

# **Linguistic Innovation and Continuity:**

## **Teaching in and of Warlpiri Language at Yuendumu School**

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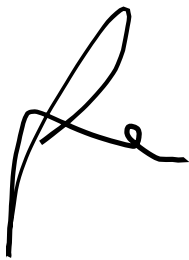
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## **Declaration**

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university. To the best of the author's knowledge, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text.

Emma C. Browne

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'E' followed by a smaller 'C' and 'B'.

14<sup>th</sup> February 2022

## Preface

This thesis contains excerpts from two articles published in academic journals. For the first, published in *Babel* in 2019, I was the only author:

Browne, E. (2019). Multimodal tools for exploring communicative practices among multilingual students in remote central Australia. *Babel* 54(1/2), 28-33. Retrieved from: <http://hdl.handle.net/1885/204024>

The second, I co-authored with a member of my Warlpiri mentoring panel, Fiona Gibson Napaljarri, who contributed to the development of interview questions, the conceptualisation for the article and who checked the Warlpiri transcriptions.

Browne, E. & Gibson, F.N. (2021). Communities of Practice in the Warlpiri Triangle: Four Decades of Crafting Ideological and Implementational Spaces for Teaching in and of Warlpiri Language. *Languages*, 6(2), 68. Retrieved from <https://www.mdpi.com/2226-471X/6/2/68>

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*To the Warlpiri kids and educators in Yuendumu who continue to grow me and many others up with patience and grace, thank you.*

## Abstract

In Yuendumu, a remote community in Central Australia, children grow up speaking a traditional Aboriginal language, Warlpiri, learn English as an additional language and are exposed to other local and global languages via family networks, travel, media, and technology. At Yuendumu School, which aims to offer a bilingual with biliteracy program, Warlpiri educators have articulated *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri language’ as both a medium of instruction and a goal for learning. This is in accordance with the community’s aspirations for the school to be a key site of Warlpiri linguistic and cultural maintenance, and amidst concerns about pressure from English on Warlpiri language use, as well as minor documented changes to contemporary language practices since first contact with Europeans in the last century.

This research into the ‘ways of speaking’ in three Warlpiri teaching and learning contexts at Yuendumu school in 2018-2019 drew on ethnography of communication as its theoretical and methodological approach to document both the linguistic practices and ideologies surrounding teaching and learning in and of Warlpiri language. Guided by a panel of Warlpiri mentors, it used mixed methods which included interactional analysis of classroom speech, complemented by thematic analysis of interviews with Warlpiri educators, of grey literature (professional development workshops reports, advocacy, curriculum, and policy documents) and multimodal arts-based language awareness activities with students.

In this study, Warlpiri students expressed multiple identities within Warlpiri and global youth cultures, strong plurilingual awareness and reflected community values promoting Warlpiri language maintenance. The research showed how Warlpiri educators, as part of a broader Warlpiri Triangle professional network have developed and refined language teaching pedagogies over four decades to achieve their stated goals of Warlpiri language maintenance. In the classrooms, Warlpiri educators used these linguistic strategies to enact a target Warlpiri language policy, establishing and where necessary re-establishing *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ as the classroom code. They also deployed plurilingual practices that reinforced social and kin relationships and created a favourable framework for in-depth processing of academic content and the co-construction of knowledge. As evidence of their learning and their sensitivity to different ‘ways of speaking,’ Warlpiri, students produced age-appropriate *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ in specific tasks, such as re-telling traditional stories. They also reconceptualised content in ways that reflected their contemporary plurilingual repertoires and identities, such as in mapping activities following bush trips. The study explored the ways in which Warlpiri educators’ language pedagogies exemplified linguistically responsive and culturally sustaining practices that build students’ competence in *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri,’ while also accommodating their contemporary ways of speaking, literacies, and identities in the school context.

This thesis is one of very few in-depth documentations of educators’ and students’ first language practices and ideologies in an endangered Australian language maintenance education program. This work contributes to understandings of the local development and enactment of language-in-education policy and draws out lessons for dual language models of education in schools operating in contexts of language endangerment and change.

# List of Abbreviations and transcription conventions

## Abbreviations

AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
BRDU	Bilingual Resource Development Unit
DITRDC	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, and Communications
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DoE	Department of Education
EALD	English as an Additional Language or Dialect
EYLF	Early Years Learning Framework
L1	first language
L2	second language
NT	Northern Territory
NTDoE	Northern Territory Department of Education
SAE	Standard Australian English
WETT	Warlpiri Education Training Trust

## Glossing Conventions

1, 2, 3	first person, second person, third person
ABS	absolute case
ALL	allative case
ABL	ablative case
ANAPH	anaphora
CAUSE	causative
COM	comitative case
CONJ	conjunction
DAT	dative case
DET	determiner
DU	dual
EUPH	euphonic
EMPH	emphatic marker
EXCL	exclusive
ERG	ergative case
FUT	future
TOP	topic
IMP	imperative
Impf	imperfective aspect
INC	inclusive
INTERR	interrogative
INCL	inclusive

INCHO	inchoative
IRR	irrealis
NPST	non-past tense
O	object
NOM	nominaliser
Perf	perfective aspect
PERL	perlative
POSS	possessive
PRES	present
PST	past
PL	plural
REFLEX	reflexive/reciprocal
redup	reduplication
REP	reported speech
S	subject
SubjCOMP	subject controlled complementiser
SG	singular
SPEC	specific
TOP	Topic
USIT	Usitative

### **Transcription Key Adapted from Jefferson (2004)**

WT1	Warlpiri educator 1 (always the same person)
R1	Researcher 1 and R2 was a Warlpiri educator/ researcher who co-conducted interviews
E1	Elder 1 (always the same person)
V	Volunteer
KK	KK or <i>kurdu-kurdu</i> 'children' represents two or more children speaking at once
K??;	KK followed by a two question marks and semicolon indicates that the speaker's identity is not clear but there are reasons to believe that it is someone different from the last unidentified speaker.
?K5	a question mark before the code name of the speaker stands for a probable but not safe guess regarding the identity of the speaker.
(.)	A dot between parentheses indicates a brief interval (between .02-0.8 seconds)

(1.5)	Numbers between parentheses indicate length of pauses in seconds and tenths of seconds.
<1> <1>, <2> <2>	Whenever two or more utterances happen at the same time, the overlaps are marked with numbered tags- all simultaneous speech has the same number
[laughter]	Non-verbal communication such as [laughter], [crying], [sighing] in square brackets
xxx	xxx is used for inaudible material
–	“em dash” – when trailing off eg He shou—he shouldn’t have come.
:::	Colons indicate stretched sound
° word°	Degree sign showing word much quieter than surrounding words
WORD	uppercase louder than surrounding speech
(word)	parentheses denote an uncertain word
{contextual information}	Contextual information is added between curly brackets where it is relevant to understanding the interaction

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# Chapter 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction and statement of the problem

The seeds of the idea for this study go back almost a decade, when, as a newcomer to the Northern Territory's education system, I began to engage with the complex and contested theoretical and practical arena of education provision for Aboriginal children living in remote communities (Hartman & Henderson, 1994; McCarty & Nicholas, 2014; Simpson & Wigglesworth, 2018). In 2013, I began working in the remote<sup>1</sup> Warlpiri community of Yuendumu. That summer, I attended my first Warlpiri educator professional development workshop in Nyirripi, one of the smaller Warlpiri communities in the Tanami Desert. Educators had travelled hundreds of kilometres from three Warlpiri communities of Yuendumu, Lajamanu, and Willowra for a week of planning, resource development and professional practice. There was a buzz of energy as Warlpiri educators articulated the need for government support for bilingual programs following a snap policy decision five years prior, known as the First Four Hours of English<sup>2</sup>, which had decimated the structures supporting bilingual programs. As a group, and guided by senior community members and elders, they penned statements and clearly articulated their concerns in Warlpiri. The group then translated these into English for the benefit of administrators at the Northern Territory Government's Department of Education. Next, they formed small groups to plan the syllabus for the next term following the Warlpiri Theme Cycle, a three-year cycle of twelve Warlpiri knowledge domains related to land, language, law, and culture (Disbray & Martin, 2018). *Yapa*, the term Warlpiri use to refer to themselves, and *kardiya*<sup>3</sup>, the term for non-Indigenous people, were working closely together and interactions switched between Warlpiri and English, to include English-speaking *kardiya* colleagues. These conversations were robust with nuance and complexity. The educators discussed their students' abilities and enthusiastically celebrated their achievements. At many points in the morning's session, *yapa* educators reiterated the

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<sup>1</sup> The Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory defines remote as "a town, place, community or locality, outside the environs of Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs where access to health, education, social, financial, emergency, communication and professional support services are limited.

[https://parliament.nt.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/616035/Aqst-453-Higgins-Urban-Rural-Remote-Definitions.pdf](https://parliament.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/616035/Aqst-453-Higgins-Urban-Rural-Remote-Definitions.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> This policy mandated all instruction to be in English only for the first half of the school day across Northern Territory government schools between 2008 -2012 (Devlin, Disbray & Devlin, 2017; Freeman, Bell, Andrews & Gallaher, 2017; Oldfield, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> I employ this terminology where appropriate from here on.

importance of teaching Warlpiri language and culture in their communities' schools and expressed their enduring dedication to this endeavour.

During the lunchbreak, a Warlpiri colleague and I stepped outside the workshop venue to observe a group of students who had begun an impromptu game of football. A senior *kardiya* school administrator approached us and commented,

“It’s a shame that the students don’t speak much Warlpiri anymore. On the football field these days you just hear so much English. It’s the same in class.”

I turned to my colleague, who, as the administrator turned to leave, quietly but firmly responded in English,

“They are speaking Warlpiri. They’re Warlpiri kids and that’s what we are teaching them. That’s why we are here this week and why we need to keep working in schools.”

This conversation was the start of what has felt like a Groundhog Day scenario of questions and commentary from teachers, principals, education support workers and administrators about Warlpiri children’s language proficiencies, in both their mother tongue, Warlpiri and the language of mainstream learning in schools, English. Many of the questions were raised in connection to doubts about the complexity and expressivity of Indigenous languages, the onerousness of bilingualism, and the need for high level academic English skills to access the mainstream curriculum. Debates around the Yuendumu School staffroom coffee table revolved around managing the conflicting demands of the standardised curriculum and the local curriculum, the Warlpiri Theme Cycle. For some *kardiya* teachers at Yuendumu School, the task of catering to their students’ linguistic repertoires, which they only poorly understood, was overwhelming, particularly for those coming with little experience speaking, let alone teaching and assessing, languages other than English. And this was not helped by guidance from the Northern Territory Department of Education at regional and school levels that is rarely coherently articulated or consistently enforced or resourced (Devlin, Disbray & Friedman Devlin, 2017; Disbray, 2015; Hoogenraad, 2001; Nicholls, 1994, 2005; Simpson, Caffery, & McConvell, 2009).

I soon learned these conversations were a continuation of a five-decade debate about theory and practice around the incorporation of Aboriginal languages into the Northern Territory’s

education system (Hartman & Henderson, 1994; Hoogenraad, 2001; McMahon & Murray, 2000; Nicholls, 1994; 2001; 2005). This education system has historically banned, excluded, and penalised the use of Indigenous languages in classrooms and articulated an ambivalent and chequered policy space for first language-in-education (Devlin, 2009; Devlin et al., 2017). This space, particularly in recent decades, has been dominated by concerns around English literacy and national benchmarking of remote students and a global shift towards high stakes, standards-based accountability in education systems (Macqueen et al., 2018; Ozga & Lingard, 2007; Wigglesworth, Simpson, & Loakes, 2011).

These conversations are also situated in the context of significant endangerment of traditional Aboriginal languages since first sustained contact with English and resulting historical and ongoing inequities. The situation is compounded by misunderstandings of the contemporary local language ecologies that have been dramatically impacted and the language socialisation practices in diverse communities. It is further obfuscated by the prevailing monolingual mindset (Clyne, 2004) that focusses on English language use, with limited understandings of multilingual practices, language acquisition and language learning.

Aboriginal leaders, educators, and scholars, however, have made a crucial and increasingly vocal contribution to this enduring debate (Anderson et. al., 2018; Marika, Ngurruwutthun, & White, 1992; Marika-Mununggiritj & Christie, 1995; Marika-Mununggiritj et al., 1990; Martin & Oldfield, 2000; Nakata, 2007). They have articulated and developed local pedagogies and proposed models of working collaboratively, ‘both ways,’ in a cross-cultural space. This is in addition to territory-wide day-to-day efforts in classrooms and on bush trips that have incorporated, often with very little structural support and resourcing, a wealth of intellectual, scientific, and social resources of communities into classrooms. These communities continue to position schools as important spaces for maintaining traditional languages and Indigenous knowledges.

Consequently, the teaching and learning in and of first languages in the Northern Territory is so much more complex than simply the incorporation of languages other than English into the curriculum. It is about Aboriginal recognition and self-determination in the socialisation of their own children. It is about linguistic survival and continuity under the intense hegemony of English language and institutions (McCarty & Lee, 2014). It is concerned with little-understood

linguistic practices<sup>4</sup> and how these can be deployed as resources to achieve diverse learning goals. McCarty, Nicholas and Wigglesworth (2019) have called efforts in this arena “survival work”. It is also political work. And for the non-Indigenous researcher, it must be careful, collaborative work that challenges the status quo and inequities rife in this context.

In this doctoral research project, I examine the language practices involved in teaching and learning Warlpiri language in three classroom contexts between 2018 and 2019, in a remote school in the Northern Territory community of Yuendumu, which offers a bilingual with biliteracy program in Warlpiri and English. I explore both the forms and functions of the language practices of students and teachers and the ideologies that underpin these. This study does not examine teaching and learning in and of English and is not concerned with standardised testing results. This study does look at Warlpiri educators' assessments of student progression in discrete units of work and analyses students' demonstrations of their learning in their first language. These are important because there is as yet no provision for standardised testing of students' progression in Warlpiri and limited systematic data being collected in schools. I take a collaborative approach to developing knowledge while acknowledging the limitations of my positionality as a non-Indigenous researcher.

In this section, I have situated this research within the contested academic and practical arena of Aboriginal language maintenance and dual language education in the Northern Territory. I continue by articulating the rationale for this study (1.2). Then I summarise the methodological approach undertaken to conduct the research (1.3). I discuss some of the key concepts framing this work (1.3.1), and critically reflect on my positionality in relation to the context (1.3.2). Finally, I provide a narrative overview of the research by summarising the contents of each of the remaining chapters of the thesis (1.4).

## **1.2 Rationale and significance of the study**

This thesis emerged from my interest, as a novice in the fields of bilingualism and biliteracy working in Warlpiri communities and school settings, to understand how the fields of education and sociolinguistics can be integrated to better understand the role of the school in the transmission of sociocultural and linguistic knowledge. In this study of language practices at Yuendumu School, I endeavour to address some of the many questions circulating around the

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<sup>4</sup> Such as code-switching, multimodal expression

education system in remote Northern Territory communities and in other contexts where bilingual programs cater to a minority language population. There is a need to articulate and clarify the language ecologies in which remote schools operate, the language practices of educators and students and the implications of these for models of education delivery.

Studies of bilingual classrooms where minority languages are taught have noted the “tight integration of the learning of language forms and the socialisation of cultural norms” in addition to language change occurring in classroom discourse (He, 2013, p. 305). Schools are powerful participants in the socialisation of children into dominant endorsed ideologies (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Schools as discursively formed instructional environments generated by student-teacher and peer interactions are fertile ground for the study of intergenerational language use, and the ways in which children negotiate these against the privileged position of standard Australian English (S. Dixon, 2017; Hall & Walsh, 2002; Poetsch, 2021). Insight into school-based language learning is significant for contributing to language maintenance efforts, understanding linguistic development and for generating recommendations for education policy and practice aimed at improving educational opportunities for remote students.

Bearing this in mind, in this study, I aim to explore the contemporary language ecology of Yuendumu School and foreground speaker perspectives. I also endeavour to document children’s learning of, and in, Warlpiri language in the classroom, to understand their linguistic choices for learning and those of their educators and to elucidate the students’ perspectives in tandem with their teachers. A goal for this research is to contribute to an emerging body of work on language socialisation, classroom discourse analysis and heteroglossic pedagogies such as translanguaging (e.g., García, 2014) that foreground children as competent actors exercising agency over linguistic resources for learning. This work endeavours to respond to recent calls by scholars such as Lee, Fasoli, Ford, Stephenson, and McInerney (2014, pp. 245-246) for

- “Ongoing, rigorous investigation to build a substantial evidence base for developing future theory and practice relevant to both-ways learning.”



- “More data on the question of whether both-ways approaches<sup>5</sup> can be shown to enhance social and/or cognitive development, as assessed from Indigenous as well as European perspectives.”
- “Evaluations by community members as to the degree to which young learners in both-ways learning situations demonstrate (...) understanding of Indigenous knowledge and values, including ability to use community languages and dialects at age-appropriate levels (...)”

In sum the objectives of this research are:

- to understand what kinds of learning and teaching are taking place in Warlpiri in the classroom,
- to document and understand the linguistic choices and strategies used by Warlpiri educators and students,
- to explore the language ideologies of students and adults about their Warlpiri language repertoires, use, choices, and proficiency that undergird the practices in this educational setting,
- to draw out lessons of the above for dual language models of education in Warlpiri schools operating in contexts of language endangerment and change.

To this end, I have developed the following research questions,

Research Question 1: What kind of evidence for teaching and learning in first language do classroom interactions at Yuendumu School show?

- a) How do multilingual students negotiate learning through Warlpiri (forms, functions, and content) with their teachers and with each other in the bilingual classroom?

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<sup>5</sup> The term 'Both ways approaches' has been used in the Northern Territory context to describe the interface of Aboriginal and mainstream languages and pedagogies in schools (e.g., Ober & Bat, 2007). For this study I am examining the lesser studied part- the teaching of an Aboriginal language in a bilingual 'both ways' program.

b) What role does Warlpiri language play in contributing to their learning?

Research Question 2. How do children, as agents in their speech communities, understand the role of Warlpiri in their learning?

Research Question 3: What do Warlpiri educators see as indicators of successful learning in and through Warlpiri?

Research Question 4. How do the language practices of educators and students appear to be mediated by (and mediate) the individual language ideologies, classroom environment and wider sociolinguistic processes such as contact and change?

I now turn to the methodological approach employed to address the questions above.

### **1.3 Methodology and approach**

This thesis proceeded on the assumption that language is a social and cultural practice. It took as its starting point the view that linguistic diversity is intrinsically enabling for individuals, families, and societies (McCarty et al., 2019). The study also took an interdisciplinary perspective as it combined insights from sociolinguistics and language education. Qualitative, ethnographic methods were used to address the intersection of language practices, language teaching and learning, socialisation, policies, and ideologies and to create what Fuller and Heyneman (1989, p. 17) have called “textured portraits of life in classrooms”. The study, guided by a panel of Warlpiri mentors, followed a mixed method approach that included analysis of classroom speech, complemented by thematic analysis of interviews with Warlpiri educators, analysis of grey literature (professional development workshops reports, advocacy, curriculum, and policy documents) and multimodal arts-based language awareness activities with students.

An ethnography of communication approach provided a theoretical foundation and methodological approach for this study (Duff, 1995; Heath, 1983; Henne-Ochoa, 2018; Kaplan-Weinger & Ullman, 2014; Katriel, 2015; Saville-Troike, 2003). Following Bauman and Sherzer (1989, p. 7), an ethnographic study of speaking necessarily entails “determining...the means of speaking available to its members” (p. 7), that is, the available linguistic codes (e.g., varieties of Warlpiri and varieties of English), as well as the conventional speech acts, registers, genres and also the community norms, and ideologies guiding the production and interpretation of

speech. This approach has involved a shifted focus from a proficiency-based view of multilingualism to a usage-based notion of plurilingualism, which captures the diversity of an individual's codes, their functionally distinct varieties, and varied competencies (Hornberger & McKay, 2010). The interest in this thesis in describing the functionally distinct and appropriate 'ways of speaking' (Hymes, 1989) at Yuendumu School required selection of terminology to adequately describe these practices amidst a proliferation of terms and inconsistencies of use in the literature.

### **1.3.1 Key Concepts: a comment on terminology**

When talking about language use, I use the term 'variety' broadly to mean a patterned and systematic way of speaking by a group of people with a shared identity, collectively recognised by them as a distinct way of speaking. I employ the term 'code' when talking about a named variety, and sometimes these terms overlap. 'Communicative repertoire' is an important concept in this study. I refer to the definition of communicative repertoire proposed by scholars such as Gumperz (1971), defined by Rymes (2010, p. 528) as "the collection of ways individuals use language and literacy and other means of communication (gestures, dress, posture, accessories) to function effectively in the multiple communities in which they participate."

Different varieties of Warlpiri have been documented in academic literature and various terminologies also circulate in the speech community's discourses. Scholars have described six major dialects and proposed four 'communilects' associated with respective communities which vary in pronunciation and vocabulary, reflecting the influence of neighbouring languages (Hoogenraad & Laughren, 2012; Laughren, Hoogenraad, Hale, & Granites, 1996). The term 'classic Warlpiri' has been used to describe forms and features without the identifiable influence of English (Nash, 1986; O'Shannessy, 2005) as has 'standard Warlpiri' (Bavin and Shopen, 1985). 'Contemporary Warlpiri' has been used to describe post-contact uses that include mild contact effects resulting from the influence of English. 'Light Warlpiri,' a new mixed language spoken in Lajamanu (O'Shannessy, 2005), is also referred to by speakers as *Warlpiri rampaku* 'light Warlpiri' and *Lajamanu Stail* 'Lajamanu style'. In my data speakers also referred to it as, 'pidgin,' though this along with 'mix-im-up' usually referred to code-switching practices. 'Hard Warlpiri' in my data was used in reference to speakers in the Warlpiri community of Willowra and sometimes very old people in Yuendumu. I understand it as similar to the term *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri', the object of this study, which is void

of English borrowing and associated with the language of old people. In this study, speakers referred to *Warlpiri-nyayirni* ‘very Warlpiri’ as the way people speak in Yuendumu. In this thesis, I employ terms used by speakers themselves wherever possible and attempt to explain these with reference to terminology in the literature (acknowledging their nature cannot be assumed without investigation).

Code-mixing, switching and language alternation have also been approached differently in the literature and have diverse definitions. I draw on Gumperz’s (1982, p. 59) definition of code-switching as “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems”. I rely on Muysken’s (2000) threefold typology, insertional, alternational and congruent lexicalisation for analysis of translingual practices in the speech data. I follow scholars such as Romaine (1989) and Myers-Scotton (1992), who view bilingual practices as forming a continuum, with code-switching providing the means by which new words can be introduced into the recipient language and sometimes later conventionalised. When describing contact effects on Warlpiri I endeavour, when possible, to note whether they are conventionalised in wider use or an in-the-moment deployment. I understand all these translingual practices as comprising translanguaging practices (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012; MacSwan, 2017), rather than positioning these in opposition to each other as some treatments have (Heugh, 2015; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015). I also endeavour to constantly reflect on my assumptions, as a non-Warlpiri person, engaging with the study of Warlpiri language practices.

### **1.3.2 Researcher positionality**

As a non-Aboriginal researcher conducting research in a remote, colonial context, I approach this study from a largely unearned position of privilege (Moffat, 2016, p. 750). Also, as an outsider bringing a different worldview, I am unable to ever fully understand the lived experience of a Warlpiri child or educator and remain critical about my own naïve assumptions, particularly in relation to Warlpiri educational and language ideologies. I do not speak Warlpiri as a first language and have only worked with Yuendumu community since 2013. The question inevitably arises, how can I explore a topic I cannot claim to fully know? A recurring question in this study is whether it is appropriate for me, an outsider, to endeavour to explore and document Warlpiri language ideologies and whether it is even possible or useful. The people of Yuendumu have been the subjects of scores of studies by non-Indigenous scholars, leading

many to acknowledge the institutionalised history of research among the Warlpiri since European contact (Musharbash, 2011; Penman, 2006; Rowse, 1990). Am I joining the mass of education research dominated by non-Indigenous voices that has historically yielded little benefit for Indigenous peoples, at best, and contributed to their ongoing misappropriation, misuse, silencing and furthering marginalisation, at worst, by privileging White interests and perspectives and deficit views of Indigenous schooling (Bishop, 1999; Moffat, 2016; Smith, 2012)? How do I ensure that my project furthers the aspirations and values, beliefs, and ways of knowing of Warlpiri participants and collaborators while creating culturally safe, accountable, and non-extractive relationships with mutually beneficial outcomes for Warlpiri students, educators, parents, and the wider Australian community? To attempt to address these questions, I must first describe my relationships with the research context here and continue to reflect on their evolution throughout the project.

I first visited the Northern Territory in 2005, taking on a temporary position delivering vocational training to nine women from three remote communities of the Central Desert. I returned to Alice Springs in 2013 and reconnected with several of these students from the Warlpiri community of Willowra through my work facilitating an Early Childhood governance project in Yuendumu. I worked as a Language Resource Officer at Yuendumu School in 2015-2016 and continued working for the NT Department of Education supporting Indigenous Language and Culture programs in the Barkly region until 2018. I began this doctoral project mid-year in 2017 and travelled fortnightly to Yuendumu as part of my fieldwork in 2018-2019.

Driving down a bumpy desert track on one of my earliest visits to Yuendumu community, a senior Warlpiri educator, Barbara Martin Napanangka, gripped her door handle and cautioned, “Slow down, please Napaljarri! Drive carefully! There are kids around and you don’t know these roads.” When we reached her home, she reassured me warmly, “Don’t worry, we’ll grow you up, Warlpiri way.” Many times, over the past decade, Barbara and other Warlpiri colleagues and friends have been true to this offer of inducting me into Warlpiri knowledges, relationships, and language. And many times, as I’ve worked in schools and with teachers supporting the teaching of first languages, I have reflected on my responsibility to grow. My responsibility is to listen, to learn, to navigate the roads on Warlpiri country, both literal and metaphorical with diligence and care. It is a difficult and messy process, and I am rarely

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successful in this regard. Clearly the process of growing up is a life-long commitment and the process of doing research in this context involves ongoing consideration (Lavallée, 2009).

The evolving literature on decolonising methodologies described by Smith (2012), Marie Battiste (2002) and Bishop (1999) has assisted in guiding the processes of inquiry and analysis and in considering the outcomes and benefits of this research for the Yuendumu school community, and Warlpiri people more broadly. I undertake this single-authored PhD research following received academic conventions and style, with a small element of collaborative practice. At the start of this process, I approached a panel of Warlpiri mentors, Barbara Martin Napanangka, Fiona Gibson Napaljarri (FM), Ormay Gallagher Nangala and Yamurna Oldfield Napurrula who have provided guidance and insights throughout the process. Although it is written by me, and all assumptions and indeed errors are my own, these leaders, and others, have played an essential role in informing the structure and goals of this thesis and guiding its conceptual development. They encouraged me in my pursuit of this topic and supported me in my applications to the NT Department of Education. FM assisted me in developing my interview questions for Warlpiri educators, co-conducting interviews with educators and in analysing the transcripts as a paid researcher. Yamurna encouraged me to consider the students' backgrounds and the ways in which educators cater for them. In her role as a Literacy Worker at the school's Bilingual Resource Development Unit (BRDU), Ormay assisted in translating my information and consent forms, and provided advice on planning a bilingual science activity. Over the years, all four have modelled the teaching of strong Warlpiri in classrooms (though these did not necessarily comprise the speech data for analysis). All four have demonstrated life-long dedication to the education of Warlpiri children.

The arguments presented in this research must be understood as products of negotiations between my personal understandings and constructed social categories as well as those of my mentors and the context in which representations were conveyed. This was by no means unproblematic as when, in the process of analysing ideologies and practices, I encountered divergences and complexities that did not align neatly (discussed in detail in 9.4.1 Challenges of studying ideologies with practices, Chapter 9). Ultimately though, in my position as researcher and author of this thesis, I must take an "authoritative stance" (Carew, 2016, p. 130) in complying with the formats and style of the academic genre. That is, a stance in which I take

responsibility for my conclusions and am transparent in the contributing processes and voices involved (Ochs & Capps, 2001).

## **1.4 Thesis outline**

In this chapter I have outlined the premise and the background for the present study. I have situated this research in the contested space of provision of first language education in Australia's Northern Territory schools. This includes considerations of the intense pressure from English hegemony, leading to language contact, language change and the pressing responsibility of speakers to safeguard language and associated linguistic, intellectual, spiritual, and cultural knowledge. The impetus to deliver quality education that is culturally and linguistically sustaining has been widely acknowledged (McCarty & Lee, 2014; McCarty & Nicholas, 2014; McCarty et al., 2019; Romero-Little & McCarty, 2006), and this thesis goes some way to describing promising practices in one specific context. I described the approach I chose in this thesis to address these within an ethnography of communication that considers not only the functions and forms of language but also the ideologies and perspectives of speakers, what Michael Silverstein (1985) has called 'total linguistic fact'.

**Chapter 2** provides a review of the interdisciplinary literature from linguistics and education around how first language practices can be studied, and what is known about language practices in contexts of language contact and the hegemony of English. I explain the utility of taking a repertoire perspective of these practices and in the light of this literature conclude with the research questions guiding this study.

In **Chapter 3** I endeavour to describe the sociolinguistic and educational context in which Yuendumu School is located. As scholars Kral and Ellis (2020, p. 8) have noted, "Language cannot be understood without understanding of the context in which it lives and changes". I paint a picture of the local language ecology of Yuendumu Community and offer a brief description of some relevant aspects of Warlpiri language and some of the minor changes to its structure and usage that have been documented in the post-contact milieu.

**Chapter 4** outlines the methods undertaken in collecting and analysing the data that formed the corpus for this study. I describe a combination of methods including document analysis, interviews, multimodal arts-based techniques, and recording of classroom speech data to

develop an empirically rich picture of the ‘ways of speaking’ in the Warlpiri classroom. I also discuss the limitations and caveats associated with these.

**Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8** comprise the findings of this thesis. **Chapters 5 and 6** explore the language ideologies of Warlpiri students and educators. Versions of Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 were respectively published in the journals *Babel* and *Languages*, the latter co-authored with Fiona Gibson, a Warlpiri educator, co-researcher, and mentor. As I delved deeper into professional development workshop reports, teaching artefacts and their very salient teaching practices I started to privilege teacher practices over those of the students and my argument shaped around their enacted language-in-education policy making. I do however hope that by positioning the children’s ideologies as my first findings chapter (Chapter 5), I foregrounded and was guided by their voices, perspectives, and understandings of language use throughout the rest of the study.

**Chapters 7 and 8** seek to provide an ethnographically grounded linguistic account of how language is used for learning linguistic and other content in the Warlpiri language classroom. **Chapter 7** involves close analysis of classroom speech data, to describe ways of speaking therein. I take as a point of departure the strong target language policy of teaching *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’, and the strategies that educators identified in Chapter 6 during interviews and workshops, to enact that policy. These included strategies that align with a unilingual target language policy of modelling, recasting, and prompting *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ as well as use of texts and drawing on the linguistic and cultural authority of elders as exemplars of this code. I also discussed practices that diverged from the policy, such as drawing on the students’ full linguistic repertoire and show how this is managed so that the program goals are still achieved.

**Chapter 8** examines the language socialisation practices in the classroom involving the naming and referring practices within the Warlpiri kinship system that not only reinforce learning of this system but also create a favourable, relationships-based learning environment. It looks at the use of oral and written texts as exemplars of the target code and the ways in which students (re)produce and (re)conceptualise this learning. Chapters 7 and 8 together present evidence that the education delivered by Warlpiri educators is culturally and linguistically sustaining and continuing.



**Chapter 9** offers a discussion of my results contextualised within the relevant literature on plurilingualism, translanguaging and understandings of the interrelationships between ideologies, practices and policy in language maintaining programs in schools. I explore the ways in which ideologies about language mediate and are mediated by practices in the classroom. I endeavour to contribute to an enduring debate in endangered language maintenance education around the role of the school in safeguarding endangered languages and supporting their intergenerational transmission. I present some challenges faced in collaborative research with Warlpiri educators where apparent divergences between ideologies and practices needed to be shared and reconciled. I reflect on the implications of the findings for practice and ideas for some ways forward for school programs. I conclude with some reflections on the study and ideas for future research, centered on the need for more Warlpiri researchers and critical and participatory action research in remote classrooms.

## **Chapter 2 Review of the relevant literature**

Over the past several decades, a number of simultaneously occurring developments have impacted the field of educational sociolinguistics. These are an exponential increase in contacts and communication between people from different cultures and speaking different languages, the emergence of new forms of linguistic heterogeneity and expanded understandings of language use in a globalised world (Blommaert & Rampton, 2012; Kress, 2010; Vertovec, 2010), and the concurrent endangerment, encroachment and disappearance of minority and indigenous linguistic varieties and associated intellectual and cultural diversity (e.g. Duchêne & Heller, 2007; Grenoble & Whaley, 1998; Hale, 1998; R. Moore, 2012; Nettle & Romaine, 2000). Complex ideological and practical conversations in Australian Aboriginal communities evolve around contemporary language practices and avenues for the preservation and continuation of traditional knowledge systems (Simpson & Wigglesworth, 2008, 2018). Schools are positioned as crucial sites for social and cultural reproduction (of both minority and dominant cultures), and for negotiating complex ideological and implementational considerations for achieving linguistic and cultural continuity in diverse communities (Angelo & Poetsch, 2019; McCarty & Wyman, 2009; Simpson & Wigglesworth, 2008).

This thesis is concerned with exploring the discursive practices of the Warlpiri classroom, and the tacit and explicit language-in-education policy processes enacted by educators and students within the context of historical and intergenerational struggles to maintain Warlpiri knowledge systems under pressure. The study's interdisciplinary interest in language practices, language ideologies, enacted language-in-education policy in the context of language contact, demands synthesis of scholarship across a range of cross-cutting themes in the fields of linguistics, ethnography, and education.

This review of the literature relevant to this thesis is organised into six sections. Section 2.1 begins with a description of research into multilingualism, language contact, variation and change and the conceptualisation of Indigenous language ecologies (Angelo & Carter, 2015) that assists in understanding contemporary linguistic practices in Australia. It outlines language-centric and repertoire-centric perspectives of multilingual practices and summarises the application of sociolinguistic theories of code-switching and translanguaging in research on classroom discourse. Section 2.2 is concerned with literature about the formal incorporation of multiple languages in an education system and provides a background to models of dual

language education. This is followed by a summary of the history and issues surrounding the delivery of bilingual education in the Northern Territory context. Section 2.3 explores the scholarly debates regarding the limits and possibilities of education systems for endangered language maintenance, incorporating treatment of the interconnected and reinforcing dimensions of ideology, policy, and practice. Section 2.4 foregrounds the literature by Aboriginal scholars regarding indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies for learning and studies of child language socialisation that have a bearing on practices in the Warlpiri classrooms in this study. It describes the dearth of research to date in classrooms where children speak an Australian Indigenous language, particularly in the teaching and learning of first languages (i.e., the primary languages of the students). The final section (2.6) summarises the gaps in the literature and outlines the development of four research questions for this project to address.

## **2.1 Languages in contact: multilingual practices, variation, and change**

When speakers of different languages or varieties come into contact, their language practices are likely to undergo changes. Three broad types of contact situations are usually discussed in the literature: language maintenance, language shift, and language creation (Winford 2003). Language shift involves the adoption of the dominant variety at the expense of others and can lead to language loss (Campbell & Muntzel, 1994). In the case of language creation, manipulation of structural choices in a multilingual repertoire can in some situations lead to the development of new varieties or the emergence of the stable mixed languages and creoles (Bakker, 2020). Language maintenance, the focus of this thesis, describes the continued use of an endangered language across all generations under pressure from a more dominant variety (Baker, 2011).

A commonplace multilingual practice, a “contact-induced speech behaviour” (Haspelmath, 2009, p. 49), involves speakers deploying more than one variety within a conversational turn or consecutive turns (Auer & Wei, 2007; Deuchar, 2020). Researchers approach such multilingual practices from many different theoretical positions and definitions of related terminology including code-switching and borrowing vary considerably across the literature. A broad definition of code-switching offered by Gumperz (1982, p. 59) is “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems”. The practice has been categorised into three main types: 1) insertional,

in which single words or features of one language are inserted into a longer string of the other language and 2) alternational, which encompasses a switch in both lexicon and grammar. The third, 3) congruent lexicalisation refers to “a situation where the two languages share a grammatical structure which can be filled lexically with elements from either language” and is likened to style or register variation in monolingual speech (Muysken 2000, p. 1).

An extensive body of research has shown that interlingual practices encompassing code-switching and borrowing are productive in achieving effective communication (Auer, 1998, Auer & Wei, 2007; Heller, 1995; Liebscher & Daily-O’Cain, 2005; Milroy, 1995; Muysken, 1997; Myers-Scotton, 1993; Poplack, 1980, 1988, 2000, 2001; Wei & Martin, 2009). Studies have shown speakers are sensitive - consciously or unconsciously - to tacit grammatical and interactional (conversational sequencing) rules that govern these practices. Structural accounts are concerned with grammatical constraints on code-switching and Myers-Scotton’s Matrix Language Frame model (1993) and Poplack’s (1980) Constraints-based models have been particularly influential in showing how one language may provide a grammatical frame into which another is incorporated. Auer (1984, p. 2) has suggested that while grammatical restrictions on code-switching are “necessary conditions” they are not sufficient to describe the reason for, or social purpose of, a particular switch. Studies have shown an array of motivations such as changing topic, emphasis, mood, appositions, quotations, question shifts, future referent checks and the proficiency and identity of the interlocutor, to name just a few (Grosjean, 2008; Zentella, 1997). A distinction has been made between discourse-related switching as a “contextualizing strategy” (Auer 1984, p. 90) concerning shifts in meaning internal to the discourse, and participant-related switching, concerning the competencies or preferences of participants (Auer, 1998; Coupland, 2010). Most scholars agree that discourse and participant related switching co-occur and are difficult to separate entirely (Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain, 2005; Unamuno, 2008). Goffman (1979, 1981) suggests that changes in purpose, context, and participant role are often signalled by code-switches (among other things such as pitch, volume, stress, or tonal quality) and proposed the concept of “participation frameworks” to understand speakers’ roles in unfolding speech. He offers the notion of “footing,” or the stance that an individual takes within an interaction, to understand discourse-driven switches. Communication accommodation theory has been productive in describing the choices speakers make in attuning to linguistic style, preferences, competence, and identity to converge to or diverge from the language patterns of their interlocutor (Giles, 2016; Giles, Taylor, & Bourhis,

1973; Linell & Manstead, 1991). For example, there were times in the Warlpiri classroom, where Warlpiri educators would switch to English or recast their commentary in English for the benefit of their non-Warlpiri speaking teaching partner.

### **2.1.1 Classroom code-switching**

With few exceptions, classroom studies on code-switching have shown this practice to be a productive resource in the bi- or multilingual teacher's and students' repertoire enabling them to negotiate different role-relationships, identities, and cultural values and to access academic content in the classroom. Early researchers noted the activity type or setting (for example one-on-one work, whole class instruction) as an important factor in dictating the forms and functions of code-switching practices. Studies on discourse-related switching have shown how code-switches signal shifts in topic, transitions, or a change of focus (e.g., Creese, 2005).

A strong theme throughout the research is on positioning first language (L1) as a resource for second language (L2) learning. Studies have shown that code-switching facilitates access to the L2-mediated curriculum by annotating or exemplifying the academic content using L1 (Adendorff, 1993). Studies have shown how both languages are used to collaboratively process vocabulary (e.g., St. John, 2010). This is relevant in monolingual contexts of academic texts with technical definitions, written in an unfamiliar register, unlike the students' usual ways of speaking or in the Warlpiri classroom, where texts are written in an older style that is different from contemporary ways of speaking (see Chapters 6-8). Experimental studies on vocabulary learning in English Chinese bilinguals suggested that teacher code-switching to L1 is more productive than paraphrasing in the L2 when building complex vocabulary (Tian and Macaro, 2012). Macaro (2009, p.43) has suggested it "lightens the cognitive load freeing up processing capacity to focus on the meaning of the text as a whole."

Classroom-based research also showed code-switching to be productive in negotiating classroom relationships or appealing to shared cultural values (Martin-Jones, 2009). Scholars have shown that code-switching to L1 can create close, culturally safe relationships (Martin-Jones, 2009; Martin-Jones & Saxena, 2003; Rueda, Monzó, & Higareda, 2016). Hispanic teachers in Mexican American classrooms have a culturally specific style which conveyed *cariño* 'affection' (Cazden, Carrasco, Maldonado-Guzman, & Erickson, 1980). Panjabi speaking assistants in a school in the Northwest of England created positive learning

relationships with their students and contextualised learning through the use of diminutives and other features of the students' and teachers' shared first language (Martin-Jones & Saxena, 2003).

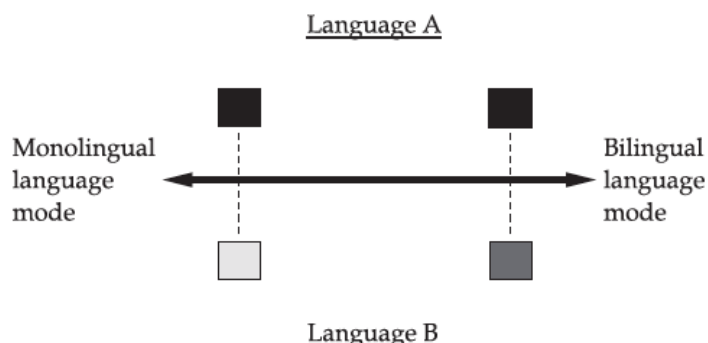
### **2.1.2 Holistic multilingualism: a repertoire-centric perspective to bi- and multilingual practices**

A recurring idea in sociolinguistics is the so-called monolingual mindset (Clyne, 2004) that arbitrarily privileges monolingualism as the social norm. From this perspective, speakers store and use separate single languages in their minds, and their language competencies are ideally developed and used equally, termed "parallel monolingualism" (Heller, 1999, p. 271). This idea is also based on assumptions that only one language is appropriate in a given context or domain (Vallejo and Dooly, 2020). This domain-separation view has been challenged by scholars proposing a holistic understanding of bilingualism that considers the multiple and complex practices of speakers (Canagarajah, 2006; Grosjean, 2008; Gumperz, 1965; Matras, 2013; Swain, 2006). An influential hypothesis proposed by Cummins (1979) is that bilinguals have an underlying integrated language proficiency rather than separate monolingual competencies. Similarly, Grosjean (1989, p. 6) argued that,

The bilingual is an integrated whole which cannot easily be decomposed into two separate parts. **The bilingual is NOT the sum of two complete or incomplete monolinguals**; rather, he or she has a unique and specific linguistic configuration.

Grosjean (2008) developed the idea that bilingual language practices operate along a situational continuum with a monolingual mode at one end and a fully bilingual mode at the other. 'Mode' in this model denotes the extent that each language is activated or deactivated depending on contextual demands such as topic, environment and interlocutor language preference and abilities (Hornberger & Link, 2012; Lüdi, 2018). This continuum is represented in Figure 2.1 below, with two languages A and B. To the left are monolingual modes and to the right are bilingual modes which draw on both languages in a communicative act. The concept of language mode comprises two components, the first is the base language chosen and the second is the comparative level of activation of the two languages and these components operate independently from one another. The squares represent the level of activation of a language - the darker the square, the more active and the lighter the more inactive. Points on a continuum

of language use are not finite nor discrete and practices deployed at any one point in time are interconnected with others.



**Figure 2.1 Grosjean's Bilingual Continuum (2013, p. 1)**

The same concept applies for more than two languages. Speakers who know and use three or more languages also find themselves in various communicative situations. For example, a Warlpiri speaker of three languages, Warlpiri, English and Arrernte, might deploy a monolingual English mode when they are interacting with a monolingual English speaker and may shift to bilingual mode or trilingual mode with a Warlpiri family member sharing two or three of their languages, respectively.

A paradigm based on evidence of the varied and evolving linguistic practices that individuals draw on through participation in various socio-cultural activities over the course of their lives proposes to replace the concept of discrete languages with flexible notions of “repertoires” (Busch, 2012). The origin of this concept is attributed to the work of Gumperz (1972), the anthropologist founder of ethnography of communication –along with Hymes– and his analysis of multilingual practices observed in India and Norway, which he termed “verbal repertoires”. The repertoire includes linguistic varieties, dialects, discursive genres, habitual speech acts in each social group and their interpretative frameworks (Gumperz, 1965). In Gumperz’s (1965, p. 140) view, languages, and dialects “form a behavioural whole, regardless of grammatical distinctness, and must be considered constituent varieties of the same verbal repertoire”. Rather than acquiring and employing multiple “language systems,” speakers develop and use a repertoire of constituent linguistic structures and forms that they must deploy for context appropriate communication (Lanza, 1997; Matras, 2009). This concept has been expanded on to include other semiotic resources such as gesture, dress, and text to constitute a

communicative repertoire (Gumperz and Hymes, 1981). The conceptualisation of an expanded communicative repertoire suggests that all individuals and communities, even those where only one named language is spoken (see “universal multilingualism” in Aboh (2020)) have a set of repertoires, styles, and resources they can deploy for expression for varied purposes (Ervin-Tripp, 2002). Research from a repertoire perspective thus is concerned not only with the forms and features of communicative resources but what speakers *do* with their repertoires (McCarty et al., 2019). That is, there are functions and uses of differing practices or 'ways of speaking' in different kinds of social events (e.g., exploration of verbal arts of Lakota speakers (Henne-Ochoa, 2018)).

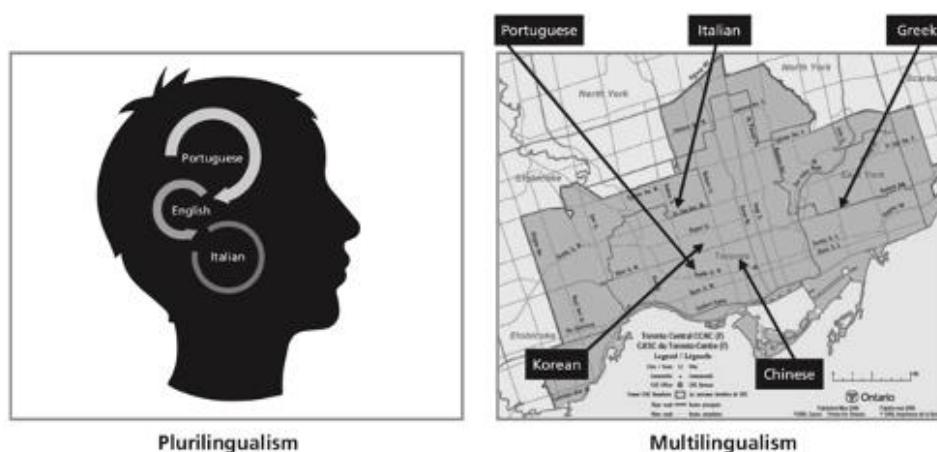
Further to the idea of a single, integrated repertoire or idiolect, scholars consider that the hybridity of multilingual communication can be more productively explained by focusing on language features and multimodal resources than by referring to conventional geopolitically defined “named languages” with rigid boundaries and abstracted, idealised rules (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Jørgensen, 2008; García, 2009; Rampton & Charalambous, 2012). Makoni and Pennycook (2007) have argued that the term “language” is a construction, historically reified and associated with colonial agendas that privilege imagined “pure” forms. They suggest that named languages are of little value to speakers themselves<sup>6</sup>.

The concept of multilingualism concerned with distinct languages and proficiencies at societal and individual levels has been reimagined as “plurilingualism”, which accounts for the ways in which individuals use and develop overlapping and intersecting linguistic repertoires comprising languages, dialects, and registers (D. Moore & Gajo, 2009, p. 138 cited in Ollerhead, Choi, & French, 2017). A plurilingual approach emphasises the development of effective communication skills which draw on a speaker’s linguistic and cultural repertoires and experiences whereas a multilingual approach emphasises a separation of languages and an idealised competency of a native speaker for each (Castellotti & D. Moore, 2002).

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<sup>6</sup> This is a point from which the emic experiences of Warlpiri speakers in this thesis departs. I discuss the diversity of post-contact named languages on page 27.





**Figure 2.2 Plurilingualism and Multilingualism adapted from Ortega (2019, p. 157)**

This diagram shows the reconceptualisation from multi- to pluri-lingualism that shifts the focus from the individual languages within a community to the underlying set of skills in an individual’s repertoire and on the relationships between languages an individual speaks, knows and identifies with as well as their linguistic mechanisms and cultural connotations (Marshall & D. Moore, 2016). Within this model, each individual deploys several mental grammars ranging from registers and dialects of the same named language to typologically different named languages. Different aspects of this repertoire can be expressed separately or intertwined for different purposes, in different spaces or people (D. Moore & Gajo, 2009). This perspective emphasises personal linguistic and cultural trajectories as well as the undergirding individual and societal ideologies (Piccardo, 2017). Lüdi (2009) has drawn on Grosjean’s (2013) notion of language modes to propose a plurilingual continuum of interaction. Instead of counting the named languages as bi-, tri-, quadri-, he considers that there is at one end a unilingual mode and at the other end a plurilingual mode encompassing pluralism in that speaker’s repertoire.

Plurilingual competence is thus not the sum of competencies in different varieties, it is rather a new “third space” containing stabilised elements and forms of communication as well as new forms, developed ad hoc in interaction to achieve social purposes. An individual’s linguistic repertoire is dynamic and characterised by the varieties they acquire, know, and use within their communities (Marshall & D. Moore, 2016). They must be considered as manifestations of ways of acting constructed and reconstructed by participants in socially situated interactions. For example, Rymes (2014) gives the example of a classical pianist with an expansive classical

repertoire but a limited repertoire of jazz. This could change should the pianist move from playing accompanying an orchestra to playing in a bar. A three-year old Warlpiri child developing distinct linguistic repertoires for different social contexts will apply these differentially when speaking to their grandmother, their siblings, their monolingual English healthcare provider, or Warlpiri-speaking playgroup educator. These socio-interactive examples highlight that participation in meaningful activities promotes learning both the forms of language and other aspects of communicative competence.

### 2.1.3 Translanguaging

An expanded understanding of language and its use based on understandings of integrated repertoires and refuting monolingual biases of an idealised ‘true’ or ‘balanced bilingual’ (Grojean, 2010) has seen the emergence of new pedagogic approaches to multilingual education (e.g., Benson, 2020; Canagarajah, 2006; Conteh & Meier, 2014; Gort & Sembiante, 2015; May 2013). One trans-disciplinary approach claiming to transcend the “artificial divides between linguistics, psychology, sociology” is that of translanguaging (Wei, 2018, p. 19). The term, dramatically popularised in education and academia in the past decade, was first conceived of as a pedagogical concept in studies in bilingualism in Wales in the 1980s. The Welsh term *trawsieithu* referred to “using one language to reinforce the other in order to increase understanding and in order to augment the pupil’s ability in both languages” where each language holds differential prestige (Williams, 2002). Translanguaging was originally developed as a strategic classroom practice combining two or more languages in a systematic way to assist multilingual speakers to develop understandings of both the content and the languages of instruction (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011; Lewis et. al., 2012; Williams, 2002).

The theory of translanguaging has since been expanded on and popularised to describe “the multiple discursive practices that bilinguals use to make sense of their bilingual worlds” (García, 2009a, p. 45). García (2009a, p. 140) describes translanguaging as “the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximise communicative potential.” The *trans-* prefix reflects a “transcendence of conventional barriers presumed in language and in hierarchal social structures” (Wei, 2018). From this perspective, an individual draws on their unique generative repertoire to communicate (Otheguy et al., 2015, p. 297), and this encompasses, but is not limited to, long-documented practices that were labelled ‘code-switching’. A core assumption

is that it is not always possible or useful to assign a speaker's linguistic resources to separate codes (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; MacSwan, 2017, Wei, 2017). Rather, a translanguaging approach views communicative capabilities as a fully integrated set of linguistic and symbolic resources that are deployed to communicate meaning. In the current study, however, it is clear that Warlpiri educators and students draw on a full repertoire (Chapter 7) but are also sensitive to boundaries between codes and the linguistic needs of interlocutors (Chapter 8).

Translanguaging scholarship in contexts outside of Australia has addressed the dearth of studies on first language learning in bilingual classrooms by documenting ways in which flexible language practices drawing on a student's whole repertoire of communicative resources can engage and extend their learning (García, 2009). In these studies, all communicative resources are viewed as offering a pedagogical resource to support the acquisition of a new language and new concepts, rather than the exclusive use of the target language. Critical and post-structural perspectives in education have revealed how heteroglossic practices can recognise and leverage communicative resources for linguistically diverse learners (e.g., Kiramba, 2016; Banda, 2010; Setati et al., 2002; García 2009; Poza, 2017; García et al., 2017). Much of the literature examining translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy has focussed on Spanish-English bilingual programs in the United States (e.g. García, Johnson, Seltzer, & Valdés, 2017; Kleyn & García, 2019); community languages programs where students learn heritage languages associated with their ethnic background, especially in the UK (Creese & Blackledge, 2010a); and to a lesser extent where the instructional language is other than the community's languages, such as English-medium schooling in Hong Kong (Lin, 2014), or French immersion programs in Anglophone dominant regions of Canada (Cummins, 2007). Several studies have tracked links between plurilingual practices and knowledge construction (Nussbaum, E. Moore, & Borràs, 2013), creating a favourable framework for in-depth processing of academic content (Hassan & Ahmed, 2015; Kiramba, 2017; Martin-Beltrán, 2014) and building trans-linguistic mental lexica (St John, 2010; Włosowicz, 2020). Others have shown how allowing students to draw on their full repertoires enhances student participation (Back, Han, & Weng, 2020), and develops positive bilingual identities (García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017) and creativity (He, 2013). The implication of this is that language separation in bilingual education results in suppression of parts of an individual bilingual's idiolect during learning (Canagarajah, 2011; Cenoz & Gorter, 2019; Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Jaspers, 2018; A. Lin & He, 2017; Otheguy

et al., 2015; Wei, 2016). There is also a tension between the importance of extended exposure to language (immersion) and identity suppression in providing culturally responsive schooling.

*Students' funds of knowledge and culturally responsive and sustaining schooling*

Explorations into students' existing communicative repertoires in supporting language development and learning have coincided with a shift in new pedagogies focussed on building on students' prior knowledge and capabilities. Contemporary learning theories explain education from a socio-cultural perspective whereby learning occurs through participation in the social world (Dyson & Genishi, 1994; Heath, 1983; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Accordingly, learning is facilitated when the curriculum and content is meaningfully connected to students' lives, including prior learning experiences from their homes and communities, called their "funds of knowledge" (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2006). From this perspective effective pedagogies are not only contextualised to students' life-worlds but stretch beyond these life-worlds in educative ways (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Wrigley, Thomson, & Lingard, 2011). Research has shown that a holistic, culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and relationships-based (Bell & Chealuck, 2021) approach to learning with explicit connections to students' lifeworlds is more engaging and results in deeper learning (McCarty & Lee, 2014; Paris, 2012) than mainstream approaches which do not take these into account. In Australia's Northern Territory communities, place-informed theories have highlighted the importance of place and local knowledges in effective education (Fogarty & Schwab, 2015; Gruenewald, 2003; Osborne & Guenther, 2013; Osborne et al., 2020).

While notions of heterogeneity, plurality and fluidity associated with translanguaging and the plurilingual frame of reference are useful in describing individuals' contemporary hybrid subjectivities and varying degrees of competence between and within languages, scholars have cautioned that for linguistically marginalised minorities, these concepts may be sites of struggle and contestation rather than celebration (Flores, 2013; Kubota, 2014; McNamara, 2011). These researchers have cautioned that uncritical application of plurilingualism may delegitimise minority understandings of language use and privilege individual-oriented, neoliberal, capitalist ideologies that contribute to their oppression. For example, emphasis on the individual aligns with neoliberal perspectives, is not wholly compatible with indigenous epistemologies and can serve to obscure or ignore the injustices associated with neoliberal multiculturalism (McNamara, 2011). Recognition of power disparities have spurred calls to examine the social

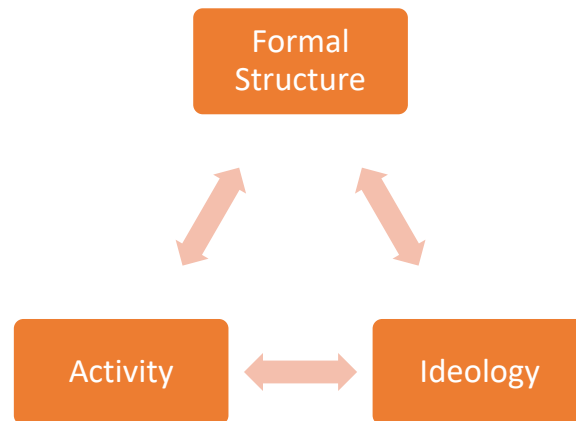
and economic power imbalances between minority and majority language groups, as Kubota (2014, p.11) impressed, “applied linguistics will perhaps more meaningfully mobilise its academic knowledge for social transformation not simply by promoting multi/plural concepts but also by examining their political, economic, and ideological underpinnings.”, a suggestion I bear in mind for this thesis.

#### **2.1.4 Indexicality, language ideologies and the “total linguistic fact”**

Studies of multilingual practices have paid attention to the indexical relationship between language features, usages, and social meanings (Bucholtz, 2009; Jaffe, 2016; Ochs, 1990, 1992). These occur at two levels. At one level, linguistic forms index subjective orientations to the unfolding talk, including affective, evaluative stances (as explored by Goffman, 1979) and at a second level the process of noticing and rationalising these forms develops enduring semiotic associations with particular social categories in the form of ideologies (c.f. Irvine and Gal, 2000). These language ideologies, “beliefs and feelings about language and discourse” (Field and Kroskrity 2009, p. 4), form the implicit and explicit assumptions, values, and beliefs that social actors have around various linguistic forms, features and practices. Language ideologies are a useful heuristic to explore attitudinal and sociolinguistic factors that underlie language use. As Irvine and Gal (2000, p. 37) commented on language variation,

Linguistic features as seen as reflecting and expressing broader cultural images of people and activities. Participants’ ideologies about language locate linguistic phenomena as part of, and evidence for, what they believe to be systematic behavioural, aesthetic, affective and moral contrasts among the social groups indexed. That is people have, and act in relation to, ideologically constructed representations of linguistic differences.

Language ideologies play a role in sustaining languages, dialects, and communicative practices, and can also contribute to change and even “erasure” (Irvine and Gal, 2000), or the process whereby persons, activities, and language features are made invisible because they are inconsistent with a given ideological position. An understanding from linguistic anthropology is that linguistic forms, interactional activity, and ideology are all closely tied together.



**Figure 2.3 Total Linguistic Fact adapted from Rampton and Holmes (2019, p.4)**

A full account of language practices in Warlpiri classrooms must contend with the interconnectedness of the three areas, what Michael Silverstein (1985) has called “the total linguistic fact” as represented in Figure 2.3.

### **2.1.5 Australian languages in contact with English**

Although Australia has a long history of language contact and multilingualism that predates colonisation (McConvell, 2010; McConvell & Bowern, 2011; O’Shannessy & Meakins, 2016; Rumsey, 2018; Vaughan & Singer, 2018), the impact of European invasion and colonisation and the proliferation of English language institutions has brought about drastic changes to traditional life and practices in which traditional languages are used and transmitted (McKay 2007). There is widespread consensus that use of traditional languages is declining, resulting from disruptions from centuries of colonisation and the hegemony of the English language and institutions (Marmion, Obata, & Troy, 2015; McConvell, 2005; McConvell, 2006; DITRC et al., 2020; R. Dixon, 2019). According to some estimates there were upwards of 250 languages spoken on the Australian continent before European invasion (R. Dixon, 2019), however recent surveys of language use have estimated that only 12 are being spoken across all generations (DITRC et al., 2020). There is also evidence of English influence on traditional languages in the form of lexical, and to a lesser extent, grammatical transfer (R. Dixon, 2019). There is tremendous pressure of English language in dictating access to a range of institutions, including schools. This hegemony positions English with highest status and relegates other languages to the periphery (Irvine & Gal, 2009).

At the same time, a growing interest in understanding the current realities of intra- and inter-generational language practices in Australian Indigenous communities has generated scholarship into emerging language varieties (Meakins & O'Shannessy, 2016) such as the mixed languages of Gurindji Kriol (Meakins, 2012) and Light Warlpiri (O'Shannessy, 2005; O'Shannessy, 2011b), English lexified creoles (Ober, 1999; Schultze-Berndt, Meakins, & Angelo, 2013); varieties of Aboriginal Englishes (Disbray, 2008; S. Dixon, 2017; Eades, 2011; Munro & Mushin, 2016); and restructured varieties such as teenage Pitjantjatjara (Langlois, 2006), young people's Kunwok (Marley, 2021), Jingulu (Pensalfini, 1999), Dyirbal (Schmidt, 1985), Murrinh-Patha (Mansfield, 2016) and children's Warlpiri (Bavin and Shopen, 1991; 1985; 1989). This "shifting langscape" (Angelo, 2006) is described as involving newly emergent systems rather than as constituting language loss (O'Shannessy & Meakins, 2016). A position in the literature that contact inevitably leads to structural convergence and simplification has been challenged in studies showing divergence and sometimes increased complexity in new varieties (Cacoullos & Travis, 2015; Evans, 2019).

The extant literature has also described practices of switching and mixing between traditional languages and dialects of Englishes and creoles (O'Shannessy, 2020; McConvell, 2010; Hamilton-Holloway, forthcoming, Vaughan, 2021). A style of socially unmarked code-switching which draws on the traditional language as the matrix, retaining verbal morphology but adopting nominal features from English or Kriol has been described for non-Pama-Nyungan languages (Dahmen, 2021; Mansfield, 2016; McConvell, 1985, 2008). Other studies have examined shaping of discourse structure, alleviating, or anticipating miscommunication (J. Lee, 1987; Mushin, 2010) or attending to participants and their relationships in code-switching (McConvell, 1998). McConvell (1998) described storytelling practices whereby Gurindji was used for the narrative and Kriol for the meta-textual commentary. In the context of small-scale multilingualism social factors and ideological factors come into play in switching between traditional languages, and traditional languages and English, as for example in Maningrida (Vaughan, 2018, 2021; Vaughan & Singer, 2018). An increasing number of studies have focussed on the concept of repertoire (as opposed to discrete languages) in Australianist linguistics (O'Shannessy, 2015, S. Dixon, 2017, 2021; Vaughan, 2018, Meakins, 2020 and A. Wilson et al., 2018).

### *Contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Ecologies*

Across Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples speak different languages for different purposes, and to different extents and proficiencies, depending on which language ecology they live in at a given time (Angelo et al., 2019; Angelo & Poetsch, 2019). The concept of language ecology offers a model for understanding present day diversity in contemporary practices and contexts of use (Angelo et al., 2019). Three main language ecologies in Australia today are described as follows,

**TRADITIONAL LANGUAGE as L1 (TL1):** Individuals learn and use a Traditional Language as their L1, and learn or use English as an L2, (and may be learning a New Language (e.g., a regional creole) as an L2).

**NEW LANGUAGE as L1 (NL1):** Individuals learn and use a New Indigenous Language as their L1 and may be learning or using a Traditional Language as an L2 (may still be spoken in a community to varying degrees); they are also learning English as an L2.

**ENGLISH as L1 (ENG1):** Individuals learn and use English as their L1, and they may be learning or using a Traditional Language as an L2 (TL2). Less commonly they may be learning a regional contact language as an L2.

(Angelo et al., 2019, pp. 23-24)

There are unique and far-reaching implications of each language ecology across all areas of social policy, including education (Angelo & Carter, 2015; Angelo & Poetsch, 2019). The situation in which this thesis is set is essentially an L1 Traditional Language ecology with bilingual use of Warlpiri as the main language, spoken across all generations, and English, which is learned as an additional language and exerts significant pressure onto the forms and functions of Warlpiri language use.

## **2.2 Bi/multilingualism in education systems**

One way to cater for multilingual speakers in the education system is to offer instruction in and of more than one language. Dual language education and bilingual education have traditionally served as cover terms for a variety of programs that involve teaching and learning in two languages with variations in terms of student cohorts, linguistic goals, models of implementation, specialisation of teachers and programming (Baker & Prys-Jones, 1998, p. 464). A lack of consensus among researchers, educators, policy makers and the wider



community as to the goals, models and efficacy pervades the academic literature and policy prescriptions. Bilingual education programs broadly fall under two paradigms: 1) additive, aiming to develop bilingualism and biliteracy and biculturalism simultaneously based on pluralistic goals of language rights and maintenance, and 2) subtractive programs with the aim of transitioning minority language students to a majority language at the expense of their first language (L1) (Baker, 2011).

Additive program models include heritage language maintenance and dual-language immersion models (Baker, 2011). For many dual language or two-way immersion programs language equity is structurally defined as equal time exposure to two languages, that is, a 50/50 model (Torres-Guzmán 2002). Although they may take a variety of forms, they generally have some aspects of dual language curriculum, specialised teachers, bilingual assessment, and evaluation as well as culturally and linguistically relevant learning materials. Subtractive, remedial models are more common in state endorsed education systems (including in the NT context in which this study is situated) and include transitional or early or later exit bilingual education programs that typically involve heavier loading of minority language in the early years with the goal of transitioning students to the dominant language. Proponents of such programs take an assimilationist view of schooling as preparing children to operate in dominant society. Studies have pointed to significant cognitive and emotional risks for learners of these programs (Allen, Crago, & Pesco, 2006; Wright, Taylor & Macarthur, 2000; Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012).

### **2.2.1 Australian languages in the Northern Territory Education System**

Students in remote localities of the Northern Territory (comprising over 50% of the total student population (Northern Territory Department of Education [NTDoE], 2020) speak a range of traditional languages and contact languages including creoles and varieties of English (Simpson, 2013). The Northern Territory Education system has been notoriously reticent to acknowledge Indigenous epistemologies<sup>7</sup>, and the knowledges and languages children bring when they first enter school and ways to value and build from these (Bat, 2010). Nevertheless, throughout this history of formal education, Indigenous communities have continued to advocate for recognition and inclusion of their languages, cultures, and identities in order to maintain linguistic and cultural knowledges and as a means for taking an active role in the

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<sup>7</sup> Discussed further in section 2.4

education of their children. One program that has been promoted in Northern Territory schools, including at Yuendumu School, is a bilingual, bicultural model of teaching and learning that has at its core inclusion of traditional and contemporary language and knowledge (McMahon & Murray, 2000).

### **2.2.2 A brief background to the history and issues in bilingual education in the Northern Territory (NT)**

The early period of bilingual education in the NT coincided with the wider Indigenous self-determination movement. In 1950 the Commonwealth Office of Education, responsible for the NT public school system, first officially recognised that bilingual instruction for Aboriginal students would be "desirable" (Devlin, 2017, p. 11). It wasn't until March 1973 that the first bilingual education programs were being implemented in five schools: Angurugu (on Groote Island), Milingimbi, Warruwi (on Goulburn Island), Areyonga and Ntaria (Hermannsburg), under the guidance of an Advisory group on teaching in Aboriginal languages in schools in Aboriginal communities in the NT. Yuendumu school adopted a bilingual program in 1974 (Baarda, 1994) followed by Warlpiri communities of Willowra (1977) (Vaarzon-Morel & Wafer, 2017) then Lajamanu (1982) ("History of Lajamanu School Bilingual Program," 1999). The original bilingual schools were intended to operate a dual language model where students' first language (L1) was used for learning across the curriculum, while at the same time Standard Australian English (SAE) was learned as a second language (L2) and for learning across the curriculum (Delvin, 2009).

The accreditation of bilingual programs demanded Indigenous teachers, language curriculum and training courses and saw the consolidation of aims, models, methods, and local curricula, monitoring and professional learning materials into the 1990s (Disbray, 2014). The school-based coordination of the bilingual programs was led by teacher-linguists. The School of Australian Languages was set up at the Darwin Community College in 1973 to train staff in the development of vernacular literacy materials in over 20 different languages (Black & Breen, 2001; Disbray and Devlin, 2017). Literacy Production Centres were set up in schools in several communities, including Yuendumu in 1974. At Batchelor College, (later Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education) the Remote Area Teacher Education Program (RATE) was set up in 1976 to offer community-based teaching for Aboriginal teachers in remote areas, with graduates receiving a Diploma of Teaching (Aboriginal Schools) with authority to teach in their

home communities (Lee et al., 2014). In the 1980s a Diploma offered a foundation to the three-year degree in teaching through the Deakin-Bachelor-Aboriginal Teacher-Education program. A method of bilingual team teaching was developed and widely promoted with three key elements: learning together, planning together, and teaching together (Graham, 2017; NTDoE 1999).

This period of innovation was short-lived. An initial establishment phase was followed by decades of reductions in staffing and a decline in funding for 26 programs across the NT. Commentators noted a re-allocation of priorities from teaching children in and about their languages, to concerns around transfer and assimilation to English knowledge and mainstream curriculum (see subtractive models in the introduction to this section 2.2 and Devlin et al., 2017; Hoogenraad, 2001; Rhydwen, 1992). In 1998, the Country Liberal Party Treasurer and Minister for Education announced in the NT Legislative Assembly the phasing out of bilingual programs in favour of “further development of English as a Second Language (ESL) programs” citing poor educational performance, community concerns around the operations of bilingual programs and a need to cut education spending (Devlin, 2009; Nicholls, 2005). Strong community backlash prompted the commissioning of the *Learning Lessons* review (Collins & Lea, 1999) and the rebranding of Bilingual Education in favour of “two-way learning programs”. While various territory-wide testing and evaluation regimes for these programs were developed, none were sustained over the long term (Devlin, 2015).

Despite ambivalent policy support, strong local advocacy has persisted (Devlin et al., 2017; Bennett, 2017). In response to community advocacy, a statement by the Northern Territory Minister for Education in 2005 reaffirmed the role of bilingual education and reinforced the importance of providing Indigenous languages teaching in schools. A mere three years later, in 2008, the then NT Minister for Education and Training, Marion Scrymgour, announced that the first four hours of each school day would be in English, citing poor comparative performance of remote students on the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) (Oldfield, 2016). No other evidence comparing bilingual remote schools with other remote schools was referenced (Devlin et al., 2017) and the bilingual programs were not replaced with a coherent plan to support the learning of Standard Australian English or English as Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) learners (Simpson, Caffery & McConvell, 2009, 2011). A lack of clarity over the status of bilingual programs in the intervening years meant that it was up to

individual principals, schools, and communities to maintain the teaching of, and in, languages other than English (Devlin, 2009).

After much advocacy and input into the Federal House of Representatives Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs inquiry into Indigenous Languages in Education, the resulting report *Our Land, Our Languages* (2012) strongly (re)endorsed bilingual programs and four years later, bilingual education was reinstated in interested communities but with limited funding and infrastructure support. Despite significantly reduced funding and resources, recent years have seen some policy developments supportive of Indigenous languages. In 2015, the Northern Territory Board of Studies also released “Changing the Conversation — A Blueprint for Languages Education in Northern Territory” which set a significant change agenda for sectors, schools, and teachers in the provision of languages education in the NT. A Senior Manager, Bilingual Education and Indigenous Languages and Cultures, based in Darwin was re-appointed to support and oversee bilingual programs across nine schools. In the same year a bilingual policy was prepared that outlined the expectations of bilingual programs although it remains in draft form today, 2022 (NTDoE, 2015). In 2018, the revised Indigenous Languages and Culture Curriculum was released within “The Keeping Indigenous Languages and Cultures Strong — A Plan for the Teaching and Learning of Indigenous Languages and Cultures in Northern Territory School” policy. Its stated aim is to provide, “...a long-term vision and goal for building the capacity of our Indigenous leaders, sector and school leaders and classroom educators to implement teaching and learning programs in Indigenous Languages and Cultures” (Wiese, 2018, p. 4).

The plan was developed by a reference group led by Indigenous educators from across the Northern Territory between 2016-2018 who were also involved in monitoring and analysis in 2019-2020 as part of a review process. It offers flexible options to cater for the linguistic needs of students in different language ecologies that include,

- First language pathway-including Bilingual (L1B) and First Language Maintenance (L1M) pathways
- Language Revival including revitalisation (LR), renewal (LRN) pathway
- Second language Learning (L2) pathway
- Language and Cultural awareness pathway

Each pathway has a corresponding ILC curriculum (including guidelines and resources for implementation) with seven curriculum documents in total. The framework emphasises strong ownership by Indigenous elders as the owners and custodians of the languages and cultures. This was followed by the reintroduction of the Remote Area Teacher Education program in 2020 for some Northern Territory schools, of which Yuendumu is included.

In October 2021, The Minister for the NT Department of Education, Lauren Moss, launched a new, ten-year Engagement Strategy 2022-2031. She acknowledged past "mistakes and missteps" in education policies – including the banning of bilingual education in 2008- and proposed to boost bilingual education and training opportunities for remote teachers, localised cultural competency training for school staff, and an expansion of the Learning on Country program, but with a modest budget for only the first three years of implementation.

A significant debate in the provision of bilingual education is the appropriate model of incorporating two languages. Stephen Harris (1977) was influential in advocating for the separation or “differentiation” of Australian Aboriginal bilingual school classes into English and Aboriginal language “domains” (1994). In learning environments this resulted in a “one-language only” position, variously known as "two solitudes" (Cummins, 2005, p. 588) or "separate bilingualism" (Blackledge & Creese, 2010) that discourages translation and dual language use in the same lesson for learning. This approach involved a compartmentalisation of language in the classroom in terms of resources, visual aids, teaching time or timetabling and teachers. It is also justified by the need to protect time for the minority language to optimise literacy, confidence and improve status. This was critiqued by linguists such as McConvell (1985, 1991) who argued that code-switching in all domains was a reality in the NT, and productive in conveying social meanings. He quoted O’Grady and Hale (1975, p. 14) suggesting the goal of education should be for Aboriginal scholars to write and talk about literally “anything under the sun in either English or his native tongue” (O’Grady and Hale, 1975, p 14).

Currently in 2022, five Northern Territory schools have maintained official bilingual status and funding. Each subscribes to slightly different models of bilingualism with biliteracy programs that endeavour to facilitate learning through two languages (NTDoE Draft Bilingual Policy, 2015). Despite recent promising developments, at an institutional level, resourcing and support for teaching in and of Indigenous languages remains fragmented, and still very much

subservient to standardised agendas for Standard Australian English language literacy acquisition. This has led some scholars to question whether the NT education system is the best place for community efforts to safeguard endangered languages (Kral, 2012), echoing global debates about the role of schools in other endangered language contexts which I discuss next.

