense matter; and that its use carries consequences that those interested in the field are only just beginning to express. And, secondly, that the vernacular on its own cannot overcome inadequacies in curriculum design and teacher attitudes and administrative ways of doing things that are still basically oriented to monocultural English, Western and technological priorities. In the first analysis, if the control over the planning of the school life (in terms of what language is used, what the curriculum plan is, and who does the teaching) is in the hands of monolingual and monocultural representatives of the dominant society, the use of the vernacular language in primary school education will never amount to more than a powerful veneer. In most cases there is a large cultural gap to be jumped: from the monocultural Aboriginal to the bicultural/bilingual Aboriginal. To speak metaphorically, the way to help a minority child to jump this gap is not to build bigger and better landing facilities, but to strengthen the jumper and release him from obstacles of communication and insecurities of identity.

NOTES

1. I gratefully acknowledge the helpful comments of Joy Kinslow-Harris, and of John Read, a graduate student in educational linguistics at the University of New Mexico.
2. ["It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium." (*The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education*, UNESCO 1953, p.11).]
3. While language **domains** is one pattern of bilingualism, **code switching** (Gumperz, 1970) is another possible pattern. Domains normally involve changing to a different language at the paragraph, or more often, at a discourse level; whereas code switching involves changing languages within a sentence. Code switching is an in-group style, and is used by the in-group as a test of whether the person being spoken to holds the same values and identity. Code switching usually involves highly educated bilinguals (it is only possible when the phrase structure rules of both languages have been mastered); it is used **within** a group (where domains operate **between** different groups as a device of separating the functions of two languages between those groups); it is used for metaphoric, semantic or stylistic purposes; and finally, involves languages (for example Spanish and English) that represent two cultures that have undergone much contact. Between two cultural systems that are still very different (for example traditional Aboriginal and white Australian cultures) the use of domains rather than code switching is more likely to be found.
4. Western teachers would continue to be needed to handle the "System" for such schools (for example, people such as ex-headmasters or other experienced teachers who had achieved some degree of biculturalism and who were sufficiently humble), perhaps in the role of deputy headmasters — with no reduction in salary, etc.

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Erratum:

p.123: Last sentence continues thus:

The structure and purposes of the pre-school might be the most sensitive indicator of whether the curriculum designers seriously want the child to be free to be bicultural, or whether pre-school is primarily a social and educational preparation towards the major culture's educational goals.

14

BILINGUAL EDUCATION: A POINT OF VIEW

Terry Long

In European terms, the educational competence and performance of children from small, indigenous minority groups in primary school and beyond is falling far short of adequacy. This is a world-wide phenomenon which is brought sharply into focus by the plight of Aborigines in Australia and, more particularly, by those in this State. If the statements and pleas made by Aborigines, themselves, are to be given credence, this under-achievement is equally as relevant in Aboriginal terms in regard to competence, performance, pride, awareness and practice of things specifically held to be of value by Aborigines.

The general breakdown of Aboriginal society which began so soon after first settlement became more and more evident with each succeeding generation, as did the ability of this society to cope adequately with the new, introduced norms of the dominant culture. Despite the generous cash incentives now available to further secondary and tertiary education for both Aborigines and part-Aborigines there are only signs of a very sluggish recovery.

Betty H. Watts (1967) in a paper delivered to a seminar on the educational needs of Aboriginal children said, "A majority of the children are making comparatively poor academic progress, whether this be judged on age-for-grade, level for achievement in comparison with State norms, the proportion remaining at school beyond the school-leaving age, or numbers entering tertiary education." Again, a survey completed by the New South Wales Teacher's Federation, in 1964, produced the disturbing information that, whereas only one Aboriginal student reached fifth year in secondary education, 35 European students from a comparable population attained that standard.

During the 1967 seminar from which Dr. Watts' statement was extracted, 83 papers in all were presented on most aspects of primary education, but only one specifically discussed the question of education in the vernacular: and that was W.H. Edwards commentary on the experience of the use of the vernacular in education at Ernabella Mission in South Australia. Dr. Betty Watts is now a prime-mover in the attempt to introduce vernacular education techniques throughout the Northern Territory.

The presented papers have been published in a volume *"Aborigines in Education"* edited by S.S. Dunn & C.M. Tatz. It is interesting to note Professor Dunn's comments when he summarises the general philosophy generated by the seminar and asks what research is likely to be most profitable in the future. He concluded that "there is plenty of room for research in the teaching of English when it is not the mother tongue". Then, in what is almost a give-away line he asks "Does it make a difference what the vernacular was?"

The Unesco monograph reviewed by Bull *"The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education"* (No. 8, 1953) defined the use of the term "vernacular" as: "A language which is the mother tongue of a group which is socially or politically dominated by another group speaking a different language. We do not consider the language of a minority in one country as a vernacular if it is an official language in another country". They also defined "world language" as: "A language used over wide areas of the world."

Bull appears to think that the Unesco committee over-reacted to the generally depressing world-wide situation — over 700 million adult illiterates with resources so poor, both linguistically and anthropologically, that it might well not be possible to guarantee a secondary education for all children within the present century. The Committee's proposition was "that every pupil should begin his formal education in his mother tongue and should continue to be taught in that language as long as the language and the supply of books and materials permit". The committee also asserted that there is nothing in the structure of any language which precludes it from becoming a vehicle of modern civilization and that planned expansion can take care of the lexical and even syntactic inadequacies which may exist as has occurred in Arabic, Hungarian, Finnish and Estonian. It also recommends that if a child's mother tongue is not the official language of the nation it will have to learn a second language and, if this language is inadequately equipped to deal with technological needs, he may need a third — a world language. A process which Bull thinks could induce a "mild kind of linguistic schizophrenia."

Paul L. Garvin (1960) points out that attempts to formalise a vernacular and to lift it to the level of a standard language are fraught with difficulties. When working in the Caroline Islands he had concerned himself with devising a unified orthography for Ponapean. However, despite the active and interested co-operation of some interested Ponapeanese, it failed. Garvin concluded "that literacy is not the same as standard language". He had attempted to extrapolate beyond the objective of literacy in a folk vernacular to that of flexibility and intellectualisation — the properties of a standard language which, he says, "is an essentially urban phenomenon".

As far as Aboriginal languages are concerned, it may well be possible to bring a recognised vernacular such as Pitjantjatjara, to the status of a standard language by developing the methodology suggested by Garvin and Mathiot (1960) who defined an SL as "a codified form of a language, accepted by, and serving as a model to, a larger speech community". (Pitjantjatjara would meet this criterion, in part, as it is basic to and compatible with a larger language family spread over the central and western desert areas of Australia.) They posited four functions of an SL. (1) unifying: the ability to unite several dialect areas into a single SL speech community, (2) separatist: an ability to set off one speech community from another, (3) prestige: the pride arising from the possession of an SL, (4) frame-of-reference: an ability to establish speech standards, literature and poetry. Bull, however, regards the whole process with some misgiving.

He does not think that the Arabic experiment has gone well. Despite the inclusion of some 10,000 technical terms by the Egyptian Academy "it has not brought Arabic to the level necessary for adequate instruction in pure science and medicine". The Indonesian Language Commission is still not able to eliminate errors and misunderstandings in law, economics and technology despite the recent inclusion of over 14,000 new terms.

Bull says "no language is adequate if one of its speakers finds the frontiers of knowledge blocked by linguistic barriers" and this, as the Unesco monograph demonstrates, is a characteristic of all vernaculars. A vocabulary can be expanded in five ways only: by word borrowing, by coinage, by giving new meanings to existing words, by extending their current meanings, or by compounding new words from existing material taken from it or some other language. The Unesco Committee, however, were loth to recommend coinage or compounding and insisted that originality be maintained — altogether a rather vague discussion that Bull regards as requiring much more research.

Bull also draws attention to a problem which exercises the minds of critics of the vernacular approach in Australia — the number of languages involved and the paucity and the capabilities of those who would be required to teach in them. He feels many will "stand tongue-tied by linguistic deficiencies" in their newly acquired language. As well, the struggle to provide enough readers, books and material in any given Aboriginal language and/or dialect is felt to be another serious obstacle, apart from finding enough teachers with the necessary linguistic skills to approach the task with competence. He questions whether it is wise to encourage the existence of a multitude of languages which may, for all time, be incapable of growth to world language status. In fact, Bull thinks it would be wiser to aim at a gradual reduction in the number of languages and dialects in every area of the world. In saying this, Bull may well have overemphasised or reacted to those aspects of the report which discussed the use of vernaculars in education to stages well beyond primary grades and even of their evolution towards standard language status.

The literature on education in the vernacular, today, is fairly explicit in stating just how far bilingual education is taken, and it also deals, in the main, with the speech communities made up by traditional and quasi-traditional tribal groups. The problems faced by part-Aboriginal children and Negro communities in the U.S.A. are very different and, perhaps, more difficult to deal with in a class-room situation.

John E. Reinecke (1938) in his paper on "**Trade Jargons and Creole Dialects**", talks of the make-shift jargons formed on first contact between Negro slaves and their masters in the Americas, followed by a stage of an emergence of an incipient Creole dialect, and then the "gradual ironing-out" and adoption of the language-style of the dominant culture. It would seem that this has been the pattern in the more heavily populated areas of Australia, leading to whole generations of "linguistically deprived" children whose English was deficient for establishing sound cognitive norms.

This situation is even more evident where vernacular speaking children are concerned. Hymes, in "**Functions of Language in the Classroom**" says in the introduction to this very authoritative work by Cazden, Johns and Hymes, that "there is no basis for assuming differences in fundamental linguistic ability or for imputing inherited differences between ethnic, racial or other groups. The vernacular speech of every society or social group, when studied, has been found to be based on complex, profound structures of the same kind." He goes on to say that the true

ability of disadvantaged children may not be accurately perceived and that in one sense it is scientifically absurd to describe children as "coming to school linguistically deprived so far as the presence of regular grammar and the capacity for creative use of language in social life are concerned". Linguistic deprivation arises when the language of the classroom is not their language of competence.

Ameé Glass (1973) in her paper "**Bilingual Education for Aborigines**" says that a "most important advantage of bilingual education is psychological". Children arriving at school in the Warburton Ranges for the first time are utterly confused by their first confrontation with English. Commands given in English are interpreted by the brighter children and the rest work it out as they go along. "Gradually," says Miss Glass, "there develops the realisation that their own language is unacceptable at school." In some cases, the use of the vernacular, for any purpose, is punishable. The rejection of this, "the most important exteriorisation or manifestation of the self, of the human personality. . . can be expected to affect seriously and adversely those children's concept of their parents, their homes, and of themselves." (Bruce A. Gaarder, quoted from Andersson & Boyer, 1967). Glass talks of the strain felt by people learning another language in their efforts to conceptualise and understand the unfamiliar symbols. The strain eventually becomes too great, and the student mentally "switches-off" and goes back to thinking in the mother tongue. When children are taught, in the early stages of school work, in their own language this strain is lessened and they are able to approach their English lessons with greater concentration.

This experience was confirmed by Edwards (1967). At Ernabella, where all instruction in the lower school is in the vernacular, it was reported that, "once the children have had success in one language and formed good reading habits, their enthusiasm, keen interest, and reading skills were quickly transferred to the second language, English, in which they have immediate success and can learn quickly. One group of children completed the normal Grade 1 reading course in five months." This, and other abundant evidence provided by Edwards and Glass, clearly shows that the vernacular approach does not retard progress in English. At the same time, it maintains and cements the child's own positive conception of his own culture. At Ernabella, elements of Aboriginal culture are a normal feature of the curriculum, and songs and myths play an essential role in the classroom. The gap between camp and school is bridge; the adults are encouraged and a vast store of vernacular material is provided. There is no occasion or need for a ten year old child (Glass, 1973) to ask of a teacher "Wangkayi is a rubbish language isn't it?" — as actually occurred

at the Warburtons.

The overall linguistic situation in Western Australia provides no easy approach to allow the Education Department to initiate a general policy of education in the vernacular.

In the southern half of the State the "linguistically deprived" child is a speaker of English — of a sort — with a poor vocabulary and a confused syntax. Perhaps what is required is an attempt to improve English as a first language on the lines of an experiment being conducted in Negro schools in Shadesville, Florida (Morton J. The Shadesville Experiment, 1969). Here, however, the part-Aboriginal child is in a minority position in his school and the situation may need to be looked at as a pre-school programme.

In the north and northwest, where many linguistic groups have migrated from inland areas to the coast and had their languages heavily influenced by more powerful neighbours, there is a confusion of languages and dialects operating throughout the region. At Port Hedland, Roebourne and as far south as Onslow, Nyangumada seems to be gaining ground as a standard vernacular, and as the structure, syntax and lexical make-up of the languages in this area have much in common, perhaps this dialect, too, could be encouraged to develop as an SL. A situation which could ease the difficulty of finding sufficient vernacular-teaching personnel and teaching material for the thirty or so schools in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions.

In the fringe-desert areas ranging from Cundeelee Mission in the south, through Kalgoorlie, Wiluna and north to the Balgo Hills Mission, the use of the vernacular in the primary grades I to III has the greatest chance of successful introduction.

In this area, the speech communities are isolated from each other by vast distances but there is still a homogeneity present which will, in the long run, probably see Pitjantjatjara emerge as the SL of the region.

The Commonwealth Government has, as a matter of policy, embarked on a programme of bilingual education in the Northern Territory, basing its operations on a report prepared by Dr B.H. Watts, W.M. McGrath, Inspector of Schools, Aboriginal Education Branch, and J.L. Tandy, Department of Education, Canberra. "Bilingual Education in Schools in Aboriginal Communities in the Northern Territory", published in March 1973.

The Report emphasises the necessity of the programme maintaining cultural continuity; pride in ethnic identity and favourable self-concepts, involvement of the adults in the community in the process. A particular goal is the improvement in understanding

and, also, in competence in English, as "the cultural well-being of the people, particularly in relation to their interaction with non-Aboriginal Australians and in relation to their continuing development of their own culture, within a nation-wide and world-wide framework, requires literacy in English".

The Report suggests that there may still be a necessity for the child to continue the study of his own language in order to (1) master its full richness; (2) foster his full cognitive development; (3) achieve full satisfaction from oral and written forms of the language.