### **2.3 Limits and possibilities of school systems for endangered language maintenance**

There exists an enduring debate in language maintenance movements about the role of the school in structuring and responding to linguistic diversity and achieving academic outcomes in complex sociolinguistic ecologies (Hirvonen, 2008; McCarty & Hornberger, 2008; McCarty & Nicholas, 2014; Wyman et al., 2010; Truscott & Malcolm, 2010; Dorian, 2009; Romero-Little & McCarty, 2006). Some scholars in the Americas have gone as far as citing schooling as one cause of language shift in the communities they studied (Messing, 2009). In other contexts, they have suggested that language shift has occurred despite Indigenous Bilingual schooling (J. Lee, 1987). In the Yup'ik context, Wyman et al. (2010) suggest bilingual education in Alaska has little promise for language retention as schools are not “set up” to recognise multiple norms and mixed codes, i.e., plurilingual practices (discussed in section 2.1 of this chapter). Some have posited that advocating for endangered minority languages in the school distracts from more important conversations about intra-family practices and contextually relevant transmission (Fishman, 1991, 2001; Costa Wilson, 2014, p. 8).

While schools cannot replace intergenerational transmission in the home, there are ample examples of their positive role in maintenance movements and one crucial factor is community engagements with, and enactments of, language-in-education policy (Hornberger, 1996, 2005; Hirvonen, 2008). Research on language policy, planning and management in schools describes a complex, multilayered ideologically driven process, which engages numerous actors at multiple institutional layers from top-down government policy at the macro level, to regional and school level governance at the meso-level, and minority language representatives including teachers, families, and students at the micro level (bottom-up) (Baldauf & Kaplan, 2005; Cooper, 1989). Ricento and Hornberger (1996) introduced the metaphor of the language policy and planning onion to highlight the multiple layers comprised of agents, levels, and processes and to describe how they “permeate and interact with each other in a variety of ways and to varying degrees” (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996, p. 402). Within the field of language policy

and planning there is also an interest in understanding how both structural forces and individuals' agency mediate language-in-education policy activities and processes (Hult, 2010; Ricento, 2000). The importance of bottom-up language planning in relation to heritage language resources has gained attention, and in recent decades the key role of community ideologies, teachers and students in shaping school programs and their outcomes has been recognised and I discuss each in turn (2.3.1; 2.3.2; 2.3.3).

### **2.3.1 Role of community ideologies around language and literacy**

While by and large communities express support for language maintenance efforts, there are numerous ideological barriers to its success in schools. In contexts where languages are changing and new varieties may not be recognised and accepted in speech communities, there can exist an ethnic revitalisation paradox: “the paradoxical mismatch between ideology and daily practices” (Ridnstedt and Aronsson, 2002, p 721). There can be divergence between public attitudes towards languages, the actual language practices, and public engagement and these have social, economic, and political dimensions. In these situations, positive attitudes towards traditional named languages do not necessarily lead to actions to support their maintenance (Austin & Sallabank 2014; Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer, 1998; Hill and Hill, 1986; King 2000, 2001; Kroskrity & Field, 2009; Kulick, 1997; Nicholas, 2009). For example, Warumungu speakers in the Barkly region of the Northern Territory have demonstrated public commitment to language maintenance activities, but this is counterbalanced by enormous pressure to shift to the dominant language, English, in all other spheres of life (Simpson; 2013, p 383-84). Roche (2020) has argued in the case of Manegacha, a Tibetan Minority language that contradictory attitudes and ideologies are commonplace, but it is the nature and intensity of this contradiction that impacts language change and shift.

There are discussions in endangered languages contexts about tensions, particularly in the education domain, around a clash between “official” Indigenous languages and changing and emerging vernacular varieties (Hornberger & King, 1998; Howard, 2007). For instance, in a foundational study on language ideologies and practices, Hill and Hill (1986) described a “discourse of nostalgia” when Mayan speakers talked about a “pure” variety of Mexicano, thought of by child learners as spoken “somewhere else” by “someone else” (often the ancestors). They confront a paradox of Indigenous linguistic purism which simultaneously

elevates an Indigenous code as a symbol of nostalgic value, but denigrates contemporary use as corrupted by contact with dominant languages, when they explain,

[Language mixing] is said to shift speaking away from a legendary perfect language called *legítimo mexicano* ‘genuine’ or ‘authentic Mexicano’. *Legítimo mexicano* is said to have existed in *achto* ‘in the past’. It is said that it can be found in old books, or that some old man, now dead, used to speak it.

(Hill & Hill, 1986, p. 98)

In contexts where language use is changing, many scholars have cautioned against a practice of invoking linguistic norms that are not necessarily those of the whole community at large, the “hyper-valorisation” of traditionalist ways of speaking of the older or past generations that excludes young people in the present (Albury, 2017; Albury & Carter, 2018; Bunte, 2009; Costa Wilson, 2014; T. Lee, 2009; Meek, 2008; Sallabank, 2018). These researchers have suggested that associating traditionalist practices with sacred or specialised knowledge places the endangered languages more at risk by reducing their domains of use. For instance, Sallabank (2018) gives the example of *Giernesiei* elders’ commentary such as “we don’t say it like that” or “they’ll never pronounce it like we do” or concerns that “they might change it” is demotivating and exclusionary for younger learners. This attitude also means that there is no impetus to expand the domains in which *Giernesiei* is used or to develop multimedia materials that would appeal to younger generations of speakers. A body of scholarship has shown how educators’ and elders’ criticism of syncretic language practices contributes to linguistic insecurity, shame and eventually disconnect among younger speakers (Costa Wilson, 2014; Cru, 2016; Sallabank & Marquis, 2018). Albury and Carter (2018) surveyed 200 Māori youth about purism in Māori vocabulary and found a tension between supporting these positions for linguistic self-determination but also rejecting them as inhibiting their access to its use.

A multidimensional framework, “language ideological assemblages,” has been developed to capture the political, economic, and social negotiations on global and local scales that have a bearing on diverse and multiple ideologies (Kroskrity, 2018, 2021). This framework draws on linguistic anthropology to examine the constitutive relations, processes, and causality in understanding the ways in which ideologies mediate and are mediated by practices and also other socio-historical factors involved in complex language contact data in contexts of socio-



political marginalisation and counterhegemonic resistance. The definition has recently been refined as follows,

Language ideological assemblages are dynamic configurations of human actors and their beliefs, feelings, and conceptions about language(s) and communication as they are produced and expressed within their individual milieus and the intersubjective worlds of mutual influence from institutions, political economic structures, state power, technologies, global systems and mediated, mediatized, and multimodal forms of expression.

(Kroskrity, 2021, p. 139)

This framework allows any consideration of the ideologies and practices in a context to be understood as being influenced by multifaceted influences operating from the global to the local, creating unique situations that must be catered to. This framework is productive in understanding the patterns of language use in schools, as historically institutions of linguistic and social exclusion (Folds, 1992; Gray & Beresford, 2001; N. Pearson, 2009) and as promising sites for contemporary minority language maintenance (McCarty & Lee, 2014; McCarty & Nicholas, 2014) and the complexity of processes, factors, and actors (teachers and students) at play. I discuss the roles of educators and students next.

### **2.3.2 The role of educators in language maintenance**

There is a growing body of ethnographic research that emphasises educator agency in the language-in-education policy process, as researchers move to conceptualise policy as a dynamic, interactive, and real-life process (Hornberger, 2005; Menken & García, 2010; Palmer, 2011; Palmer & Martínez, 2013; Varghese, 2008). Studies of bilingual education have clearly demonstrated that the values and beliefs about language and learning held by individual teachers, impact enactment of policy in the classroom (Hopkins, 2016; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Terra, 2018). The choices that educators make about language education policies, programs and practices reflect ideological assumptions about languages and speakers and their place in education. Some studies have uncovered a mismatch between reported and actual language practices by bilingual teachers (den Hartog King & Nash, 2011; Flores, 2001).

Hornberger (2002, p. 30, emphasis mine) has posited the role of educators as navigating, reinterpreting and appropriating policies for “opening up *ideological* and *implementational* space” for endangered languages “to evolve and flourish rather than dwindle and disappear”.

The ideological spaces are the parameters and possibilities governing beliefs or feelings about languages in use, embedded in and shaped by political and economic interests within social settings. The implementational spaces encompass teaching and learning practices, events and relations within the classroom and the wider community. Hornberger explains that the ideological and implementational spaces mediate and are mediated by each other, as the ideological spaces can inform implementational ones at classroom and community levels, but also that implementational spaces can serve as wedges to open ideological ones (Hornberger, 2005; Hornberger, García, Skutnabb-Kangas, & Torres-Guzman, 2006).

Recent ethnographic work in this area, such as that of Hornberger and Johnson (2007) in the School District of Philadelphia and in bilingual intercultural education in Cochabamba, Bolivia or Marlow and Siekmann (2013) in Alaska or authors such as Bloch, Guzula, and Nkence (2010) in Menken and García's (2010) volume have offered rich descriptions of teachers' engagement with policy and the ways in which they can individually or collectively seize openings, and creatively and actively negotiate for space, transforming and expanding the possibilities for language education. For example, Bloch et al. (2010) explored how Xhosa teachers in the Western Cape of South Africa negotiate the national Education Policy promoting bilingualism and a new regional policy favouring English language instruction, with limited government support and few instructional materials in Xhosa, as well as conflicting beliefs about Xhosa language instruction.

Research on educators' influence in the education system has drawn on the communities of practice perspective to illuminate the social processes involved (Coburn & Stein, 2006; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The term Community of Practice refers to a group of people who have developed shared practices and historical and social resources (Lave & Wenger, 1991). What holds such communities together is a common purpose, similar beliefs and value systems and collaboration, negotiation, and elaboration to achieve consensus on and consistency of vision, goals, and action. The strength of a professional learning community is formative in shaping ways that individual teachers engage with or depart from the official status quo (Coburn & Stein, 2006; Gallucci, 2003). A relevant example is the Second Language Acquisition Teacher Education (SLATE) project in Alaska whereby Yup'ik and English-speaking educators collaborated to develop a reciprocal learning model for understanding second language learning at both English medium and Yup'ik medium schools. Through the

establishment and nurturance of a Community of Practice among educators, and through near-peer mentoring, they were able draw on teaching methodologies for English-as-a-second language to develop instruction and assessment and enhance local control of language programming for the specific needs of Alaskan Indigenous communities (Marlow & Siekmann, 2013). While the important role of dedicated community members and teachers in language revival and revitalization has been explored in contexts such as Hawaii (Brenzinger & Heinrich, 2013), New Zealand (McPake, McLeod, O’Hanlon, Fassetta, & Wilson, 2017) and Alaska (Marlow & Siekmann, 2013). While much less is known about contexts where languages are still being spoken across all generations While in the Australian context there is research about the impact of Aboriginal teachers (see summary by the Australian Institute for Teaching and school Leadership (2021)), there has been little examination of their language practices in classrooms (however, see Reeders (2008); A. Wilson, Hurst, & Wigglesworth (2018)).

### **2.3.3 The role of students in language maintenance**

While historically scholarship on language ideology has focussed on adults and older students (Fitts, 2006; González & Arnot-Hopffer, 2003) and children have been described as the “voiceless majority” in studies of education and language (Hohti, 2016), there is a growing body of work on the values and ideologies of children (e.g. Bauman & Henne-Ochoa, 2015; Belanger & Connelly, 2007; Danby, Ewing, & Thorpe, 2011; Nigro & Wolpow, 2004; Pietikäinen & Pitkänen-Huhta, 2013; Pietikainen, 2008). With an increase in participatory research methods (Barley, 2020; Cheney, 2011; Christensen & Prout, 2005) as well as a growing interest in the sociology of childhood and child rights theories (James & Prout, 2003), research into the school environment and language practices from the perspective of children is an emerging field. These studies represent a shift from viewing learners as individually internalizing systems of language knowledge to seeing them as diverse users and members of social and historical collectives engaging in dynamic learning processes (Purkarthofer & De Korne, 2020). A noteworthy example is the pioneering work of Fabre (1985) exploring the ways local children considered their language use and values around the minority code Occitan and the national language, French, which positioned learners as active agents in developing and articulating their own beliefs and values. Understanding children’s perspectives offered insights into how categories of language use are integrated into children’s consciousness and how these categories shape their socialisation as members of linguistic groups “in the making” (Costa, 2014).

In more recent years, a focus has shifted from children's views of language to focussing on their engagements with diverse linguistic practices (e.g., Lopez, 2011; Martinez-Roldan and Malave', 2004). A study by McCarty and Nicholas (2014, p. 31) on Indigenous youth perspectives of language in the United States found that even as their language resources and communicative practices were constructed as "limited" and not conducive to school-defined success by adults and teachers alike, young people described dynamic sociolinguistic environments in which multiple varieties were drawn on for interaction. Such discrepancies highlight the need to listen to children's voices in language planning and language maintenance efforts and allow for expanded understandings of language use. In her research in Australia's Western Desert, Kral (2012) described the many ways young people's linguistic and literacy practices form "semiotic reconstructions" (Pennycook, 2003, p. 527) that reanalyse their deeply traditional cultural schema with global youth culture. Exploring children's perspectives might attempt to go beyond rhetoric of endangerment and language maintenance that tend to "invisibilise" children's experiences (Wyman et al., 2013, p. xv). As Wyman et al. have argued, children are "*the* central stakeholders in communities' linguistic and cultural futures" and their perceptions of language use are essential for imagining the future and initiating change" (2013, p. xv).

More recently, several arts-informed tools such as language portraits, language networks, language trajectory grids and biographic photography, have been developed to explore children's language ideologies and metalinguistic interpretations within broader work on language awareness, identity and learning in schools (Bush, 2016; Dagenais & Beron, 2001; Prasad, 2013, 2018; Wolf, 2014; Ollerhead & Choi, 2017). Art and drawing are just one of the "hundred languages of children" (Malaguzzi, 1993, p. 3) that can afford the means and time for reflection and open up conversation about complex realities. Studies using these methods have highlighted the importance of linguistic and cultural representations in language learning and use. As Castellotti and D. Moore (2002, p. 20) have stressed, these "representations play a crucial role in constructing identity, relationships with others and knowledge."

## **2.4 Indigenous knowledge systems and language socialisation practices**

Indigenous peoples across the globe continue to negotiate with hegemonic dominant discourses to find recognition and a meaningful space for their knowledge systems in mainstream education systems. Indigenous knowledges have been described as "the complex set of

technologies developed and sustained by Indigenous civilizations (...) passed on to the next generation through modelling, practice, and animation." (Battiste, 2002, p. 2). Castagno et al. (2008) caution against essentialising Indigenous worldviews or assuming that they are homogenous because within any living, dynamic system, knowledge is shared differentially and is constantly evolving (see also Nicholls, Crowley, & Watt, 1998 for critical discussion of Aboriginal learning styles). While Indigenous knowledges and pedagogies are as varied as the communities who relate to them, a number of common themes emerge from the international literature including relationality and kinship (Battiste and Henderson, 2009; Burkhardt, 2004; Meyer, 2001), the significance of place/land (Basso, 1996; Briggs & Sharp, 2004; Fogarty & Schwab, 2015) responsibility to self and community (Burkhardt, 2004; Deloria et al., 2018), and a responsible use of power (Stoffle, Zedeño, & Halmo, 2001). The holistic nature of Indigenous knowledges has been explained as an interest in big picture connections and interrelations between living beings and the natural world (Deloria Jr & Wildcat, 2001).

In Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars and leaders have offered detailed conceptualisations of local pedagogies and world view. Indigenous knowledge systems are described as linking land, history, spirituality, and identity through cultural and linguistic practices. (Blitner, Dobson, Gibson, Martin, Oldfield, Oliver & Palmer, 2000). For example, the Arrernte socio-ecological system *Anpernirrentye* 'Kinship Framework' describes the relationship between *Apmere* 'Country', *Tyerrtye* 'People' and *Altyerre* 'Dreaming' in the context of Natural Resource Management (Walsh, Dobson, and Douglas (2013). Other frameworks include *Iwenhe Tyerrtye* for Arrernte (Turner and Macdonald; 2010) and the *Galtha* curriculum for Yolngu (Marika-Mununggiritj and Christie, 1995).

In the Warlpiri context, Pawu-Kurlpurlurnu et al. (2008) describe the five key elements of Warlpiri worldview as encompassing Land (also called Country), Law, Language, Ceremony and Skin (also called Kinship). In Warlpiri schools, educational leaders have articulated Warlpiri knowledge systems, pedagogies, and priorities for learning within the Warlpiri Theme Cycle, a local curriculum document (Anderson et al., 2018; Disbray & B. Martin, 2018; B. Martin & Oldfield, 2000). Disbray and B. Martin (2018) in their discussions of examples of Warlpiri knowledge in curriculum demonstrate how the separate subject areas of mainstream schools' contrast with Indigenous values of unified, interrelated systems.

The importance of relationships, relationality and interconnectedness as underpinning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ideologies, epistemologies and pedagogies have been well articulated in the literature (Baker, Mushin, Harvey, & Gardner, 2010; Battiste & Youngblood Henderson, 2000; Burkhardt, 2004; Pawu-Kurlpurlurnu, Holmes, & Box, 2008). Aboriginal viewpoints on Indigenous pedagogy have emphasised the importance of relationships, the importance of elders and the older generations (Marika-Mununggiritj (1991, pp. 33-34); Mununggurr et al. (1987); Ruluminy (1991) and Ngurruwutthun (1991). Leading Aboriginal authors such as Raymattja Marika-Mununggiritj and Dayngawa Ngurruwutthun have foregrounded the importance of the old people. A group of Aboriginal students undertaking the Deakin–Batchelor Aboriginal Teacher Education (DBATE) program in the 1980s described a process of authorisation by the community's elders as the authorities with whom the teacher negotiates the teaching content and approach. Yolngu community members described elders as a curriculum “text” who transfer knowledge to teachers for use in lessons (Eggington, 2006).

#### **2.4.1 Standpoint theory and the cultural interface**

Recent decolonising scholarship, Indigenous standpoint theory (Foley, 2003; Nakata), informed by feminist theories (e.g., Haraway, 2004) has called for a more nuanced engagement of Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledges than simplistic binaries of “traditional” and “Western” (Nakata, 2007; Nakata, Nakata, Keech, & Bolt, 2011; Osborne, Lester, Tjitayi, Burton, & Minutjukur, 2020). Nakata (2006, p. 272) suggests that “what is needed is consideration of a different conceptualisation of the cross-cultural space, not as a clash of opposites and differences but as a layered and very complex entanglement of concepts, theories and sets of meanings of a knowledge system.” This scholarship considers the complicated, embodied histories of resisting and conforming to colonial demands and also appropriating them for Indigenous purposes and interests. This foregrounds Indigenous agency and continuity and discontinuity in developing social meanings.

In the Northern Territory, the notion of Both Ways and Two-Way philosophy emerged from projects of collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators and was influential in the early years of Bilingual programs. Many of the key published statements are attributed to the Yolngu educators Wes Lanhupuy, Mandawuy Yunupingu, Dr Marika-Munungurutj as well as other Aboriginal educators through the Deakin–Batchelor Aboriginal Teacher Education (DBATE) program. The notion of both ways has been explained via a number of

evocative metaphors such as the Yolŋu Ganma metaphor which describes “a situation where a river of water from the sea (in this case Balanda ‘non-Indigenous’ knowledge) and a river of water from the land (Yolŋu knowledge) mutually engulf each other on flowing into a common lagoon and become one” (Marika et al., 1992, p. 28). These align with Nakata’s understandings of schools operating on the cultural interface (also see Bucknall, 1982, 1983). I now progress from research on Indigenous epistemologies, pedagogies and learning frameworks to research on multilingual classroom practices.

## **2.5 Studies of classroom language practices**

Underpinning studies of classroom discourse is the seminal work of Vygotsky (1980) that shows that all mental processes, cognition, is mediated by among other things, language. As such speaking and writing shape and reshape thought and this is visible as learners talk through meanings with themselves and others in organised ways (what Swain, 2006 called “*linguaging*”). Research from interactional linguistics has uncovered a wealth of information about the structural organisation of communicative practices in teaching and learning events (e.g., Bloome et al., 2004; Cazden, 1988; Erickson, 1982, 1996; Hicks, 1996; 2011; Markee, 2015; 1 Mehan, 1979; Mehan and Griffin, 1981; Resnick, Asterhan, and Clarke, 2015). These have identified typical features of discourse structure in classrooms involving illocutionary acts of asking, informing, and repeating. The Conversation Analysis method has highlighted narrative patterns (Au, 1980) the orderly arrangement in which participants speak, for example, the sequential organisation of turns (Kasper and Wagner, 2014). The Initiation–Response–Evaluation (I-R-E) sequence in teacher-fronted classroom interaction has received significant attention (McHoul, 1978; Mehan, 1979, Lemke, 1980). This involves the teacher initiating a question, followed by student response and the teacher’s follow up or evaluation of their response. Children’s competence within these discourse schemas affords and denies access to learning (Crago et al., 1997).

### **2.5.1 Studies of language practices in classrooms where Aboriginal students learn**

There have been few ethnographic studies on discourse patterns in classrooms where Aboriginal students are learning (Christie and Harris, 1985) and only a handful that rely on linguistic data (Devlin and Lowell, 1998; Edmonds-Wathen, 2019; Malcolm, 1979; Moses & Wigglesworth, 2008; A. Wilson et al., 2018; Moses & Yallop, 2008, Poetsch, 2018; Somerville,

2013). Most studies have been undertaken in mainstream schools where the Aboriginal students are the minority and are learning in a language or dialect that is an emergent part of their repertoire. Observations in these studies have largely centred around cultural discontinuity between the home or community and the school environment. Most of these examine cross-cultural miscommunication arising from cultural differences in socialisation practices and communication styles between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and teachers in both remote and urban contexts (Angelo & Hudson, 2018; Christie & Harris, 1985; Lowell & Devlin, 1998; Malcolm, 2011; Malcolm & Sharifian, 2005; Malin, 1990). Differences between Aboriginal styles of communicating and learning have centered around questioning (Christie, 1985; Harris, 1984; Malcolm, 1982); cultural differences in listening behaviour (Devlin and Lowell, 1998) and conflicting learning paradigms describing Indigenous children as “action-oriented” (Watts, 1973, p. 177), non-verbal (Christie & Harris, 1985), and “imaginal” (Nichol, 2005, p. 142). Some authors have compared cultural schemas as “generalized collections of knowledge of past experiences which are organized into related knowledge groups” (Nishida, 1999, p. 755) to explain the cultural disjunct between home and school contexts. Examples include students in the Daly-river region of the Northern Territory (Ford, Barwick, & Marett, 2014; P. Harris, 1991; Watson, 1988) or those speaking Aboriginal English in Western Australia (Sharifian, 2005, 2008, 2014).

Recent scholarship has shifted the focus from the influence of cultural background to the structure of the communicative situation in children’s interactional behaviours in the classroom (Angelo, 2021; S. Dixon, 2017; Gardner & Mushin, 2016, 2017; Steele, 2020). Angelo (2021) has advocated for understanding learner home varieties to better cater for learners’ linguistic resources for learning. S. Dixon (2017) applied variationist modelling to compare bi-varietal language use on a new contact language, Alyawarr English and Standard Australian English (SAE) at home and at school in Ipmangker community, NT. She found that despite limited explicit SAE instruction, children were adapting features of their home language that differ from SAE to produce output closer to SAE in the classroom. The implications she drew for school-based language assessment are that,

Without an understanding of the differences between the L1 and SAE, assessments that appear to indicate progress may reflect stasis, and conversely, language use that looks non-target may actually reflect progress. It therefore might be more meaningful for teachers to engage in tracking in



detail specific language features over time and using this information to inform and adjust teaching.

(S. Dixon, 2017, p. 284)

The very few studies concerned with language use in first language teaching and learning interactions in remote Indigenous communities have shown the strength of local educators in catering for the students' repertoires and building on their funds of knowledge (Edmonds-Wathen, 2019; Murtagh, 1982; Poetsch, 2022; Reeders, 2008, p. 108; Wood, Forshaw, Bunduck, & Lantjin, 2019; Wood, Lantjin, Tipiloura, Bunduck, & Tchinburrurr, 2020). A common theme of these studies is the cultural responsiveness of local teachers. They also show the creative ways in which students and teachers, "language" (Swain, 2006) their learning by drawing on dynamic repertoires that increase children's participation in learning. In recent years scholars have recognised the utility of taking a repertoire perspective of multilingualism in complex contact situations that focuses not on discrete named languages, but rather the observable practices for purposeful communication (S. Dixon, 2021; García, 2009; Wei, 2018). This has prompted calls in the Australian context to take a translanguaging-informed approach to understanding language use in remote Indigenous contexts (Carter, Angelo, & Hudson, 2020; Oliver, Wigglesworth, Angelo, & Steele, 2021; Poetsch, 2018; Vaughan, 2018; Wigglesworth, 2020). Studies of translanguaging in English-medium classrooms have shown that even when lessons are delivered in English-only, students are drawing on their repertoires in productive ways to make sense of the content and increase their engagement and depth of learning (Oliver et al., 2021; Poetsch, 2018, 2022). Few studies have yet applied a translanguaging lens where traditional Indigenous languages are the medium of instruction. One notable exception was Vaughan's analysis (2018) of translanguaging in the context of a school assembly.

## **2.6 Summary, research gaps, and the development of research questions**

This literature review has endeavoured to traverse the complex terrain of linguistics, education, and anthropology to articulate points of intersection in scholarship on multifarious language practices, policies and ideologies that have a bearing on understanding the linguistic realities of educators and students in the remote bilingual school context of Yuendumu community in Central Australia. I have summarised the important research at the intersection of socio- and applied linguistics and education that have shaped the focus of this classroom-based study of Warlpiri language use. This review has shown that while endangerment of traditional languages

in Australia is well known, what is much less well understood is the nature of language practices and ideologies in diverse Aboriginal language contexts and the implications of these for developing projects at the chalkface, to maintain and transmit valued linguistic and cultural knowledge. I have shown the contributions that a repertoire perspective offers for shifting understanding of bi/multilingual practices from static systems to dynamic and multifaceted mechanisms for communication. This approach foregrounds speakers as creative contributors to the shaping of linguistic structures and routines (Matras, 2013). I have also drawn on linguistic anthropology to show that nuances of language practices can be best understood in examining interrelated forms, functions, and ideologies, "the total linguistic fact" (Silverstein, 1979).

This review has also highlighted much contestation in the space of models of bilingual education in the Northern Territory and broadly. A better understanding of the language practices in a remote school classroom might address some of the debates about the appropriate way to incorporate Aboriginal languages into the NT school system. In light of the chequered history of dual-language delivery in the NT, linguist Patrick McConvell's (1985, p. 125) four-decades-old suggestion is still relevant today,

Understanding of these issues and formulation of theory to deal with them could make the framing of language policy and language maintenance strategies of Aboriginal bilingual situations, whether in education or generally, less haphazard, and potentially dangerous, than it is today.

While seminal studies have been conducted about the teaching and learning of Aboriginal students in English as a second language or dialect (Angelo & Hudson, 2018; S.Dixon, 2017; Malcolm, 2011; Malcolm & Sharifian, 2005; Malcolm, 1992; Moses & Wigglesworth, 2008; Sellwood & Angelo, 2013; Steele, 2020), there is a general dearth of studies into language practices in first language teaching and learning contexts among speakers of endangered Aboriginal languages (however see Edmonds-Wathen, 2019; Poetsch, 2022; Reeders, 2008; Wood et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2020, , Yolŋu Aboriginal Consultants Initiative, 2007). There has been very little examination of the language practices of Aboriginal educators in teaching and learning events and even less is known about their engagement with ideology and enacted language-in-education policy. Moreover, there is a dearth of information about how children as the current and future speakers of traditional languages view language variation, change and the learning process. A body of scholarship in classroom discourse suggests the functions of

code-switching and translingual practices among bilinguals might be relevant in this learning context.

Examination of the scholarship on the role of the school in other contexts of endangered languages in the colonised Americas has illuminated cross-cutting themes of negotiating ideology, cultural conflict, rights, and aspirations that are yet to be deeply explored in the contemporary Warlpiri context. Ethnographies of communication in the field of education offer a useful organising approach to exploring how ideologies of language mediate between communicative practices and educational social structures. The scholarship has made clear that communicative practices of educators and students are locally defined and enacted within individual and wider ideological dimensions (Kroskrity, 2005; Silverstein, 1979) and my research questions address both language practices and undergirding ideologies.

I restate the research questions for this study as follows:

Research question 1: What kind of evidence for teaching and learning in first language do classroom interactions at Yuendumu School show?

- a) How do multilingual students negotiate learning through Warlpiri (forms, functions, and content) with their teachers and with each other in the bilingual classroom?
- b) What role does Warlpiri language play in contributing to their learning?

Research Question 2. How do children as agents in their speech communities understand the role of Warlpiri in their learning?

Research Question 3: What do Warlpiri educators see as indicators of successful learning in and through Warlpiri?

Research Question 4. How do the language practices of educators and students appear to be mediated by (and mediate) the individual and collective language ideologies, the classroom environment, and wider sociolinguistic processes such as contact and change and the goals for safeguarding Warlpiri language and associated intellectual, social, and indexical resources?

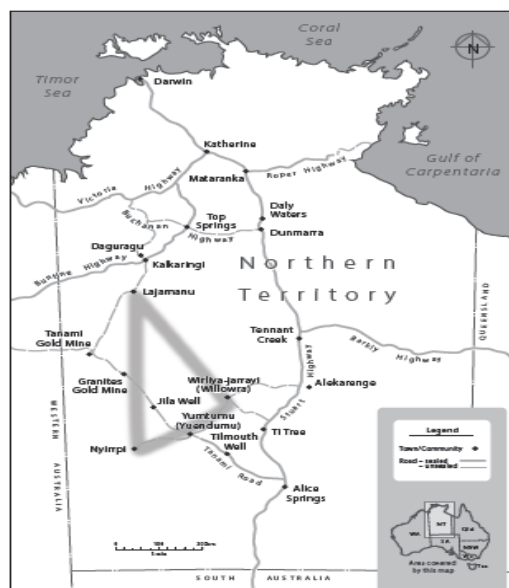
Before outlining the methodological approach to answering the research questions (Chapter 4), I first paint a background picture of the remote Aboriginal community of Yuendumu, its language ecology, and the historical and contemporary school situation in Chapter 3.

## Chapter 3 Research context and background

In this chapter, I offer a background to the socio-linguistic (3.1) and educational (3.2) contexts in which this study is situated. I provide a brief history of the remote Warlpiri community of Yuendumu in Australia's Northern Territory (NT) (3.1.1) and its current situation (3.1.2). This is followed by a concise description of Warlpiri language, how it differs from English and the documented effects of contact with English (3.1.3), Yuendumu's contemporary language ecology (3.1.4) and Warlpiri language socialisation practices (3.1.5). I conclude this background chapter by presenting the educational context (3.2), describing the models of bilingual programming in Warlpiri schools (3.2.3) and the specifics of the Warlpiri program at Yuendumu school, setting the scene for a description of the methods for this classroom-based research (in Chapter 4), the findings (in Chapters 5-8) and discussion (in Chapter 9).

### 3.1 The socio-linguistic context of Yuendumu community

Yuendumu is a remote Aboriginal community 290 kilometres northwest of the regional town of Alice Springs in Australia's Northern Territory. The place name derives from the name of a Dreamtime woman *Yurntumulyu*, also the name of an area in the hills to the east of the Tanami highway (Rockman Napaljarri & Cataldi, 1994). Located on the border of Anmatyerre and Warlpiri lands in the Tanami desert, it is one of four Warlpiri communities that include Nyirrpri, Willowra and Lajamanu, forming what is known as the Warlpiri Triangle region (See Figure 3.1). Social relationships are extensive and there is an attitude of being 'one Warlpiri people' across the Warlpiri Triangle communities (Disbray et al., 2020).



**Figure 3.1 Map of the NT showing the Warlpiri Triangle communities (Thornley in O'Shannessy et al., 2019). Used with permission.**

Warlpiri country extends east towards the Northern Territory-Western Australian border, west of the Stuart Highway and northwest of Alice Springs with Anmatyerre land to the east, Kukatja to the west and Pintupi and Lurijta to the south. This region around the Tanami desert has been home to Warlpiri people since long before the invasion of 1788 (Bradley, 2019; Rowse, 1990). Precontact history has been documented by the Warlpiri in oral storytelling, artwork, song, and dance (Brown, Townsend, Pinkerton, & Rogers, 2011; Rockman Napaljarri & Cataldi, 1994) and informs the Warlpiri knowledge frameworks surrounding teaching and learning. Contemporary pedagogies, practices and interactions have evolved within two cultural paradigms -Warlpiri and colonial-during the history of contact with non-Indigenous people since the last century.

European exploration of the area was first documented from the 1860s with sustained contact precipitated by the expansion of gold and wolfram mining and pastoralism in the early twentieth century. The 1920-30s saw a period of intensified conflict over land and water compounded by prolonged drought. Frequent violent incursions among pastoralists, miners and the Warlpiri culminated in the tragic 1928 Coniston Massacre, a significant event in Warlpiri contact history (Rockman Napaljarri & Cataldi, 1994; Bradley, 2019). Growing numbers of dispossessed Warlpiri at the cattle stations to the east of Warlpiri country resulting from this conflict, as well as pressure from anthropologists (e.g., Olive Pink) and missionary bodies, spurred the Native Affairs Branch of the Australian Government to set up ration and welfare stations for Warlpiri people in the Tanami desert in 1945 which subsequently became the settlement of Yuendumu.

### **3.1.1 The history of the settlement of Yuendumu**

The settlement of Yuendumu was established as a ration and welfare station in 1946 and became a Baptist Home Mission the following year (Brown et al., 2011). Once the Yuendumu Aboriginal Reserve was put in place in 1952, the area was permanently settled by Warlpiri families. Many of these families came from Warlpiri camps on neighbouring stations such as Mt Allan, Mt Denison, and Mt Doreen where they acquired some English vocabulary and expressions (M. Laughren, personal communication, 3rd June 2022). In the 1950s and 60s administration of the reserve was transferred from the missionaries to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Education was initially offered by a mission school until 1961 when a

government school was built (Ross & Baarda, 2017). In the early years of schooling children were forbidden from speaking Warlpiri at school (Baarda, 1994) and in other public domains in Yuendumu. As Peggy Rockman Napurrurla recalled, (in Nicholls, 1994, p. 214) “In those welfare days the settlement supervisors would hit us if we spoke Warlpiri. They would say, ‘Stop talking in that Chinese language.’”

In 1976 the reserve became the Yuendumu Aboriginal Land Trust area under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* (Northern Territory) and control was handed back to Warlpiri people via a community council in 1978. The self-determination era of the 1970s-80s, described as “an unprecedented period of optimism in the Australian state’s dealings with Aboriginal people” (Hinkson, 2017, p. 93) saw government support for resettlement to outstation communities on Warlpiri owned lands (Ketsteven, 1978; Peterson & Myers, 2016). For example, during this period a school was set up in the nearby outstation of Waylilinpa, run by Warlpiri educators and visited by a teacher from Yuendumu School.

This optimism eroded in subsequent years and all but expired in 2007 with the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER), or intervention, a package of legislative measures<sup>8</sup> in areas of education, employment, health, and housing brought about by the Northern Territory National Emergency Response Act 2007 (Churcher, 2018; Lea, 2020). The justification for the measures was the findings of an inquiry into child sexual abuse commissioned by the Northern Territory government in what is known as the *Ampe Akelyernemane Meke Mekarle* ‘Little Children are Sacred’ report. The interpretation of the report’s findings to justify the intervention was widely criticised, including by the Human Rights commission (Churcher, 2018). Nevertheless, the legislative changes and income management, accompanied by large injections of funding for law enforcement and child protection, have accelerated wide-ranging deterioration of self-determination policy in remote NT communities and a devolution of power away from communities to regional shires. These measures were continued under the “Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory” Act from 2012 which remains in place today.

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<sup>8</sup> Some of these measures included acquisition of tracts of land, abolition of permit visitation system, compulsory health checks of Aboriginal children, linking family welfare payments to student attendance and providing mandatory school meals at parents’ expense, abolishing Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) and marshalling work-for-the-dole programs to clean up communities to name a few (Lea, 2020).

### 3.1.2 Yuendumu today

Yuendumu today is a bustling desert settlement hosting three community stores, a clinic, an air strip, a post office, a Centrelink office (the Federal government social security service) and the Central Desert Regional Council hub, an Old People's Program, and a Women's Centre and safe house. Facilities for young people include a swimming pool, several playgrounds and a peace park, a learning centre, a youth recreational centre and basketball courts and a football oval. A number of local organisations have been founded there including the highly acclaimed Warlukurlangu Art Centre, Pintupi, Anmatjere, Warlpiri (PAW) Media and Communications organisation, the Warlpiri Youth Development Corporation (WYDAC) and the Mampu Maninja-kurlangu Jarlu Patu-ku aged care provider. Several churches exist alongside the established Baptist mission. The Granites Affected Areas Aboriginal Mining Corporation was set up in 1991 to fund and manage community development projects by affected areas funds from the Newmont Mining gold mine, situated in the Tanami Desert, 540 kilometres northwest of Alice Springs.

Yuendumu currently has a fluctuating population of roughly 700-1000 people, the vast majority of whom are Warlpiri with some Anmatyerre, Luritja, Kukatja and Pintubi (Brown et al., 2011). According to the 2016 national census, 14.5% of the population is non-Indigenous, a transient population living and working as service providers for several government and non-government organisations (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Full-time employment opportunities for Warlpiri are scarce and many people work casually or as part of a work-for-the dole scheme<sup>9</sup>. Inequalities between *kardiya* and *yapa* in the community are reflected in employment statistics, quality of housing and relative balance of power in decision-making positions in local service providers. Yuendumu is the largest remote Indigenous community in central Australia, declared a "growth town" in 2007 under the *Working Future Plan* of the NT Government, and receives significant attention in the way of government services relative to other remote communities (Lee et al., 2014). Despite this focus, the delivery of basic services to the community is far from

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<sup>9</sup> formerly known as the Community Development Employment Programme (CDEP) until it was replaced as part of the NTER with the Community Development Program (CDP), the federal government's remote employment and community development service provides flexible employment and training opportunities in exchange for welfare payments

reliable and of an acceptable standard with numerous reports citing corruption, incompetence and lack of transparency and accountability in delivery (Lea, 2020; Purtill, 2017).

Day to day life reflects a nexus of traditional and contemporary practices, for example health concerns are taken to both *ngangkayi* ‘traditional healers’ and government health clinic nurses; people live in dwellings, but much socialising happens around campfires outside houses; formal education occurs at the government run school but teaching and learning still happens out bush in family groups (Musharbash, 2008).

In terms of the physical layout, a main street runs down the middle of the community with six residential areas or camps to the east, west, north, south and centre referred to by these cardinal directions. The school campus sprawls along the central street to the North and is dotted with a patchwork of multi-coloured buildings from different eras of development. In 2021 its perimeter is marked by a large fence put in place by the latest administration to regulate community access. Walking along this perimeter, a passer-by might hear the students therein speaking Warlpiri peppered perhaps with some familiar words of English origin.

Warlpiri is the main code spoken in Yuendumu and among roughly 3000 speakers in several communities in the central desert (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016) as well as diaspora in other regional centres of the Northern Territory as well as in the larger cities of Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney (Burke, 2018). Several dialects of Warlpiri have been documented and differences across the four communities have been identified in terms of pronunciation and vocabulary, usually influenced by neighbouring languages. In addition, Light Warlpiri, a contact language spoken in Lajamanu community that systematically draws on elements of Warlpiri, Kriol and Aboriginal Englishes has been described (O’Shannessy, 2005, 2012, 2013).

In addition to different dialects of Warlpiri, there are also different ways of speaking Warlpiri depending on interlocutor, context, and time (Laughren et.al., 1996; Laughren & Nash, 1983). As is documented in other Aboriginal societies in Australia, social interactions are inherently also multimodal including hand signs, gesture, song, drawing and speech (Ellis and Kral, 2020, p.9). Baby talk, a stylised register of Warlpiri used to infants includes modification of phonological, syntactic, and semantic features to accommodate language acquisition. Warlpiri sign language is another register, known as *rdaka-rdaka*, literally ‘hand-hand.’ It is a manual representation of Warlpiri language, a parallel system of communication that fulfils multiple



functions in hunting, private communication, across distances, or for subjects that require a special reverence and in ritual practices where talking is forbidden, for example ritual mourning (Kendon, 1980). Special terms of address mark different relationships, reflecting the complex system of kinship and relatedness and there is an avoidance register involving lexical substitution and manipulation of grammatical elements reserved for certain relationships within this system (Japangardi in Hinkson, 2017; Laughren, 2001). Ceremonial songs are replete with connotative symbolisms that differ from everyday meanings (Curran, 2010; Hale, 1984).

### 3.1.3 Warlpiri Language

Warlpiri is a member of the Ngumpin-Yapa subgroup of the Pama-Nyungan family of languages (Laughren & McConvell, 2004). It is one of the fewer than twelve traditional languages in Australia that are spoken by all generations (DITRC et al., 2020). Of the many languages in the central desert, Warlpiri has been relatively well documented (see Nash (2021) for a comprehensive list of publications on Warlpiri language). Prior to the establishment of Yuendumu as a ration station in 1946, Warlpiri vocabulary and cultural terms were recorded by travellers and anthropologists (Terry, 1928; 1930; Pink, 1934), followed by ethnographic accounts (Fry, 1951; Meggitt, 1954, 1962). The 1960s to 1980s saw increased interest in the documentation of grammar and morphosyntax by linguists (e.g., Hale, 1969, 1974, 1983a, 1983b; Jagst, 1970; Laughren, 1982, 1984a, 1984b; 1987; Nash, 1986; Simpson, 1983; Swartz, 1985) resulting in the first typological sketch of Warlpiri (Hale, 1976) and production of Warlpiri dictionaries, the largest of any Australian Aboriginal language (Laughren & Nash, 1983). A standard orthography for Warlpiri been in use since the 1970s (O'Shannessy, 2020).

Warlpiri has many structural features typical of Pama-Nyungan languages such as variable word order and a complex case marking<sup>10</sup> and pronominal system (Hale, Laughren, & Simpson, 1995). In Warlpiri, cases mark the subject and object of an action. There are three basic case frames: ergative-absolutive, absolutive-dative and ergative-dative. The dominant case frame for transitive sentences, that is, sentences where a verb requires an object to receive an action, is ergative-absolutive. The agent of a transitive verb takes an ergative case marker, while the object of a transitive verb<sup>11</sup> is in the absolutive case, realised as zero as in the example below (3.1). In 3.1 the agent, the "doer" Jangala, is marked by the ergative suffix *-rlu* to show that he

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<sup>10</sup> There are 18 cases by some counts (e.g., Bavin and Shopen, 1985, p. 84).

<sup>11</sup> or the subject of an intransitive verb.

is completing the action while the Napaljarri, the object of the action, is in absolutive case, with no ending.

(3.1)

*Jangala-rlu nya-ngu Napaljarri.*  
 Jangala-ERG see-PST Napaljarri-ABS  
 ‘Jangala saw Napaljarri.’

(Simpson, 1983, p. 34)

This contrasts with, for example, English, which relies on word order (Subject-Verb-Object 'Jangala saw Napaljarri') to signify the agent in an action. While the order of subject, verb and object is relatively free in Warlpiri, for pragmatic reasons the most salient information is often promoted to the beginning of a sentence (Hale, 1992; Swartz, 1991). Complementing free word order is the use of anaphoric ellipsis. Because subject and object functions are not signalled by word order, anaphoric pronouns are not required to fill any position and can be omitted (Hale, 1983; Swartz, 1991). Warlpiri has different allomorphs of case suffixes depending on word length. For example, in the locative, words of up to two syllables take the suffix *-ngka* (e.g., *ngurra-ngka* 'home-LOC') and those longer than two syllables take *-rla* (*watiya-rla* 'tree-LOC'). Ergative and instrumental suffixes are *-ngku/ ngki* except for those longer than two syllables which take *-rlu/ -rli* (Bavin and Shopen, 1985, p. 92), depending on the final vowel in the stem, because Warlpiri also exhibits vowel harmony between suffixes and verb stems.

Warlpiri has a complex pronominal system which includes information about singular, dual and plural, and distinguishes between inclusive and exclusive readings (Laughren et al., 1996). There are independent pronouns for first and second person as well as bound pronouns for first, second and third person. Bound pronouns (see table 3.1 in the next section) combine either with an independent auxiliary complex that usually occurs in second position in the clause or where there is no auxiliary base, for example in a past tense clause, to the first constituent in the clause to express mood or aspect (Bavin & Shopen, 1987, p. 152). Example 3.2 demonstrates the auxiliary and bound pronominal clitics for subject and object,

(3.2)

(*Ngaju-rlu*) *kapi-rna-ngku*    *nyanyi*    (*nyuntu*)  
I-ERG    FUT-1SG.S-2SG.O    see-NPST    you-ABS  
'I will see you'

(Bavin and Shopen, 1985, p.85)

The future auxiliary *kapi*, is bound by the first-person singular subject clitic *-rna* and the second -person singular object clitic *-ngku*. The independent pronoun *ngaju-rlu* '1SG-ERG', can be omitted because the subject is clearly indicated. Auxiliaries inflect according to a nominative-accusative pattern and pronouns take ergative-absolutive patterning, a situation known as split ergativity (Legate, 2002, 2005).

Warlpiri verbs are built from a relatively small set of verb roots, followed by a tense suffix distributed among five conjugation classes to convey temporal and modal readings (Simpson, 1983). Preverbs combine with verb roots yielding numerous verbal expressions (Nash, 1982). An example offered by Nash (1982, p. 173) is the preverb *pirri-* meaning to scatter. Example 3.3 lists some *pirri-* compounds and their meanings.

(3.3)

*pirri-yani-* to disperse  
*pirri-yinyi-* to distribute  
*pirri-kijirni-* to scatter via throwing

In addition to case markings, nouns and verbs can combine with suffixes and enclitics to convey different meanings, e.g. *-lku* 'now/then', or *-purda* 'in the direction of', or *-ju* as a topic marker. These play important discourse functions by showing relationships between clauses. Warlpiri words with adjectival meanings pattern morphosyntactically like nouns (Simpson, 1991). Warlpiri words have initial stress and syllables have CV and CVC structure where the last syllable of a word must end in a vowel (CV structure) and the final consonant in a CVC syllable must be a sonorant nasal, lateral or trill (Nash, 1983).

*English influence on Contemporary Warlpiri*

Mild<sup>12</sup> contact effects on Warlpiri spoken in Yuendumu, especially by children, such as changes to vocabulary, phonology, and morpho-syntax have been documented in the past 40 years (Bavin & Shopen, 1985, 1987, 1991; Laughren, 1987). Warlpiri speakers borrow many words for contemporary concepts from English, such as for clothes, technology, and schooling, reflecting changes to the traditional post-contact lifestyle (Bavin & Shopen, 1991; O'Shannessy, 2020). There are neologisms for some post-contact terms, for example *kanja-jarrimi* for 'steering wheel' (O'Shannessy, 2020). Colours, numbers and certain spatial concepts belong to a category of borrowings for which a Warlpiri neologism has been engineered by literacy workers for school learning (Bavin, 1989). But usually in these cases, especially where these are not commonly used in the children's everyday lives, the English alternative is preferred. Like other Aboriginal languages, Warlpiri has a history of word replacement and when a Warlpiri person dies, their name and any similar words become taboo. One source for a replacement word is a neighbouring language or more recently, English (Bavin, 1989, p. 277).

As is common in contact situations, borrowing from English also occurs for other concepts where the Warlpiri term still exists (Bavin, 1989). English verbs are borrowed as co-verbs with Warlpiri inflecting bound verbs such as the inchoative *-jarrimi* (as in *plei-jarrimi* for *manyukarrimi* 'play') or causative *-mani* (as in *hold-i-mani* for *mardarni* 'hold'). English adjectives are assimilated into the Warlpiri system by the attachment of a derivational morpheme or nominaliser *-wan(i)* '-NOM' to form an attributive nominal, as in descriptions of Aboriginal English and Kriol (Schultze-Berndt, Meakins & Angelo, 2013). This is in keeping with the fact that adjective-like meanings in Warlpiri are expressed by nouns. Some examples in the speech data from this study include blue-*wan* for 'blue' (see example 7.10 in Chapter 7) or light-*wani* for light (see example 6.31 in Chapter 6). The negative markers *nu*, *na* (derived from English 'no', 'not') are commonly used in alternation with the Warlpiri negator *kula* 'negative' (Bavin and Shopen, 1985; 1991 and see example 7.22 in this study). Additionally, a negative imperative construction formed by combining *nati* (derived from English 'not') with an imperative verb is replacing the classic Warlpiri negative construction comprising an infinitive verb with *-wangu* ('without') (Bavin, 1992).

<sup>12</sup> A dramatic contact influence is seen in the emergence of the new mixed language, Light Warlpiri (O'Shannessy, 2020, p. 14).

English words are usually assimilated into the Warlpiri phonological and morphological systems, hosting case markers, focus markers and compounding, among other features. Consonant-final words that are borrowed from English usually take a final epenthetic vowel /i/ but some speakers also apply a back vowel when the vowel in the preceding syllable is a high back vowel (O'Shannessy, 2016). For example, 'shirt' becomes *jarti* but 'school' becomes *kuurlu* and 'pencil' becomes *pinsurlu*. There is some variation among individual speakers in the application of this rule (Harvey & Baker, 2005; O'Shannessy, 2016). In recent years, the vowel-final word rule has been observed to be weakening, with pronunciations omitting the final vowel (O'Shannessy, 2016, 2020). These changes could be influenced or at least accelerated by the fact that many words in English end in consonants (O'Shannessy, 2020). In this vein, new allomorphs of case markers are becoming commonplace (O'Shannessy, 2016), such as:

Dative: *-ku/ki* is reduced to *-k* (see example 7.17 in chapter 7 of this thesis).

Comitative *-kurlu/kirli* is reduced to *-kurl/-kirl* (see example 7.4 in chapter 7).

The possessive marker *-kurlangu/-kirlangu* is reduced to *-kurlang/-kirlang* and *-kang* (see example 7.14 in chapter 7).

Recent changes to the ergative *-ngku/-ngki* are realised as *-ngu/ngi* or *-ng* (see example 7.5 in chapter 7).

Analysis of data across the four Warlpiri communities revealed that case and other suffixes are used consistently with no apparent change in function but that children use new allomorphs more often than adults do (O'Shannessy, Culhane, Kalyan & Browne, 2019).

Morphosyntactic changes were observed in Warlpiri children's elicited narratives in the 1980s. For example, older children were observed to use an increase in subject-verb-object (SVO) word order with more overt subjects (Bavin & Shopen, 1985). This suggests an influence from English learned at school where subject and object referents need to be mentioned overtly. Studies of children's narratives showed that some children left out ergative case-marking in elicited narratives which could be the influence of English S-V-O word order theoretically rendering suffixing subjects redundant (Bavin & Shopen, 1985). In these studies, some children were also recorded incorrectly using suffixing allomorphs. For example, they said *kurlarda-ngku* 'spear-INS' whereas as a three-syllable word, it would have been *kurlarda-rlu* 'spear-INS' in classic Warlpiri (Bavin and Shopen, 1985, p.89).

Changes to the Warlpiri pronominal system and to transparency in the auxiliary structure have also been described (Bavin & Shopen, 1987). Table 3.1 below shows the traditional Warlpiri bound subject pronouns (in Bavin and Shopen, 2010, p. 108) and I have circled those which have undergone change.

	Singular	Dual	Plural
	(Pers-Nbr)	(Pers-Nbr)	(Pers-Nbr)
First person			
Exclusive	rna-ø	rlijarra	rna-lu
Inclusive	—	rli	rli-pa
Second person	n(pa)-ø	n(pa)-pala	nku-lu
Third person	ø-ø	ø-pala	ø-lu

**Table 3.1 Warlpiri bound subject pronouns (in Bavin and Shopen, 2010, p. 108)**

In contemporary Warlpiri, the inclusive-exclusive distinction is not always maintained with the first person dual inclusive form *-rli* (1DU.INCL) and exclusive for *-rli-jarra* (1DU.EXCL) replaced by the more transparent first-person dual form *-rna-pala* (1SG-1DU) (Bavin, 1989, p. 281). Changes documented to the second person plural form *-nkulu*, expressed as *-npalu* (2SG-PL) (Bavin and Shopen, 2010, p. 109) are reflected in both educators' and students' speech in this study (see examples 7.1-7.3 in Chapter 7).

### 3.1.4 The contemporary language ecology of Yuendumu

Classrooms as ecological microsystems are best understood with consideration of their position within wider societal language ecologies (Angelo and Poetsch, 2019). Yuendumu community has a traditional language (L1) ecology where the traditional language, Warlpiri, is spoken by all generations and English is learned as a second language (L2). Some speakers of Warlpiri also have some passive or productive knowledge of another Aboriginal language (Disbray, O'Shannessy, et al., 2020; Laughren et al., 1996). Families travel frequently between Warlpiri and non-Warlpiri communities for sporting events and cultural business, and most report understanding, if not speaking, multiple other Aboriginal languages (Vaarzon-Morel, 2014). When interacting with non-Warlpiri speakers, most Warlpiri people speak some variety of English to different proficiencies (O'Shannessy, 2011a). The situation in Yuendumu was described by Warlpiri teacher Tess Ross (in Ross & Baarda, 2017, p. 248-249),

We all hear other languages, Anmatyerre, Pintupi, Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, whatever languages are spoken in NT, in other communities, out in the desert. For desert people can understand each other (..) A long time ago my sister use to work here (at Yuendumu school). She knew three languages, and more. She could speak Anmatyerre, our grandmother's language and she could understand Luritja and Pitjantjatjara. And our first language is Warlpiri. I don't speak Pitjantjatjara, but I can understand it. All these language and culture skills come in together. English is a second language for everybody. I see that with my eyes and hear it with my ears. When Aboriginal people are together, and playing AFL (Australian football), they understand each other. Each of those people from different communities, they can understand. Yes, when people come together, children too, for Sports weekends or church or sorry (mourning and mortuary rites), they are learning, learning other languages.

Use of Warlpiri, mixed varieties and code-switching between Warlpiri and varieties of English reflect heteroglossic, syncretic practices of bilingual speakers (Disbray et al., 2020; McConvell, 2010). In 1985 Bavin and Shopen (p. 81) observed that,

At Yuendumu, there is official support for Warlpiri as well as English, but there are a number of domains where English is used in preference to Warlpiri, where Warlpiri is used with a high level of interference from English, or even where there is code-switching. These domains include all those involving contact with Europeans, as well as communication among Warlpiri people about topics introduced from European culture, and among younger Warlpiri speakers, interference from English is evident even on topics traditional for Aborigines.

In conversation, people often compare varieties of Warlpiri along a continuum of *rampaku* 'light' or *pirrjirdi* 'strong/heavy/hard.' The former involves more borrowing from and code-switching to English, whereas the latter characterises the precolonial grammatical and vocabulary features of older speakers and is viewed by Warlpiri speakers as the high-status variety of the language (O'Shannessy, 2011a, p. 135). The contemporary dynamics are still being investigated for Yuendumu (Bavin, 1989, p 269) and other Warlpiri communities (O'Shannessy, Culhane, Siva and Browne, 2019). This thesis is concerned with understanding how this continuum is practiced in the Warlpiri classroom which aims to teach *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' linguistic and cultural content (sees Chapter 5 and 6 for detailed discussion of Warlpiri ideologies surrounding different varieties and Chapters 7 and 8 for examples of these practices in the classroom).

Differences in language practices among the generations must be understood in the socio-historical context. A diminishing number of elders born before Yuendumu was settled still have limited interactions in English and employ fewer borrowings and code-switching with English in what has been described as ‘classic Warlpiri’ (Simpson, 2013; Musharbash, 2008). Those who are middle-aged went through the missionary education system and were the first to learn to read and write Warlpiri, many with literacy skills in both languages. As with many other Indigenous communities in central Australia, the majority of the Yuendumu population is under the age of thirty-four (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Many young adults and teenagers today who completed high school usually were sent to boarding schools (Lee et al., 2013). Children in Yuendumu today are exposed to Warlpiri from birth and live in close contact with extended families, with ages ranging from young babies to elderly grandparents (cf. O’Shannessy, 2005). An increased variety and complexity of inputs from family, teachers, youth workers, mass media and the internet shape their receptive and productive opportunities (c.f. Simpson & Wigglesworth, 2008). The uptake of digital technologies is reflected in widespread use of mobile phones, laptops, portable DVD players, mp3 players and social media platforms. Intensified use of English language and globalised cultural practices are part of these interactions (Vaarzon-Morel, 2014 and c.f., Appadurai, 2003). Children hear different varieties of Warlpiri from older family members, visiting family members from other Warlpiri communities and their peers. There is also a media company PAW Media (Pintubi-Anmatjere Warlpiri) that broadcasts news and other programs in Warlpiri language and these are available by radio, online and on free-to-air television channels such as NITV or ICTV.

Participation in institutions where the working language is English, formal education and mass media as well as requirements to travel to the regional centre of Alice Springs to access a range of specialist services, have encroached on Warlpiri language domains<sup>13</sup>. The institutional pressures from education and employment have impacted opportunities for in-context learning of specialised vocabulary (e.g., plants, animals) and language forms (e.g., songs, speech styles associated with ceremonial activities, dances, kinship quantificational terms) (Bavin, 1989; Bowler, 2017; Kral, Green, & Ellis, 2019) among the younger generation. The older generations have been vocal in expressing concerns about the impact of these altered sociocultural

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<sup>13</sup> It is very uncommon for non-Indigenous people to learn Warlpiri to any proficiency beyond greetings and some vocabulary terms.



circumstances (see Chapter 6 for details), and this motivated examination of Warlpiri language socialisation practices in this thesis.

### 3.1.5 Warlpiri culture and socialisation

It is well established that for Australian Aboriginal people, languages are sacred, closely connected to land and belief systems and their vitality is crucial to healthy relationships between peoples and the land (Christie, 2017). To elucidate this connection between language, spirit, and culture for Warlpiri people, I draw on the words of Warlpiri educators such as Tess Ross who has explained,

Warlpiri is our main language. We don't want to lose that. We want our children in the future to speak the language we were born with. It's got spirit, language and culture together. When we are born, we have our skin name, already in our mother's womb, and our *Jukurrpa*.

(in Ross & Baarda, 2017, p. 249)

*Jukurrpa*<sup>14</sup> is a central concept that encompasses Warlpiri culture and law (see Green (2012) for the historical evolution of English translations of "The Dreaming" or "Dreamtime"). Warlpiri educator Jeannie Herbert Nungarrayi (2002) provides an explanation that captures the complexity and centrality of *jukurrpa* 'dreaming' to every aspect of Warlpiri life,

To get an insight into us – [the Warlpiri people of the Tanami Desert]-it is necessary to understand something about our major religious belief, the *Jukurrpa*. The *Jukurrpa* is an all-embracing concept that provides rules for living, a moral code, as well as rules for interacting with the natural environment.

The philosophy behind it is holistic- the *Jukurrpa* provides for a total, integrated way of life. It is important to understand that. For Warlpiri and other aboriginal people living in remote Aboriginal settlements, the Dreaming isn't something that has been consigned to the past but is a lived daily reality. We the Warlpiri people, believe in the *Jukurrpa* to this day.

Tess Ross (2017, p. 249) explains that,

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<sup>14</sup> *Jukurrpa* is often translated as 'Dreaming' or 'Law,' describing an ancestral past that continues in the present. For a fuller explanation of Warlpiri meaning of *Jukurrpa* see the article in the conversation by Jeannie Herbert Nungarrayi: <https://theconversation.com/dreamtime-and-the-dreaming-an-introduction-20833>

*Jukurrpa* is the stories of the ancestral beings, where they travelled and how they shaped and changed the world. It links up with all other tribes around and even far away, as the Dreaming travels on into other language areas. We have always been bilingual

*Jukurrpa* describes people's relationship to place, to each other, to plants and to animals, and the proper ways of interacting with relationship and kinship groups.

Despite pressures presented by post-contact life, narratives of the *jukurrpa* 'dreaming,' the ceremonies, gestures, songs, dances, oral storytelling, and designs continue to be alive in the everyday and passed down the generations forming the central rationale of Warlpiri sociality. Yuendumu teacher and mentor Barbara Martin explains its significance in the present,

We are talking about living culture, *warnkaru*. Its alive in the country and in each person. There are proper ways to act and living and move in places, that show that everything is connected- law, land, country, songs, people and language.

(Disbray & B. Martin, 2018, p. 37)

It follows that Warlpiri socialisation has been described within a system of autonomy and relatedness (Pawu-Kurlpurlurnu, Holmes, & Box, 2008; Musharbash, 2011, p 260; Bavin, 1993, p 87) whereby individual autonomy is highly valued alongside obligatory relationships and sociocultural expectations. A foundational part of Warlpiri child socialisation practices is introduction to the subsection/ kinship system which begins very early, locating babies within Warlpiri sociality (Bavin, 1989; Laughren, 1982). The system governs all aspects of traditional and contemporary activities, from land ownership and management, inter-personal relations, ceremonial life to just name a few. As Cataldi and Ross have said "for Warlpiri people the relationship between each person and the world is mediated by their kinship subsection".

The Warlpiri kinship system can be described as,

(..) a complex hierarchically organised structure which encompasses a conventionalised set of relations based on the maternal and paternal relations. These relations hold between individuals on the basis of actual genealogical relationship or on the basis of their membership of recognised related sets. In addition to the relations which hold between people and sets of people, the kinship system is extended to the relations between people and their actual and ontological world, thus encoding their social and political organisation; it provides a system of personal appellation and reference.

(Laughren, 1982, p. 72)

There is an extensive terminology of kin terms in Warlpiri with distinctions between father's and mother's side and older and younger siblings (Meggitt, 1962, pp. 167-187). In addition to kinship terminology, Warlpiri also includes a system of social category terms that are popularly referred to as "skin names."

Warlpiri has eight different groups known as skin groups inherited from ancestors (Ross, 1987). These groups are called subsections in the anthropological literature and are a short-hand reference to the broader kinship system (a discussion of which is beyond the scope of this paper, for more information see Meggitt (1962); and Laughren (1982) among others). The table below shows the Warlpiri subsections for women (starting with N) and men (starting with J), girls and boys.

Woman	Man	Code	Girl	Boy
Nakamarra	Jakamarra	D	Nakarra, Wajarla	Jakarra
Nungarrayi	Jungarrayi	A	Ngampukurlu	Jukurtayi, Jukurdayi
Nampijinpa	Jampijinpa	C	Ngampija, Ngampijakurdu	Jampirka
Napanangka	Japanangka	B	Ngamana	Janama
Nangala	Jangala	C	Ngangkarla	Jangkarli
Napaljarri	Japaljarri	A	Ngalyirri, Ngamalyi	Japalyi
Napurrula	Jupurrula	D	Ngapurru, Ngampurla	Jurlama
Napangardi	Japangardi	B	Ngampayardi, Ngampayardi, Napangayi	Japayardi, Jangari, Japangayi

Notes: \* code letters distinguish the semi-patrimoieties; AB vs. CD are the two patrimoieties. From: <https://www.anu.edu.au/linguistics/nash/aust/wlp/skins.html>.

**Figure 3.2 Warlpiri subsections (O'Shannessy, 2020, p. 8)**

Marriage is preferred between particular subsections and children automatically take the designated sub-section term with biological siblings sharing the same subsection term. There is also an extensive array of kin terms, with distinctions made on the basis of maternal and paternal moieties, generation and other factors (Laughren, 1982). Children must learn about this system in order to know how they relate to others and relate to the land on which they live.

Early socialisation of infants involves descriptions of classificatory systems, subsection terms (skin names), and reinforcing appropriate ways of interacting according to kin relationships (Bavin, 2010; O'Shannessy, 2011a).

According to Warlpiri socialisation, as has been documented in other Aboriginal contexts, knowledge is developed through experience and maturity (Bavin, 2010). "Learning through doing" is a style well documented in Warlpiri culture (Musharbash, 2008, p. 12; Baarda, 1990; Myers, 1986, p. 294; O'Shannessy, 2009) and the anthropological literature suggests that children are not expected to demonstrate knowledge in the way of middle-class English-speaking question and answer routines, rather it is understood that through repeated exposure to information, children will enact knowledge when ready (c.f. Moses & Yallop, 2008). Consistent with values of personal autonomy, children spend a lot of time in each other's company and are free to move around established areas of the community. This has a dual effect of exposing them to a variety of interactions across extended family members and generations while also reducing the amount of time they hear traditional languages from elders (Simpson, Caffery & McConvell, 2009). Due to family mobility children will spend periods of time in other remote communities where other languages are spoken. Warlpiri children can often attend multiple Warlpiri schools in their educational career and might take up education opportunities beyond these communities in post-primary (Disbray & Guenther, 2017).

The abovementioned language socialisation dynamics further expand and add nuance to the language input for Warlpiri children in Yuendumu today. Resulting from this are bilingual, bicultural Warlpiri and English classrooms that teachers and teaching teams have to navigate for learning and assessment (Sellwood and Angelo 2015, p. 251). One of the challenging factors in education in remote Australian communities is appreciating and responding to the complex and fluid language ecologies of the classroom that reflect wider changes in contemporary remote communities and these considerations are at the forefront of concerns around educational provision to remote communities in the Northern Territory (the concerns are outlined in Chapter 2, sections 2.2-2.3). In the next section I offer an overview of remote education in the NT (3.2) to situate the context of Yuendumu School today.

## **3.2 The educational context of Yuendumu community**

In this section, I describe the provision of bilingual education in the four Warlpiri schools (3.2.1), with detailed discussion of the curricular, programming and staffing structure in 2018 and 2019 at Yuendumu School (3.2.2).

### **3.2.1 Bilingual education in Warlpiri Schools**

The schools in the four Warlpiri communities have different histories of provision of Warlpiri-medium language education and Bilingual programming. Teaching Warlpiri language and culture and teaching in Warlpiri has strong support in all four communities. Warlpiri communities have strongly advocated for education that includes first language and Standard Australian English (SAE) (WPKJ, 2012) according to a two-way model defined by Devlin (2004, p. 26),

(...) an underlying model of bilingual/bicultural education in which power is shared, the curriculum is balanced, the existence of competing knowledge systems is acknowledged, and the program is related to language use and cultural observances in the community.

Warlpiri describe language maintenance is the main rationale for the bilingual programs (McKay 1996, p. 114; McConvell, 1994, Disbray et al. 2020), as Tess Ross Napaljarri explained (in Warlukurlangu Artists, 1987, p. 9),

Many people told the children about the Dreamtime by drawing on the ground and on paper; they told them a long time ago in the bush by drawing on their bodies, on the ground, and on rocks. This was the way men and women used to teach their children. Now, when children are at school, at a white place, they want to pass on to them their knowledge about this place. They want them to keep and remember it. They want them to learn both ways-European and Aboriginal.

Disbray (2014, p. 26) noted a number of measures that Warlpiri themselves view as of importance in educational programming,

Their involvement in their schools; Warlpiri language and cultural knowledge in their children's learning; teacher training; curriculum development; and the extensive resource production and linguistic documentation that the Warlpiri Program has generated.

At a policy level, ambiguity around teaching and assessment models, the “chequered” (Disbray, 2016, p. 239) history of bilingual policy and funding (described in Chapter 2, section 2.2.2) has impacted consistency of delivery and associated assessment approaches in Warlpiri schools. As a former regional linguist for the NT Department of Education wrote:

A lack of sanctions and an absence of effective monitoring of what actually happens in classrooms in daily practice also meant that the [non-Indigenous] classroom teacher could undermine the bilingual program with impunity, and the principal could simply not run the bilingual program in the school.

(Hoogenraad, 2001, p. 131).

Anecdotally programs are strongly influenced by staffing dynamics and ideologies, particularly leadership, and momentum from energetic teaching teams can easily be diverted by a new policy or intervention (Disbray, O’Shannessy, MacDonald, & B. Martin, 2020). As Disbray et al. (2000, p 3) in their writings on Warlpiri schools have explained,

Individual school programs have weathered various challenges, most profoundly, the vicissitudes of the Northern Territory Education Department’s ambiguous commitment, and the resultant power of individual principals over the fate of the local program.

Within this culture of optionality many exceptional teaching teams at Warlpiri schools strive to understand their students’ linguistic assets and address learning needs with vague direction and guidance (Simpson et al., 2009).

Currently classrooms in Warlpiri schools are resourced as bilingual spaces with learning co-delivered by English-speaking teachers and Warlpiri-speaking educators. They are supported by a teacher linguist and resourcing by literacy production workers. At different times the Yuendumu School council has spent its own funds to employ a linguist to support its program and the four Warlpiri schools as government funded Teacher Linguist positions have not been filled or have been underutilised<sup>15</sup>.

With changes to teacher accreditation standardisation and reductions in training opportunities, most Warlpiri educators are employed casually as teacher assistants. While administratively

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<sup>15</sup> At times these senior positions have been repurposed to fulfil other duties within the school’s leadership structure at the principal’s discretion or not filled by a teacher with qualifications, skills, or interest in considering the role of languages in whole-of-school programming.

designated as Assistant Teachers (aside from 2 registered Warlpiri teachers in 2018), I follow the lead of the scholars writing on team teaching in the NT (e.g., Bat & Shore, 2013) in referring to these professionals as Warlpiri educators henceforth. Inconsistent efforts have been made to reintroduce team-teaching models from the 1980s that emphasise collaborative planning, learning, and teaching within and across school teams (Graham, 2017). At the time of this study, efforts were being made to support regular team planning at Yuendumu School, and opportunities to learn together were scheduled into a monthly professional development program.

A small team of literacy production workers and a linguist at the Yuendumu school-based Bilingual Resource Development Unit (BRDU) have worked since 1974 with the schools in the four Warlpiri communities to develop, disseminate and archive hundreds of resources in Warlpiri language (including reference texts, fiction, phonics resources, posters, graded readers, histories, magazines, community histories and workbooks) (Disbray, 2015). Resources are also stored in a common digital archive, the Living Archive of Aboriginal Languages (LAAL) (Bow, 2016; Bow, Christie, & Devlin, 2014). It is a central hub of resourcing support for the Warlpiri programs in all four schools which also have had literacy production centres operational at different points in time. Wendy Baarda, a teacher-linguist who has worked in Yuendumu since 1973, noted that during initial work developing these resources with linguist Mary Laughren, incorporating strong Warlpiri wasn't widely accepted. She recalled comments such as "that's old people stuff. We don't know that anymore." However, she notes that "over the years this attitude has changed" and some of the very same educators are seeking out information from old people (Baarda, 1994, p. 206).

At all Warlpiri schools, a model of language separation is promoted whereby Standard Australian English (SAE) and Warlpiri are attributed different domains in the classroom and each member of a teaching team negotiates the scope and sequence to deliver separate aspects of the curriculum. A diglossic compartmentalisation of SAE and Warlpiri according to timetable, subject and teacher is encouraged. This is underpinned partly by a language maintenance impetus, and the need to preserve a space just for the teaching of Warlpiri. It is also partly rationalised by a widely held, largely unquestioned belief, by educators and administrators, that acquisition of reading and writing competence of print and digital forms of SAE is of the highest priority for Indigenous education (Malcom, 2011). This type of "parallel

monolingualism” in which “each variety must conform to certain prescriptive norms” (Heller 1999, p. 271) occurs in classrooms where the SAE teacher has the role of modelling SAE, but the Warlpiri-speaking educators take on a more complex role of negotiation, translation and code-switching in addition to teaching in Warlpiri. While some efforts have been made since 2018 to integrate learning through Warlpiri across the curriculum, it is most often still taught as a stand-alone language enrichment lesson.

### *Warlpiri Triangle Professional Learning Workshops*

Faced with addressing the disruption to existing and continuing knowledge systems by historical forces of colonialism, assimilationism and recent policies of monolingualism, Warlpiri educators have for decades articulated and defined what Warlpiri knowledge systems entail and the implications of these for curriculum and assessment (Disbray, 2014; Disbray & B. Martin, 2018; Purdon, 2010). In 1984, professional development workshops were held for educators from all four Warlpiri communities with the intention of developing teaching materials and curriculum, in particular maths, social science, and song writing. The first workshop that year developed the *Pipa Nyampuju Nampapinkikirli manu Nyajangukurlu*: ‘Bilingual Warlpiri-English Mathematics Book’ (1984) and further Warlpiri Triangle Mathematics Workshops were held in 1987. In 1988/89 a Warlpiri secondary level language and culture curriculum was devised. Between 1975 and 1992, collaboration with Warlpiri Triangle and communities by linguist Mary Laughren made an impactful contribution to Warlpiri bilingual education through dictionary work, curriculum and teaching training and resourcing. After a hiatus from 1991-1997, educators in 1998 began the process of setting up a formal Incorporated Entity, the *Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru* (WpkJ) with meetings held at annual Warlpiri Triangle workshops alternating between the communities of Yuendumu and Lajamanu. In 2005, Warlpiri educators and traditional owners of the Newmont Tanami gold mine, set up the Warlpiri Education Training trust (WETT) to fund projects that meet Warlpiri educational aspirations such as bilingual and bicultural resources, youth leadership, training and development and intergenerational learning independent of government initiatives (Shaw, 2015). Since 2006, WETT-initiated smaller planning workshops called *Jinta-Jarrimi* (Becoming one) alternate between the smaller communities of Nyirrpi and Willowra. Efforts have been made in professional workshops to draw on research into Warlpiri acquisition and Warlpiri educators’ knowledge of child development to structure the sequence of learning (e.g. Disbray, O’Shannessy et al. 2019; O’Shannessy, Disbray, et al., 2020). Work has also been done



to follow and translate achievement standards and content descriptions of the Australian curriculum into Warlpiri. Over four decades of meetings and professional learning, Warlpiri educators in consultation with elders have workshopped themes for student learning that were consolidated into a Warlpiri Theme Cycle.