The teaching-team in the schools will be both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. The non-Aboriginal teachers will receive special in-service linguistic courses (of a general nature) as well as an understanding of the cultural norms of the Aborigines in the area. The Aboriginal teaching-aides will require in-service training to extend their knowledge of the educational goals, competence in teaching strategies and to acquire professional attitudes and competencies. The development of the Aboriginal Teaching Officers or Assistants is seen as one of the most important developments of the programme and is to receive the support of the Summer School of Linguistics. Also, a "major initial need is to create a rich reading environment in the school" so that interest and pleasure are aroused. In all, five communities will be involved during 1973 and the scheme will expand again in 1974 and 1975.

In Western Australia, the first pilot programme will be conducted at the Warburton Ranges in the Ngaanyatjara language using materials already developed by Amee Glass and Dorothy Hackett. The programme will be for a period of three years plus one for assessment. At present, Miss Glass claims that an Aboriginal child on completing Grade 1 has, in maths and reading, accomplished little more than half of what an average child accomplishes in the same time.

In Grade 1, the teaching medium will be Ngaanyatjara. There will be some instruction in writing and in oral English, but texts for social studies and maths would be in diglot.

In Grade 2 texts for social studies and maths would continue to be in diglot, but a great deal of the instruction may be in English. The course of English as a second language would continue using Ngaanyatjara as the vehicle and culture and folk lore would be studied in Ngaanyatjara.

In Grade 3 a more normal curriculum would be studied, with English as a second language and Ngaanyatjara culture in that language.

The method used will be a modified version of similar successful programmes first attempted as far back as 1952 in Peru, in 1968 in Mexico and the U.S.A. and other programmes carried out in Russia (from 1927) South Africa and South Vietnam. Miss Glass quotes Eugenia Johnston, the literacy secretary of the Summer School of Linguistics in Vietnam.

"I don't think there could ever be any question about the superiority of a bilingual education system over the system where minorities who know almost no national language have to begin school in that language. Any review of the Communist world's work in this area — especially the history of bilingual education in Russia from 1927 to the present — mounts evidence on evidence bilingual education is the most effective method to get minorities literate."

It will be more than interesting to see if these first, tentative Australian approaches to the same problem can motivate and enthuse Aboriginal communities to hold on to their own cultural concepts and compete on equal terms with European Australians in the wider community.

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15 BILINGUAL EDUCATION: IMPLEMENTATION Amee Glass

1. Implementing A Bilingual Education Program

During 1973 bilingual education was introduced for the first time at Goulburn Is, Angurugu, Milngimbi, Areyonga and Hermansburg in the Northern Territory and at Aurukun in North Queensland. Because of the Federal Government's decision that bilingual education should be implemented in distinctive Aboriginal communities, bilingual education has become a talking point. But what is meant by bilingual education? The following definition was formulated by the United States in framing its Bilingual Education Act.

"Bilingual education is the use of two languages, one of which is English, as mediums of instruction for the same pupil population in a well-organised program which encompasses part or all of the curriculum and includes the study of the history and culture associated with the mother tongue. A complete program develops and maintains the children's self-esteem and a legitimate pride in both cultures."

2. What is Bilingualism?

I have noticed that in discussion of bilingual education, there seems to be some confusion of the terms bilingual education and bilingualism. Basically, I would define bilingualism as the ability to speak two languages. This may or may not be accompanied by the ability to read and write both languages.

Some have stated that a bilingual's grasp of the two languages is a little retarded compared with a monolingual's grasp of his own language. I think I could claim to be bilingual in English and Ngaanyatjarra. I can testify that my ability to write and speak

English has not been hampered by learning to write and speak Ngaanyatjarra. However I would not claim to be able to speak Ngaanyatjarra as well as someone who speaks it as a first language.

Aborigines want to learn English. They need to learn English to function within the wider community. But because they are learning English, they will not forget their Aboriginal language. Whether their bilingualism will be a handicap will depend on how they are taught their second language and whether their use of their first language is allowed to develop so that they master the full richness of that language. This is where bilingual education is vital as a means of ensuring balanced development of skills in both languages.

When we are thinking of bilingual education for Aborigines we are thinking in terms of a transitional program, that is one that will enable the children to continue their education in English. There will be three basic elements in the bilingual program.

1. The introduction of literacy in the Aboriginal language. This has two main advantages — (a) — “the psychological meaningfulness of the reading process is more easily established when the child’s first language is used.” (b) Reading in the Aboriginal language is simpler and easier than in English because there is a better correspondence of sound and symbol than in English.
2. The systematic teaching of English as a Second Language. In the first year this will be oral only but when literacy in the mother tongue is firmly established, literacy in English will be introduced. By this time the child should have oral control of all the structures he is likely to encounter in the reading book.
3. The use of the Aboriginal language as the main medium of instruction in early years will enable them to learn efficiently and also enable normal cognitive development to take place.

3. Models for Bilingual Education

Model 1

That proposed by myself in the paper “Bilingual Education for Aborigines” (Available from: The Editor, Newsletter, D.A.A. Perth).

Model 2

That proposed in the Northern Territory report (Bilingual Education in Schools in Aboriginal Communities in the Northern Territory) for schools where linguistic analysis and recording of the Aboriginal language concerned has been completed.

The main difference in these two models is that in the Northern Territory one, literacy in English is not introduced until the third year, thus allowing two years for the establishment of literacy in the Aboriginal language, while I have suggested the introduction of literacy in English in the second year of schooling.

Model 3

That proposed in the Northern Territory report for schools where the accepted Aboriginal language has not been analysed and recorded it is not possible to introduce the child to literacy in the Aboriginal language. However, it is possible to use the Aboriginal language as the language of instruction and at the same time delay the introduction of literacy in English until the child has sufficient fluency to be able to cope with it.

There may also be other models.

To my mind there would be no doubt that Model 1 or Model 2 would be more effective than Model 3 because “having learned to read in one’s dominant language greatly facilitates learning to read in a second, particularly if the learner knows how to speak the second.”

4. Teachers in a Bilingual Education Program

The teaching in the bilingual program will be carried out by a teaching team consisting of the non-Aboriginal teacher and the Aboriginal teaching-aide. The non-Aboriginal teacher will be responsible for teaching the English lessons and for guiding the Aboriginal teaching-aide in his teaching, since he will most probably be untrained or have received only in-service training. The Aboriginal teacher will be responsible for all the teaching in the Aboriginal language.

Early in 1973 the Commonwealth Minister for Education requested Dr Betty Watts, Mr W.J. McGrath and Mr J.L. Tandy to make recommendations for the implementation and development of a program involving teaching in Aboriginal languages and the incorporation in the school curriculum of further elements of traditional Aboriginal arts, crafts and skills. The findings of the group were published in “Bilingual Education in Schools in Aboriginal Communities in the Northern Territory.” Department of Education, Canberra, March 1973.

As the group made their investigation they were looking for schools where bilingual education could be implemented in 1973. The major conditions they were looking for were:

1. a community with a single language or a dominant language likely to be acceptable to the community as the language of the school.

2. linguistic research and analysis to a point where the language could be used in written form in the school program.
3. the availability of a linguist who had studied that language, and if possible was living on site.
4. the existence on school staff of Aboriginal Teaching Officers or Teaching Assistants.
5. the existence, on school staff, of a Head Teacher and other non-Aboriginal staff members who would be likely to be enthusiastic about the implementation of a bilingual program.

They noted that for the five schools chosen, not all of these conditions were met in every case.

It would seem advisable for some sort of survey to be done in this area also to determine in which schools the education of the children could be improved by the introduction of bilingual education. At the same time the principle of it should be carefully explained to these Aboriginal communities and their attitude gauged. It would not be advisable to attempt to introduce bilingual education in any school where the community did not fully support the concept.

Once it has been decided that it would be advisable to introduce bilingual education in a particular school and that community is in agreement, it will be necessary to produce reading books and teaching aids in the Aboriginal language, if these are not already in existence. If possible these should be written by a linguist who has had some experience in literacy in consultation with a native speaker of the particular language.

It will be necessary to appoint an Aboriginal teaching-aide and if he is not already able to read and write the Aboriginal language, to teach him to do so.

It will be necessary for the non-Aboriginal teacher to begin to gain some knowledge of the Aboriginal language. It will not be necessary for him to be a fluent speaker of the language, for the Aboriginal sections of the curriculum will be taught by the Aboriginal teacher. However, he should be able to speak a little and understand a little of what is said to him.

It will be necessary for the linguist to consult with the teaching-team regarding the curriculum and also the method of teaching as set out in his reading books. The linguist will be able to supply details of Aboriginal songs and stories that can be used in the classroom. If the linguist is resident at the same location as the school it would be advisable to arrange regular consultation periods.

When it is decided to implement bilingual education in a school it is advisable to introduce it only to the new intake for that particular year. "Where children have already undertaken one or two years schooling it seems inadvisable to interrupt the route of their educational progress."

However in the higher grades where the children have an adequate grasp of literacy in English it may be possible to introduce them to literacy in their Aboriginal language.

5. Books and Literature in Aboriginal Languages

The pilot project at Warburton Ranges began in 1974. The materials used at Warburton could also be used at Cosmo Newbery or Mt Margaret if it were decided to implement a program there. (With regard to the latter the situation would need to be researched, as there are probably a mixed group of children with quite varied language backgrounds.)

Cundeelee would need a different set of materials. I understand materials are in the process of preparation by Mr and Mrs Hadfield, the linguists there.

At Jigalong Mr and Mrs Marsh of the Summer Institute of Linguistics have completed the basic analysis of the Mantjiltjara language and would be ready to produce reading books on their return from leave in the U.S.A.

At Balgo the language is Kukatja, and has been studied by Father Peile. However, I understand that this is very similar to Pintupi as spoken at Papunya where reading materials have been prepared by Mr and Mrs Hansen of the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

At Fitzroy Crossing reading materials in Walmatjari have been prepared by Misses Richards and Hudson of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. I understand that these materials could be used at station schools such as Gogo and Christmas Creek.

There will possibly be other schools where despite the absence of materials in the Aboriginal language, it will be possible to implement bilingual education in terms of Model 3. This means that the language of instruction in early years could be the Aboriginal language and Oral English could also be taught. The introduction of literacy would need to be delayed until the children had sufficient command of English — possibly the second year of schooling.

There may also be schools where there are not sufficient children speaking the Aboriginal language to warrant the introduction of a bilingual program. However, there may be value in introducing courses in English as a second language to assist in the development of Standard English, for the language of the home may be

a type of hybrid speech or substandard English.

We have the privilege of being involved in the pilot project at Warburton Ranges this year. Because it is a pilot project, there are many unknown factors. There is much we have yet to discover. This time next year we would expect to have a great deal to share with you that will be of value. However, I am quite confident that the results of bilingual education will be well worth the extra effort which must be put into the implementation of it.

16

BILINGUAL EDUCATION: THE PRE-SCHOOL Jill Churnside

The kindergarten at Jigalong is a hall. It was a dormitory used in the mission days but now it's being used as a kindergarten. It's a very large hall and we have equipment which has been bought for us by the Kindergarten Association (or the Pre-School Education Board as it is now). We have twenty children attending. Actually there are twenty-five; which is only what we are allowed to have, probably because of the size of the building and for health reasons. The five children who don't attend are away on different stations where their mothers and fathers work. We also have four European children who come to kindergarten.

Jill, why do you think it's important for the children at Jigalong to go to kindergarten?

I think it's important for all children to attend kindergarten. Aboriginal children especially need it because they seem so far behind when they enter their first year at school; that is, if they haven't been to kindergarten before. You often hear teachers complain that the child doesn't seem to understand what the teacher is saying. If the child has been to kindergarten it makes it easier for the teacher to communicate with him. An example of this would be a teacher I know who was teaching in Roebourne. She told me that she had some children who hadn't been to kindergarten previously and she found it very hard to communicate with them; the following year she had children who had attended kindergarten and she found a great difference in school-work and communication.

Jill, tell me about some of the activities that you do in the pre-school at Jigalong.

Perhaps one of the most popular activities that the children love

doing at Jigalong is our Nature walks. This includes collecting beetles, lizards, children identifying small animal tracks, and gathering berries. Small insects are brought back and put in specimen jars and put out on the nature table. To me, this is a terrific way of learning from one another. Another thing that happened which was very exciting was that the children staged a corroboree. They started by themselves and they were dancing around. We carried this on a bit further with my aide. I told her to give the children some tapping sticks and blocks so that they could tap together and produce sound. After this went on for a while we took off the children's tops and put some bright coloured paints on them. The children thought this was marvellous and carried it off very well.

Jill, do you do anything in that kindergarten year to help them get ready for, say mathematics, when they go into Grade 1?

Yes, we do have maths in very simple terms. For example, whilst we were out walking one day we found two berries on a tree. Seeing we had twenty children that day, it was a bit hard for everyone to have one each. We gave one each to a boy and a girl but then we asked them to give them back so that we could chop them up in bits so everyone could have a taste. Other things that are familiar to children are stones, from the creek; we use these for shapes, sizes and counting. For new interest we've started using shells; this attracts the children greatly because they do not often see things like this. Also there is the use of insects — butterflies, moths, beetles, and grasshoppers — that the children know about best. This includes the colour, various shapes, counting of legs and so on.

Would you tell us what training you had as a kindergarten teacher and who is your aide and has she had any training?

I did a two year training course at Meerilinga Kindergarten Teachers College, in Perth, Western Australia. My aide's name is Jan Simpson and she hasn't had any training, except that she helped in the kindergarten here last year. Also I have my sister who is working with me this year, and going back to Perth next year to do the Child Care Certificate Course.

Was this course, Jill, just for Aboriginal kindergarten teachers or for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal kindergarten teachers?

This was a special course for Aboriginal girls wishing to become involved in working in kindergartens where there are Aboriginal children. Aboriginal girls and women are able to do this now through the Child Care Certificate (Triple C) Course.

You were saying before that you teach using some of your language and some of each of the children's languages and that you also use some English. How much English do you use to get them ready for going into Grade 1 where all their program is in English?

This was a large problem when I first came to Jigalong and started the kindergarten, because the children could not understand English. After some observation and hard listening, I found that some of their words were very similar and some the same as the languages I speak, which are Ngarluma and Injabarndi. There are two dialects at Jigalong: Mantjiltjara and Kartutjara. I mix my words up a bit; I use some of my dialect and some of theirs and I find that this way I can converse pretty well with the children. But there are one or two children who still can't understand English. For example. I have one little boy and I could say to him, "Phillip, would you please go and wash your hands as it's milk time now?" and he'll just sort of look at me because he doesn't understand what I've said to him. Then I'll say to him after a little while, "Phillip pangkurrim marawashman". This he will do straight away because he understands this better than he can English.