The Warlpiri Theme Cycle was adopted in all 4 schools in 2000 to define and develop resources and structure programming (Disbray & B. Martin, 2018). A Warlpiri teacher from Willowra community, Maisie Kitson described the development of the Warlpiri Theme Cycle as

Old people told us what to put in the Warlpiri. We worked everytime with elders, about what we should teach the kids, in different parts of the school. Jukurrpa [traditional law], jurnarrpa [introduced items], what food, everything, also literacy and Warlpiri maths. In SACE [South Australian Certificate of Education)] workshops, on country visits in the 80s and at Warlpiri Triangle and sometimes Jinta Jarrimi they help us so they can help us teach our kids.

(in Disbray & B. Martin, 2018, p. 31).

The three-year cycle includes 12 themes relating to land, language, and law. It is intended to be taught over the students' school life with deepening learning as the students' progress from early years to senior classes according to the recursive model reflective of ceremonial cycles of knowledge transfer. Disbray and B. Martin (2018) describe the many ways that the Warlpiri Theme Cycle captures the local knowledge system, in terms of taxonomy and temporal nature. They explain the process of its development drawing on intergenerational knowledge transmission and learning patterns of articulating, restating and systematizing knowledge. From 2008, all available planning documents relating to these themes were synchronised and shared on an online platform. These have included lists of key concepts, vocabulary, stories, places, dances etc. that educators agreed that Warlpiri children need to know. The themes in the cycle are summarised in the table below.

Term Year	1	2	3	4
One	<i>Ngapa</i> 'Water'	<i>Watiya</i> 'Trees & plants'	<i>Jurnarrpa</i> 'Possessions, tools, artifacts'	<i>Juju, Yawulyu &amp; Purlapa</i> 'Monsters, Ceremony'
Two	<i>Palka</i> 'Body'	<i>Warlalja</i> 'Family and kin'	<i>Kuyu</i> 'Meat animals'	<i>Jaru &amp; Rdaka-rdaka</i>

				‘Communication & Hand signs’
Three	<i>Jukurrpa &amp; Kuruwarri</i> ‘Law, traditional stories & Designs’	<i>Nyurru-wiyi</i> ‘History’	<i>Ngurra &amp; Walya</i> ‘Country & Home’	<i>Miyi</i> ‘Vegetable Foods’

**Table 3.2 Warlpiri Theme Cycle. Adapted from Disbray (2015)**

An important project funded by the Warlpiri Education Training Trust (WETT) and the Granites Mine Affected Area Aboriginal Corporation (GMAAAC) began in 2018 to align the Warlpiri Theme Cycle to the Australian curriculum and achievement standards, differentiate age-appropriate outcomes and compile all related materials into a handbook that can be used by teaching teams in planning, teaching and assessment of Warlpiri in bilingual schools and those with Warlpiri Indigenous Language and Culture programs. This will effectively consolidate more than four decades of work by Warlpiri educators and community members (Disbray & B. Martin, 2018). The handbook will make explicit links to the Australian Curriculum and a database of teacher resources e.g., student work samples and units of work (Macdonald, 2018).

The first component of the project involved curriculum workshops with a broad range of stakeholders focussing on reviewing structure, themes and priorities within the cycle, identifying priorities for resource development, developing a visual representation of the cycle, further elaborating on and differentiating language and culture outcomes, clarifying the role of the BRDU and others in using the theme cycle and the maintenance of Warlpiri language and culture more generally (Macdonald, 2018, p. 2). I attended three of these workshops, one held in Yuendumu in September 2018, one in Nyirrpi in October 2018 and one in Alice Springs in April 2019.

### **3.2.2 Bilingual education at Yuendumu School**

Yuendumu School delivers education from preschool to senior years. In 2018 there were 13 teaching and 14 non-teaching staff and in 2019 that number doubled (ACARA, 2021). In 2018 there were 202 students enrolled and in 2019 there were 231. In both years four students were non-Indigenous. Despite strong commitment and advocacy from the community and additional funding made available by the Yuendumu School Council for additional support positions and by WETT for training and resource development, delivery of bilingual education at Yuendumu

school has been patchy over the decades. The school's Language Policy (Bilingual Resource Development Unit [BRDU], 2015, p. 6) leads with a community statement that clearly captures the goals for a bilingual, bicultural program as follows,

We think it is important to teach Warlpiri language and culture in our school with yapa teachers who are bilingual to complement the education outside of school from families and grandparents. Most importantly, the children in Yuendumu learn the language and culture of both Warlpiri and English so they are strong for the future.

This Language Policy has theoretically subscribed to a Steps Language Acquisition Model (LAM) of heavy loading of Warlpiri in the early years, transitioning to SAE instruction in the middle years (see discussion of subtractive models in Chapter 2). This approach aims to build on and develop students' first language (L1) during staged introduction to second language (L2) as the child progresses through school. SAE-speaking teachers work together with a vernacular-speaking, bilingual Warlpiri educator to cover the ACARA content, follow the Warlpiri Theme Cycle and develop literacy in English as an Additional Language. This approach was described in the policy (BRDU, 2015, p.1) as,

*Jirrama jaru-jarra ngulaju jirrama-wana Warlpiri manu English wana kalu kurdu-kurdu pina jarrimi jirrama yimi, jirrama jaru, jirrama tija-jarra yapa manu kardiya.*

Two way = two languages, two cultures, two teachers in each class. Kardiya (non-Indigenous) and Yapa (Indigenous) working together as equals.

In practice, the Warlpiri program has had to battle for space with many competing demands in a busy school program. There are pervasive tensions in negotiating standardised curriculum based on SAE delivery and assessment and institutional monolingualism with diversified instruction of Warlpiri curriculum content into a bilingual model (Devlin et al., 2017). During my work in Yuendumu in 2012 – 2015 and Willowra in 2016, I observed these deep conceptual tensions as having complex and wide-ranging impacts on the delivery of dual-language education and the Warlpiri program specifically. And these conceptual tensions motivated and informed my line of inquiry in this study.

#### *Teaching in and of Warlpiri at Yuendumu School*

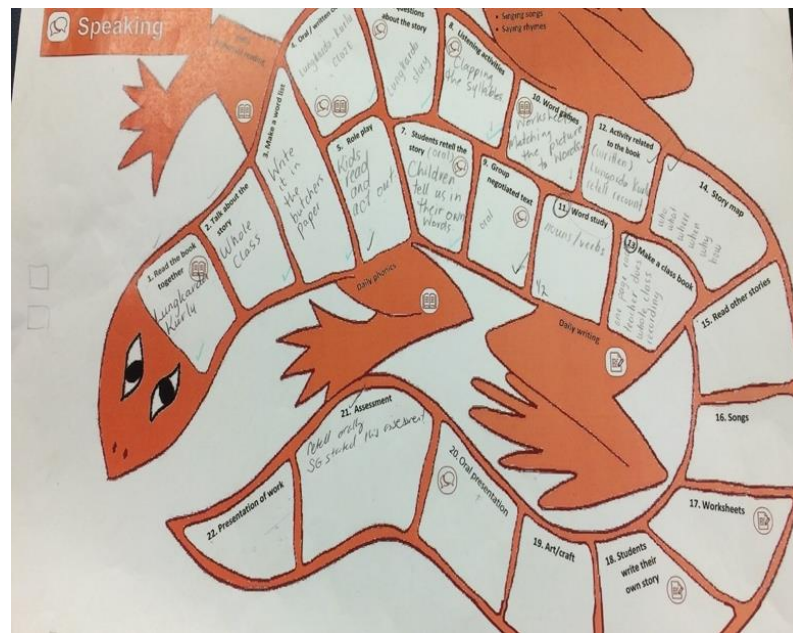
The incorporation of Warlpiri into the timetable at Yuendumu School has depended almost entirely on the enthusiasm of individual non-Indigenous classroom teachers, their relationship

with a Warlpiri co-teacher and their ability to work together interpersonally and cross-culturally. In teaching teams, a power imbalance exists in qualification, pay, housing and status of the teachers in the team. Non-Indigenous classroom teachers must have completed qualifications that meet registration criteria in the NT, while Warlpiri educators are supported by the Department of Education to complete Certificate training in Education Support Work level III-Advanced Diploma through Batchelor Institute (Lee et al., 2013). Non-Indigenous teachers are remunerated with handsome housing and pay packages, training and development and career progression. While some Warlpiri educators have full-time contracts, many take up casual by-the-hour positions without the benefits of sick leave or training. Professional Standards for Assistant Teachers with role expectations and career progression were only recently developed (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2021). In the current model, Warlpiri educators are expected to lead all teaching, learning and assessment of Warlpiri and support the non-Indigenous teacher in their work. This requires them to “walk both worlds” or work “two ways” to broker the socio-cultural and linguistic knowledge belonging to the community and students with the learning imperatives set out by the euro-centric school culture (Bat, 2010; Silburn, Nutton, McKenzie, & Landrigan, 2011). Ultimately, despite the rhetoric of collaboration and co-responsibility in school policy documents (BRDU, 2015) and DoE documents (NT Bilingual curriculum document, NTCF ILC, Teaching in Teams), the onus for planning, delivery and reporting on outcomes is on the non-Indigenous, higher qualified and remunerated teacher.

*Yuendumu Schools Language and Literacy Framework in 2018 to 2019*

Between 2016 and 2019, Yuendumu School based their school-wide approach to language and literacy provision on the Walking Talking Texts program, an English as an Additional Language teaching program which is offered alongside a teaching of Indigenous Languages tool, the Goanna Planner. The program “offers a sequence of teaching strategies with units of work based around the deconstruction and reconstruction of a single text over many weeks” (Northern Territory Department of Education and Training, 1995). The Goanna Planner includes 22 activities focussing on a single Warlpiri text such as group negotiated texts, cloze exercises, recounts, role plays, arts informed activities to provide opportunities for input and for students to process this orally and in written forms. These activities are complemented by a daily phonics and writing program. In 2017 the program’s author, Fran Murray delivered professional development to all staff and Warlpiri educators. The English and Warlpiri

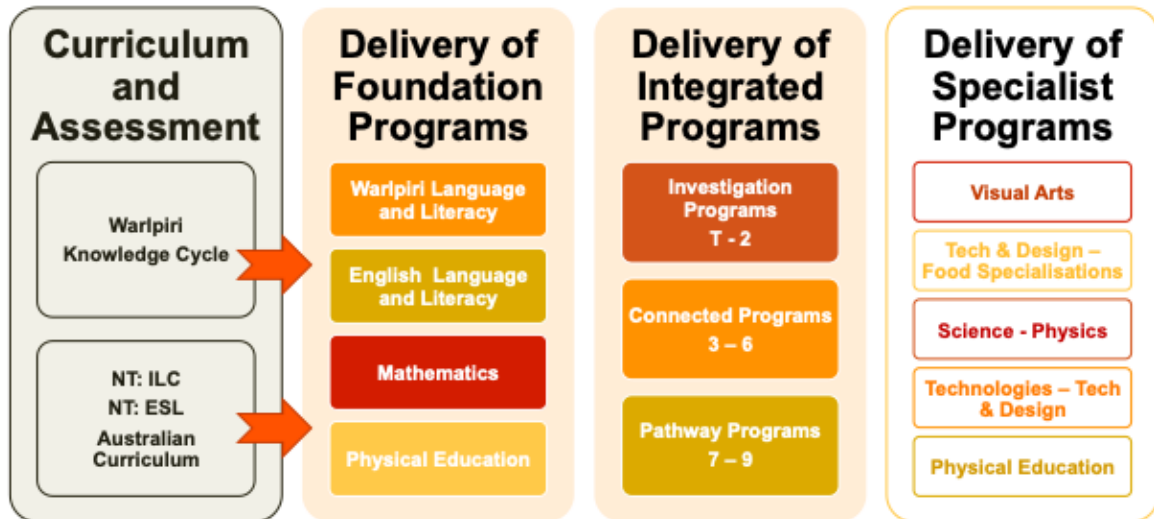
programs were central to the school's Literacy and Language framework (MacDonald, personal communication, 2018 and Murray, personal communication, 2021). A goal of the Goanna Planners is to empower local educators with knowledge about planning for teaching and assessing through home language (Murray, 2016). At the time of this study, 2018- 2019, most Warlpiri educators used the Goanna Planners for structuring their literacy teaching, but the Walking Talking Texts were not used consistently across the school.



### *Integrated curriculum at Yuendumu School*

In recent years, there has been interest within the Bilingual Unit of the Education Department about integrating curricular learning and delivery across both languages. In Term 2, 2018, Yuendumu School enlisted the support from Northern Territory Department of Education Curriculum specialist to assist with their Curriculum Delivery model that developed integrated bilingual, cultural learning. This diagram depicts the model that was developed in collaboration with the leadership team. The first column, Curriculum and Assessment, informs what is planned, taught, assessed, and reported on. Foundation subjects are to be planned by classroom teaching teams every term, while specialist programs are delivered by specialist teachers and are subject to change depending on staffing and skills. Integrated programs are the subjects that align to the Warlpiri Theme Cycle and change every term. I had access to Scope and Sequences for Early Years, Transition to Grade 2, Grades 3-6 and 7-9 in terms 3-4 2018 and 1-2, 2019 (see Appendix A for an example draft Early Years' document). They include information about the

Warlpiri Theme Cycle and connections to other subject areas including roles and responsibilities for learning and assessment.



**Figure 3.4 Yuendumu Curriculum Delivery Model (Boscato, 2019)**

In my observations and classroom recordings there was limited evidence of teaching teams following these plans in 2018/19; rather Warlpiri was delivered according to the Warlpiri theme cycle and literacy instruction guided by Goanna Planners while all other subjects were taught in English. In 2019 I observed an Upper Primary teaching team deliver some integrated units for History and the Social Sciences (HASS), but this work was interrupted after 2019 with a change in school leadership and commitment and gradually abandoned over subsequent years (Macdonald, personal communication, 2021)

### 3.3 Summary

This chapter has set the scene for the research conducted in classrooms at Yuendumu School by introducing the community of Yuendumu and its traditional (L1) language ecology. Yuendumu has seen significant sociocultural change over the past century. Intercultural encounters with non-Indigenous people have evolved over the decades with interactions, collaborations and conflicts around land rights, services, governance, and commerce over periods of overt violence, assimilationism, self-determination and contemporary mainstreaming of neo-colonial realities (Hinkson, 2017). There have also been documented changes to Warlpiri language, directly and indirectly attributable to the influence of English.

A brief overview of bilingual education in Warlpiri schools set out the community aspirations for bilingual, bicultural education and significant challenges. Since the establishment of the first schools in Warlpiri communities more than half a century ago, Warlpiri educators have been engaged in ongoing negotiations at classroom, school, community, and territory policy levels around models of bilingual delivery to best address the multifarious learning needs of their students. While the stated goal in Yuendumu School's language policy is to "develop students' competence and confidence in all strands of language acquisition in two languages: Warlpiri and English" (BRDU, 2015, p. 15), delivery has been inconsistent and differing perceptions of how to achieve and evaluate these are underpinned by conflicting interpretations of policy (see Chapter 2, section 2.2.2) and understandings of students' Warlpiri language use by the various stakeholders. This leads me to the next chapter (Chapter 4) which describes the methods for studying classroom language practices to address the abovementioned lacunae.

## **Chapter 4 Methodological and analytical framework**

In this chapter I provide an overview of the methodology for this study starting with the principles underpinning the research design (4.1). I then describe the data collection process (4.2), methods of data collection (4.3) and approach to data analysis (4.4).

### **4.1 Approaches underpinning the research design**

This classroom-based study adopted a mixed-method approach within a qualitative research paradigm informed by a social constructivist theory of language, learning and social relations (as discussed in Chapter 2) to gather and analyse linguistic and ethnographic data about Warlpiri language practices in teaching and learning events at Yuendumu School. The approach taken follows a tradition of educational sociolinguistics (e.g., Cazden, John, & Hymes, 1972; Hornberger & McKay, 2010) and ethnography of speaking (e.g., Bauman & Sherzer, 1989; Hymes, 1974) and was concerned with adhering to principles that resist the colonising potential of research where concerns over power, voice and interpretation are central elements (Bishop, 1999; Smith, 2012).

#### **4.1.1 Linguistic anthropology in education**

This thesis draws on principles from linguistic anthropology of education, concerned with exploring four aspects of language use in cultural context, comprising what Silverstein (1985) calls “the total linguistic fact”: form, use, ideology, and domain. This work is underpinned by an emerging body of scholarship within Dell Hymes’ (1974) ethnography of communication tradition that includes language socialisation (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Simpson & Wigglesworth, 2008) and classroom ethnographic studies (Cazden et al., 1972; Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 1980; Heath & Street, 2008). These approaches aim to combine ethnographic and linguistic methods to describe language- as-social-interaction, situated within multiple layers of context including historical, sociocultural, political-economic, developmental, and psychological (Henne–Ochoa, Elliott–Groves, Meek, & Rogoff, 2020). They take what Mertz (2007) has called a “semiotic” approach to language use, emphasising flexible use of language and the stable norms and sometimes-unexpected relations they create. This thesis draws on principles from linguistic anthropology of education, concerned with exploring linguistic practices focussed on four aspects of language use in cultural context, comprising what Silverstein (1985) calls “the total linguistic fact”: form, use, ideology, and domain. This work



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The ethnography of speaking approach has been applied in education settings to illuminate diverse ‘ways of speaking’ (Hymes, 1974). These include styles, varieties, registers, channels of communication (e.g., oral, manual, written) and the constraints which govern language use in social practice. Out of this paradigm, ethnographic treatments of previously invisible practices of minoritised students have emerged (e.g., Gilmore & Galtthorne, 1982, Heath, 1983; Philips, 1972). A key idea in ethnography of communication is the importance of considering emic perspectives and speaker ideologies concurrent with observable practices. In recent years the ethnography of speaking approach has been promoted to understand Indigenous ways of speaking in contexts outside of Australia to show how language use is culturally patterned and implications for educational practice; for example, such as Māori education in New Zealand (May, 1994); Inuktitut-Cree-English-French Arctic Quebec (Patrick, 2013); a Canadian Northern Athapaskan community (Meek, 2012); Oglala Lakota of Pine Ridge Reservation (Henne-Ochoa, 2018) and the Yup’ik in Alaska (Wyman et al., 2010). And the implications for educational practices. In these contexts of language endangerment and shift, these scholars have demonstrated that although language change is most obvious at the level of code, the locally specific and culturally governed interactional practices, the “aspects of a speech community’s interaction that are most tacit are also the most resistant to change and are maintained through mundane routines and forms of interaction” (Field, 2001, p. 249).

Language socialisation studies focus on how children as novice language users learn the situated discourse practices of their communities (Duranti, Ochs & Schieffelin, 2012; Schieffelin, 1986). The focus thus is on the teaching and learning of sociocultural knowledge and communicative competence through the organisation of communicative practices in the classroom context (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002). Both forms (such as word choice, word

order, morphology, turn-taking patterns) and socio-cultural contexts of language use (e.g., student attitudes to language use or teacher perspectives of the language ecology of the classroom) are of interest in exploring the 'ways of speaking' Warlpiri language lessons. Locally defined ways of speaking are important in exploring emic<sup>16</sup> repertoires of communicative forms and functions as they interface with individual values and beliefs, social institutions and the history and ecology of a community (Hymes, 1974, p. 4).

Classroom discourse studies aim to elucidate the language choices of participants to understand how language, brought to, and constructed in, classrooms, impacts learning. Socio-cultural theories influenced by the work of Vygotsky (1980) provide a useful framework for understanding classroom learning as a social activity of dialogic interaction and interpretation within culturally and socially mediated activities. Language use in the classroom is not a simple tool for the communication of information, rather, it “involves complex social, cultural, political, cognitive, and linguistic processes and contexts—all of which are part of the meaning and significance of (...) using language” (Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, & Shuart-Faris, 2004, p. xvi).

#### **4.1.2 The ethics of linguistic anthropology**

Research in Indigenous contexts, inextricably tied up in oppressive colonial agendas, has too often caused Indigenous peoples to be over-researched, “Othered,” and their knowledges commodified (Battiste & Youngblood Henderson, 2000; Gerlach, 2018; Smith, 2012). The resulting perspectives have historically contributed to hegemonic research theories founded on Euro-Western worldviews, racist discourses, program agendas and policies that have caused long-standing disempowerment of whole communities (Hawkes, Pollock, Judd, Phipps, & Assoulin, 2017). Kenyan writer, wa Thiong’o (1986) cogently described the power of writing in constructing and controlling legitimating arguments as a “cultural bomb” that can challenge local systems, unity, and knowledge systems. In recent decades, the role of non-Indigenous researchers as allies in actively resisting the colonising potential of research and enacting methodologies aligned with Indigenous epistemologies and interests has been explored (Ormond, Cram & Carter, 2006; Smith, 2012; Battiste, 2002; Bishop, 1999; Henne-Ochoa et al., 2020). A starting point for this approach is transparent, critical, and ongoing reflection of

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<sup>16</sup> Concerned with meanings speakers ascribe to their own practices.

my own positionality as a researcher, colleague and ally and the development of a relationships-based, collaborative framework for doing research with Warlpiri educators in their school.

### **4.1.3 Positionality and relational research**

Interpersonal relationships and relationality have been a crucial epistemological scaffolding in my endeavours to enact ethical research. Cree scholar S. Wilson (2008, p. 99) conceptualises relational research as demonstrating “respect, reciprocity, and responsibility (be accountable as it is put into action)”. I got to know Warlpiri educators, students, and their families over almost a decade of working with schools in Warlpiri Triangle communities. These relationships inspired the questions for this study and based on these relationships I have been able to explore the relevance, appropriateness, and utility of this research for the Yuendumu school community and perhaps Warlpiri education more broadly.

I wanted to ensure that this research would be relevant to educators and attenuate power imbalances. A panel of senior Warlpiri educators, Barbara Napanangka Martin, Yamurna Napurrurla Oldfield, Maisie Napaljarri Kitson and Fiona Napaljarri Gibson formed a mentoring panel for this project and were engaged informally and formally in all stages from initial design, to scoping analysis, reporting results, and writing up. I also sought to collaborate with the educators, Warlpiri and non-Indigenous, in the classrooms in which I worked wherever possible. This involved regular planning and reflections, transcribing, and analysing data together and sharing this within the school and wider research community. Fiona Gibson and I co-published a paper for a Special Issue on Australian Languages Today in the journal *Languages* in 2021 and presented together at the Desert Knowledge Symposium and Australian Linguistics Society Conference and the Australian Linguistic Society Conference both in 2021.

Scholars have emphasised the importance of social action and “community-led processes and useful end products delivered back for the benefit of the community as the primary objective” (O’Sullivan 2015, p. 100). It was important to me to ensure that my project and involvement at the school contributed to the educators’ professional development in the process of my own personal and professional development through the PhD. I kept Yuendumu school’s leadership team informed throughout the process and took opportunities to participate in and contribute to staff meetings, ‘Learning Together’ (weekly meetings where teaching teams explore an area of their professional practice, together), Warlpiri educator study meetings, educator workshops

and the Warlpiri Theme Cycle meetings. I shared language awareness tools at a Warlpiri educator study session in Term 4, 2018. I presented early findings of my project during pupil-free days at the beginning of Term 1, 2019 and co-facilitated a session on Working in Teams with a Warlpiri teacher mentor and non-Indigenous Senior Language research officer (linguist). I collated the Upper Primary class' planning materials, audio files, photos etc. for the *Lungkarda-kurlu* 'Blue tongue Lizard' book into a PowerPoint presentation which the Warlpiri educator went on to share at a whole staff Learning Together, Term 1 *Jinta-jarrimi* (Warlpiri educator meeting) and at the 2019 Warlpiri Triangle workshop. I received funding from the Association for Language Testing and Assessment of Australia and New Zealand (ALTAANZ) to run a workshop on Warlpiri assessment on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, and a follow-up presentation at the Warlpiri Triangle workshop on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019. A team of three Warlpiri educators co-presented about our collaboration at the PULiMA Indigenous Language and Technology Conference in August 2019. When in the classroom, I endeavoured to be useful and supportive in my collaborations, acknowledging the time and energy participation in research entails. The following sections detail the specifics of the data collection and analysis process at Yuendumu School in 2018 and 2019.

## **4.2 The data collection process**

In order to gain detailed contextualised accounts of language practices and speaker perspectives I used a combination of ethnographic observation, interviews, arts-based methodologies, documentary evidence, a collaborative bilingual science project, and audio-recordings of Warlpiri teaching and learning situations in classrooms and on bush trips to significant sites surrounding Yuendumu. This approach demanded recursivity in moving between observations and data, as well as theoretical and conceptual insights from the literature, constituting a “back-and-forth observing, noting, reading, thinking, observing, and noting” and “back-and-forth among historical, comparative, and current fieldwork sources” (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 33). The use of ethnographic methods of observation and interviews allowed for the analysis of practices and ideologies in situ, revealing “grounded, insider perspectives on linguistic needs and aspirations” while also showing “local realisations” of language practices (Canagarajah, 2006). This combination of data sources with an emphasis on interpretation of meanings is consistent with the ethnographic demand for ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) and served as methodological triangulation, defined by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011, p. 254) as an

“attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint”.

Between March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018, and June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019, I conducted 15 trips to Yuendumu, totalling roughly 16 weeks spent in the community. On one of these occasions, I also travelled to Nyirrpi, a Warlpiri community 130 kilometres from Yuendumu for a teacher educator workshop, *Jintajarrimi*. Additionally, I attended a Warlpiri Theme Cycle workshop for Warlpiri educators from April 5-6, 2019, in Alice Springs. I was fortunate to be able to work with a Warlpiri colleague and project mentor, Fiona Gibson, Napaljarri (FM) and Barbara Martin Napanangka in Alice Springs on other occasions between March 2018 and December 2021, developing my interview schedule in Warlpiri, checking, and reflecting on my transcriptions and co-publishing findings (Browne & Gibson, 2021). I kept in regular contact with many of the educators from this study as I reflected on and wrote up the findings in 2020-2021.

Schools, particularly in remote communities, are complex, ever-changing environments and I am acutely aware of the limitations of my travelling in and out of Yuendumu over a 12-month period (Kelly & Nordlinger, 2013) even though I had lived and worked there in 2013-2015. Often, I would arrive in the community to find that the team I had arranged to work with the week before was unavailable due to competing commitments, health issues or other demands on their time. My family situation, in particular as my being the primary carer of our 2-year-old son and later pregnant with our second, also impacted my travel schedule and logistics. Aware of the theoretical importance of observing sequences of lessons rather than one-off instances (F. Christie, 2002), I endeavoured, but was rarely able, to be in Yuendumu over two or more consecutive weeks. While I wasn't always able to observe lesson cycles, I did have access to resources from connected lessons and teachers readily reflected on their teaching progressions with me on each visit which I documented in my field diary.

#### **4.2.1 Participants, collaborators, and sampling**

This study obtained ethics approval from the Australian National University's Human Ethics Committee, the Northern Territory Department of Education's Research and Evaluation Committee and permission to travel to Yuendumu from the Central Land Council. During my first visit to Yuendumu, I introduced this project at a staff meeting and invited Warlpiri educators to collaborate with me in recording their teaching and learning if they were interested.

Copies of the information sheet, in both English and Warlpiri language, were available for all staff, parents and school council members in the staff room. Five educators expressed an interest in being involved in the study and in the end, I observed and collected speech data from three classrooms: two Early Years classes and an Upper Primary class. This included 38 individual children in the study – 20 Early Years students and 18 students from Upper Primary. I also joined the whole-of-school country visits camp south of Yuendumu in September 2018, and several additional children and elders were included in the study.

Prior to recording in each class, I visited families and discussed the project with carers and guardians before obtaining their permission. I then shared a multimedia presentation of my study in English with the students and obtained whole-class consent. I added to this list of students on subsequent visits when new students were in attendance. Ensuring informed consent was relatively straightforward for the Upper Primary students, however, ensuring genuine informed consent from Early Years students was more difficult. An age-appropriate explanation of the data collection process was relatively effective, however the long-term goals of the research and concepts of risk and self-determination were developmentally beyond their comprehension. To compensate, during recording I relied heavily on, and was attentive to, behavioural indicators and verbal indicators of stress or discomfort (c.f. Hughes & Helling, 1991; Spriggs, 2010). For example, some of the youngest Early Years students looked visibly uncomfortable wearing lapel microphones in a bag on their small frames and I adapted my approach by placing microphones close to their spaces of play or learning. This impacted the sound quality in a noisy classroom space, but I was comfortable with this decision in weighing up apparent student discomfort.

Prior to each recording, I confirmed key points with children and adults: that I am recording for the purpose of a PhD project, that I will publish the data in different formats, that it is unlikely anyone will recognise their voices except probably Yuendumu community members, that students and educators can withdraw at any time during or after recording. Three students elected to remove their recording devices part-way through a lesson. All three students confirmed they were happy for me to use the recorded data and continue to participate in the project in future lessons. I viewed this as a positive indication that students felt comfortable exercising their informed consent but decided not to use excerpts from that particular lesson in any publication.

Classrooms are dynamic and evolving ecosystems involving multiple participants, educators and students; their linguistic, cognitive and experiential resources; beliefs and teaching and learning styles situated within historical, institutional contexts (Creese, 2004). Every day, the dynamics changed somewhat depending on attendance factors, content, and community factors and these were detailed and reflected on in my field diary. Collecting data over two school years 2018 and 2019 meant that students and teaching teams changed, having implications for continuity. I recorded lessons in the Early Years classes in 2018 only and the Upper Primary class over 2018-9 with a change of teachers. This small-scale study does not claim to be representative of the school, rather a snapshot of particular teaching and learning events at moments in time and I used numerous methods to capture this.

### **4.3 Methods**

Overall, I observed and recorded a total of 15 classroom-based lessons and three days of learning at specific traditional sites outside of Yuendumu. I collected roughly 35 hours of speech data, including five hours of interviews with educators, students, and community members, roughly 140 pages of field notes, over 170 files of work samples, photographs, and other resources (See Appendix B for a table describing data collected).

#### **4.3.1 Ethnographic fieldnotes, documents, photographs, and artifacts**

I drew on an ethnographic approach, drawing on my existing membership of the NT education system, and on knowledge and relationships from having worked previously in the school, as well as on knowledge accumulated through 11 months of fieldwork. I took detailed ethnographic notes in the form of a field diary, reflecting on community and school dynamics, conversations, and interactions of relevance to my study (Thieberger, 2012). I used double-entry fieldnotes to capture observations and my own reflections in two columns (Kaplan-Weinger & Ullman, 2014). Photographs taken on my phone as well as scans of teaching materials, student work and other classroom relics complemented my field notes. From my second visit, I developed a classroom observation template, which facilitated consistency in noting important information about the students and lessons and to add some structure to my observations.

Detailed descriptions of classroom activities were necessary as language use in general, and classroom discourse in particular, is multimodal (Kress, 2012). Young children express

themselves holistically through performing actions and using gestures and mimes and as I did not film these interactions, photographs, diagrams, and descriptions of activity were vital. I also had access to two hours of classroom data, filmed by the BRDU team which I could refer to when reflecting on non-verbal elements of my own data. The degree to which I participated in classroom activities in addition to these formal observations varied throughout the year. Generally, I refrained from active participation during whole group instruction and small group activities and was more likely to engage directly with the students in independent work, if at all. I expected to be a completely non-participating observer of lesson planning and reflection, however, due to the nature of these meetings and my relationships with the teachers, my involvement occurred more often than I had planned.

I complemented my observational data and field reflections with analysis of documents and artefacts reflective of the broader ideologies framing the educational context. These included the policy documents both at the levels of Northern Territory Government Department of Education and the local school as well as curriculum documents, public statements, lesson plans and student work from the classroom. Of particular interest were all available<sup>17</sup> educator professional development workshop reports from 1984 to 2021, comprising 18 Warlpiri Triangle reports and 27 *Jinta-jarrimi* 'Becoming One' reports. Workshop reports offered privileged access into collective, and individuals' ideas articulated by Warlpiri educators over a 40-year period, across the four central communities, as the key platform for discussing Warlpiri education goals and issues. The workshop reports comprised a detailed record of week-long meetings which include sharing sessions, planning, professional development opportunities, advocacy meetings, song writing, materials development, and literacy workshops in addition to student work samples and photographs. They are written either in Warlpiri with English translations, or in English without Warlpiri translation.

### 4.3.2 Speech Data

All classroom observations were audio-recorded, forming the naturalistic speech data on which my analysis was grounded. I situated the micro-analyses of bilingual discourse practices within the wider social and historical context of the education system, teacher training, practices, accepted school behaviours, school systems, and support available. I am aware that decisions

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<sup>17</sup> More reports might have been published over the 40-year period, but I wasn't able to access them.



about when and who to record had implications for the quality of my data (Bower, 2008; Thieberger, 2012).

For each lesson, the educator and three to four students were fitted with lapel microphones attached to Zoom H2 recorders in small material belt bags. Sometimes devices didn't record, students turned them off or exercised their informed participation and returned them. On bush trips I couldn't use lapel microphones for students, relying rather on surround microphones to capture student responses to discourse. Unfortunately, to increase the likelihood my project passed the Department of Education's ethics process, I couldn't include video-recordings in my methodology. The literature on classroom discourse analysis strongly emphasises the superiority of film for capturing the integration of embodied action and gesture with talk (Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby, & Olsher, 2002). Efforts to address this limitation were to take many photographs during the lesson that show classroom configuration, positional groupings, etc. (this also assisted with transcription) and also detailed classroom observations.

### 4.3.3 Language awareness activity and interviews with students

Two methods, language portraits and language networks, were trialled with a class of fifteen Upper Primary students.



**Figure 4.1 Template for Drawing the Language Portraits from Busch (2012, p. 10)**

The language portrait activity was run during class time and students were invited to map all the languages, means of expression, and ways of talking that play a role in their lives on a body silhouette (the template was downloaded from [www.heteroglossia.net](http://www.heteroglossia.net)) (See Figure 4.1) using position, choice of colour, extent of coloured sections, symbols and accompanying written comments (c.f. Busch, 2016; Kress & Leeuwen, 2001). While students worked independently on their personal representations it is possible that they were influenced by the responses of

their peers, and this could account for more similarities than if they had completed the activity separately. In the Australian Indigenous context, the language portrait activity was first used by Singer and Harris (2016) to describe multilingual practices in remote Arnhem Land.

On the following day, 12 students completed language interaction networks to illustrate patterns of language use among their social networks (Dagenais & Berron, 2001; Prasad, 2013; Smythe & Toohey, 2009). Students drew a large circle and arranged various actors around the circle, with themselves at the top. They then drew arrows or lines showing which language they deploy in conversation with each person using different coloured crayons. Students naturally expanded the concept of network to include both interlocutors and domains, and most networks included a combination of individuals (e.g., my baby cousin), groups (e.g., my school friends) and domains (e.g., the health clinic).

Following both activities, students could elect to participate in a short, ten-minute linguistic biography interview in any language they preferred with the researcher and opt for it to be audio recorded or for written notes to be taken. The interviews were a key aspect of the method, to avoid over- or under-representation of meaning (Busch, 2016). Six students chose to be interviewed about their language portraits and eight about their language networks. All but two the fourteen interviewed elected to speak in English, for my benefit as a learner of Warlpiri. As one student explained, “its [sic] feels strange when I talk to someone in Warlpiri, but not to Warlpiri people” (CB) and it is probable that students would have felt more comfortable expressing themselves in their first language to a Warlpiri speaker<sup>18</sup>. Students chose their own code name (e.g., Fortnite, CB, Jaja) and engaged in whole class discussion at the end of the activity and interviews.

#### **4.3.4 Semi-structured interviews with Warlpiri educators**

In exploring the role of repertoire in interactional contingencies of the classroom, it is essential that a speaker’s own theory of their practices, their language ideologies and metalinguistic interpretations is considered (Hymes, 1974). This is consistent with Nakata’s (2007, p. 157) Indigenous Standpoint theory that requires “... a position that gives primacy to how people make sense of the world they live in — as they do — as well as a focus on smaller groups of

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<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately, a Warlpiri co-researcher was not available at that moment. I had hoped that we would be able to continue interviews together at another time but this turned out to be impossible given our schedules.

people whose symbolic sense making processes are often obscured by, or not visible to, the dominant group.” The value ascribed to a particular language practice cannot be understood apart from the person who employs it and from the larger networks and social relationships in which this person is engaged (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). In the context of language contact and change, Silverstein (1998, p. 420) has suggested that “the ideological aspect of analysis is central and key to understanding how people experience the cultural continuities and interruptions in the particular case”.

All Warlpiri educators at Yuendumu School were offered the opportunity to be interviewed at a time and place of their choosing. While many expressed an interest, due to timing and logistical factors, five educators were interviewed. I also took the opportunity to interview three Warlpiri men who do not work in classrooms but have been involved on the School Council, learning on bush trips in various capacities and were active participants at the Warlpiri Theme Cycle workshop in Alice Springs in April 2019. Eight adults in total were interviewed. Three of these taught in classrooms at Yuendumu School where observations and recordings of classroom talk took place in 2018 and two were other senior Warlpiri educators, retired from the classroom, working as mentors. All the educators interviewed were grandparents or great-grandparents, aged between 45 and 65. Their experience in the education sector ranges from 40 years to 6 years. Each teacher, except the one with 6 years’ experience, had also spent time working in Warlpiri schools in other communities, either as teaching assistants or on the production of Warlpiri literacy resources. Three have completed tertiary qualifications in education and are, or have been, registered teachers, the other two are completing Diplomas in Education Support through Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. To anonymise the respondents, each participant was assigned a code, e.g., WT1. Participants were given a voucher valid for six months at the local Yuendumu *Nguru-Warlalja* Store in acknowledgement of their time.

I co-constructed interview questions with a paid Warlpiri Research Collaborator to explore Warlpiri educator perspectives on language practices, language policy and pedagogy. The semi-structured interview schedule was divided into three sections:

*Section 1 Personal experience, attitudes towards Warlpiri language and learning*

*Section 2 Warlpiri language use in the classroom and in the home*

*Section 3 Warlpiri language learning and assessment in the classroom.*

Each interview went from 30 minutes to 1 hour and was conducted face to face and audio recorded, with the participant's permission. Two were conducted by the Warlpiri Research Collaborator and the rest by me alone. Participants could respond in whichever language they preferred, which resulted in a lot of accommodation and use of English with me as a learner of Warlpiri. While the ideal approach would have been for a Warlpiri assistant to interview all participants, this was not possible due to logistical and time restraints. On a couple of occasions, I had to seize the opportunity to interview a busy teacher by myself. There is a clear difference in quality of data between those interviews conducted by a Warlpiri research assistant and when it was just me and I will be transparent about this in presenting findings. I draw on Talmy's (2010) approach to a research interview as a social practice in which teachers' perspectives are shaped by and through the interview itself. As someone who is not proficient in Warlpiri, I interpreted the data with the understanding that responses are embedded in respondents' ways of interpreting the world, on the discourses available to them at a particular moment (Weedon, 1987).

#### **4.3.5 Bilingual Science activity**

In order to complement the process of knowledge gathering with a proactive process of knowledge creation, a participatory science module in Warlpiri was co-designed and conducted with the Upper Primary 2018 teaching team. While science is taught and learned through a range of modalities including experiments, diagrams, pictures and gestures, the importance of language in mediating these has been recognised by both science educators and linguists (Llinares, Morton, & Whittaker, 2012; Mortimer & Scott, 2003; Slater & Mohan, 2010).

The planning, implementation and assessment process were recorded. Reflections in my field diary documented the ad hoc planning process during recess and lunch breaks. A learning area was chosen from the Australian National Science Curriculum (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2020) for the relevant Upper Primary grade and useful vocabulary and concepts in both languages were brainstormed and questions and potential answers discussed. The teaching team designed four experiments that would reflect the different properties of materials. While a suggested assessment method was to use a series of photographs of the process as prompts and students would describe what happened and why in Warlpiri, the team preferred checking learning during a whole group question and answer session at the end.

## 4.4 Approach to the analysis of data

The analysis of all data for this study was conducted inductively, with emerging constructs becoming more focussed over time according to what Glaser and Strauss (1967) describe as the constant comparative method of returning to the data as insights develop, evolve and change. Broadly, the approach involved conducting theme-based multimodal discourse analysis (Pavlenko, 2007)<sup>19</sup>, biographic case study of individual responses to language awareness activities (Klusters & DeMeulder, 2019; Kramersch, 2009; Busch, 2016) and grammatical analysis of speech data following micro discursive traditions (e.g., Auer, 2007)

I acknowledge that in the critical tradition, analysis of data includes all the decisions surrounding data collection requiring what England (1994, p. 82) calls “self-conscious analytical scrutiny”. I endeavoured to take a reflexive approach to how my decisions and interpretations were produced and the implications of these, as Clifford (1986, p. 100) states, “stories are built into the representational process itself”. Indeed, ethnographic preparation not only influences accuracy but also representation of participants and aspects of interaction, comprising the total “ecology of communication” (Gumperz, 1999). These decisions were reflected on in my field diary and are included in the corpus of documentary data to ensure transparency of the process.

A “funneling” methodological process (Jacob, 1987) proceeded from general observations about the lessons to focussed sociolinguistic study of speech events (Duff, 1995). I used themes emerging from interviews with educators and students as forming categories and themes for my linguistic analysis allowed their input to be incorporated into my interpretation of results. I followed the process common in ethnography of communication in taking a speech event as the unit of analysis to create a well-bounded discursive event for analysis (Hymes, 1974). For each event, I included an overview using a formulation proposed by (Hymes, 1974, pp. 53-64) as the mnemonic device SPEAKING (see example in Appendix C).

**S**cene = where the event is taking place and the overall mood and context

**P**articipants = information about the participants

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<sup>19</sup> Conducted using data analysis software NVivo for Mac (QSR International). Following approaches to inductive analysis, each interview was coded individually without setting pre-existing categories.

**E**nds = the goals or outcomes of the speech acts

**A**ct = message form, content and how the events unfold

**K**ey = the tone and manner

**I**nstrumentalities = the linguistic (channels and forms- language, dialect, variety and code, style) and non-linguistic tools (props, devices)

**N**orms = conventions used by speakers to achieve communicative goals

**G**enre = kind of speech act (e.g., poem, lecture, myth)

During my fieldwork I made notes of emerging themes immediately after classes and interviews as well as during the transcription process, using analytic memos on the comment tier on ELAN software, and sticky notes and tables in word documents (Bower, 2008). Examples of categories in teacher interviews (Chapter 6) included, “language as a right” or “team teaching”, and categories in the classroom speech data pertained to different pedagogic strategies deployed by teachers or “borrowings from English” (Chapter 7). I explored the organisation of sequences, the structure of speech events, such as turn-taking and repair practices, syntax-for-conversation and how speakers deploy these aspects of interactional competence to communicate in, or learn in, Warlpiri. I looked for interactional patterns and code-switching patterns during the transcription process and noted salient dynamics and features of the talk (Chapter 7 and 8). Special attention was paid to sequences in which code-switching was mobilised by participants to manage multiple interactional aims. My analysis did not assign pre-set social or functional meaning to the code-switching and code-mixing phenomena I encountered, rather I endeavoured to interpret them in the contexts in which they occurred. As Bakhtin (1981, p. 293) has famously commented, “each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life.”

I drew on linguistic research on discourse functions of code-switching (Gumperz, 1982, Blom and Gumperz, 1972, Valdes, 1981, Duchêne & Heller, 2007, Milroy and Gordon, 2003) as comprising heteroglossic approaches to multilingual communication in the classroom and on translanguaging (García, 2008). In analysing bilingual practices, I had to be careful to not attribute more value to English than was reasonable, given English insertions were highly

salient to me and to Warlpiri speakers<sup>20</sup> when looking closely at transcripts (Hill and Hill 1986, p.122; Kroskrity 2010, p. 199), because of the ideologies explored in Chapters 5 and 6. As code-switching practices are dependent on context it was difficult to quantify what proportion of the forms and functions belonged to each code.

#### **4.4.1 Transcription of speech data**

I transcribed the speech data, both from classroom interactions and interviews, with ELAN software (ELAN, 2020; Sloetjes & Wittenburg, 2008). In the interests of time and for survey purposes, I transcribed all audio at the lexical level (including non-lexical vocalisations) and then for more intensive analysis, smaller portions at more detailed levels drawing on some conventions of conversation analysis adapted from Jefferson (2004) (see page vii). I took an interest in the timing of speech, particularly length of pauses and fluency and included these for more fine-grained analysis. I thought these might be interesting given the comparative cross-linguistic work on conversational silence in Australian Aboriginal talk-in-interaction (Mushin & Gardner, 2009). I also thought these might provide some information about student engagement in the lessons. In representations of speech, elements from Warlpiri are in italics, and elements from English and Kriol are in plain font. An English gloss follows each quote. In representing teaching and learning interactions, I followed the conventions for interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme glosses according to the Leipzig Glossing Rules (2015).<sup>21</sup>

I experienced a number of challenges in transcribing classroom speech data. Linked to the issue of relying on audio recording over visual methods, I found it difficult to capture prosodic and paralinguistic features such as intonation, voice quality, emphasis, value-orientation, attitudes, and non-verbal phenomena such as coughs and sighs. Gesture and gaze direction and facial expression couldn't be easily captured in notetaking. Segmenting speech in noisy, multi-speaker classroom interactions was a gruelling process. While I didn't experience too many issues distinguishing speakers in the Upper Primary class, most of whom I have known for four years, the Early Years students were very difficult to distinguish in the audio files. This limitation was addressed by transcribing with the Warlpiri educators wherever possible who

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<sup>20</sup> They were concerned about any encroachment of English in the Warlpiri classroom.

<sup>21</sup> These were retrieved from: <https://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/pdf/Glossing-Rules.pdf>

could identify different speakers from their voices. Where I was unsure, I attributed the utterance to the generic code “KK” for *kurdu-kurdu* ‘children.’

Crucial to analysis were multiple additional opportunities to engage in a process of “member checking” (Heigham & Croker, 2009) through discussion of my findings and interpretations one-on-one with native speakers of Warlpiri, during interviews, during the transcription process, formal and informal meetings and through presentations to school staff during school orientation, weekly staff training sessions, ALTAANZ funded assessment workshops and the Warlpiri Triangle Workshop, 2019 (see Appendix B for outline of data transcribed and checked). I elicited Warlpiri educators’ commentary about specific linguistic forms, contextual factors, and their personal ideologies. Not only did this aim to prevent misallocation of Indigenous knowledge (Bishop, 1999), but contributed to an understanding of the socialisation process and associated language ideologies through an understanding around the beliefs, values and cultural presuppositions that shape them, such as local expectations about student language proficiency. Ideally, I would have liked to check every transcription for each class with the classroom teachers themselves, however this wasn’t always possible for educators with many demands on their time in school, and out. I was only able to work with the Upper Primary teacher on one transcript from that year level. All data in the Early Years’ A class was checked and reflected on by the teacher herself, which was invaluable in gaining her insights on interactions, student backgrounds and reflections on her choices. She made comments about her use of a “baby talk” register (Laughren, 1984b), on her perceptions of the students’ communicative practices at home and in the classroom and at times expressed dismay when she was using what she called “pidgin” or talking “wrong way” to the students. This commentary was noted in a comment tier and informed the analysis. Collaboration with this educator was made easier because she took study leave at the end of 2018 and was available on all but one of the 2019 visits and in informal meetings in 2020.

I was interested in noticing speech that differed from what educators themselves describe as *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ (see Chapter 6 and as described in the literature on classic Warlpiri (e.g., Hale, Laughren, & Simpson, 1995; Nash, 1986; Simpson, 1983; Swartz, 1985) and annotating it in the comment tier. Members of my panel suggested that I should endeavour to represent the non-standard forms accurately in my transcripts. Without fine grained phonetic analysis there were times when neither I nor the Warlpiri L1 speaker was sure if they could



hear a full or reduced morpheme. At these moments, I elected to take the position of the Warlpiri L1 speaker and note the ambiguity in a footnote. A related concern was the tendency of L1 Warlpiri speakers to present speech using classic representations rather than keeping true to actual spoken forms. I endeavoured to remain vigilant in avoiding this where possible. Reflection on emerging findings during regular meetings with my supervisor, Carmel O'Shannessy and peers (e.g., over the phone, at co-supervisory meetings, at linguistics workshops and conferences) served to increase the congruency of emerging findings with my data and expertise in the field.

## **4.5 Summary**

This chapter described the methodology for this classroom-based research drawing on an ethnography of communication approach to connect language and communication to its context of use (Hymes, 1974). I emphasised the critical need for researcher reflexivity in the Indigenous research space and ways in which I endeavoured to enact decolonising methodologies as a non-Indigenous researcher and ally. An essential part of this was taking a relational approach to the construction of knowledge. I also ensured collaboration with Warlpiri advisers, mentors and research assistants and transparency in my process from start to finish. I described the variety of methods employed to collect ethnographic and speech data that were used to address the research questions. My process for analysing data involved recursivity of moving back and forth between the literature and the data and reflecting on speaker perceptions of their language practices to recordings of these.

The next chapters in this thesis outline the resulting findings and discussion, presented in four chapters. The first findings chapter (Chapter 5) foregrounds the students' language ideologies, attitudes, and perspectives of learning in and of Warlpiri at school, using the biographical methods of language portraits (Busch, 2016), language networks (Dagenais & Berron, 2001) and interviews. It addresses my second research question, how do children, as agents in their speech communities, understand the role of Warlpiri in their learning? The following chapter (Chapter 6) explores the development of consensual ideology by Warlpiri educators that informs their enacted language-in-education policy in classrooms, drawing on the method of document analysis and interviews. It addresses my third research question, what do Warlpiri educators see as indicators of successful learning in and through Warlpiri? Chapters 7 and 8 describe the interactional dynamics for teaching and learning Warlpiri, drawing on the method

of interactional analysis of classroom speech data. They respond to my first research question about the linguistic practices, the forms, and functions of Warlpiri in teaching and learning events. The discussion chapter (Chapter 9) brings together questions of ideologies and their interactions with classroom practices and addresses the fourth research question to reveal how the language practices in the classroom are mediated by and mediate the language ideologies, classroom ecosystem and wider sociolinguistic processes.



## Chapter 5 Warlpiri Students' language ideologies, awareness and plurilingualism

Any study of language practices must be situated within wider social, ecological, and ideological processes (Hymes, 1974; Saville- Troike, 2003; Rymes, 2014). The emic perspectives of language users are vital in painting a fuller picture of language use in context. The next two chapters employ different methods to explore the language ideologies of Warlpiri Upper Primary school children (Chapter 5) and of Warlpiri educators (Chapter 6), elucidating some of the *ideological spaces* that interact with the *implementational ones* in the Warlpiri language classroom (Hornberger, 2005).

In this chapter, I discuss the results of multimodal arts-based activities and interviews conducted with the Upper Primary students in 2018<sup>22</sup>. These are complemented by excerpts from classroom interactions on the topic of Warlpiri language maintenance and use. This chapter focusses on how children describe Warlpiri language and what this means for the ways in which they categorise the speech communities within which they are being socialised. I explore how children construct and understand language, its status, domains, functions and questions of authority and legitimacy in deciding these. Following Kroskrity (2009, p. 72), I understand language ideologies as consisting of “linguistic awareness, linguistic beliefs, feelings, and practices” For the purpose of analysis, I tease out three categories from his definition (1) language awareness, (2) feelings and attitudes including positive and negative evaluations, and (3) language beliefs – ontological views on the nature of language, how it is acquired and how it changes. Before exploring these themes, I present three case studies which elucidate the students' language awareness, beliefs, and attitudes in closer detail.

### 5.1 Case studies

As described in the methods section of the previous chapter (see Chapter 4), 15 students in the Upper Primary class were given a piece of paper with a silhouette of a body and asked to document their language world using colours, shapes, shading and other visual markings (c.f. Klusters & DeMeulder, 2019; Busch, 2016, 2012; Wolf, 2014; Singer & Harris, 2016). Twelve

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<sup>22</sup> This research activity was reported on in a publication for Babel Journal in 2019: Browne, Emma (2019). Multimodal tools for exploring communicative practices among multilingual students in remote central Australia. *Babel* 54(1/2), 28-33.

of the fifteen students who attended class the next day were asked to map their networks, by making connections between themselves and the interlocutors or domains of use (c.f. Dagenais & Beron, 2001; Prasad, 2013). Six students participated in optional follow-up interviews about their language portraits and eight about their language networks. The next three case studies show how three different students engaged with these activities (refer to Appendix E for more examples).

### Case Study 1: CB<sup>23</sup>

In their<sup>24</sup> language portrait (see Figure 5.1), CB included three Australian Aboriginal languages, distinguished a dialect of Warlpiri spoken in Lajamanu; two registers of Warlpiri, “baby talk” and Warlpiri hand signs; English and two languages other than English, Hindi, and Vietnamese. CB claimed spoken proficiency in Warlpiri, “Lajamanu Warlpiri” and English. The student included two other Aboriginal languages spoken by their grandmother, Luritja and Pitja-Pitja (Warlpiri for Pitjantjatjara, a Western Desert language) on their ears, because they said they had been exposed to them since birth, and can partially comprehend, but does not speak them. Their use of American rap music in a separate category to English shows an appreciation of different dialects of English, and CB indicated that they use their phone to access world music, rap being their favourite “just to listen and relax” (CB Language Portrait Interview, 01:43-01:46).

CB explained that they drew symbols for *jukurra* ‘dreaming’ running along their arms in red, the same colour as they depicted Warlpiri language, to signify its connection to ancestors and their spiritual belief system (see Figure 5.1). CB included English around their stomach and head, encasing the Warlpiri in their heart and outside their body. When asked why English was outside their body, particularly surrounding their head, this student positioned themselves as an English learner,

uhmmm cos I hear like the words that I know sometimes and then I learn it at the classroom. Like uhmm like I get English into my brain so I can listen and talk more English.

(CB Language Portrait Interview, 02:53-03:18)

In their language network, they included several domains including the school, the shop, the clinic and interlocutors, their mum and family and their baby sibling. They speak Warlpiri in all domains, reserving baby talk register for their baby sibling and hand signs

<sup>23</sup> Children offered their own code names for this research which I employ in this chapter.

<sup>24</sup> I use gender neutral pronouns for the purposes of preserving anonymity, and in keeping with promoting inclusivity and gender-fair language use.

### Case Study 1: CB<sup>23</sup>

for the whole family. CB also included Luritja (the thin green line on her ears in figre 5.1 and the thin purple line in 5.2) as being spoken in their home by her grandmother. Unlike many of her peers, the only domain where English was spoken was at school.

When asked about the bilingual program, learning in English and Warlpiri at school, they explained, “it’s good. Learning everything in English, maths and literacy, writing, reading, and writing.” (CB Language Portrait Interview, 08:36-08:50). When asked what content they learn in Warlpiri at school, they mentioned body parts and cultural topics like kinship terms and *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’ stories. CB summarised the activity by reflecting,

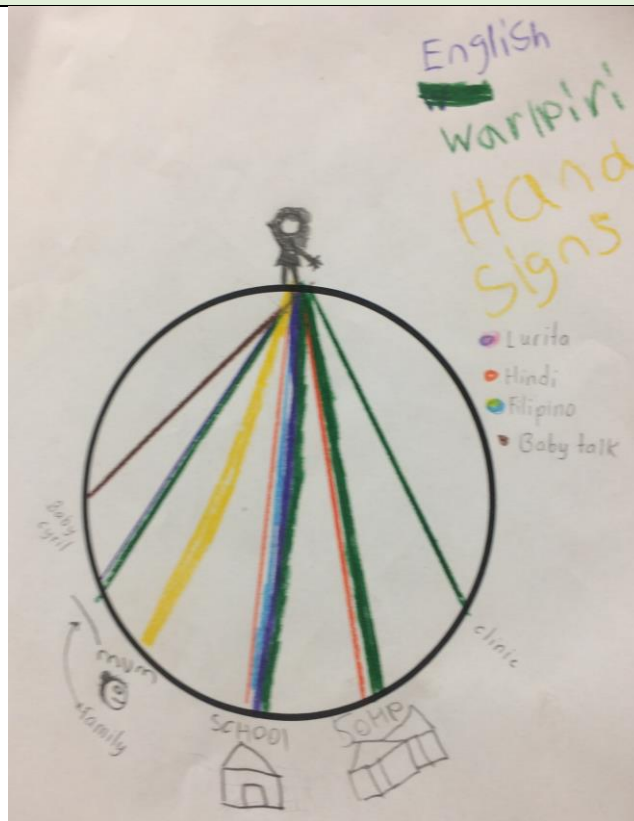
“it’s good to show what I hear or what I have in my heart, which language, or what I hear, like music, what I talk to people, how I communicate and yeah”

(CB Language Portrait Interview, 13:56 -14:16)



Figure 5.1 CB Language Portrait

### Case Study 1: CB<sup>23</sup>



**Figure 5.2 CB Language Network**

### Case Study 2: Jaja

This student, who chose to be referred to by the code name Jaja, a kinship term for a maternal grandmother or her siblings, was present on the day the class completed their body silhouettes, but not the language networks. Jaja included English and four Australian Aboriginal languages, Warlpiri, Arrernte, Luritja and Pitjantjatjara among their repertoire and distinguished a dialect of Warlpiri spoken in the community of Lajamanu from the Warlpiri spoken in Yuendumu. ‘Lajamanu Warlpiri’ as they called it, was depicted on their torso, and outlined asymmetrical shapes around their body and on a heart encased in a square under their feet, which they said represented their family and home in the community of Lajamanu. When asked why it was in the middle of their body Jaja responded,

*“tumaji nganayi learn-jarri karna Warlpiri mix-up, nganayi understand-jarrimi karlipa-jana.”*

## Case Study 2: Jaja

‘Because I like learning mixed-up Warlpiri and like we can understand it’

(Jaja Language Portrait Interview, 01:16-01:24)



**Figure 5.3 Jaja Language Portrait**

During their interview, Jaja comfortably switched from Warlpiri to Arrernte to demonstrate their proficiency. They often accommodated to the English-speaking interviewer by switching to or recasting their comments in English. They said they put Luritja on their legs because of their maternal grandmother, with whom they currently live. The language of their paternal grandmother, Arrernte, was depicted in yellow on their head, one ear and arms. Unlike most of their peers, Jaja claimed and demonstrated productive competence in these languages. Their other ear was coloured green for Warlpiri, and this was also used on their eyes, nose, mouth, and cheek. They explained this showed Warlpiri as the language of their senses while living in Yuendumu. The four Aboriginal languages were positioned on



### Case Study 2: Jaja

his heart, signifying emotional attachment, “*rduku-rduku-rla karna mardani anything-nyayirni Warlpiri, Arrernte, Luritji, Pitja-pitja*”, glossed as ‘In my heart I have many languages, Warlpiri, Arrernte, Luritji, Pitja-Pitja.’ (Jaja Language Portrait Interview, 01:41-01:50). By contrast, English was depicted in red on his head, for learning, “*nganayi maths – do-man hard-work-rlangu, think-jayi kapi mind-i-ngka-ju,*” glossed as ‘for learning maths or when we’re doing hard work as well, I think it in my mind.’ (Jaja Language Portrait Interview, 01:31- 01:38)

Jaja included all the languages they speak in little dots surrounding their body and expressed pride when looking at the languages in their heart and on their body. They inserted the following English-derived words body, proud and feel, “*ngurrju karna-j mardarni rduku-rduku-rla an all that body-rla karna mardani ole-lot-i-nyarra ngana-jayi ka proud-wan-I karna-ju feeli-mani*” meaning, ‘I keep them in my heart and all those in my body and I feel proud.’ (Jaja Language Portrait Interview, 01:55 – 01:59).

### Case Study 3: K1

K1 spends time between family members in Adelaide and Yuendumu. The student depicted Warlpiri on their heart, eyes, the centre of their mouth and body and legs. They said the depiction on their heart signified emotional attachment, while colours on their mouth and eyes represented everyday use. Colouring their whole body in red represented their identity as a Warlpiri person, and their legs represented their connection to Warlpiri land. English and Warlpiri share space at the top of their head, “where my brain is” (K1 Language Portrait Interview, 0:30-0:35). English also shared space with Warlpiri on their body and upper arms but not on their legs which were connected to Warlpiri country, “the country where I was born on” (K1 Language Portrait Interview, 0:43-0:46). K1 spent a semester at school in Adelaide in 2017 where they said they enjoyed learning Japanese. They included English, Warlpiri, baby talk and Japanese on their mouth, as languages they have some productive capability in. K1 expressed enjoyment of K-pop music by putting Korean on their ears, but not their mouth, because they cannot speak it.

### Case Study 3: K1

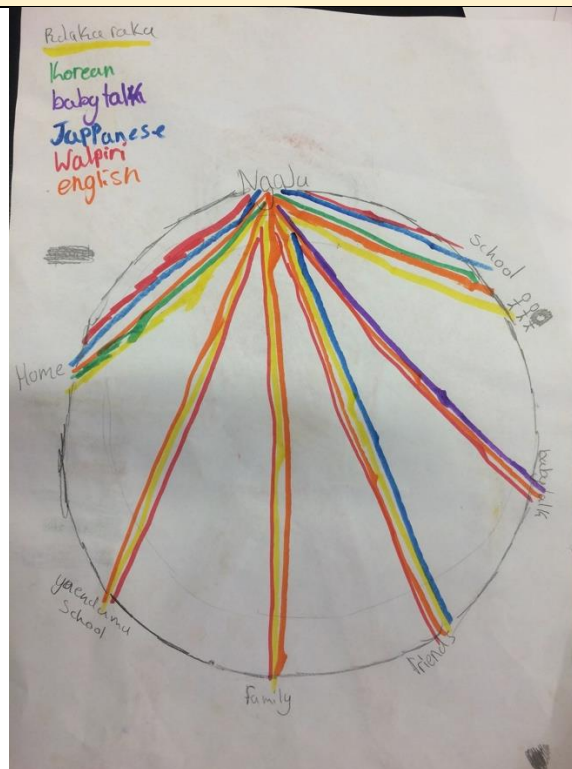


**Figure 5.4 K1 Language Portrait**

On their network, K1 singled out several domains for language use including the home, Yuendumu school, school (meaning school in Adelaide), friends, baby talk. At the top they wrote *ngaju* ‘me’ in Warlpiri further solidifying their identity foremost as a Warlpiri speaker. English and Warlpiri are both spoken in each of these domains. K1 also used hand signs everywhere and indicated their grandmother used hand signs the most, “my nana always gives me hand signs, when I’m doing something wrong, doing something right” (K1 Language Network Interview, 02:20-02:27). They described baby talk as follows, “you sound like a baby and it’s like little cousins or smaller kids when they come near you” (K1 Language Network Interview, 03:30-03:39).

At their school in Adelaide, K1 also hears Japanese and Korean, and these languages are also connected to the home domain, where they listen to what they call J-pop and K-pop music. In their interview they said they liked practising Japanese with their “Adelaide friends”, “cos we all learn Japanese.” K1 was excited to report that next year their class were going to “change Japanese to Warlpiri, I mean, Aboriginal language” as their foreign language subject (K1 Language Network Interview 06:23-06:30).

### Case Study 3: K1



**Figure 5.5 K1 Language Network**

K1 reported speaking to different family members in Warlpiri and English. When asked how they decide which language to use, K1 described the process as unconscious, “uhmmm I dunno, I just think of it and just do it. I just talk” (K1 Language Network Interview 07:03-07:11). They described differences in ways of speaking Warlpiri in different communities as connected to identity, saying people use “different accents like to show themselves” (K1 Language Network Interview 02:02-02:11).

The case studies above illustrate the variety of language backgrounds, values, beliefs, and experiences that comprise the biographies of just three students in this study. There are nonetheless some common themes from the three cases that can be drawn out among all the students in terms of their language awareness (5.2), attitudes about languages (5.3) and beliefs about languages, their understandings about the language of the classroom and their role of language maintenance (5.4) and I’ll discuss these next in turn.

## 5.2 Language awareness and plurilingualism

Despite geographic isolation and relative cultural homogeneity of the community, students expressed an interest in languages across the globe with ten different languages featured across the 15 portraits (a list is included in Appendix D). Of these, only three were included in depictions of daily contact in language networks – Hindi, Vietnamese (both at the shop) and Japanese (learned in school in Adelaide). Despite limited proficiency and indeed communicative opportunities in world languages, students included them on their portraits for a variety of reasons. Many students expressed an awareness of the multiculturalism within their community provided by visiting service providers, including hearing Hindi music and Vietnamese language (referred to by two students as Chinese) spoken by families managing the local shops. One student said they hear “Hindi at the shop but I talk in English to the shopkeeper” (Kurlirra interview notes, p. 1). Music and technology emerged as a space that exposed students to a broader range of languages including K-pop (Korean), J-pop (Japanese) and South American music (Spanish and Portuguese) that were not spoken in the immediate context of the community. Students expressed an interest in travelling to other countries, one saying that their grandmother from Mauritius wanted them to travel to France to learn French, “my nana told us, uhm when we get, when we get 15, we go to FR- thing, where people talk French, where’s that? (..) yeah France. We go there when we get 15 and then speak French” (Joy Language Portrait Interview, 01:35-01:48).

Students demonstrated competence in recognising and using different registers of Warlpiri, different ways of speaking Warlpiri. Seven of the fifteen students included “baby talk” on their portraits, a stylised register of Warlpiri used with infants, which has been documented to include modification of phonological, syntactic, and semantic features to accommodate language acquisition (Laughren, 1984b). For all but one, it was depicted on their mouths, neck and/or ears but nowhere else on their body, perhaps reflecting its very specialised uses. As one student explained, “yeah baby language, [is for] talking to my little cousin and hearing, replying back like in baby language” (CB, 00:01:501-2:02). Students identified differences in the way they speak Warlpiri to elders. One student described the older generation as follows, “old people ... they just talk like old Warlpiri?” and when asked if they can emulate this, they noted that their grandmother supports their comprehension as in the following example,

(5.1)

R1: and uh can you talk like them?

K1: uhmm my nana she kinda tells me what it means if I don't know.

(K1 Language Portrait Interview, 01:07-01:18)

One student mentioned it was different talking to their friends but at home with their parents and grandparents they feel pressure to be more aware of their Warlpiri use, more careful about saying something “wrong in Warlpiri.” They reported having more expressive freedom with their peers.

(5.2)

CB: mm uhmm talking to my friends about something, anything or my cousins.  
But at home, uhm uhm you have to be sensible, not to do anything wrong or say anything wrong in Warlpiri. Its uhmm that's what my mum taught me.

(CB Language Portrait Interview, 04:15-04:42)

Another student reflected on English insertions and inter-generational differences in Warlpiri use saying, “Elders don't speak English, we don't put it in our Warlpiri with them and I don't know all their words” (Fortnite, Interview notes, p1). These comments indicate an awareness about “right” and “wrong” ways of speaking Warlpiri, evaluated by the older generations. The children positioned the elders' way of speaking Warlpiri as different and something they needed to learn. Some students indicated they too enforce these evaluations. For example, one student mentioned that they make fun of their Adelaide-based cousins who don't speak Warlpiri very well (K1), two others talked about kids being “silly” and “teasing” when learning Warlpiri in the school (CB, Kurlirra, Williams).

Warlpiri sign language is another register that featured in thirteen of the language portraits, always depicted on the hands. Known as *rdaka-rdaka*, literally ‘hand-hand,’ it is a manual representation of Warlpiri language, a parallel system of communication that fulfils multiple functions in hunting, private communication, across distances, or for subjects that require a special reverence and in ritual practices where talking is forbidden, for example Sorry Business or ritual mourning (Kendon, 1984). Students ascribed different domains to its use, most commonly citing the shop, the football oval, and Sorry Camp<sup>25</sup>. Most students distinguished

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<sup>25</sup> A designated area where relatives live for a period of time after the passing of a member of community.

their use of hand signs in limited everyday situations: “asking for smoke” (Kurlirra, Interview notes, p1) to use by elders at Sorry Camp to fulfill broader communicative purposes. As CB explained, “like they ... elders are getting uhm you know, weak to talk but they do the hand sign now at thing ... sorry camp.” They described their own competence as receptive and limited, “yeah I understand hand sign but not really. Little bit. ‘Cos, I see people at sorry camp and elders do that” (CB Language Portrait Interview, 14:59 -15:48). They said they would use hand signs more when they learn them and when asked where this learning would take place, at school in or home, they responded, “uhmm I think home or sorry camp with my family, maybe” acknowledging the socially and culturally situated nature of language learning (Schiefflin & Ochs, 1986; Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Students noticed and discussed the Warlpiri dialects spoken in different communities. The dialect of Warlpiri spoken in Lajamanu described by Yuendumu students as ‘Lajamanu Warlpiri’ or ‘Lajamanu style’ featured on nine portraits, was connected to family members living in that community. One student commented that the “accents” and “some words” were different between different communities (K1).

Students are exposed to a variety of ways of speaking English, including different varieties and both Standard and non-standard forms. At the time of fieldwork there were teachers from Canada, Ireland, and the Philippines, as well as different parts of rural and urban Australia working at Yuendumu School and an even broader range working in other community organisations. During whole class discussion, students talked about different dialects of English, naming a teacher who spoke “Canadian English” and how the English of American rap music differed from English in Australia.

Students showed their awareness of the different kinds of cultural capital carried by varieties of English and local languages. English was viewed as a way of communicating with others outside of Warlpiri communities, expanding their networks, something children seemed to value. For example, in this conversation with two cousins, interviewed together, said,

(5.3)

K2: I like English because you can translate with your friends, and they speak other languages. Mm I like English because ...

K1: it's a way of communicating to other people

K2: yep, what she said.

### **5.3 Attitudes about languages**

Talking about their language practices proved an engaging activity for the students who were enthusiastic about recounting their feelings and ideas. This interest in other languages and awareness of different dialects and ways of speaking was reinforced by positive views of language learning, such as “it’s fun” (Joy) and “it’s interesting” (Fortnite). Students expressed positive feelings about many of the languages in their repertoires, including English. Students associated using Warlpiri in the classroom with positive feelings, such as making them feel “happy” (Dami; Fortnite), “excited” (CB), “it makes me feel happy, exciting” (Joy). One student described the feeling of talking about Warlpiri to a group of students from interstate earlier in the year, “proud. Yeah, yeah. Like showing off my culture” (CB, 00:07:43- 00:07:47).

Warlpiri language featured centrally on all body portraits. Student responses reflected the well-documented relationship between Warlpiri language and identity, and by extension land and spirituality (Pawu-Kurlpurlurnu, Holmes & Box, 2008; Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru, 2011). Students often placed Warlpiri on their hearts, likely an adoption of the European concept of the heart as the seat of emotions (Simpson pers. communication, 2022). They also represented it on their legs, as a grounding device, described in their interviews in connection to the country on which they were born, walk and live on. For example, one student said, “well the legs are grey and red, red because we’re standing on Warlpiri land ... and the heart is red because I mainly talk Warlpiri outside of school” (Dami, 00.06 -01:26). Another explained, “I did my whole-body green because I walk on Warlpiri land and grew up on Warlpiri land too” (Fortnite, interview notes, p. 1). This student wrote “land” next to Warlpiri in green in the language key attached to his portrait (see Appendix E for additional examples from students with code names Dami, Joy and Kurlirra).

Although included in every language portrait, English did not feature as prominently as Warlpiri in terms of extent or position. It was usually narrowly depicted on students’ eyes, mouths, or brains, or shaded or dotted on larger areas outside of their bodies (see Appendix E). As one student explained, the language held in their heart was “Warlpiri. Yep. English is like to communicate to the person I don’t know” (CB, 08:03-08:13). By contrast, English was a

significant code of communication in students' language network maps extending beyond the school to other places in the community such as the clinic, shops, football oval and sometimes, though rarely, the home. English was described as a way of broadening social networks beyond Warlpiri family and community, including with speakers of other Aboriginal languages, as in the example "like if someone like a visitor from Papunya came to visit us or somewhere, like Luritji people, or Pitja-pitja first we kids like us, we communicate to English, but the adults know, you know, how to speak. I hear sometime [sic] I hear my grandmother speaking Luritja and little bit of Pitja-pitja" (CB Interview, 00:12:44-00:12:54). Another, when asked about speaking Arrernte, which was included on her portrait, said, "I just listen to my nana" (Joy Interview, 00:05:46-00:05:50). These responses reflect a trend of using varieties of English for inter-group communication among the younger generation in Central Australia (McConvell, 2008; Vaughan and Singer, 2018). Although English featured in language networks as having numerous communicative applications in students' lives beyond the home, this prominence was not reflected in identity construction on their portraits.

#### **5.4 Beliefs about languages and learning**

Students' responses included multiple languages for different purposes, domains and even interlocutors. In representations of language networks, students included school, home/family, particular babies/younger siblings, the shop, the clinic, the football oval, with friends, and family from other communities as separate domains of language use. One student, Sims, (see Figure 5.6) even included dogs as distinct and separate networks for conversation with whom he reported speaking English and Dog's [language]. At a minimum students included the school, home and friends.

In representations of their language networks, Warlpiri was used in the home, school, among friends and on country. For example, one student said, "I talk to my family and its sometime, well my ancestors, when my siblings get very naughty, I talk to them" (Joy Interview, 03:23-03:33).



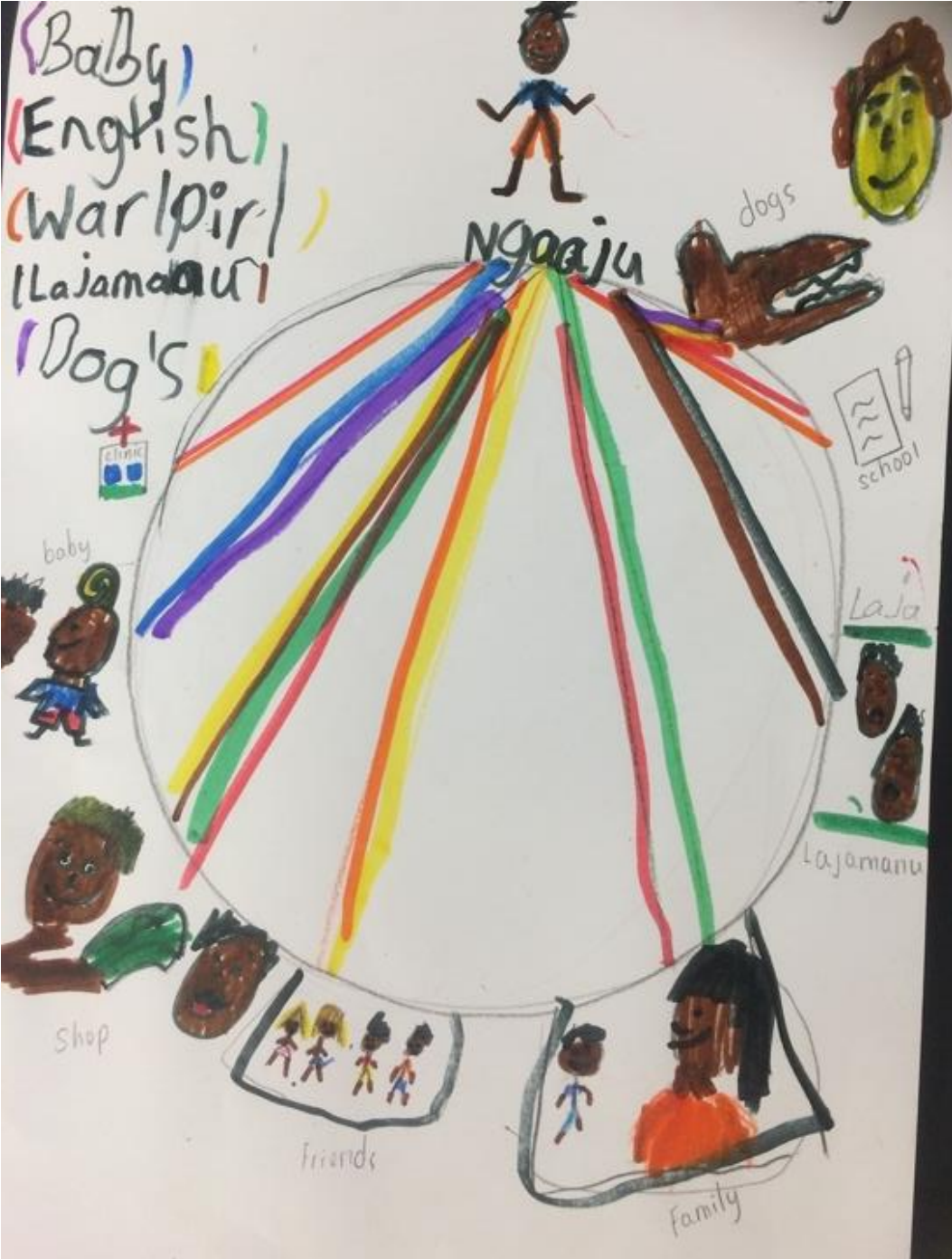


Figure 5.6 Sims Language Network

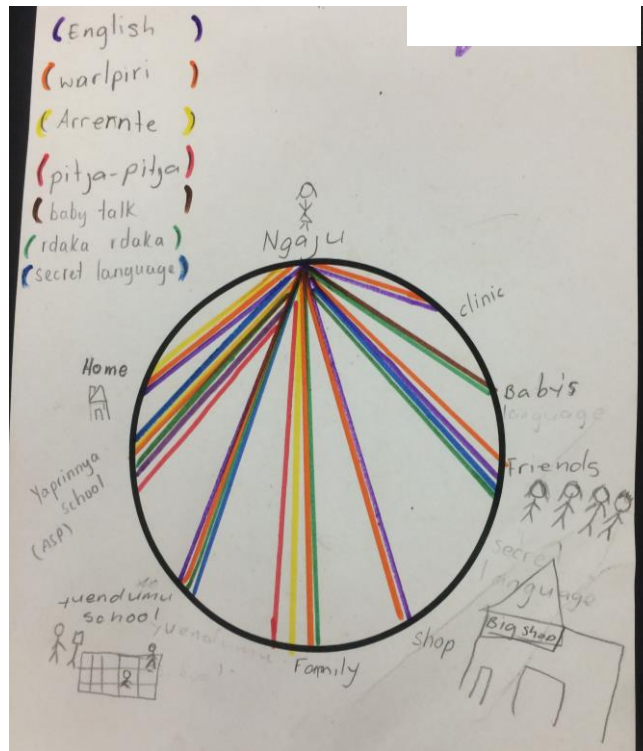


Figure 5.7 Joy Language Network

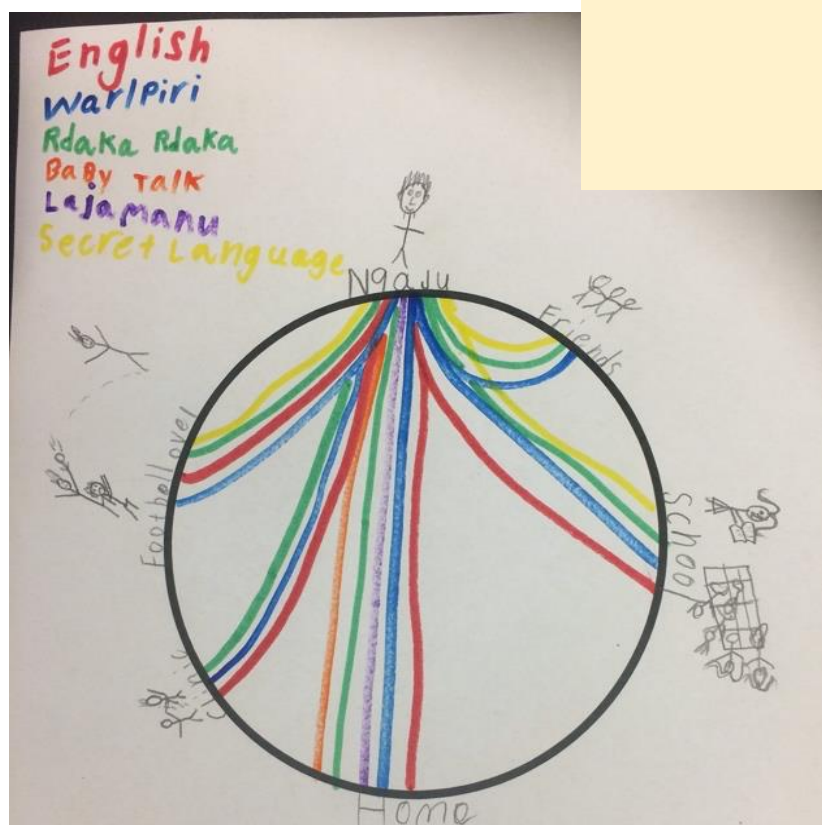


Figure 5.8 Fortnite Language Network

An interesting insight into children's perceptions of ownership is exemplified in an interaction where Upper Primary students were discussing the source of Warlpiri language. The teacher, WT4 asks the students where Warlpiri comes from and the responses included, "*Purlka-purlka*" 'old people,' "*Wapirra-ngku*<sup>26</sup>"! 'God-ERG' and the non-committal "We don't know!"

#### 5.4.1 The language of the classroom

In the children's language networks, Warlpiri and English were the codes associated with the school. In their interviews, they constructed schools as English dominant spaces. When asked which language they feel most comfortable learning in at school, English predominated the responses. When asked whether it's easier to learn complex subject matter in Warlpiri or English, every student interviewed said "English" first and then added, "Warlpiri" or "both" afterwards. Most students responded in similar ways when asked this question. Some examples include,

(5.4)

CB: oh English! English and Warlpiri I know but because I learned in English since I was in Kindergarten.

(CB Language Portrait Interview, 3:35-03:49)

(5.5)

Joy: uhmm English? And Warlpiri, a bit?

(Joy Language Portrait Interview, 04:08-04:13)

(5.6)

K9: [English] because teachers learn us to speak English.

(Ronaldo Language Network Interview, p1)

(5.7)

Kurlirra: English ... and Warlpiri is good for hard learning."

(Kurlirra Language Portrait Interview, p1).

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<sup>26</sup>Note the allomorph for ergative instrumental would be -rlu in classic Warlpiri

Though one student who said they spoke English at home did say they preferred English “because Warlpiri makes my brain hurt.” (SL Language Portrait Interview, p1).

Learning Warlpiri content was viewed by students as something acquired outside of the school. When students said they didn't know something, for example hand signs, and were asked where they would learn it, they suggested the home or during cultural ceremony. When asked whether they learn about kinship systems at school, CB responded as follows:

(5.8)

CB: Nah at home we already know, what's our skin name but we ... some of when someone new comes to the school, like not Warlpiri person, English person we give them skin names. And you can, you can like connect to each other with like skin names and dreaming and everything.

(CB Language Portrait Interview 12:34-13:00)

They commented that children already know their skin name, which is the term for subsections within the kinship system. In a sense this response indicates this student associates inducting non-Warlpiri speakers into Warlpiri culture with discussions of kinship in the school context.

#### **5.4.2 The role of young people in linguistic and cultural maintenance**

Students echoed a broader community value of Warlpiri language as connected to culture and identity, and expressed concerns about language maintenance, particularly in the face of the overwhelming influence of English. One student explained, “I don't want to lose my Warlpiri because English is always coming to my brain” (Fortnite, interview notes, p. 1). Another said, “[learning Warlpiri] it's good. Yeah, so I can remember my language” (Dami, Language Network Interview 06:59-07:07). In other interviews they talked about keeping Warlpiri language “strong” (e.g., Williams, K2).

Students articulated a sense of responsibility as “the next generation” (K4) of speakers. This responsibility was exemplified in this excerpt from one of the lessons in the Upper Primary class observed in Term 1 of 2019 within the theme *Nyurru-wiyi manu Jalangu-jalangu* ‘Olden days and today’. In this lesson the teacher put up an AIATSIS map of Indigenous languages

spoken in Australia prior to colonisation (see Figure 5.9). The class talked about the arrival of “English language” in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and language loss on the continent.



**Figure 5.9 Educator and students discuss map of Australian Languages**

(5.9)

WT4: language *pirrjirdi nyampu*: *Luritji, Arrernte, APY pija-pija-pawu Alywarra, palka* gen. *Warumungu kalu* right up *ampu-rra*. *Nyampu palka kalu-nyanu mardarn* gen *strong-i-jala (...)* *nyampu part-i?* All gone.

‘Strong languages are these: Luritji, Arrernte APY pija-pija, Alywarra as well. Warumungu they also [speak] right up there. And here its strong again but in these parts? [points to the East Coast of the continent] All gone.’

Kk: what?

K16: *inya* part?  
‘That part’

WT4: English *kalu wangkam* right up. Only *kalu* little bit *pina-jarrinjarni* ‘they speak English all the way up here. They only learn a little bit [of traditional languages]’

- KK: English English {pointing at the East coast}
- K2: like Shepparton-*pinki*  
'such as places like Shepparton.'
- WT4: like *Shepparton-pinki like only kalu pina-jarri: langa, mulyu, milpa puka. Nati-li kalu wangkam nganimpa-piya Warlpiri-nyanu. Nyanu language, lawa. Nyampu-rlangu kanpa nyanyi? Nyampu part-rlangu kalu wipe-out-mani slowly kujaju.*  
'like Shepparton and places, they only are learning things like ears, nose, eyes that's it. They don't speak like us, like we speak our Warlpiri. Our language, no. Can you see over here as well? They also are wiping out this part slowly like this [pointing at the East coast and then to the areas of the Northern Territory where Kriol is spoken].'
- KK: middle area!
- WT4: *kuja only kalu nyampu part mardarn nyampu puka wita but ampu-rla kalu strong nyinam nganimpa-ju*  
'like they only have a bit in that part, only a little bit but here we are strong'
- WT4: might be, *nyiya jalangu?* Two thousand nineteen.  
'maybe, what year is it now? 2019?'
- K16: *palka-juk*  
'it's still here!'
- WT4: 2050 you think *ka-rlipa kuja-ju mardarn language-wati*  
'2050 you think we will all have our languages?'
- K16: yesssss!
- K12: *lawa! Lawa!*  
'no! no!'
- K18: maybe, we dunno!
- WT4: das why *ampu karlipa do-man* learning. *Nyurru-wiyi, Warlpiri gen.* alright?  
'and that's why we are learning here. A long time ago, Warlpiri again, alright?'

(WT4 Lesson 30.04.2019,17:04-18:20)

The teacher asks the question, in 50 years from now, what do you think people will speak? Answers varied with some students sure that Warlpiri will be spoken, and others were not

convinced. After this discussion the teacher wrote the question on the board: *Nyiya-jangka Warlpiri pina-jarrinjaku?* ‘why learn Warlpiri’ and requested an answer from each student, naming them one by one and writing down their responses on the board. The majority of the responses can be understood as essentialist discourses around identity, wellbeing and for spiritual reasons,

(5.10)

K13: *muku-nyayirni strong palka mardarni*  
‘in order to keep everything strong’

(5.11)

K11: *nganimpa-nyanu culture strong mardarni*  
‘we’re keeping our culture strong’

(5.12)

K??: Remembering, *nganayi inya old-people-kurlangu nganimpa forget-jarri old-people-rlu-ngu*  
‘remembering things of the old people, we are forgetting things of the old people’

(5.13)

K16: *ngurrju-nyayirni nyinanjaku*  
‘in order to stay healthy [for wellbeing]’

(5.14)

K?: *lawa-jarrinja-kujaku*  
‘so that it won’t disappear’

(5.15)

K19: *jukurrpa-pinki*  
‘dreaming/spiritual things’

(5.16)

K12: *kurnta*  
‘shame’

(5.17)

K23: might be *kardiya-kujaku*  
‘maybe because of non-Indigenous people’

(5.18)

K24: *kardiya? Inya kalu English wangkami muku!*  
‘non-Indigenous people? Then everyone will speak English here’

(5.19)

K?: survival instinct!

(WT4 Lesson Summary 30.04.2019, 00:27-03:30)

There were also utilitarian discourses around learning, about having the knowledge required for participation in cultural and artistic endeavours and for intellectual reasons:

(5.20)

K14: *pina-jarrinjaku*  
'in order to learn'

(5.21)

K?: *kuruwari, painting-pinki*  
'knowledge related to law and painting'

(5.22)

K13: *smart-jarrinjaku*  
'in order to become smart'

(WT4 Lesson Summary 30.04.2019, 01:57-03:50)

Towards the end of the learning event, a student solemnly declares in English (perhaps quoting an oft heard phrase from older members of the community), '*nganimpa* next-*i-generation*' 'we're the next generation' and another adds in English, "we the last speakers of our language." (WT4 Lesson Summary 30.04.2019, 05:02-05:16)

## 5.5 Discussion of the findings and summary

This chapter has offered insight into a small group of Upper Primary School students' perceptions of the language ecology of Yuendumu. The children not only index a range of language forms, styles, registers, and modes to their identities, they have the ability to critically reflect on this linguistic agility. Students used their linguistic resources to construct plurilingual identities in diverse environments that comprised active language use and exposure to language through affiliation and inheritance (Leung, Harris & Rampton, 1997). Warlpiri students expressed strong awareness of different languages in their communities and included languages in which they had productive, receptive competence and those which they could identify as in their worlds. Children are immersed in what (Appadurai, 2003) calls "global culture flow", nevertheless they are deeply rooted in connection to kin and to country and the relationship between place, language and identity is strong. I have shown that children can hold both ideologies of global youth culture and traditional cultural values as has been shown in other remote contexts (c.f. Kral & Ellis, 2019; McCarty & Wyman, 2009).



Unlike the literature in other global Indigenous contexts (Meek, 2008; Sallabank, 2013; Roche, 2019), whereby the valorisation of the language as ancestral is considered an unsupportive ideology for language maintenance because it restricts this language to contexts associated with custom and tradition, Warlpiri is still of strong social significance and communicative relevance to the students. It has strong connection to their identities and in their everyday usage. Warlpiri and English are not restricted to particular domains, rather are used widely in the students' lives. The students expressed positive attitudes towards learning languages, especially positive attitudes towards Warlpiri and English. Students, however, did associate the language of learning and the language of the school strongly with English, and this reflects the dominance of English in the school. When asked where or how they might acquire Warlpiri linguistic and cultural content (e.g., *rdaka rdaka* 'hand signs' or kin terms) they mentioned learning in context, rather than in the school. In class, educators and students discussed the importance of learning Warlpiri as connected to an array of essentialist discourses around identity and self-determination. In the next chapter (Chapter 6), I turn to a discussion of educators' perspectives and ideologies surrounding language practices in Yuendumu.

## Chapter 6 Developing a consensual ideology and target language policy at Yuendumu School

Research on education policy and practice in endangered language contexts suggests that conceptualisations within a community of speakers of what language is, beliefs about communicative practices and how learning happens impact on the process of implementation of language maintenance activities and their efficacy (Henne-Ochoa, 2018; Menken, 2010; Kroskrity, 2018; Roche, 2020). In this chapter, I analyse 40 years' of grey literature (professional development workshops reports, advocacy submissions, curriculum documents and school policies) and interviews with five Warlpiri educators in 2018-2019<sup>27</sup> to discuss the Warlpiri educators' language ideologies, or what Kroskrity (2009, p. 72) calls, "beliefs, feelings, and conceptions about language structure and use", that inform the broad goals of Warlpiri language and cultural maintenance situated within a bilingual Warlpiri and English program (6.1). I explore four ideological orientations to Warlpiri language and its role in the school: language as being (6.1.1), as wellbeing (6.1.2), as self-determination (6.1.3), and as resource (6.1.4). These orientations are underpinned by a societal valuing of plurilingualism (6.1.5). I then describe the conceptual development of the classroom code, which educators and community members call *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri,' positioned against everyday plurilingual language practices of borrowing and alternation with English and other registers and varieties of Warlpiri (6.2). *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* "strong Warlpiri language' was described by educators as both the language of instruction and the goal of teaching and learning. During teacher professional development workshops in recent decades, Warlpiri educators have identified its features (6.2.2) and the specific classroom practices and strategies that are facilitative of its transmission in the Warlpiri program. These practices include attention to structural and social aspects of language use including conscious modelling of salient features (6.2.3), language socialisation practices (6.2.4) and collaboration and partnerships in the development of teaching materials (6.2.5).<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> See Chapter 4 for detailing of methods

<sup>28</sup> These themes were discussed in an article co-authored with Fiona Napaljarri Gibson: Browne, E. & Gibson, F.N. (2021). Communities of Practice in the Warlpiri Triangle: Four Decades of Crafting Ideological and Implementational Spaces for Teaching in and of Warlpiri Language. *Languages*, 6(2), 68. Retrieved from <https://www.mdpi.com/2226-471X/6/2/68>

## 6.1 Ideological orientations *vis a vis* Warlpiri language

Interviews with Warlpiri educators echoed decades of consistent community advocacy in Warlpiri educator workshops and grey literature publications expressing the importance of a school program that is inclusive of and founded on Warlpiri language and pedagogies (Northern Territory Department of Education (NTDoE), 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2020, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2004, 2001, 1999, 1998; Anderson et al., 2018; Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru, 2011; Disbray & Martin, 2018; Pawu-Kurlpurlurnu, 2008). Over the past four decades, Warlpiri communities have expressed that it is the responsibility of community schools to support language maintenance and cultural continuity in addition to efforts in the home and other domains of use. Ideological orientations around Warlpiri language follow a similar semiotic logic of other documented language maintenance and/or revitalisation movements (Schwartz & Dobrin, 2016). Warlpiri is invested with symbolic value with indexical connections to cultural practices, political self-determination and recognition, participation in ceremonial and economic life and cultural identity (Disbray, Plummer, & Martin, 2020; Hornberger, 2002; Pawu-Kurlpurlurnu et al., 2008). I have separated these into four interrelated ideological orientations (Ruiz, 1984) surrounding language use and utility as follows: language as being (6.1.1), language as wellbeing (6.1.2), language as self-determination (6.1.3) and language as resource (6.1.4). These positions must be understood within a wider ideology which is embracing of societal multilingualism and individual plurilingualism (6.1.5).

The importance of relationships, relatedness and interconnectedness as underpinning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ideologies, epistemologies and pedagogies have been well articulated in the literature (Baker et al., 2010; Battiste & Youngblood Henderson, 2000; Burkhardt, 2004; Pawu-Kurlpurlurnu et al., 2008). And this is true for the Warlpiri ideological orientations in this study which are interconnected, reinforcing, and overlapping but also sometimes conflicting. A common thread that underpins and reinforces the rationale of the Warlpiri program is that of language maintenance, expressed at a 2008 Warlpiri Triangle meeting in the following statement,

(6.1)

*Nganimpa yungu-rnalu waja-waja mardarni maninja-wangurlu nganimpanyangu jaru manu culture. Nganimparlu yungu-rnalu tarngangku-juku mardarni pirrjirdi-nyayirni tarngangku-juku.*

We don't want to lose our language and culture. We want to keep it going and we want to keep it strong forever.

(NTDoE, 2008, p. 3).

### 6.1.1 Language as being

One of the main discourses expressed by educators and community members establishes Warlpiri language as an emblem of identity. Disbray, Plummer and B. Martin (2020) called this ideological position “language as being” exemplified by Warlpiri educator, Barbara Martin Napanangka’s statement, “I don’t ‘*speak*’ Warlpiri, I ‘*am*’ Warlpiri”. B. Martin explains that Warlpiri language was brought into existence by travels of ancestral beings moving across the country in the *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming,’ creating the landscape, and naming places as they went, then returning to the ground (Disbray, Plummer, et al., 2020). Language, thus, is something passed down from ancestors and is linked to the land on which Warlpiri people are born. Lajamanu community elder Steve Jampijinpa Patrick Pawu-Kulpurlurnu explained the inextricable links between language, land, and identity when he said,

(6.2)

Language is like a tree: it makes you stand firm in country, gives you a sense of identity ... I was born Warlpiri and I will die Warlpiri but if you lose language then you are gone ... Language is a defence; it is *kurdiji* ‘a shield’. It is strength.

(Pawu-Kurlpurlurnu et al., 2008, p. 21)

The notion of language as a “defence” against the overwhelming dominance of mainstream culture and language in every domain of life is widely found in expressions of language maintenance in the grey literature (BRDU, 1987; Disbray, Macdonald, & B. Martin, 2018; NTDoE, 1998, 1999, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2016d; Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru, 2011). Essentialist discourses connect Warlpiri language to being Warlpiri, as in this statement from a workshop in 2008,

(6.3)

*Nganimpa-rnalu jintangku Yapa Warlpiri manu wangkami jinta jaru.  
Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu Jaru.*

'We are one Warlpiri people and speak one language. The language belonging to Warlpiri people'.

(NTDoE, 2008, p. 3)

Nevertheless, Warlpiri educators, like the students (see Chapter 5) acknowledged a broad range of different ways of speaking Warlpiri as still being tied to Warlpiri identity. In an interview, WT1 commented on family members who speak the mixed language of Light Warlpiri in Lajamanu, "its ok, we all Warlpiri" (WT1 interview, 2018).

### **6.1.2 Language as wellbeing**

Knowledge of Warlpiri language affords access to cultural information, practices and belonging which are in turn linked to spiritual, mental, and physical wellbeing. In the words of Warlpiri translator, Theresa Ross Napurrurla:

(6.4)

Warlpiri language is the key to learn your culture, to remember the ceremonies, to remember the songs. If you had not Warlpiri in your head, you wouldn't know all those sorts of things. You'd be lost.

(in Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 2020, p. 1)

The connection between language and wellbeing for Warlpiri students was expressed in the Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru (2011, p. 12) written submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs National Inquiry into Language learning in Indigenous Communities,

(6.5)

When kids visit their country and speak in their own language, they feel safe and belong. They are proud. It helps them to be strong in their spirit and strong in their life. If this happens, they are better placed to learn how to live in two worlds; they will be more interested in learning and participating.

Warlpiri educators also described the sense of cultural safety afforded by having access to their first language in the classroom. Later in the submission another educator commented,

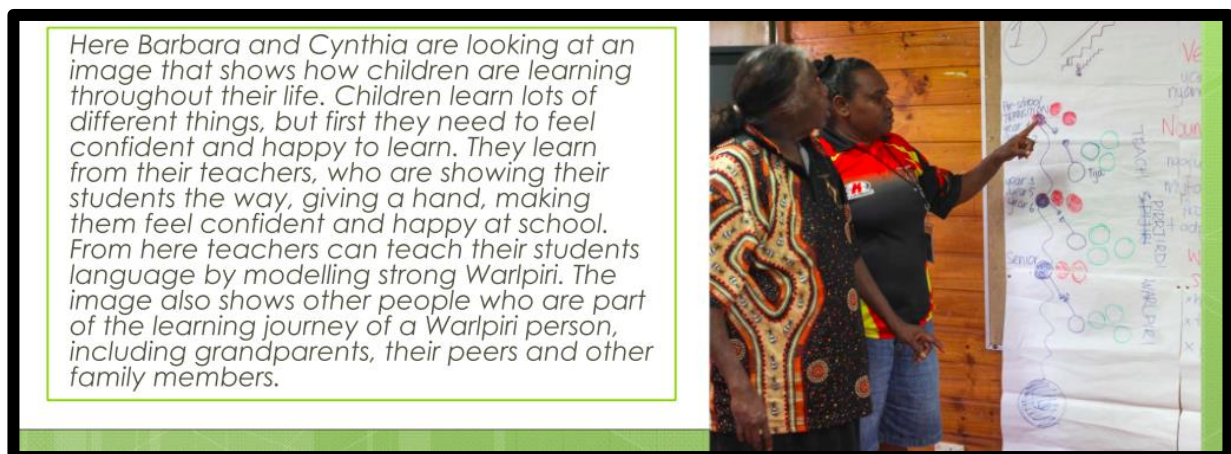
(6.6)

It's good for the little kids to learn in Warlpiri, they learn well, they get used to school with Warlpiri and feel happy at school because it is safe, and they feel safe. When little kids are being taught English by a Kardiya teacher they are scared, they don't understand and then they are scared of school, and they don't want to go to school.

(Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru, 2011, p. 15)

A similar idea was expressed in an interview by WT5 who suggested, "Like these kids are really happy with me they know I ... speak in Warlpiri yeah." (WT5 Interview 2018, 05:56-06:09).

Warlpiri educators have described wellbeing as a prerequisite for learning, exemplified in a 2012 workshop statement, "*Pirlirrpā rarralypa pirlirrpā pirlirjirdi*" '[students must be] strong in their hearts so they can learn' (NTDoE, 2012). This idea was expanded on in an activity conducted at a Warlpiri Triangle workshop in 2017 where educators illustrated a Warlpiri child's learning journey described in the report excerpt below:



**Figure 6.1 Excerpt from a Warlpiri Triangle Workshop Report (2017)**

Workshop participants explained that before children can learn, they need to feel "confident and happy to learn." Once this confidence and sense of engagement is established, learning can occur, "from here teachers can teach their students language by modelling strong Warlpiri." In their interview, WT6 talked about fostering confidence in their students by organising group and choral reading. They explained the importance of knowing the backgrounds, proficiencies,

strengths and needs of students in the room. WT6 noted that they needed to respond quickly to children's attempts to engage to foster their confidence and enhance learning,

(6.8)

You know you gotta make those kids feel confident too when they're putting their hands up, pick them out quickly (..) Yeah you gotta keep *nganayi* 'like' like include them *yuwayi* 'yes' keep them going

(WT6 Interview 2019, 25:07-25:22)

The wellbeing effects of teaching in Warlpiri were also experienced by educators who expressed positive feelings of pride and strength (WT1, WT2, WT3), happiness (WT2, WT3), confidence (WT1, WT2, WT6) and comfort (WT2) when teaching Warlpiri in the classroom. These were viewed as being enhanced through recognition and support via professional learning and collaborations. Conversely, WT1 described the discomfort of teaching in English when they were completing their practicum for their undergraduate teaching degree. WT1 was being assessed by a non-Warlpiri lecturer, so they had to teach in English. The students also found the Warlpiri educator's use of English uncomfortable, and WT1 described feelings of shame in excerpt 6.9,

(6.9)

WT1: at first, *nganayi* 'like' when I become a teacher when I doing like English? I was talking English but that was for my *nganayi* 'like'

R1: studies?

WT1: yeah *nyurruwiyi* and *yangka kurdu-kurdu kalalu wangkaja*, "hey *nyuntuju Warlpiri! Warlpiri-rli-nga wangkaya!*" And I feel really *punku*, shame inside"  
'yeah in the old days, and those students said, "hey you're Warlpiri!"  
Speak in Warlpiri! And I felt really bad, ashamed inside'

(WT1 Interview 2018, 22:45-23:09)

This educator described teaching in English as difficult, and that it made students "nervous." Conversely, once their studies were completed, they expressed the freedom of being able to "let Warlpiri out" and "teach Warlpiri out" once they were qualified and had their own class,

(6.10)

WT1: Yeah, it was really difficult you know like you know I got kids nervous. And then at first as the teacher *ywayi* 'yes' I got really nervous. And then when I started like teaching in English then in Warlpiri was really like, I could let Warlpiri out, you know? Like teach Warlpiri out, *ngurrju* 'good.' But in English I just did little bit you know like just to get that study through."

(WT1 Interview 2018 24:15-24:34)

### 6.1.3 Language as self-determination

A third ideological orientation connects language and language teaching and learning to discourses around Warlpiri self-determination, human rights, control, and respect (c.f. Ruiz, 1984). At a Warlpiri Triangle workshop in 2009 (NTDoE, 2009, p. 10), a participant evoked the UN Declaration of Human rights as giving weight to community advocacy for first language in their schools,

(6.11)

No we don't have time and we don't have space, *junga* 'true' that's true. We are still fighting strong for our language, still be taught in our school, for our kids. See Indigenous people got a right to teach their own language in the school. That's what that UN Declaration of Human Rights says. They just signed the agreement, but government still won't let us teach full language, full Warlpiri in our schools. Put's a lot of things in the way. *Junga* 'true' it is really sad.

And at a presentation by a group of educators at the Garma Festival in 2014 (Patterson & Anderson, 2014), that was later shared at the Warlpiri Triangle 2014 meeting, the UN Declaration was invoked in emphasising the importance of community decision-making in local schools,

(6.12)

We believe that as Indigenous people we have the right to make decisions about our children's education. We have this right under Section 14 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



This reclamation of educational control is viewed by Warlpiri educators and the wider community as facilitating maintenance of language. Opportunities to develop the Warlpiri program, its curriculum and its implementation has enabled Warlpiri educators to define Warlpiri linguistic and cultural knowledge and teach it within a setting that has historically marginalised (and continues to marginalise) both. When asked about their motivations for entering the teaching profession, educators expressed an interest in being involved in and having ownership of the education of subsequent generations of Warlpiri children. At a Warlpiri Triangle Meeting in 2008, one educator commented that despite the power imbalance and differential remuneration and status between Warlpiri and non-Indigenous staff, Warlpiri educators are motivated to continue to work in the school for the benefit of subsequent generations of Warlpiri children, “the only reason we are working in education is for our kids for our *Yapa* ‘Warlpiri’ kids.” (NTDoE, 2008, p. 24).

Over decades of determined efforts to have a say in their children’s education, educators and community members have evoked rights-based discourses about equality of status between Warlpiri and English. As Warlpiri educators in 2004 noted, a core rationale of a bilingual model is, “Acknowledging and respecting both languages equally” (NTDoE, 2004, p.2). Discourses around respect and recognition, “respecting and celebrating both languages equally” (NTDoE, 2016, p. 29), that challenge the unequal status of Warlpiri language as compared to English are prevalent in the grey literature and interviews. The notion of “two-way” or “both ways” captures equality of status (Van Gelderen, 2019; Ober & Bat, 2007). As a senior educator from Nyirripi community insisted at a Warlpiri Triangle meeting in 2011,

(6.13)

Make sure you tell them to be equal with us because we are equal to them. The government wants us to learn *kardiya* ‘non-Aboriginal’ way, but they don’t learn *yapa* ‘Aboriginal’ way. ‘Two way’ learning is about respect, we respect English, they have to respect our language. They say ‘two way’ but they don’t learn ‘two way’, they don’t respect *yapa* ‘Aboriginal’ way. We all need to learn ‘two way’, *kardiya* ‘non-Indigenous’ and *yapa* ‘Aboriginal’ because we are both equal.

(Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru, 2011, p. 5).

#### 6.1.4 Language as resource

Warlpiri language is described as a resource both outside of the school: a) for participation in Warlpiri cultural and ceremonial life, and b) in mainstream economic opportunities, and within the school: c) for access to the curriculum and d) access to literacy in students' first language.

Warlpiri language, inherent in social, cultural, and spiritual practices of Warlpiri life, encodes the Warlpiri worldview, cultural knowledge, and relationships. In addition to identity, Warlpiri language was expressed in the grey literature and in educator interviews as an invaluable cultural and social resource and viewed as a requirement for participation in kinship and cultural and spiritual ceremonies. This was articulated in the Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru (2011, p.1) submission,

(6.14)

Strong language equals strong identity, sense of place, community and culture. People need their language to learn their culture and learn about their culture and country and learn ceremonies. Everything is connected together; language is a part of that.

First language teaching was also described as crucial for accessing Warlpiri intellectual cultural, linguistic, spiritual and scientific knowledge, what educator Tess Ross (2017) and others have referred to as *jaru pirrjirdi*, 'strong cultural knowledge'<sup>29</sup>. At a Warlpiri Triangle meeting in 2008, one senior community member emphasised the importance of Warlpiri language for engagement with land and law,

(6.15)

The Education Department needs to recognise that we are living on our land and practising our Law. We must know our language. If we know language we can sing and if we can sing, we can dance and know the whole country where the *jukurrpa* 'dreaming' went across.

(NTDoE, 2008, p. 17)

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<sup>29</sup> This emphasis on learning Warlpiri cultural content is supported by a Warlpiri Education Training Trust review (Disbray & Guenther, 2017) which noted that 'learning Warlpiri culture' was the strongest theme in their thematic analysis of Warlpiri community consultations.

When asked about teaching priorities, and content that students can only learn in the Warlpiri programs, Warlpiri knowledge was foregrounded as in this comment (6.16) by WT3,

(6.16)

WT3: *Kurdu-kurdu ngula-ju karnalu-jana-ju ngarrirni nyanungu ngurra-nyangu jukurrpa, nguru, nyiya-nyiya kuja kalu nyinami*  
‘We tell children about land, dreaming, skin names, who lives there’

(WT3 Interview 2018, 10:19-10:31)

Warlpiri educators expressed their concern that in recent decades, many children aren’t exposed to a depth of cultural knowledge at home and reiterated the importance of the school as a site of language and cultural maintenance, as in this account (6.17) by WT6,

(6.17)

WT6: the only thing they learn cultural way is when they see a people at-doing a ceremony, cultural things and sometimes they see at people at Sorry and cultural thing when like culture day happens things like that *yuwayi* ‘yes’ and singalong special events.

R1: at the school you mean or in the community?

WT6: in the school but community like they look at Sorry and ceremony.

(WT6 Interview 2019, 31:15-31:48)

Later this educator, WT6, compared the difference between her generation and her grandchildren’s generation in terms of learning in the family setting,

(6.18)

We were taken bush camping out that our parents taught us. They were really careful about us getting into *nganayi yangka* ‘you know like’ break ins and stuff like that. But they worried, they would take us bush but our kids we don’t do that to them anymore. We don’t take them camping out. They like going Alice Springs because they want us to do shopping, *yuwayi* ‘yes’. I don’t think nobody’s taken any kids out bush. (...) *yuwayi* ‘yes’ because our parents didn’t have any car, they used to stay one place, only thing they could do is walk to *Wakurlpa*, “let’s take our kids because this is long weekend. So, they can eat bush food out bush.”

(WT6 Interview 2019, 32:02-37:16)

Not only is Warlpiri language connected to participation in traditional activities, in addition a utilitarian discourse was expressed at a Warlpiri Triangle meeting in 2012 with regards to its economic and employment value. For example, references are sometimes made to needing Warlpiri language for employment opportunities,

(6.19)

Warlpiri language has a future. It is important for building the future leaders of our communities. It is important for pathways to jobs – like managing our lands and using our cultural heritage, in tourism and arts

(NTDoE, 2014, p. 29)

At a Warlpiri Triangle meeting in 2011, a senior Warlpiri person also pointed out that,

(6.20)

If people don't speak strong Warlpiri they can't (...) do those jobs where they need Warlpiri like Art Centre documenting paintings or Warlpiri media making Warlpiri programs.

(Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru, 2011, p. 7)

They also noted that without Warlpiri one might be excluded from “meetings that are all in Warlpiri” and “negotiating with other family groups or tribal groups” (NTDoE, 2011, p. 7-8). The Warlpiri program is also seen as a pathway to future employment within the education system, with the school one of the main employers within the community, as one educator pointed out,

(6.21)

Warlpiri teachers are good role models for kids – they can grow up and be a Warlpiri teacher, but they can't grow up to be a white teacher. When kids don't have Warlpiri teachers as role models, they don't imagine growing up to be a teacher because they think all teachers are white.

(Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru, 2011, p. 18)

Most significantly, Warlpiri was also described as a resource for learning. It is considered vitally important for accessing the curriculum and acquiring literacy. An overwhelming theme

arising from the interviews was the crucial function of Warlpiri language for successful learning at Yuendumu School. Educators emphasised the importance of learning through first language for children who come to school with limited English. The Warlpiri Triangle workshops began in the 1980s, with exploration of pedagogy for using Warlpiri to teach subjects such as mathematics (BRDU, 1984, 1987) and science (NTDoE, 1987). This was explained in interview excerpts 6.22 and 6.23:

(6.22)

WT1: *Yangka marda-ngka wita-wita-nyayirni ngula ka nyinami transition and year one pirrjirdi nu-kalu milya-pinyi yangka English-pirrjirdi marda. Warlpiri kalu milya-pinyi wangkanja-kurra Warlpiri tija-kurlangu-ju. Ngula karnalu Warlpiri tiji-i-mani. Ngurrju kujaju. Warlpiri ngula-rna-jana tiji-i-mani yeah yungulu purda-nyanyi junga-ngu kurdu-kurdu-rlu yangka-wiyi wita-wita-nyayirni-rli wiri-wiri-rli-ji yangka jirrama karnalu do-man yangka Warlpiri manu English.*

‘Those very little ones in transition and year one, they might not know English, and they know Warlpiri. They can speak Warlpiri with the teacher. We can speak Warlpiri to them. It’s good that way. If you teach Warlpiri to these they are able to listen properly and those kids, from those very little ones until the big ones, we can do both together, Warlpiri and English.’

(WT1 Interview 2 2018 06:00-06:30)

(6.23)

WT5: *Ngurrju karna-jana wangkami kurdu-kurdu-ku yungulu purda-nyanyi ... yeah purda-nyanyi kajulu yimi wangkanjaku. Warlpiri, warlalja. Yuwayi kula kalu milya-pinyi English-pirrjirdi, English marda wita kalu milya-pinyi.*

‘It’s good when I speak to the kids so that they understand. Yeah, they listen when we talk to them in Warlpiri. Warlpiri. Family. Yes, they don’t know English or maybe they only know a little bit.’

(WT5 Interview 2018 07:56-08:18)

The importance of a Warlpiri educator in facilitating students’ engagement and understanding of lesson content was articulated in statements 6.24 and 6.25 by two different educators,

(6.24)

WT1: And they will understand Warlpiri teacher, Warlpiri person. If I ask kids in Warlpiri, they will answer. Warlpiri teacher teaching, they will learn.

(WT1 Interview, 2018, 30:26-31:02)

(6.25)

WT2: *Warlpiri-rli tiji-i-mani ngula kalu kurdu-kurdu pina-jarrimi.*  
'If taught in Warlpiri, those children will learn.'

(WT2 Interview, 2018, 09:08-09:12)

In addition to accessing curriculum content, both Warlpiri and mainstream, educators emphasised the importance of acquisition of literacy in first language. The importance of developing Warlpiri literacy was a significant theme discussed at the majority of Warlpiri Triangle meetings and noted in all five interviews (NTDoE, 1998; 1999; 2001; 2006; 2007; 2011; 2016a; 2016b; 2019) At a *Jinta-jarrimi* 'Becoming One' event in May 2006 (NTDoE, 2006, p. 2) the following reasons for teaching Warlpiri literacy in the school were brainstormed in figure 6.2,

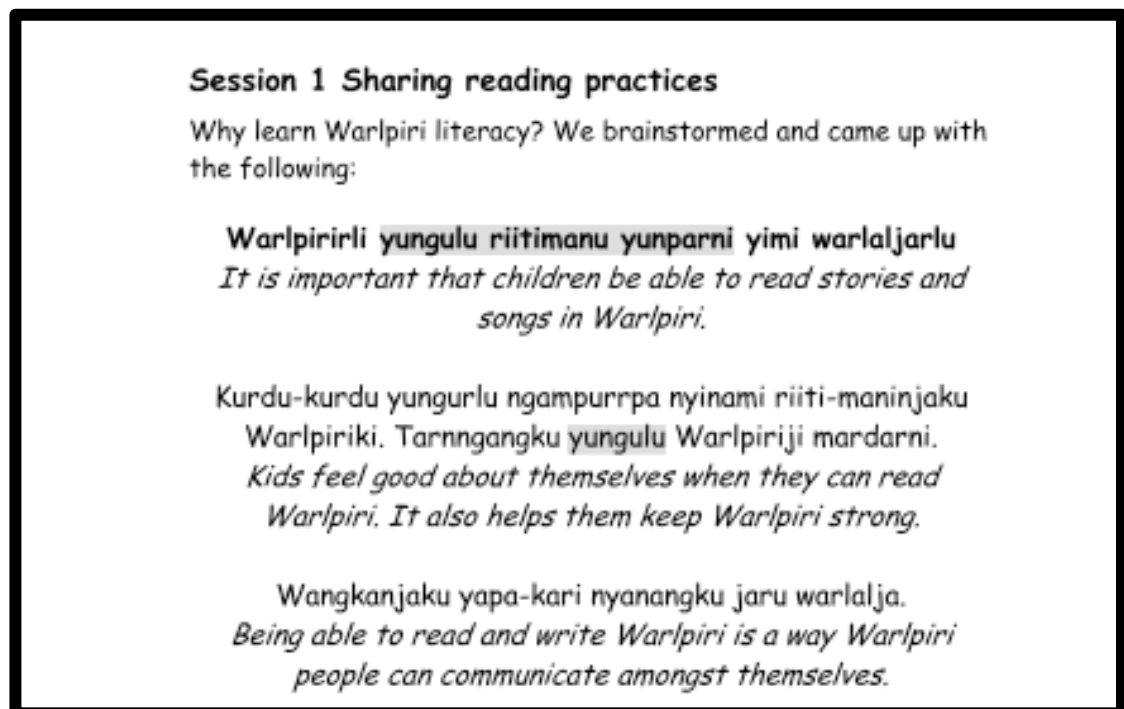


Figure 6.2 Excerpt from Jinta-jarrimi Report May 2006 (NTDoE, 2006, p. 3)

These points highlight the importance of literacy in Warlpiri language maintenance and accessing Warlpiri literature to facilitate the transfer of Warlpiri cultural content. There is certainly no sentiment, unlike reports from some other endangered language contexts (c.f. Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer, 1998), that Warlpiri should be used exclusively in the oral tradition. Warlpiri is also used in notices in the community store and on social media (e.g., Warlpiri chat page on Facebook). In the *Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru* submission on Indigenous Language learning, educators linked literacy to preservation efforts “When they don’t learn to write and read in their own language it will be lost” (Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru, 2011, p.2).

### **6.1.5 Plurilingualism and Warlpiri language**

The four aforementioned positions must be understood within a wider Warlpiri language ideology in which, along with the maintenance of Warlpiri, plurilingualism is not only the norm but is valued (see Sutton’s 1997 p. 240 and Evans, 2010, p. 277 ‘propositions of Indigenous multilingualism’). Throughout the grey literature and interview responses, Warlpiri educators and community members consistently articulate multilingualism as underpinning Warlpiri discursive consciousness. As educator Tess Ross in her explanation of *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming,’ as intersecting with many language groups, commented “we have always been bilingual” (Ross & Baarda, 2017, p. 249).

While promoting Warlpiri language use in the community and school, educators also stressed the importance of children learning English as a second language for access to the broader curriculum, and the benefits of being bilingual and bicultural in contemporary Warlpiri society. Warlpiri children are growing up at a nexus of traditionalism and modernity and this is recognised by Warlpiri educators and community members who strongly advocate for the value of ‘two ways’ in terms of language but also intercultural living. The importance of both Warlpiri as the first language, and English as a second language, in schools is expressly maintained in the reports (NTDoE, 2008, 2014, 2016). At a Warlpiri Triangle meeting in 2004, schools workshopped their definitions of ‘two ways’ learning as allowing children to,

(6.26)

Learn the language and culture of both Warlpiri and English and be able to use it practically in their day-to-day lives.

And,

(6.27)

Enabling students to move in and out of both cultures. Using Warlpiri to talk about English ideas, views and stories and using English to talk about Warlpiri ideas, views, and stories. Teaching Warlpiri culture to support and maintain it. Teaching culturally appropriate behaviour, e.g., school manners, *kardiya* 'non-Aboriginal' etiquette and *yapa* 'Aboriginal' protocols.

(NTDoE, 2004, p.7)

The importance of raising bilingual, bicultural children was depicted in a painting by Warlpiri educators Barbara Martin and Nancy Oldfield in Figure 6.3 (B. Martin and Oldfield, 2000, pp. 20-21). They explain,

This painting represents a child growing up and learning how to live as a strong Warlpiri person. Children need to feel excited about learning both the knowledge and traditions of the elders as well as the new ideas and technology of the contemporary world.



**Figure 6.3 Painting representing a child growing up and learning how to become a strong Warlpiri person (B. Martin and Oldfield, 2000, p. 20)**



At a Warlpiri Triangle meeting in 2004, a Warlpiri educator at Ti Tree school (a school not funded as an official bilingual school but with a Warlpiri Indigenous Language and Culture program) used the metaphor of a *Ngarlkirdi* 'Witchetty tree' (*Acacia kempeana*) to describe the rationale for teaching both Warlpiri and English in a bilingual program:



### How Kids Learn Warlpiri and English as a Second Language

This is a picture of the *ngalkirdi* 'witchetty' tree. The tree represents the child. The two rain clouds are coming together- English and Warlpiri -and the Tree is soaking up these languages and growing strong. Beneath the surface of the tree live the *laju* 'grub'. These are the deep part of the child's language and culture, the part that makes the tree special. The rain, soil, and environment are all working together to make the child strong. Because the child is strong their language and culture is also keeping strong. When the *laju* 'grub' grows up it turns into a butterfly. It has two wings- English and Warlpiri- that help it to fly. It needs both wings to fly.

**Figure 6.4** How Kids learn Warlpiri and English as a Second Language (NTDoE, 2004, p. 26)

According to this metaphor, both Warlpiri and English are equally significant, symbolised in the diagram by the rain that nourishes the children's learning, providing a strong intellectual foundation and sense of identity within Warlpiri multilingual society.

While bilingualism with English is valued, educators express a strong preference for domain separation in the classroom. A metaphor drawn on by the Warlpiri educators to describe the relationship between Warlpiri and *kardiya* teachers in the school is that of *kirda* 'traditional owner' and *kurdungurlu* 'traditional custodian' (B. Martin, 2019). In the excerpt below from a Yuendumu school 'Learning Together' workshop in 2016, one of the interviewees explains this relationship using these concepts,

(6.28)

WT5: When ceremonies are held, everyone has a role to play depending on their relationship to the land and each other. The roles are different, complementary but equal. Everyone has rights to talk. Warlpiri teachers believe the school should run in the same way. There are things that non-Warlpiri teachers should be *kirda* 'traditional owner' for and things they should be *kurdungurlu* 'traditional custodian' for and vice versa. Nonetheless, everyone has equal rights and responsibilities for the children's education."

This idea was further elaborated on in a Yuendumu School workshop in 2018 (14/02/2018 taken from field notes January 28-31),

(6.29)

WT5: *Ngajurna kirda Warlpiri-ki tiji-maninjaku. Kardiya ngulaju ngaju-ku kurdungurlu Warlpiri-ki-ji. Kardiya kirda English-ki, ngula-jangkaju yapa kurdungurlu kardiya-ku. Ngaju karna tiji-mani Warlpiri manu Warlpiri-kirli yimi, ngaju-nyangu kurdungurlu ngulaju kardiya.*

'I am the traditional owner for teaching Warlpiri. The non-Indigenous person is the *kurdungurlu* 'traditional custodian' for Warlpiri. *Kardiya* non-Aboriginal person' is the traditional owner for English, and then *yapa* 'Warlpiri' are the traditional custodians for the *kardiya* 'non-Aboriginal person.' I am teaching Warlpiri and Warlpiri content, and my traditional custodian is the *kardiya* 'non-Aboriginal person.'

This separation of language teaching roles in the classroom was expressed in an interview between Warlpiri educator and researcher, R2 and educator WT2,

(6.30)

R2: and it's *ngurrju* 'good' you know different talking in the classroom and talking at home. *Yuwayi* 'yes' and you see the difference in the kids' Warlpiri language. Mmm yeah *ngurrju* 'good.'

WT2: yeah and *nyampu kardiya nyampu?*  
'yeah and this one, this non-Indigenous person'

R2: yeah

WT2 *ngula karla nganayi* [teacher name] *karla wangkami*  
'this one, uhm [teacher's name] talks'

R1: English?

WT2: English.

R2: *yuwayi* 'yes'

WT2 and *Warlpiri, ngaju Warlpiri*  
'and Warlpiri. I [speak] Warlpiri'

R2: *purda-nyanyi kalu yangka kurdu-kurdu*  
'and those kids listen to that'.

(WT2 Interview 2018, 22:43-23:07)

Within a strong preference for language separation in the classroom, educators established that the goal for learning within the Warlpiri program is of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri,' void of borrowing from English. In the next section I discuss how this code is conceptualised and operationalised by educators in the Warlpiri classroom.

## **6.2 Ideologies about how language is learned: developing a target language policy for transmitting Warlpiri cultural and linguistic content**

The ideologies expressed by educators reflect the position that Warlpiri language can and should be taught in school, that it can and should be written down and that it can and should be spoken and taught alongside, but separately from, other languages. When asked about the language spoken in the classroom, educators were clear that *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' is the medium for teaching of, and in, the Warlpiri program and this encompassed developing communicative competence involving both language as code and language as social practice.

In workshops and in interviews, Warlpiri educators identified a number of teaching practices and strategies for promoting the use of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ in the classroom and facilitating access to *jaru pirrjirdi* ‘strong cultural knowledge’. Three key strategies included educators consciously evaluating their own language use and that of students in the classroom (6.3.1) and socialising students in the classroom within *jaru pirrjirdi* ‘strong cultural knowledge’ guided by the Warlpiri kinship system (6.3.2). Collaborative engagement with a variety of stakeholders, particularly elders, was important for developing linguistic knowledge and resources for the purposes of teaching and learning Warlpiri linguistic and cultural content (*Warlpiri pirrjirdi* and *jaru pirrjirdi*) (6.3.3). I address each of these strategies in turn.

### **6.2.1 Conceptualising the language of the Warlpiri classroom**

The concept of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ has been consistently referred to by Warlpiri educators to describe the medium for teaching and learning in Warlpiri schools and a goal for Warlpiri programs since the first Warlpiri educator workshops in the 1980s (see NTDoE (1983, p. 3) and (NTDoE (1987))<sup>30</sup>. The term has been used with reference to Warlpiri language with little or no mixing with English and is associated with the language spoken by the older generations (Bavin, 1989; Disbray, O’Shannessy, et al., 2020; NTDoE, 1998, 2001, 2012, 2016a, 2016b, 2017a; O’Shannessy, Disbray, B. Martin, & Macdonald, 2019). It has also been conceptualised as involving vocabulary and syntactic features related to traditional practices such as ceremony, songs, ecological terms (water, birds, animals, seasons) and relationship terms (NTDoE, 2017, p. 34). In 2017, at a *Jinta-jarrimi* ‘Becoming One’ workshop, educators reaffirmed its role in the school, “they need to be taught strong Warlpiri every day, the whole way through school” (NTDoE, 2017, p. 29). This code was also connected to transmitting *jaru pirrjirdi*, ‘strong cultural knowledge’ (Ross & Baarda, 2017).

In the interviews, Warlpiri educators distinguished between community talk and classroom language practices. They reported different ways of speaking Warlpiri in the children’s homes which they positioned against a preferred code of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ in schools. Over the years that this study was undertaken, educators would comment that while children do alternate and mix Warlpiri and English at home, the students and educators speak only

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<sup>30</sup> For example, in the 1998 Warlpiri Triangle workshop, educators outlined the history of Warlpiri programming and stated that during the bilingual program between 1982-1989 “in school the children spoke Warlpiri and learned in Warlpiri, strong Warlpiri was spoken in the school”.

Warlpiri at school. If they use English at school, its purpose is to “include the kardiya teacher” (WT6, WT5). This perspective is captured in an excerpt 6.31 from an interview below where two educators acknowledged varieties of Warlpiri spoken in different Warlpiri communities, but reserved *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri,’ as the code for teaching at Yuendumu school.<sup>31</sup>

(6.31)

- WT2: Yeah strong-*u nyayirni yangka teachi-maninjaku*  
‘yeah, like one should be teaching very strong’
- R2: Warlpiri *nyayirni ngula karlipa* <1>*wangkam Warlpiri yangka*<1>  
‘Warlpiri really like speaking really strong there [at school]’
- WT2: <1> *Warlpiri wangkami* and <1>  
‘speaking strong Warlpiri and’
- R2: <2>because like *karlipa nyinam yangka Lajamanu-rla kalu mardarni yangka* <2>  
‘because like we are like that and in Lajamanu they have something like ...’
- WT2: <2>we jus <2> *kajirna wangkami* pidgin. <3>English *jaru kujarra piya* <3>  
‘we just then I speak pidgin. Like using [it] with English language’
- R2: *yuwayi* and <3>*Willowra-rla, Yurntumu-rla, Nyirrpi-ngka* <3>  
‘yes and in Willowra, Yuendumu, Nyirrpi’
- WT2: *Yimi yangka* different-different-*I karlipa mardarni* light-wani, strong-wani but  
*Yurntumurla yungu-rnalujana yangka tijii-man* elders strong Warlpiri.  
‘we have our different languages, light ways of speaking, strong ways of speaking. But in Yuendumu we would like to teach strong Warlpiri with the elders.’

(WT2 Interview 2018, 08:44-09:13)

Those interviewed (WT1, WT3, WT5, WT6) echoed concerns raised in educator workshops (e.g. NTDoE, 1998, 2001, 2012, 2014b; NTDoE, 2017b) about the influence of English on everyday Warlpiri use. Contact with English was noted by educators as having wide-ranging effects on Warlpiri language practices such as the borrowing of English lexical items, English insertions in Warlpiri preverbs, errors in past tense forms, contractions in Warlpiri vernacular, diminished use of complex compound verbs and code-switching and mixing practices (Author

<sup>31</sup> Note transcription conventions pages xii-xiii- <1> xxx <1> and <2> xxx <2>denotes overlapping speech

1, Field Notes, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018; WT1 Interview 2018, WT2 Interview 2018, WT3 Interview, 2018). Terms such as “pidgin”<sup>32</sup> and “mixed up way” were employed in discussions of changes to some children’s ways of speaking Warlpiri (Browne, Fieldnotes, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018; WT2 Interview 2018, WT6, 2019). Individual evaluations of these changes to Warlpiri language use varied somewhat. For some these practices were strongly negatively evaluated, equated with language deterioration, but for others it was a way of speaking that “we all do” (WT1). One educator worried that their granddaughter frequently responds to their Warlpiri questions in English (WT5 Interview, 2018). A senior community member, now passed, expressed some community concerns around opportunities for hearing Warlpiri language without the influence of English when they said in a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs National Inquiry into Language Learning in Indigenous Communities (2011, p. 7),

(6.32)

All children in Yuendumu can speak Warlpiri to adults but often use English or mixed English as a children’s language among themselves. They might grow out of this but while there is mostly English in school, they probably find this easier. If they keep using mixed language when they grow up, their children will not hear proper Warlpiri. Yuendumu is not so isolated. People travel in and out of Alice Springs all the time and there are many white people here like youth volunteers talking English to children. We need our bilingual program in school, so our children value our language and use strong Warlpiri for learning and literacy in school.

In his statement the elder makes clear that the teaching of Warlpiri in the school not only elevates the status of Warlpiri but carves a space for “strong Warlpiri” to be unilingually deployed. Another comment at a *Jinta-jarrimi* ‘Becoming One’ meeting (NT DoE, 2016, p. 10) is particularly disparaging of contemporary practices, discounting children’s agency in their language use by saying “the children are losing their language, they don’t realise what’s happening”,

(6.33)

The children are losing their language, they don’t realise what’s happening. They are not using the proper kinship terms for uncle,

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<sup>32</sup> Used by speakers to mean mixing or code-switching

auntie, father, mother, grandparents, and other kinship terms. Young people are just thinking about technology like mobile phones. They think they don't need to learn language from old people.

Another described how they themselves use English in some situations and that they alter their way of speaking when on the phone to family in Lajamanu (WT1). The same teacher acknowledged children's autonomy in their language practices saying, "and that's the way the kids want to be, like you know? Like talk their language ..." (WT1 in WT2 interview 2018, 19:35-19:40). Ownership of their ways of speaking was expressed by Upper Primary students, who during language awareness activities (described in Chapter 5) acknowledged intergenerational differences in Warlpiri language use.

Educators also commented on the children's indexing of different ways of speaking to their identities and for different purposes. WT6 noted her granddaughter's ability to speak two varieties of Warlpiri, which they termed Warlpiri and *Lajamanu stail* ('Light Warlpiri'). The educator commented on the child's ownership of the latter, as they insist on speaking "my language from Lajamanu" when instructed by family members to "speak Warlpiri first" at home.

(6.34)

WT6: And right now, I can listen to my granddaughter little [name] saying both languages Willowra- I mean *Lajamanu Stail* 'Light Warlpiri', she sometimes only speaks English but use little bit of Warlpiri, mixed. And I- we say to her, "you should always say Warlpiri first and then little bit of English," [she responds to us] "no I'm gonna talk Eng<sup>33</sup>- my language from Lajamanu."

(WT6 Interview 2019, 18:38-19:06)

In the next excerpt, WT3 indexes their use of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' to their identity as a teacher and contrasts their use of Warlpiri in "normal" life. They describe *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' as facilitating language maintenance and intergenerational transfer

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<sup>33</sup> The speaker here starts to say English and then self-corrects, I think she is thinking of Warlpiri with English mixed in. Her meaning was that the child considers their way of speaking Warlpiri (Light Warlpiri) as *their* "language from Lajamanu"

of cultural content such as knowledge of *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’ stories and connections to country in context.

(6.35)

WT3: I do [talk differently in the classroom to home] ... because it’s different. When I’m at work I talk to the kids because I’m a teacher, a Warlpiri teacher for them to learn but at home it’s normal life for me with my own family. But anyway, with kids here [at school] it’s really important for me to teach them like if they grow up they can know that what they’ve been taught in Warlpiri, is mostly about *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’, dreamings like countrysides and where we usually take them on bush trips and country visits, *ngurrju* ‘good’ and overnight trip when we go and visit family country *yuwayi* ‘yes’ it’s like exploring all the other family’s country – we usually take the TOs [traditional owners].

(WT3 Interview 2018, 13:47-14:30)

Similarly, WT6 indexes the way they speak to their role as a teacher when they note that they use “teacher Warlpiri”<sup>34</sup> in the school.

(6.36)

WT6: As a teacher, I use my teacher Warlpiri and I think about teaching them all the time and talking teacher way in a school.”

(WT6 Interview 2019, 32:46-32:55)

Warlpiri educators believe that their role is to model strong Warlpiri language. One salient theme was the connection of student learning outcomes to the teacher input. In all responses, the concept of a strong Warlpiri learner was tied to the idea of a strong Warlpiri teacher. In this example the teacher explains that the identity of a “good Warlpiri student” is intricately tied to a strong teacher, modelling strong Warlpiri.

(6.37)

WT1: *yuwayi kurdu-kurdu kalu pina-jarrimi nyanjarla manu- nyanjarla manu purda-nyanjarla yangka ngula karlipa pirrjirdi nyinam yangka*

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<sup>34</sup> This was also referred to as “school Warlpiri” at a *Jinta-jarrimi* ‘Becoming One’ meeting in 2017 (p 35)



*tija yapa-patu. Yuwayi, kuja nawu yangka nyanjarla na kalu pina-pina-jarrimi kurdu-kurdu-ju junga-nyayirni purda-nyanyi kalu wangkanja-kurra yangka yapa tija purda-nyanyi and kalu wangkami kurdu-kurdu pirrjirdi yuwayi ngurrju kuja-ju.*

‘yes kids learn from looking and from listening to those teachers that are strong Warlpiri people yeah and that’s how they really listen. Listening to the strong Warlpiri of the teacher and they speak strongly to the students and its good that way.’

(WT1 Interview, 2018 01:02-01:35)

When asked to describe a strong Warlpiri learner, WT2 responded,

(6.28)

WT2: They learn after teacher, teacher-*jangka kurdu-kurdu-ju* after teacher *kalu learn- jarri*”

‘The kids learn from the teacher, from the teacher the children learn from the teacher.’

(WT2 Interview 2018, 24:12-24:19)

They later explained that the educators teach using strong Warlpiri and the students listen and learn to speak like the elders.

(6.29)

WT2: *Teach-i-man karlipa-jana* strong Warlpiri-*rli. Wa- purda-nyanyi kalu wangkanja-kurra.* We’re teaching strong Warlpiri, they’re listening to speak *purlka-purlka-piya.*

‘We teach strong Warlpiri and they listen as we are speaking. We’re teaching strong Warlpiri; they’re listening to speak like the old people.’

(WT2 Interview 2018, 23:36-23:46)

WT3 identified a couple of students with strong Warlpiri skills, and they explained this was “because they listen all the time and they focus, and they understand” (WT3 Interview 2018, 14:51-14:56). WT6 said, “I think kids who learn and listen they, I mean listen very well and do their lessons, are learning properly because what we teach, they got that.” (WT6 Interview 2019, 40:42-40:55).

## 6.2.2 Features of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong’

While Warlpiri educators had differing levels of acceptance of the influence of English on home language practices and of the diversity of ways of speaking Warlpiri in the community, all expressed the view that educators and students should (and do) aim for unilingual language performances of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ for classroom teaching and learning. There are strong ideologies and clear ideas about what constitutes *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ (Disbray, O’Shannessy, et al., 2020) and these have been actively crafted and engaged with over decades of professional development and learning in a community of practice. This has led to the development of an unofficial *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ target policy in the classroom.

Explicit articulation of the features of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ based on analyses of children’s speech have been documented in workshop reports in 2001, 2006 and a decade later, during five professional learning cycles at workshops which focused on oral language teaching and learning between 2012-13 and 2016-17 (Disbray, O’Shannessy et al., 2020; O’Shannessy, Disbray et al., 2019). In these workshops, educators recorded and transcribed students’ retellings of stories to discuss language practices reflective of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ and strategies to reinforce these in the classroom. In 2001, educators categorised features of children’s speech according to *ngurrju/pirrjirdi* ‘good’/ ‘strong’ or *punku* ‘bad’. Correct use of suffixes, complex sentences and vocabulary were considered to be *ngurrju/pirrjirdi* ‘good’/‘strong’, while using English words, omitting auxiliaries and suffixes were not (NTDoE, 2001, pp. 11-16). Changes to children’s language practices that have since been documented (O’Shannessy, 2005, p. 33), such as deletion of a velar stop from the velar form of ergative and locative clitics (e.g., *walya-nga* for *walya-ngka* ‘earth-LOC’) were considered by educators to be “not strong Warlpiri” (NTDoE, 2001, p. 15). The educators concluded that “sometimes the children use English words in their Warlpiri and the teachers think they should only use Warlpiri words” (NTDoE, 2001, p. 13). Later in the session, the educators examined examples of Warlpiri language in group negotiated texts co-constructed by students and teachers together and noted the importance of complex sentences in texts such as *Yarla wiri-jarlu* (‘The big bush potato’) as exemplars of “diverse and complex Warlpiri grammar” (NTDoE, 2001, p. 15). In an activity in 2006, educators identified vocabulary ‘old Warlpiri words’ which are being replaced with English equivalents, that they wanted to target in their teaching and learning (outlined in Figure 6.5 below).

**Nyiya yirdi-watiji kalu pina-jarrimi?** (*Which words will the children learn?*)

**Old Warlpiri Words**

Old Warlpiri Word	English	Old Warlpiri Word	English
walya-pangurnu	(shovel)	yali, yinya	(over there)
mungangka, kutukari	(night time)	warna, lingka	(snake)
yukangka	(morning)	maliki, jarntu	(dog)
yimi, jaru	(language)	kunjuru, yulyurdu	(smoke)
kanarri, kilyawu	(lizard)	yama, malurnpa	(shade)
pawani, ngawarra	(flood)	kalyu, pirraku, ngapa	(water)
mardukuja, karnta	(woman)	nganju, yujuku	(humpy)
lawu, walku	(nothing)	karnuru, wiyarrpa	(poor thing)

**Figure 6.5 Warlpiri Triangle Report in 2006 List of Old Warlpiri words students need to learn**

Between 2012 and 2016, five professional learning cycles were organised to support Warlpiri educators' skills in developing students' oral language. Educators began by analysing recordings of children aged 5 to 14 telling stories in Warlpiri gathered by Carmel O'Shannessy from across the four Warlpiri communities<sup>35</sup> in 2010 (Disbray, O'Shannessy, et al., 2020). Each community analysed samples of children's language to describe what children know, what they need to learn and how to teach them (a table of responses from all communities is found in Appendix F) (Disbray, O'Shannessy, et al., 2020). Again, educators from all schools agreed that children needed to learn to employ use of strong Warlpiri case-markers and suffixes as opposed to contracted variants and emphasised the use of Warlpiri over English vocabulary terms (for notes from a workshop on suffixes see Appendix G). One group commented that students need to learn "old people's language" while another echoed the need to develop contemporary Warlpiri vocabulary for English loan words (NTDoE, 2012). Over the course of the professional learning cycle, educators developed their analytical skills and moved from describing student errors to identifying the metalinguistic and vocabulary features of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' and strategies for addressing these in the classroom (Disbray, O'Shannessy, et al., 2020). These are discussed in the next section.

<sup>35</sup> 15 children from Lajamanu, 14 from Willowra, 18 from Nyirrpi, and 24 from Yuendumu.

### 6.2.3 Conscious use and regulation by educators: language as code

In the 2012-2016 workshops, Warlpiri educators identified a number of ways to advance oral Warlpiri language such as, “teachers pay attention to own speech”, “talk to the students in strong Warlpiri all the time” (NTDoE, 2012, p. 22), and “Develop good, gentle, helpful ways to correct speech – like repeat back in the proper way” (NTDoE, 2012, p. 40). In interviews, educators reported being cognisant of the way they speak in the classroom and said that they avoid using English and tried to recast English responses with Warlpiri terms. This was exemplified in the below interchange. WT2 explained (using everyday Warlpiri with English mixing), that when a student uses the English borrowing “swimming pool” they rephrase their response with the Warlpiri verb *julyurl-wantimi*, ‘to swim’. This educator believes that with regular repetition a child will learn to use the Warlpiri equivalent<sup>36</sup>.

(6.30)

WT2: *yeah yangka kalu kurdu-kurdu-rlu pija draw-mani kalu, draw-mani kalu pija, payirni karna-jana “nyarrpa-jarri ka ampuj pija-ngka? Nyiya-mpa ampuj pija yirrarn?” an wangka kaju kurdu “ngajurna yanu swimming-poolu-kurra.”*

‘yeah when the children draw pictures, they draw pictures, I ask them, “what is happening in this picture? What did you draw on this picture?” And a child says to me “I went to the swimming pool”’

R2: *yuwayi*  
‘yes’

WT2: *yuwayi jungarni-mani karna-jana Warlpiri, “ngajurna yanu julyurl wantinjaku” kuja instead of “swimming pool”, “julyurl-wantinjaku” ‘yes and I correct the Warlpiri “I went swimming” like that instead of “swimming pool”, “julyurl-wantinjaku.”’*

R2: *and pina read-i- mani kalu kurdu-kurdu?*  
‘and the kids read it again?’

WT2: *yeah pina readi-mani yeah pina jungarni mani an pina-read-pirrjirdi kajulu. Same over and over-lk nganta yeah ‘til that child get pina-jarri.*

‘yeah and read it again, yeah and I correct it again and they read it again to me. Same over and over until the child seems to know it’

(WT2 Interview 2018 25:22-25-59)

<sup>36</sup> Repetition was noted by Disbray et al. (2020, p. 12) in their paper for building capacity for critical listening and analysis of Warlpiri oral language among educators.

In this excerpt the educators modelling target language practices in the classroom are identified as an important teaching strategy along with the importance of repetition in both input and output. Similarly, WT5 reported asking students to copy the way they speak Warlpiri to them. This educator gave the example of a student from Lajamanu, who speaks what they called “Lajamanu Warlpiri” but also can also speak what they termed “good Warlpiri,” equated with the language of the classroom. WT5 described how they asked this student to copy the teacher’s strong Warlpiri.

(6.31)

WT5: like uhm [student name], she speak Lajamanu Warlpiri but sometimes she talk good Warlpiri with like that and sometimes I said talk like in Warlpiri, you gotta copy me, like if I speak Warlpiri to you, *pirrjirdi* (strong) Warlpiri, you gotta talk. *Yuwayi* 'yes!' and she do yeah.”

(WT5 Interview 2018, 24:05-24:45)

WT5 also noted that explicit correction is an effective way of supporting desired language practices. They used the example of how they correct their grandchild from Adelaide who was raised speaking English as their first language and is learning Warlpiri “very well”

(6.32)

WT5: [grandchild’s name] learning really, really she speak *Warlpiri ngurrjunyayirmi!* See like when she’s talking, I correct her. *Jungarni mani karna nyarrpa ka wangkami.* ‘[granddaughter’s name] is really learning. She speaks Warlpiri well! See, like when she’s talking, I correct her. I correct her when she’s talking.’

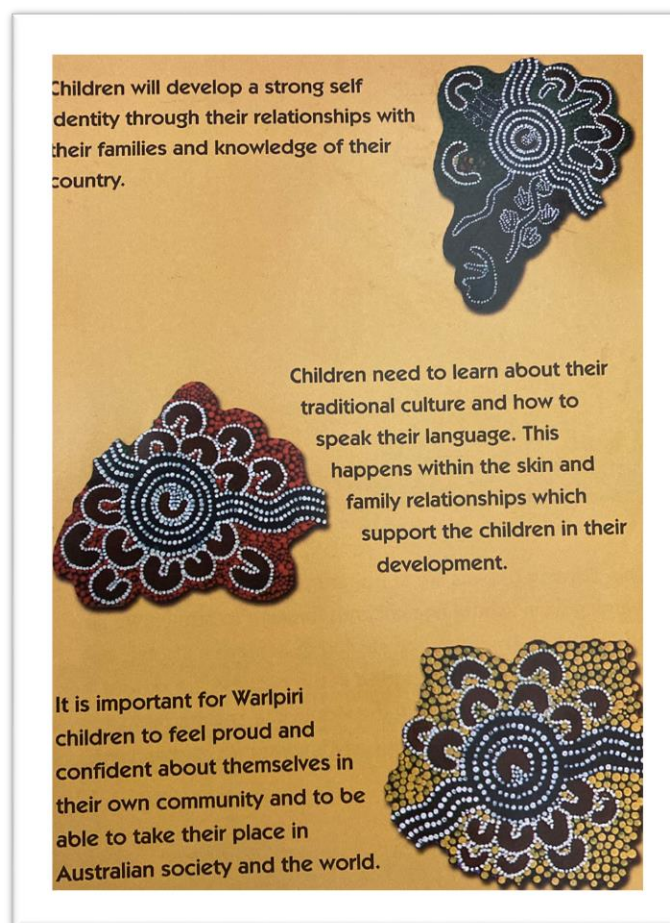
(WT5 Interview 2018, 30:26-30:42)

#### **6.2.4 Language socialisation practices inducting children into strong Warlpiri knowledge: language as social practice**

Warlpiri educators socialise students into particular uses and understandings of Warlpiri language and culture through stories, visits to significant sites, songs, gestures, painting and reinforcement of their place in the kinship system (cf. Meek, 2017). Connected to the idea of teaching as a collaboration are the centrality of relationships in Warlpiri pedagogy. According to Warlpiri educators, teaching children Warlpiri language and culture must happen within the

kinship system. Teaching through the kinship system is linked to Warlpiri socialisation practices that have been documented outside of the classroom (Bavin, 2010; Laughren, 2001, O'Shannessy, 2011a; Musharbash, 2008).

The centrality of relationships to learning was described by Warlpiri educators, B. Martin and Oldfield (2000) in their book "Strong Voices" (see Figure 6.6) in their depiction of a Warlpiri child's learning pathway. Here they suggested that children learn their language and culture through the kin and family relationships which support children in their development.



**Figure 6.6 Excerpt from Strong Voices (B. Martin and Oldfield, 2000, p 21)**

When asked for examples of how educators encourage use of 'strong Warlpiri' in the classroom, interviewees described the centrality of relationships. For example, WT3 said she drew on kinship terms and relationships,

(6.33)

WT3: Uhhh we just ... talk to them about what relationship is that person or that kid is to you. Yeah teach that about you know? Relationships. Yeah.

(WT3 Interview 2018, 16:08-16:15)

Later, when talking about the most important things the students learn, WT3 said,

(6.34)

WT3: We teach the kids what their country is and their dreaming and others  
*nyiya-nyiya kuja-kalu nyinami nguru kalu-nyanu milya-pinyi an nyanungu-nyanu jukurrpa*  
‘We teach the kids what their country is and their dreaming and others, skin names, which country they are on, they know their dreaming.’

(WT3 Interview 2018,10:19-10:21)

In discussing the importance of relationships to student wellbeing and learning, the following interview excerpt explains the strength of Warlpiri educators in knowing their students and the web of kin relationships and naming practices.

(6.35)

WT2: *Kardiya tija nu kalu wangk- kardiya tija nu kalu milya-pinyi kumunjayi word an* nick name, grandfather-*kurlangu* names, borrowed name yeah  
‘Non-Indigenous teachers don’t say- non-Indigenous teachers doesn’t know which words are taboo and nick names, grandfather’s names, borrowed names’

R2: [they] just start with English not Warlpiri *lawa angka* ‘no right’? they have to ask a *yapa* ‘Warlpiri’ teacher.

(WT2 Interview 2018, 15:50-16:04)

The response from the other Warlpiri teacher was that it’s important that non-Indigenous teachers consult Warlpiri educators on these terms of address to develop relationships. In this dialogue, educators discussed the referring practices that reinforce important cultural knowledge and simultaneously develop relationships in ways that happen in the home. During

an interview facilitated by a Warlpiri educator as researcher R2, and the transition teacher, WT2, R2 asked what students learn in Warlpiri class that they don't learn in other lessons and these referring practices were the first discussed.