It's pretty hard to know how much English to use, but I think in my position, I'm finding the last term of kindergarten ideal for more use of English. The children by now can speak much better English than they did at first.

It should be a must for Aboriginal children to attend kindergarten because these children do not get everyday experiences at home, as the European children do. I mean, where would you, in isolated areas such as Jigalong and other places, hear these children speaking English to each other, mothers singing songs to them and other such things that go on in many European households?

I'm a firm believer in holding the pre-preschool for the very young age group, where mothers come in and sit with the children and play with them. Not necessarily a well-organized group but where they can be free just to sit and relax with the children and watch to see how they play and learn. We have our little group here with the mothers and grandmothers who come and sit in the shade of the tree and play with the children. This is also important because it helps the child settle in and know what to expect when he or she attends kindergarten.

17

ENGLISH IN TRIBAL ABORIGINAL SCHOOLS

H.H. Penny

It is not the Education Department of South Australia, not Parliament, not the general public, not the white teachers who press for the teaching of English in the tribal Aboriginal schools; it is the tribal Aborigines themselves. Indeed, one community has asked that all teaching in their school be in English. All the communities realise the need for the 3 R's to be taught in English if they are to understand "white feller business" and if their own people are to do some or all of those things now being done for them in their settlements by white people.

Other than the factors described in Section I, 1,¹ the greatest single obstacle is the weakness of the aides and Aboriginal teachers in English. Improvement in their own command of English and in their proficiency to teach it and teach in it is, then, the most important and most urgent component in any programme of systematic training for aides and Aboriginal teachers. They need a reasonable competency in English for the further reason that it is the language in which they can most effectively learn about teaching itself, and about class management. To attain sufficient command, the aides and Aboriginal teachers must hear more English in the schools of at least four of the settlements than they now do, speak more English, and read and write much more of it.

In four of the schools, there is a disabling obstacle — the "hiding", as it has been called, of English. Reluctance to use a language in which one feels insecure is understandable. A resistance against using in the school itself the very language the community asks its schools to teach is at first more difficult to understand.

After the early days spent in and around one tribal school, it

was borne upon me that the children spoke no English to each other in the classroom or playground; that aides and Aboriginal teachers spoke no English to each other in school or out, and none to the children they taught unless the use of English words was unavoidable. Odder still, aides and Aboriginal teachers more fluent in English than most others avoided English even with white colleagues whom they liked and trusted if those colleagues knew some Pitjantjatjara. The same curious situation exists in three other tribal schools.

Two children who had been to an "outside" school for a while came back to a tribal school talking easily in English. In a couple of weeks their English was "hidden". An Aboriginal teacher with well above average fluency in English came back from fairly lengthy teaching experiences (in English) "outside" and soon used Pitjantjatjara in the school almost exclusively. An aide, also above average in English, was pressed by a white colleague to make more use of it in school. The reply — in Pitjantjatjara: "This is Pitjantjatjara country. In Pitjantjatjara country, speak Pitjantjatjara."

I asked an Aboriginal teacher, a man of standing in his community, about this more than reluctance to use English. A verbatim account may be useful:

"The people want their children to learn English at school?"

"Uwa". (Yes)

"Is it all right for the children to speak English in the camp?"

"Kura, kura." (Bad, bad)."

"Do the parents want their children to speak English to each other?"

"Wiya". (No)

"Do your people really want the children to learn English?"

"Uwa, here".

(And he tapped three or four times with cupped hand to ear)
"Want them to hear English."

"To speak English?"

"Some, to talk to white fellers."

"To write English?"

"A few. Letters, cheque, all that. Want white people teach my people English. When my people learn more, white people go."

None of the many tribal Aborigines I talked with sees schooling in English as opening a way to the wider world. Rather, they see

it as a way of freeing themselves from dependencies upon white folk which have sometimes been incomprehensible, sometimes irksome, and sometimes deeply humiliating.

Of course they want to free themselves from a one-way dependency in their Settlements upon white people, and it is understandable that the older men, while wanting English taught, are mistrustful of younger men or women who talk and mix freely with whites.

Our first responsibility is to help a tribal people to a clearer understanding of the community attitudes and school practices needed if the teaching-learning of English is to be as efficient as the fulfilment of their own hopes requires. A few Aborigines of standing see this clearly. They would be the best persons to discuss the problem with the old men and others in the camp. Just now the most practical step would be to lift the attainments in English of aides and Aboriginal teachers and to encourage greater use of it in the schools.

It is fairly widely accepted that the best approach to literacy in a foreign language (and English is just that in the camps and even in most tribal schools) is through literacy in one's own. The bilingual approach has other impediments than Pitjantjatjara reluctance to use English. Most white teachers set about learning at least to speak Pitjantjatjara from respect for the language and culture of the people, for better communication, and as a helpful medium for teaching. These are all commendable reasons. But the more eagerly the white teacher practises Pitjantjatjara in school the more surely he deprives pupils, aides and Aboriginal teachers of the opportunities they need to hear and speak English. Indeed, the considerable proficiency of some white teachers in Pitjantjatjara makes it all the easier for aides and Aboriginal teachers to evade the use of English. The children, at school chiefly to learn English, are the losers.

There is a heartening contrast between the well-meant, but over-zealous attempts common in earlier times to 'rescue' tribal peoples from what were held to be their heathenish and primitive ways, and the thoughtful efforts of white teachers and others in the Settlements to understand Pitjantjatjara culture, and to avoid further damage to the great deal in it that is good. But the plain facts are:

1. that literacy in Pitjantjatjara is of a very limited 'practical' value;
2. that its chief pedagogic value is as an introduction to literacy in English, and

3. that literacy in English is what the Pitjantjatjara peoples want from the schools.

As the pupils move from the lower through the middle to the upper grades the use of English should progressively, and in the end markedly, increase. In most of the tribal schools this is not the case.

Even now, before, that is, the aides and Aboriginal teachers have undertaken systematic courses to strengthen their English, it would be useful to set aside periods during which pupils and teachers will try to use only English. Such periods should at first be brief, and shorter, of course, for nine-year-olds, than for twelve and thirteen-year-olds. There can be no better test of success than that the older pupils — and their aides and Aboriginal teachers — can get through ten minutes, then an hour, and then a morning, with a 90% or greater use of English. A very thoughtful Aborigine, non-literate in English, is one of the few who realises that English must be used if it is to be effectively learned: "Those boys, those girls, that school, English — learn and play."

A cheerful spirit for English-only periods is essential to success. (No one now would try to compel the use of English by belittling the vernacular and punishing those who used it. A few older Aborigines have had experience of this.) Pitjantjatjara-only periods, for white teachers to attempt, would contribute to what is needed, a cheerful spirit of co-operative endeavour. Pitjantjatjara-only periods could also help to show that greater attention to the use of English in schools is in no way a depreciation of Pitjantjatjara.

NOTES

1. For these factors refer to source.

18

THE BUGBEAR OF LITERACY IN THE EDUCATION OF TRIBAL ABORIGINES

J.W. Wafer

The most solidly entrenched prejudice in the field of Aboriginal education, even among people who are sympathetic towards Aboriginal culture, is that literacy and Basic English constitute an unqualified good for all Aboriginal children. The arguments used to justify this point of view in the days of assimilation are, of course, discredited, and it is now considered proper to make at least a token gesture of consulting Aboriginal people on issues such as this.

Accordingly the experts have asked Aboriginal people about the kind of education that they want for their children, and have discovered that Aborigines appear to have internalized the assimilation policy: "One well documented fact is that every Aboriginal community so far approached in the Northern Territory has stated that the children of the community must be taught English" (Lynch, K., 1976: 24).

I would be interested to find out how this information was elicited from the Aboriginal people, and whether anyone indicated to them what the consequences of their children's learning English and literacy are likely to be, or what the alternatives are. Although Aboriginal communities often do not have an undivided opinion on issues such as this, the spokesmen delegated to cope with white officials are called upon to give a clear-cut answer. This answer may reflect in varying degrees the community's feelings or their own self-interest. In expressing an opinion about this particular issue, the spokesmen, since they probably speak English themselves, may not be without a certain bias.

It is a familiar story that the real traditional authorities of the tribe frequently do not have enough English to be consulted on

matters such as this. In any case their respect for tribal life may well lead them to resist change, so that white administrators are happy to take advice from the younger, English-speaking, less tribally-oriented Aborigines who will play into their hands.

It is also well known that Aboriginal people will go along with what they think white Australians expect of them, simply in order to be left in peace, or because for years they have been led to believe that the white man has control over their destinies. They expect Euraustralians to want them to learn English, because that has always been the way as long as they can remember.

What are, in fact, the consequences of an Aboriginal education policy which incorporates universal literacy and Basic English? The most significant is one which no tribal Aboriginal adult of my acquaintance would wish to see. the death of the oral tradition.

In 1949 the late A.K. Coomaraswamy published a classic work called *The Bugbear of Literacy*, in which he cited evidence from educationalists and anthropologists who had worked in a wide variety of cultures, that the imposition of literacy on a traditional people has an inevitable degenerating effect on the oral tradition and, since the oral tradition is intimately bound up with religion and social order, on the society as a whole.

This problem is not uniquely Aboriginal, since it is confronting linguistic minorities throughout the world. With increasing pressure towards standardization in all countries, there is increasing compulsion for linguistic minorities to become literate in one of the international languages.

The arguments used to justify policies designed to bring about this end are neatly summed up by Stern (1967: 6): "vernaculars, admirable and adequate for local use, [are] inadequate 'for present day politics, and commerce, inadequate also for living a full twentieth-century cultural life'".

This makes it clear that the issue is not just a matter of learning a second language, but also of adopting the world-view of contemporary western "culture". The culture of traditional societies, including their internal politics and commerce, is based on a delicate symbolic or poetic cosmology, which is radically at variance with the gross, quantitative cosmology of the contemporary west. (Cf. Burckhardt, 1974.) In our ignorance of the relative nature of our own materialistic world-view, we assume that our conception of reality is superior to all others, and that children of ethnic minorities should be weaned away from their primitive superstitions and fed on a diet of so-called "facts". When this happens, the life goes out of traditional cultures, and what is left

are sterile, banal, meaningless fragments, to be displayed in museums or enacted for the tourist.

A parallel process takes place with the languages of ethnic minorities. Although proposals that everyone in a minority group should learn a particular second language are not usually explicitly intended to undermine the first language, this is, in fact, the effect, as a result of what linguists call "interference". An individual bilingual who suffers interference in his first language from learning a second can still refer to the language spoken by the monoglot speakers of his first language for the correct forms. But if an entire linguistic group learns a second language, there is no such external standard to refer to, and the first language suffers irreversible interference, particularly if there is no written form of the language.

Anyone who has tried to learn an Aboriginal language will have ample evidence of this, in the frequent borrowings from English incorporated into the vernacular of the younger generation of Aborigines. This is not only the case with words for which their own language has no equivalent, but also where the language has a perfectly acceptable word, now remembered only by the older generation.

When a whole community learns a second language, the short-term result is likely to be the development of bastard form of the first language, which will be, in the long term, effectively supplanted by the second language. (How many people still speak Gaelic in Scotland or Irish in Ireland?) One can foresee the ultimate linguistic assimilation of all small ethnic groups taking place in the same way as their cultural assimilation into the ethos of the modern industrial technocracies. This will in no way contribute to world unity, but only to a drab uniformity of the kind all too obvious in the superstates and their satellites.

The question of bilingual education only serves to cloud the real issues. Bilingual education policies still assume that all Aboriginal children will become literate, initially in their own language. This is likely to have several adverse effects. It will undermine the very reason for existence of the oral tradition. It will allow for the translation and wide dissemination of the pernicious conceptions which make up the twentieth century world-view. It may also provide an opportunity for the translation of literary trivia. As Coomaraswamy says, "if reading and writing are to enable [the people of traditional societies] to read what the Western proletariat reads, they will remain better off, from any cultural point of view, with their own more classical literature, of which all have oral knowledge" (1949:34).

In any case the bilingual education programs currently in operation treat literacy in the vernacular only as a stage on the way to literacy in English. Moreover the bilingual situation is very one-sided. The effort to create a bridge of understanding between our two cultures by learning each other's language has been made largely by Aborigines. Compared with the number of Aboriginal people who speak reasonable English, the number of Eurastralians who speak an Aboriginal language fairly well is minimal. (For this reason I would wholeheartedly endorse the Aboriginal Consultative Group's recommendation to the Schools Commission, that it "foster where practical the introduction of Aboriginal languages into secondary school studies, in the short term as a non-examinable elective, then as part of secondary educational qualifications". [Recommendation 25 of the ACG's "Report", 1975.] But why restrict the recommendation to secondary studies? Aboriginal languages should be available for study at the tertiary level as well.)

What I have said about bilingual education is not intended to deny that it is an excellent thing for some Aboriginal children. Literacy in the vernacular would mean, as we shall see, that even if the fragile oral traditions perish, it may be possible for Aboriginal people who have acquired the necessary technical skills to record and interpret these traditions in writing.

Similarly Aboriginal children who have become fluent in English can be a great advantage to their community, in helping it to operate with a degree of autonomy and in minimizing the extent to which the community is exploited by white Australians. This does not mean that all Aboriginal children need to learn English. All that is required is a group of specialist cultural go-betweens to deal with the community's external affairs. Many traditional Aboriginal communities had emissaries of this kind.

{Perhaps the most highly formalized instance of the Aboriginal envoy was the *buntamai* or royal messenger of the Awabakal. His training included 12-14 stages of initiation, and the learning of about six languages or dialects. His privileges included diplomatic immunity and the wearing of a special uniform: a cloak of possum skin and headgear of swans' down. He carried message sticks, familiar also in other parts of Aboriginal Australia.]

To the argument that the education of only a proportion of Aborigines in literacy and English is likely to lead to elitism and abuses of power, I can only say that even if this happens (and where Aboriginal social structure remains strong, the likelihood is not great), this is perhaps at least better than the alternative, which is the eventual complete breakdown of Aboriginal social

order. Moreover the example of our own society should make it only too clear that universal literacy gives a society scant protection against elitism and abuses of power.