(6.36)

WT2: skin name, name-*I ka-nyanu yirdi-mani* and even a nickname *kalu-nyanu yirdi-mani kurdu-kurdu-ngku yuwayi* like *kuja-piya yangka Wawu kujarra-piya-ju*  
'skin names, saying their skin names and even nicknames. Kids say those. Yes like for example Wawu, like that'

R2: yeah *kurdu-kurdu-rlu wita-wita-rlu milya-pinyi* gen *kalu-nyanu yirdi angka?*  
Sometime might be *kumunjayi marda*.  
'Yeah little kids know their names, don't they? Sometimes it might be taboo perhaps'

WT2: *kumunjayi marda*  
'It could be taboo'

(14:39- 15:15 removed)

WT2: and nickname *yangka-rra* <1>grand-father's name *kalu yirrarni*<1/>  
'and nicknames like they take their grandfather's name'

R2: <2>*warringiyi-kurlangu*<2/>  
'their paternal grandfather'

WT2: yeah *warringiyi-kurlangu kuja-rra*  
'yeah paternal grandfather, like that'

R2: *kuja-rnalu pina-pina-jarrimi kurdu-kurdu-k yangka*, you know?  
That's how we teach the kids you know?'

WT2: yeah *kuja-nawu pina-pina-jarrimi* even *outside-rlangu pina-jarrimi*  
'yeah that's exactly also how we teach the kids even outside'

R2: mmm outside *nyampu-rla* inside in the classroom and with the family-*kirli*  
'mmmm outside here inside in the classroom and with the family'

(WT2 Interview 2018, 14:18-15:37)

The congruence between language socialisation practices at home and at school is reflected in the comments that children not only learn these things "outside" but also "inside" the classroom.



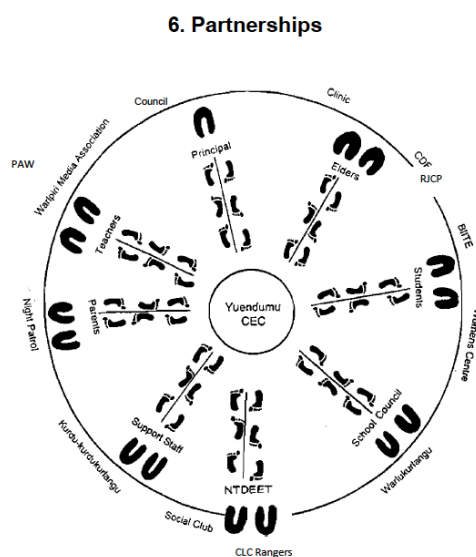
## 6.2.5 Collaboration and partnerships in the development of teaching practices and materials

*Kardu-mani, manu jinta, jinta-mani karlipa yimi manu jaru pina-jarrinjaku ngurrju-nyayirni. Ngalipa-rlu panu-ngku-juku jinta-ngka-rlu-juku.*

‘Creating success together: making and bringing together stories and teaching very well. We are all coming together’

(NTDoE, 2015, p. 1)

In describing best practice in Warlpiri teaching, educators emphasised the interrelatedness between collaboration, relationships, wellbeing, and learning. Warlpiri pedagogy is a collaborative practice among many stakeholders, facilitated by Warlpiri educators (as also described by Angelo and Poetsch (2019) in other traditional language teaching contexts or by Henne–Ochoa et al. (2020) as language-as-a-process-of-sustaining-relationality ideology). All interviewees expressed an ethic of cooperation and collaboration in the education of Warlpiri children involving several stakeholders, including elders, mentors, peers, literacy production teams, non-Indigenous teachers, linguists and teacher-linguists, professional learning through workshops and team teaching. This position was articulated by Warlpiri educator Alma Granites in 2011 when she depicted the role of partnerships in the Proposed School Organisation Structure in Yuendumu School’s Language Policy (2017).



(Adopted from Alma Granites 'Proposed School Organisation Structure, 2001)

**Figure 6.7 Partnerships in Yuendumu School, In Yuendumu School Language Policy (2017)**

The diagram reflects the many individuals (depicted inside the circle) and organisations (depicted outside) involved in the school programming, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The internal footprints are the parents, teachers, principal, elders, and students. On the outside are the organisations that support learning on bush trips, *Warlukurlangu* Arts Centre or teacher education (delivered by Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)). One of the most important stakeholders described in interviews are the elders, and senior speakers of Warlpiri.

*Mentor-apprentice relationship with elders and senior speakers* Elders are integral to the social organisation of remote communities (Busija, Toombs, Easton, et al. 2018; Turner, K. Wilson & Wilks, 2017). The language of the elders was viewed by all educators as the authentic, prestigious form of Warlpiri, and the importance of elders' input in children's education was unanimous. Positive value judgements were extended to the type of Warlpiri spoken by the older generations of Warlpiri speakers, the interviewees' parents, which was often described as "hard" unmixed forms of Warlpiri that do not contain English. Elders were constructed as primary sources of authentic knowledge and their role in transmitting cultural and linguistic knowledge was acknowledged by all educators and unanimously described in interviews (WT1, WT2, WT3, WT5, WT6). Consistent reference throughout the decades to the importance of elders' involvement in education as teachers at home and school was expressed in this statement at a Warlpiri Triangle workshop, "*jilypi manu muturna kalu nganimpa nyinami tija ngurrangka manu kuurlu-rla*" 'old people are our teachers at home and in school' (NTDoE, 2007, p. 27). Elders are described in other workshop reports and public statements as possessing knowledge about storytelling, culture, discipline, mentoring Warlpiri educators and using strong Warlpiri words (NTDoE, 1999, 2006; and see NTDoE, 2007 for more information on the role of elders in the classroom, 2008, 2011, 2013, 2016d). Over the four school terms during which this study was conducted, I observed two Warlpiri Theme Cycle professional development workshops and two *Jinta Jarrimi* educator workshops and in all of these, the knowledge of old people was instrumental in identifying themes and topics, specific lexical items, and grammatical structures that students should know. Old people were deferred to when brainstorming desired knowledge for each stage of the learning journey from birth to adulthood. When discussing the layout of the Warlpiri Theme Cycle handbook, educators noted that the first thing was to have an acknowledgment of the elders, adding validity to the work.

While the Warlpiri educators interviewed described their role as modelling the classroom code, they also position themselves as still learning many of its features and associated vocabulary, grammar and knowledge systems. WT1 noted “we still learning, [we’re] learners” and in the following excerpt, WT1 positions the educators as learners of “hard” Warlpiri language of the elders alongside the students,

(6.37)

WT1: *yuwayi nganimpa nyinami karnalu Warlpiri-patu tija. Yangka pina-pina pina-mani karna-jana kurdu-kurdu Warlpiri-rli but yangka ngula karnalu yangka yani nganayi-kirra yangka culture trips an country visits an yangka teaching kuurlu-ngka kurdu-kurdu. lawa still-pirrjirdi kalu yanirni muturna-muturna manu purlka-purka. Pina- pina-mani karlipa yangka maybe new words marda kula karna milya-pinyi, lawa. Manu nganimpa jalangu-ju still-pirrjirdi karnalu pina-jarrimi. Murnma-juku yuwayi. Lani-jarri karnalu yangka yirdi-wati yangka. Because yangka old people-rlu-lu muturna-muturna manu purlka-purka-rlu kalu use-i-mani ngulaju old words waja. Yangka nyurru-warnu-patu. Yuwayi kuja nawu karnalu do-mani nganimpa-rnu-ju yangka-ju kula karnalu milya-pinyi nganimpa tija-wati-l. Nganimpa-ju karnalu pina-pina-jarri murnma-juku. Yangka kurdu-kurdu ngula kalu jalangu wan-juku pina-pina-jarri kuja gen karnalu nganimpa-ju pina-pina-jarri. Purlka-ngku, purlka-purlka muturna- muturna-rlu kalu nyampurla pina-pina-mani”*

‘Us Warlpiri teachers when we teach kids Warlpiri, we go to the culture trips and country visits. And when teaching kids in the school we still go to the old people. They can teach us things like new words maybe. I don’t know them, no I don’t. And today we are still learning, we’re getting afraid [to use] the words. Because those old people, old women and men use old words, words from the past. From the ancestors yes, and that’s how we do it, like that. We are still learning. What these kids are learning we are still learning too, from the teaching of the old people, the old men and old women’

(WT1 Interview 3, 2018 00:13-01:37)

In the above quote the teacher positions themselves as a learner of strong Warlpiri linguistic and cultural knowledge in a mentor-apprentice relationship with old people. They point to the crucial role of senior speakers in sharing this knowledge which has been passed down from the ancestors. I interpret the teacher’s use of “getting afraid [to use] the words” to mean a

combination of being unfamiliar with some terms, feeling uncertain about using them and perhaps also afraid of losing them.

Those interviewed described the benefits of working with elders in mentor-apprentice style relationships to develop higher-level teaching resources. WT3 gave the example of collaboration on a text about the human skeletal and digestive system at a *Jinta-jarrimi* workshop in Willowra in 2015 (WT3 Interview, 2018) which expanded her specialist subject knowledge that in turn assisted in her teaching her students,

(6.38)

WT3: And with elders to come and teach us more about the *jukurpa* ‘dreaming’ everything and when that we do like Warlpiri Triangle-*rla* and *Jinta-jarrimi* ‘Becoming One’ we always have elders. They are there to support and give us more information about Warlpiri things that are still hidden in that long hard language that we don’t really know. But it’s good that I found out last, three years back when I went to Willowra to do *Jinta-jarrimi* ‘Becoming One’ with uhmmm two *Napaljarri*, other one [person’s name]’s mum? *Yuwayi* ‘yes’ and [Elder name] and uh..nother one... mmm there was another one, other lady? But anyway, we had those three old ladies. We took them to Willowra and that’s the time that I found out all the hard body parts, *palka-kurlu* ‘about the body’ in English. That was really good that they told us (...) yeah that was really *ngurrju-nyayirni* ‘very good’ when they tell us Warlpiri-*kurlang* ‘Warlpiri’ hard words. Words even like *palka-kurlu* ‘about the body.’

R1: *palka-kaninjarni*? ‘internal organs?’

WT3: that’s it and even- *yuwayi* ‘yes’ *palka-kaninjarni* ‘internal organs’ and it’s making my job easier because they’re there to sometimes help to teach us so we can teach our kids.

(WT3 Interview 2018, 06:01-07:11)

This educator also explained that when they first started teaching, they drew on the model of their family members for teaching ideas and to derive confidence,

(6.39)

WT3: But first when I started working as a teacher, I didn’t know much but anyway I still got that experience from you know my families. That’s why when I started straight working, I just knew what to do in this

and that. *Yuwayi* ‘yes’ since I came to work in 2014, *yuwayi* ‘yes’ even in Warlpiri and English.”

(WT3 Interview 2018, 17:19-17:42)

Similarly, WT6, a highly experienced educator who emphasised independence in teaching in her description of a ‘strong Warlpiri teacher’, explained that this independence and confidence is fostered by continuing to learn from others including elders, mentors, the BRDU team and other professional development opportunities.

### *Team teaching with other Warlpiri educators*

In the school there are formal and less formalised structures to support mentoring and peer collaboration in teaching among Warlpiri educators. Team teaching with Warlpiri peers and mentors was noted as an important collaborative practice for developing confidence and skills. WT3 described increased satisfaction and outcomes whilst working with another Warlpiri teacher on their own lessons in Warlpiri compared to working as an assistant to the non-Indigenous teacher. This educator described the building of confidence and professional learning from this role. It is interesting to note a shift in their choice of language, beginning in English to describe their role in teaching via English medium and then shifting to Warlpiri to discuss their Warlpiri experience.

(6.40)

WT3: mmm when I’m in the classroom teaching with [teacher name] in English lesson, it’s ok that I’m there to support [teacher name] cos we’ve worked together nearly four year in same like class from upper class to lower class teaching in red class, yellow class, blue and then orange. That’s moving from younger to lower class ... to upper class and *ngula-jangka-ju ngurrju-nyayirni karna feel-jarri kuja-rna Napurrurla-kurlu* [Warlpiri educator name]-*kirli warrki-jarrija jinta-ngka. Ngula-rna-jana jinta-ngka-juk mardarnu ngula-lpa-rna Napurrurla nyangu ngulalpa-juk pina-ngarru-uh pina-yirri-puraja nyarrpa do-maninjaku warrki. Kuja-rna nyanungu-nyangu ngula-jangka-ju feel-jarrijarna strong-u-lku jelpi-lki warrki-jarrinjaku* ‘and then started to feel really good when working with Napurrurla, with [name] when we worked together. When we were together Napurrurla would ask me to observe her and explain to me how she does the work. After seeing her teaching, I felt really confident and strong to do the work by myself.’

(WT3 Interview 2018, 04:49-05:41)

The emphasis on the collaborative nature of teaching was reflected in comments about collaboration in assessment within teaching teams and with Warlpiri mentors.

(6.41)

WT1: I think *yapa* 'Warlpiri people' got the strong knowledge you know? Teaching and the *yapas* 'Warlpiri people' are mentor too, for example [name]

R1: yes!

WT1: there lot of *yapa-patu kalu wangkami panu-jarlu*, "[teacher name]'s a good mentor like *nyuntu*". Yeah, all our expert teachers and she is 'lots of Warlpiri say [name] is a good mentor like you.

R1: yeah

WT1: *kuja nawu* you know *yapa*, *yapa ngula nyinanjarn yangka kardiya-kurlu manu yapa.yapa.. yapa-kurlu an manu yapa mentor just yea yapa-kurlu like teachers and yapa manu yapa mentor-wati. yeah kuja, mentors are really important*  
'like that you know Warlpiri people, Warlpiri people who sit with non-Indigenous people and the people who work with Warlpiri people as a mentor yeah with Warlpiri people like teachers and Warlpiri and Warlpiri mentors yeah so mentors are really important'

(WT1 Interview 2018, 07:53-08:16)

Team teaching with Warlpiri peers was noted as an important practice for developing confidence and skills. WT6 explained the importance of team teaching and how it works to develop teaching skills and confidence with support by taking smaller groups of students in a rotation,

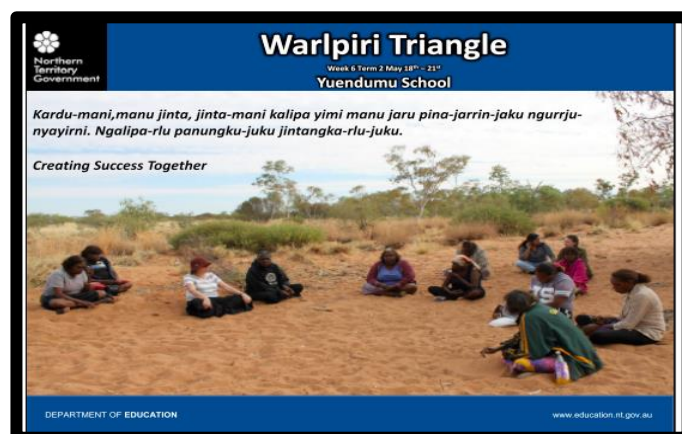
(6.42)

WT6: Yeah, team teaching is important too and makes us strong but and make us confident because we are like company to each other and learning from each other. I can't make mistakes because, or maybe if my- I mean if you make mistake, you need help if you don't feel confident, you need help someone's there all the time to sit with you and to help you and teach you. *Yuwayi* 'yes.' Team teaching is important thing. Yeah, working with team teaching can help make

you strong too because sometimes you need to be there to take a group. *Yuwayi* ‘yes’ so you will feel strong in teaching that little group and now when they’re rotating then you need to still hang on and organise that lesson that you’re doing with the others, you know? [Have] you got enough resources to teach for other two groups coming in?

(WT6 Interview 2019, 23:35-24:42)

In all feedback from Warlpiri Triangle workshops, team teaching, and collaboration are noted as highlights. For example, in 2015 “planning together was inspiring (...) coming together in unity in one voice gives us strength and a strong voice” (and see others NTDoE, 2007; NTDoE, 2008, 2009, 2011). This was exemplified in the theme of the Warlpiri Triangle workshop in 2015, *Kardu-mani, manu jintu, jintu-mani karlipa yimi manu jaru pina-jarrinjaku ngurrjuyayirni. Ngalipa-rlu panu-ngku-juku jintangka-rlu-juku* which was translated as *Creating Success Together: Creating and bringing together stories and language teaching really well. We’re doing it together.*’ (Figure 6.8)



**Figure 6.8** Cover of Warlpiri Triangle Report 2016

#### *Team Teaching with kardiya teachers*

Professional learning opportunities such as the Warlpiri Triangle and *Jinta-jarrimi* ‘Becoming One’ workshops were described by all participants as being invaluable to their professional development, reflected in WT2’s statement,

(6.43)

*“Yuwayi, yuwayi jintu-jintu-mani. Yani karlipa meeting-kirra Warlpiri Triangle, Jinta-jarrimi. Ngula-ngka karlipa yimi-jangka jintu-jintu mani*

*karlipa xxxmipa olelot pina-jarrimi Warlpiri. Yapa and kardiya jintan-gku warrki-jarrinjaku. Yeah, through by Batchelor too*”

‘yes, yes getting together. We go to meetings, Warlpiri Triangle, *Jinta-jarrimi*. At those meetings we share together, and we all learn Warlpiri. Warlpiri and non-Warlpiri together working together. Yeah, through Batchelor too’

(WT2 Interview 2018, 07:47-08:09)

This teacher, who emphasised the importance of intercultural collaboration between Warlpiri and *kardiya* teachers at these workshops, also mentioned study through Batchelor Institute. Later, the same teacher talked about the value of workshops and conferences for learning new ideas and sharing knowledge and experience.

(6.44)

WT2: *tarnnga-juk and study-rli strong-rli ngurrju-manu workshop-u-ngu*  
‘a long time and studying strong at workshops’

R2: *yuwayi* ‘yes’ *workshop-u*

WT2: when we get *nganayi yangka* more ideas  
‘when we get uhm like more ideas’

R2: when you go to conferences might be you do presentations on that  
*kuja-rra-piya ngurrju-nyayirni yangka*  
‘Those kinds of things are really good’

(WT2 Interview 2018, 09:50-10:06)

### **6.2.6 The importance of texts as exemplars of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’**

Educators also noted the utility of texts for planning the content and structure of Warlpiri lessons. One tool for literacy programming is the Goanna Planner. It is a pedagogical tool that complements the English as a Second Language teaching tool, Walking Talking Texts, “that offers a sequence of teaching strategies with units of work based around the deconstruction and reconstruction of a single text over many weeks (Northern Territory Department of Education and Training, 1995). Educators select a text from the Warlpiri Theme Cycle theme and use the Goanna Planner to organise learning around this text. The Goanna Planner saw a period of revival in the school from 2016-2019. In 2016 the Walking Talking Texts author, Fran Murray, delivered professional development to all staff and Warlpiri educators and the English and



Warlpiri programs were central to the school's Literacy and Language framework. A goal of the Goanna Planners is to empower educators with a process of planning for, teaching and assessing through, home language (Murray, 2016). One fully qualified Warlpiri teacher described the Goanna Planner and associated activities as assisting in developing their knowledge around structuring their lessons as a novice teacher,

(6.45)

WT6: mmm yes that's how I started, I used to teach from a book and then I used to get all ideas from the book. Yeah, like procedural text and *nganayi* 'like' role-role play and then missing the words, what do you call it? (...) cloze activities. Yes, it all came out of one book.

(WT6 Interview 2019, 12:01-12:27)

Later she talked about using the Goanna Planner as a tool to strengthen teaching practice,

(6.46)

WT6: we used to look through curriculum, ILC framework. *Yuwayi* 'yes' to look for a lesson how the lesson would connect but it was easy for us to use Goanna Planner *yuwayi* 'yes' 'that's how it helped us to be a strong teacher.

(WT6 Interview 2019, 08:48-09:13)

Warlpiri educators also identified Warlpiri texts as exemplars of the features and vocabulary of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri.' During interviews, educators described how they utilise this rich body of textual materials to leverage learning and the broader current study has evidence of this (see Chapters 7 and 8). For example, when WT5 was asked about the kinds of activities that are used in the classroom she suggested that texts are a way of stimulating discussion about the Warlpiri theme. In her example, she explains how Warlpiri books developed specifically for the learning theme can facilitate discussion about Warlpiri-specific knowledges,

(6.47)

WT5: reading book! Theme is messages, you know, communication for this term? Like we tell kids like long time for signal they used to make fire. Or...yeah and listening to birds. Like *jiyiki* 'zebra finch', if

you hear a *jiyiki* ‘zebra finch’ there’s water somewhere nearby. Yeah, follow that bird, it’ll take you and there is a messenger bird that tells bad news and good news. I don’t like that bird [ laughs] because it tells the truth! I want to teach them, see, that birds can give you message or falling star”

(WT5 Interview 2018, 11:16-12:06)

Another educator in an interview referred to a *jukurpa* ‘dreaming’ story from an area that didn’t belong to her. When asked for details about the story she explained “I can’t tell you but if I have book, I can” (WT1 Interview 2018 45:16-45:26). This example reveals how published stories can preserve stories and knowledge that might not be widely known. Appropriate and careful consideration of the dynamics of dissemination are required but can support educators to transfer knowledge to students in respectful and culturally congruent ways.

Educators expressed an awareness about the need for active engagement with reading materials for language maintenance goals. A Warlpiri Triangle report in 2008 (2008, p. 2) quoted Dora and Richard Dauenhauer’s caution that “Books and recordings can preserve languages, but only people and communities can keep them alive”. In a *Jinta-jarrimi* ‘Becoming One’ workshop in 2014 one educator echoed this sentiment when they said, “The knowledge is in books but still we need to be adding to the books for students to learn deeper knowledge. This is how we pass knowledge onto students” (NTDoE, 2014a, p. 19).

### **6.3 Discussion of the findings**

In section 6.1, I discussed the emblematic role of Warlpiri language as tied to collective belonging and wellbeing, as well as essentialist and utilitarian discourses surrounding the role of Warlpiri in the classroom that position language as both a right and a resource. Analysis of the grey literature and interviews with educators clearly promoted the overarching goal of the Warlpiri program at Yuendumu School as that of Warlpiri language maintenance. What is shared by Warlpiri educators and communities is a strongly held sentiment that their language constitutes an invaluable repository of distinctive knowledges that children have a right to, and need, for full participation in their communities, and that “are central to self-determination and sovereignty” (Sims, 2005, p. 105). Both essentialist discourses and utilitarian perspectives of language allowed educators to reconcile the sense of Warlpiri language’s viability in the contemporary milieu and the role of schools as appropriate sites for learning, within their own

personal histories of linguistic exclusion and ongoing battles for recognition (c.f. McCarty, Nicholas, & Wyman, 2012). These ideologies are underpinned by a societal valuing of multilingualism and parallel concern around the impact of English on Warlpiri language use.

Many of the ideological orientations discussed by educators were in common with the students' responses in the previous chapter (Chapter 5). For all generations of users, Warlpiri language is closely tied to identity and inextricably linked with wellbeing. The teaching and learning of Warlpiri at school was described as evoking a sense of pride, confidence and happiness for adults and children alike. Educators expressed the importance of equal status of Warlpiri with English and its role in affording access to the mainstream English-medium curriculum, and Warlpiri knowledge. Both students (in Chapter 5) and educators (in this chapter) described plurilingual practices encompassing different registers, dialects, modalities, and code-switching practices, in domains outside of the school. Individuals expressed different evaluations of these. A key difference between students and educators was the orientation to language use in the school. Whereas students described drawing on their full linguistic repertoires across all domains, with English, Warlpiri and other varieties having a place in the school, educators have expressed a unilingual target language policy for the Warlpiri part of the school program. While there was some contestation among educators surrounding plurilingual home practices, they were unanimous in expressing what the classroom code is or should be, and its essential role in teaching and learning Warlpiri in school and by extension, the maintenance of Warlpiri language generally. As in other minority language contexts, articulation of classroom language practices is indexed to the educators' role as teachers (Martínez, 2015; Palmer & Martínez, 2003).

In section 6.2. I explored the educators' expectations around how language is learned and the role of languages in Warlpiri Schools. Over 40 years, the concept of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong language' as both the goal and the medium of instruction in the school has undergone articulation and consideration among Warlpiri educators during professional development meetings. Even though educators' individual views of plurilingual community language practices varied somewhat, what was striking is the consistency of articulation of a target language policy in the classroom and how it is achieved. Their position aligns with domain separation models (described in Chapter 2), that express a clear ideological position about what

the classroom code is and its essential role in teaching and learning Warlpiri in school and by extension, the maintenance of Warlpiri language generally.

The concept of Community of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) is useful in understanding the development of consensual ideologies and language-in-education policies refined and clearly articulated through processes of mutual engagement over four decades of collaboration and meetings. When individual Warlpiri educators walk into their classrooms, they bring with them decades of community articulation and rearticulation of their role, its importance, and the ways in which they can achieve community goals of maintaining strong Warlpiri language. The professional learning around oral language development in recent years has been crucial in supporting Warlpiri educators to develop their critical analysis of students' speech and strategies for achieving their goals (Disbray, O' Shannessy, et al., 2020).

Collaboration and partnership in teaching and learning are important themes in this analysis (and have been discussed by others in the field (e.g., Angelo & Poetsch, 2019). The mentor-apprentice style model of learning *to* teach and learning the language *for* teaching from elders and mentors is significant, particularly in the context of limited opportunities for formal training in remote communities (Lee et al., 2014). Texts, oral and written, that are developed by senior speakers, form important exemplars of the target code.

Warlpiri educators have clearly articulated the centrality of relationships and kin networks as both a goal of learning and as incentivising learning. The productive intimacy and relationality in teacher-learner relations has been noted also by non-Indigenous scholars in other contexts (Etherington, 2006; Hudspith, 1996). The idea of Warlpiri students' learning as underpinned by understanding their place in the kinship system and understanding the connections between themselves and content aligns with the literature on relational pedagogies (e.g., Bell & Chealuck, 2021).

Three major strategies to develop Warlpiri competence (encompassing language as code and as social practice) described by educators and workshopped during professional development activities over the decades have included,

Strategy 1: Conscious use and explicit teaching of forms and features of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri,' through modelling, recasting, and evaluating students' use

Strategy 2: Socialisation of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ through the kinship system and relational pedagogies

Strategy 3: Drawing on texts, oral and written, developed by elders and senior speakers to model *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’.

The strong unilingual language-in-education position, preference for domain separation and associated teaching strategies set against the reported prevalence of plurilingual practices outside of the classroom, raises questions about actual language use in teaching and learning events (Spolsky, 2004, p. 218). How are articulated ideologies, goals of language maintenance, a unilingual language policy and agreed-on strategies for achieving these enacted in classrooms? What are the students’ engagements with these? How are linguistic and cultural forms, construed ideologically, tacitly, and explicitly operationalised through the construction of collaborative teaching practice and engagement with texts in classrooms? These questions surrounding how the *ideological spaces* interact with the *implementational ones* (Hornberger, 2005) demand close examination of classroom interactions and analysis of their utility in the teaching and learning of, and in, Warlpiri.

## 6.4 Summary

With this chapter I complete a picture of the representations of ideologies and experiences of both Warlpiri educators and students in terms of languages use and the role of and goals of the Warlpiri program in school. There are clear ideologies around the symbolic and utilitarian value of Warlpiri language within the community. Of concern for all generations, particularly the older generations of speakers, is the maintenance of Warlpiri language and the associated knowledges set within a valuing of plurilingualism and plurilingual practices across many domains of language use outside of the school. The Warlpiri educators have articulated a clear separation of domains for the school context and developed strategies to achieve this. Understanding how these positions are reconciled in the classroom raises questions about the educators’ and students’ day-to-day classroom language practices in teaching and learning interactions.

With these understandings as a backdrop and questions as a guide, I next turn to a description and analysis of the documented language practices via transcripts and observations of teaching

and learning events in Warlpiri classrooms in 2018-2019 (Chapters 7 and 8). I examine the three salient strategies which emerged from analysis of interviews and documentation (and discussed above) to explore students' and educators' engagements with teaching and learning in and of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri.' In Chapter 7, I focus on (Strategy 1) the teaching of forms and functions of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' and the practices that both align with a unilingual target language-in-education policy and those which diverge, representing plurilingual practices. Then in Chapter 8, I explore the language socialisation practices deployed by Warlpiri educators (Strategy 2), and the ways in which texts imbued with the cultural and linguistic authority of the elders are drawn on in teaching and learning of the target code (Strategy 3).



## **Chapter 7 Ways of speaking in Warlpiri classrooms: forms and functions of language use**

In Chapters 5 and 6, I explored the ideologies framing both the students' and educators' language attitudes, values, and practices. Chapter 5 revealed students' awareness about different varieties and modalities of communication and their plurilingual use of their repertoires across all domains of their lives, including the classroom. In Chapter 6 educators also described various 'ways of speaking' in Warlpiri communities and expressed their rationale for the Warlpiri program as contributing to maintenance of Warlpiri language and culture, particularly considering immense pressure from English. The interviews with educators echoed decades of work among Warlpiri educators in the NT that has established *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' as the target code for learning in and about Warlpiri language and culture. During professional development workshops across four Warlpiri communities, the educators have outlined the features of this code and identified and refined strategies for enacting a target code classroom policy (Browne & Gibson, 2021; Disbray, O'Shannessy et al., 2020; O'Shannessy, Disbray et al., 2019). The strategies include explicit modelling in the classroom, using texts both oral and written as exemplars and more tacit strategies through language socialisation practices that teach students' context-appropriate use within Warlpiri relational pedagogies, organised within the kinship system.

As discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.3 of this thesis, the literature on language ideologies, policies and practices in many contexts has highlighted complexities and tensions between language policies, ideologies about reported language use and actual language practices in different domains (Kroskrity, 2009; Kroskrity & Duranti, 2004; Shieffelin, Woolard, & Kroskrity, 1998). This raises several questions surrounding actual language use in the classroom. What are the forms (structures) and functions (purpose) of the language practices in the Warlpiri classroom? How do educators and students navigate their plurilingual (multimodal, and multidialectal) repertoires in teaching and learning in and of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' at Yuendumu School?

In this chapter, I turn to close analysis of the recorded speech data, complemented by educator commentary from interviews and the grey literature, to document the language practices in the three contexts under study: 1) two Early Years classes, 2) an Upper-Primary class and 3) "Country Visits" a half week camp where learning across student cohorts occurred. I start with



a description of the general organisation of teaching and learning interactions for each context, Early Years (7.1.1), Upper Primary (7.1.2) and all ages bush trips (7.1.3). I follow this with a description the ‘ways of speaking’ that is the patterns, and functions of speaking (Hymes, 1974) available to speakers in Warlpiri teaching and learning events, offering the reader a sense of the language practices they might hear if they were to attend one of these classrooms (7.2). In keeping with an ethnography of speaking approach in addition to a description of the communicative repertoires, I examine the “norms, operating principles, strategies, and values which guide the production and interpretation of speech (Bauman & Sherzer, 1989, p. 7).

I structure section 7.3 of this Chapter and the next (Chapter 8) around the strategies (1-3) which educators identified in the previous chapter (Chapter 6). I discuss the ways in which Warlpiri educators regulate students’ and their own use of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ as the classroom code, setting up the expectations for and modelling its use in teaching and learning events (Strategy 1). I examine also plurilingual practices reflective of reported wider community language practices and describe their socio-pragmatic functions in scaffolding and co-constructing knowledge of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri.’ As I attend to the educators’ strategies and practices, a focus in this chapter is on educators’ speech in dyadic interactions which include students’ productions. In Chapter 8, I describe the educators’ socialisation practices (Strategy 2) and the use of texts, both oral and written (Strategy 3), as exemplars of the target code. I share examples of students’ reproductions of age-appropriate target code for specific tasks (such as re-telling traditional stories) and their reconceptualisations of learning (such as knowledge mapping after bush trips) that reflect their contemporary repertoires and identities. Together, these chapters exemplify Warlpiri educators’ language pedagogies as linguistically responsive (Lucas & Villegas, 2013), culturally sustaining (McCarty & Lee, 2014; Paris, 2012) practices that build students’ competence in *Warlpiri pirrjirdi*, ‘strong Warlpiri’ while also accommodating their contemporary ways of speaking, literacies, and identities in the school context.

## **7.1 Building the research field in three Warlpiri teaching and learning contexts**

Prior to discussing the ways of speaking across different contexts and participation structures, I first must describe the three Warlpiri teaching and learning contexts in this study, two Early Years classes, an Upper Primary class, and Country Visits. Then I offer an overview and

comparison of the types of participation and interactional structures in teaching and learning contexts what Nakata (2007) has called the “cultural interface”, the intersection of non-Indigenous Australian institutions and Warlpiri practices. My use of “building” in the title aims to emphasise that the research context is created as much by researcher participation and design decisions as by the conditions encountered during the study. It is relevant to emphasise the temporal nature of this study, that the specific teacher configurations and student configurations, learning topic and content and other environmental factors such as time of day and community dynamics had a bearing on the language practices at any given moment in time.

Classroom observations and recordings spanned over 11 months and included two semesters and four Terms: Semester 2, 2018 (Terms 3 and 4) and Semester 1, 2019 (Terms 1 and 2). Learning in all classes from preschool to senior years followed the Warlpiri Theme Cycle, a local 3-year thematic cycle comprising 12 Warlpiri knowledge domains related to land, language, law, and culture (Disbray & B. Martin, 2018). In every school Term, the educators attended professional development workshops, *Jinta Jarrimi* ‘Becoming One’ in Terms 1, 3 and 4 and the Warlpiri Triangle workshop in Term 2 to prepare for teaching the next Term’s theme. The theme for Term 3, 2018 was *Kuyu* ‘animals that are meat’, Term 4 2018, *Jaru manu rdaka-rdaka* ‘Language and hand signs’, Term 1, 2019 *Jukurrpa manu kuruwarri* ‘Dreaming and designs and Term 2, 2019 was *Nyurru-wiyi manu Jalangu-jalangu* ‘Olden days and Contemporary times.

### 7.1.1 Two Early Years classes

#### *Class A*

The first Early Years Class, which ran daily from 8:30 am until midday in 2018, was taught by a fully qualified Warlpiri teacher assisted by up to two Warlpiri-speaking teaching assistants and occasionally a *kardiya* volunteer. The teacher was also supported in her planning by a senior *kardiya* teacher responsible for overseeing Early Years’ programming and by the linguist and literacy production staff at the Bilingual Resource Development Unit (BRDU). The educator also invited senior members of the community to teach students specialised subjects such as *rdaka-rdaka* ‘hand signs’ or demonstrating activities from the past such as building *tali tali* ‘grass dolls.’ The teacher had over three decades’ experience working in schools. Like many Warlpiri educators, their career started in the BRDU. They then became a teacher assistant and undertook their teaching qualifications through the Remote Area Teacher

Education (RATE) programme at Batchelor Institute for Indigenous Tertiary Education in the 1990s and completed the Indigenous Teacher Upgrade Program in 2008. They held key positions on reference groups and committees related to Early Childhood and education.

All the classroom speech in the Early Years' A class corpus was recorded in the second semester (terms three and four) of 2018. During my observations there were roughly 8-10 children in the class, with attendance only just above the school average of enrolments. Student ages ranged between 3;5 and 5;1. Most students had lived in Yuendumu their whole lives but there was a group of three students who had relocated from Lajamanu community that year. A *kardiya* student also attended for the second semester of 2018. During sessions transcribing the classroom data, the teacher commented on her purposeful accommodation of the different Warlpiri language proficiencies of her student cohort.

The program followed the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) that promotes intentional teaching of language, literacy, and numeracy through play-based learning. Play-based learning is defined in the EYLF as “a context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they actively engage with people, objects and representations” (DEEWR, 2009, p. 46). In this class, it involved 10-15 minutes of a whole-class structured activity on the mat preceded and followed by activities at pre-arranged play stations such as dress ups, phone-play, painting, playdough, puzzles, or outdoor play. The structured activity in Semester 2, 2018 always began with the book *Kurdu-kurdu-pirrijirdinyinanjaku* ‘Healthy, Strong Kids’ which guided students through practices of nose-blowing, deep breaths, ear cleaning and exercises such as star jumps and running on the spot. This was followed by other books and songs linked to the Warlpiri Theme Cycle.

### *Class B*

The second Early Years class ran five days a week, between 8:30 – 15:30. A *kardiya* teacher taught the English literacy and curriculum subjects. The Warlpiri program was scheduled for a daily 45-minute session before lunch, led in Warlpiri by the Warlpiri educator, WT2. In practice, the Warlpiri session was held once or twice per week, as it was sometimes replaced by extra-curricular activities, or postponed due to conflicting demands on the teaching team. The Warlpiri educator had several decades’ experience teaching Warlpiri and assisting mainstream program delivery at primary level and has a history of strong collaboration with

non-Indigenous teachers and team teaching. They had also previously worked in literacy production in another Warlpiri community. In 2018 they were studying towards a Certificate IV in Education Support through the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and has since graduated with this qualification.

The Warlpiri educator sought out planning support and teaching resources from the BRDU. During the Warlpiri lesson, the *kardiya* teacher either used the time to clean the classroom or supported behaviour management. I did not observe the teachers planning for Warlpiri together; rather, on the occasions I was present, the *kardiya* teacher's contribution was to provide materials such as pens, glue, or paper, or to photocopy books. As in the other Early Years class, senior community members were invited to instruct on specialised activities.

The speech data for this study in the Early Years' B class corpus was recorded in Semester 2, 2018 (terms 3 and 4). Student numbers varied from 8-14 in my recordings, and the children were aged between five- and six-years old. A *kardiya* student was present for one of my recordings, but the Warlpiri educator did not explicitly accommodate for them in their teaching of Warlpiri. Students were very chatty and actively engaged in this class, speaking Warlpiri, and occasionally switching to English for humour or play and to garner the attention of the *kardiya* teacher. In this class there was a competitive dynamic among the students with frequent commentary during activities such as “*ngaju first-i-lki*” ‘I’m first’ or “*ngaju pina! pina ngaju-lu*” ‘I’m clever.’ A common jibe in sing-song English, “you got no cluuuue” was often directed at a student being assessed or working individually with the teacher. It seemed as if the students used English as a distancing mechanism when teasing a student behind the teacher’s back and Warlpiri when wanting affirmation from the teacher of their status as being clever or having completed an activity quickly.

The observed Warlpiri lessons followed a predictable structure. Every lesson began with a program of choral chanting involving the teacher pointing to a sequence of wall posters displaying Warlpiri syllables, sight words, colours and numbers and reading each one. Students then called out the words altogether. This program of listing sequences was dubbed “Deadly Ways to Learn” by the previous teaching team. A routine interaction about the days of the week usually followed, where the teacher asked for the name of the day today, yesterday and tomorrow (*nyiya jalangu-ju?* ‘What day is it today’ *pirrarni-ji?* ‘Yesterday?’ *jukurra-ju?* ‘Tomorrow?’.) And students were selected to place a card with the day of the week in the

correct spot on the board. The rest of the lesson was usually structured around two texts, a phonics book following the Warlpiri phonics program, and a book related to the theme in the Warlpiri Theme Cycle (see Table 7.1 for list of resources each term). The lesson concluded with a related craft or worksheet activity. At the beginning of the week, students drew a recount of the weekend and were supported to write a word or sentence and explain it verbally to the whole class.

<b>Term 3, 2018</b>	<i>Kuja kuyu karlipa ngarni</i> ‘Animals we eat’ (Reading Level 1) <sup>37</sup>  Warlpiri phonics book 1, step 8 ‘p’  Warlpiri phonics book 1, step 9 ‘r’  Warlpiri phonics book 1, step 10 ‘rd’  Warlpiri phonics book 1, step 11 ‘t’
<b>Term 4, 2018</b>	<i>Rdaka-rdaka Marlu witalpa nyinaja</i> ‘Hand signs, Little Kangaroo’  Warlpiri phonics book 1, step 12 ‘w’  Warlpiri phonics book 1, step 13 ‘y’

**Figure 7.1 Books used in Terms 3 and 4 in the Early Years’ B classroom**

### 7.3.2 The Upper Primary class

I recorded lessons in the composite Upper Primary class (comprising two combined year levels) in Semester 2 in 2018 and one in Semester 1 in 2019 and thus collaborated with two different teaching teams and roughly the same cohort of students over two school years. The Warlpiri educator, WT3 in the Upper Primary class in 2018 had been teaching since 2014 and had worked with the same *kardiya* teacher, moving up together with the same group of students, for three consecutive years. The Warlpiri educator was completing a Diploma in Education Support through the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. They were scheduled to deliver Warlpiri literacy lessons for an hour 1-2 times per week, though due to competing

<sup>37</sup> The BRDU has a system of levelling texts from 1 (easy) to 6 (difficult). The texts have been levelled against the Key Growth Points (KGP) and Band Levels of the NT curriculum.

responsibilities in the community, they were absent for several weeks at a time. Occasionally invited elders and community members would lead or participate in activities in their absence. I would estimate that this class received approximately four hours of Warlpiri instruction per fortnight over a term. The teaching team did not formally plan Warlpiri lessons together; all classes I observed involved planning support from the BRDU staff, in particular the linguist, and from me. Nevertheless, the non-Indigenous teacher was very supportive of Warlpiri lessons taking place and flexible to accommodate the Warlpiri educator's plans, even at short notice. The non-Indigenous teacher played an active role in Warlpiri lessons, taking on behaviour management, holding the big book for the Warlpiri teacher during whole class reading, and distributing resources.

In 2019 the class was taken over by a new teaching team, WT6 and KT6, who had previously co-taught a senior class for a year. They had a system of regularly planning together for all lessons after school. They also allocated time for Warlpiri lessons in their schedule several times per week. The non-Indigenous teacher supported with resourcing and behaviour management. The Warlpiri educator spent their early years of schooling as a student in Yuendumu School's bilingual program in the 1990s before leaving the community for boarding school. They had two years' teaching experience and had started an undergraduate degree at a university in a major city but returned to Yuendumu due to family commitments.

This Upper Primary class was comprised of roughly fifteen students aged between 10 and 12 years old. Seven students left the community in 2019 for boarding school and thus only participated in the first portion of my fieldwork period. It was with this class that I conducted the language awareness and language network mapping activities in October 2018 (see Chapter 5). There was one *kardiya* student who attended School of the Air<sup>38</sup> in the mornings and occasionally was present for Warlpiri lessons in the afternoon. Three of my recordings were taken when a relief teacher replaced the absent *kardiya* classroom teacher. In two of these cases this meant combining with the composite class below.

The Warlpiri lessons in 2018 were structured around the Goanna Planner program, with a key Warlpiri text linked to the theme. I observed a full Goanna Planner cycle comprising 22

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<sup>38</sup> School of the Air is a correspondence school for children too far away from urban centres to attend mainstream schools.

activities conducted around the *Lungkarda-kurlu* ‘Blue tongue lizard’ text. In Term 2, 2018 the teaching team also trialled teaching a science lesson through Warlpiri. In 2019 the teaching team followed integrated units structured around the Warlpiri Theme Cycle for social science (see Appendix A for example scope and sequence). They did not follow the Goanna Planner to plan literacy activities. Table 7.2 below shows the range of reading levels of the texts used for each theme.

<p><b>Term 3, 2018</b></p> <p><i>Kuyu</i> ‘Meat and Animals’</p>	<p><i>Lungkarda-kurlu</i> ‘Blue tongue lizard’ (Reading Level 2)</p> <p><i>Yumurru-wangu-kurlu</i> ‘Reptiles’ (Reading Level 5)</p>
<p><b>Term 4, 2018</b></p> <p><i>Jaru manu rdaka-rdaka</i> ‘Communication and Hand Signs’</p>	<p><i>Yimi-kirli</i> (Reading Level 2)</p> <p><i>Yulyurdu-kurlu</i> ‘About Smoke’ (Reading Level 3)</p>
<p><b>Term 1, 2019</b></p>	<p>No lessons observed.</p>
<p><b>Term 2, 2019</b></p>	<p><i>Nyurru-wiyi-warnu</i> ‘A long time ago’ (Reading Level 2)</p> <p><i>Nyurru-wiyi kalalpalu yupuju-rla wapaja</i> ‘In the olden days people used to wander the bush’(Reading Level 6)</p> <p><i>Jimpurru-kurlu</i> ‘About a donkey’ (Reading Level 4)</p>

**Figure 7.2 Books used in Upper Primary in 2018-2019**

### 7.3.2 Country Visits

In September 2018, as part of the annual Country Visits program, 30 Yuendumu school students and their families travelled south to a significant place called *Yarripirlangu* and camped with Nyirripi<sup>39</sup> school students and their families, non-Indigenous teachers from Nyirripi and Yuendumu schools, and several Warlpiri and *kardiya* rangers from the Central Land Council,

<sup>39</sup> Nyirripi is a neighbouring Warlpiri community roughly 2 hours’ drive from Yuendumu (see map in Figure 3.1 Chapter 3)

for three nights, four days<sup>40</sup>. Over the four days the group of roughly 60 people made day trips to significant sites and a night visit to Newhaven Sanctuary where a *mala* ‘Rufus hare wallaby’ enclosure had recently been built<sup>41</sup>. They also painted designs on their bodies, called *kuruwarri* ‘designs’, and learned and performed several dances, *yawulyu* ‘women’s ceremony’ on the final evening<sup>42</sup>. Examples of teaching and learning events observed on this trip included

- identifying kinship groups with tracts of land and *kirda* ‘traditional owners’ and *kurdungurlu* ‘managers’ of land
- storytelling at significant sites including moral tales, descriptions of landscapes, historical recounts and explaining social expectations
- identifying plants, animals, bush foods and their habitats
- learning dances and songs on specific sites
- learning painting and designs including collecting ochre and other materials
- discussing ways of behaving on sacred sites
- bush survival skills: tracking animals and finding water, making tools
- preparing animals (goanna, cat and kangaroo) for cooking
- learning specialised language for the above

Authority over teaching and learning was assumed by a group of elders who are traditional owners of the sites with knowledge related to the stories and activities. The Warlpiri educators from Yuendumu and Nyirripi schools took on the role of facilitating and resourcing the elders’ teaching by connecting them with materials required for learning and keeping the *kardiya* teachers abreast of their plans. On return to the classroom, the Warlpiri educators facilitated follow-up activities and invited the elders to guide the learning.

In sub-sections 7.2.1, 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 I described the unique classrooms that formed the contexts for this study in 2018 to 2019. The teaching configurations (i.e., instruction was led by a Warlpiri educator or by a team) and dynamics (e.g., team planning and teaching practices), student numbers and backgrounds as well as teaching content (i.e., the Warlpiri Theme Cycle themes) and resources utilised all had bearing on the types of participation structures (7.2.4) and practices (7.3) which I will discuss in the next sections.

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<sup>40</sup> I returned home early as my 2-year-old son became unwell on the fourth day.

<sup>41</sup> To address the extinction of the *mala* in the wild, the New Haven Sanctuary built a 1.8 metre-high, 44-kilometre, feral predator-proof fence to protect a small, reintroduced population of *mala*. For more about this initiative see: <https://www.australianwildlife.org/endangered-mala-released-into-biggest-feral-predator-free-area-on-mainland-australia/>

<sup>42</sup> I unfortunately wasn’t present for these activities



#### **7.1.4 Participation and Interactional structures in the Warlpiri program**

This section describes the participation and interaction structures commonplace in the Warlpiri program. Studies on classrooms have identified different participation structures as influential in guiding communication in ways that participants learn to expect (Cazden, 2001). Classrooms are dynamic spaces where teaching and learning is mediated by communicative practices, resources, and culturally informed activities. Although each lesson is unique with different educators, cohorts of students, content and environmental variables on the day, there are some patterned ways of participating and interacting and associated ways of speaking that can be described. Participation in classroom discourse not only transmits skills and knowledge but also socialises students into a “habitus” (Bourdieu, 1991) or a set of ideas, practices and norms that enable, as well as restrict, social action in a particular setting. In institutional contexts, such as classrooms, it is useful to identify the interactional projects – the modes (the participation structures, e.g., whole group, small group, peer-learning) and types (the activity-specific interactions e.g., talk around text or individual literacy practices) of interactions – in which the language practices occur (Cromdal, 2003, p. 747). In thinking about the relationships between agency and structure in speaker choices, I bear in mind Hymes’ (1987) reminder that “the goal in seeking to uncover patterns and functions of language use in context is to understand, not the replication of uniformity, but the organization of diversity”, that is “the actual diversity of habits, of motives, of personalities, of customs that ... coexist within the boundaries of any culturally organized society” (cited in Hornberger (2009, pp. 350-351).

Goffman’s concept of participation frameworks (1974) is useful to understand the ways in which expectations of behaviours are represented in specific contexts. Two cultural frameworks are at play in lessons, non-Indigenous Australian classroom discourse strategies “school way” expectations and Warlpiri approaches to learning that are holistic and relational. These cultural frameworks are drawn on by educators and students interchangeably and sometimes are interwoven and deployed at different times to accomplish their goals in teaching and learning events. Nakata (2001) has described this learning space between Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of being and knowing as the “cultural interface”. Much of the learning is mediated by English-informed pedagogies such as initiation-response-feedback routines and centred around texts.

***Whole class: Managing the activities and student behaviour***

Much of the learning in all contexts (in the school and on Country Visits) happened as a whole class, with the teacher at the front, addressing the group of students. This was characterised by extended teacher turns concerned with setting up the lesson, the activities, and expectations for behaviour. In all classes, educators' behaviour management involved appeals to listen and sit still. A commonly used phrase in the Early Years classes was "school way" employed by both Warlpiri and *kardiya* teachers to denote classroom behavioural expectations for sitting, answering, and talking, for example, "sitting school-way," means sitting cross legged on the floor, quietly and still.

In contrast to studies documenting silences and mis-aligned learning sequences in other contexts where other contexts where Indigenous students are instructed in a language or dialect other than their first (Angelo & Hudson, 2018; Malcolm & Sharifian, 2005; Malcolm et al., 1999; Moses & Wigglesworth, 2008; Philips, 1983; Sharifian, 2008), transcripts from lessons reflect constant verbalisations by the students with the teacher and each other, both on and off topic in Warlpiri and sometimes English. There was generally more student talk in the Early Years classes than the older class where the teacher and student turns were more separate and interactional routines more structured.

***Whole class: talk around text***

Learning in every context followed the Warlpiri Theme Cycle and every classroom session I observed from Early Years to Upper Primary was organised around a Warlpiri text from reference works, non-fiction, and fiction, complemented by use of dictionaries, flashcards, worksheets, literacy games and readers from basic to advanced levels (Browne Fieldnotes, August-June 2018/9; see Appendix H for a list of the literacy activities observed in each of the three classes in 2018/9).

A common mode of interaction when using texts involved the Warlpiri teacher speaking to the whole class, asking questions allowing students to self-select in their responses (c.f. Reeder, 2008) and occasionally calling on individual students, reflective of mainstream Initiation-Response-Evaluation (I-R-E) routines (Mehan, 1979). Within this structure, the teacher initiates an interactional sequence by asking a question, and one student is expected to give a short

response. Following the response, the teacher provides a brief evaluation – typically, “*yuwayi, ngurrju*” ‘Yes, good,’ or a similar expression of positive reinforcement – then moves ahead with a new question. In these I-R-E sequences in all classes, the students’ responses were usually short but immediate and enthusiastic, expressing engagement in the learning.

### ***Whole Class: Choral listing and reading sequences***

Whole class choral listing and choral reading were also common in all classroom contexts. In the Early Years listing target vocabulary was a routine practice and the educators often instructed students to read along in chorus. This practice was observed in the Upper Primary class as well, particularly when engaging with texts. The choral responses provided all students the opportunity to participate and produce target vocabulary. As noted in other classroom contexts (c.f. Chick, 1996) these types of chorsing sequences serve social as well as academic functions, such as building confidence, reducing loss of face, and affording all students a sense of accomplishment in the lesson.

### ***Small group work***

Small group work was also a common mode of learning for both cooperative tasks and individual tasks. Students either worked collaboratively to complete individual tasks (that is each student had a worksheet or task but were encouraged to help each other) or a single group task. During small group work, students would initiate interactions with the teacher, especially during individual learning to seek assistance, guidance, or validation. Early Years students were more likely to initiate off-topic interactions with the teacher than in the Upper Primary class<sup>43</sup>. Students in the Early Years' B class thrived in both competitive and cooperative learning interactions. Upper Primary educators often organised literacy activities to be conducted in pairs or small groups rather than individually. The Warlpiri educator in 2018 explained that this was so students could assist each other, and I observed this teacher was careful to group students with a mixture of abilities to facilitate this. This often meant that one student in a group completed their own work and spent the rest of the time supporting their peers to do the same.

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<sup>43</sup> I wondered if this is because the Early Years' students were accustomed to speaking to the Warlpiri educator on a range of non-school topics in the home and had less experience in expected school behaviours than their older peers. One of my Warlpiri mentors supported this idea.

Students interacted with each other both on topic and off topic and peer talk was constant during cooperative learning.

### ***Individual assessment***

When formally assessing students' learning, educators withdrew individual students from small group activities to perform a task and evaluated their productions using a checklist or rubric. Warlpiri educators were quick to prompt and support students who didn't respond immediately. They were encouraging of all student responses and produced frequent prompts (often whispered) when students hesitated to respond. As discussed in Chapter 6, Warlpiri educators view students' emotional wellbeing and self-esteem as crucial to their content learning. In their feedback and commentary, educators were likely to comment on students' learning behaviours such as engagement, willingness to listen and learn and to mark students as competent in a task regardless of whether they completed the task individually or with teacher support.

### ***Learning on Country Visits: Whole group and small group interactions***

The interactional configurations and expectations on Country Visits were slightly different to the classroom context. The most common mode was an elder standing or sitting at a significant site with the children sitting around them, listening to instruction and storytelling. As in other contexts in remote Central Australia, storytelling on bush trips at Yuendumu is a collaborative practice (Bell, 2002; Reeders, 2008). Several adults contribute to the narrative confirming the content and adding details. The norms governing this type of formal interaction require very little from the students in terms of productive performance when instruction is underway, but they are expected to be actively listening and observing. Then, when discussing the relevance of the story in terms of the students' relationships with the story and the tracts of land, they are expected to identify others or self-identify and respond to questions in I-R-E style routines.

Other types of learning interactions occurred when walking or driving to significant sites and these involved input from children in the form of collaborative commentary or questions (c.f. Reeders, 2008). During hands-on, experiential activities such as painting or creating an artefact, interactions involved instruction and discussion of materials in small groups and one-on-one, some off topic talk and stretches where talking was not required or expected.

This section has set the scene for teaching and learning in three different contexts, 7.2.1 Early Years' classrooms, 7.2.2 Upper Primary and 7.2.3 Bush trips. Although teaching and learning interactions are created in socially meaningful local situations, in the microcosms of these unique contexts, several patterned types and modes of interaction are evident across them (Rampton, 2006; Tainio, 2005, 2007). Classroom practices observed at Yuendumu School differed from the literature on Indigenous teaching and learning paradigms emphasising non-verbal observation and imitation-based styles of interaction (Harris, 1984; Nichol, 2005; Philips, 1983). While students were encouraged to listen and there were many directions for the students to be quiet, especially when talking off topic, their verbal input was encouraged at all levels from Early Years to Upper Primary, mostly in the form of I-R-E routines and choral, whole group responses. While researchers of Warlpiri children's language (Bavin, 1993, p. 322) suggest that question and answer routines are not common in Warlpiri society, because "the adult has knowledge, not the child, and questioning is not used as a teaching device", in the classroom these routines reflect common interactional routines in the "cultural interface" of the classroom (Nakata, 2007 and have been documented by Moses (2005; 2009) in the Kimberly, Western Australia). In the next section I describe the ways of speaking in the Warlpiri classroom across different classroom participation and interactional frameworks.

## **7.2 Ways of speaking in the Warlpiri classroom**

In this section, I describe the ways of speaking deployed in teaching and learning events by educators and students in the Warlpiri classrooms as a background to closer analysis of linguistic practices for establishing the classroom code. 'Ways of speaking' is a general term in ethnography of communication research to describe patterns of speech activity (Hymes, 1974). In taking a repertoire approach, I am interested in how educators and students select different features from their plurilingual repertoires to accomplish communicative goals in specific contexts. As the analyst, while it is impossible to interpret the speakers' every goal and motivation, close analysis of the accomplishment of interaction and metalinguistic commentary from educators themselves allowed patterns to be identified and described. This section sets the background of everyday interactions in the Warlpiri classroom to allow for more detailed analysis of the specific linguistic, pedagogic and socialisation practices for teaching in and of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' in subsequent sections of this chapter and the next (Chapter 8).

Educators and students use Warlpiri language for teaching and learning in all educational events from Early Years, Upper Primary, to teaching on bush trips within the Warlpiri program. Interactions are also multimodal, comprising gesture, gaze, facial expressions, body movement and object manipulation and include textual (oral and written), visual, and symbolic materials (Goodwin, 2007; Gumperz, 1999; Hymes, 1974). Educators and students' communicative repertoires comprise unilingual practices associated with *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' and plurilingual practices involving borrowing from, and code-switching between, varieties of English and features and forms from other varieties of Warlpiri, such as Light Warlpiri and Baby Talk (e.g., in the Early Years' A class where students are under the age of 5<sup>44</sup>). From a socio-constructionist point of view, students and educators co-construct their language use and create practices for the use of different configurations of their communicative resources to achieve different goals (Auer, 1998; Cromdal, 2005). Language users' competencies are always emergent García (2009). This means that the degree to which plurilingual speakers participate in communicative situations using unilingual practices, that is, features from one 'named' variety in their repertoire at a time, vary from individual to individual and over time and situation (Llompert, Masats, E. Moore & Nussbaum, 2020). Although these plurilingual practices diverge from the expressed target language policy of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' they are nevertheless productive in drawing on students' funds of knowledge and developing and building vocabulary and other features of the target code. I will describe these ways of speaking and provide some examples of their patterns and functions to give an idea of the general discursive environment and then to explore specific strategies.

### **7.2.1 *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri'**

As discussed in Chapter 6, educators have conceptualised *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' language, void of English and encompassing complex sentence structures and vocabulary, as both the goal for learning in Warlpiri lessons and an interactional resource. This target language policy is framed within concerns about changes to Warlpiri language and its use resulting from pressure from English dominance in all spheres of Warlpiri life. *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong

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<sup>44</sup> In interviews, Warlpiri educators commented on the influence of peer pressure in shaping children's language practices in the classroom. They referred to students from other communities in the central desert (Warlpiri and other), who adapted their speech to fit in with other students. This is consistent with research on peer influence on language learning (e.g., Swain & Lapkin, 1998). The fact that the older the students from Lajamanu were, the less likely they were to speak Light Warlpiri in the classroom, corroborates this supposition.

Warlpiri' is associated with elders' talk and is exemplified in their storytelling on bush trips (Example 7.1), and in the songs and texts that they have authored over the decades including cultural stories, histories, and reference materials (Example 7.2). Examples 7.1 and 7.2 are typical representations of unilingual expressions of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri,' void of English borrowings with complex sentence structures and terminology. Example 7.1<sup>45</sup> is an excerpt from a senior person telling the *Mala jukurrpa* 'Rufus haired Wallaby Dreaming' story on Country Visits.

(7.1)

- 1 E1:    *yarlu yarlu nya-nyi ka-npalu? Marliri-piya ngapa*  
           clearing clearing see-NPST PRES-2PL.S swamp-like water  
           'The clearing, clearing, can you see? The swampy water.
- 2            *mala-wardingki-patu-rlu-j Jungarrayi-rli,*  
           rufus.haired.wallaby-belonging-PL-ERG-TOP jungarrayi-ERG  
           'those belonging to the rufus-haired wallaby Jungarrayi'
- 3            *Japaljarri-rli, Japanangka-rlu an Japangardi-rli-lpa-lu-nyanu*  
           japaljarri-ERG japanangka-ERG and Japangardi-ERG-PSTImpf-PL-REFL  
           'Japangardi, Japanangka and Japangardi'
- 4            *purra-nja-ya-nu kuja-purda-lu yani-nja-ya-nu, nya-ngka?*  
           burn-INF-go-PST thus-towards-PL.S go-Impf-go-PST see-IMP  
           'were going along burning themselves, while going towards that way, see?'
- 5            *kuja-piya-rlu-lpa-nyanu purra-ja mala-wardingki-patu-lu-j*  
           thus-like-ERG-PST.Impf-REFL burn-PST mala-belonging-PL-TOP  
           'the people belonging to the *mala* dreaming were burning themselves like that'

(*Mala-kurlu* TR 06:47-07:01)

In example 7.1, features of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* include case suffixing, reflexive encoding with the anaphor *-nyanu* and the infinitival use to show concussion, *yani-nja-yanu* 'while going' (Laughren, 2010). The storyteller deployed specialised terminology such as *marlirri* 'cold weather' in this excerpt, to describe the frosty appearance of the Salt Lake. The storyteller explained that the term *purrami-nyanu* 'to burn oneself' has special connotations in men's

<sup>45</sup> E(number) denotes elder speech, WT (number) is Warlpiri Teacher and K(number) is *kurdu* 'child'

ceremony. When I asked about how to accurately understand and represent the meaning of the term *purrami* ‘burning’ in this context, Warlpiri mentors referred me to the book *Yapa-kurlangu purlapa manu panu-kari* ‘Warlpiri ceremonies’ (Gallagher, 2014) which describes the *Ngajakula* fire ceremony. The photograph depicts the *kurdungurlu* ‘managers’ “burning” the *kirda* ‘traditional owners’ during a *Ngajakula*<sup>46</sup> ‘fire ceremony.’



**Figure 7.3** Excerpt from *Yapa-kurlangu purlapa manu panu-kari* ‘Warlpiri ceremonies’ (Gallagher, 2014, p. 11)

Example 7.2 is an excerpt from the text, *Jinjiwarnu-rdukurduku-tirirtiri-kirli*, ‘The Crimson Chat’ (2006, p. 5-6) which is the second highest reading level (5) of Warlpiri published readers.

<sup>46</sup> *Ngajakula* ‘fire ceremony’ is similar to the better known *Jardiwanpa* ‘fire ceremony’ but owned by the opposing patrimoiety with a different songline (Curran, 2019).



(7.2)

- 1        *wirriya-jarra-rlu-pala pina-nya-ngu jurlpu wirnpirli-nja-kurra ngatijirri-piya.*  
 Boy-two-ERG-DU        again-hear-PST bird    whistling-Inf.O-COMP budgerigar-like  
 ‘the two boys looked again and heard a bird like a budgerigar, whistling’
- 2        *nya-ngu-lpa-pala            tarnnga-ngku. Kutu-jarri-ja-lku-pala wirriya-jarra-ju.*  
 see-PST-PST.IMPF-DU longtime-ERG close-INCHO-PST-then-DU boy-DU-TOP  
 ‘they both looked a long time. Then they went closer’
- 3        *ngula-jangka-ju jurlpu-ju paarrpardi-ja watiya-ngurlu-ju*  
 that-after-TOP    bird-TOP    fly-PST            tree-from-TOP  
 ‘After that the bird flew from’
- 4        *jinta-kari-kirra            watiya-kurra*  
 one-other-ALL            tree-ALL  
 ‘one tree to another’

Example 7.2 demonstrates cohesive devices to organise the events in the narrative such as *-lku* ‘then,’ *ngula-jangka* ‘after that’ and complex constructions such as the use of the suffix *-kurra* to show that what is whistling is the bird and not the boys. As in, *jurlpu wirnpirli-nja-kurra ngatijirri-piya* ‘the bird that is whistling like a budgerigar’ (cf. Hale et al., 1995). It also presents terminology that according to one of my Warlpiri mentors is not commonly used among children in contemporary parlance, *wirnpirlini* ‘whistling,’ who prefer the English verb.

There were also instructional monologues, or extended turns where the educators used Warlpiri with very little English influence as evidenced in example 7.3 in the Early Years’ A class.

(7.3)

- 1 WT5: *kaju kaju-npalu*<sup>47</sup> *miirnta well miirnta marda-rni mulyu-ngka,*  
 if    if-2PL.S    mucous well mucous    have-NPST nose-LOC  
 ‘if you if you have congestion in your nose’

<sup>47</sup> Two Warlpiri educators and I all hear *-malu* for *-npalu* here but in absence of acoustic phonetic analysis we have decided to represent it as *-npalu* which is already an innovation from the dual-exclusive form *-kangkulu*. This is interesting because co-articulation with a bilabial stop is very well-documented in other linguistic contexts (e.g., English) but not for Australian languages (Butcher & Fletcher, 2014).

- 2            *ka-npalu tarnga-juk marda-rni. Kuja kapi ya-ni-rni ampu<sup>48</sup>-kurra*  
 PRES 2PL.S long time-still have-NPST thus FUT go-NPST-hither here-  
 ALL            ‘you have it there for a long time. It will come this way’
- 3            *panu-jarlu-jarri panu-jarlu-jarri kapi*  
 many-very-INCHO many-very-INCHO FUT  
 ‘it will increase and increase’
- 4 CH20: *yakarra! Miirnta-rlangu!*  
 DIS mucous-also  
 ‘Gosh! There’s also snot!’[pointing at graphic in the book]
- 5 WT5: *kapi ngurrju-ma-ni-lki nyampu-kurra-jarri kapi*  
 FUT make-cause-NPST-then this-ALL-INCHO FUT  
 ‘it will then make this and it will go’
- 6            *langa-kurra-jarri kapu ampu-wana kapi wilypi.pardi*  
 ear-ALL-INCHO FUT this-PERL FUT go.out.NPST  
 ‘it will go through the ear and will go out’

(WT5 21.11.2018, 02:54-03:12)

In example 7.3 the educator is describing the process of congestion moving through the sinuses to the ear by showing students a diagram. The turns are largely void of English. The educator uses complex compound verbs such as *wilypi-pardimi* ‘emerge’ and constructions explaining causality. A student (CH20) responds in this interaction only using Warlpiri.

*Use of hand signs*     One modality associated with Warlpiri *pirrjirdi* is *rdaka-rdaka* ‘hand-signs’ a complete system of communication using hand signs (Kendon, 1980). Educators and sometimes students annotated their speech with commonly used manual representations such as *murnma* ‘wait’ or *lawa* ‘no/nothing.’ Educators were observed using *rdaka-rdaka* ‘hand signs’ to encourage and affirm correct student responses or ask, *nyiya-jangka?* ‘What do you want?’ when Warlpiri School Attendance officers entered the classroom in search of specific students. Hand signs were also explicitly taught as part of the *Jaru manu rdaka-rdaka* ‘Communication and Hand Signs’ Warlpiri Theme Cycle Theme in Term 4, 2018. Most educators I collaborated with told me they were not comfortable teaching *rdaka-rdaka* to students without the input of elders. They invited elders as guests, used video recordings from

<sup>48</sup> Baby talk for *nyampu* - here

the BRDU and the *Iltyem-iltyem* Australian Indigenous Sign Languages website<sup>49</sup>. I observed teachers using a book called, '*Rdaka-rdaka marlu-witalpa nyinaja*' 'Hand signs: There lived a little kangaroo' (Dickson, 2006), a widely known text, often sung in classrooms, with photographs of Yuendumu elder Coral Napangardi Gallagher demonstrating the hand signs for every line of the text (see Figure 7.4).



**Figure 7.4** *Rdaka-Rdaka Marlu-witalpa nyinaja* 'Hand signs, Little Kangaroo' book.

In the Early Years' A class, the educator annotated her reading of the story *Marlungku karla warrirni kurdu-ku* 'The kangaroo is looking for her baby' with hand signs for several kin and animal terms including, *ngamarlangu* 'mother-daughter pair,' *ngati* 'mother', *kurdu* 'child', *marlu* 'kangaroo' and *yankirri* 'emu', *wardapi* 'goanna' and *kanyarla* 'wallaby'. An excerpt from this teaching is in Example 7.4.

<sup>49</sup> <https://iltyemiltyem.com/film/>

(7.4)

- 1 WT5: *nyiya-kurlu nyampu-ju?*  
 what-COM this-TOP  
 ‘what is this about?’ {holds up a book}
- 2 K20: *°marlu-kurl °*  
 kangaroo-COM  
 ‘about kangaroos’
- 3 WT5: *marlu-kurlu!*  
 kangaroo-COM  
 ‘about kangaroos’
- 4 K20: *marlu-kurlu!*  
 kangaroo-COM  
 ‘about kangaroos’
- 5 KK: *marlu-kurlu!*  
 kangaroo-COM  
 ‘about kangaroos’ {in chorus}
- 6 WT5: *nyarrpa rdaka-rdaka-ju marlu-ju?*  
 how hand-hand-TOP kangaroo-TOP  
 ‘what is the hand sign for kangaroo?’
- 7 K26: {uses correct hand sign, another student makes approximate gesture}
- 8 WT5: Yeah, good boy!
- 9 V: *marlu-ngku* {reading the book cover}  
 kangaroo-ERG  
 ‘kangaroo’
- 10 WT5: see? *Marlu-kurlu, nya-ngka. Marlu-kurlu nya-ngka? nya-ngka*  
 see kangaroo-COM see-IMP kangaroo-COM see-IMP see-IMP  
 ‘see? It’s about kangaroos, see? {makes hand sign} About kangaroos, see?  
 {makes sign} See? {repeats hand sign}’
- 11 *ya-nta-rni ampu-kurra nyuntu-j. Kalkurn-purda-jarri-ya*  
 go-IMP-hither DET-ALL you-TOP middle-towards-INCHO-IMP  
 ‘come here you. Turn around’

- 12        *kalkurn-pura-jarri-ya*  
          middle-towards-INCHO-IMP  
          ‘turn around.’
- 13 V:     maybe just tell the story instead of reading? Maybe tell it?
- 14 WT5:  righto *nyurruwiyi-lpa nyina-ja marlu.*  
          righto long.ago-PST.Impf    be-PST kangaroo  
          ‘right-o a long time ago there was a kangaroo.’
- 15        *Kurdu-wita-kurlu. Kala-lpa-pala ya-nu ngarni-njaku marna-ku ngamarlangu*  
          child-small-COM    USIT-Impl-DU    go-PST eat-NOM    grass-DAT mother.child.pair  
          ‘with her baby. The pair used to go together to eat grass’  
          {reads the story and shows the hand sign for mother-child-pair}
- 16 K25:  *ngamarlangu    mayi?*  
          mother.child.pair INTERR  
          ‘is this (the hand sign for) mother-child pair’  
          {attempts hand sign with approximate accuracy}
- 17 V:     Do you know the story? Cos they’re all wriggly, aren’t they?  
          {points at several students who are lying on their backs and calling out answers }
- 18 WT5:  yeah *ngamarlangu-ju kuja*  
          yeah mother.child.pair-TOP thus  
          ‘yeah this is how to do mother-child-pair’  
          {ignores the volunteer and shows the student the correct hand sign again }

(WT5 15.11.2018 12:45-13:36)

In this example, 7.4, the educator is reading the story and asks the students if they know the hand sign for kangaroo (line 6). Some students respond with the correct and approximate hand signs and the educator affirms the correct one. WT5 reads on and introduces the hand sign for the kin term *ngamarlangu* ‘mother-child-pair.’ This interaction also exemplifies a common dynamic of incursions from a non-Warlpiri speaking *kardiya* volunteer (V). Despite the students’ engagement with the Warlpiri educator, the *kardiya* volunteer attempts to divert the lesson in English, suggesting that the students’ attention is waning because some of the 4–5-year-olds were wriggling on the floor. In this case, the Warlpiri educator ignores the interruptions in the non-target code and continues to instruct the students in Warlpiri about the hand signs. This was one of several strategies the educators reported employing to (re)establish

the symbolic and functional status of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong' as the classroom code and I will discuss others in section 7.3.1 of this Chapter.

## 7.2.2 Contemporary Warlpiri in the classroom

In addition to exemplars of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri', evident in oral and written texts, the classroom speech data reflected contemporary ways of speaking Warlpiri with some of the minor documented impacts on Warlpiri language use from contact with English (see O'Shannessy, 2020; Bavin and Shopen, 1985 and discussed in sub-section 3.1.4 in this thesis).

In the classroom data, English borrowings occurred in cases where there are no ready functional alternatives in the Warlpiri lexicon, such as school words (e.g., pencil, worksheet), phrases for school concepts (such as "have a go" meaning to attempt an activity, "sitting school way" meaning sitting as per the school expectations and rules: cross legged, still and quiet) and Warlpiri ways of using English (e.g. 'cheeky' meaning dangerous, 'right skin' meaning someone from the appropriate subsection for marriage, 'sheet' meaning 'worksheet'). English temporal markers (e.g., 'early') and conjunctions (e.g., 'so' 'an/'and', 'but') were often inserted into clauses, as is commonly evidenced in language contact situations (c.f. Poetsch, 2018, p. 155; Wilkins 1996 for Arrernte, Matras and Sakel, 2007 and Bavin & Shopen, 1985 for Warlpiri).

As has been documented in previous research (e.g., Nash, 1983, Bavin, 1989, O'Shannessy, 2005), English borrowings usually maintained Warlpiri morphosyntax, taking on focus markers, case markers and other morphology. Generally, borrowings also showed assimilation of the Warlpiri phonological system (i.e., beginning with consonant, ending with a vowel)<sup>50</sup>. However, as recently documented by O'Shannessy, Culhane et al., (2019), word-final consonants and English-derived consonant clusters were also evidenced in natural speech (for Example /sk/ in *skurlu-rla* 'school-LOC' vs *kuurlu-rla* 'school-LOC' or *swim-jarrimi* 'swim-INCHO' vs *juwimi-jarrimi* 'swim-INCHO'. Reductions of final vowel sounds, and deletion of a velar stop from the velar form of ergative and locative clitics (e.g., *ngurra-nga* for *ngurra-ngka* 'home-LOC') were also evidenced in the data.

<sup>50</sup> As observed by Bavin, (1989, p. 271) three decades ago.

The students appeared to prefer some English concepts over the Warlpiri neologisms, for example colour and number terms. During choral routines in both Early Years' A and B classes the students called out the English number and colour terms before the educator had the chance to, whereas the opposite was true for Warlpiri<sup>51</sup>. This could be because these terms engineered for the school context have not been taken up widely in other community domains.

There were examples of English verbs inserted into Warlpiri pre-verb slots and combined with either of two bound inflecting Warlpiri verbs, the inchoative *-jarrimi* or causative *-mani* (O'Shannessy, 2005; Nash 1983; Bavin & Shopen, 1985). Many were used interchangeably with their Warlpiri equivalents (as described by in Yuendumu the 1980s by Bavin and Shopen (1985)) and some causative compounds were only expressed by the English derived form (as outlined in Table 7.1).

	<i>Inchoative -jarrimi (non-past forms)</i>	<i>Causative -mani (non-past forms)</i>
Warlpiri compound exclusively attested in speech data	<i>palka-jarrimi</i> – born	<i>jinta-mani</i> -put together
English preverb + Warlpiri bound verb used interchangeably with Warlpiri equivalent	live- <i>jarrimi</i> = <i>nyinami</i> play- <i>jarrimi</i> = <i>manyu-karrimi</i> swim- <i>jarrimi</i> = <i>julyurl-wantimi</i> learn- <i>jarrimi</i> = <i>pina-jarrimi</i>	hold- <i>u</i> <sup>52</sup> - <i>mani</i> = <i>mardarni</i> do- <i>mani</i> = <i>ngurrju-mani</i> cut- <i>i-mani</i> = <i>pajirni</i> write- <i>i-mani</i> = <i>yirrarni</i> teach- <i>i- mani</i> = <i>pina-mani</i> follow- <i>mani</i> = track- <i>i-mani</i> / <i>yitaki-mani</i> blow- <i>mani</i> = <i>nyuurl-pinyi</i>
Only English-based compound attested in speech data	none found	help- <i>mani</i> <sup>53</sup> -help riiti/read- <i>i-mani</i> – read choose- <i>i-mani</i> - choose pick- <i>i-mani</i> – select use- <i>i-mani</i> - use close- <i>i-mani</i> - close jat-im-up- <i>mani</i> -shut

**Table 7.1 Examples of borrowings in compound verbs and their Warlpiri equivalents in the data**

While in the 1980s, all documented borrowings of English verbs into Warlpiri became preverbs (Bavin & Shopen, 1985, p. 82), in this classroom speech data the children sometimes, though

<sup>51</sup> For more about Warlpiri visual discourse and concerning “colour talk” see (Wierzbicka, 2008).

<sup>52</sup> I follow O'Shannessy in glossing as euphonic, phonological integration by vowel addition.

<sup>53</sup> When asked, two educators said they know there is a “hard way” for the word but didn't know what it was.

still less frequently, borrowed English verbs without the Warlpiri bound inflecting verb. For example, a pre-schooler told her educator, *ngaju sing-i* '1SG sing-EUPH-NPST' to which the Warlpiri educator responded with the Warlpiri *yunparni* 'sing-NPST' and the child repeated using the compound *sing-i-ma-nu* 'sing-EUPH-CAUSE-PST' (see example 7.7 for more of this interaction). This educator's practice of orienting to the students' speech, evaluating it (tacitly or overtly) and offering a response, was commonplace when teaching the target code as I discuss in the next section.

### **7.3 Linguistic strategies for teaching *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri': establishing and diverging from a target language policy**

The main goal of this section is to shed light on some of the distinguishing features of how a target-code policy is materialised in situ in the Warlpiri language classroom. The strategies for establishing, and where necessary re-establishing, *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' as the target code come from the educators' own analyses of what they do (as identified in Chapter 6), and these are supported by the analysis of speech data in this study (discussed in section 7.3.1). There are also instances where the educator's and students' practices diverge from the target code. In these situations, accommodation by Warlpiri educators of plurilingual practices facilitated negotiation of meaning and collaborative vocabulary processing that appeared to be productive in achieving the goals of Warlpiri language transmission and maintenance (discussed in section 7.3.2).

#### **7.3.1 (Re) establishing *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong' as the classroom code**

In interviews conducted with Warlpiri educators (see Chapter 6) the educators described several normative and situated strategies for enforcing a target language policy of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' as the medium of classroom interactions in the context of other ways of speaking (Amir & Musk, 2013; Browne & Gibson, 2021). This involved educator-initiated evaluation of student language use against the *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' register using techniques such as explicitly setting expectations for language use when transitioning to Warlpiri instruction (7.3.1.1), modelling strong Warlpiri and recasting lexicon or structures (7.3.1.2), reminders to use the target code, elicitation of another response by way of prompts for more appropriate forms (7.3.1.3) or simply requests for the student to re-represent the utterance in what has been called guided performance (c.f. L. Moore, 2004) (7.3.1.4).



## 7.3.1.1 Transitioning to the Warlpiri lesson

At the beginning of the observed lessons<sup>54</sup>, the Warlpiri educator would announce the transition from mainstream learning in English to the Warlpiri lesson. Often this would involve a reminder of the term's theme within the Warlpiri Theme Cycle as exemplified in example 7.4 or asking whether the children were ready to learn Warlpiri, as in example 7.5<sup>55</sup>.

(7.5)

- 1 WT3: *kurdu-kurdu?* Theme *jalangu-j nyiya ka-rlipa*  
 child-redup theme now-TOP what PRES-1PL.INCL  
 'Kids? What is the theme now that all'
- 2 *ole-lot-i-ng nyampu-rla ol class-i-ng*  
 whole.lot-EUPH-ERG here-LOC all class-EUPH-ERG  
 'all the classes here'
- 3 *school-u-ng do-man?*  
 school-EUPH-LOC do-CAUSE-PST  
 'in the school did?'

(WT3 Flower 22.05.00:08-00:16)

(7.6)

- 1 WT3: *nyurru-mayi kurdu-kurdu?* Warlpiri lesson *jalangu-ju*  
 ready-INTERR child-redup Warlpiri lesson now-TOP  
 'Are you ready kids? Warlpiri lesson now'

(WT3 29.11.2018 00:43-00:50)

In the Early Years' B class, the educator employed a routine of listing sequences using Warlpiri wall posters to indicate a transition to Warlpiri-medium teaching and in her own words, "warm up" for the lesson ahead. The educator, WT2 explained to me that these predictable, scripted

<sup>54</sup> With the exception of the preschool class where all learning, all day was conducted by the same Warlpiri educator in Warlpiri.

<sup>55</sup> Note the vowel final reductions for *-ju* (-TOP) expressed as *-j* and *-manu* (CAUSE-PST) expressed as *-man* although without detailed phonological analysis it is hard to know the extent

routines, guided by Warlpiri wall posters were a good way to transition the focus from English-centred activities to the Warlpiri-centred ones.

Similarly, on Country Visits, prior to commencing storytelling, the instructor would explicitly lay out expectations for behaviour and language use. Consistent with other studies of learning on significant sites (F. Christie, 2002; M. Christie, 1985; M. Christie, Harris, & McClay, 1987) children are expected to actively listen, and there are frequent questions and confirmations that they are doing so (e.g., *purda-nyanyi ka-nku-ju-lu?* ‘are you listening to me’). Example 7.7 illustrates the way an elder sets up the expectations for students’ language use while teaching about a site of cultural significance.

(7.7)

- 1 E1: *ngana-ngku ka marda-rni langa-jarra-ju*  
 who-ERG PRES.3SG.Impf hold-NPST ear-two-TOP  
 ‘who has got two ears’
- 2 *pardanya-nja-kurlangu-ju*  
 listen-INF-belonging-TOP  
 ‘in order to listen?’
- 3 KK: me!
- 4 E1: *an kaji-npalu* any question, Warlpiri, really strong question word  
 and IRR-2PL.S any question Warlpiri really strong question word  
 ‘and if you have any question in Warlpiri, really strong question words’
- 5 *Warlpiri payi-ka-lu [E1 name], nganta?*  
 Warlpiri ask-IMP-PL [E1 name] right  
 ‘ask in Warlpiri [E1], right?’
- 6 *yungu-npalu pina-jarri-mi. If its kaji yirdi-ma-ni Walawurru,*  
 COMP-2PL.S know-INCHO-NSPT IRR name-CAUS-NSPT wedge.tailed.eagle  
 ‘if you’re learning, if its if you’re naming wedge tailed eagle’
- 7 *nyiya-piya Walawurru-ju?*  
 what-like wedge.tailed.eagle-TOP  
 ‘what (kind of thing) is a *Walawurru*?’

(Walawurru-jukurra 00:52-01:27)

In example 7.7, the elder begins by asking the children if they have two ears to listen, eliciting a positive response from the students. They then set the expectations for the interaction, asking students to be conscious of their language use when asking questions, insisting they use “really strong question word” (line 4). The storyteller also checks (lines 6-7) that the students know the key Warlpiri vocabulary related to the story, *Warlawurru*, a ‘wedge-tailed eagle’. And they continue their commentary closely aligning with features of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri.’

Once a transition to Warlpiri has been made, there are other linguistic strategies deployed by educators to (re)establish *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* as the code for teaching and learning. These include recasts, prompts and guided performance and I explain and exemplify these strategies in turn.

### 7.3.1.2 Recasts

In interviews, Warlpiri educators described an in-class strategy of providing Warlpiri alternatives to English utterances, or recasts (WT3 Interview, 2018, WT5, WT1). While it has previously been noted that in Yuendumu adults don’t tend to recast utterances of very young children, preferring a Baby Talk register that emulates the children’s speech (Bavin 2010; Laughren, 1984), recasts appear to be a pedagogic and discourse strategy invoked for the classroom domain (c.f. Lyster & Mori, 2006; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). While working together on a transcription, one educator reflected, “they say it in English, then I say it in Warlpiri.” There were many examples of educator recasts without explicit commentary as in example 7.8 in this Early Years class.

(7.8)

1 WT5: *nyuntu-rlangu ka-npa      yunpa-rni*  
 you-also      PRES-2SG    sing-NPST  
 ‘you sing as well’

2 K25: *ngaju sing-i*  
 1SG    sing-EUPH-NPST  
 ‘I’m singing’

3 WT5: *yunpa-rni      yungu-npalu*  
 sing-NPST      COMP-2PL.S  
 ‘you’re singing’

4 K25: see? *Ngaju-rna nyurru sing-i-ma-nu*  
 see 1SG-1SG already sing-EUPH-CAUS-PST  
 ‘see? I already sang’

(WT5 21.11.2018 20:21-20:26)

In example 7.8, the educator tells a student in Warlpiri that they should sing as well (line 1). The student replies using the English verb ‘sing’ (line 2) and the educator counters with a repetition of the Warlpiri equivalent, *yunparni* ‘sing’ (line 3) to which the student responds using ‘sing’ with the causative suffix, *-manu*. Similar practices were also employed in the Upper Primary classroom. In another example (7.9), the Warlpiri educator offered the Warlpiri alternative when the student used the English word, ‘cloud’, re-establishing the target vocabulary required for the activity.

(7.9)

1 KK1: [WT3]! [WT3]! *Cloud-wan yirra-rnu*  
 [WT3] [WT3] cloud-NOM put-PST  
 ‘WT3! WT3! He put a cloud there’

2 WT3: *yirra-ka mangkurdu*  
 put-IMP cloud  
 ‘Put a cloud’

(WT3 26.09.2018 01:07:04-01:07:11)

In another instance, example 7.10 the Upper Primary class is talking about the anatomy of blue tongue lizards. The educator, WT3, models the Warlpiri verb *palyu-palyu-jarrimi* ‘dart in and out’ to describe the tongue moving in and out of its mouth. WT3 then asks the students to describe the tongue, to check their understanding of *palyu-palyu-jarrimi* which is uncommon in everyday parlance. When a student uses the English preverb ‘sticking-out’ with the inchoative *-jarrimi* (line 5), reduced to *-jayi*, the Warlpiri educator affirms the student’s correct response and provides another Warlpiri alternative, *wilypi-pardimi* ‘emerge’ (line 6). This interaction reveals an explicit process of eliciting and teaching Warlpiri vocabulary terms.

(7.10)

- 1 WT3: *Yirdi-kari palyu-palyu ngula ka jalanypa palyu-palyu-jarri-mi*<sup>56</sup>  
word-other dart.in.and.out ANAPH PRES.3SG tongue dart.in.and.out-INCHO-NPST  
'another word is "palyu-palyu'. Its tongue goes in and out.
- 2 *nyiya kuja-ju jalanypa?*  
What thus-TOP tongue  
'What's the tongue like?'
- 3 K14: *blue-wan jalanypa*  
blue-NOM tongue  
'it's a blue tongue'
- 4 WT3: *nyarrp-kuja-j yangka wangka-mi ka?*  
how thus-TOP ANAPH say-NPST PRES.3SG  
'What is another way of saying it'
- 5 K14: *sticking-out-jayi ka*  
sticking-out-INCHO PRES.3SG  
'it is sticking out'
- 6 WT3: *yeah, ngurrju. Wilypi-pardi ka jalanypa*  
yeah good emerge-NST PRES.3SG tongue  
'yeah good the tongue comes out'

(Zeck Fish 30.08, 01:05- 01:15)

In the Early Years' A class, the educator's recasts also involved explicit explanation. In Example 7.11, the Warlpiri educator offers English and Warlpiri equivalents consecutively and then points out the Warlpiri term.

(7.11)

- 1 K25: *ngula-piya mayi miirnta?*  
this-like INTERR mucous  
'is it like this, the snot?'
- 2 WT5: *ay:::! ay! Yeah blow! Blow-ma-nta. Nyuulypu-ngka, NYUULY-PU-NGKA!*  
ay ay yeah blow blow-CAUSE-IMP blow -IMP blow-IMP  
'Ay ay yeah blow! Blow! Blow! Blow!'

---

<sup>56</sup> Line one is the text read from the book.

- 3            *Warlpiri-rli-ji*            *nyuulypi-nyi*. [name] you gotta blow your nose too!  
 Warlpiri-ERG-TOP    blow NPST  
 ‘In Warlpiri its “nyuuly-pinyi” [student name] you gotta blow your nose too!’

(WT5 15.11.2018 05:59-06:13)

In line 2, the educator expressed the imperative forms in English “blow”, then in Warlpiri with the compound, “*blow-manta*” and then the ‘strong Warlpiri’ equivalent’ *nyuuly-pu-ngku*. In line 3 they explicitly pointed out the Warlpiri verb, *nyuuly-pinyi*. Then they instructed a specific student sitting next to the English-speaking volunteer who was holding the tissue box, “you gotta blow your nose too.” It could be surmised that their intersentential switch to English was motivated by the need to include the volunteer assisting them to support students to practise blowing their noses (the linguistic choices involved in working in a cross-cultural/linguistic team are further explored in section 7.3.2).

### 7.3.1.3 Prompts

Another strategy employed by educators to maintain *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ as the classroom code was to prompt students to respond using the Warlpiri term or request the Warlpiri alternative. Prompting has been described as a widespread language socialisation practice in various cultural and linguistic communities (eg. Kaluli by Schieffelin, 1990; Samoan by Ochs, 1998; Inuit by Crago, Allen and Pesco, 1998 and Mayan by de León 1998). In the Warlpiri classroom context, the educator’s efforts to elicit the desired lexicon and structures were often achieved using prompts to use a Warlpiri term. These involved annotating a question in I-R-E routines with prompts such as “Warlpiri!” to remind the students to use the classroom code (as in Example 7.12).

(7.12)

- 1 WT3: *nyarrpa yangka ngula-pala ka-lu nyina-mi mapirri-lki*  
 how like DET-DU PRES-3PL live-NPST together-then  
 ‘How do these two live together then?’
- 2 K2: *married-i Married-i*  
 married-EUPH married-EUPH  
 ‘in a relationship! In a relationship!’

- 3 WT3: *yuwayi nyiya-rlangu? Warlpiri!!*  
Yes, what-also Warlpiri  
'yes, what else? In Warlpiri!'
- 4 KK: *an jirrama an jirrama.*  
And two and two  
'and two and two'
- 5 K??: happy! happy!
- 6 WT3: *an yapa- Warlpiri name yangka yirdi?*  
And Indigenous Warlpiri name like word  
'and our-way- what's the Warlpiri name for that word?'
- 7 K2: *°ahhh wardinyi°*  
ahhh happy  
'ahhh happy'
- 8 K4: *wardinyi!*  
happy  
'happy'
- 9 WT3: *yuwayi!nyarrpa?Wardinyi-jarri-ja-pala, angka?*  
yes how happy-INCHO-PST-DU TAG  
'yes and they became happy didn't they?'
- 10 KK: *wardinyi-jarri-ja-pala!*  
happy-INCHO-PST-DU  
'they became happy'

(WT3 16.08, 15:30- 15:48)

The educator, WT3, engaged in a typical interaction, asking questions about the story's protagonists. They ask, 'how did these two live together?' to which the students shout out in unison *marrirdi* 'married'! This is a conventionalised borrowing from English "married" which has the Warlpiri meaning, 'in an intimate relationship'<sup>57</sup>. WT3 accepted this response with an affirmative *yuwayi* 'yes' but is actually requiring a different response. They prompt the students to use a Warlpiri alternative, by asking "*nyiya-rlangu! Warlpiri!*" 'What else, in Warlpiri!' (line 3). When the students once again respond in English, they ask for the "Warlpiri name" (line 6).

<sup>57</sup> For more discussion about the concept of relationships in Warlpiri refer to Musharbash, Y. (2010), 'Marriage, Love Magic and Adultery: Warlpiri Relationships as Seen by Three Generations of Anthropologists', *Oceania*, 80 (3). pp.272-288.

When the students respond using the single Warlpiri utterance “*wardinyi*” ‘happy’ the educator is satisfied and models desired response in a full sentence, “*yuwayi! nyarrpa? Wardinyi-jarri-ja-pala, angka?*” ‘yes and the two became happy didn’t they?’ (line 9), also reiterating the preferred code while still allowing the interaction to flow smoothly. The authentication value of this move was evidenced by several students repeating the last part of the sentence in chorus (line 10). The educator affirmed responses that are conceptually correct, but not reflective of the target register, *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ whilst prompting for the response in the target variety. Their approach was accepting of and responsive to various ways of using the students’ repertoires all the while guiding the conversation towards the preferred construction. This approach appeared to allow students to engage and respond enthusiastically, drawing on their whole repertoire and expanding their communicative potential in Warlpiri.

As in 7.12 prompting would usually (though not always) have the desired result of eliciting student responses using the target linguistic feature or lexicon. In the next example (7.13) other students chime in to evaluate the Warlpiri term, with reference to a concept *pirrjirdi* ‘strong’ that is used in a lot of Warlpiri health messaging and is the title of a book that is taught in Early Years *Kurdu-kurdu Nyinanjaku Pirrjirdi* ‘Healthy kids,’ teaching healthy habits.

(7.13)

- 1 WT4: [student name], *nyiya-jangka Warlpiri ngurrju-j? Pina-jarri-njaku?*  
[student name] why-from Warlpiri do-TOP learn-INCHO-NOM  
‘[student name], why do we do Warlpiri? The learning?’
- 2 *nyiya-jangka Warlpiri? xxx inya* always in *rduku-rduku-rl*<sup>58</sup> *kuja wangka-ya.*  
Why Warlpiri this always in heart-LOC thus say-IMP  
‘Why Warlpiri? Say thus, “it’s always in the heart.”’
- 3 *nyiya-jangka? Warlpiri?*  
Why Warlpiri?
- 4 K7: *strong-u-nyayirni*  
*strong-EUPH-very*  
‘very strong’

<sup>58</sup> *rduku-rduku* in the Warlpiri dictionary is ‘chest’ and there is an interesting extension of chest to heart as the seat of emotions



- 5 WT4: strong. *Nyiya strong-u yirdi Warlpiri-rli inya-j? pirr...*  
strong what strong-EUPH word Warlpiri-ERG this-TOP pirr  
'Strong. What is the word for strong in Warlpiri? Pirr...'
- 6 KK: *pirrjirdi! Pirrjirdi!*  
strong strong  
'strong strong'
- 7 K7: *pirrjirdi! Strong!*  
Strong strong  
'Strong. Strong'
- 8 WT4: *pirrjirdi, strong.*  
strong strong  
'Strong. Strong'
- 9 K18: *pirrjirdi nyina-ya!*  
strong be-IMP  
'Keep strong'
- 10 KK: *kurdu-kurdu nyina-njaku pirrjirdi!*  
child-redup sit-NOM strong  
'Kids keeping strong' {referring to book title}

(WT4 30.04.2019, 35:01-35-55)

Examples like these are occasions when students are attuned to the normative expectations around language use in the Warlpiri classroom and responsive to educators' efforts to (re)establish its status.

#### 7.3.1.4 Guided performance

Another strategy employed by Warlpiri educators is known as guided repetition (L. Moore, 2004), a form of rote modelling of the exact grammatical and lexical forms, sometimes preceded by a request "*kuja wangkaya*" 'say it like this'. This is consistent with the standpoint that learning occurs through repeated exposure, "i.e., listening and watching over and over" (c.f. Ochs, 1988, p. 137). Guided performance was a common practice in one-on-one teacher-student interactions, particularly for assessment. For example, in the following excerpt in the Early Years' B class, the teacher, WT2 was testing a student following an activity where students cut out and glued footprints and text next to respective animals. WT2 showed them

cards made by the students themselves with animal tracks and asks them questions about who they belong to, and whether that animal can be eaten. These areas of knowledge were identified in an observed planning workshop and past workshops (Disbray, O'Shannessy, et al., 2020) as important learning goals for the *Kuyu* 'meat and animals' theme in the Early Years.

(7.14)

- 1 WT2: *kala nyiya-kurlangu wirliya nyampu-ju? maliki-kurlangu*  
 CONJ what-POSS tracks this-TOP dog-POSS  
 'and whose tracks are those? A dog's.'
- 2 K11: °*maliki-kangu*°  
 dog-POSS  
 'a dog's'
- 3 WT2: *kuyu mayi maliki-ji?*  
 meat INTERR dog-TOP  
 'are dogs meat?'
- 4 K11: no:::!
- 5 WT2: °*lawa kuyu-wangu* ° [whispers] *kala jinta-lk ampu-ju.*  
 no meat-without CONJ another-then this-TOP  
 'no they're not edible. And next one is this.'
- 6 *Nyiya ampu-ju? (.) °Nyampu-ju yankirri° (.) Nyampu-ju yankirri*  
 what this-TOP this-TOP emu this-TOP emu  
 'What is this?' This is an emu. This is an emu'
- 7 K11: emu!
- 8 WT2: *yeah yankirri, nyampu-ju yankirri*  
 yeah emu this- TOP emu  
 'yeah emu, this is an emu'
- 9 K11: *yankarri!* {mispronounces vowel sound}  
 'emu'
- 10 WT2: *nyiya-kurlangu wirliya nyampu-ju?*  
 what-POSS tracks this-TOP  
 'whose tracks are those'
- 11 K??: *yankirri!*  
 'emu'

- 12 WT2: *yankirri-kurlangu*  
emu-POSS  
'the emu's'
- 13 K11: *yankirri-kangu*  
emu-POSS  
'the emu's'
- 14 WT2: *kuyu mayi yankirri-ji ka-rlipa nga-rni?*  
meat INTERR emu-TOP PRES-1PL.INCL eat-NPST  
'do we eat emu meat?'
- 15 K11: yeah!
- 16 WT2: "*kuyu ngurrju-nyayirni*" *wangka-ya*  
meat good-very say-IMP  
say "it's very good meat"
- 17 K11: *kuyu ngurrju-nyayirni*  
meat good-very  
'it's very good meat'

(WT2 29.08. 2018, 45:52-46:22)

The educator asked the question, 'whose tracks are these?' then left a very small pause before modelling the correct answer in a whispered tone, which the student loudly repeated at first using a single word and then phrase (as in lines 2 and 4) and later reproducing the full utterance (as in line 17). The educator appeared to be orienting not only to content knowledge but also to the form of the possessive suffix *-kurlangu* 'belonging to.' The reduced form *-kangu* deployed by the student has been previously identified in a workshop as "not strong Warlpiri"<sup>59</sup> (NTDoE, 2016b).

Guided performance was not only reserved for one-on-one interactions but was also used in whole group I-R-E routines. In Example (7.15) in the Upper Primary class the educator begins the lesson by reminding the students of the subject of a reference book they have already read.

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<sup>59</sup> O'Shannessy (2005, p. 35) has documented reduction of the possessive case-marker *-kurlangu*, which becomes *-kang*.

(7.15)

- 1 WT3: *Kurdu-kurdu nyurru nyina-ya-lu!*     *an nyampu-lku kapu-rna-nyarra*  
 child-redup enough sit-IMP-PL and this -then FUT-1SG.S-2PL.O  
 ‘kids enough, sit down. And I am going to’
- 2     *book-u yirri-purra-mi ngula-ju, milya-pi-nyi ka-npalu*  
 book-EUPH tell-NPST this-TOP remember-NPST PRES-2PL.S  
 ‘tell this book, and you remember’
- 3     *nyiya-kurlu nyampu-j kurdu-kurdu?*     *wangka-ya-lu nganayi wurra!*  
 what-COM this-TOP child-redup say-IMP-PL ANAPH wait  
 ‘what is this about, kids? Say this uhm wait’
- 4     “*yumurru-wangu-kurlu. Kuyu manu kuyu-wangu*” *yuwayi,*  
 fur-without-COM meat and meat-without yes  
 ‘“About reptiles that we eat and those we don’t” yes’
- 5 KK: *yumurru-wangu-kurlu!*  
 fur-without-COM  
 ‘about reptiles’
- 6?K19: *lizard-i-kirli!*     *kuyu-wangu-kurlu*  
 lizard-EUPH-COM meat-without-COM  
 ‘About lizards. We don’t eat them’

(WT3 30.08. 2018, 00:35-00:55)

In line 2, the educator, WT3, reminds the students that they already know the book, and in line 3 asks them to summarise what it is about. Without pause, WT3 immediately asked the students to repeat the answer they provided (line 4). Which elicits the desired response from a group of students (line 5) and some extensions from others.

### 7.3.1.5 Holding the floor in team teaching

Yuendumu school’s Bilingual Program is underpinned by principles of two-way learning involving collaboration between Warlpiri and *kardiya* educators. While in the preschool and on bush trips all learning is led by a Warlpiri educator, there were still *kardiya* ‘non-Indigenous’ teachers or assistants present who assisted with logistics and behaviour management. In the Early Years’ B Class, and the Upper Primary Class, a *kardiya* teacher was responsible for most

of the programming while playing a support role during Warlpiri lessons. In every recording there was an instance or instances where the unilingual English-speaking teachers would interject in English during Warlpiri instruction, assuming principal speaking rights and allocating turns so that teaching and learning events became ‘jointly managed’-both in cooperation and sometimes in competition (cf. Martin-Jones, 2000; Martin-Jones & Saxena, 2003).

In some cases, such interjections were invited or endorsed by the Warlpiri educator and assisted in behaviour management or resourcing the activities. Although they contributed to productive collaboration on teaching and learning, they nevertheless increased the amount of English spoken during the time allocated for Warlpiri instruction. The Warlpiri educator in the Early Years’ B classroom was observed managing this by speaking simplified Warlpiri to her teaching partner, instead of switching to English. For example, in 7.16 where the Warlpiri educator maintains Warlpiri phonology when directing the *kardiya* teacher to provide pencils for the activity,

(7.16)

1 WT2: [non-Warlpiri teacher name] *pinsurl-u!*  
          [name]                                 pencil-EUPH  
          '[name], [bring the] pencils!'

(WT2 28.08.2018, 11:47-11:49)

A common dynamic observed in all classroom contexts was the *kardiya* teacher taking on the principal speaking rights to discuss the materials and logistics for the activity (e.g., where to find paper, what materials to use, etc.). In these cases, the onus was on the Warlpiri educator to re-establish the language for learning the content of the lesson. In the next excerpt (7.17), the class was making dioramas as part of a sequence of lessons about the *jukurra* ‘dreaming’ story and book *Lungkarda-kurlu* ‘Blue Tongue Lizard’. They had spent the beginning of the lesson re-reading the story, checking comprehension through whole group questioning and facilitating an interaction about Warlpiri terminology for different times of day, and how those might be visually depicted using different materials in the dioramas. Then the *kardiya* teacher, K1, intervened and without realising this has already been addressed by WT3, discussed use of craft materials again. WT3 endeavoured to bring the interactions back to Warlpiri by repeating

the commentary in Warlpiri. When the *kardiya* teacher required assistance with the content knowledge of the text, WT3 seized the opportunity to test and extend students' knowledge.

(7.17)

- 1 KT1: what are you gonna do for with the spear?
- 2 KK: *watiya-pawu! Watiya-pawu!* Get stick!  
stick-DIM stick-DIM  
'little sticks, little sticks! Get sticks!'
- 3 KT1: you can get a stick!
- 4 WT3: outside-*i-li* *walya-kurra-lu wapa-ya.*  
5 outside-EUPH-PL ground-ALL-PL wander-IMP  
'Walk around outside on the ground'
- 6 *ma-nta-lu warri-ka-lu-rla wita-wita-k mayi?*  
get-IMP-3.PL look.for-IMP-PL-DAT little-redup-DAT INTERR  
'and pick up little sticks, little ones, right?'
- 7 WT3: <1> *ka-npalu ma-ni an ngurrju-ngurrju-ma-nta mayi?* <1>  
PRES- 2.PL.Subj get-NPST and good-good get -IMP INTERR  
'you can get it and get good ones, yes?'
- 8 KT1: <1>so you'd be<1> sorry
- 9 WT3: nah you're right
- 10 T1: so if you guys need to use plasticine for anything, you could either ask [WT3  
11 name] for now, or [non-Indigenous assistant name] or me but you can't just 12  
come and grab a lot of plasticine and then sit down and make an idea
- 13 WT3: yeah, *lawa!*  
yeah, no  
'yeah, no!'
- 14 KT1: like we did last year, put up your hands if you did dioramas last year!
- 15 WT3: think-*i-jarri-ya-lu* think-*jarri-ya-lu*  
think-EUPH-INCHO-IMP-PL think INCHO-IMP-PL  
'Everyone, think! Everyone think!'
- 16 KT1: so all you guys are diorama experts!
- 17 WT3: well *kurdu-kurdu milya-pinyi ka-npalu nyurrurla-rlu*

- well child-redup remember-NPST PRES-2PL.S you.PL-ERG  
'well kids, do you remember'
- 18 ole-lot<sup>60</sup>-*i-rli-ji*  
whole.lot-EUPH-ERG-TOP  
'all of you?'
- 19 KT1: when you come you say, "[teacher's name] I really need some plasticine! I'm  
20 gonna make my person...I'm gonna make uhmm Ja..?" {looks to Warlpiri  
educator for assistance with skin name }
- 21 WT3: *Jangala an karnta-ju! ngana?*  
Jangala CONJ woman-TOP who  
'Jangala and the woman? Who is that?'
- 23 KT1: an then you gotta say, "[KT's name] <2>I need some blue" <2/>  
24 what else do you need?
- 25 K18: <2> *Nungarrayi!* <2/>
- 26 WT3: *yuwayi!*  
yes  
'yes!'
- 27 K21: brown!
- 28 KT1: maybe brown for his skin, maybe
- 29 KK: xxx grey!
- 30 KT1: maybe some grey for his hair...maybe a little bit of black for his...uhmmm  
31 really cool {points to ceremonial headdress and looks to WT3 for word }
- 32 WT3: *nya-nyi ka-npalu? Nyiya-wati ampu-jarra wear-i karri-nja-yani*  
see-NPST Pres-2PL.S what-pl those-DU wear-euph stand-INF-go  
'can you see, what are the two men wearing?'
- 33 *kala ampu-rra kata-ng nyiya ka wear-i-ma-n nyampu-ju?*  
ANAPH DET-PL head-LOC what PRES.3SG wear-euph-NPST this-TOP  
'and here on his head. What's he wearing this one?'
- 34 WT3: *wati-ng yangka yuka-mi ka-rlipa yangka purlapa do-ma-n nyiya?*  
men-ERG like enter-NPST PRES-1PL.EXCL like ceremony do-cause-NPST what?  
'what do we men wear during ceremony?'
- 33 *ku- ngula ka jarti-ja? Ku? ta? Ku?*  
ku- this PRES.3SG start-PST ku-ta- ku

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<sup>60</sup> Strong Warlpiri would be *jinta-warlayi* or *jintaku-marrarni* or *panu*

‘It starts with ku-? Ku? Ta? Ku?’

34 KK: kuta! Kuta! Kurlu!  
kuta kuta -COM  
kuta kuta! With!

35 WT3: *kuta-ri!*  
ceremonial headdress  
‘ceremonial headdress’

36 KK: kutaru! {mispronouncing Warlpiri word}

37 WT3: *kutari!* *Kata-ngka yangka wear-i-ma-n*  
ceremonial headdress head-LOC like wear-EUPH-CAUSE-NPST  
‘kutari! The old people wear it on their heads’

38 *purlkapurlka-ng(ku)* or *kurdu-kurdu nyurru-rla-ngku-npalu*<sup>61</sup>  
elder-ERG or child-redup you.PL-ERG-2PL.S  
‘or kids maybe you’ve’

39 *wear-i-ma-nu* *yangka?*  
wear-EUPH-CAUSE-PST ANAPH  
‘worn it as you know’

(WT3 26.09. 2018, 2:23 -2:54)

The two educators articulated different priorities in this interaction: the *kardiya* educator is concerned with the practicalities of creating the dioramas while the Warlpiri educator discussed the content and vocabulary of the *jukurra* ‘dreaming’ story to consolidate learning intended for the lesson. It is evident that the students were engaging with both educators at the same time on the two separate topics. In line 21, the Warlpiri educator took the opportunity to remind the students about the content of the lesson. While the non-Indigenous educator asked about the rules of using plasticine, the Warlpiri educator checked that the students knew the skin names of both the main characters (line 21). Later when the *kardiya* teacher could not recall the Warlpiri word for a ceremonial headdress (line 30), the Warlpiri educator was able to take the floor and tested the students first before giving them a clue (line 32-33), and finally offering the correct term when it was clear students didn’t know the answer (line 35). Finally, the Warlpiri educator contextualised the new vocabulary, drawing on the students’ experience, commenting in lines 38-39 ‘maybe you’ve worn it too’ referring to the ceremonial headdress.

<sup>61</sup> This utterance sounded very much like *-malu* instead of *-npalu*



In this way they have taken up a content learning opportunity. This example shows the linguistic strategies the Warlpiri educator employs in managing the incursions and the discourse shifts introduced by the *kardiya* teacher to divert the language of interactions back to Warlpiri and regain authority over the unfolding of the lesson's activities. This example also highlights the importance of Warlpiri educators for extending learning as clearly this interaction would not have been so rich if it were just about the practicalities of making a diorama in English. Moreover, this excerpt demonstrates how students fluidly move back and forth between Warlpiri and English and have the ability to flexibly, meaningfully, and creatively select from their linguistic repertoire to enact context-appropriate meaning.

### **7.3.2 Plurilingual practices for negotiating meaning and scaffolding learning in the Warlpiri classroom**

While *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' is established by the educators as the code of the Warlpiri classroom, language practices in these three contexts also reflected wider community practices in which fluid language choices are accommodated for (Grosjean, 1982; Scheffelin and Ochs, 1986). The concept of the 'plurilingual' competence (Ollerhead, Choi & French, 2018) is useful for describing the set of different linguistic skills that a speaker can draw on to communicate. Consistent with research on unilingual switching between linguistic registers (Gumperz, 1967, Ervin-Tripp, 1964, 2001) and language alternation as a strategic sociolinguistic resource during bilingual conversation (Gumperz, 1982, Duchêne & Heller, 2007, Milroy and Gordon, 2003) classroom interactions were replete with examples of socio-pragmatically meaningful language alternation which retain communicative complexity (Muysken, 2000). This included intra-sentential code-switching as well as switching inter-sententially to a variety of English, usually to garner the attention of the *kardiya* teacher or as a classroom management strategy in the context of teaching in an intercultural/linguistic team (discussed in the previous section).

Although not explicitly endorsed for classroom use (see Chapter 6), educators' and students' plurilingual practices were productive in achieving the learning goals, attesting to what Arthur and P. Martin (2006) have called the "pedagogic validity of code-switching" or in the translanguaging literature as the flexible use of repertoires for a range of purposes (García & A. Lin, 2017; A. Lin & He, 2017). These plurilingual practices among educators had several interrelated pragmatic and pedagogical functions to facilitate learning of content and language

including encouraging student participation and managing the non-Warlpiri speakers in the room (A. Lin & P. Martin, 2005).

In addition to the borrowings discussed in section 7.2.2 that have been conventionalised in Warlpiri and documented in usage since the 1980s (Bavin & Shopen, 1991) there were examples in the data of socio-pragmatically meaningful switches to English and other varieties of Warlpiri. In this section I discuss pedagogic strategies such as cross-linguistic repetition and annotating strong Warlpiri with contemporary Warlpiri and English translations that provide reformulations, clarifications, and elaborations on content. These practices encouraged student participation and co-construction of meaning, what has been called reciprocal lexical illumination (St John, 2010; Bakhtin, 1981). Finally, I move from lexical insertions and intra-sentential switching to inter-sentential switching to English as a discourse strategy in managing teaching in a cross-linguistic team.

### *7.3.2.1 Cross linguistic repetition*

The replication of Warlpiri and English lexical, phrasal, or clausal equivalents side-by-side, called cross-linguistic replication, was used for providing translations, reformulations, and clarifications and for emphasis. It is a practice documented in many multilingual classrooms (Creese & Blackledge, 2010a; García & Lin, 2017; Romaine, 1989) as one of the most common discourse functions of code-switching. This practice was also described several decades ago among children in Yuendumu who used Warlpiri and English equivalents side by side for emphasis, as in example 7.18.

(7.18)

*Ma-nu-lpa-rnalu*    *yuparli*,      *bush banana, yuparli*  
get-PST-PST.IMPF-1PL.EXCL.S bush.banana bush banana bush.banana  
‘We got bush banana, bush banana’

(Bavin 1989, p. 275).

### *Early Years*

In the Early Years' A class where all the teaching and learning was planned and led by a Warlpiri educator supported by Warlpiri Assistant teachers (as opposed to a *kardiya* teacher with

Warlpiri educators as Assistant teachers), the educator reported deliberately employing different ways of speaking to accommodate her students' perceived proficiencies. The educator also commented that their role was preparing students for entry into primary school where most of the learning would be led by an English-speaking teacher. For this reason, the educator told me they enacted an idiosyncratic language-in-education policy for the Early Years class by offering instructions for classroom activities in Warlpiri and then English. Analysis of cross-linguistic repetition in classroom speech data supports their assertion and here are several Examples of her annotating her Warlpiri with English (7.19 and 7.20).

(7.19)

- 1 WT5: *Yaraju-lu ya-nta-rni!* Come on! Come on!  
 quickly-3PL.S come-IMP-hither  
 'hurry! Come here! Come on come on'

(WT5 21.11.2018 02:02-02:06)

In example 7.20, the educator introduces the routine of gathering on the mat and alternates between Warlpiri and English to explain the instruction.

(7.20)

- 1 WT5: *kaji-rna-nyarra kaji-rna-nyarra purla-mi*  
 IRR-1SG.S-2PL.O IRR-1SG.S-2PL.O shout-NPST  
 'if I sing out<sup>62</sup> to you, if I shout to you'
- 2 "preschool on the mat!" that's means  
 preschool on the mat that means  
 "preschool on the mat" that means
- 3 *ole-lot-i ka-npalu<sup>63</sup> mat-i-ngka-nyarra*  
 whole.lot-EUPH PRES2PL.S mat-EUPH-LOC-2PL.O  
 'the whole lot of you on the mat'

<sup>62</sup> To say or shout something loudly.

<sup>63</sup> *-npa-lu* is a relatively new bound pronoun recorded in the 1970s (M. Laughren personal communication, June 3, 2022) and created by analogy with first person plural *rna-lu*; it combines *-npa* '2SG' with *-lu* '3PL' to mean '2PL.S', instead of *-nkulu* '2PL.S'

- 3        *nyina-njaku, mayi? Kaji-rna purla-mi* “preschool on the mat!”  
 sit-NOM    INTERR IRR-1SG shout-NPST  
 ‘sitting, right? If I shout “preschool on the mat”’

(KK nyinanjaku pirrjirdi 2 00:15-00:27)

In (7.20) the educator switches to English reported speech when modelling the commonly used instruction “preschool on the mat” for which they offer the Warlpiri equivalent. Example 7.21 shows how this educator and their two Warlpiri assistant teachers supported each other in conveying instructions in both languages.

(7.21)

- 1 WT5:    *YANTA!        Nyina-ya-mpa. Yaruju!*  
 Come-IMP sit-IMP-across quickly  
 ‘Come! sit across from me, hurry!’
- 2 WT7:    you lot sit down now!
- 3 WT8:    *read-i-ma-ni        kapi-rna book-u.        Jinta-ngka nyina-ya-lu!*  
 read-cause-NPST FUT-1SG.S book-EUPH together sit-IMP-PL  
 ‘I’m going to read a book. Sit down together all of you’
- 4 WT7:    *nyina-ya-lu!*  
 sit-IMP-pl  
 ‘you all sit down’
- 5 WT8:    *come on kurdu-kurdu!*  
 come on child-redup  
 ‘come on kids’

(KKPN 00:05-00:10)

In line 1, WT5 uses the Warlpiri imperative form *nyina-ya* (sit-IMP), which WT7 repeats in English (line 2), then a third educator, WT8 explains the activity in Warlpiri (3) and this instruction is repeated by WT7 with the Warlpiri command *nyinaya-lu* (sit-IMP-pl). Finally, WT8 urges the children using the English “come on” (line 5).

There were also examples of alternation of different varieties of Warlpiri, forms associated with *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ and constructions that have emerged in the period of contact

with English, associated with contemporary Warlpiri. For example, sentential negation in non-imperative finite clauses in classic Warlpiri is expressed with the morpheme *kula*. There are also two common forms in contemporary usage derived from English *nati* (from English 'not') and *nu* (from 'no') (Bavin & Shopen, 1985; Bowler, 2017). In past professional development workshops (see Chapter 6), Warlpiri educators identified the latter two as “not Warlpiri *pirrjirdi*” (NTDoE, 2016b) although they have been in regular usage for the past half a century. In the next example (7.22), the educator first models the Warlpiri *pirrjirdi* ‘strong’ non-imperative form *kula* then the contemporary negative imperative construction *-nati* +imperative verb.<sup>64</sup>

(7.22)

- 1 WT5:   righto *kula-npalu-nyanu miirnta nyuulypi-nyi*,  
righto NEG-2PL.S-REF mucous blow.one’s.nose-NPST  
‘righto you’re not blowing your nose mucous’
- 2           *nyarrpa-jarri ka-nga?*  
how-INCHO-PRES-2SG  
‘what are you doing?’
- 3           NO:::!  
No not sniff-IMP   back thus-ERG NEG thus do-IMP  
‘No! don’t swallow/sniff it back like that! Don’t do it like this’
- 4           *nya-ngka! LAWA! nyuurlpu-ngka!*  
look-IMP no       blow-IMP  
‘Look! No! blow it’

(WT5 21.11.2018 02:49-03:05)

In this example, the educator uses the older form *kula* first (line 1), *kula-npalu nyanu miirnta nyuurl-pinyi* ‘you’re not blowing your nose mucous’. When they repeat it as a command, they use the *-nati* construction (line 3) “*nati yirrpika*” ‘don’t sniff’ and alternate between the English ‘no’ and *lawa* ‘no’, adding emphasis and clarification.

<sup>64</sup> Linguist Mary Laughren (pers. com, 2021) confirmed that *nati* is the way speakers born after the 1950s express negative commands.

In addition to using different Warlpiri constructions, the educator, WT5, also noted, when transcribing the lesson, that although they are not a Light Warlpiri speaker, they use features associated with Light Warlpiri when speaking to students from Lajamanu, for whom Light Warlpiri is a primary way of speaking. In the example below (7.23) WT5 commented on their use of an English pronoun combined with an English-derived verb and Kriol-derived transitive marker *-im* (cf. O'Shannessy 2005).

(7.23)

1 WT5: *tissue yampi-ya kulkurru-kurra. Kulkurru-jarri-ya*  
 tissue leave-IMP middle-towards. Middle do-IMP  
 'Leave the tissue in the middle. Put it in the middle'

2 K24: *an ngaju-ngirli*  
 and 1SG-from  
 'and away from me'

3 WT5: *middle-rla you put-im*  
 middle-LOC 2SG put-TR  
 'you move it to the middle'

(NO 21.11. 2018, 04:41-04:49)

In line 1 the educator gave their instruction as *kulkurru-jarriya* (middle-INCHO-IMP 'move to the middle') and then in line 3, they repeat the instruction using the English term 'middle' with a locative suffix followed by an English pronoun 'you' and 'put' with the *-im* transitive marker, a feature of Light Warlpiri and central Australian contact languages generally. Although WT5 is not a Light Warlpiri speaker, they reflected that they are drawing on a salient feature in their speech directed at a student from Lajamanu, K24.

Baby Talk, "a stylised way of speaking for the benefit of very young children from newborn to those of around five years of age" (Laughren 1984, p.73) was also observed mainly in the Early Years' A class (where students are aged 3-5) to accommodate students' developing language proficiency. For example, the educator identified their own use of Baby Talk in example 7.24 when transcribing the lesson together. They were encouraging their reluctant grandchild, whose mother has spent much of her life and all of her schooling in Adelaide, to go to their hearing appointment and then return to class.

(7.24)

- 1 WT5: *anja-wiyi langa-s, langa-s* poinment an you come back”  
 go.IMP -first ear-PL ear-PL appointment and you come back  
 ‘Go first to the ear ear appointment and come back’

(WT5 21.11.2018 02:06-02:10)

*Anja* ‘go’ is a Baby Talk register word for the imperative *yanta* ‘go.’ The initial glide is omitted and /t/ turns to /dʒ/. The educator combined the Warlpiri *langa* with an ‘s’ either denoting possession or plurality in English, and then switched completely to English. While Baby Talk was mostly heard in the Early Years’ A class, educators and students in the Early Years’ B class also used Baby Talk kin terms such as *tartarta* ‘mother’s father’ and *pimiya* for *pimirdi*, ‘father’s sister’ frequently. These terms were rarely observed in the Upper Primary class. However, educators and students in the Upper Primary class also used phonological reductions associated with this register such as omission of initial *ny-* in *nyampu* ‘this’ → *ampu* ‘this’ and *-pardu* ‘-DIM’ → *-pawu* ‘-DIM’ which are fairly widespread in contemporary Warlpiri (Bavin, 2013, Laughren, 1984).

Cross-linguistic repetition, while used less frequently, was evidenced in the Upper Primary classroom. In example 7.25, the Warlpiri educator was looking for the stick that they used to point to words and pictures when reading the big books together with students, and they alternated their questions and the name of the stick between Warlpiri and English.

(7.25)

- 1 WT3: and where’s that *yangka watiya?* *Nyarrpara-rla wita-pawu?*  
 And where is that like stick where-LOC little-DIM?  
 ‘and where’s that stick? Where is that little one?’
- 2 *Yangka wita-pawu watiya.* Pointers, you know?  
 Like little-DIM stick  
 ‘Like the little stick. Pointers, you know?’

(WT3. 30.08, 05:39-05:46)

The teacher phrased the question first in English with the Warlpiri term *watiya* ‘stick’ and then all in Warlpiri (line 1). When they received no response, they repeated the name of the object in English ‘pointer’ (line 2). This had the effect of eliminating ambiguity around the reason

they were looking for *watiya* ‘stick’, that was used as a ‘pointer’ for group reading. This also ensured everyone present (including the non-Warlpiri speaking *kardiya* teacher) was following and able to respond to their request.

As in the Early Years classes, the Upper Primary educator used Warlpiri and reinforced her message in English for classroom management. In example 7.26, the educator instructs two students to sit down, repeating the direction in three different ways. The first clause contains the instruction all in Warlpiri with the imperative *nyina-ya-pala* ‘sit-IMP-DU’ and the appeal, *yaruju* ‘quickly’ (line 1). Second, they use a free Warlpiri pronoun with dual suffix *nyuntu-jarra* and the imperative in English ‘sit down’ (line 1). Third, they draw on English for the descriptors sister and brother and the *-kurlu* suffix to reflect the Warlpiri kinship relationship between students (they are not siblings by blood) and reinforce the two targets sitting together (line 1). They end the turn with the same Warlpiri imperative, *nyinaya* ‘sit down’ from the start of the turn. There is no ambiguity here as to which two students they are talking to and the remit of their request.

(7.26)

1 WT3: *Nyina-ya-pala, yaruju! Nyuntu-jarra sit-down! sister an brother-kurlu nyina-ya!*  
 Sit-IMP-DU quickly you-DU sit down sister and brother-COM sit-IMP  
 ‘Sit down you two, hurry! You two, sit down! you two brothers, sit down!’

(WT3 30.8. 2018, 29:42-29:46)

Language alternation was productive in repair sequences, to deal with problems of hearing or understanding, to continue the conversation (c.f. Drew, 1997; Macbeth, 2004). In Example 7.27 the Warlpiri educator is unable to make out the student’s response in Warlpiri, twice (lines 1 and 3). The student uses the English equivalent and is understood by the educator who confirms the answer and instructs him to write the Warlpiri response down (line 7).

(7.27)

1 WT3: *yuwayi warna. Nyiya ka-lu nga-rni warna-ng?*  
 yes snake what PRES-3PL eat-NPST snake-ERG  
 ‘yes snake. What do snakes eat?’

2 K7: *jarlji*



- frog  
'frogs'
- 3 WT3: *nyiya?*  
what  
'what?'
- 4 K7: *jarlji*  
frog  
'frogs'
- 5 WT3: *mayi?*  
INTERR  
What?
- 6 K7: frog-frog *yangka*  
frog-redup ANAPH  
'you know, frogs'
- 7 WT3: *yuwayi, yirra-ka jarlji*  
yes write-IMP frog  
'yes, write down frog'

(Flower Mirnirri 30.08, 50:37- 50:44)

### 7.3.2.2 Collaborative vocabulary processing

Another plurilingual practice in classroom interactions involved inserting a single English-derived lexical item for problem solving. This pattern of switching language for single lexical items or key terms as a resource for students' and educators' problem solving has been documented in many studies of bilingual classroom interactions in other contexts (e.g., Martin-Jones, 2000; P. Martin 1999). P. Martin (1999) referred to this process as "unpacking the meaning" and St John (2010) described the practice as "reciprocal lexical inter-illumination". Drawing on lexical equivalents across speakers' full repertoires for conceptual teaching allows students to make sense of new and familiar words, expanding their semantic networks and reorienting concepts in relation to each other, promoting conceptual and linguistic reproduction and transmission.

During Warlpiri lessons in Upper Primary classes, students flexibly responded to the educator's questions and commentary in Warlpiri or English and both codes were used for clarification and elaboration on a topic. In Example 7.28, the educator asks for an explanation of the Warlpiri verb *yitaki-mani* 'to track.' The student offers an alternate form using the English preverb

‘follow’ with the Warlpiri causative *-mani* and the English lexical item, ‘track,’ to explain the meaning, which the educator accepts as correct.

(7.28)

- 1 WT3: *yitaki-mani-nja-yani*<sup>65</sup>                      *ka*                      rightup                      *angka?*  
tracking-CAUSE-INF-go.NPST    PRES.3SG    all.the.way    TAG  
‘He is tracking all the way, right?’
- 2                      *nyiya “yitak-ma-ni                      ka”?*  
what track-CAUSE-NPST Pres.3SG  
‘What is [the meaning of] “he is tracking”’
- 3                      *nyiya yitaki-ji                      yirdi-ji?*  
what track-TOP word-TOP  
‘what does the word *yitaki* mean?’
- 4 K9:                      follow-*ma-ni*                      *ka*                      track-*i*  
follow-CAUSE-NPST Pres.3SG track-EUPH  
‘he is following the tracks’
- 5 WT3:                      *yea:::h*

(Part 2 WT3 29.11. 2018, 10:30-10:41)

An example of language alteration in negotiation of meaning is provided by the teaching and learning event in example 7.29 as part of the bilingual science activity about properties of materials and ways of communication (the Warlpiri Theme for the term was *Jaru manu rdaka-rdaka* ‘Communication and hand signs’). In the planning phase and at the start of the lesson, the Warlpiri educator identified key Warlpiri terminology and their English translations. These were put up on a board and added to as the lesson progressed. Following the experiment, the educator used a Warlpiri-language text *Yulyurdu-kurlu* ‘About Smoke’ to talk about different materials for communication. In 7.29, the educator alternated between varieties of Warlpiri and English to encourage and elicit student participation and clarify meaning. In this teaching and learning event the teacher is transitioning from debriefing about a science experiment, involving communicating via secret messages using materials with different properties such as

<sup>65</sup> In many of these examples the constructions are realised without full enunciation of each morpheme. These were checked where-ever possible with a native speaker to ensure accurate representation of speech (see Chapter 4 for more details).

oils and acids, to a written Warlpiri text *Yulyurdu-kurlu* ‘About Smoke’ discussing Warlpiri traditional communication practices such as using smoke signals.

(7.29)

- 1 WT3: *yangka-lpa warlu-ngka yarrpi-rninja-yani nyampu pirdangirli*  
 ANAPH-PST.Impf fire-LOC heat-INF-go-NPST that before  
 ‘As you know, it is heated on the fire first’
- 2 *nyiya marda* inside, *nyampu-rla-ju?*  
 what perhaps inside here-LOC-TOP  
 ‘what might be inside here?’
- 3 K9: *nyarrpara-ngka?*<sup>66</sup>  
 where-LOC  
 where?
- 4 WT3: *yangka-npa nyuntu wangka-ja jalangu* early-part-*i*  
 ANAPH-2SG you say-PST today earlier-EUPH  
 ‘like you said earlier today’
- 5 K9: oil
- 6 WT3: *yuwayi nyiya-piya inya-ju* oil? different, *angka?*  
 yes what-like this-TOP oil different TAG  
 ‘yes what kind of oil? It’s different, isn’t it?’
- 7 K4 : lemon-ah oil! {begins to say lemon juice, and changes answer to ‘oil’}
- 8 WT3: *yuwayi* and *yapa-way-i-ji* *ngula-ju*  
 yes and Warlpiri-way-EUPH-TOP that-TOP  
 ‘yes and in Warlpiri’
- 9 *ka-rlipa yirdi-mani* <1>*nganayi* </1>  
 PRES-1PL.INCL name-cause like  
 ‘how do we say it in Warlpiri? <1> uhmm</1>’
- 10 K9: <1>*jara!* </1>  
 oil/fat

<sup>66</sup> O’Shannessy (pers. communication, 2021) has pointed out that while this allomorph is not considered by teachers to be strong Warlpiri, it is in common use and from a child-learner’s point of view is appropriate acquisition reflecting the input they would have received.

‘oil/fat!’

- 11 WT3: *yuwayi! jara an nganayi-rlangu, nganayi yangka palya, palya.*  
 yes oil and like-also ANAPH like spinifex.resin spinifex.resin  
 ‘Yes oil and what-else you know like spinifex resin, spinifex resin’
- 12 *yangka ka-npalu kurlarda ngurrju-mani nyurrurla-rlu karlarra?*  
 like PRES-2PL.S spear make-NPST 2.PL-ERG west  
 ‘Like you make spears west of the community?’
- 13 *yangka black-wan-pawu? Yangka ka-npalu kurlarda-kurra-lku*  
 like black-NOM-DIM like PRES-2PL.S spear-ALL-then  
 ‘Like those little black ones? Like you go to make spears’
- 14 *kanpalu yirrarni? and hold-u-mani an kiji-rni ka-npalu yangka?*  
 PRES-2PL.S put-NPST and hold-EUPH-NPST and throw-NPST PRES-2PL.S like  
 ‘you put it, hold it and throw it, like that?’
- 15 *yangka black-wan-pat? palya inya-ju*  
 like black-NOM-PL spinifex.resin that-TOP  
 ‘Those black ones? That is spinifex resin’

(06:03-06:31 sentences removed)

- 16 WT3: *yuwayi, angka? Kurdu-kurdu marna-jangka, angka?*  
 yes ITERR child-redup grass-from TAG  
 ‘yes, right? Kids it is made from (spinifex) grass.’
- 17 *nyuntu-nyangu tartarta-kurlu-ngu, [name]-kurlu-ngu.*  
 2SG-POSS mother's.father-COM-ERG [name]-COM-ERG  
 ‘We went with your grandfather and [elder name]’
- 18 *Jampiti Lingkirli-kirli yangka-rlipa yanu [K name] yangka karlarra*  
 skinname Lingkirli-COM ANAPH-1PL.INCL go-PST ANAPH west  
 ‘Jampiti Lingkirli and (student name) over there, west’
- 19 *Mission Creek-rla. Nganimpa karnta ka-rnalu yirninti-kirli and nyampu-rra*  
 Mission Creek-LOC 1PL.EXCL woman Pres-1PL.EXCL beans-COM and this  
 ‘at Mission Creek us women were making bean necklaces and over there’
- 20 *wirriya-wirriya wati-jarra-kurlu. Kuja-piya nyampu-ju. Wax-i-piya gen*  
 boy-PL men-DU-COM thus-like this-TOP wax-euph-like again  
 ‘the boys with the two men. It’s like this, it’s like wax.’

(minutes pass)

- 21 WT3: *kurdu-kurdu nyampu-rl ka-rna-nyarra riiti-i-man puku.*  
 child-redup this-ERG PRES-1SG-2PL read-CAUSE-NPST book  
 ‘kids I’m going to read this book to you’

- 22        *nyiya nyampu-j kurdu-kurdu yirdi-ma-nta-lu?*  
 what this-TOP child-redup word-give-CAUS-IMP-PL  
 ‘What is this word kids?’
- 23 KK:    *yulyurdu-kurlu*  
 smoke-about  
 ‘about smoke’
- 24 WT3:  *yeah nyiya yulyurdu-ju?*  
 yes what smoke-TOP  
 ‘yes and what does ‘yulyurdu’ mean?’
- 25 K9:    <1> *warlu!* </1>  
 fire
- 26 K18:   <2> smoke! </2>
- 27 WT3:  *yeah smoke. Smoke-u-ju well kunjuru smoke-i*  
 yeah smoke smoke-EUPH-TOP well smoke smoke-euph  
 ‘yeah smoke. Smoke is well, kunjurri is smoke’
- 28        *yangka nganayi ngula ka come-out-jarri-mi*  
 like ANAPH. this PRES.3SG come-out-INCHO-NPST  
 ‘like uhm it comes out’
- 29        *but warlu-ju nyampu warlu inya flame*  
 DISJ fire-TOP this fire that flame  
 ‘but *warlu*, this *warlu* is the flame’

(Part 2 SG 29.11.2018, 05:28-16:37)

In the first part of example (7.29), the educator recounted the science experiment involving heating lemon juice with candles and using other materials such as glue and wax to reveal secret messages. By accommodating student responses in both Warlpiri (line 10) and in English (lines 5, 7), the educator was able to clarify and elaborate on the semantic categories of the materials and their properties. It became clear that the student who answered ‘oil’ in English initially (line 5) knew the Warlpiri equivalent *jara* ‘fat’ and was able to demonstrate this knowledge by responding to educator prompts (line 10). The educator then introduced the second substance used in the experiment, *palya* ‘spinifex resin’ and drew on students’ experience of using resin when making spears on a bush trip to connect, clarify and extend the students’ learning. The educator suggests another term borrowed from English, *wax-i-piya* ‘like wax’ to describe the property of *palya* ‘spinifex resin’.

The class then talked about the trip and the educator reminded them which family and community members were involved, the location and other (culturally gendered) learning activities such as making necklaces using *yirninti* ‘beans. This interaction reflects the importance of people and place, the intergenerational nature of learning and the importance of country in Warlpiri knowledge production, described in more detail in the next chapter (Chapter 8).

A few minutes later, in the third part of the teaching and learning event presented here, the educator introduces the class to a Warlpiri book entitled *Yulyurdu-kurlu* ‘About Smoke’ (line 21). WT3 engaged in I-R-E routines to explore Warlpiri vocabulary and concepts related to smoke. The educator asked for clarification of the Warlpiri word *yulyurdu* ‘smoke’ (line 22 & 24). Two students responded at the same time, one with the direct English translation ‘smoke’ (line 26) and the other with the related Warlpiri term *warlu* ‘fire’ (line 25). In classic Warlpiri *warlu* is the generic term that covers ‘fire, smoke, heat, hot’ (Laughren pers. communication, 2021). The educator accepted the English translation, ‘smoke’, as correct and specified the Warlpiri *kunjuru* ‘smoke’ (line 26). Finally, they responded to the student who gave the Warlpiri response offering an explanation of *warlu* as ‘flame’ in English (*jarra* and *rdili* are direct translations of flame that belong to the category of *warlu*) (lines 27-29)<sup>67</sup>. In doing so they are expanding the students’ semantic networks, constructing a framework of corresponding English and Warlpiri lexical items, all the while drawing on the students’ full repertoires to assist in this exercise of lexical clarification and elaboration. Perhaps also innovation are occurring in Warlpiri semantic categories during this process. Later in the lesson the Warlpiri educator and another adult discussed a third and lesser known (among children) synonym for smoke, *puyurlu-yurlu* ‘smoke’ which is used in reference to burning hair, fat or flesh. These examples display the pedagogical choices that ultimately softened ‘hard’ boundaries between Warlpiri *pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ as ‘the’ medium of instruction, and students’ (and educators’) broader linguistic repertoires.

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<sup>67</sup> Mary Laughren (pers. communication 2021) suggested that this is an example of semantic change in contemporary Warlpiri whereby the category of *warlu* which traditionally would encompass heat and smoke becomes associated with ‘flame’ more than ‘smoke’.

### 7.3.2.3 Language choices in team teaching

As mentioned in section 7.2.1, collaboration with *kardiya* speakers in the classroom impacted the Warlpiri educators' language practices during Warlpiri lessons. In this section I discuss how in certain situations, for instance, the presence of a *kardiya* teacher influenced the choices the Warlpiri educator made. I describe two situations, first (7.30) the benefits of when the teaching team work together collaboratively and plan their learning in both Warlpiri and English. Second, when the *kardiya* teacher was not involved in the planning or instruction and the educator had to manage incursions or “include” (to quote WT5) their team-teacher in order to “hold the floor” and so as not to interrupt the flow of the lesson.

Example 7.30 represents an excerpt from a unit of work where the *kardiya* and Warlpiri educators collaboratively integrated Warlpiri History and Social Science (HASS) content with the Warlpiri Theme Cycle topic for Term 1, 2019, *Nyurru-wiyi manu jalangu-jalangu* 'Olden Days and Contemporary times' (see Appendix A for sample plan).

Together the educators selected two Warlpiri texts, *Nyurru-wiyi warnu* 'In the olden days' and *Nyurru-wiyi manu jalangu jalangu* 'The olden days and today' about the history of Yuendumu. The *kardiya* teacher used the English translation of the texts when the Warlpiri educator was absent as the basis for discussion and activities around social changes in the community's history. Throughout the subsequent Warlpiri lesson, the Warlpiri educator refers to the work the other teacher had facilitated in English on the same text. As exemplified in 7.30, the expectation was that they were building on this prior knowledge in the current Warlpiri lesson.

(7.30)

- 1 WT4: *nyurruwiyi purlka-purlka ngalipa-nyangu jamirdi-nyanu*  
old.days old-redup 1PL.INCL-POSS grandfather-KIN  
'In the old days old people, our grandfathers'
- 2 *jaja-nyanu warringiyi-nyanu ngalipa-karra wangu-rla*  
grandmother-KIN grandfather-KIN 1PL.INCL-ALL without-LOC  
'our grandmothers, grandfathers, before we were here'
- 3 *kala-lpa-lu yupuju-wana wapa-ja. Nyiya "yupuj-j"?*  
USIT-PST.IMPF-3PL.S bush-PERL wander-PST what bush-TOP  
'used to wander around in the bush. What is 'yupuju'?

- 4 K13: ahh I dunno
- 5 WT4: *Warlpiri* like *ngalipa-j* like *yupuju*  
Warlpiri like 1PL.INCL-TOP like bush  
'Warlpiri like us, like bush'
- 6 K16: *nyiya? yupuju?*  
what bush  
'What? Bush?'
- 7 WT4: *wangka-ja* [*kardiya* teacher name] *ngula ngula*, English.  
say-PS [*kardiya* teacher name] this this English  
'[name] said this, this in English'
- 8 *ngula-piya* gen, *Warlpiri kapi-rna riit-i-ma-ni*.  
ANAPH-like again, Warlpiri FUT-1SG read-EUPH-CAUS-NPST  
'and suchlike again I'm going to read in Warlpiri'
- 9 *tumaji pina-mani-nja-yani ampu-rla*  
too.much learn-CAUSE -INF-go-NPST DET-LOC  
'you are learning a lot here '
- 10 K16: *translate-ma-nu* from (.) Warlpiri-*kurra*  
translate-TR-PST from Warlpiri-ALL  
'he translated it from [English] into Warlpiri

(WT4 30.04.2019; 05:30-08:00)

This example shows that when planning occurs together, the educators can use each language productively for learning. However, it was more often the case that the teams did not plan together. In many cases particularly where the *kardiya* teacher wasn't involved in the planning or teaching, they would intervene in English in the Warlpiri lesson. One response to frequent assumption of speaking rights by the *kardiya* classroom teachers was for Warlpiri educators to switch inter-sententially to English to signal their intentions and teaching plans or to express English-oriented norms. The goal was allaying interruption by the non-Warlpiri speaker, to "bring them along" (WT3) and "include" (WT5) them on their teaching course while the lesson was underway. For example, Warlpiri educators used English phrases taking on an evaluative stance linked to English-orientated norms such as "sitting school way", "pack up time!", "good boy" and. "line up time".

A longer example is provided in (7.31). Fifteen minutes before the end of an Upper Primary lesson, the Warlpiri educator and a Warlpiri teaching assistant were encouraging the students



to settle down so that they could recap the unit. The *kardiya* teacher, KT2, unaware of their plans, assumed instruction had ended and suggested the class watch a movie to fill in the remaining fifteen minutes until the lunch bell.

(7.31)

- 1 KT2: okay you've got fifteen minutes 'til lunch. I'm happy to put something on for the  
 2 fifteen minutes if you're nice and quiet and depending on what we're doing this  
 3 afternoon we might be able to catch the end of it later on
- 4 WT3: *nyurru mayi?*  
 ready INTERR  
 'are you ready?'
- 5 KT2: please find yourself in a comfortable spot. Please leave other people alone-
- 6 WT3: 'scuse me! *yuwayi*. I'll just explain about what they learned and <1>what <1>  
 {directed at *kardiya* teacher}
- 7 T2: <1>oh sure! <1> sure!yeah great! So [WT3]) Is <2>gonna<2/>
- 8 WT3: <2>just<2/> waitin' on the kids to be (.) *nganayi nyina-nja-kurl*  
 just waiting on the kids to be ANAPH sit-INF- COM  
 'just waiting on the kids to be..uhmm sitting
- 9 *nya-ngka, nyurru! nu-ka-npalu purda-nya-nyi. Nyurru!*  
 see-IMP enough NEG-PRES-2PL.S listen-NPST enough  
 'look, that's enough! you're not listening! Enough!'
- 10 WT3: na *purda-nya-nja-rla nyurru ampu do-ma-n work jalangu-rlu.*  
 now listen-INF-LOC already this do-TR-PST work today-ERG  
 'now, having listened/understood already and done this work today'
- 11 *nyiya-npalu* learned anyway-*i-ji?*  
 what 2PL.S learned anyway-EUPH-TOP  
 'what did you learn anyway?'
- 12 WT3: *yuwayi nyiya-kurlu-lpa learn-jarri-ja?*  
 yes what-COM-PST.IMPF learn-INCHO-PST  
 'yes, what did you learn about?'
- 13 *nyiya-wati-kirli? nah xxx.*  
 what-PL-COM nah  
 About what things? Nah xxx

14 yeah tumaji teacher-*palangu nya-ngu. Yuwa, yuwayi. nya-ngka* yeah  
too.much teacher-3DL-O see-PST yes yes look-IMP  
'yeah because the teachers saw those two. Yes, yes look, yeah'

15 when we talking, you gotta be listening and answering!

{lines omitted}

16 WT3: [KT name] and *ngaju yapa* teacher and *kardiya* teacher *nyurnu*.  
[KT2 name] and 1SG Indigenous teacher and non-Indigenous teacher sick  
and I, Warlpiri teacher and non-Indigenous teacher are sick.'

17 so you mob gotta start thinking *yapa* teacher we here to teach you Warlpiri

18 *yuwayi nati-l plei-jarri-ya* another way or jelpi  
yes NEG-PL play-INCHO-IMP another way or alone  
'Yes don't play another way or by yourself'

(WT3 30.08.2018, 1:01:39-1:05:00)

At the end of Example 7.31, the Warlpiri educator repeatedly reverted to English for the benefit of the *kardiya* teacher, as a discourse marker, changing "footing" and taking an evaluative stance (Goffman, 1975). For example, the educator switched to English, in lines 15 "when we talking you gotta be listening and answering" and line 17 "so you mob gotta start thinking *yapa* teacher we here to teach you Warlpiri".

Another example (7.32) is from Country Visits, where an elder and retired Warlpiri educator used English in reported speech to quote a non-Indigenous ranger, *Japaljarri's* instructions for children's expected behaviour at the *mala* enclosure in New Haven Sanctuary. This followed some discussion among the Warlpiri and *kardiya* staff about the importance of outlining expectations prior to the trip.

(7.32)

1 TR: *kurdu-kurdu Nyirrpi-wardingki, Yurrampi-wardingki kaji-rlipa ya-ni*  
child-REDUP Nyirrpi-inhabitant Yurrampi-inhabitant if-1PL.INCL go-NPST  
'kids from Nyirrpi and from Yurrampi, if we go'

2 *jukurra kaji-rlipa ya-ni jukurra inya nganayi-kirra*  
tomorrow if-1PL.INCL go-NPST tomorrow there you.know-ALL  
'tomorrow, if we go tomorrow to there uhm'

3 *Warrikinpirri-kirra* you got really high fences, no one's gonna touch that

Warrikinpirri-ALL you go really high fences, no one's gonna touch that  
'there are really high fences. No one is allowed to touch them.'

- 4        *nat-i-l*                *ka-npalu*                touch-*i* -*mani*                *ngarru-rnu-ju*  
NEG-EUPH-PL PRES-2.PL.S touch-euph-CAUSE-NPST tell-PST-1SG  
'you must not touch it, he told us,
- 5        *kardiya-rlu-ju*                *Japaljarri-rli*  
non-Indigenous-ERG-TOP Japaljarri-ERG  
that non-Indigenous person, Japaljarri told me
- 6        "no one's gonna climb up that fence", *lawa*  
{ shift to English for direct reported speech }  
'no one can climb up that fence. No'
- (...)
- 7        *nganayi* an *wita-pawu mala*, ay ay ay sit down!  
like    And little-DIM rufus.haired.wallaby  
'like and that little mala, ay ay ay, sit down!'
- 8        we not finish yet, *mala*                *wita-pardu* kangaroo-*nganayi-piya*  
we not finish yet rufus.haired.wallaby little-DIM kangaroo-ANAPH-like  
'we're not finished yet, the rufus haired wallaby, dear little kangaroo like things'
- 9        *mala*                *wita-piya ngurrju-nyayirni* an *yirra-rnu-lu-jana*  
rufus.haired.wallaby little-like good-very                and put-PST-3PL.S-3PL.O  
'the little rufus haired wallabies are very good and they put'
- 10        *fenci-ki mala-ki-ji*                *warnapari-ji-k*  
fence-DAT rufus.haired.wallaby -DAT-TOP                dingos-TOP-DAT  
'a fence for the wallabies, the dingoes
- 11        an pussy-cat-*i-ki* or any other animals  
and cat-EUPH-DAT  
'and cats, and any other animals'

(Karrku-wita-ngka Warlawurru jukurrrpa-kurlu TR and JJ. 10.9)

The elder began by cautioning the students in Warlpiri, and then switched to English to say "you got really high fences, no one's gonna touch that" to signal to the non-Warlpiri speakers the topic of instruction. Then the elder reverted to Warlpiri to frame the *kardiya* person, *Japaljarri*, as the one who gave the directive not to climb. They used reported speech in English to relay his instructions (line 5-6). Then while the elders were still talking, the *kardiya* staff started to collect orange peels from the students and move around the group. A couple of

students stood up to put their peels in the bin. The elder switched to English for the benefit of the *kardiya* staff to ask the students to sit down and to remind them “we not finish yet” before continuing with her monologue. This example is reflective of what McConvell (1994) has described as “the distancing authority of English” to reinforce culturally governed behavioural expectations and flag to the non-Indigenous teachers that they are aware of these and fulfilling their role in students’ “school-way” behaviour management. It also shows how code-switching can be a symbolic resource in constructing relations of dominance and affiliation as well as disaffiliation (Gumperz, 1982) and accounts for some of the inter-sentential switches in the data.

## 7.4 Discussion of the findings

This chapter has offered some insights into the 'ways of speaking' and their functions in the Warlpiri classroom. It outlined some of the regular participation and interactional frameworks for teaching and learning in three contexts: Early Years, Upper Primary and on Country Visits. The educators' and students' communicative repertoires included varieties and modalities of Warlpiri (spoken and signed) and plurilingual practices involving language switches at word and clause level to English. This was in addition to innovations to contemporary ways of speaking Warlpiri. Educators' metapragmatic discourses indexed *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' with the target classroom forms which were evidenced most prevalently in the elders' instructional routines on country visits and in written texts. There was also evidence of Warlpiri educators endeavouring to consciously model features in all contexts. Warlpiri educators employed several linguistic strategies to establish and maintain *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' as the classroom code including recasting, prompting, guided repetition and strategies to "hold the floor" in the face of incursions from non-Warlpiri speakers.

While educators construct a space where *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' is the language learned (see Chapter 6 and 7), their language practices and local frameworks of interpretation accommodated a diversity of ways of speaking that are still facilitative of accomplishing the goals of teaching strong Warlpiri linguistic and cultural content. The data suggests that educators and students not only move between Warlpiri and English but between different ways of speaking Warlpiri that reflect bilingual discourse strategies. From a pragmatic perspective, this situation may be understood as a process in which the language practices move in a continuum between the everyday discourse, contemporary Warlpiri (including students' funds

of knowledge and ways of speaking) and the subject matter knowledge (the academic discourse or *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri'). The more fluid ways of speaking are nevertheless facilitative of teaching *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' as they contribute to vocabulary teaching and support students and educators to construct a conceptual framework in Warlpiri and English, facilitating interlingual exploration.