It needs to be recognized that tribal Aboriginal communities have an existence of their own, which, even if not entirely independent of the rest of Australia, operate from radically different premises. Children within these communities should be taught skills which will be useful to them in their own situation, not skills which might be useful to them if they drifted to the towns.

Perhaps this whole argument is a waste of ink. Perhaps the fate of third-world countries, where "development" and industrialization are increasingly transforming traditional communities into factory-fodder, will be the fate of our own indigenous people also. In this case, literacy and English will be necessary survival skills. To quote Coomaraswamy again, "in industrial societies, where it is assumed that man is made for commerce and where men are cultured, if at all, in spite of rather than because of their environment, literacy is a necessary skill. It will naturally follow that if, on the principle that misery loves company, you are planning to industrialize the rest of the world, you are also duty bound to train them in basic English" (1949: 24).

If this is to be the fate of the Aboriginal people, then one of the most pressing needs at the present time is for their oral traditions to be written down. If Aboriginal youth eventually recover from their romance with technology — with cars, motorbikes, electric music and the like — they may begin to feel the rootlessness which most of the youth of European descent feel to-day, and to wonder if there is a way back. It will be too late, of course, but it may at least help them in their search for an identity if they have a written record of their traditions to which they can turn.

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19

TEACHING STANDARD ENGLISH AS A SECOND DIALECT TO SPEAKERS OF ABORIGINAL ENGLISH

Jennifer Gardiner

1. Introduction¹

There is great diversity among Aboriginal lifestyles today. This diversity may be considered along a continuum, from the one extreme of the traditionally oriented Aborigines to the other extreme of the urbanised Aborigines, integrated into the larger European-Australian society.

This diversity is also reflected in the linguistic status of Aborigines. On the one extreme are people who continue to speak one, or more, traditional Aboriginal language or dialect only, whilst at the other extreme are Aborigines who speak only an 'educated' form of English (referred to in this paper as "standard English"²). Between these two extremes are people who speak one type, or another, of Australian "pidgin English", "Aboriginal English"³, or any combination of the above four types of linguistics code (for example, a person may speak an Aboriginal language and Aboriginal English).

This paper is concerned with speakers of Aboriginal English and of varieties of pidgin (or creoles). More specifically, it is concerned with "teaching standard English as a second dialect" (TSED⁴) to such speakers.

It is generally recognised that the policy of teaching Aboriginal children in English without regard for their own 'linguistic state' (Kaldor, 1976) is a major cause of much of the recurrent failure experienced by Aborigines in the school situation. The Northern Territory Bilingual Education Programme developed out of this awareness. However, the bilingual programmes were designed primarily for children whose first language is an Aboriginal language. The situation of those Aboriginal children who speak a

non-standard variety of English as their only language is only just beginning to receive attention by educators.

The rationale for TSED (similar to the rationale for the bilingual education programmes) is based on premises wider than just the need to teach children standard English so that they can succeed in school. A major premise of such programmes is that the child should retain his (her) first language and/or dialect and that this should be used as a resource for learning standard English, so that he can function within the wider community if he so desires. Such programmes are also concerned with the totality of the child's experience, that is, with Aboriginal culture, values and aspirations, rather than, as in the past, exclusively aimed at inducting Aboriginal children into the European-Australian society. Sommerlad summarises the recent past and present situation as follows:

"Education for Aborigines [was, until recently] . . . based on an ethnocentric model which is designed 'to ensure that students will have in common with their European classmates certain interests, understandings, knowledge and skills' . . . Aboriginal culture places emphasis on different cultural values and the school situation creates discontinuity with their home experiences and lifestyles. Where as in the past it was considered appropriate and necessary for education to inculcate new values, educationists are now beginning to argue that teaching strategies must be based on these cultural differences if learning is to occur. (quoted by Duffill, 1974:9)

For such an approach to succeed, according to Sommerlad, "the dominant society needs to become more accepting of cultural differences and to value the right of the individual to retain a unique Aboriginal identity."

Implicit in the above summary is a controversy surrounding the nature of non-standard dialects based on the 'deficit' and 'difference' theories. I propose to present this controversy and discuss the implications of each theory for education.

Before doing so, I shall outline the origin and nature of Aboriginal English in order that what continues may be evaluated in the light of the nature of this dialect.

Following the discussion of the 'deficit' and 'difference' theories, I shall briefly summarise some of the education programmes in Australia for Aboriginal English speakers, with special regard to the Queensland Van Leer Language Development Programme. I will then discuss the need for TSED for Aboriginal English speakers.

I shall conclude with a presentation of some TSED principles and the importance of TSED for acquiring literacy.

Due to the limited scope of this paper, and the lack of detailed and well-developed TSED materials for Australian conditions, I have not been able to present a full programme based on TSED. What I have attempted to do is to explain why there is a need for TSED and to outline some of the methods in teaching a second dialect. I have not expanded greatly on how the integration of the Aboriginal child's home environment and the school can be achieved and how school can be made more meaningful for Aboriginal children.

2. The Origin and Nature of Aboriginal English

Aboriginal English is defined by Vaszolyi (1976:46)⁵ as, "a peculiar dialect of Australian English developed by Aborigines as a result of contact with European-Australians mostly in rural areas and in the outback". In the contact situation, Aborigines acquired English in an informal way, by "picking it up" through the necessity of communicating with European-Australians. The particular characteristic features of Aboriginal English are a result of linguistic 'interference'⁶ from the traditional Aboriginal language/dialect at a phonemic, grammatical and lexical level. In other words, the features of English were 'restructured' by the Aboriginal speaker according to the particular features of his own language.

Subsequent generations have learnt Aboriginal English as a first and only language, rather than through the process of contact outlined above, so that, today, there are speakers of Aboriginal English who speak no other language. In this way, the patterns of speech which developed out of the initial language contact between Aboriginal languages/dialects and English have become formalised as Aboriginal English.

As well as a vehicle for communicating with the European-Australian community, Aboriginal English is also a means of communication between groups whose dialects or languages are mutually unintelligible. Sommer (1974:39) states that: "In fact, because of its generality, [Aboriginal English] serves as a unifying and identifying characteristic of the Aborigines almost everywhere."

There are underlying similarities between the different varieties of Aboriginal English, such as the similarity of the contact situation under which each variety of Aboriginal English developed and similarities between the structures of Aboriginal languages.

However, with the 'generality' claimed by Sommer, there is also diversity; Aboriginal English varies as a result of differences among Aboriginal languages and dialects that now exist, or existed on the arrival of the British to Australia. Each variety of Aboriginal English is, to a degree, conditioned by differences peculiar to a particular Aboriginal language/dialect. Description of the regular features of Aboriginal English is thus made difficult by these variations.

Furthermore, differences in Aboriginal English exist because the form spoken by individuals "depends on such social and cultural factors as the span and intensity of contact with English speakers, the degree of formal education, age and physical aptitude, the individual's intellectual abilities, motivation and the like." (Vaszolyi, op cit:46). In other words, the particular form of English spoken by an individual may alter over time in relation to the above factors.

In Western Australia, monolingual Aboriginal English speakers, that is, people who speak only Aboriginal English, and Aboriginal people speaking standard English are found within a triangle formed by the west coast – south of Carnarvon, the south coast – as far east as Esperance, and a line drawn between these two towns. This area includes all of the south-west and some of the wheat-belt.

In many towns outside this area, such as, Meekatharra, Kalgoorlie, the mining towns and the north-west coastal towns, such as Port Hedland and Derby, a sizeable number of Aborigines are monolingual in Aboriginal English, although many are also bilingual or multilingual in several Aboriginal languages or dialects and Aboriginal English. Where such bilingualism exists, it is probably affected by the transitory nature of some members of the Aboriginal population in these towns. Many people have recently arrived there or spend only part of their time in that area.

Until now little has been known about the structure of Aboriginal English, especially in Western Australia. However, research into the language problems of Aboriginal children, which involves a description of the dialectal forms of English spoken by Aboriginal primary school children, is now being conducted in Western Australia by a team headed by Dr. Susan Kaldor of the University of Western Australia. The results of this study should be invaluable to teachers.

One point that needs to be stressed is that each variety of Aboriginal English (or any dialect of any language, for that matter) should be seen as a consistent 'code' of communication, with its own internal logic and rules.

The term 'dialect', as it is used by linguists, has no pejorative meaning. It is simply used to refer to any distinguishable variety of a given language. Linguistically speaking, no dialect is inherently better than any other. However, dialects are often employed by the members of a dominant culture to serve the social purpose of determining speakers' backgrounds, educational levels, and even intelligence. Judgements on the relative 'value' of different dialects are made for social, economic and political reasons. Saville-Troike (1973:8) explains that in a literate society, "the dialects of the upper class, educated speakers come to be judged 'standard' ... and used as the basis for written language, while the dialects of less prestigious speakers come to be considered 'nonstandard'."

As already mentioned, Aboriginal English has developed as a dialect due to factors stemming originally from the differences between the structures of Aboriginal languages and that of English. Sommer (op cit:43) summarises the nature of Aboriginal English: "A tentative analysis suggests that [Aboriginal English] draws most of its vocabulary from English, and its morphology and phonological processes from Aboriginal sources."

According to Vaszolyi, Aboriginal English may be described in terms of the regular patterns in the omissions and changes of features of standard English, the most immediately noticeable feature of Aboriginal English being "deviation from the generally accepted phonemic patterns of Australian English". (op cit:47)⁸

The Van Leer Experimental Language Development Program in Queensland (Van Leer Research Report, 1970:75) looks into aspects beyond features of Aboriginal English 'accent'. The Report states that "the predominant impression is one of omission of essential distinguishing grammatical markers. For example, morphemes which mark plural and possessive nouns and comparative and superlative adjectives are in general not applied."

It should be pointed out that on some occasions the omission of grammatical markers may be caused by phonemic 'mismatch'. In other words, the difficulty experienced by Aboriginal English speakers in pronouncing a phoneme, or a cluster of phonemes, due to 'interference', may contribute to the omission of a morpheme, or a grammatical marker. For example, the sound *s* is not part of the stock of sounds of Aboriginal languages and some Aboriginal English speakers find it difficult to say. This factor may contribute to the loss of the *s* suffix, for example, the third person singular present tense marker *-s*, as in, *The dog run*.

At this stage it would, perhaps, be expedient to briefly summarise 'interference' theory.

2.1 Interference theory

As we have seen, some of the language problems experienced by non standard dialect speakers, and second language learners alike, are due to a concept called 'linguistic interference', originally developed by Weinreich (1953).

Saville-Troike (1973:28) aptly summarises this phenomenon:

"As a child develops his control over his native language the linguistic habits involved in the perception and production of the language become increasingly fixed. Although all physiologically normal children are born with the capacity to produce any sound used in any language, as they get older they lose the flexibility to produce other sounds. More importantly, they learn to hear all sounds in terms of the particular set of sound-categories used in their own language . . . Comparable problems occur in grammar and vocabulary, all of which result from the natural tendency of a speaker to carry over the habits of his native language into the second, or to translate from one into the other. All of these problems of perception and use of a second language which are due to the native language habits are termed linguistic interference."

In the case of the child who is a monolingual speaker of Aboriginal English, it is the patterns of this non-standard dialect which may interfere in his learning of standard English. Some of these patterns, as we have seen, may be attributed to the residue of the original Aboriginal language which is incorporated into that particular variety of Aboriginal English.

3. The Deficit/Difference Theories of Non-Standard Dialects and Their Implications for Education

The deficit/difference controversy, which began in the United States in the 1960s, has been concerned with the question of whether the language of minority cultures, particularly the non-standard dialect of American English spoken by black speakers is 'deficient' or whether it may more validly be thought of as simply a 'different' dialect.

3.1 The 'deficit' theory

The deficit theory (endorsed by some psychologists and educators, with little reference to linguistic theory) puts forward the idea that the language of non-standard dialect speakers is 'defective', that it is underdeveloped or restricted in some way.

This thesis developed (with some misunderstandings) from the work of a sociolinguist, Bernstein, who distinguished between a restricted code and an 'elaborated' code in language. He proposed

that the 'restricted' code was more commonly used by the lower social classes, relying upon implicit meanings and being context bound, while the 'elaborated' code, more common to the middle class, presents information in a more explicit manner. However, Bernstein points out that the restricted code is used by everyone under certain conditions. It is generally used when the people engaged in a conversation have a shared knowledge about the topic. The 'elaborated' code is used in more formal situations.

The misunderstanding arose when the language of non-standard dialect speakers was taken as representing a 'restricted' code and was identified as an underdeveloped, deficient style of speech. This defective language supposedly resulted in the 'cognitive impairment' of non-standard-dialect-speaking children, as evidenced by their failure in the school situation. From the recognition by developmental psychologists of the importance of rich and varied sensory experience in infancy for the development of intelligence, the deficit theorists put forward the hypothesis that children of non-standard dialect speakers (who generally belong to the lower social classes) had been deprived of the necessary inputs for cognitive growth in early life, and that this deprivation of cognitive growth (in other words, cognitive impairment) was likely to be the basis of their inability to cope with the demands of school.

A major cause of the lack of necessary inputs from cognitive growth was assumed to be inadequate mothering. The mother was supposed not to have interacted with the child to the extent that a middle-class standard dialect speaking mother did, nor did such interaction have the **quality** of interaction provided by the latter type of mother.

The evidence of this argument, however, relies heavily on superficial aspects of language production and does not take into account sociocultural and environmental features of the wider society. Saville-Troike (op cit:23) criticises such evidence:

"We often hear the claim that economic deprivation and the social conditions associated with it tend to interfere with language development in children. We need to view such claims very skeptically, since the poor performance of a linguistically and culturally different group of children on various tests is usually only reflective of the linguistic and cultural bias of the tests being used, or of the testing situation itself.

The 'deficit' theory calls for compensatory and remedial education to help non-standard dialect speaking children "catch up" with their middle class contemporaries. The underlying assumptions for compensatory and remedial education programmes are that

children are culturally, linguistically and cognitively 'deprived' and it is, thus, necessary to 'make good' their cultural and home environment by means of programmes specially designed for this purpose. In the interests of the children at risk, educators should 'intervene' in their early lives, especially during the years of maximum cognitive growth.

An education programme based on this theory was developed by Bereiter and Engelmann. They concentrated directly on language, believing that language skills should be taught by direct instruction, in a short period of time — within at least six months. The non-standard dialect is not allowed in the classroom. Labov (1972:199) quotes Bereiter as saying, "the language of culturally deprived children... is not merely an underdeveloped version of standard English but is a basically non-logical mode of expressive behaviour".