The examples in all three contexts demonstrate how educators consider and attend to their students' linguistic preferences and competencies (cf. Auer's 1988, p. 192 'participant-related switching') offering reformulations and clarifications across their communicative repertoires. Using full repertoires for conceptual teaching allows students to make sense of new and familiar words, expanding their semantic networks and reorienting concepts in relation to each other, promoting conceptual and linguistic reproduction and transmission. Warlpiri educators also scaffold use of the classroom code. Rather than excluding students from participation, Warlpiri educators draw on students' full repertoires to engage with the content of the lesson or management of classroom behaviour. A useful concept is that of the plurilingual speaker, to describe the ways in which individuals build a "communicative competence to which all knowledge of and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact" (Council of Europe, 2020). These fluid languaging dynamics (c.f. Poetsch, 2018) are consistent with the literature on translanguaging as a means to leverage a range of semiotic resources for learning (Creese & Blackledge, 2010b; García & Wei, 2014). These practices highlight the value of Warlpiri educators as having the best knowledge of students' repertoires, proficiencies, contributions, and linguistic preferences and sharing the means for plurilingual meaning making in the classroom.

The Warlpiri educators' language choices reflect their engagements with language policy processes such as establishing the classroom code within a domain separation or differentiation (Harris, 1994) approach and supporting children to transition to English-only classrooms in later years. What is evident in the examples is that students and educators deploy the full extent of their linguistic and cultural resources for learning, but both are also sensitive at times to the boundaries between codes, to the individual linguistic needs of interlocutors and the rules governing language use in the classroom. This situation informs the domain separation (Harris, 1977) or differentiation (Harris, 1994) vs integrated language use (McConvell, 1985) debates in first language teaching (discussed in Chapter 2) by showing how a strong preference among

educators and the wider community for domain separation (discussed in Chapter 6) can be reconciled with the more fluid sociolinguistic realities of speakers.

## 7.5 Summary

In this chapter I have offered a broad overview of three teaching and learning contexts, Early Years, Upper Primary and Country Visits at Yuendumu School in 2018/9. I have described some of the forms of language use, the ways of speaking in the classroom and the functions these serve for accomplishing pedagogic and organisational tasks in Warlpiri. While the language data demonstrates clearly that educators are at times conscious of maintaining *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' as the language of the classroom, they are also flexible with their language use to effectively achieve their goals. Consequently, the Warlpiri classrooms may be described as contexts in which several discursive practices are in use and being negotiated. Against this backdrop, in the next chapter, Chapter 8, I examine two key themes related to the teaching of, and in, the classroom code. These are the socialisation practices educators report enacting and the importance of the cultural and linguistic authority of elders in resourcing development of communicative and cultural competence of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' and *jaru pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri culture' in students.

## Chapter 8 Practices of linguistic and cultural continuity in Warlpiri classrooms

In Chapter 7, I described how teaching and learning in and about *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ is accomplished through different varieties and modalities of Warlpiri and through different configurations of uni- and plurilingualism. I examined the linguistic strategies employed by educators to establish and when necessary, re-establish *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ as the classroom code, corroborating many of their own analyses of their practices (outlined in Chapter 6). I showed also, how Warlpiri educators were able to draw on their own and students’ full communicative, plurilingual repertoires to scaffold learning of target linguistic forms and structures. In addition to teaching these linguistic forms and structures, Warlpiri educators have been clear in interviews and professional workshops that developing communicative competence in Warlpiri involves developing skills for engaging in social interaction according to culturally determined standards or norms (c.f. Hymes, 1962, 1972; Henne-Ochoa, 2019). In Chapter 6 I explained how educators understand learning within a kinship system that governs all linguistic and cultural development in Warlpiri language socialisation.

In this chapter, I address two related themes which Warlpiri educators reported as essential to social mediation (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, Vygotsky, 1987) in teaching and learning of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong language’ and *jaru pirrjirdi* ‘strong culture’. These include (8.1) the transmission of Warlpiri linguistic and cultural content within a relationships-oriented approach based on the kinship system and, (8.2) drawing on the linguistic and cultural authority of elders and older community members in program and materials development. To illustrate the ways in which Warlpiri educators develop communicative competence in their students, in section 8.1.1, I describe some of the language socialisation practices that build on and extend students’ linguistic and cultural knowledge of and within the complex Warlpiri kinship system. In section 8.2 I discuss how elders contribute to the learning of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ as guest-experts in classes, workshops, and meetings, mentors to teacher apprentices and as consultants and creators of descriptive and pedagogical language materials. I examine the ways in which texts, both oral and written, are used as essential teaching devices of the linguistic and cultural structures associated with *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ (in 8.2.1 and 8.2.2). Finally, I examine students’ engagements with and (re)productions of each type of text to analyse their productions of forms and functions of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ within

their broader communicative repertoire (in 8.2.1 and 8.2.1). I show how students' learning reflects cultural and linguistic continuity and innovation in the observed teaching and learning contexts. This chapter provides evidence for the specific ways that Warlpiri educators socialise students and develop their communicative competence that contribute to transmission and maintenance of Warlpiri cultural and linguistic knowledge in the Warlpiri program at Yuendumu school.

### **8.1 Warlpiri socialisation practices in the classroom: referring and naming**

Almost a century ago, Vygotsky (1978) described human development as an “enculturation process” in which learning takes place by adopting the cultural practices and the language use of a specific culture. Culturally specific socialisation practices in a speech community are also embedded within, and constitute, classroom routines and activities in ways that facilitate both acquisition of academic knowledge and the formation of personhood and subjectivities (Duff, 2020; Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011). In the Warlpiri context, socialising practices form the basis of the production and reproduction of language and cultural practices founded from ancient traditions of transmission that are valued by community members as emanating from the *jukurpa* ‘dreaming.’ Warlpiri relational pedagogy has been described as a system of relatedness and autonomy, expressed by a system of rights and obligations associated with place within a complex of relationships (Peterson, 2015; Vaarzon-Morel, 2014, Musharbash, 2008). In communities such as Yuendumu, all people are related through blood ties, marriage and long history of families' shared experiences, unlike in most non-indigenous communities. Consequently the Warlpiri teachers are members of the pupils' own family or extended family. In an interview, one Warlpiri educator explained that a key part of the Warlpiri program is learning about the interconnected relationships in all of life and understanding one's own place as a Warlpiri person (WT1). To function as a member of Warlpiri society, children must understand their position within the extended kinship system and learn appropriate terminology and distinctions of both biological and classificatory relationships. To quote Bavin (2010, p. 320),

A major part of the socialisation process in a Warlpiri community is learning about the subsection (kinship system and its control of social behaviour). The system is tied to the social and political organisation of the people and to become a functional member of the community, it is necessary to gain an understanding of the system. The importance of the system is reflected in the



adult use of explicit verbal instruction for kin terminology, whereas in other domains the child is expected to learn by observation.

The system is not only relevant for understanding norms governing social interactions and behaviour, but also for understanding interrelated concepts of the land, environment and all beings that live thereon. Clearly this system is central to Warlpiri life. In Warlpiri communities, induction into the system of kinship begins from infancy (Musharbash, 2011; O' Shannessy, 2011; Bavin & Shopen, 1995) and this socialisation continues at school. In this section, I explore the language socialisation practices associated with classroom referring and naming practices, because they show the ways in which students continue to be socialised in the classroom into the broader communicative functions of Warlpiri.

In the classroom, the addressing and referring practices of Warlpiri educators reinforced important relational practices and concepts, enhanced communicative competence among students and developed positive affective learning relationships. The referring practices involved attention to and reiteration of familial relationships that assist in learning cultural content. Broadly speaking, in classroom talk-in-interaction, the expressions that educators and students used for referring to and addressing persons can be grouped into the following types. Warlpiri educators employed particular constellations of verbal cues in educator-learner interactions that included use of terms of address which were familiar to the children such as frequent use of nicknames (e.g., Wawu), diminutives to express affection (*karnta-pardu*, 'dear girl') and skin names (see appendix I for a table outlining the types of referring and addressing practices in the data). As in other Northern Territory communities, there is a relatively low occurrence of direct naming and preference for self-association forms, that is forms that connect the subject and object of the conversation without direct naming (Dussart, 1988 and c.f. Blythe, 2010). The data in this project is consistent with O'Shannessy's (2020) estimation that for Warlpiri, subsection terms, followed by kin terms are the most common terms of address. Students, when addressing or referring to educators, preferred their initials or relational terms in either Warlpiri or English (e.g., *pimiyi=pimirdi* /Auntie or the English, Auntie) and sometimes skin names (cf. O'Shannessy, 2011a). This indicates a small shift from the 1980s when it was reported that in the community, senior generations used personal names of younger kin but the reverse was rare (Dussart, 1988). Reprimands by educators were often directed in English to the whole class with the target in the third person such as "ohhh [student name] not listening (WT7) (c.f. O'Shannessy, 2011a). It has been noted in Warlpiri socialisation that this

indirect way of influencing others' behaviour is consistent with values of personal autonomy within kinship obligations (O'Shannessy, 2011a).

In keeping with Warlpiri customs, educators used the term *kumunjayi* 'bereavement name' to refer to people who had passed away, certain students with names similar to people who had passed away, and objects and words that are still not able to be uttered for reasons of cultural taboo (Nash, 1981; Laughren, 2001). For example, during the bilingual science activity in the Upper Primary class (WT3. 29.11), the candle was referred to as, "*kumunjayi*-light" out of respect for a deceased woman whose English nickname began with two similar-sounding syllables. On another occasion, the educator told students that she could not use the Warlpiri synonym for perentie, *purlalypa* because the first part of the word sounded similar to her deceased Uncle's nickname, *Purlanja* (chatterbox/orator). They acknowledge this taboo when discussing terminology for reptiles in example (8.1).

(8.1)

- 1 WT3: *nyiya yirdi-j-wiyi?*  
what word-TOP-first  
'What word is this first?'
- 2 K18: *perentie!*  
*perentie*  
'perentie!'
- 3 K12: *perentie!*  
*perentie*  
'perentie!'
- 4 WT3: *yeah perentie but yirdi-j kapi riiti-i-mani yapa-kurlangu.*  
yeah perentie CONJ word-TOP FUT read—EUPH-CAUSE Warlpiri.person-POS  
'yeah perentie but read the Warlpiri word.'
- 5 *mulyurlinji and jinta-kari-ji yirdi-ji (.) purlalypa*  
*perentie and one-other-TOP word-TOP perentie*  
'*mulyurlinji* and the other word is *purlalypa*'
- 6 KK: *purlalypa!*  
*perentie*  
'perentie!'
- 7 WT3: *yeah kumunjayi*  
*yeah kumunjayi*

‘yeah it's taboo’

(WT3 30.08.2018, 06:00- 06:13)

This example shows the ways in which an educator modelled and reinforced and reinforce taboo naming practices in classroom learning.

A common practice in the Early Years classes was for students to discuss their connection to the educator and to each other. In contrast, this practice wasn't recorded in the interactions in the Upper Primary class (except when younger students were present), presumably because by this stage these connections had already been established. Relationships were nevertheless as crucial in the Upper Primary as the educators and students discussed relationships between the students and the authors or storytellers, protagonists, and content of texts (described further in section x). In example 8.2, in the Early Years' B class, students used a combination of English (Auntie) and Warlpiri terms (*yayi*, ‘sister’ and *tatarta* ‘father’s father’) to establish their relationships to their Warlpiri educator during a colouring-in activity.

(8.2)

- 1 K35: *nyam na* Auntie, here! Auntie [K39 name]-*kangu nyampu-j. Nya-ngka!*  
 this DIS auntie here auntie [name]-POSS this-TOP look-IMP  
 ‘This here Auntie, here! [student name]’s Auntie is this one. Look!
- 2 *Nyampu-j* [K29]-*kang* Auntie, *ngaju-nyangu yayi*  
 this-TOP [name]-POSS auntie me-POSS sister  
 ‘this is [name]’s Auntie, my sister.’
- 3 K31: and *nyuntu-nyangu yayi*, [K 40 name]! *ngaju-nyangu tartata!*  
 and you-POSS sister, [student’s name] me-POSS mother’s mother  
 ‘and (she’s) your sister (student’s name)! My maternal grandmother!’

(K35, 29.08.2018, 15:29-16:32)

In (8.2), the students are exploring the relationships in the class. K35 tells another student that the educator is K39’s Auntie (line 1) and is also her own sister according to their kinship subsection (they share a skin name) (line 2). A third student, K31, establishes that the Warlpiri educator is also the sister of a fourth student, K40, and their own mother's father's sister (i.e. mother's paternal aunt) (line 3).

An excerpt from the same lesson (8.3) shows the variety of terms used to address the educator by different students. These include Auntie (English), *tartarta* (maternal grandparent and siblings in baby talk register), *jaja* (maternal grandmother and her siblings), *yayi* (baby talk register for sister- biological or according to sub-section, using a term derived from a neighbouring language, Arrernte).

(8.3)

- 1 WT2: *yuwayi*, ready *nyina-ya-j*  
yes ready sit-IMP-TOP  
'yes, sit ready!'
- 2 K32: *nyarrpara-kurra-wiyi-rlipa* walk-u-j *yani*, *nganpa*<sup>68</sup>?  
where-ALL-first-1PL.INC walk-EUPH-TOP go-NPST 1.EX.PL.O  
'where are we doing for a walk, us mob?'
- 3 *yayi*, *nyarrpa-kurra-wiyi-rlipa* walk-u-j *yan nganpa*?  
sister where-ALL- first- 1PL.INC walk-TOP go 1.EX.PL.O  
'sister where are we going for a walk, us mob?'
- 4 WT2: *ngaka-jala ka-rlipa yani*  
later-actually PRES-1PL.INC go-NPST  
'we'll go later'
- 5 K33: *kakarrara*. Auntie *wangka-ja-mpa*  
east auntie say-PST-2SG.S  
'East. Auntie, you said'
- 6 *kakarrara-wiyi ka-rlipa yani walk-u*  
east-first PRES-1PL.Incl.S go-NPST walk-EUPH  
'that we are going east for a walk'
- 7 WT2: *yaruju* finish-*i-manta-lu* *yaruju! Kapi-mpa jinta-kari do-mani na*  
quickly finish-EUPH-CAUSE -PL quickly FUT-2SG different do-NPST now  
'hurry and finish it, hurry! You're going to do something different now'
- 8 K29: *jaja*, *ngaju* first!  
mother's mother 1SG first  
'Grandmother, I'm first'
- 9 K27: aun- auntie *nya-ngka nyam nyurru*.  
auntie look-IMP DET finish  
'Auntie, look this one is finished'

<sup>68</sup> this is reduced from *nganimpa*

- 10 K29: *ngaju-nyangu nyurru*  
1SG-POSS finished  
'Mine is finished'
- 11 K35: *ngaju-wiyi* first, *ngaju-ngku* finish. *Ngaju-ng-wiyi* finish *nganta*  
1SG-first first 1SG-ERG finish 1SG-ERG-first finish reportedly  
'I'm actually first, I finished (it). I'm telling you that I finished (it).'
- 12 WT2: *murnma!*  
wait  
'wait!'
- 13 K29: *ngula ngaju*, [student's name]! *Jaja ngaju-wiyi* first!  
this 1SG [student's name] mother's mother 1SG-first first  
'This is me, (student's name)! Granny, I'm actually first!'
- 14 WT2: *murnma nati-l ka-rna-nyarra yinyi ngula-ju lawa.*  
wait NEG-PL PRES-1SG-2Pl.O give-NPST this-TOP no  
'wait, I'm not going to give you this one, no'
- 15 *ngaju-ngku-wiyi ka-rna nganayi-mani*  
1SG-ERG-first PRES-1SG something-CAUSE-NPST  
'I am first going to do something'
- 15 K32: *ngaju-wiyi first-ji, Yayi*  
1SG-first first-TOP sister  
'I'm first, sister'
- 15 K??;<sup>69</sup> *tartarta, ngaju-wiyi!*  
mother's father, 1SG-first?  
'Grandmother, I'm first'

(K35 29.08.2018, 23:05- 23:51)

There are four students in interaction 8.3, and each uses a different relational term for the educator. The first student, K32 asks the Warlpiri educator in which direction they will go for a walk after class, calling her *yayi* 'sister'. When the educator suggests they talk about it later, a second student K33 calls her 'Auntie' and suggests they walk to the east. A third student, K29 calls her *jaja*, 'maternal grandmother' and lets her know they have completed their work. A fourth student K?? refers to her as *tartarta* 'maternal grandmother' when announcing that they completed the task first. In keeping with documented Warlpiri socialisation practices (Bavin, 2010) the distinction between mother's mother, *jaja* and mother's father, *tartarta* is expressed by the students. However as documented by Bavin (2010) the distinction between younger sister,

<sup>69</sup>

K??; is used when the identity of the student is unclear or unknown.

*ngawurru* and older sister, *kapirti* is omitted and students used *yayi* for all classificatory sisters regardless of age.

The features of talk exchanged between Warlpiri educators and their students bear resemblance to studies in other bilingual classroom contexts that show how language practices develop culturally safe and positive learning spaces (Rueda et al., 2016; Martin-Jones & Saxena, 2003; Martin-Jones, 2000). The practices described in this section serve to engage students, make them feel comfortable and cared for, make learning relevant and shape their identities as Warlpiri speakers and members of the community. This approach combines a concern for academic and social success among students. It was rationalised by an elder in example 8.4, who on country visits described her role as not only passing on knowledge but also love and care for the students.

(8.4)

- 1 E1:    *yeah ngaju nganayi ka-rna-nyarra        warru pura-mi*  
           yeah 1SG ANAPH PRES-1SG-O.2PL follow around-NPST  
           ‘yeah you know I am just following you around’
- 2           *because kurdu-kurdu kalu pina-pina-jarrimi*  
           because child-redup 3Pl.S learn-INCHO-NPST  
           ‘because kids are learning’
- 3           *yungunpa-jana yulkami kurdu-kurdu-ku manu teach-i-mani*  
           2SG.S-3PL.O love child-redup-DAT and teach-EUPH-CAUSE-NPST  
           ‘so I love the kids and am teaching them’
- 4           *mayi?*  
           INTERR  
           ‘right?’

(Mala-kurlu, 03:06-03:18)

The elder, speaking to a group of parents and children, explains that their interest in children learning on Country Visits is motivated by love for them. The senior person associates *teaching* and *loving* students as the same process and goal. Clearly the older generation is central to an approach to learning that is embedded in relationships and in the next section I discuss their role as linguistic and cultural authorities in the Warlpiri program.

## 8.2. Drawing on the cultural and linguistic authority of elders for teaching and learning *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’

Senior speakers of endangered minority languages are widely considered a vital resource in language maintenance efforts (e.g., Platero, 2001; Rouvier, 2017; Meek, 2008; Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer, 1998; Bow, 2016). In the Warlpiri context, the role of elders, that is senior members of the older generation, in the school as authorities on Warlpiri linguistic and cultural knowledge and in provision of governance to the teaching programs and associated materials development, has been emphasised by Warlpiri educators in 40 years of professional meetings (Browne & Gibson, 2021). Older community members, many of whom were raised by parents who experienced pre-contact ways of living, are constructed as ideal speakers of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong language’ and as holding knowledge of *Jaru pirrjirdi*, ‘strong culture.’ A theme emerging from interviews with Warlpiri educators in 2018-19 (see Chapter 6) was the role of elders in inducting both educators and students into a life-long process of learning Warlpiri linguistic and cultural content. In 2018 -2019, elders invited to Yuendumu School were instrumental in running school culture days, bush trips, and country visits, exposing students to specialised language used in the stories, songs, and activities. Elders and senior members of the community played an essential role in professional development meetings, development of teaching resources, reference materials and song writing. This body of Warlpiri literature provides an important source of reference material for teaching the Warlpiri Theme Cycle and as exemplars of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri.’ The texts are legitimised by the current cohort of elders as having linguistic and cultural authority, constituting an “authorised medium that conveys to pupils’ legitimate knowledge” (c.f. De Castell and Luke, 1987. p. 413-14).

### 8.2.1 Written texts as fundamental devices for teaching linguistic and cultural knowledge in the classroom context

The discursive architecture of classroom practices is constructed not only by linguistic resources but also material and embodied ones, texts being salient among these (Burdelski & Howard, 2020). Warlpiri texts formed a central organising structure for all the observed lessons in 2018-2019. These included reference materials, narrative, and personal histories. They were complemented by teaching resources such as posters, flash cards, worksheets, and bingo games among many others. The texts exemplified complex grammatical structures and vocabulary and enabled a set of practices that facilitated the teaching of the structure and vocabulary of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri.’

The BRDU also prints a range of materials, some of which resemble more closely everyday ways of speaking (such as *Junga Yimi* ‘true stories’ community newsletters over the past 30 years or phonics resources containing vocabulary for concepts borrowed from English such as *taya* ‘tyre’). More recently, in a project that I was involved in in 2015, the Upper Primary students created a resource called *Kapurna nyinami nyampu-piya*<sup>70</sup> ‘Local heroes’ (Orange Class, 2015). This resource was developed by students interviewing members of the community and transcribing the interviews and translating them into English. This documentation of everyday speaking practices includes features of spoken Warlpiri and includes borrowings and insertions from English. Interactive and online resources in Warlpiri are being developed that privilege everyday ways of speaking.

In this section, I focus on one type of text, *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’ stories, also described by linguists such as McConvell (1989) and McGregor (1987) as “mythological narratives.” These narratives were used by Warlpiri educators to scaffold the learning of Warlpiri linguistic and cultural content. Stories are powerful tools for socialisation (Miller, Wiley, Fung & Liang, 1997) and transmitting cultural knowledge, values, and beliefs. Oral storytelling is a salient Warlpiri cultural and pedagogical activity, a locus for socialisation into linguistic practices, subjectivities, and morality (Klapproth, 2004). *Jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’ stories as both linguistic and social devices, are ontologically and ecologically significant in constituting relations between people, places, and culturally important activities. Their general mode of organisation follows “the movement of people from (named) place to named place, recounting their experiences along the way” (McGregor, 1987 p. 20). These narratives provide sociocultural and historical accounts of community knowledge that are passed on from elders to youth, ensuring the survival of the knowledge with new generations (Fixico, 2003, Campbell, 1988). As in other Australian contexts, different levels of knowledge are passed on at different stages of life and maturity (Gale, 1995; Baarda 1994).

To show how written texts are used as social and linguistic teaching devices, I begin section 8.2.1 by examining a unit of learning organised around a *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’ story in the Upper Primary classroom, describing a variety of literacy activities that build knowledge of the content and linguistic features of the text. I then analyse the students’ retellings of the text in the unit’s oral assessment task to understand the students’ engagement with the features of the text. The

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<sup>70</sup> literally, ‘I will be like this’



unit of work elaborated on here was based around the *jukurra* 'dreaming' story, *Lungkarda-kurlu* 'Blue tongue lizard' (Nungarrayi, C, 2007)<sup>71</sup> as the core text (Figure 8.1) and followed the sequence of literacy (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) activities outlined in the Goanna Planner program (see Figure 7.7 and for more details see Chapter 3 section 3.2.2.). The Goanna Planner offers a framework of oral and written activities that facilitate the deconstruction and reconstruction of a text for the purposes of developing linguistic skills, sociocultural knowledge, and literate practices (Murray, 2007). The unit of work was delivered by the Warlpiri educator, WT3 over 6 weeks, from August 14th to the 28th of September over eleven 45 to 90-minute lessons. I observed and recorded five 45-minute lessons and three planning sessions. The text was selected by the educator with assistance from staff at the BRDU at the beginning of the term. It was chosen because of its congruence with the Warlpiri Theme Cycle theme for term 3, *Kuyu* 'meat or animals eaten for meat'. The educator also noted that it would complement the focus in the mainstream English-medium science curriculum on reptiles.



**Figure 8.1** *Lungkarda-kurlu* 'Blue Tongue Lizard' text

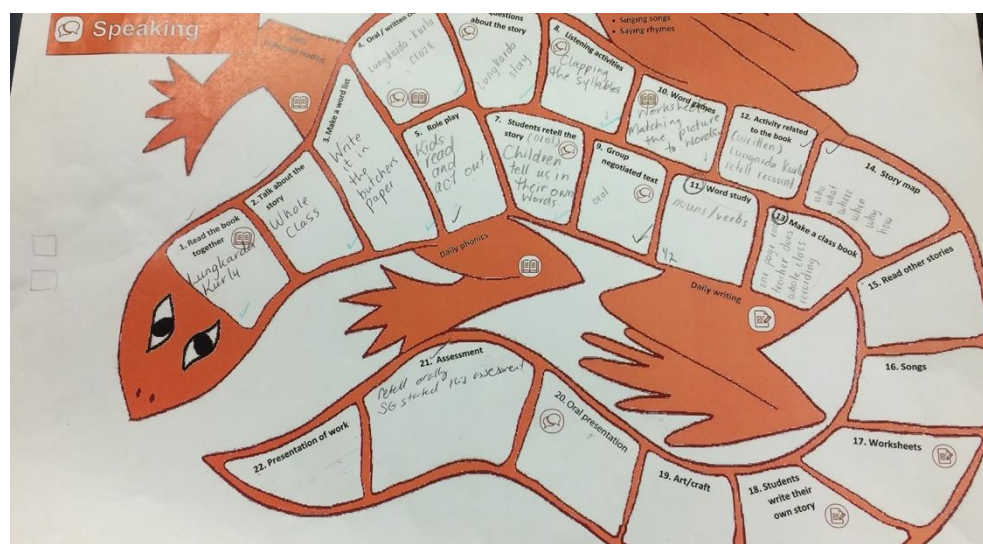
The story follows protagonist *Nungarrayi* as she searches, singing and crying, for her love, *Jangala*. When they are finally reunited near a soakage at *Karrinyarra*, a significant site south of Yuendumu, they have two blue-tongue lizard babies whose eyes are ringed with black from crying.

<sup>71</sup> This story was originally told by J.Jakamarra and written by C. Nungarrayi in 1981. The second edition, used in this unit of work was revised by O. Nangala and the illustrations were done by L. Jungarrayi in 2007 at the BRDU. it is 15 pages long (90 words) with a page-long English translation at the back.

As part of her planning, the educator completed a text analysis template (Murray, 2007) which assisted her in noting important language patterns (phrases, repetition, sentence structures), parts of speech, locations and markers of time, direction, and number as well as the book's genre (see Figure 8.2 for a copy of the complete text analysis). Next, they mapped out the activities on a Goanna Planner template (see Figure 8.3) and presented these to the *kardiya* classroom teacher, who scheduled the lessons into the class timetable.

Text Analysis	
Book Title <i>Lungkarda-Kurlu</i>	
Author & Illustrator <i>Connie Nungarrayi / Ormay Nangala / Lloyd Tungarrayi</i>	
Important language patterns in this book (phrases, repetition, sentence structures) <i>-lpa/already happened / Jangala-rlu-jurlpa</i> <i>-yirraru + -ku / yulaja-rlparla / yulaja-lpa / Kalya-Kalya-ku</i>	
Nouns (Naming words for things, people & places eg. karnta, marna, tawurnu). Circle any endings. <i>Lungkarda, Muju, Nungarrayi, Jangala, Kalya-Kalya, Wati, Warlu, Wirlianyi, Karnta, Kurrinyarra, Kurdu-jarra, milpa</i>	
Adjectives (Describing words eg. wiri, wita, ngurrju). Circle any endings. <i>Tarnnga, Wardinyi, yirraru,</i>	
Verbs (Action/doing words eg. nyinami, nyinaja, nyinaya, yanu, yanurnu, yanurra). Circle any endings. <i>Nyinami, yanu, yulami, <del>yanpami</del>, yarrpurna, nyangu, palija,</i>	
Compound verbs (Action/doing words with 2 parts eg. manyu-karrimi) <i>palka-jarrimi,</i>	
Pronouns (eg. ngaju, nganimpa, karna, karnalu, nyampuju, ngula, kuja) <i>nyuntu-ku, ngulalu, yali, kujalpa-rla,</i>	
Questions	
Location (places). Circle endings. <i>Lungkarda-Muju-Muju-ngka / Kurrinya-rla</i>	Time (eg. pirrarni, nyurru-wiyi, mungalyurrula) <i>Yarda,</i>
Direction (Yatijarra)	Words for number or how many (eg. jinta, jirrama, -patu, -jarra) <i>Kurdu-jarra</i>
What type of story is this? (Yimi junga nyayirni, Yimi manyu-manyu, Jukurpa...) <i>Jukurpa</i>	

Figure 8.2 WT3's text analysis of *Lungkarda-kurlu* text



**Figure 8.3 Goanna Planner for Term 3, 2018, Lungkarda-kurlu ‘Blue Tongue Lizard’ text**

The table (8.2) below outlines each of the fifteen planned activities in the Goanna Planner, a description of the actual activities conducted and reference to the work samples and classroom artefacts in appendices, comprising reading, listening, writing, and speaking activities.

Activity	Description of activities
1 Read the book together	The educator read the book together at least 9 times over the weeks- usually the students followed along with their own versions of the text.
2 Talk about the story	During reading and directly afterwards the educator would ask questions about the text, the protagonists, their relationships, linking the story to the kinship system, local travel, Warlpiri ecological knowledge and the students’ experiences stc.
3 Make a word list and word study	As a class the students made a word list and did a simple word study identifying nouns and verbs from the story (see Appendix J)
4 Oral/written cloze	The students completed cloze worksheets developed by the BRDU team (see Appendix K). A Focus was on salient and important or lesser-known words.
5 Role play	In small groups, the students acted out scenes from the story and these were recorded using lapel microphones.
6 Ask questions about the story	The educator engaged in question-and-answer routines during whole class reading and after reading the story together.

	The non-Indigenous teacher developed a question sheet that the class did as a group with the English language framing questions who, what, when, where, why with Warlpiri translations below. The group penned their responses in Warlpiri (see Appendix L)
7 Story map- , a graphic organiser to help students learn the elements a story	Each student illustrated a story map for the story, and this was the basis of the oral assessment task which required students to retell the story with the story map as a prompt. (See Appendix M)
8 Students retell the story	This was identified as an assessment task and students were asked to retell the story in Warlpiri using their story map. The first author recorded 4 students retelling the story in Warlpiri and English.
9 Listening activities	Bingo Flashcard matching game – students had to categorise flashcards with different reptiles according to their characteristics (Appendix N)
10 Group negotiated text	The educator facilitated a collaborative process of rewriting the story on a large note pad at the front of the room. The educator asked students to come to the front and students could orally “shout out” and construct the story in their own words (Appendix O).
11 Word Games	Syllable matching game- the students-built words and sentences from the text
12 Arts and Craft related to book	Students made dioramas out of plasticine to depict scenes from the story. They were invited to work with PAW media to create animations out of their creations (Appendix P).
13 Make a class book	Based on the group negotiated text, the class made a single book. Each student was responsible for illustrating a different scene of the book and the writing the text for that page (Appendix Q).
14 Read other stories	A second reference book was chosen to complement the learning: <i>Yumurru-wangu-kurlu</i> ‘About Reptiles’ (Gallagher, 2014) which included Warlpiri scientific and cultural knowledge about reptiles (see Appendix R) and related worksheets and was rated reading Level 5 for the complexity of content and density of text
15 Songs	The students had a weekly singing session with a BRDU literacy production worker

**Table 8.1 Outline of activities taught according to the Goanna Planner in 2018**

In interviews (Chapter 6), Warlpiri educators noted the importance of repeated exposure to the content for mastery of a skill or knowledge domain. Repetition of linguistic features and functions is central to language, learning and the reproduction of cultural and social organisation (Bauman, 2004, Tannen, 2007, Brown, 2001). Brown (2001, p 223) has argued “repetition is a prerequisite for learning, providing the possibility of assimilating experience, committing it to memory and also thus the basis for prediction”. Disbray, O’ Shannessy, et al., (2020) have commented on the importance of repetition for the reproduction of linguistic and cultural knowledge in the Warlpiri Theme Cycle. This non-linear approach involving “repetition and returning to concepts for deeper understanding” has been identified as a crucial feature of Indigenous pedagogy in general (Yunkaporta & McGinty, 2009). Each new production recontextualises the language in new ways to maintain student engagement and interest and shaping the meaning making process (Bakhtin, 1981, Tannen 2007).

The educator read the core text at the beginning of each of the five lessons I observed and reported that they did so for most of the others in the unit. The first time the whole class read the book, the students indicated that they were already familiar with the story. They called out that it is a *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’ story, and that it’s about blue tongue lizards. The educator emphasised utility of repetition when they reminded students that they had already read the book (example 8.5).

(8.5)

1 WT3: *kala kaji-rna-nyarra pina read-i-mani jalangu-rlu*  
 USIT IRR-1SG.S-2PL.O again read-EUPH-CAUSE now-ERG  
 ‘and if I read it again now’

2 an *ka-npalu milyapinyi mayi?*  
 and PRES-2PL.Subj remember INTERR  
 and you remember, ok?

(WT3 17.08.2018, 00:34-00:39)

This type of commentary was observed every time they re-read the story, an acknowledgement that the students already knew the story, and that in re-reading they were consolidating and extending prior learning. Engaging with texts frequently and in depth provided students with repeated input that included a diversity of forms (e.g., focus markers, compound verbs,

infinitive constructions, modal particles) that is void of English. While the text was the same each time, the educators' engagements with the texts varied with each repetition, focussing on different aspects of content and connecting to various experiences from the students' lifeworlds. In the next sub-section, I describe how educators engage with texts as exemplars of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi*, 'strong Warlpiri'

### 8.2.1.1 Talk around text

It was typical for educators to read a text with the class and offer metalinguistic commentary and discuss the story while rephrasing and recasting sections and checking student understanding. This practice, observed in many other classrooms contexts, led Baker (1988, p. 264) to assert that in mediating classroom texts there are “two parallel texts to be managed and integrated: the written text itself and the educator’s oral commentary on it via questions and responses to answers”, the so called “talk around text”. When reading, the educators would often model the cognitive processes of reading comprehension, developing what has been referred to as “meaning orientation” to the text with the students in a group reading activity (Davey, 1983; Duffy, 2009; Fisher, Frey & Lapp, 2009). The next example (8.6)<sup>72</sup> exemplifies this process. The underlined text is the educator reading from the story and the rest is her spontaneous commentary concerning comprehension, text structures, and text features

(8.6)

WT3: *nyanyi kanpalu? Yunparnulpa kalya-kalya-ku “mmmmm” yulajalpa. Yulajalparla watiki yaliki Jangalaku. Nyanyi kanpalu? Nungarrayi an nyampu Jangala. Mmm kurdu-kurdu ngurruju. Jangala-rlu-ju-lpa? warluju yarda yarpurnu kujalpa nyangu Nungarrayirli-lki. Nyanyi kanpalu? Yanu-lpa yanu-lpa kujalpa-rla jurnta palija warluju Nungarrayi-ki-ji. Warlu-julpa jangka-ja-juku wurnturu. Nyanyi-kanpa-lu? wurnturu jankami ka angka? Ngulalpa yulaja-juku Jangala-kuju. Nyanyi kanpalu? Nungarrayi ka yulami? Jangala nyanyi ka tumachi wurnturu-nyayirni angka? Yanurla Jangala-ku-ju manurla purdangirli karrija wirlinyi-rlani. Nyanyi kanpalu? Nungarrayi warrirni karla wirlinyi-rlani. Jangala yanurnu ngurra-kurra ngula nyangu Nungarrayi-lki, manurla wardinyi-jarri-ja karnta-ku-ju. Nyanyi kanpalu? Nyampu-rla Jangala-ju nyampu-rla pirdangirli Nungarrayi-ji. Ngurra-ngka-lk. Jangala-ju-rla wangkaja “Yuwa nyiyakunpa yanurnu?” Nungarrayi-ji wangka-ja “Nyuntuku-rnangku yanurnu warlu nyanjarla yirraru manunpaju. Yanu-pala wardinyilki manu-pala*

<sup>72</sup> A glossed example is in Appendix U

*nyinaja tarnnga Karrinyarra-rla ngapangka. Nyarrpara-rla  
Karrinyarra-ju kurdu-kurdu? Kuja, kurlirra.*

‘Can you all see? She is singing for her husband “mmmm” then she cried. She cried for that man Jangala, can you see? Nungarrayi and that’s Jangala [pointing at the pictures]. Mmmm good, kids. Jangala made a fire and Nungarrayi could see the fire and started crying. Can you all see? She went and went carrying the fire stick but it went out. Can you all see? It went out didn’t it? And then she cried for Jangala. Can you see? Nungarrayi is crying? She sees Jangala is too far away isn’t that right? She went but found that Jangala had gone hunting. Can you see Nungarrayi was looking for him but he was out hunting. Jangala came home and saw Nungarrayi and was happy to see her, that woman. Can you all see? Here is Jangala and here behind is Nungarrayi and home at last. Jangala asked Nungarrayi, “Yeah what did you come for? Nungarrayi said “I have come for you because of the fire you burned; it made me feel lonely for you”. They both became happy and stayed forever at Karrinyarra at the soakage. Where is Karrinyarra, kids? Here, South.

K1: *Nyarrpa? Karrinyarra?*

What karrinyarra

‘What? Karrinyarra?’ {points towards the south}

WT3: *Kuja! Kurlirra. Ngana-patulu-lpa yanu nyurru-wiyi-j?*

thus south. who-3PL-PST go-PST already-first-TOP

‘Yes that way, South. Who of you went there a long time ago?’

*Ya-nu-npalu ole-lot ngalipa class.*

Go-PST-2PL whole.lot 2PL.INCL class

‘You all went there from our class.’

(WT3 16.08.2018, 07:14-08:44)

As part of this mediation process, WT3 provides student readers with a running metatextual commentary with which to process text by moving between the text, focus questions “can you see?” and “isn’t that right?” and commentary such as pointing out each character, their location and commenting on their actions (c.f. C. Luke, De Castell, & A. Luke, 1989, p. 252). Each time the educator read the text over the six-week unit, she repeated key questions and introduced new ones to expand students' learning and maintain interest. For example, in some lessons the focus was on the protagonists and their relationships, in other lessons the educator focussed on geographic features depicted in the texts, introducing new geographic terms associated with the specific location of the story. During one lesson, the class compared the lesser-known term *winjirri* 'spring' with the commonly used *mulju* 'soakage'. In this way each time the class read

the story, the students were offered opportunities<sup>73</sup> to engage with the content and extend their learning beyond the text, making connections to new and existing knowledge (exemplified in interactions described in the next section).

### 8.2.1.2 Identifying and making connections between texts and the students' lifeworlds

All students enter the classroom with a 'backpack' full of experiences, which implies that they, in the process of learning, continuously and constantly relate the content to prior experiences, and the notion of funds of knowledge (González, Moll & Amanti 2006, Martin-Jones & Saxena, 2003). In engaging with texts, Warlpiri educators were careful to identify and make connections through association to the students' lifeworlds (Hultgren, 1995) and connections to existing knowledge (Yunkaporta & McGinty, 2009). Dewey (1902) used the term "continuous reconstruction" to describe the process of moving "the child's present experience into the organised bodies of truth" (p. 11). For example, when introducing a text, educators would provide commentary about those Warlpiri people (mostly elders, some of whom are still alive today) who were involved in its production. All oral texts that are reproduced as teaching materials at the BRDU are checked with the original storyteller, who are acknowledged on the inside cover, as are those who wrote the text down and illustrated it (Gale, 1995). In example 8.7, WT3 introduces the authors and illustrators of the text, annotating the reading with comments about the people.

(8.7)

1 WT3: oh *kurdu-kurdu purda-nyangka-lu yimi pura-ja ngula-ju* Jack  
oh child-redup listen-IM-PL.S story tell-PST this Jack  
'oh kids, listen. This story was told by Jack'

2 *Jakamarra-rlu nyampu-j purlka-pawu wiyarrpa*  
Jakamarra-DAT that-TOP old-DIM poor.thing  
Jakamarra that dear old man, poor thing'

3 K3: *Jakamarra*

4 WT3: *an yirra-rnu Nak- Nungarrayi-rli. Nyurnu, wiyarrpa*  
and write-PST Nak- Nungarrayi-ERG sick poor.thing  
'and written up by Nak- Nungarrayi, she's sick poor thing

<sup>73</sup> This strategy was also effective given sporadic attendance of some students (attendance rates were reported to be 49.2% at the time of this study (NTDoE, 2019))



- 5            *an yirdi ngurrju-manu Ormay Gallagher Nangala-rlu*  
and story done-CAUSE-PST    Ormay Gallagher    Nangala-ERG  
'and the story was done by Ormay Gallagher Nangala'
- 6            *an kuruwarri <I> kujur-rnu <I>Lloyd Jungarrayi-rli* '  
and illustrations    draw-PST        Lloyd Jungarrayi-ERG  
'and the illustrations were drawn by Lloyd Jungarrayi'
- 7 K7:        <1>Jungarrayi! <1>
- 8 WT3:      *yeah tartata                    nganayi nyuntu-nyangu*  
yes mother's.father uhm    you-POSS  
'yeah your maternal grandfather'

(WT3 16.08 5:22-06:13)

In 8.7 the educator describes the storyteller as, "*purlka-pawu wiyarrpa*", 'that dear old man' (line 2). They employ the diminutive suffix "*-pawu*" (derived from *-pardu*<sup>74</sup>) followed by "*wiyarrpa*" 'poor thing'<sup>75</sup> to express affection. They comment that the author of the book, *Nungarrayi*, is "*nyurnu, wiyarrpa*" 'sick poor thing' (line 4). As the educator introduces the illustrator, a student calls out his skin name (line 7) and they confirm, "*yeah tartata nganayi nyuntu-nyangu*" 'yes, your mother's father' affirming the student's relationship to the illustrator.

Not only were connections made to the contributors, the elders who generated the text or storytelling, but also to the content of the material. In the Upper Primary classes when discussing texts, the educators and students regularly demonstrated their relatedness to the protagonists and to each other<sup>76</sup>. These were modelled by educators in regular interactions and explicitly taught through references to character relationships in *jukurrpa* 'dreaming' stories, stories about the land and to practices on country (referred to by subsections e.g., *Jakamarra*'s country/dreaming). For example, in *Lungkarda-kurlu* 'Blue tongue Lizard' the protagonist with the skin name, *Nungarrayi* was crying for husband, *Jangala*. The educator asks a question and

74 O'Shannessy (2005, p. 20) described a change in Warlpiri whereby rhotics become semi-vowels in some words such as *pardu* -*pawu*

75 *Wiyarrpa* 'poor thing' is commonly used in Warlpiri for expressing sympathy or care for a person (Clendon, 2014, p. 173).

76 The practice of self-association in storytelling, linking oneself to the protagonists of the story has also been documented in other contexts (e.g., by Blythe (2010) in the Murrinpatha context)

when the student responds they remind him that he is from the same subsection as the protagonist (example 8.8).

(8.8)

1 WT3: mmmm ay *nyuntu-rlangu Jangala-ju*  
 mmmm ay you-also Jangala-TOP  
 ‘you are Jangala too’

(WT3, 31:08 00:02:48.930-00:02:51.228).

Later in the same lesson, example 8.9, the educator and students co-construct a shared understanding of the relevant classificatory kinship terms from a *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’ story and discuss how this relates to the students’ lived experiences.

(8.9)

1 WT3: hey! *kurdu-kurdu manyumanyu mayi ampu* story or *junga-nyayirni*?  
 hey child-redup play ITERR this story or true-very  
 ‘hey kids! is this story made up or real?’

2 K1: *junga!*  
 true  
 ‘it’s true!’

3 K2: *junga-juk!*  
 true-definitely  
 ‘It’s definitely real’

4 K3: *jukurrpa!*  
 dreaming  
 ‘It’s a dreaming story’

5 WT3: *yuwayi*  
 yes

6 WT3: *yuwayi ngurrju. An nyiya-nyiya-jarra?*  
 yes good. and what-what-two  
 ‘yes good and what are the skin names of these two?’

7 K2: *Jungarrayi an Nangala*  
 Jungarrayi and Nangala  
 Jungarrayi and Nangala

- 8 K4: *lungkarda-jarra*  
blue.tongue.lizard-two  
'two blue tongue lizards'
- 9 K1: *Jangala an Nungarrayi!*  
Jangala and Nungarrayi  
Jangala and Nungarrayi
- 10 WT3: yeah an *nyiya-pala kurdu-j*, *nyiya sk-*  
yeah and what-DU child-TOP what sk-  
'yeah and what about the two kids, what were the sk-
- 11 *nyiya-nyiya kurdu-pala palka-jarri-ja*  
what-what child-DU born-INCHO-PST  
skin names of the kids who were born?'
- 12 KK: *Nungarrayi!*
- 13 KK: *Japaljarri*
- 14 K1: *Nampijinpa, Jampijinpa!*
- 15 T3: yeah *lungkarda-jarra*, *jirrama, angka?* yeah *ngurrju*  
yeah blue.tongue.lizard-two two right yeah good  
'yeah, the two blue tongue lizards, two of them, isn't that right? yes good!'
- 16 *yuwayi ampu-j junga angka?*  
yes that-TOP true TAG  
'yes and this one is a true story'
- 17 story nati *manyumanyu. Nyurru-warnu* part, *yuwayi*  
story not fiction long-ago part yes  
'it's not fiction, it's from a long time ago. Yes'
- 18 KK: *nyurru-wiyi-ji*  
long ago-TOP  
'a long time ago!'
- 19 KK: xxx
- 20 WT3: *yuwayi an ngana ampu-rla Jangala?*  
yes and who here-LOC Jangala  
'yes and who here is Jangala?'
- 21 KK: *ngaju!*  
1SG  
'me'

- 22 WT3: yeah
- 23 KK: [male student nickname]!
- 24 WT3: yeah [student nickname], *nah junga-jala an Jampijinpa?*  
yeah [student nick name] nah really-still and Jampijinpa  
'yeah [student nickname]! nah who in real life? an Jampijinpa?'
- 25 KK: *ngaju!*  
1SG  
'me!'
- 26 WT3: *Nampijinpa?*
- 27 K4 *ngaju!*  
1SG  
'me!'
- 28 K1: *ngaju-rlangu*  
1SG-also  
'me too!'
- 29 WT3: *nyampu Nampijinpa* yeah  
this Nampijinpa yeah  
'this is Nampijinpa, yeah'
- 30 K6: *ngaju Nampijinpa*  
me Nampijinpa  
'I'm Nampijinpa'
- 31 K3: *nyampu Nampijinpa*  
this Nampijinpa  
'This is Nampijinpa'
- 32 WT3: *kurdu-kurdu yuwayi, ngurrju!*  
child-redup yes good  
'kids yes, good'

(WT3 16.08.2018, 16:27-17:16)

In line 1 of (8.9), the educator, WT3, reinforces the genre of the story as non-fiction or true, setting up for discussion of the skin names in the text in relation to the students' own lived experiences<sup>77</sup>. In line 6 WT3 asked for the skin names of the two protagonists, compatible according to their subsection for marriage ("right skin"). They then ask (line 10) what their children's skin names would be, something that is not mentioned in the text but can be deduced

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<sup>77</sup> Reiterating that *jukurrpa* 'dreaming' stories are true is a standard feature in this style of storytelling.

from knowledge of the subsection system, a necessary calculation in Warlpiri socialisation. In asking this question (line 10), they begin to utter the English term “sk-” for ‘skin name’ but repair this to the Warlpiri *nyiya-nyiya*. After some erroneous student responses, one student calls out the correct answer, that the children of *Nungarrayi* and *Jangala* must have skin names *Nampijinpa*, *Jampijinpa*. The educator, WT3 confirms the correct response and once again reiterates to the students the authenticity of the story, “yes and this now is a true story, it’s not made up” (line 15). At the same time a student demonstrates enthusiastic engagement by way of cooperative overlap with the educator (cf. Tannen, 1994) in agreeing, “from a long time ago!” (line 16). The educator then asks which of the students shares a skin name with the male protagonist, *Jangala*. The students call out enthusiastically identifying themselves (as in line 19), or other students by name (line 21). Then WT3 asks for any students who share the same skin as the female protagonist, *Nungarrayi* (line 22) reiterating and reminding students this is “*junga-jala* ‘true’. They ask who shares the same skin names as the protagonists’ offspring and students identify themselves (line 28) and others (line 29). This process serves to build an intimate, connected learning space and reinforces relationships between learning content and Warlpiri personhood that students have been learning since infancy.

Warlpiri educators’ engagement with Warlpiri cultural knowledge not only contributes to socialising students within the kinship system but also to conveying the deeply integrated nature of ethnobiological knowledge (Milne, 1998). Warlpiri ecological knowledge is embedded in its cultural context (Holmes & Jampijinpa, 2013, p. 25). This was explained by Warlpiri educator Barbara Martin with reference to the Warlpiri Theme Cycle,

“Every theme is connected to every other theme. It’s hard to pull apart because they are connected (...) Even though we are teaching about warlalja ‘family’ or ngapa ‘water’ theme, it is connected to everything, to law, people, land, country, Jukurrpa ‘Dreamtime/Stories’, songs” (Disbray & B. Martin, 2018, p. 36).

Interactions in the *Lungkarda-kurlu* unit of work demonstrated development of understandings related to the deeply integrated biocultural knowledge involved in complex relatedness between people, biota, and environments, encoding ecological knowledge for social, cultural, pragmatic, ethnobiological purposes. For example the text contains geographic information tied to locations of significance and also the habitats of blue tongue lizards in the area. The story culminates with an explanation of the black under the lizards’ eyes, as stemming from the crying protagonists in the story.

This unit of work was part of the *Kuyu* ‘animals and meat’ theme which incorporates not only the biological knowledge about the animals, but also their usage (for eating as the English translation of *kuyu* suggests), and cosmological/spiritual and cultural significance. In the process of deconstructing and reconstructing the core text, other related materials were also drawn on such as a reference book, *Yumurru-wangu-kurlu*, ‘About reptiles’ (see Appendix R for book cover). The text *Yumurru-wangu-kurlu* ‘Reptiles’ consists of descriptions of 34 reptiles found in the central desert, including their scientific and English names. It is not a *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’ story, rather a reference text which integrates ethno-biological knowledge and scientific knowledge as connected ontological constructs in descriptions of each reptile. For example (8.10) the description of a small lizard, the *Lerista vermiculais*, *Rinpi Rinpi* or Slider includes its habitat, physical features, and its role in the wider system of ethnobiological knowledge as making the bush potatoes grow big for human consumption.

(8.10)

*Rinpi-rinpi ngulaju kalu nyinami kanunju walyangka. Warna wita-piya kalu nyina karalya, kala wirliya-jarra- kurlu. Rinpi-rinpi kalu purlami mungangka ngula kalu- nyanu yalu-mani panungku. Yunparni kalu puurda manu mardj wiri-karda.*

‘These lizards live under the sand. They are like a little, smooth snake but with two legs. They sing out at nighttime and lots of others answer. They sing to make the bush potatoes grow big’

(*Yumurru-wangu-kurlu*, 2017, p. 15)

Another example (8.11) is the description of the lizard *Ctenophorus/Amphibolurus-isolepis*, *Kulupari* –Military dragon which includes its habitat and behaviour followed by the social implications if it is killed,

(8.11)

*Nyampuju pirli-ngawurrpa. Wurulya ka nyina pirlingka. Karnari-piya wita kalu nyina kala kuruwarri kalu mardarni purturlurla. Kajinpa kuluparri pakarni ngula ngati-nyanu kapi palimi nyuntuku-palangu.*

‘This one lives among the rocks. He hides away in the rocks. He is small like the reticulated dragon lizard and has patterns on his back. If you kill one of these, this means your mother will die.’

(*Yumurru-wangu-kurlu*, 2017, p.25)

Classroom talk between educators and students further exemplified this holistic approach to ethnobiological knowledge. For example, during a question-and-answer routine about the Blue Tongue lizards, following the reading of *Yumurru-wangu-kurlu*, ‘Reptiles’, students’ responses reflected a broader conceptualization of the reptiles, encompassing their social significance and depictions in *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’ stories (Example 8.12).

(8.12)

1 WT3: *nyarrpara-rla ka nyinami ngurra-ngka-ju nganayi?*  
 where-LOC PRES.3SG live- NPST home-LOC-TOP ANAPH  
 ‘Where does that thing (the blue tongue) live?’

2 ?K19: *walya!*  
 ground

3 K14: *walya= I mean marna-ngka!*  
 ground I mean grass-LOC  
 ‘on the ground=I mean grass!’

4 WT3: *marna-ngka yuwayi*  
 Grass-LOC yes  
 ‘in the grass, yes’

5 K14: *yula-nja-warnu!*  
 cry-NOM-after  
 ‘from crying!’

(WT3 30.08.2018, 02:29-02:41)

In (12), the educators and students are discussing the habitat of the blue tongue lizard. Towards the end of the interaction, one student notes that the blue tongue lizards had been crying, referring to the core text in which the children of the blue tongue lizard have black under their eyes from crying (line 5). Later in the lesson when reading a section in the same reference book about perenties, this student refers to a different *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’ story by commenting that the perentie has been painted (Example 8.13).

(8.13)

- 1 K14: *paint-i-jangka ngula-ju mulyurlinji*  
 paint-EUPH-from that-TOP perentie  
 ‘the perentie which has been painted’

(WT3 30.08.2018, 05:46-05:49)

The student is referring to a widely told *jukurra* ‘dreaming’ story, the text of which was also published by the BRDU in 1984, remade in 2004 called *Mulyurlinji-kirli Yimi nyampuju* ‘Story about the Perentie’ (Egan, 2004 and see Appendix S for cover page). In the story a perentie approaches various reptiles asking them to paint a design on his back. When they refuse, he eats them up. Finally, he asks the goanna, who agrees but does a very poor job and so he is eaten up too.

Another reptile featured in the text were frogs. In example 8.14 when the educator finished reading, several students shared experiences of seeing frogs at Mission Creek, a popular creek bed near Yuendumu. Then the educator asked the question “what does the frog say” and then rephrased, “what does it send away” alluding to a widely known *jukurra* ‘dreaming’ story that was not in the text, about a frog sending away water (line 3). The students make the connection to this story immediately and respond correctly, without pause (line 4).

(8.14)

- 1 K17: *yangka-rna nyangu yangka-time*  
 ANAPH-1SG.S see-PSTthat-time  
 ‘I saw it that time’
- 2 WT3: *an nyarra ka wangkami?*  
 And how Pres.3SG speak  
 ‘and what does it say?’
- 3 *nyiya ka nganayi-mani yilyami kapi?*  
 what PRES.3SG something-CAUSE-NPST send.away FUT  
 ‘What does it do something, what will it send away’
- 4 KK: *Ngapa! Ngapa!*  
 Water water  
 ‘Water! Water!’
- 5 WT3: *yeah ngapa.*  
 yeah water  
 ‘yeah water’



6 K10: *kapi yilyami-rni ngapa*  
 FUT.3SG send-away-hither water  
 ‘It will send water’

7 WT3: *yuwayi ngapa ka-rla nganayi-jarrimi. Mmm ngurrju.*  
 yes water PRE.3SG-DAT ANAPH-INCHO mmm good  
 ‘yes, it will do something to water. Mmmm good.’

(WT3 30.08.2018, 11:59-12:17)

This example, and the two preceding it, demonstrate the ways in which educators and students make connections between natural history knowledge and cultural content, drawing on their shared knowledge of Warlpiri scientific and cultural knowledge to expand on the learning. These practices construct a motive and context for acquiring and applying knowledge (Rueda & Genzuk, 2007).

In this subsection I demonstrated how educator practices of making connections not only inducts Warlpiri students into relevant ontological and epistemological perspectives but also draws on their own funds of knowledge through contextualising content, in what Rueda and Genzuk (2007) have termed “sociocultural scaffolding”. This contributed to cultural continuity by reinforcing home practices in the school context. Making connections between scientific and cultural knowledge and between texts and students’ ‘funds of knowledge’ (González et al., 2006) also served to extend the learning.

### 8.2.1.3 Students’ Oral (re)productions of written texts

Listening to educator input and engaging with written material in Warlpiri exposes students to target vocabulary, structures, and forms but research has indicated that this isn’t enough to ensure productive mastery of the language (e.g., comprehension in endangered language contexts Meakins & Wigglesworth, 2013; production in L2 contexts, Thomas, Lewis & Apolloni, 2012, p. 257) or register (Uccelli, Dobbs & Scott, 2013). Students need opportunities to use these structures extensively themselves and formulate and produce extended responses. The Goanna Planner framework offers opportunities for free-er, extended language performance such as engaging in role play, oral presentations or making three-dimensional dioramas of scenes from the story using large storage boxes and arts materials (see Appendix P). These activities provided a context for students to use language forms and constructions that were modelled in the text and in the educator’s question and answer (I-R-E) sequences. In role-

play, students devised their own dialogue to explore their personal understandings of the story, infer the characters' motives, intentions and moods and develop a picture of the context of the story.

The making of dioramas, an art-and spatial-thinking integrated activity encouraged students to explore “creative, non-verbal ways of understanding a subject” (Marshall & D. Moore, 2016, p. 12). The making of the dioramas facilitated the process of foregrounding Warlpiri geographic, spatial, and historical knowledge and through their creation, children explored aspects of land use, historical dress and tools which are based on Warlpiri teachings. For example, the dioramas were oriented in terms of cardinal directions and in making the scenery, students replicated the landscape features of the locations. Educators and students discussed historical and contemporary usages of fire for communication and burning of the landscape. Also, a great deal of discussion went into the Warlpiri and English terminology for the times of day (e.g., *parralpa-parralpa* 'dim light at dawn or dusk' vs *pararr-pararrpa* 'dusk' and *parra* 'day') and the colours of the sky (and by extension, the colours of paper used for the scenes). These kinds of activities, rather than reproducing privileged mainstream practices around text, afforded students opportunities to build on their funds of knowledge from their community, school and historical experiences to develop the scenes, and opportunities to develop and extend their Warlpiri vocabulary.

The final assessment activity within the unit of study required students to retell the story using their own story map, a sequence of illustrations they had created in a previous lesson (see Appendix M for an example). I recorded four students retelling the text, K9, K14, K10 and K17, to gauge both the students' comprehension of the text and their ability to reproduce the narrative in their own words, using both extended language units and concise syntactic structure (Roth, Speese, Cooper & Paz, 1996). These examples demonstrate the students' engagement with and reproduction of features of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' that educators have workshopped in the past (Disbray, O'Shannessy, et al., 2020) as well as some innovations to contemporary Warlpiri documented in the past several decades. They also correlate with features the educator noted as important in her text analysis in the planning phase of this unit of work (see figure 7.7).

The four students, all boys, represent a reasonably broad distribution of Upper Primary class competencies. K9 and K14 are active participants in Warlpiri lessons, with K14 singled out by

the Warlpiri educator as a “strong Warlpiri learner” and belonging to a family of “good talkers”, meaning conversant in strong Warlpiri and active in its use and maintenance in other domains, such as ceremony. K17 is a very quiet student with regular attendance while K10 has experienced significant absences since a close family member passed away earlier in the year. While I don’t have access to attendance data, I would estimate all four students were in attendance for over half of the lessons in this unit. The storyboards have ten illustrated word-less strips to them, and in general the students’ retellings included one sentence per strip (see Appendix M for a sample storyboard) .

I offer the full transcript in of K14’s retelling from start to finish (8.15), and the other three examples can be found in Appendix T.

(8.15)

- 1K14: *ngula Jangala yanu wirlinji*<sup>78</sup>. *Nungarrayi-lpa yula-ja Jangala ku*  
 this Jangala go-PST hunting Nungarrayi- then cry-PST Jangala-DAT  
 ‘This Jangala went hunting. Nungarrayi then was crying for Jangala.’
- 2 *Nungarrayi wa- yarrpurnu warlu watiya-rlu.*  
 Nungarrayi wa- ignite-PST fire stick-ERG  
 ‘Nungarrayi fi- lit the fire with the stick.’
- 3 *Parnka-ja warlu-kurlu Nungarrayi-ji yula-nja-kurlu*<sup>79</sup>.  
 Run-PST fire-COM Nungarrayi-TOP cry-INF-COM  
 ‘She ran with the fire, Nungarrayi while crying.’
- 4 *Ngula-lpa Jangala-ngu yarrpu-rnu warlu pirli-ngka*  
 this-then Jangala-ERG light-PST fire rocks-LOC  
 ‘Then Jangala was lighting a fire on the rocks.’
- 5 *Jungarrayi nah Nungarrayi-lpa yula-ja Jangala-ku.*  
 Jungarrayi nah. Nungarrayi- IMPF cry -PST Jangala-DAT  
 ‘Jungarrayi nah Nungarrayi was crying for Jangala’.
- 6 *Jangala yanu-rnu pina wirlinji-jangka nyina-ja-lpa warlu-ngka.*  
 Jangala go-PST-hither back hunting-from sit-PST-then fire-LOC  
 ‘Jangala came back from hunting, then sat by the fire.
- 7 *Jangala wangka-ja, “nyiya-kurl nyiya-ku-mpa ya-nu-rnu?”*

<sup>78</sup> *Wirlinji* ‘hunting’ is a relatively recent change from *wirlinyi* ‘hunting’ (O’Shannessy, 2020).

<sup>79</sup> This is an innovation from older ways of speaking which would use the subject complementiser *-karra* or object complementiser *-kurra* after the infinitive

Jangala say-PST what-COM what-DAT-2SG come-PST-hither  
 ‘Jangala said “what-with what did you come for?”’

- 8 *Nungarrayi wangka-ja, “ngajurna ya-nu-rnu nyuntu-ku” wiyarrpa!*  
 Nungarrayi say-PST 1SG.S go-PST-hither 2SG.O.DAT poor.thing  
 ‘Nungarrayi said “I came for you.” Poor thing!’
- 9 *Ngula-lpa lungkarda yula-ja, kurdu palka-jarrja. Kurdu-jangka*  
 This-then bluetongue.lizard cry-PST, child-INCHO-PST child-from  
 ‘That blue tongue lizard was crying, a child was born. From the child’
- 10 *ngula-ju kurdu-pawu yula-nja-warnu lungkarda jarri-ja.*  
 this-TOP child-DIM cry-NOM-from bluetongue.lizard become-PST  
 ‘That dear child, from crying became a blue tongue lizard at Karringarra’

All four students spoke fluently in Warlpiri with minimal English insertions. This was in contrast to their practices when engaging with the *Lungkarda-kurlu* 'Blue Tongue Lizard' text in whole class I-R-E routines (see section 8.2.1.1 ‘talk around text’) and small group work<sup>80</sup> which involved frequent borrowings, insertions and even switches at clause level (usually for the benefit of a non-Warlpiri speaker or when joking around). For this assessment task, the only instances of English were minimal conventionalised borrowings such as 'nah' in line 5 of example 8.15. In the other three stories (see examples in appendix T), the only English insertions were "thing" when K9 was stuck for a word, the conjunction *an* 'and' (K10), which three decades ago was included as a loanword by Bavin in Yuendumu (1989, p. 275). K9 used *tumaji* ‘too much, because’, also long ago identified as a loanword by Nash (1980, p. 209). In this case, *tumaji* ‘too much’ was integrated into Warlpiri morphology carrying the first-person singular marker and object clitic, *tumaji-rna-ngku* 'too.much-1SG.S-2SG.O'. In their recorded assessment tasks, the four students also used features described by educators in workshops as *Warlpiri-nyayirni* ‘good Warlpiri’ or *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri', including varied morphology such as compound verbs, case markers, focus markers, and infinitive constructions, with some innovations. Their retellings generally had clear narrative structure and showed command of sentence grammar.

Warlpiri educators have previously expressed that verbal morphology is an important feature of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' (see Chapter 6). The children used different types of verbs, from four of the five verb classes (V1,2,3,5), including transitive and intransitive verbs. This is

<sup>80</sup> in this thesis see examples 5.6 & 7.28 for K9; examples 7.10, 8.12, 8.13 for K14; and example 8.14 for K17 and K10

crucial as a minor outcome of contact with English is the reduction of verbal morphology in favour of borrowings of English verbs compounded with bound Warlpiri verbs. Three students retold the story in past tense, and one told it in present tense. Three of the four students used the complex verb, *palka-jarrimi* ‘be born’ comprising nominal and main verb when referring to the birth of the children, the blue tongue lizards.

Warlpiri educators have identified accurate use of case suffixing as constituting *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ (NTDoE, 2016). Students’ use of case suffixing included dative *-ku*, allative (*-kurra*), locative (*-ngka/*, *-rla*) and ergative (*-ngku/rli*) on a variety of case structures as well as derivational cases such as associative (*-warnu*), elative (*-jangka*) and comitative (*-kurlu*). Some of the retellings exemplified a change from the older style of allomorphy. For example, in line 4 of example 8.15, K14 used the newer allomorph usually reserved for mono and dual-syllabic words, *Jangala-ngu* ‘Jangala-ERG’ whereas classically it would be *Jangala-rlu* ‘Jangala-ERG’ (discussed in section 3.1.3 in Chapter 3).

Another newer construction is the application of the comitative suffix, *-kurlu* on the infinitive form of the verb *yulami* ‘to cry’, to give the meaning that the understood subject of the infinitive, Nungarrayi, is coreferential with the subject of the finite verb *parnka-ja* ‘run-PST’ (see line 3 of example 8.15). In older Warlpiri this meaning would be expressed with the subject-controlled complementiser *-karra* as in, *yula-nja-karra* ‘cry-INF-Subj.COMP’ (Hale, et al., 1995, p. 1442; Simpson, pers. communication, 2021).

The students used other complex, multi-clausal sentences in their retellings. One example is 8.16 from K9’s retelling (K9, line 3 in Appendix T), who reversed the protagonists so that the woman was Nangala and the man was Jungarrayi.

(8.16)

K9: *Parnka-nja-ya-nu Nangala-ju warlu-kurlu lawa-jarri-ja jurnta-rla.*  
Run-INF go-PST Nangala-TOP fire-COM no-INCHO-PST away.from-AUX  
‘Nangala went running with the fire, which went out.’

This sentence begins with a nominalised verb *parnka-nja* ‘run-NOM-go’ with *yanu* ‘go-PST’ with the topic, Nangala following the verb. This word order shows this student is speaking *pirrjirdi Warlpiri* and not calquing from English S-V-O order. The use of the adverbial preverb

*-jurnta* with the auxiliary pronoun *-rla* following the verb +*jurnta* complex also reflects strong Warlpiri usage.

Consistent with studies in 1985 and 1991 in Yuendumu, there was a preference for SVO word order in the children's elicited narratives (Bavin and Shopen, 1985, 1991). The *Lungkarda-kurlu* text, published in 1981 and republished in 2007 (Nungarrayi, 2007), also reflects a preference for this pattern (Bavin and Shopen, 1985, 1991). However, this does not necessarily denote pressure from English (Mushin, 2005), as in Warlpiri pragmatics if there is a switch in subject, this needs to go before the verb and pragmatically most salient ideas come first (Simpson, 2007; Hale, 1983, Swartz, 1991). The students referred to the protagonists using skin names, reflecting the emphasis in the story and on these in the group reading and activities. Nevertheless, one student's storytelling in example K9 expressed some confusion around these (In lines 2-6 and then again in lines 9-10). Third person forms were the most frequent because the protagonists, the default grammatical subjects, are third person entities.

In addition to control over text structure and sentence grammar, the students demonstrated knowledge of Warlpiri oral storytelling conventions such as extending vowel sounds to denote length of an activity (as in example K10, line 5), emulating the singing “mmmm” (as in K14), repetition (example K17, line 6) Three of the four included the reported speech from the story in their retelling. Student K14 employed commentary devices such as *wiyarrpa* “poor thing” (line 8) and diminutives (eg. *Kurdu-pawu* ‘dear child’ in line 10). The students used the focus marker *-ju/-ji* to foreground nominals already mentioned in the discourse, assumed to be known to the listener (as evidenced in Bavin and Shopen, 1985)

Two of the four students used *-lku* in order to focus the constituent on which it is attached and relate it to a previous event. For example, in 8.17 (from K9 Appendix T), the *-lku* attached to *kurdu-jarra* 'child-two' implies a relationship between the arrival of two children, blue tongue lizards, and the return of Jangala who was lonely for Nungarrayi.

(8.17)

<i>Yanu-rnu-rna-ngku</i>	<i>tumaji-rna-ngku</i>	<i>yirraru-jarri-ja</i>
go-Past 1SG-2SG	too.much-1SG-2SG	lonely-INCHO-PST
'I came because I was missing you (lonely for you)'		

*Kurdu-jarra-lku-pala lungkarda jarri-ja-lku, yeah. Karrinyarra-rla.*  
 child-two-then-2DU blue.tongue INCHO-PST-after yeah Karrinyarra-LOC  
 'After that, two kids then became blue tongue lizards, yeah. At Karrinyarra'

I now consider the features the educator identified in her text analysis (Figure 8.2) at the planning stage of the unit as important features of the text. In table 8.3, I have included these features in the left-hand column and whether these were represented in the student data in the right-hand column using a tick or a cross.

Features identified in educator's text analysis (see Figure 8.2)	Features present or not in students' storytelling			
	K14	K9	K10)	K17
<b>Important language patterns:</b>				
<i>-lpa</i>	√	√	√	√
<i>Yirraru +DAT</i> <sup>81</sup>	x	x	√	x
<i>Yulaja-lpa-rla (-rla dative construction)</i>	x	<i>wangkaja-rla</i>	<i>wangkaja-rla</i>	x
<b>Nouns:</b>				
<i>Lungkarda</i>	√	√	√	√
<i>Mulju</i>	x	x	x	√
<i>Nungarrayi</i>	√	√	√	√
<i>Jangala</i>	√	√	√	√
<i>Kalya-kalya</i>	x	√	x	x
<i>Wati</i>	x	x	x	x
<i>Warlu</i>	√	√	√	√
<i>Wirlinyi</i>	√ <i>wirlinji</i>	√	√ <i>wirlinji</i>	x
<i>Karnta</i>	x	x	x	x
<i>Karrinyarra</i>	x	√	x	√
<i>Kurdu</i>	√	√	√	√
<i>milpa</i>	x	x	√	√
<b>Adjectives:</b>				
<i>Tarnnga</i> 'for a long time' (adverbial noun)	x	x	x	x
<i>Wardinyi</i> 'happy' (nominal)	x	x	x	x
<i>Yirraru</i> 'lonely' (nominal)	x	√	√	x
<b>Verbs:</b>				
<i>Nyinami</i> (V1)- to sit	√	x	√	√
<i>Yani</i> (V5)-to go	√	√	√	√
<i>Yulami</i> (V1)- to cry	√	√	√	x
<i>Yunparni</i> (V2,tr)- to sing	x	√	x	x
<i>Yarrpirni-</i> (V2,tr) build a fire	√	x	x	x
<i>Nyanyi</i> (V3,tr) -to see (A/D case frame)	x	x	√	√
<i>Palimi</i> (V1)- to die or go out	x	x	x	x

<sup>81</sup> Although the students didn't use *yirraru*, with a dative case suffix-marked complement, every retelling included correct dative constructions.

<b>Compound verbs:</b> <i>Palka-jarrimi</i> - 'be born'	√	x	√	√
<b>Pronouns:</b> <i>Nyuntu</i> - you <i>Ngula</i> - that <i>Yali</i> -there <i>Kuja</i> - like so	√ √ x x	x x x x	√ √ x x	x x x x
<b>Time:</b> <i>Yarda</i> - more <i>-lku</i> - now/then	x √	x √	x x	x x
<b>Number words:</b> <i>(Kurdu)-jarra</i>	x	√ -pala	√ -pala	x -pala

**Table 8.2 Students' productions compared to the educator's text analysis document**

In general, the students used the nominal and verbal forms the educator indicated were important. Many of the identified target features were used by at least one of the students. An exception was the category of words with adjectival meaning, which most students omitted from their retelling (with the exception of *yirraru* 'lonely').

The scarcity of English lexical insertions and use of features suggests that the students are orienting to a more unilingual mode of Warlpiri for this task. The students' use of complex morphology, vocabulary from the text, and almost complete omission of English in their retellings is important for two reasons. One, they reflect the features educators have discussed in workshops as constituting a desired classroom code (see Chapter 6), and two, these are areas where one might see the influence of English on students' Warlpiri. The forms used differed from their recorded language mixing in classroom discourse and the reported community practices in interviews (Chapters 5 & 6). The four students' retelling a *jukurpa* 'dreaming' story for an assessment task demonstrated an ability to shift register for specific purposes and contexts.



Name:	✓ X	
[REDACTED]	✓	Yuway, kurdu nyampu-rlu milya pinya-ka puku-jangka yimi; Lungkarda-kurlu.
[REDACTED]	✓	Milya-pinyi-ka kurdu nyampurlu puku-jangka lungkarda-kurlu.
[REDACTED]	✓	Kurdu nyampu-rlu ngula-ju yirraru Lungkarda-kurlu jungarni-ngki puku-jangka
[REDACTED]	✓	Nyampu kurdu yirraru jungarni-ngki puku-jangka.
[REDACTED]	✓	Ngurru yirraru puku-jangka lungkarda-kurlu, milya-pinyi-ka ngurru-ngku.

**Table 8.3 Educator's assessment checklist for retelling Lungkarda-kurlu**

Table 8.4 is a redacted copy of the Warlpiri educator's partly completed assessment checklist which includes a row for each student, a tick or a cross referring to whether they completed the retelling to the educator's satisfaction and a column with commentary which included observations such as "yes this child knows the story from the book." In each comment, reference was made to the retelling *puku-jangka* 'from the book,' positioning the written text, its features and content rather than the story itself as the core component of the unit of work. This is important when we consider that in Warlpiri society, authority to tell certain stories is not widely shared (Michaels, 1991). Having these stories available in a written text arguably shifts the authority and status and allows the educator to act as the "custodian and principal interpreter" with privileged access to the text (A. Luke, 1988, p 156).

This section has shown how Warlpiri educators utilise written texts for structuring learning and as exemplars of linguistic and cultural knowledge. Students' oral reproductions of the text as an assessment task demonstrate their sensitivity to the classroom register, *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri'. Their ability to replicate some of these forms shows continuity in the ways of speaking attributed to elders in addition to innovations to contemporary ways of speaking.