Bereiter and Engelmann believe that the non-standard dialect is deficient in its capacity as a tool for cognition and the child must be provided with the language which is conducive to the cognitive process. Then (and only then) the child can be taught anything the teacher wishes. This approach actively seeks to come between the child and his early life experiences.

However, the fact that children learn more language behaviour from their peer group than from their parents, according to Stewart (1970:18), has important implications for the success of such a programme. No matter how much intensive drilling children may receive in the standard dialect, if the medium of communication for the peer group is the non-standard dialect they are likely to forget very quickly any standard dialect language patterns they have learned.

Project Head Start, a pre-school 'compensatory' programme initiated in the United States in the Johnson era as part of the "War Against Poverty" programme, was based on the 'intervention' model outlined above. This programme attempted to provide non-standard dialect speaking 'deprived' children with standard dialect language skills indirectly, through an 'enriched' middle-class-type nursery environment.

The programme has been acknowledged by most educators as having failed in the long term 'making-up' of the difference in achievement between blacks and whites in the school situation.

Baratz (1970:194) interprets the programme's failure as being due to the fact that it ignored the cultural system of the children concerned; that it "failed because its goal is to correct a deficit that simply does not exist". Baratz and Baratz (1972:191) point

out that a "disadvantage created by a difference is not the same thing as a deficit."

Bernstein (1972:137) draws attention to the fact that, because children from minority, or 'different', cultures are labelled 'culturally' or 'linguistically' deprived, teachers have lower expectations of such children and so labelled, these children then tend to perform in accordance with the low expectations held of them.

Baratz and Baratz believe that the 'intervention' model is racist in that it denies the validity of other cultures. They wrote critically of this ethnocentric view which denies cultural differences in an article entitled, "Early childhood intervention: the social science basis of institutional racism" (1972). According to them, "remediation or enrichment gradually broadens its scope of concern from the fostering of language competence to a broad based restructuring of the entire cultural system" of non-standard dialect speakers (op cit:190).

Whilst criticising the 'deficit' theory, it must be pointed out that it may be, at times, appropriate and should not be entirely discounted. There are 'deficient' children with some lack in their original language and cognitive development due to insufficient early stimulation or mothering, or some other reason. However, such children are not peculiar to one particular class or sub-cultural group, they may be found in all groups or classes. Their situation is the result of individual circumstances. It may be valid to expose such children to remedial or compensatory educational programmes in an attempt to overcome the deficit from which they suffer.

3.2 The 'difference' theory

The 'difference' approach to non-standard dialects has been advanced, in the main, by linguists who believe that the language of non-standard dialect speakers is a "different yet highly structured, highly developed system" (Baratz, 1970:20). Baratz states that just because certain forms are missing in a non-standard dialect (such as, the verb form *is*, plural *-s*, or the past-tense marker *-ed*) it does not mean that the corresponding concept or the process is absent as well.

In "The Logic of Non-Standard English" Labov (1972) sets forward arguments against the 'deficit' theory, in favour of the 'difference' theory of non-standard dialects. He states that non-standard dialect speakers apply rules to produce utterances which are grammatical in terms of that dialect. The features of non-standard English may be said to be 'surface' manifestations of a 'deep structure' which is the same as the 'deep structure' of standard English. In other words, the same logical relations under-

lie both dialects.

According to Baratz (1970:23) it has been "clearly demonstrated that one can produce highly abstract concepts while using extremely restricted codes". Pilon (1973:127) supports Baratz in stating that the language of non-standard dialect speakers "is rich in imagery, thoughts can be well expressed, creatively and imaginatively". Pilon states that, "the takeover of [non-standard dialect] words by many middle and upper-class Americans proves that the [non-standard dialect speaking] child... is very creative in his language". Examples of borrowings from non-standard American 'black' English are: "bread, cool it, cop out, groovy, out of sight", etc. (op cit:128).

Baratz (1972) tested the proficiency of non-standard dialect speaking black children and standard dialect speaking middle-class white children in the United States in repeating sentences in each others' dialects. She found that neither the white nor the black children could correctly repeat utterances in the dialect of the other, that is, neither group is inherently bi-dialectal. The incorrect premise upon which the testing of non-standard dialect speaking children was usually based was made evident by Baratz' research. If the instrument for testing the language development of standard dialect speaking children was the speech of non-standard dialect speaking children, the standard dialect speakers would, then, have to be labelled 'deficient'. Thus, it follows that studies of children's speech are only valid if evaluated in terms of the norms of such children's own speech.

The premises upon which the assumptions of the 'deficit' theory are based, that is, that the culture, language and, hence, cognitive processes of the child are deficient, are untenable to the 'difference' theorists. The term education, to the difference theorists is synonymous with the full acceptance and understanding of children's various cultural backgrounds and life experiences. The eradication of an allegedly 'defective' non-standard dialect is totally inconsistent with the above view.

Specialist educators are now urging that the child's own language or dialect be regarded as a resource, rather than an obstacle. This is the premise upon which the TSED programme is based. Teaching should not aim to eradicate the non-standard dialect but should freely allow its use in those situations where it is 'appropriate'. 'Appropriateness' varies with the place and the participants in the conversation.

Kaldor (1976) identifies several "lines of communication" along which children must be able to function: a child must be able to communicate successfully with (a) his parents, other kinsmen,

and members of his household, (b) his classmates, (c) children in other classes, in his own school or in other schools, (d) his teacher/s, (e) members of the wider community within the region, and (f) members of the wider community outside the region.

The appropriateness of the dialect used depends on a particular "line of communication". For example, to communicate with members of the wider community a person must be able to speak the standard dialect. The non-standard dialect may, for the non-standard speaking child, be appropriate for those "lines of communication" which often have the most meaning for an individual, such as, communicating with parents, kinspeople, peers and members of a person's immediate community.

Language acquisition occurs in a social setting. If a person's ability to speak the non-standard dialect, which he learnt from his primary group, is eradicated, this frequently results in emotional impoverishment and loss of social identity. A person then becomes what is known as a 'marginal' person, that is, they do not belong to any particular group or culture. Further, there should not be a gap between a child's early cognitive development and his first school experiences. Early education must build on what a child already knows. If a child is made to feel ashamed of the language form he speaks on entering school, he will respond by not speaking at all if he can help it.

The self-concept of the non-standard dialect speaker is also an important consideration in teaching the standard dialect. Because a person's self-concept is intimately linked to the language he learns as a member of a group, teachers should expect great sensitivity when referring to the non-standard dialect in any way. Non-standard dialects have traditionally been stigmatised in the wider community and speakers themselves usually regard them as 'inferior'. It is up to the teacher to point out to all children that there are many ways of speaking a language, no one way intrinsically better than another. It is essential that a child should never be made to feel ashamed of his language or dialect. Indiscriminate criticism of a person's speech will, in all probability, humiliate that person and, in the school situation, will set up resistance to learning. Teachers who reject a child's language, insisting always that standard English be spoken, are damaging that child's self-concept and learning potential.

To develop familiarity with and fluency in the use of the language structures of standard English so that, eventually, standard English will be used in those social situations that call for it, non-standard dialect speaking children must be taught the standard dialect, just as we are taught a second language, for example, French.

According to Pilon (op cit:132) "most linguists will agree that a speaker of any language will make linguistic adjustments to a specific social situation". There is no reason why speakers cannot 'switch codes' according to the situation. In order for this code-switching to take place naturally, the language patterns of the second dialect or language must become so familiar that they are unconsciously produced.

Sommer (op cit:45) illustrates the implementation of a TSED programme with the aim of developing bi-dialectism. In Hawaii, descendants of Japanese immigrants speak a non-standard dialect of American English, as a result of which they occupy a low status in that society. To overcome this undesirable state of affairs, the non-standard dialect, "... was introduced into the classroom as a respected medium of discussion and written expression. Educationalist recognized its value and status as a language for use in the home, or in the student's peer group. But it was simultaneously emphasized that higher education, and a place in commerce or industry could not be assured unless the child learned to control a more standard dialect of English. This approach brought a significant measure of success."

In attempting to overcome the problem recognised by the 'difference' theorists, TSED (and Bilingual) programmes employ the culture and experiences (as well as the language) of the child as a foundation upon which to base further learning. In the course of their pre-school years and out-of-school hours, all children develop certain skills, concepts, abilities and attitudes. These differ according to the environment — physical, cultural and linguistic — in which the child is raised. Such concepts, skills and abilities as the child brings to school should serve as a foundation for school learning, rather than teaching children concepts and values which are completely foreign to their actual or potential experience. Unless such principles are adopted, school will have no meaning for the child. It is obvious that the formal education programme of children from different environments needs to differ accordingly.

The need for a programme such as TSED is summed up by a quote from a 1953 UNESCO report regarding the role of language in education: (quoted by Gollagher, 1974).

"It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother tongue. Psychologically it is the system of meaningful

signs that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar medium."

4. Education Programmes in Australia for Speakers of Aboriginal English

Most of the special education programmes for Aboriginal English speakers have been based on ideas of 'environmental deprivation', 'compensatory education', 'early intervention' and, more particularly, on linguistic and cognitive 'deficit', according to Gollagher (1974).

In most states of Australia there seems to be a trend towards earlier and earlier 'intervention' in the lives of your Aboriginal children. De Lemos (1973:25) states that. "This is in line with current trends in the United States, where the failure of the Head Start Pre-School programmes has led investigators to look more deeply into the home environment and early experiences of disadvantaged children." According to De Lemos, such investigators argue that for intervention to be effective it must be introduced earlier in the child's life.

From the foregoing it would seem that the 'difference' theory has received much less attention in Australia so far than the 'deficit' theory.

There have, however, been some advances made in recognising the importance of the child's own dialect in educational programmes. The Van Leer Language Development Program of the Queensland Education Department (1970, 1971) must be mentioned in the first place, in this context. This programme, one of the first Australian language education programmes based on extensive empirical research, emphasizes the need for teachers to be familiar with Aboriginal English and generally with "the nature and extent of [the child's] previous learnings". (Queensland, 1971:1:iv) It also urges teachers to ensure "that they avoid any impression of derogating Aboriginal English", (ibid). The publications resulting from the project give a detailed description of the research from which the experimental programme was developed. The experimental programme itself is a rich source of ideas and techniques of teaching Standard English to your Aboriginal children and, as such, should undoubtedly be read by all teachers specialising in Aboriginal education.

It must be noted, however, that the Van Leer materials were developed at a time when comparatively little material based on the 'difference' theory was available. Consequently, the Van

Leer project, while being a precursor of possible TSED programmes based on the 'difference' theory, still leans rather heavily on assumptions of 'deficiency' and notions of inadequate levels of 'cognitive development'.⁹

Gollagher (op cit) points to some of the contradictions arising out of the situation as outlined in the foregoing. She quotes some of the 'Aims' stated in the project as illustrations of such contradictions. These are:

"1. To help the children to develop facility in the language structure of Standard English. It is hoped that they will eventually make automatic use of such English in school, and in comparable settings. "This accomplishment should facilitate their cognitive development, and their learning of reading and writing skills". (It is assumed that their cognitive development is not all that it might be.)¹⁰

2. The programme does not aim to alienate children from their own people, or to diminish the potency of their Aboriginal English. Teachers must ensure that they avoid any impressions of derogating Aboriginal English. The children, hopefully, will become proficient and secure in two forms of English, using each in the appropriate place. (Nevertheless the assumptions underlying the programme outlined in the Introduction (op cit:iii) do derogate Aboriginal English.)

3. To stimulate cognitive development. The children need to be helped to perceive and understand their familiar world more accurately. (The assumption is that Aboriginal children perceive their world inaccurately . . .)

4. To foster problem solving and critical thinking skills. "The children should gradually become able to use language to deal more effectively with the problems presented by their everyday environment, and those posed within the school programme". (The implication is that Aboriginal English is deficient as a tool for problem solving.)

5. To stimulate the children's creativity and imagination with a view to the personal enrichment of their lives. (Their own way of life is considered to be in need of enrichment.)" (Gollagher, op cit)

According to Gollagher: "The criticisms of those researchers in America who pointed out the ethnocentrism of the 'deficit' theorists are appropriate to most of these aims, with their underlying assumptions, as are the criticisms of sociolinguists who demolished the notion of dialectal superiority or inferiority."

Such ethnocentric bias, although no doubt well-meaning, is not restricted to those concerned in developing the Van Leer Project. In a Western Australian Education Department publication, entitled "Objectives in Aboriginal Education — Developing the Child" (1973) statements appeared such as the following:

"How to arrest and reverse the course of intellectual retardation in the culturally deprived child? How can this be done? By (i) providing him with an optimal learning environment as early as possible to overcome the effects of cultural deprivation . . . largely the development of verbal knowledge and intrinsic motivation in this area . . . children from culturally deprived homes have little 'intrinsic' motivation (love of learning)". (Makin, 1973:7:9)

"We assume that children have reached a certain level of concept development by the time they enter school, but in the case of Aboriginal children who have been living in an unstimulating environment this assumption cannot be made. The school needs to devise deliberate programmes to encourage the development of basic concepts." (Wright, 1973:10)

From the foregoing it would appear that the claims of the 'difference school' have not as yet been tested in the Australian situation. In the meantime, however, it seems safe to assume that the proponents of the 'difference' theory have, indeed, presented a convincing case for regarding dialects as valuable and viable communication systems, resources on which TSED in Australia, also, should be based. It is important that educators should not see minority groups of different cultural backgrounds simply as people who are cognitively and culturally 'deprived' as judged by the 'standards' of the wider community.

Much more work needs to be done on Aboriginal children's language problems before TSED programmes based entirely on 'difference' principles can be developed. Many aspects of this field are not fully understood at this stage. However, on the basis of preliminary results of a study of Aboriginal children's speech in W.A. it seems likely that Labov's findings concerning 'the logic of non-standard English' (Labov, 1972) are relevant also to the 'logic' of Aboriginal English. Aboriginal children may express underlying grammatical relations differently from their non-Aboriginal peers, but this does not mean that no grammatical relations underlie their utterances. Thus, a child may say, **that one little, that one half-kind little and that one big**, but it is very likely that her perception of differential aspects of size and her concept of grammatical comparison are probably not very different from that of the child who says, **that one's small, that one's bigger and that one is the biggest**. Nor can we assume that the child who

says, Rachel mob for dog bin die has less of an idea of what possession is or what past tense is than the child who says Rachel's people's dog died.¹¹

5. The Specific Relevance Of TSED For Aboriginal English Speaking Learners.

Most Aboriginal children attend schools which cater for monolingual standard English speaking children (except where the TESL or other special language programmes have been implemented). Much of the recurrent failure experienced by Aborigines in the school situation is the result of their inability to understand and to communicate with the teacher. Not only does the language differ between the school and the Aboriginal English speaking child's home environment, but the culture differs also. The extent of this cultural difference depends on the degree of estrangement from the traditional way of life and on the acceptance of European-Australian values and lifestyle by the family and community within which the child is raised. However, even in the case of extreme alienation from traditional culture Aborigines still do not, usually, completely share the culture and values of the larger European-Australian community, just as many members of the lower European-Australian classes do not share the values of the middle-class.

Gallacher (1969:100) summarises the main cultural factors that hinder the Aboriginal child in the European-Australian school situation. To a large extent, some of these cultural factors cause Aboriginal-English-speaking children to experience problems in their education because they have not fully internalised the European Australian concepts outlined below:

1. **Future Orientation** — the preoccupation with the future of European-Australians, as opposed to the traditional Aboriginal concern for the present and the past, with 'being', not 'becoming'.
2. **Saving** — (related to future orientation) — long-term or deferred rewards had no importance for a people whose economy was based on daily hunting and food gathering and sharing, nor for those accustomed to the regular ration hand-out.
3. **Competition and Individualism** — the most important aspects of 'motivation' in an achievement-oriented society have little meaning for people who stress cooperation.
4. **Work** — the idea that work is a commodity that has a price and which is generally separated from all other aspects of life is alien to people for whom work was an integral part of living.
5. **Learning** — European Australians encourage their children to question the present order, develop new technology, explore new

ideas, etc. In contrast, traditional Aborigines were taught to understand the present world in terms of the past and imitation observation and rote learning were stressed.

A major criticism levelled at current educational practice in relation to Aborigines is that, in submitting them to exactly the same programme as that for middle-class European-Australians, the education provided is not appropriate to the needs and opportunities open to Aborigines. Children are taught concepts and values which are completely foreign to their actual or potential experience.

At the same time, Aboriginal children are continually alienated from the culture of their parents because of the middle-class European-Australian value orientation presented in the schools. Cultural misfits are being created who can relate neither to their parents' society, nor to the European-Australian society.

Because deferred rewards are not part of Aboriginal value systems, because the curriculum has provided an education for which there is no immediate or foreseeable use in the Aboriginal pupils' lives, and because the material is presented in a language which Aboriginal English speakers can't understand, school generally has no meaning for Aboriginal children. This fact is illustrated by the high absentee and drop-out figures and the lack of educational aspirations expressed by most Aboriginal children, according to McKeich (1969).

Besides being meaningless, school may also be a very strange and threatening place for a child not familiar with it. Malcolm (1975) describes the situation in the classroom:

"Any child joining the classroom community will need to be socialized accordingly: he will need to acquire a sociolinguistic competence to enable him to function effectively in that environment. . . The minority-culture child may, however, be subject to **sociolinguistic interference** on account of rules peculiar to [his primary group] which he has internalised in contexts not common to the teacher or the other children.

Thus, a non-standard speaker's hesitancy in speaking in the classroom may be due to the fact that the language of the classroom and the rules of communication between the students and the teacher may be unfamiliar to the child. That is, the sociolinguistic rules of interaction of the classroom are different from the rules which apply in the child's wider community. Whereas middle-class European-Australian children are prepared by their culture and their parents for these rules prior to attending school, most Aboriginal children are not.

The Aboriginal child generally lacks certain experiences and training in the dominant culture which teachers assume a child to have undergone. In addition, the concepts which the Aboriginal English speaking child takes to school are different from those usually expected by the teacher, and which are necessary if learning based on such concepts is to take place.

It is obvious, therefore, that slowness on the part of an Aboriginal English speaker should not be confused with dullness. It is rather because of the unfamiliarity with the language and/or the subject matter. The situation of Aborigines in Australia is similar to that of the Indians of America. Morris (1972:163) reports a common comment by U.S. teachers about American Indians: "They just can't deal with abstractions. Everything must be concrete: and even then, only the literal interpretation is made." This comment is also common to Australian teachers when talking about Aborigines. In looking for reasons behind this comment, it should be pointed out that, perhaps, neither Indians nor Aborigines have had the opportunity to develop the particular processes for abstraction in standard English. This does not mean that they cannot make abstractions in their own language or dialect.

With such linguistic and cultural 'mismatch' as exists between Aborigines and European-Australians, how are the problems of educating Aboriginal English speakers to be overcome? It would seem that the admitted failure of the American compensatory and remedial language development programmes is evidence that such programmes in Australia will be unlikely to succeed in the long term. If such programmes are unsuccessful in overcoming the differences between American black and white middle class cultures, which are not as great as those between Aboriginal and European-Australian cultural concepts, then it would seem unrealistic to believe that they would be of benefit in Australia.

Admittedly, there are children in Australia who would benefit from compensatory or remedial education programmes because of their individual circumstances — and some of these may be Aborigines. What must be guarded against is considering the culture and language of Aborigines — whether speakers of pidgin, Aboriginal English or an Aboriginal language/dialect — as 'culturally or linguistically deprived'.

Given the present trend towards 'cultural pluralism' evident in Australia today, rather than that of 'cultural homogeneity', which was, for so long, the catchcry of policy makers, a TSED programme would be the best way of approaching education for non-standard Australian-English speakers, because it is based on the recognition of the culture and language of a sub-group within

the population, as we have seen in the discussion of the 'difference' theory.

A TSED programme for Aboriginal English speakers would orient the curriculum toward their social, physical and linguistic environment. It would make school more meaningful and would overcome much of the sense of failure experienced by Aboriginal English speakers.

The teacher has a vital role to play in the TSED programme, and its success or failure would probably depend upon him (her). He would have to have a knowledge of the nature of Aboriginal English and of the culture of its speakers. He would have to be continuously aware of areas which are unfamiliar to the Aboriginal-English-speaking child so that such areas could be introduced at a pace suited to the child's progress in acquiring unfamiliar concepts, articulatory habits and grammatical distinctions.

Close links between home and school are imperative. Parents should be encouraged to take an active part in their children's education and should be frequent visitors to the school. Such close links encourage children to view the school as less divorced from the home and immediate community and promote a greater transfer of school learning to out-of-school life and vice versa.

It has been argued that the 'difference' theory exponents are advocating a form of apartheid in suggesting that non-standard dialect speaking (or minority) groups should be taught, in their own dialect or language, a curriculum which differs from that of the standard dialect speaking majority. The rejoinder to such criticism is that the critics have not understood the aims of the 'difference' school, which are to use the language and prior knowledge of the non-standard dialect speakers as a resource for learning the standard dialect and for the understanding of important concepts upon which the dominant culture is based.

The difference theory does not entail the denial of the opportunity for non-standard dialect speakers to integrate into the larger society. However, such integration must not be carried out by treating the non-standard dialect and the culture of its speakers as worthless or deficient and by producing a group of alienated, marginal people. Non-standard dialect speakers should be allowed to continue using their own dialect. At the same time, they must be able to use the standard dialect in situations where this would ensure that their voices are heard within the larger society so that they can make known their needs and desires.

There are enormous problems which would be encountered in

mounting a TSESD programme in Australia. Firstly, as already mentioned, teachers have to be specially trained, or retrained. They must acquire a basic understanding of the nature of language. This most important aspect of education has been neglected for too long in teacher training courses.

A difficult problem is presented by the existence of classes where some students speak non-standard English and others speak standard English. This is more likely to occur in areas where Aborigines are monolingual in Aboriginal English and are, thus, in most need of a TSESD programme. It is not feasible in this situation to subject all students to a TSESD programme as some already have the facility of speaking the standard dialect.

Special classes could be conducted for Aboriginal English speakers to instruct them in standard English, as is done in the TESL programme for migrant children. However, the regular class teacher should be aware of TSESD principles and should adopt a modified approach during all lessons. The teachers should be especially aware of the necessity of not derogating the non-standard dialect.

Alternatively, where it is not possible to have special classes to teach standard English to Aboriginal English speakers, the teacher could implement a modified, unobtrusive, bi-dialectal programme. The teacher would concentrate on certain features at a time (determined, perhaps, according to Wolfram's criteria¹²) without the class being aware that they were actually being taught the standard dialect. The teacher could also try to adapt standard materials so that they are as meaningful as possible to both the non-standard and standard dialect speakers. This does, of course, take much ingenuity and innovation on the part of the teacher.

In the remaining sections of this paper some TSESD principles advocated principally in the American literature on the subject will be reviewed. It is uncertain at the present time to what extent these suggestions are applicable to the Australian scene. Such suggestions are presented here in the hope that, after having formulated their own views on the subject of TSESD, teachers may wish to experiment with similar approaches or with other approaches which the reading of these materials may stimulate.

6. Some Principles in TSESD

The teaching of a second dialect is, in some respects, similar to the teaching of a second language. Allen (1968:212) states: "Some of the foreign language teacher's procedures will suggest useful strategy to teachers of English as a second dialect."

One method from second language pedagogy which is important

in teaching a second dialect is that of contrasting the systems of the native dialect with those of the target dialect. By means of comparison, students can see where differences occur between their own dialect and the standard dialect. If a person understands the phonological, grammatical and syntactic features of their own language or dialect, they find it easier to understand the features particular to the target dialect and the systematic differences between the two dialects.

Such contrastive analysis involves open discussion in the classroom of the non-standard dialect to determine its features and how it differs from the standard dialect. The teacher must be extremely cautious that no value judgement is made of the worth of either dialect. It must be stressed that both are of equal worth.

The contrasting of the two languages or dialects is also useful in determining in what order material should be presented. From a comparison of the two dialects/languages, it is possible to predict the problem areas in learning the second dialect. It is important to teach the problems, but it is equally important to avoid teaching those features which are non-problematical. As in teaching a second language, the smallest possible number of vitally significant items should be taught, ensuring that they become habituated. Features that truly distinguish standard English from non-standard English should be concentrated on.

Wolfram (1970:109-113) believes that the criteria according to which the introduction of material should be sequenced should be based primarily on social connotations. This is because not all features of the non-standard dialect are equally socially stigmatised by standard-dialect speakers. These criteria are:

6.1 Social diagnosticity of linguistic variables

A primary consideration in the sequencing of materials is the way in which social groups are separated from one another on the basis of linguistic features. Those features on non-standard English which are on the most conscious level of awareness of the standard dialect speakers, that is, the most stereotyped features, should receive early attention.

6.2 The generality of rules

Some non standard forms affect only a small number of words whereas others involve general rules that operate on the form of every sentence of a particular structural type. The more general the rule, the earlier it should be introduced. For example, the non-standard use of multiple negation in American Black English (such as, **He didn't have no homework**) affects all negative sentences.

6.3 Phonological versus grammatical variables

Wolfram states that there is an important difference between the social diagnosticity of phonological and grammatical variables and, as a general principle, it is best to begin with grammatical rather than phonological principles because grammatical features are more socially obtrusive to the standard dialect speakers.

6.4 Regional versus general social significance

Features having general social significance should be dealt with before those whose social significance is regionally restricted. (This criterion is not as relevant to Australia as to the United States because there is little regional difference within the standard Australian-English dialect. What difference there is has been identified as 'broad', and 'educated' forms of the standard dialect, which are not so much regional as socially stratified.)

6.5 The relative frequency of items

"Some nonstandard patterns occur only infrequently during the course of a normal discourse. Even though some of these features may indicate sharp stratification, the infrequency of their occurrence makes them less essential than others in preparing lesson materials." For example, Wolfram reports that in a study he carried out he found the incidence of third-person singular present-tense -s (such as, **He runs**) was four times as numerous as the possessive marker -s (such as, **That is Tom's**).

Wolfram lists in order of priority some features of non-standard Black English which he considers to be requiring early attention. Priority is determined by the number of pluses given a particular feature over all the criteria. An example from Wolfram's matrix is reproduced below:

Black English feature	1	2	3	4	5
-s third person singular (e.g. he go)	+	+	+	+	+
multiple negation (e.g. didn't do nothing)	+	+	+	+	+
-s possessive (e.g. man hat)	+	+	+	+	—
invariant be (e.g. he be home)	+	+	+	+	+
copula absence (e.g. he nice)	+	+	—	+	+

been auxiliary in active sentence (e.g. he been ate the food)	+	—	+	+	—
existential it (e.g. It is a whole lot of people)	+	—	+	+	+

Key:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. most stereotyped (+)
less stereotyped (—) | 4. general significance (+)
regional significance (—) |
| 2. general rule (+)
non-general rule (—) | 5. frequent occurrence (+)
infrequent occurrence (—) |
| 3. grammatical feature (+)
phonological feature (—) | |

A matrix of this type could be employed by local teachers to determine which features they should concentrate on first.¹³

A variety of drill activities for the acquisition of features of standard English by American black children are suggested by Feigenbaum (1970:90). These activities are based upon comparisons and contrasts between non-standard and standard English. (These drills might be better suited to children in the later primary school years who are more competent at making comparisons and contrasts. Additionally, in Australia it might be preferable to have children identify their dialect as Aboriginal English, rather than non-standard.)

1. The sorting out of standard and non-standard examples of speech.

The pupils should be able to state how two utterances differ and which is standard and which non-standard.

2. Discrimination drills

Students discriminate between standard and non-standard English on the basis of the feature being worked on. Pairs of sentences or words are presented to students orally and the students indicate whether the two are the same or different, for example:

Teacher stimulus: "He work hard"
"He works hard"

Student response: "different"

3. Identification drills

The students are required to identify a single word or sentence without the assistance of a second, comparative item, for example:

- Teacher stimulus: "He work hard"
 Student response: "non-standard" (Aboriginal English)
 Teacher stimulus: "She likes movies"
 Student response: "standard"

4. Translation drills

The students translate a word or sentence from standard to non-standard or vice versa, for example:

- Teacher stimulus: "She prefer movies"
 Student response: "She prefers movies"

5. Response drills

These drills can be carried into freer activities in which the students have the opportunity of speaking more naturally. The students can give a standard response to a standard stimulus or a non-standard response to a non-standard stimulus, for example:

- Stimulus (teacher or pupils): "He fat"
 Response: "No he aint"
 Stimulus: "William likes tall girls"
 Response: "No he doesn't"

The stimulus and response pattern may be carried out between pairs of students rather than teacher and students.

As well as the grammar drills above, the same types of drills may be used to teach standard English pronunciation.

Feigenbaum also stresses the necessity of using and requiring of the student only completely natural standard English. A valid criticism of the more traditional approach to teaching standard English is that, in many cases, children were taught unnatural syntax or pronunciation.

It is a basic tenet of TSED programmes that the non-standard dialect be allowed to be spoken in the classroom. It should be recognised as a viable form of communication and, for reasons already discussed, it should not be ignored or derogated. Many children have been labelled dull, non-communicative, etc., because they have been forbidden to speak in their own dialect and have not had sufficient command of the standard dialect to communicate their ideas in that code.

Children are also often needlessly confused because they are corrected for their production of English in, for example, a geography or maths class; they may believe that they are being corrected for incorrect subject matter. Even in a reading class,

the correction of pronunciation at a time when that is not the focal point of the lesson may entirely confuse a non-standard speaking child. The child may not know whether he said the wrong word or whether he said the right word but pronounced it differently. A striking example is given in Simons (op cit: 8). The sentences being read are: They call, "What is it?" "What is it?"

- Child 1: Dey ...
 Teacher: Get your finger out of your mouth.
 Child 1: call ...
 Teacher: Start again.
 Child 1: Dey call, What is it? What is it?
 Teacher: (asks a second child)
 Child 2: Dey
 Child 1: Dat
 Teacher: What is it?

In this example, the child has become so confused that he has guessed at another word altogether (Dat). Thus, teachers must exercise discretion as to what features they concentrate on at a particular time and should not confuse the child by pointing to a whole range of features all at the same time.

A further point to remember is that just correcting the language items, without even requiring the student to repeat the correct form, is not teaching standard English. The teacher must have the student recognise the difference between the item he or she produced and the standard form. A short drill involving the whole class is a good way of relieving some of the anxiety sure to be experienced by the student at being corrected in front of the whole class.

It is important that the children become familiar with the new structures before they are expected to produce them spontaneously in speech. Each new language pattern should be introduced in three phases: (a) listening, (b) supported use (drills), (c) spontaneous speech. Again as in learning a second language, a new set of language habits needs to be developed which will enable the speaker to utter appropriate responses instantaneously, whenever the need arises.

Repetition and overlearning are essential for the acquisition of new language habits. However, often a non-standard dialect speaker is unaware of the extent of the difference between his speech and that of a standard dialect speaker, and becomes easily

bored with the repetition of drills. Thus, the learning of a second dialect is harder to motivate than that of a language entirely foreign and new. Because the second dialect learner understands the meanings of many words, the teacher must continually ensure that the content of sentences containing language patterns is interesting to the learners. The teacher must also offer the particular language pattern being learnt as unobtrusively as possible. A language pattern must be introduced time and time again. Games, stories, role playing, skits, cumulative tales with the children joining in are some of the ways of overcoming boredom. It is important, however, that such activities be devised by the teacher in conjunction with the students, so that the material is relevant to the children.

As Pilon (op cit: 138) states: "Teachers can and should structure their lessons to help children discover *inductively*" what they should learn. Teachers should keep the children highly involved in oral-aural ways such as those outlined above. A good approach to appreciating both the standard and non-standard dialect is to have the class prepare a dictionary which incorporates both standard and non-standard words and their meanings.

"A teacher should always be searching for poems, songs, or stories that repeat as regularly as waves roll in and out a standard expression which the children may not ordinarily be accustomed to hearing or saying." (Pilon, *ibid*: 144)¹⁴

Children should be encouraged to express themselves through the use of exercises in which there are any number of responses. This way, children do not feel there is one right answer, an attitude which may be responsible for much of the feelings of failure. The teacher should also generally aim to create a classroom characterised by child talk, rather than by teacher talk. Children should be encouraged to talk about experiences which are highly meaningful to them. Too often classroom discussion is based on the teacher's experience which is meaningless to the children.

Teachers must have some knowledge of the non-standard dialect, especially of the regular patterns of pronunciation and grammar, in order to understand the children's speech and their difficulties with standard English. Apart from grammatical and phonological features, teachers need to be aware also of specific difficulties encountered with individual vocabulary items. Homonyms (words which sound identical but have different meanings, for example, *sum* and *some*) in the standard dialect have been mentioned in the TSED literature as a special source of difficulty for non-standard learners. Often, non-standard dialect speaking children

misunderstand standard dialect sentences using such words. The teacher must anticipate such misconceptions and explain the difference between the two words. Alternatively, the teacher must be aware of the homonyms in the non-standard dialect which are not homonyms in the standard dialect so that he or she will not correct a word for meaning when the child appreciates the meaning of the word but does not pronounce it as it is pronounced in standard English. For example, a non-standard dialect speaker may pronounce *coal* and *cold* the same way, while being fully aware of each of the two meanings of this non-standard homonym. An interesting example is given by Piestrup (as quoted by Simon, op cit: 9)

Teacher: Who can give me a sentence with "win"?

Child 1: A boy win a race.

Teacher: A boy **win** a race? That sounds . . .

Child 2: I know teacher . . .

. . .

Teacher: . . . Can you say that a little better, so it sounds — I understand what you mean, but Erndalyn, what, how would you say that?

Child 5: The win blew the hat off my frien' head.

The teacher should also try to understand why the children may make the modifications they do in their attempts to reproduce utterances in the standard dialect. Competence in reproducing language structures is influenced to some extent by comprehension. If the modifications of the sentence made by the child do not preserve the meaning of the sentence, it is possible that the child has not understood the function of the structure. For example, when asked to repeat the sentence: **The teacher said that Jill should go back to her class**, the child might come up with **The teacher said class**. Alternatively the child may have understood the sentence but, when repeating it, translates it into his own dialect. For example, in reproducing the sentence in the previous example, the child might say **Teacher said can go back to the class**.¹⁵ The two cases must be seen as being fundamentally different.

The teacher of TSED has a vital role to play in the maintenance of the students' self-esteem. He or she must somehow let the students know that their dialect, while appropriate and acceptable in certain settings and situations, is nevertheless not acceptable in all settings and situations in the school and in the wider community. As previously mentioned, the teacher must point out that there are many ways of speaking a language but that in certain

situations one dialect is preferable to another.

Finally, further problems arise in making decisions as to when is the most appropriate time in a child's school career to learn standard English. There is considerable controversy over this in the literature. Some educators believe that it should be taught to 'disadvantaged' children as soon as they enter kindergarten. Others believe that the intermediate grades of the primary school constitute the best time, while yet others maintain that it is best taught at secondary school.

7. TSED and the Acquisition of Literacy

It is commonly agreed by both linguists and educators that literacy should first be achieved in a person's own language and this is a basic tenet of the Bilingual Education Programme. However, this premise has not been adopted as yet by those concerned with the literacy of non-standard dialect speakers. Hence, children in the earliest years of their school lives are asked to read language which has only a partial correspondence to language as they speak it. It is not surprising, therefore, that there is a very low level of literacy among non-standard dialect speakers who have attended school for a number of years.

According to Shuy (1969:127) certain kinds of reading errors are the result of what he calls "differing performance realizations of similar underlying language structures". In other words, when a child reads *He John fren* for *He is John's friend*, he may be quite well aware of the underlying grammar in the written sentence. Because this 'surface' grammatical structure is not present in his dialect, the child 'translates' the written standard English form into his own dialect. This is a process similar to that outlined in the previous section where the child makes modifications to a sentence he is asked to repeat.

In cases of such different 'performance realizations' there is not an inability to see, or even to say, the particular feature, it is just that it does not exist in the 'surface structure' of that particular dialect.

As the student reads he is influenced by the grammatical system of his dialect. Thus, the language performance of the student is consonant with his dialect, even though the visual symbols might argue otherwise. Furthermore, in translating the standard dialect into his or her own dialect the student is providing proof that he or she has understood the meaning of the written word.

Both the deficit and difference viewpoints accept the assumption that mismatch between the written standard-dialect and the non-standard dialect of the speaker is a major source of reading interference. However, according to Simon (1973:4) in order to resolve this problem "the deficit model would change the child's language while the difference model would change the school."

Basically three ways of overcoming the mismatch between the standard and non-standard dialect in reading have been suggested in the American TSED literature. These are:

1. Non-standard dialect speaking children should firstly learn oral standard English. Thus, the mismatch between the child's dialect and the language of readers used to teach reading would no longer exist. However, according to Shuy (1973:12) "there generally exists a pessimistic feeling about the possibility of teaching six year olds standard English because the peer group influence over speech resists the attempts of teachers to change speech patterns." But, to wait until children have mastered standard English before teaching them to read is unrealistic, so much would be denied them without this skill.

2. Special readers may be written in non-standard dialects so that the non-standard dialect speakers are taught to read with materials written to conform to their dialect. This approach involves radical changes in the basal readers.

3. Existing reading materials may be used, but the non-standard dialect speaking children should be allowed to translate what they are reading into their own dialect.

Goodman (1969) suggests that the last approach is the most satisfactory. It recognizes the legitimacy of the child's language and makes no attempt to change it so that the problem of rejecting the child's language inherent in the first approach is avoided. And, by not calling for materials written in dialect, this approach avoids the practical problems of devising and printing special readers. It also overcomes the objections of all those who feel that dialect readers may hinder the child's development in standard English. There is much resistance to the use of non-standard materials even on the part of non-standard speakers themselves who do not value their own form of speech but, rather, consider it a severe handicap in social advancement.

Simon (op cit:7) states that "The Goodman proposal has no real disadvantages, except that it would require extensive changes in the way most teachers are handling dialect. This would involve extensive retraining of teachers." Such retraining is a major problem, but necessary if headway is to be expected in the teaching of non-standard dialect speaking children.

According to Simon, sometimes teachers' ways of responding to non-standard English speaking children are responsible for the major source of reading interference. He states that: "The teacher's interaction with the black dialect speaking child during reading instruction, rather than dialect per se, is a major source of reading interference. More specifically, it is the teacher's lack of knowledge of the rules of dialect and his attitude toward dialect which is a major source of reading interference." Simon further believes that teachers are confused about the difference between reading and speaking. Many teachers encourage the non-standard dialect speaker to read in 'preferred pronunciation' without any real concern for comprehension.

Teachers of students who speak a non-standard dialect must be constantly aware of whether a 'mistake' in pronunciation is just that, or whether it indicates non-comprehension. (The reader is here reminded of an example given in the preceding section in the context of homonyms.) Teachers must also be aware that correct pronunciation need not necessarily mean comprehension. As pointed out earlier, a knowledge of the homonyms of the child's dialect is necessary otherwise the teacher might keep insisting that two words are different in meaning, which the child already knows.

7.1 The 'Language Experience' approach to reading

This approach is based on utilising the child's existing vocabulary and experiences as a basis for learning to read. It is particularly suitable for non-standard dialect speaking children because it maximizes the correspondence between the printed word and the child's language. By using the child's own vocabulary, the need to teach meaning in addition to learning to 'read' the word is eradicated. Because the child learns to read his own 'spoken' stories which he dictates to the teacher, or which he writes for himself as he develops the necessary skills, motivation to learn to read is no real problem. By using this approach there is none of the usual problem encountered in teaching non-standard dialect speaking children to read from readers which are based on different cultural concepts and language patterns.

Traditional readers are sometimes unrelated even to the experience of the standard-speaking child. On the matter of such readers, Kaldor (1973) states that "it is particularly important that reading materials be linguistically well graded and that their content should be sociolinguistically sound. All too often readers contain discourse not natural to real life situations." The mismatch of readers with the language of the children learning to read from

them results in serious difficulties in learning to read. There is, therefore "a drastic need for adjustment of beginning reading materials for children of all social classes but there is a drastic need for the adjustment of such materials for the non-standard speaker whose grammatical system is sufficiently different from standard English to hinder his learning to relate his oral language to the grammatical forms of the primer" (Shuy, op cit:132).

Using the 'language experience' approach there is no need to modify the language of the child in order to make him or her ready to read books which are largely irrelevant to his experiences.

This approach is already gaining ground in Australia. An interesting example is given by Michael Christie (1976) who describes his experience in using this approach to teach Aboriginal children at Milingimbi, in the Northern Territory, to read.

The children would draw a picture which they would then take to Christie who would write underneath it the story they dictated to him: (ibid:19)

"I would write a story slowly in the space below the picture . . . and reading each word as it appeared on the page. The children would read back the sentence straight away, pointing to the words one by one, before they had time to forget them; instant success at reading! . . . Whenever the child came across a word he didn't know, I told him immediately. He never had to fidget in silence trying to work out a word; right from the first day he was a fluent reader."

The picture was vital to later re-readings, giving clues to decoding the words. As a child's repertoire of written words grew, so did his dependence on recognising word shapes and initial sounds. Finally, after much re-reading, a picture could be folded out of sight and the child could read his better known stories without the picture clues.

Christie found that the same words and sentence structures appeared over and over. From the texts and pictures Christie compiled books grouping similar grammatical structures together. For example, a basic sentence pattern with only one word different in each example would be grouped together. In this way a basal reader was compiled from the children's own language 'performance' at their level of 'competence' eliminating many of the problems experienced as a result of the mismatch between the beginning reading materials and the children's language.

The children were shocked, but excited, to discover that they could also read other children's stories and "information that had started in someone else's head and not their own". This initial

discovery eventually led to the children attempting to read from library books.

Christie admits that some children did not progress as quickly as others through irregular attendance, lack of motivation or readiness or previous failure experiences. He found, however, that by weeding out the pictures and stories with which an individual child was experiencing difficulty, children were able to cope. In this way these children experienced the success necessary for motivation — a prerequisite for learning to read.

Christie emphasises that:

"... Two things were born in mind during all of this. Firstly, there is a time and a place for teaching young children who are still learning English (or any other language) what 'correct' grammar and usage is. This is not it. The children dictating the story, whatever language they used, would get the story on paper just as they told it. Any attempt to correct grammar, and the child would not be able to read it back the next day. Secondly, the reading and word study as described here is only a small part of this programme. In any reading programme lots of time should be spent in creating a reading environment for the children. Even with only an hour and a half each day I made sure that I spent about ten or fifteen minutes reading to the children, listening to my children and older children read, or just looking at books with them. A reading would be brought frequently and meaningfully into every other activity in the open classroom. (ibid:21)

In the above statement, Christie endorses a principle which has been emphasized in this paper. That is, children should not be corrected for grammar in their performance of speaking or reading, except in a period especially devoted to that purpose or in a situation when the children are aware that they are being corrected for grammar and not for meaning.

Christie's experience in teaching reading could be a valuable model for all teachers, but especially for teachers of non-standard dialect speakers.

NOTES

1. I am grateful for the many discussions with Dr Susan Kaldor of the University of Western Australia on the topic and for her guidance to the appropriate literature.
2. & 3. Throughout the remainder of this paper I shall omit the quotation marks from these commonly used terms.
4. All future references to "Teaching Standard English as a Second Dialect" will appear as TSESD;

5. For an introduction to Aboriginal linguistics see Vaszolyi (1976).
6. 'Interference' theory is summarised later in this section.
7. For a different interpretation of the difference between dialects see the 'deficit' argument in the following section.
8. Vaszolyi (1976:46-50) summarises the main differences between Aboriginal English and standard Australian-English.
9. Although the Van Leer Project has come under some criticism, the teaching methods presented in the "Handbook for First Year Experimental Language Development Program" Books One, Two and Three, may be usefully adapted to a TSESD programme.
10. The text appearing in brackets is Gollagher's comments concerning her summary of the 'Aims' which precede the comments.
11. Examples from Kaldor, personal communication.
12. Wolfram's criteria for sequencing lessons appear in the section discussing "Some Principles in TSESD".
13. The "Black English Features" which appear in this list may not be applicable to features of Aboriginal English as they are drawn from the speech of non-standard dialect speaking black Americans.
14. Pilon provides a bibliography of useful materials for TSESD. However these books are all prepared in the United States and, thus, the materials contained therein might have to be adapted for use in Australia.
15. Examples from Kaldor, personal communication.

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20

BUT THEY DON'T USE IT IN THE PLAYGROUND

Ed Brumby

A common complaint from teachers of Aboriginal children in rural/remote schools goes something like this: "I teach them Standard English and they use it in the classroom and when they speak to me. But they don't use it in the playground. They revert to Aboriginal English or the vernacular. So why waste time teaching Standard English?"

So, what is the problem? More importantly, is there a problem?

There is little doubt that the teaching of English is one of the most difficult areas in classroom work with Aboriginal children. And the frustration felt by teachers when they hear children speaking other than Standard English is, in one sense, understandable. However, in another more important sense, it reflects a lack of appreciation for the different ways that people use language, either varieties of the same language or different languages.

It is unfortunate that so many people, teachers included still think in terms of Standard English being 'right' and anything else being 'wrong'. There are many varieties of English. Standard English is one, Aboriginal English another. (Aboriginal English is used here as a collective term referring to the many varieties of the dialect.) There is not, and never can be any justification for calling one 'right' and the other 'wrong'. They certainly cannot be judged in this manner in linguistic or scientific terms. Standard English and Aboriginal English are different dialects of the same language, each having its own phonological and grammatical system and each being a separate and equal entity in its own right. There is no linguistic basis whatsoever for saying that one is better than the other.

There is a criterion for using one dialect or language in preference to another. That criterion is "appropriateness to the situation." For example, it would be most inappropriate for the Prime Minister to make an address to the nation using Cantonese. The reasons are obvious. This is not to say that Cantonese is intrinsically worse or better than English. It just would not be appropriate for the situation.

Nor would it be appropriate to use the same variety of language at both a CWA garden party and a two-up game. Not that one variety is superior to or better than the other. It is just that one variety is appropriate to the garden party situation and the other appropriate to the two-up game. The variation in form of language used depends not only on the total situation but also on the age, sex and number of people involved and the general context of the conversation.

In the course of any one day each one of us uses many different varieties of English, standard and non-standard forms included. One only has to compare the language he or she uses at breakfast, in the classroom, in the staff room, at the shop or supermarket, in the hotel or club and so on to appreciate the quite considerable differences in variety or form of English we use. And, how often, in fact do we use the so-called Standard English forms in other than 'formal' situations?

Children, Aboriginal and white Australian are no different. It is an interesting and remarkable fact that children recognize at a relatively early age the appropriateness of particular varieties of language to particular situations. Even in all-white schools the varieties of English used by children in the playground differ a great deal from the varieties they use in the classroom. Again, how often do white children use Standard English forms in the playground?

Is it right, then, to expect Aboriginal children to be any different? Should we require them to use Standard English at all times and in all situations at school? Many if not most teachers would justify this approach on the grounds that the children do not have the opportunities to use Standard English outside the school and so need the extra practice. This justification, as well as the expectations of such teachers are quite false, and, as stated previously, reflect a lack of appreciation of the way children use different varieties of language in different situations. In any case, how does one police such an approach???

This should not be misinterpreted as being an argument against the teaching of Standard English to Aboriginal children. The needs in this regard are obvious and compelling. Without a knowledge of

and the ability to handle Standard English, how is a young Aborigine going to learn to read and write and cope with white society??

Teachers who insist on their Aboriginal pupils using only Standard English probably do not recognize Aboriginal English as being a legitimate dialect of English in its own right. The legitimacy of Aboriginal English cannot be denied. It may be deemed inappropriate in some situations. But never illegitimate.

Overt recognition of Aboriginal English by the teacher in the classroom can be a helpful tool in the teaching of Standard English. It is probably not unfair to say that Aboriginal children may well think that they are speaking 'English' when they use an Aboriginal dialect of English. That is, they may not be aware of the differences between the two varieties or dialects. The teacher would do well to point out some of these differences, not in terms of Standard forms being 'right' and Aboriginal forms being 'wrong', but rather in terms of appropriateness and that one is just different from the other.

The use of a contrastive approach in the teaching of Standard English forms or structure could be of enormous benefit. For example, if the teacher wants to teach the simple past tense of English verbs, he or she might use the following approach:

Presentation

Start by writing the following two sentences on the board:

You went. You bin go.

Ask the children which is the Standard English (use the term 'whitefella' English if need be) form and which is the Aboriginal English form. Other examples from both dialects and discussion with the children should lead them to the fairly obvious conclusion that 'bin' is a past tense marker in Aboriginal English.

This simple and by no means original activity/approach should take only a short period of time and should lead to recognition by the pupils of one of the distinctive contrasts between Standard ('Whitefella') English and Aboriginal English.

The approach can be expanded and reinforced by using a variety of drills such as:

Discrimination Drills

A discrimination drill gives the children practice in discriminating between Standard and Aboriginal English. Pairs of sentences or words are presented orally and the children indicate whether they are "same" or "different".

Teacher Stimulus

You go.
You bin go.

You sleep.
You sleep.

You bin stealim.
You stole.

Students Response

Different

Same

Different

Translation Drills

As the name suggests, Translation Drills involve the translation of items from one dialect to another.

Teacher Stimulus

You bin pinish.

You worked.

You stole.

You slept.

Students Response

You died.

You bin work.

You bin steal.

You bin sleep.

The format for these kinds of drills can vary in many respects. The teacher can use all Standard forms or all Aboriginal forms as stimuli or, as above, a combination of both. Obviously, emphasis on translation from Aboriginal forms to Standard English forms is desirable in keeping with the stated objective of teaching Standard English.

The example given in the drills above are extremely simple using only one subject ("you") in all cases. However, there is much scope for expansion into more complicated areas of Standard vs Aboriginal English.

Teaching identification and discrimination of Standard and Aboriginal English is only part of the process. There is the obvious need for teaching when and in what situation and context each or either dialect is appropriate. A direct approach of stating just when and where would not be entirely wrong and role playing games and activities should be of some use. It can also be taught incidentally.

It is essential, though, that teachers avoid making value judgments in terms of 'right' and 'wrong' in relation to the two dialects. Each should be treated as different but equal parts of the English language. Any reduction of the 'shame' factor amongst Aboriginal children in relation to their language is a step in the right direction.

21

LANGUAGE AND READING

John Fleming

The Halls Creek School in Western Australia is classified as a Special Native School because of the large complement of Aboriginal children in attendance (90% of 200 total school enrolment).

The children come from a variety of situations — reserve, cattle stations, transitional home areas and normal government housing quarters, but mainly from the first two mentioned areas.

Their knowledge of English is varied but on the whole their language competence is substantially below that of their European/Australian counterparts. There is a similar discrepancy in their knowledge/experience of the modern world and in fact any situation outside their own local environment.

We have, then, a serious problem to be overcome before formal learning can commence with the new beginner at school: an English language deficiency.

In addition to the language problem being experienced by the new beginner we have a reading problem in the 11-14 year group. Some of these children have failed to reach any standard of reading competence and coupled with this deficiency have a dislike for any form of reading at all.

These, then, were two of our more serious problems — the language deficiency of the younger children and the need for a creative motivation program with the older non-reader.

The language programs in both cases had to be designed from the limited vocabulary that they did know and based entirely on situations that were completely familiar to the children so that all learning was based on known experiences which were in turn used as the basis for developing new experiences.

Our limited experience with Aboriginals gave us some grounds for formulating the opinion that Aboriginal children make use of their senses to far greater advantage than the European/Australian child; so we decided to work on his sight and aural observances.

We obtained for this work the following equipment:

1. An instamatic camera.
2. A Polaroid camera.
3. A language master.
4. A listening centre.

The language master is a recording machine that uses a card with a double magnetic tape across the bottom. Various size cards can be used and photographs and word cards can be attached to it either temporarily, so that the card may be used again, or permanently. The listening centre is a set of headphones and control box which can, in turn, be connected to the language master.

The Junior Group

The first series of photographs was of all the children in the groups, taken individually and in their own environment. Most of the photographs were taken in the camp with the children standing near some possession of their own or their family.

"outside the camp",
 "next to the fire",
 "with their dogs".

The background is important because the more there is in each photograph the more scope there will be for eventual discussion. For example, one photograph provided this progression:—

John.

This is John.

John is near the tree.

The tree is big.

These words were all to be found in the vocabulary of the reading texts that were eventually selected for use when the children had progressed sufficiently to start formal learning. At no stage though did the children use the actual text; they used only their own work books and the class book made up by the teacher.

To begin with, each photograph was attached to the language master card with photo corners and the name of the child was printed on the card (Card A). We selected the larger card 11" x 8½" which gave us sufficient room for both the photograph and

the printing. Later we found it just as easy to print the word or phrase on stiff paper and attach it to the card with a paper clip.

When the group selected to use the machine was ready, the teacher inserted the card onto the machine and by using a master key recorded her voice on the tape, clearly saying the word printed on the card. The children then listened to the playback and then each of them in turn recorded the word, played back the word and then listened to the teacher's recording again. We did not use the listening centre with this group, as it was to the advantage of the whole class that they could hear all that was going on.

As the children are normally shy and quiet, the amplification of the set gave the teacher a much louder voice pattern to listen to and she was able to detect and correct any sounds not being made or being made incorrectly.

Each child had a work book and as the words were introduced they were printed into the books by the teacher and various kinds of activity work used to consolidate the words.

When all the work on each photograph was expended on the language master it was removed from the card and put into a flash card and the most useful word groupings that had been used on the machine were printed on the card which was then used for revision work. (Card B).

For the next stage, the basic word vocabulary of the Janet and John series **Here We Go** was selected. There was no basis for selection other than that we could introduce each word orientated to the camp theme and photograph the children as close to that location as possible.

Words and phrases using the text vocabulary and other words already learned were printed on the master cards and the photographs attached. Recordings were then made and practised until the teacher was certain the children not only understood the meanings of the words but had mastered voice inflection and pronunciation. We considered this to be of major importance because besides being deficient in Standard English many children were deficient in sound discrimination. For example, even in their vernacular the single sounds d, e, f, h, t, v, do not exist, they can't pronounce "th", and do not differentiate between the sounds: p and b, k and g, d and t.

The equipment used with the group enabled us to teach from their experience, and for them to see and hear the words at the same time, thus using the two senses we selected from the beginning.

The photography created the material for discussion and language development, and the language master gave us the scope for analysing voice technique and correcting or teaching it where necessary.

By careful planning the teacher can have her class outside the school environment quite frequently while on photographic expeditions and can take the opportunity to meet the parents and in general explore the community. This, in turn, gives scope for experience learning in other subject areas such as art, drama, science and social studies.

The Senior Group

The methods used by this group varied slightly from those used with the junior group as our aim here was to rekindle some enthusiasm for reading and language.

Our language master was again our main aid but it was used this time in conjunction with the listening centre and a Polaroid camera which gave us film prints immediately.

The children were first introduced to the language master and the listening centre and taught simple routines for using them both. Then the camera was used for the first series of photographs by the teacher while the children observed and posed for the photographs that were taken. The first series was the only one taken by the teacher. All the subsequent shots were taken by the children and they also chose how and where the photographs were to be taken; this created many situations for oral and written expression for the teacher to use.

To start the series the teacher chose the word "leg" and used this word in a variety of sentences matched with the children's names and words from the **Happy Venture — Introductory Book**, as far as possible. The seven photographs in the series were as follows:—

Here is David's leg.

David fell on the leg.

Francis is by David's leg.

Don can see David's leg.

David is by the tree.

Greg is by the tree.

Fred is by the tree.

These seven stories were then master recorded on seven taped cards with the photograph and printed card of the story attached also. The photograph was attached with the photo corners and the story card with a paper clip so they could both be removed at any time. This is important as it means the card can be used again in another series and it allows the teacher to introduce matching games with the taped voice, the printed cards and the photographs.

The first subject chosen by the group and one that was found to be most successful was "travel" — the different ways of getting to Halls Creek. The preparation for this series included photographing a plane (and being taxied down the airstrip in it), photographing a truck and having a ride in that, photographing a caravan and having morning tea inside it with the owners, photographing a motor cycle and bicycle and riding on both of them.

In this manner the word lists of the texts **Endeavour Book I** and the **Introductory Book** of the **Happy Venture** series were introduced, all in story situations related to experiences and in areas of high interest to the children.

All the children in the group have developed a remarkable confidence in handling the equipment as well as a marked improvement in confidence in themselves and their reading.

I feel quite sure that the work done with this senior group has considerable application to remedial reading groups in any school situation. Teachers who see fit to experiment with this system will be astounded by the interest and improvement that their children will show towards reading and language development.

EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY



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MOUNT LAWLEY