### **8.2.2 Oral texts: storytelling by elders on bush trips as exemplars of oral *Warlpiri pirrjirdi***

Oral storytelling plays a key role in socialising Warlpiri children into cultural understandings (Kral, 2012, O'Shannessy, 2011a, Musharbash, 2016). Oral texts can reflect many of the innovative and adaptive dimensions of verbal arts traditions that are not captured in written texts. This means that they represent a way of speaking in time and can be drawn on as exemplars if this way of speaking has prestige. Also, oral story telling on country visits offers contextualised occasions for talk associated with traditional processes and practices which are becoming rarer in the contemporary lives (Kral, 2012 and see Chapter 3 describing contemporary Warlpiri life). Gunn Allen (1986, p.45) described the significance of oral storytelling for Indigenous Americans since colonisation as maintaining the “web of identity that long held tribal people secure”,

“The oral tradition has prevented the complete destruction of the web, the ultimate disruption of tribal ways. The oral tradition is vital; it heals itself and the tribal web by adapting to the flow of the present while never relinquishing its connection to the past”

On country visits elders told *jukurpa* ‘dreaming’ stories and stories about the ways people lived in the past, “oral histories” (Gale, 1995). In this section I examine the language used by two elders teaching on country visits in September 2019, to show the ways in which elders use storytelling to induct students into Warlpiri cultural and linguistic knowledge. I then share examples of the follow-up multi-age literacy and mapping activities in the classroom that demonstrate student engagement with the content and reconceptualization of the traditional content that reflects their contemporary repertoires and identities (sub-section 8.2.2.2).

I have selected for analysis the transcript of a teaching and learning event which followed an excursion to an area with a spring and ochre depository (8.18)<sup>82</sup>. The group stopped at a significant site to have lunch and once seated two elders told the stories about the locations visited. The first elder, E1, is a former Warlpiri educator and translator who has also worked at the school’s BRDU and is now retired. The second, E2 is a senior man, actively involved in educational governance.

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<sup>82</sup> The transcript with interlinear gloss is available in Appendix U.

(8.18)

- 1 E1: *nyampu-wiyi nyampu-rla kuja nganturnu. Well ampu-ju wita nyangu, ngula*  
 2 *yanu karlarra lku na. Karrku-kurra-lku. Nyampu-rla puta ngantu-rnu. Kujarn*  
 3 *yanu-rnu nganayi-ji Warlawurru kakarra yanu-rnu.*  
 ‘before now right here it built the hill and then it went west to *Karrku* it tried to  
 build it but failed. And the eagle came from the East’
- 4 E2: *nyampuju nganayi kinki nyampu kurdu-kurdu. Kuja-rni-nawu yanurnu*  
 5 *Warlawurru-ju. Warlawurru ngulaju. Nyampu-ju kinki. Purda-nyangkalu.*  
 6 *yarriri-yarriri ngula yirdi nyampuju. Purlka-pardu ka nyina ngula-ngka-ju.*  
 7 *Nyampu-ngurlu kinki! Kapi nyampurla ngurra -ngka ngurrju mantarla. Karrku*  
 8 *nyampu-rla-ji yirrarnu. Karrku yangka kanpa mani inya-rla? Karrku-inya*  
*kalu mani karrku karlarra. Nyampurlalparlipa mantarla karrkuju. Lawa*  
*nyangu lani manu Jurlpungku. Jurlpu-ngku lani-manu nyampu-jangka-ju.*  
*yinya-yanu Nyirrpi-kirra, yatijarra. Karrku inya karlarra. Inya-kurra yanu.*  
*Nyampu-jangka pangalangu yanu karlarra-lku yangka jaka ka ngunami*  
*karlarra-purda. Nyampu-wana-jangka karrku- ngka kuja-purda yangka.*  
*Kurdu-kurdu Nyirrpi-wardingki-patu?*  
 ‘ah, this is about the monster, kids. The eagle came this way. The eagle is that  
 one (separate story). This one is the monster. Listen everyone. The word for it  
 is *yarriri- yarriri*. The dear old person is sitting over there. From there, the  
 monster was going to make its home. It made *Karrku* there. The ochre that  
 you’re getting, you know? They get ochre from *Karrku*, west. This is where we  
 were gonna get ochre here. He saw nothing and the bird frightened him. He  
 was frightened of the bird. He went to *Nyirrpi*, north. *Karrku* is West, that’s  
 where he went. And then the monster went West and that’s where his bottom is  
 and from there now at *Karrku* that way kids, from *Nyirrpi*?
- 14 KK: *Yuwayi! Yeah! Yeah!*
- 15 E2: *yeah milya-pinyi kankulu*  
 ‘yeah you all know this’
- 16 E1: *yangka karrku-ng kuja kangu nyanu maparni.*  
 17 *Business time, kurdiji time, inya-na ngurrju-manu*  
 ‘they would paint themselves up with *karrku* ochre in business time, during  
 ceremony and that’s how they did it’
- 18 E2: *so yangka ngula-ngka ka nyina inside-i nyampu-jangka na and cave-i ngula*
- 19 *karla karrimi ka nuu-rna ngaju warrkarnu ngula-ngka karrku-ngka lawa-juk*  
 ‘so that’s where he’s living, inside now. That’s his cave up there, but I’ve  
 never climbed up there’
- 20 E1: *yuwayi*  
 ‘yes’
- 21 E2: *nyampu-rla right naa ngaju warrkarnu nuu-nukulu nyurrurla warrkarnu*  
 22 *yeah inya-na jukurrpa ampu-j nyampu-jana inya Karrku so kapi ampu-rla*

23 *karri-yarla. Purlka-pardu nyampu-rla. Manu nyampu-rla pirli-ngka*  
 24 *kurrurungu kaji-rlipa inya-kurra jarrimi warlawurru ngula-ju ka karrimi,*  
 25 *warlawurru! Kuja kurlumparra parnka-ja paarl- pardija everywhere,*  
 26 *warlawurru ngula-ju. Warlungurru-rla yangka kakarra-side-i yangka jarntu-*  
 27 *jarntu-lpa everything nest ngula kala karrimi an ampu-ju a parnka-ja*  
 28 *kurlumparra right-through everywhere Warakurna and all that area*  
 ‘I’ve climbed up here, but not you and this dreaming is this one is Karrku, so  
 Karrku would have stood here. The dear old person is here and on this hill,  
 there are small rock wallabies the eagle is here, the eagle! From the south it  
 flew around everywhere, that eagle. From Kintore from the East side, it was  
 scratching everything and there was a nest there for him and he ran south right  
 through everywhere to Warakurna and all the other areas’

29 E1: *nyampu-ju purda-nyanyi ka-nku-ju-lu?*  
 ‘This, are you listening to me?’

30 KK: mmmm yes!

31 E1: So, I got *jukurrrpa* there too. *Nyampu-jangka parnkaja*. Family *ngaju-nyangu* all  
 31 there *yuwayi Kintore-kurra* he bin go up and down. *nyampu jukurrrpa* my  
 32 grandfather bin show me *nyampu warringiyi an ngaju-ku-palangu-patulu*  
 33 *yangka walku-jarri-ja*. So I got my *jukurrrpa* too.  
 ‘so I’ve got dreaming there from where it came, my family are all there yes,  
 he went up and down to Kintore this is my dreaming, my grandfather showed  
 me and my fathers and my father’s brothers are no more so I have my  
 dreaming too’

34 E2: *kurdu-kurdu ampu-j yirdi, yarriri-yarriri*  
 ‘kids, this word is *yarriri-yarriri*

35 E1: *an nyampu-ju jukurrrpa is wardapi jukurrrpa purda-nyanyi ka-nku-ju-lu?*  
 ‘and this dreaming is goanna dreaming, are you mob listening?’

36 KK: yeah

(Warlawurru jukurrrpa E1&E2, 01:13-04:06)

The story encodes rich knowledge of Warlpiri social and ecological worlds. It gives insight into place-based, experiential education in natural, culturally significant surroundings where settings, places and people as cultural referents are contextualised. This type of learning that is inclusive of elders, families and other community members strengthens connections between the learning, the students’ life worlds and the classroom context (Gruenwald 2008, 2003; Knapp 1996). The sequence of the interaction follows a storytelling genre, which is collaborative in nature with the two primary elders with authority to tell two stories - about a monster and an eagle - and other adults contributing, affirming, and adding information or clarification in at

various points in the telling. A key part of the teaching encompassed directional terminology and spatial orientation skills<sup>83</sup>. The elders describe the journey of the wedge-tailed eagles using cardinal directions and identifying landmarks “the hill” (line 22), the place where the students gathered ochre (line 33), and particular caves (line 18-19). They also include the names of contemporary communities of Nyirripi to the west, Kintore on the Pintupi homelands and Warakurna to the South just over the border of Western Australia on Ngaanyatjarra lands. The two stories, about the monster and the wedge-tailed eagle, intersect and link together to include geographic features such as the place where the monster’s bottom came to rest.

While *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ is used for this teaching, especially in the storyteller’s extended turn, the storyteller also switched to everyday plurilingual practices as discourse markers, when breaking from the narrative to talk about their own or the students’ own lives. For example, this change in “footing” (Goffman, 1975) is observed in lines (30-33), when the speaker departs from the formal storytelling to comment on their family’s connections to Kintore and that this information was imparted to him by his grandfather.

### 8.2.2.1 Authority, ownership, and connections in oral storytelling on country

An established practice before commencing a teaching and learning event on bush trips was for the storyteller to explain their position in relation to the adults and students present, as expressed in example 8.19.

(8.19)

- 1 E1: *nya-ngka-ju-rla ngaju-ju ngaju [name]-kurlangu pimirdi.*  
look-IMP-O-DAT 1SG-TOP 1SG [name]-POSS auntie  
'look at me. I, I am [name]'s auntie.'
- 2 [E2 name]-kurlangu, [E3 name]-kurlangu, [Adult 1 name]-kurlangu  
[E2 name]-POSS, [E3 name]-POSS, [Adult 1 name]-POSS  
'[name], [name] and [name]'s'
- 3 *pimirdi ngaju karna-jana nyina.*  
auntie 1SG PRES.1SG-3.PL.O be-NPST  
'I am their Auntie.'
- 4 *yuwayi. Nyampu my father wita-pardu mmm and jinta-kari nyampu [laughs]*  
yes this my father little-DIM mmm and one-other this

<sup>83</sup> This is a standard practice for adult Warlpiri telling stories to each other.

- ‘yes this is my father, this little dear one mmm and the other is here.  
{pointing to a couple of children}
- 5 *nyarrpara-kurra jintakari wiri-jarlu-ju nyarrpara?*  
where-ALL one-other big-very-TOP where?  
‘where did the other one, the big one go, where?’  
{referring to another child who is also the storyteller’s little father by subsection}
- 6 KK: *inya! Bus-i-ngka!*  
there bus-EUPH-LOC  
‘There in the bus’
- 7 E2: *bus-i-ngka wiri-jarlu-ju?*  
bus-EUPH-LOC big-very-TOP  
‘The big one is in the bus?’  
{referring to an older sibling}
- 8 *Nyampu an nyampu and nyampu ngaju-nyangu* family.  
this and this and this 1SG-POSS family  
‘This one and this one and this one are my family’
- 9 *an yangka kuja-lu yani-rni* family  
and ANAPH thus-PL come-hither family  
‘and like those family come here’
- 10 *family-jarrimi ka-lu ole-lot Nyirrpi.*  
family-INCHO-NPST PRES-3PL all Nyirrpi  
they all became everyone (in) Nyirrpi
- 11 All those place-*i-wati kuja ka karri-nja-yani* right up  
All those places-EUPH-PL thus PRES.3SG stand-INFI-go-NPST right up  
‘All those places like up right up going along there’
- 12 *Nyirrpi-ngirli nganayi-kirra.*  
Nyirrpi-from ANAPH-ALL  
‘from Nyirrpi towards whatchamacallit’
- 13 *Yarripirlangu-pinki-kirra, nganayi-pinki-rra*  
Yarripirlangu-such.like-ALL ANAPH-such.like-ALL  
‘towards Yarripirlangu and such like, and uhm towards whatchamacallit such-like’
- 14 *Karrinyarra pinki-rra ole-lot-i ngalipa* family  
Karrinyarra-such-like-ALL all-EUPH 1PL.S family  
‘Karrinyarra and the like, we are all family’
- 15 *ngula ole-lot-i kurlirra-side ngalipa-j*  
this all-EUPH south side 2PLEXC -TOP  
‘everyone here we are all from the South’

(Mala-kurlu 01:13-02:01)

In example (8.19) the senior speaker points out all the adults who are her nieces and nephews and children who are her classificatory father, by subsection. She connects everyone as family “from the south.” These statements relate the storyteller to the audience, to other adults who will contribute and to the land on which they are learning. This had the effect of cementing the teaching as being informed by appropriate genealogical connections, thus bolstering the speakers' epistemic position, and opening the floor for those with knowledge to contribute to the knowledge building (c.f. Blythe, 2010). Those telling the story also acknowledged others who are known to know the stories from the same location, with reputations as good storytellers. This emphasises the ways in which traditional knowledge can be developed and shared. This is evident in example 8.20 where E1 finishes her teaching by thanking the other adults for their skill and knowledge,

(8.20)

1 E1: *Kajinpalu kajinpalu Nyirрпи-ngka wangkami story-rlangu, jukurrpa-puru*  
 2 *kapinkulu mani Nampijinpa. Ngarrirni ka jukurrpa wiri. Because-i ka pina-*  
 3 *jarri-warru ranger-kurlu right across inya-kurlangu jukurrpa ka pina-jarri*  
 4 *warru ngarrirni ka-nganpa. And wardinyi jarri kalu yapa-kari-rlangu*  
 5 *inyarra. Kula karlipa-jana milya-pinyi ngalipa-rlu yimi ngarrirni kalu*  
 6 *Nampijinpa-ku. Junga ngurrju Nampijinpa-ju we wanna thank Nampijinpa*  
 7 *yuwayi every jukurrpa an song ka milya-pinyi Nampijinpa-rlu yapa-kurlangu*  
 8 *like that nganayi-piya-rlu Nungarrayi-piya-rlu yangka Nookie yangka.”*

‘if you want to get a storyteller at Nyirрпи, *Nampijinpa* is the right person. She tells a big dreamtime story because she was trained as a ranger<sup>84</sup>. Yes, right across here. She learns about the dreaming and tells us and people get happy hearing it. We don’t know these stories, but these stories are told to *Nampijinpa*. It’s true *Nampijinpa*. We want to thank *Nampijinpa*. Yes *Nampijinpa* knows every song and dreaming belonging to Warlpiri like that *Nungarrayi*, Nookie [Lorraine Granites]’

(Marlu-kurlu-TR 00:11:30-11:46)

<sup>84</sup> Working as a ranger is a new occupation, often taken up by those with expert land management knowledge and skills.

In example (8.20) the speaker, E1, identifies another elder *Nampijinpa*, who is present as the “right person” because she has learned a lot and people get happy hearing about it. She then asks all present to thank this elder and makes reference to another renowned storyteller by nickname and skin name, who is not present. Explicit thanking is a new practice and there is no word for ‘thank publicly’ in Warlpiri, which accounts for the switch to English in line 6.

When teaching students on Country Visits, the storyteller would also appeal to students’ connection to the content of the learning to enforce learning behaviours such as listening and paying attention. In example 8.21, E1 reminded students who were traditional custodians to hurry up and sit down because this story and tract of land is of direct relevance to them.

(8.21)

- 1 E1: [student’s name] *nyinaya yaruju!* *Nyuntu kurdungurlu!*  
 [student name] sit-IMP quickly you traditional.custodian/manager  
 ‘[student name] sit down! you’re the traditional custodian (for this place)’

In another example (8.22), the storyteller appeals to the students to show them respect, as they would their parents, emphasising that they and all those present are family.

(8.22)

- 1 E2: *yangka wiri-wiri nganimpa-piya* parents story-*kirli-k nganyi*  
 ANAPH big-big 1.PL.EX-like parents story-COM-DAT uhm  
 ‘you know us grown-ups are like your parents with the story (for you) uhm’
- 2 *nyuntu-nyangu* parents, respect. *Yuwayi.*  
 you-POSS. parents respect yes  
 ‘You respect your parents. Yes’
- 3 *Yani-rni karnalu-nyarra Nyirrpi-wardingki-patu-ku-juku*  
 come-hither 1EX.PL-2PL.O Nyirrpi-belonging-PL-DAT-still  
 ‘we are coming here to you people living in Nyirrpi’
- 4 *Nganimpa-ju tumaj-i- family ngalipa*  
 1.PL.EXCL.S-TOP because-EUPH family 1PL.INCL  
 ‘because we are all family’



- 5            *yungu-rnalunya-nyarra jukurrpa ngarrirni*  
               so-1PL.EXCL.S-O jukurrpa tell-NPST  
               ‘so we can tell you the dreaming story’

(Mala-kurlu 00:39-00:57)

An aspect of oral storytelling is to induct students into the processes of understanding intellectual property and authority to tell stories. The next day, the group stopped at another place. That night a trip to the *mala* ‘rufus haired wallaby’ enclosure in Newhaven Sanctuary was planned. In example 8.21 elder told the children about how in recent times the *mala* “were sent away” and there weren’t any *mala* anymore then, they were sent back in boxes from “Sydney, Melbourne, Darwin and Alice Springs, *ngurra-kurra*, *warlalja-kurra*, ‘back to their home, their family’” and then goes on to describe the ancestral travels of the *mala* from the dreaming place of *Mawurrungu*, seeking confirmation from other adults present. Once she finishes she passes on authority to talk about the story to a particular student, who is a traditional owner for that place. By doing so she is inducting students about the dynamics of authority to hold and pass on intellectual knowledge,

(8.22)

- 1 E1:        *yuwayi ngurrju, kula-nyarra ngana-ngku-lku ngarrirni jukurrpa-ju. Kapunpa purda-nyanyi nyampu-rla mayi? [child name]? Kapu?-npa-rl?-jana nyunturra?-rlangu anyway yapirli? kutu-wangka angka? Teacher-waja kuja-nawu wangkaya, nganta? Nati-ji-li ngaju-ku worry-jarriya. Yeah ngurrju, yuwayi junga-nyayirni ampu story”*

‘yeah its really good. No one will tell you this story. You’ll listen to this right? [child name- who is the *kurdungurlu*] you will you can tell the story to the other grandchildren? You say this, my grandmother told me. Tell your teachers that, ok? Don’t worry about me. Yes good, this is a true story’

Similarly in example (8.23) the elder asked a student to tell his other siblings who are the grandchildren of the storyteller to pass on the true story, giving these children the authority and ownership over the story.

(8.23)

- 1 E1: *yuwayi ngurrju, kula-nyarra ngana-ngku-lku ngarrirni jukurrpa-ju.*  
yes good NEG- 2O.PL who-ERG-then tell-NPST jukurrpa-TOP  
'yes good, no one else will tell you this *jukurrpa* 'dreaming' story'
- 2 *Kapu-npa purda.nyanyi nyampu-rla mayi?* [student name]?  
FUT-2SG listen-NPST this-DAT INTERR [student name]  
'you're going to listen carefully to it, aren't you? [student name]?'
- 3 *Kapu-npalu-jana nyuntu-rra-rlangu anyway yapirliyi?*  
FUT-2.PL.S-3PL.O 2SG-ALL-also anyway woman's.son's.child  
'when you are with the other grandchild, you should say'
- 4 *kutu wangka angka? Yuwayi kuja wangka-ya, "ngaju-nyangu yapirliyi*  
regardless say-NPS TAG yes thus say-IMP 1SG-POSS paternal.grandmother  
'just talk anyway, won't you? yes say it like this, "my father's mother"'
- 5 *ka wangkam teacher-waja kuja-nawu wangka-ya, nganta?*  
PRES.3SG say-NPST teacher-REP thus-SPEC say-IMP reportedly  
'says, she's a teacher" say it just like this'

(Mala-kurlu 9:59-10:21)

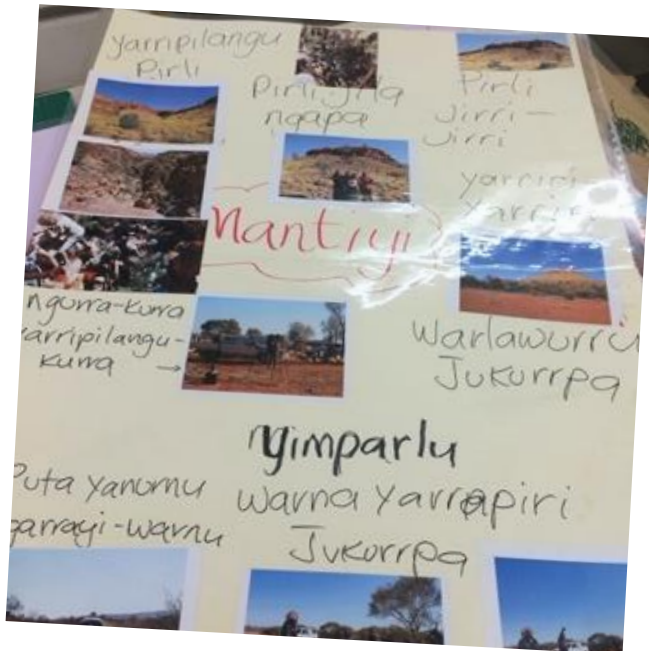
In line 1 of (8.23) the elder emphasises the privilege of hearing the story, commenting that no one else will be able to tell you that story and appealing for the students to listen carefully (line 2). Then she transfers authority to retell the story to their subsection siblings and share the learning more widely. Follow-up of learning on country visits in the classroom was an important aspect of consolidating and sharing the learning from country visits and I discuss follow up activities in the next section.

### 8.2.2.2 Students' written reproduction of oral texts

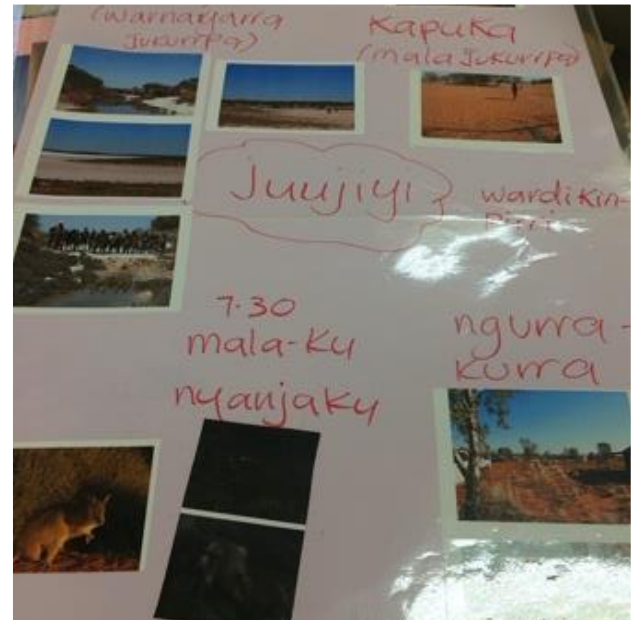
On return to the school classroom from Country Visits in term 3, 2018, the Warlpiri educators organised several follow-up activities. Students were grouped into multi-age group according to their country visit camps. The country visit group I observed completed a photo diary (see Figure 8.4) and a mapping activity. On large posters with the days of the week in Warlpiri in the middle, the students placed photos of the various locations, the associated *jukurrpa* 'dreaming' stories (*warlawurru* 'wedge tail eagle' *jukurrpa*, *warna* 'snake' *jukurrpa*, *wardapi* 'goanna' *jukurrpa*) and other activities. Students included sentences such as "*puta yanu-rnu Jungarrayi warnu*" 'we tried but couldn't get to *Jungarrayi-warnu*' to describe their efforts to

reach a significant site on an impassable road. They documented a hunting trip for *ngarlkirdi*, 'witchetty grubs,' painting on canvass and on their bodies, *yawulyu*. They also included photos of the process of cooking a perentie.

## Monday



## Tuesday



## Wednesday



Figure 8.4 Photo Diary from Country Visits 2018



Figure 8.5 Country Visits Map



As a group, the students drew an aerial view of the area that they covered during country visits depicting the area travelled, their route and some key features. The students' work reflects learning of the directional geographic learnings on country visits and their maps included sites: *Kapuka*, *Yimparlu* (which they originally wrote as *mimparlu*, corrected by an educator), *Yarnukurnjarni*, *Wardikinpirri pirli* (a significant site marked by hills) in the Newhaven Wildlife Sanctuary. They also depicted the outstation *Wayilirlinpa*, another Warlpiri community of Nyirрпи and the main highway. They represented houses in different colours and included wind breaks in the layout (an activity during the visit was building windbreaks when setting up camps). The children used a combination of traditional Warlpiri symbols for people and drawings of people.

Students integrated contemporary and dreaming sites to synthesise different types of knowledge learned on country visits. They noted where they got the *yarriri yarriri* 'ochre', a term that was explicitly taught by the elder in example 8.16. The students were able to map the path of the *Warlawurru*, the wedge tailed eagle, using dotted lines based on the story that they heard, but they also mapped their own paths using different coloured lines. They included a depiction of the rufus haired wallaby, *mala*, enclosure that they visited one night, replete with curly barbed wire fence surrounding it to keep the cats out, and the location where they learned the dance related to the *mala*. The students depicted buildings of the outstation and traditional symbols for camps. They showed themselves playing with a soccer ball at the camp. This mapping activity demonstrates the ways in which students (re)conceptualised the geographic and other information in the traditional storytelling and integrated it with their frames of reference. Children's replication of the language forms using maps and stories is not just about acquisition of these forms, but also their appropriation and transformation for their own purposes in their developing communicative competence as Warlpiri speakers.

### **8.3 Discussion of the findings**

In section 8.1 of this chapter, I discussed the referring and naming practices used in the Warlpiri classroom that connect Warlpiri children to the cultural and intellectual life of their community. These interactions constitute socialising activities that form the basis of transmission and reproduction of Warlpiri language and culture within a knowledge system that emphasises relatedness. In section 8.2.1, I examined how competence in operating within the kinship system is indexed and socialised in the educator talk. Excerpts (8.2) and (8.3) from interactions

in the Early Years' B class demonstrated that the students themselves are concerned with social relationships in the classroom. The Warlpiri educators' referring practices had the effect of creating an agreeable and "culturally safe" classroom climate which is not an insignificant endeavour considering the wealth of research across Australia around the cultural and linguistically exclusionary school environment for Aboriginal people (c.f. Moses & Wigglesworth, 2008; Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). The importance of positive relationships for learning has been shown in other classroom contexts to enhance all aspects of learning from language (Spilt, Koomen & Harrison, 2014) cognition and social-emotional skills and engagement in the learning (Rudasill & Rimm-Kaufman, 2009).

In section 8.2 I examined in detail the ways in which educators engage with exemplars of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' informed by the cultural and linguistic authority of elders in the form of oral and written texts. I explored the authority of elders in curriculum and materials development. My analysis showed how texts form the backbone of Warlpiri lesson planning and are used as exemplars of the content and lexical and grammatical features to be learned. I analysed the ways of speaking which enter the classroom via Warlpiri texts and other written materials and the language practices which mediate these exemplars of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri.' Warlpiri educator practices of talk around text involve mediating the text with regular questions and commentary. Links were made to students' funds of knowledge (Gonzalez et al., 2005; Zentella, 2005).

This discussion further exemplifies the way in which the unilingual modes (orientation towards a single language) and plurilingual modes (simultaneous use of diverse resources) are used in conjunction to achieve goals and serve several socialising and affective purposes for teaching and learning Warlpiri. One practice in connecting the stories with the children's lifeworlds was to switch to bilingual ways of speaking as a discourse strategy to engage and contextualise the learning in the students' lives. Warlpiri educators, in this sense, can be understood as brokers in a process of drawing on both the linguistic and cultural authority of elders, as well as the students' funds of cultural and linguistic knowledge to achieve cultural and linguistic continuity in the classroom through relevant, accessible learning. These examples have demonstrated culturally responsive pedagogies (Gay, 200; Ladson-Billings, 1995) as using students' lifeworlds to create meaning. There is also a focus on social success in multiple cultural settings of schools and the community and empowerment of students as Warlpiri speakers and holders

of Warlpiri knowledges to own and “keep forever” (WT2 Interview). This chapter has also exemplified culturally sustaining pedagogies, that make teaching and learning relevant, accessible and responsive to the ways of speaking, the literacies and cultural practices of students (Paris, 2012). Practices of connecting the learning to student lives and transferring ownership of the stories were part of this brokering process. Embedded in both oral and written engagements with text is the concept of authority and ownership of knowledge. In the case of written texts, the educator refers to the knowledge *puku-jangka* ‘from the book.’ In the case of the oral storytelling on bush trips, good orators were acknowledged and thanked, even those who weren’t present.

Analysis of students’ oral reproductions of a written text (8.2.1.3) revealed that although students use bilingual discourse strategies for learning, when required, they endeavour to use the target classroom code, *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ including complex grammatical structures and an absence of English borrowing (e.g., for an assessment task) though with some innovations of the past half-century. Students’ reproductions of their learning show that they are sensitive to code boundaries and ways of speaking that are associated with *Warlpiri pirrjirdi*. Students’ (re)productions of the texts show agility over ways of speaking and ownership over these linguistic practices. Educators’ and students’ engagements with oral and written texts demonstrate that far from being alienating or lacking in contemporary significance, students are learning in ways that cement their relevance in their life worlds. Students were also able to synthesise the learning on country visits, in a map utilising Warlpiri symbols and contemporary designs that included representation of scale, projection (direction of things) and abstraction (pictures) (8.2.2.2). The tradition of telling *jukurrpa* ‘dreaming’ stories is both sustained in the school context, and in some ways transformed, as students assumed active roles expressing knowledge using new and different modalities (maps, collages, dioramas, and role plays).

## 8.4 Summary

This chapter has analysed in detail two strategies employed by educators to develop communicative competence in the classroom and achieve their goals of Warlpiri linguistic and cultural maintenance. These were language socialisation practices within Warlpiri relational teaching practices that emphasise learning within the kinship system and utilising oral and written texts imbued with cultural and linguistic authority of elders. Underpinning the findings



of this chapter is an understanding of Warlpiri pedagogy as relational and holistic. Warlpiri educators' language practices served to foster an intimate and connected learning space, cultural ownership of the content and to build students' identities as Warlpiri learners, and future knowledge holders. This chapter has explored some of the practices of continuity and innovation that constitute the meaning making process, positioning Warlpiri educators as brokers of language socialisation practices, drawing on the authority of elders, within an ontology of relatedness. Analysis of students' engagements with learning have shown the ways in which plurilingual Warlpiri students use available language resources in learning processes, and how these resources contribute to strengthening and expanding their language and conceptual development.

This chapter is the last of the chapters in this thesis providing analysis of empirical data about the language ideologies (Chapters 5 and 6) and the language practices (Chapters 7 and 8) in Warlpiri classrooms. In the next chapter, my discussion (Chapter 9), I bring these findings together to address my final research question, seeking to understand the ways in which the classroom practices mediate and are mediated by the ideologies. I then discuss some of the implications related to the role of the Warlpiri program at Yuendumu School in the community's agenda for the maintenance of Warlpiri language and culture today.

## **Chapter 9 Discussion of the findings and conclusions**

This study has offered a glimpse into language practices in three Warlpiri teaching and learning contexts at Yuendumu School over a twelve-month period, from mid-2018 to mid-2019. This snapshot involved a detailed description of the 'ways of speaking' in Warlpiri classrooms and the ideologies that frame and sustain these at a moment in time. Analysis of both speech and interview data demonstrated the ways in which educators and students co-construct sustainable language practices within the Warlpiri language maintenance program as part of a broader bilingual program.

In this discussion, I provide a summary of my findings (9.1) and situate them within the literature on plurilingualism and the interrelationships between ideologies, policies, and practices in endangered minority language education. I address my fourth and final research question examining the ways in which ideologies mediate and are mediated by classroom language practices and wider environmental factors such as language contact and change (9.2). I then address a challenge encountered during collaborations with educators concerning divergences in classroom language practices from the target language policy (9.3). Next, I examine the significance and implications of the findings of this study for the project of first language maintenance in Warlpiri schools and for informing models of bilingual education in the Australian language maintenance context more broadly (9.3). Finally, I reflect on the learnings for research in endangered language school contexts and propose questions for further study (9.4) before making some concluding remarks (9.5).

### **9.1 Summary of the findings**

Over the previous four chapters I have discussed the ideological underpinnings of students (Chapter 5) and educators (Chapter 6) and their language practices in three classroom contexts (Chapters 7 and 8). I explored students' descriptions of their linguistic repertoires and their attitudes, values and beliefs about languages and language learning (Chapter 5). The multimodal activities and interviews with Upper Primary students in Chapter 5 revealed their strong metalinguistic awareness and positive view of themselves as multilinguals and I situated their individual experiences within wider social processes of colonisation, globalisation and language contact and change. Children's communicative abilities varied depending on their unique family histories, life trajectories and interests, but there were also common themes for

all those interviewed. The students' communicative repertoires included different varieties and modalities of Warlpiri, Englishes, and awareness of other world languages.

In Chapter 6 I have analysed grey literature and educator interviews to draw out the most prevalent ideological orientations around Warlpiri language which included essentialist and utilitarian discourses which conceptualised Warlpiri language as being, as resource, as wellbeing, as self-determination (rights-based discourse) and as underpinned by a strong valuing of multilingualism ("we've always been multilingual"). Educators described their views on contemporary 'ways of speaking', the classroom code and effective ways of teaching it.

In interviews, both educators and students noted different ways of speaking in Yuendumu and across Warlpiri communities as well as differences in intergenerational languages use. Warlpiri educators and students noted an increase in English as the *lingua franca* for communicating with non-Warlpiri speakers, and a decrease in productive (though not necessarily receptive) knowledge of other Aboriginal languages of the Central Desert among the younger generation. For Warlpiri children, English was described as a code for expanding their networks, to "make friends" beyond their community and family members. English featured prominently in representations of their language networks, depicting their day-to-day interactions in a range of domains outside the home. The students did not express a strong domain separation in their networks, with most domains or interlocutors described as involving multiple named languages and varieties. Both educators and students noted changes to Warlpiri language use at the level of morphology and differential knowledge of *rdaka-rdaka* 'hand signs' and specialised vocabulary. Individual educators expressed different levels of acceptance of these changes, with some very disapproving and others expressing tolerance of "how young people want to speak" (WT5). Student responses reflected wider community concerns about the future of the Warlpiri language and associated knowledge being impacted or even disrupted by processes of colonisation and contact with English. Both the educators and the students insisted on the importance of safeguarding Warlpiri language and some children acknowledged their responsibility in its maintenance and continuity.

All educators interviewed reported passionate advocacy for, and dedication to, Warlpiri language teaching in the school, connected to language maintenance goals. The adults shared the students' sense of pride and wellbeing whilst teaching and learning Warlpiri at the school.

Whilst students expressed positive feelings about learning Warlpiri, they nevertheless viewed classrooms as English dominant spaces and the home and socially situated learning activities (such as Sorry Camps and Ceremonies) as the most likely place for learning *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ from the older generations. This reflects their experience of the strong monolingual English-dominant logic driving local policy and practice at the school despite efforts to deliver a bilingual program since the 1970s (Devlin et al., 2017).

Linked to this notion of maintenance is the identification of a particular code, referred to by all educators as *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri.’ It is associated with the ways of speaking of old people and encompasses a dis-preference for using loan words from English. At professional development workshops, educators developed their critical analysis of students’ speech and articulated the features and structures as well as the forms and functions of Warlpiri *pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ (Disbray, O’Shannessy, et al., 2020). This included an expanded notion of communicative competence (cf. Hymes 1972) learning within the kinship system and situated activities within a Warlpiri Theme Cycle curriculum (Disbray and B. Martin, 2018). Within a Community of Practice network, Warlpiri educators have collaboratively developed strategies for maintaining the classroom code including its conscious use, and evaluation of students’ usage. They have also refined a repertoire of strategies for establishing (and when needed re-establishing) the classroom code, such as explicitly setting expectations for use, recasting lexicon or structures, and using prompts and reminders to use the target code (described in Chapter 7). These strategies are in addition to inviting elders to the classroom, to professional development activities and curriculum, and resource development, and Warlpiri-specific language socialisation practices such as teaching within the kinship system (described in Chapter 8).

Analysis of the actual language practices in the classroom speech data (in Chapters 7 and 8) illuminated compelling evidence across teaching and learning contexts of the implementation of these strategies. I found that language practices in the classroom included unilingual use of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ and plurilingual practices drawing on different registers and varieties of Warlpiri, including other modalities (e.g., *rdaka-rdaka* ‘hand signs’) and Englishes. The organisation of dialogic interaction in the Warlpiri language classroom, while clearly ideologically rooted in maintaining *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri,’ was accommodating of plurilingual practices of borrowing, code-switching, and mixing into an essentially Warlpiri

syntactic and grammatical framework (cf. Myers-Scotton, 1993) to achieve the goals of teaching strong language and cultural knowledge. Students demonstrated a sensitivity to the different practices and an ability to replicate *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ orally (exemplified in retelling traditional stories as an assessment task in Chapter 8) and reconceptualise their learning of this code in their own innovative ways (as in the example of the mapping activity in Chapter 8). Capturing the diversity of contemporary practices also served to challenge prevalent deficit discourses about Warlpiri children’s learning abilities by highlighting their linguistic agility and metalinguistic awareness.

The patterns of classroom discourse can be interpreted using standpoint theory and the notion of classrooms as operating on the “cultural interface” of colonial institutions and Warlpiri pedagogies (Yunkaporta & McGinty, 2009; Nakata, 2007). Educators and students both drew on a combination of Warlpiri and non-Indigenous Australian classroom discourse schemas in teaching and learning events. For example, Warlpiri educators facilitated classroom interaction patterns such as Initiation Response Evaluation (I-R-E) routines in combination with language socialisation practices in the classroom that included naming and referring practices and relational pedagogies which connected ethnobiological knowledges. It has been argued that the structure of the communicative situation, or “participant structures,” is key in ensuring successful teaching and learning among Indigenous students (Carter et al., 2020; Moses & Wigglesworth, 2008). The data in the current study challenged longstanding stereotypes of the “silent” Aboriginal learner (Philips, 1983) with students engaging readily and easily with their Warlpiri educators (c.f. Freedman et al., 2017; Reeders, 2008). Studies of other Australian Indigenous children in the classroom have shown communication breakdowns in Standard Australian English-only classrooms where educators and students do not share these cultural and linguistic resources (Angelo & Hudson, 2018; Moses & Wigglesworth, 2008; Christie, 1985, Malin, 1990; Freeman, Bell, Andrews & Gallaher, 2017; Lowell & Devlin, 1998) and for this study, shared communicative resources clearly meant smoother communication.

The teaching and learning of Warlpiri language was presented as socially situated and an important aspect of this approach is the linguistic and cultural authority of elders in transmitting this knowledge, developing resources and modelling storytelling practices on significant sites around Yuendumu. Warlpiri language socialisation practices were productive for creating a positive classroom environment for learning that encouraged participation and engagement and

built on and celebrated Warlpiri cultural and linguistic identity. The analysis of Warlpiri educators' language practices exemplified culturally sustaining pedagogies that affirmed students' ways of speaking, literacies and identities in the school context, a context that has historically marginalised them.

## **9.2 Understanding the findings in relation to the literature**

In this section, I discuss the contribution of this study with reference to the literature about plurilingualism and translanguaging in the classroom (9.2.1) and the role of language ideologies and practices in informing language planning and maintenance efforts in schools (9.2.2)

### **9.2.1 Critical plurilingualism and translanguaging in Warlpiri classrooms**

The examples of students and educators *linguaging* their learning (Swain, 2006) is consistent with social constructionist theories of language as situated, integrated, and socially governed. The diversity of ways of speaking and modes of participation in Warlpiri classrooms are neither unique nor entirely culturally specific but typical of multilingual communication (c.f. Smyth, 2015; Singer and Vaughan, 2018; MacSwan, 2017; Smyth, 2015; Liu & Evans, 2016; Pietikäinen et al., 2013; Bhatia & Ritchie, 2012; Kramsch, 2009; Wei, 2008; Garrett & Baquedano-López 2002). The findings align with the translanguaging literature that emphasises use of a speaker's whole repertoire as productive for learning. As Filipi and Markee (2008, p. 14) have argued, "having recourse to more than one shared language provides an important and rich resource for getting the work of language teaching and learning done through orderliness which can be described." The results described in this study contribute to a small but growing body of evidence across Aboriginal communities taking a translanguaging-informed perspective to show educators and learners drawing on their linguistic resources and moving between different varieties of their languages as needed and as appropriate (Oliver & Nguyen 2017; Oliver et al., 2021; Steele, 2020; Vaughan, 2018). In this data, children and educators used translanguaging strategies to support their own meaning making (Alvarez, 2014; García, 2012) and to develop complexity of their language production (Creese & Blackledge, 2010b; García & Li, 2014). This could be contrasted to the approach to mainstream learning of English through immersion, whereby Warlpiri children are not able to draw on their full repertoires which include their L1 (Warlpiri) for learning. While this study did not examine these L2, English-medium teaching and assessing practices, they have been widely critiqued in other

studies in Northern Territory schools (e.g., Freeman et al., 2017; Macqueen et al., 2018; Rahman, 2020; Simpson et al., 2009; among others).

The concept of the plurilingual communicative repertoire as an integrated set of skills in different languages and varieties from perfect to partial that is shared and mobilised by speakers, is useful in explaining the students' conceptualisations of their communicative repertoires and the practices occurring in the classroom. The 'ways of speaking' in the Warlpiri classroom could be understood as presenting along a continuum of unilingual and plurilingual modes, with unilingual Warlpiri usage on the one end and the mobilisation of different styles, varieties, dialects, registers and named languages in alternation at the other, depicted in Figure 9.1.

Unilingual mode  Plurilingual mode

**Figure 9.1 Continuum of Warlpiri classroom practices adapted from Lüdi (2018)**

Unilingual and plurilingual modes are activated in different teaching and learning events. Each mode has different functions, but both can achieve overall goals of teaching *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' by mediating the cognitive demands of learning. Warlpiri educators and students could consciously utilise practices closer to the unilingual end when required, as observable when educators and learners oriented themselves towards the exclusive use of the target language (evidenced in educators' practices and students' retellings of a story in *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri'). Warlpiri educators switched out of the unilingual mode as a discourse marker, and into more plurilingual practices when providing metatextual commentary and linking content to the students' lives (a practice previously documented by McConvell (1998) for Gurindji and described in other teaching and learning contexts (e.g., Gort & Sembiente, 2015). Plurilingual practices were productive in teaching students the desired lexical and syntactic forms and communicative functions of the target code, motivated by accommodating students' linguistic and cultural experiences. The plurilingual modes were used to scaffold learning, harnessing the learners' and educators' ability to choose between multiple mental lexica. I propose that as plurilingual strategies are close to one of students' and educators' ways of speaking in contexts outside of the classroom (as reported by educators and students in Chapters 5 and 6), the use of this mode of speaking helps to mediate the cognitive demands of the learning (Swain and Lapkin, 2000, DiCamilla & Antón, 2012). This was

evidenced by the high rates of student participation and engagement in teaching and learning events and examples where meanings were negotiated between the educator and students around complex content.

Analysis of the interview and classroom language data revealed educators' metalinguistic awareness as they attended to the range and limitations of students' proficiencies. Warlpiri educators also attended to students' identities as Warlpiri individuals within a complex system of kinship and socialisation practices, their associated social norms, and expectations. From this perspective, learning new content demands activating a learner's whole communicative repertoire as a scaffold, relying on what is already available to extend learning (Llompart and Nussbaum, 2018). These practices fit with the pedagogical reorientation that emphasises the importance of building on students' prior knowledge and capabilities (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). They align with culturally responsive and critically, culturally sustaining pedagogies concerned with understanding how students' existing communicative repertoires might support language development. Also, these practices signify a shift in focus from deficits to strengths, to what students already know, their 'funds of knowledge' as hooks to engaging learning (Lucas & Villegas, 2013; McCarty & Lee, 2014; Paris, 2012).

The heteroglossic view of language and expanded concept of communicative repertoire is useful for understanding "the actual observable ways of using languages" (Blommaert, 2010, p. 102). However, this approach to describing a singular system or idiolect, and assuaging the idea of named languages has its limitations in the Warlpiri context. For Warlpiri speakers, there are very clear boundaries and differences between the various ways of speaking that can be and are noticed, named, and discussed by the speech community. There is a broad consensus among educators and students as to what the classroom code is, expressed in interviews with educators, examination of their workshopping of concepts of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' (see Chapter 6) and also students' conceptualisations of their repertoire using arts-based multimodal mapping tools (see Chapter 5). Although this preference for domain separation contrasts with the plurilingual realities in classrooms, analysis of educators' perspectives and their classroom language practices has emphasised the importance of having the terminology to distinguish between the ways of speaking, and to safeguard practices and knowledge that is valued. Codifying the features and functions of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' clearly allowed Warlpiri educators to identify and describe the forms they wished to teach, and to develop



strategies for teaching them, within a Community of Practice (as evidenced in Chapters 6-8). I echo MacSwan's (2017, p. 167) call for a multilingual perspective on translanguaging, which acknowledges the existence of “discrete languages and multilingualism along with other “treasured icons” of the field, including language rights, mother tongues, and code-switching.”

Warlpiri educators demonstrated that they have both an inventory of strategies for establishing the classroom code and strategies for scaffolding learning, using students’ full repertoire of languages and varieties. A combination of these strategies is effective in teaching and learning in the context of language change and variable repertoires. The plurilingual practices allow educators to maintain the relevance linguistic and cultural content that are associated with older generations for contemporary youth. The Warlpiri educators developed institutional constraints around language expectations as they established and where needed, re-established, the language of the classroom, but were also pragmatic and flexible in drawing on all the students’ full repertoires to achieve learning goals and scaffold students’ knowledge of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri.’ I propose that it is this unilingual policy *combined* with a more flexible enacted policy of accommodating students’ full repertoires that contributes to the efficacy of Warlpiri educators’ practices in the classroom. What is interesting to think about next are the opportunities and challenges these school practices present for language maintenance efforts.

### **9.2.2 The limits and possibilities of schools for language maintenance: ideologies, policies, and practices**

In this section, I address my fourth and final research question:

How do the language practices of Warlpiri educators and students appear to be mediated by (and mediate) the individual language ideologies, classroom environment and wider sociolinguistic processes such as language contact and change?

There are many dimensions that impact on the language practices of Warlpiri educators and students in the dynamic global, local, and cultural setting of Yuendumu School. Drawing on linguistic anthropology and his seminal understandings of language ideologies, Kroskrity (2021, 2018) has in recent years developed a multidimensional framework, language ideological assemblages, to assist in exploring the many intersecting ideological, social, economic, and political dimensions that come into play in the success or failure of language maintenance programs. Within this conceptual framework, the complexity of diverse and

multiple ideologies within a community of speakers can be understood as shaped by political, economic, and social negotiations. Speakers' positions in contact situations are motivated by navigating complex indexicalities to local and global movements of counter-hegemonic resistance to and accommodation of pre- and neo-colonial institutional structures resulting in intersectional contemporary identities. This framework can be usefully applied to this study, to account for seemingly discordant ideologies and material language practices such as the Warlpiri educators' policy of unilingualism and translingual practices, or the students' plurilingualism and the large-scale incursion of English and their interest in expanded communicative resources, within a strong sense of valuing of Warlpiri language and culture.

A contribution of this thesis breaks away from some of the views espoused by the Indigenous language rights movement that describe standardisation and purism of Indigenous languages as eroding their potential (Lane, Costa, & De Korne, 2017). While on the surface it might appear that the ideologies surrounding the development and expression of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' and the "discursive manifestations" (Van Dijk, 1998 p. 6) of a unilingual Warlpiri policy in the school mirror standardisation movements in other majority language contexts, a more nuanced analysis challenges this view. Ideologies that at first appear contradictory, such as an overt, unilingual target language policy, and language practices that leverage plurilingualism, are synergistic in the classroom. They serve to guide the transmission of the desired code while ensuring the learning is accessible to and inclusive of young people and other ways of speaking. Taking both the ideologies and practices together, as demanded by an ethnography of communication approach (Henne-Ochoa, 2018), demonstrates how communicative resources are deployed in the classroom in a way that retains relevance, dynamism, and communicative and symbolic value, as a strong vehicle for contemporary communication in certain contexts. Far from being a "static ideology" of language in which the classroom code has mainly nostalgic and "post-vernacular" value (Sallabank & Marquis, 2018), *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' is still used in domains that are being accessed by young people via written texts, oral texts on bush trips and other activities in the Warlpiri program. While some children reported hearing strong Warlpiri in the home and on 'Sorry camp' (in mourning practices) and during ceremonies, not all families had the resources or membership (e.g., Elders in their family) to conduct this kind of learning outside of school hours (Douglas, 2011, p. 19). Far from limiting its use by speaking it in the school domain, schools are

expanding the domains of use of strong Warlpiri and providing diverse opportunities for all attending Warlpiri children to receive input.

In the specific neo-colonial context of Yuendumu, it is important to view the goal of language maintenance within the contextual history of colonial violence, subjugation and oppression and that speakers today carry the responsibility for the survival of the language (and associated knowledge) on a global scale. While educators expressed different evaluations of Warlpiri varieties, Warlpiri identity is indexed to speakers of all varieties of Warlpiri, “we all Warlpiri” (WT5 Interview). Underlying this position is not the rigid preservation of Warlpiri forms and structures for preservation’s sake but for children to creatively imagine themselves as keepers of Warlpiri knowledge and ways of being in their contemporary milieu. While the classroom code is associated with the language of the elders, unlike situations documented in other colonised societies (Costa Wilson, 2014; Meek, 2008, Sallabank, 2018) where heritage languages are at risk because youth are excluded via negative evaluations of their use and lack of relevance; Warlpiri educators’ practices in classrooms and on bush trips connect to children’s contemporary lifeworlds. The educator ideologies and aspirations for learning oracy and literacy in Warlpiri in the school contrast with dominant discourses of first language learning by the education system and *kardiya* community, which have assimilationist goals of transitioning to English. At best the role of first language in schools is viewed by some administrators and educators as a way to improve student attendance via engagement in the school, or as a way of transitioning to English-dominant medium learning, and at worst as an add-on culture subject, or something that can and should be taught in the home.

Of relevance to understanding the Warlpiri education language ideological assemblages is the acceptance of oral and written texts and new technologies as productive in the language maintenance approach and offering authentic exemplars of the desired code. The importance of the Bilingual Development Resource Unit (BRDU) in Yuendumu and Warlpiri literacy production centres in other communities as developers, organisers, and mediators of Warlpiri knowledge play an enabling role for the dissemination of materials that reflect the kinds of linguistic and cultural knowledge that educators and wider community members value and want to pass on. In the Warlpiri context, the texts are made with authority and endorsement from elders, with the students’ lives in mind and referring to real life activities, events, and knowledge. In assessing students engagements with stories, teachers were careful to emphasise

the reproductions as coming 'from the book', *puku-jangka*. These oral and written texts are safeguarding features of pre-contact Warlpiri for contemporary engagement, and for children to (re)conceptualise in their own ways (evidenced in mapping activity in Chapter 8). The use of texts reflecting different contexts, content, and media on a continuum of plurilingual practices has been promoted in the literature (see Hornberger and Link's (2012) biliteracy continuum).

The discussion of the Warlpiri language ideological assemblages is situated within complex interactions of neoliberal and colonial pressures and the institutional demands on Warlpiri educators. On the one hand, the English-dominant, unilingual logic of the school has hampered the development of a consistent and effective language strategy across the bilingual program (Devlin et al., 2017). As a site of socialisation, the school is historically a space where monolingual policies have eroded the legitimacy of Warlpiri in academic expression and weakened institutional support structures for teaching it in Warlpiri schools. The ideologies framing in-school structures around bilingual programming, in particular, team teaching, impacted on the language use in the classroom. On a micro scale it has also meant that Warlpiri educators must manage regular incursions in English to their teaching of Warlpiri (as described in Chapter 7). The data from this study has shown that Warlpiri educators must exert significant energy to re-establish the classroom code and retain speaking rights in teaching and learning events (evidenced in Chapter 7). The status, workloads and school expectations all hampered effective collaboration within teaching teams (c.f. Liddicoat, 2018). The communication between the educators was largely one-way, with the Warlpiri educators presenting their ideas and plans to the mainstream teacher to be integrated into the timetable.

On the other hand, this pressure and English-dominant logic has been productive in strengthening Warlpiri resistance and spurring the refinement of the target code. Because the Northern Territory Education system has in practice been so resistant to hearing Warlpiri voices, Warlpiri educators have had to advocate particularly strongly and clearly to negotiate their position. The aim is not to preserve a collection of linguistic features but to resist the colonizing institution, preserving the knowledge captured in strong Warlpiri language and the practices which are still valued, though changing, in the community. The Warlpiri Triangle as a Community of Practice (c.f. Lave & Wenger, 1998) has built over 40 years a shared understanding of the goals of the program and the target language of the classroom, both in

terms of forms and functions and social context. This has been in direct resistance to hegemonic forces that challenge their goals of language maintenance. Clearly the Warlpiri Triangle professional network has allowed educators to refine and renegotiate their language-in-education policy positions and to express agency (Purdon, 2010; Browne & Gibson, 2021) in opening up the ideological and implementational spaces for language maintenance in schools (Hornberger, 2005). The Warlpiri Triangle professional development meetings have historically served as platforms for forming, restating, and expanding on consensual ideologies collaboratively and intergenerationally. Not only are the Warlpiri Triangle workshops key platforms for professional development, but they are also arenas for collective community ideologies to be articulated and refined. Then they can be disseminated into practice, affecting community decision-making in language-in-education in government schools. I have previously noted that “When individual Warlpiri educators walk into their classrooms, they bring with them 40 years of community articulation and rearticulation of their role, its importance and the ways in which they can achieve community goals of maintaining ‘strong Warlpiri language’” (Browne & Gibson, 2021, p. 17). The theoretical concept of Community of Practice has great explanatory power in exploring how educators develop shared repertoires of practice, shared routines, and ways of doing things that helps them develop their intentions with one another (c.f. Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Yuendumu is not immune to forces of globalisation. Warlpiri students are growing up in a situation where more and more diverse languages and varieties are entering their community due to migration and transnational flows of goods and services. Warlpiri students’ plurilingualism extends to noticing languages such as Hindi, Korean, and Vietnamese tied to their experience of music, people, and products in the local shop. They consume media representing a variety of Englishes and other world languages. The students have opportunities to travel to other Australian communities where they negotiate and find communicative solutions to expand their networks and understand their identities as Warlpiri speakers. B. Martin and Oldfield’s (2000, p. 21) aspirations are becoming a reality in many ways,

It is important for Warlpiri children to feel proud and confident about themselves in their own community and to be able to take their place in Australian society and the world.

The diagram below, drawing on aspects of Kroskrity's framework (2019, 2021), summarises the mutually reinforcing and interconnected dimensions of the Language Ideological Assemblages I have described.



**Figure 9.2 Dimensions of the Warlpiri Language Ideological Assemblages at Yuendumu School (c.f. Kroskrity, 2021)**

The figure above illustrates, using a language ideological assemblages framework, the many dimensions that impact on the language practices of Warlpiri educators and students. It paints a picture about the challenges, opportunities and pressures that are at play in the ways ideologies mediate and are mediated by language practices in this particular context.

### 9.3 Implications for practice

The results of this study support many of the arguments that Warlpiri educators and communities have been reiterating for decades at Warlpiri Triangle Network meetings and workshops (e.g., NTDoE, 1999; 2008), advocacy submissions (Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu-jaru,

2011) and in informal interactions in the staffroom of Yuendumu School. These are that the school is an important domain for achieving the community's aspirations for language maintenance (McCarty & Nicholas, 2014) and a program that teaches *both* Warlpiri (the language of the home) and English (the code of wider communication) with equal but separate status is required. Warlpiri communities are committed to a bilingual model of education where both Warlpiri and English are taught, and multilingualism is fostered. This was articulated in the Yuendumu school policy (BRDU, 2015, p.1),

Our language is strong and so is our culture. We think it is important to teach Warlpiri language and culture in our school with *yapa* teachers who are bilingual to complement the education outside of school from families and grandparents. Most importantly, the children in Yuendumu learn the language and culture of both Warlpiri and English so they are strong for the future.

A contribution of the research in this thesis has been in shedding light on the linguistic agility of Warlpiri children, and the abilities of Warlpiri educators to harness this. These findings are particularly relevant as there are very few studies into first language teaching and learning practices of traditional Indigenous languages in any Northern Territory school (Edmonds-Wathen, 2019; Etherington 2006; Poetsch, 2022; Freeman et al., 2017, Yolŋu Aboriginal Consultants Initiative, 2007; Wilson et al., 2018). Beyond the Australian continent, there are also few studies that combine analysis of practices and ideologies in endangered language teaching contexts (with notable exceptions Guthrie, 1985; Jaffe, 2020; Marlow & Siekmann, 2013). The next step is to consider the implications of these findings for future practice. I take up Canagarajah's (2006) encouragement to draw on ethnographic studies into the everyday realities of students' and educators' lives to offer some insights for policy and practice. I also align with critical sociolinguistic endeavours to "rethink language in the contemporary world [ . . . ] in order to provide alternative ways forward" (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007, p. 3).

In the next subsections, I discuss the implications of this study's findings in informing effective models of dual language education and the idea of 'breathing spaces' for endangered minority languages (9.3.1). I then examine the question of learning across the curriculum using students' full repertoires (9.3.2) and finally, I emphasise the importance of first-language educators, as uniquely positioned for the task of delivering quality, linguistically and culturally sustaining learning. I propose some ways that schools and education systems might further support these endeavours.

### 9.3.1 Informing models of bilingual education: ‘Breathing spaces’

When this study was conducted, Warlpiri children attending Yuendumu School were required to learn the following:

- the content of the mainstream curriculum through English immersion and EALD pedagogies<sup>85</sup>
- the content of the Warlpiri Theme Cycle through Warlpiri and translingual practices.

In addition, they needed to learn and strengthen

- their L1, Warlpiri through oral and written *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri' texts complemented by translingual practices.
- their L2, Standard Australian English through immersion by SAE-speaking teacher supported by Warlpiri assistant, and EALD program.

And were required to develop the concept of literacy through initial Warlpiri literacy and literacy in their second language, English.

In terms of models of bilingual education, considering the language maintenance imperatives of Warlpiri teaching and learning and the asymmetrical power dynamics in the classroom, educator preference for a policy of strict language separation to preserve the space for Warlpiri in an English-dominated context is understandable and necessary. Considering also that language alternation and translanguaging are naturally occurring in these lessons, the question arises as to how these can be compatible with the efforts to maintain and promote the minority endangered language, Warlpiri. It has been suggested that sustainable translanguaging is possible, “it is important to preserve a space, although not a rigid or static place, in which the minority language does not compete with the majority language” (García, 2009, p. 301). The idea of a breathing space, first proposed by Fishman (1991, p. 59), has been conceptualised as,

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<sup>85</sup> The focus of this study was on teaching and learning in and of Warlpiri. I did not examine teaching and learning events conducted in English, nor lessons targeting English as an Additional Language or Dialect. However, there is ample evidence in the international literature from diverse classrooms that the teaching of first language has important flow on effects for development of second language (e.g., Collins, 2014; Cummins, 1979; J. Lee, Hill-Bonnet, & Gillispie, 2008).



“where minority language can be used freely and without the threat of the majority language; it can “breathe,” in a space where only the minority [language] is spoken. Such a space could be a village, an area, a classroom or a school” (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017, p.909). At Yuendumu School, such a space is currently afforded by the Warlpiri language program, governed by the Warlpiri Theme Cycle, bush trips, and Warlpiri texts. Efforts by Warlpiri educators to establish a Warlpiri unilingual register for the class reinforces this space. The creation of language boundaries in the Warlpiri/English bilingual program serves to protect the minoritised Warlpiri by giving it its own space and function within a largely English dominant system. Cummins (2007), who has also critiqued “two solitudes” immersion education in Canada, likewise, sees the utility of these spaces, conceding, “it does seem reasonable to create largely separate spaces for each language within a bilingual or immersion program”. Whilst domain separation runs counter to the sociolinguistic reality of the Warlpiri classroom there is an argument for creating a stable arrangement whereby students and educators have clear expectations around which language is used for which purposes. This approach would be supported by the practices educators already deploy and those put forward by García (2009) and Cummins (1979), in allowing switching and mixing for the affective and intellectual purposes described in Chapters 7 and 8.

Several prerequisites for a sustainable model of translanguaging have been proposed by scholars concerned with sustainable translanguaging, notably, 1) developing metalinguistic awareness in students and educators, and 2) expanding uses of minority language across the curriculum. A prerequisite for a strong, sustained and evidence-based approach to language programming is for language awareness work to be done regularly to understand the repertoires that students and educators bring to the classroom. Cenoz and Gorter (2017) have noted the need to develop metalinguistic awareness in students and educators as one of their principles of sustainable translanguaging and much work has been done on the benefits of language awareness in other Australian contexts where other dialects of English or new contact languages are spoken (Angelo, 2021; Steele, 2020). In this study I have used two multimodal techniques, language portraits and networks, but there are other tools such as Angelo’s (2006) Language Awareness Continuum, which could be used for teachers and students to explore their linguistic repertoires, in order to document and address them. Studies in other contexts (García and Vazquez, 2012) and in second dialect acquisition in Australia (Angelo, 2021, Steele 2020) have shown the importance of developing metalinguistic awareness and focussing on differences

between home language practices and those of the school. The approach facilitates learner-centred pedagogy, and side-by-side treatment of languages nurtures metalinguistic awareness, which is already a feature of multilingual communities like Yuendumu.

The second principle for sustainable translanguaging is ensuring interest and expanding the domains for using Warlpiri to increase students' engagements and meaningful opportunities to use it. This raises the question about learning other curricular content in Warlpiri and in English, which I discuss next.

### **9.3.2 Linguaging the curriculum: learning curricular content using students' full repertoires that include Warlpiri**

Beyond the learning *of* Warlpiri there is ample space to explore learning *in* Warlpiri *across* the curriculum. While so much work has been done over four decades on the topic of bilingual education, the Warlpiri program is nevertheless not a strong core component of a bilingual model of education at Yuendumu School. At many moments in history, it has been relegated to an add-on reified Indigenous Languages and Cultures program. As mentioned in Chapter 3, Yuendumu School had started to develop integrated units in Warlpiri and English across the curriculum (see example in Appendix A), however with limited leadership support and limited structures for training and team support, implementation has not been extensive across the school.

This thesis followed the priorities expressed by Warlpiri educators in exploring the learning of Warlpiri language and cultural content within the Warlpiri Theme Cycle, however educators have also expressed an interest in learning other curricular content through Warlpiri in a bilingual model of education. In the earliest Warlpiri Triangle workshops in the 1980s, materials were developed for teaching mathematics and science and the conversation about learning in Warlpiri across the curriculum has been a present, though quieter, hum in the background of language maintenance efforts. Bow (2016) described how the Living Archive of resources in Indigenous Languages, which includes Warlpiri, can be used to teach different areas of the Australian curriculum. Bow suggested (2016, p 20)

Rather than just an add-on, the histories and cultures of Indigenous people can be integrated into each learning area to bring new perspectives to existing knowledge and practice, and to encourage interesting and innovative ways to incorporate this knowledge.

At the time of fieldwork, the school was working on developing integrated units with the Warlpiri Theme Cycle as the basis of teaching across the curriculum and mapping other learning across to other areas such as history, social sciences, sciences and even English (see example in Appendix A). I attended two workshops with educators where questions around assessment of content using Warlpiri were discussed and concerns were raised by teaching teams around who would conduct the assessment in situations where Warlpiri educators (many on casual contracts with significant responsibilities outside of their roles in the school) were absent from work. I did not observe this planning work in action in the classrooms I attended. In the Upper Primary, as part of my research project, we attempted to plan and deliver a unit of science bilingually in Warlpiri and English. We found it very difficult to find a time to plan the content as with both members of the teaching team and in the end, the Warlpiri educator and I were only able to engage the *kardiya* teacher later in the process once the content and Warlpiri language planning had been done. While the lesson was well received by the students, who expressed engagement in the learning, and the Warlpiri educator, who said she was so excited to try new things in the classroom, we were unable to complete the full unit, or trial our bilingual assessment tool, due to disruptions in the school calendar (e.g. Warlpiri and *kardiya* teachers away for professional development, personal reasons and visiting activity providers taking precedence over day to day teaching and learning) and the community (e.g. royalty meetings causing domestic conflict and student and educator absences). When reflecting together on the activity, the educator pointed out that for these activities to be successful in future, she would need more planning and resources to support the delivery, “*yuwayi* ‘yes’ I need to try to do more planning and get everything organised. Get a dictionary *yuwayi* and know what’s there and what’s in it like steps by steps how we do it” (WT3 Interview). Her suggestion was supported by work by Poetsch (2020) on the demands on a teaching team in covering both the curriculum content and the language learning for EAL/D learners in remote Aboriginal communities where the students’ exposure to English is limited. Poetsch (2020, p. 49) reported,

Despite all of the factors that mark this teaching team as outstanding (outlined in the methods section above), they report that they cannot cover all curriculum content, due to the time their students require to learn both the language and content in the different learning areas/subjects.

Clearly, significant language engineering, time and skills would be required for teaching across the curriculum using all the communicative resources available, Warlpiri and English. In a dual

language model of education where one side is so much more highly resourced an important area for investment is in the L1 educators and the structures which support their work.

### **9.3.3 The importance of Warlpiri educators and school structures that support educators' local enactment of language policy**

This project has made an empirically grounded case to support the important role of Warlpiri educators in Warlpiri students' language and content learning. The Warlpiri educators are uniquely positioned with knowledge and skills to teach Warlpiri linguistic and cultural content and extend language socialisation practices from the home, at school. The Warlpiri educators have significant cultural and linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991) and are best placed to make an impact in their children's education because of their shared repertoires and the efficacy of their practices (Browne & Gibson, 2021; Disbray & Guenther, 2017; Guenther & Disbray, 2015; Ross & Baarda, 2017).

Calls for more professional development training for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff have been made for at least three decades (e.g., Lowell & Devlin, 1998; Lee et al., 2014; McKay, Davies, Devlin, Clayton, Oliver & Zammit, 1997, among many others) and the success of such training in the Northern Territory has been clearly articulated in past evaluations (Angelo & Poetsch, 2019; Bat & Shore, 2013; Devlin, et al., 2017; Murray, 2016). Whilst the Warlpiri educators have developed as a Community of Practice through the Warlpiri Triangle network, they still have significantly reduced access to professional development opportunities available to *kardiya* teachers. The reestablishment of the Remote Area Teacher Education (RATE) program, an accredited model of community-based teacher education (1976-1997) in 2020 is showing promise in supporting the next generation to obtain qualifications to improve their status and practice in the remote schools. Making space for elders in the school and continuing to support their contributions to Warlpiri lessons and teacher professional development would also be productive.

Working on teaching other curricular areas through Warlpiri demands investment from the school and the NT Department of Education in teacher professional development and co-teaching. The examples provided indicated a real need to develop team teaching relationships in Warlpiri classrooms. In other contexts, collaborative planning was an important factor in developing the change and creating a sense of an integrated curriculum (Thousand, Villa, & Nevin, 2006). In my data, I show that in situations where teams have developed a strong

collaborative relationship to co-plan their lessons, they were able to leverage the learning in both English, cross curricular areas, and Warlpiri (see Chapter 7). Local enforcement of the planning together, learning together, teaching together model (Graham, 2017) would set expectations about the level of collaboration expected in a bilingual program. Poetsch (2020, p. 47) in her study of co-teaching in another remote community addressed the importance of team planning,

It is planning that enables the team to become familiar with the curriculum content and the English language in the selected teaching resources. The assistant teacher needs time to research ways to talk about key concepts in the students' L1.

My experiences observing and facilitating the bilingual science activity as part of this study in 2018 aligned with this statement.

Targeted training for *kardiya* and Warlpiri educators about language use is by no means a new proposal (see contributions to Devlin et al., 2017) and was recognised in the recently released NT Department of Education Engagement Strategy (2022-2031) (Parry, Woodroffe & Reedy, 2021). Having a clear and explicit framework for use of languages in the curriculum was also acknowledged in the strategy. The importance of school principals as leaders in bilingual programming has been strongly supported in research (Menken & Solorza, 2015) and would underpin the planning and implementation of a consistent and effective bilingual model.

#### **9.4 Reflections on the methodology and implications for research: strengths, challenges, and questions**

The study has contributed to increasing understandings of how language ideology and policy are lived out in practice, through interactions in the classroom. I join a growing body of scholarship that advocates for taking an ethnography of speaking approach to developing programs that are tailored to a given community's needs, assets, aspirations, and resources to inform language maintenance efforts (Henne-Ochoa et al., 2020; Henne-Ochoa, 2018). Taking a post-structural approach and viewing the complexity of language and ideologies and their interactions is also important because it gives a more responsive, nuanced picture of the sociolinguistic realities in which children are growing up in Warlpiri communities and other traditional language (L1) language ecologies (Angelo and Poetsch, 2019). In addition to identifying as Warlpiri speakers, students described many ways of communicating that have

meaning in their lives. I did encounter some difficulties in negotiating the reported practices with the language data, which I discuss next.

#### 9.4.1 Challenges of studying ideologies with practices

An important aspect of my methodology was seeking guidance and mentoring from Warlpiri educators (see Chapter 4). I learned almost too late in the process about the importance of careful workshopping and clarity in explaining terms and motivations. The Warlpiri educators in interviews, planning meetings and in reflecting on the transcripts were very clear about the classroom code being *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* 'strong Warlpiri'. For a long time, I was unsure how to broach the subject of plurilingual practices and translanguaging in the classroom. In 2019, eight months into my fieldwork, I showed a group of Warlpiri educators at Yuendumu School some brief examples of teaching which I naïvely called, “not exactly strong Warlpiri” and after some commentary on the “right way” to talk, the conversation quickly moved on. At a presentation to all staff during their orientation week in Term 1, 2019, I mentioned examples of “contemporary ways of speaking” in the classroom which similarly did not spark discussion among the Warlpiri educators. While educators were willing to assist with transcription, transcript checking and identify features that weren’t “strong,” they were much less willing to accept the prevalence of these and take the next step to talking about their intentions and pedagogical implications. An educator mentor was clear, “we teach strong Warlpiri in the classroom.” The educators I worked with dismissed these examples as mistakes, “oh I shouldn’t have said it that way” or while laughing “there I’m talking just like the kids.” In another conversation some senior educators talked about noticing how often they accommodate to the ways their grandchildren speak. It was important that I balance the educator's views and the documentation. I responded to this by setting up several conversations and careful, intentional workshopping for just one educator to become comfortable that language change, which they acknowledged is widespread in the community, exists in the classroom too, and that including the children's own repertoires in the classroom can be productive in achieving learning goals. An important next step for this research is to continue to carefully share and workshop the different ‘ways of speaking’ in the classroom with educators at Yuendumu School which might contribute to the continued refinement of language teaching strategies.

### **9.4.2 Further Questions and future directions**

There are still many unanswered questions about language use in the Warlpiri classroom and abundant room for further progress in determining the ways in which educators and students use their repertoires for learning. Detailed analysis of students' language practices in peer interactions would be interesting to foreground children as agents in their classroom learning. Differentiating between the learning needs of different age groups within a developmental approach would also yield useful insights for practice. A really important area to explore and document is the teaching of other curricular content such as science or maths in Warlpiri through an integrated curriculum. In a review of code-switching research in classrooms, A. Lin (2017) proposed the need for exploring language practices, not as discrete instances of units of work as I have done, but as part of a holistic view of curriculum. Future research and development of bilingual assessment that considers the plurilingual continuum and the integrated nature of the students' language proficiencies and content knowledge, could productively capture children's learning.

The reported ways of speaking in the community could be further investigated through analysis of spontaneous language data in other community domains. The home is an important context of intergenerational language use, as are other intergenerational areas such as Sorry Camps (locations of mourning practices), or spaces where peer learning occurs, such as youth programs. Examination of language use in these domains would shed light on the types and varieties of input students are receiving outside the school and could suggest implications of these for classroom learning.

### **9.5 Concluding remarks**

In the introduction to this thesis (Chapter 1), I situated this research project in the context of concerns I had been hearing anecdotally. These were from *kardiya* teachers, administrators and other stakeholders about the language used in the teaching and learning in and of Warlpiri at Yuendumu School and pernicious ideas and deficit discourses about students' language abilities and awareness. This was in addition to broader ideological and implementational debates around the most appropriate models for provision of bilingual education since the first schools for Aboriginal students were set up in the Northern Territory (Bennett, 2017). This contested space operates in stark contrast to the Warlpiri educators' consistent, firm messaging and their

long-suffering advocacy for a strong and consistent program of learning of, and in, both Warlpiri and English. The goal of Warlpiri language maintenance underpins this aspiration in the context of changes to Warlpiri language practices in recent decades and associated social, political, and economic hegemony of English-language institutions in almost all areas of contemporary Warlpiri life.

Taking up a call initially formulated by Spolsky (1974, p. 2024) to "show how linguistics and its various fields can help define and solve problems that reflect the centrality of language in the educational process", I endeavoured in this study to address language educational challenges and opportunities with a holistic approach integrating theory and practice, research, and policy. I asked four questions about the language practices and ideologies of students and educators, and the ways in which these mediate and are mediated by each other in the teaching and learning of, and in, Warlpiri in the classrooms at Yuendumu School. These were,

**RQ1:** What kind of evidence for teaching and learning in first language do classroom interactions at Yuendumu School show?

**RQ2:** How do children as agents in their speech communities understand the role of Warlpiri in their learning?

**RQ3:** What do Warlpiri educators see as indicators of successful learning in and through Warlpiri?

**RQ4:** How do the language practices of educators and students appear to be mediated by (and mediate) the individual language ideologies, classroom environment and wider sociolinguistic processes such as contact and change?

I also posed and regularly reflected on the question of whether it was my place at all to undertake research in response to these questions, given I am neither a Warlpiri speaker nor educator and considering that my professional experience with Warlpiri schools spans not quite a decade.

In the second semester of 2018, I began eleven months of fieldwork, collecting a range of data relating to the educators' and students' language practices teaching *in* and *of* Warlpiri at Yuendumu School. This involved recording of classroom interactions in two Early Years classes, one Upper Primary class and on Country Visits, a four-day educational and cultural camp to the south of Yuendumu community. These recordings were complemented by examination of classroom artefacts, photographs, and student work samples. Analysis of the



recordings and supporting artefacts was guided by articulations of educator and student ideologies which were investigated using educator interviews, examination of ‘grey literature’ (professional development workshop reports, policies, and public statements) and multimodal arts-based language awareness activities and interviews with Upper Primary Students. I approached this study from a social constructivist perspective that views language use as a social practice and linguistic diversity as inherently enabling for individuals, families, and societies. I took a repertoire perspective of plurilingualism with an interest not only in the named languages, but in understanding classroom interactions, informed by a translanguaging approach. I summarise the key findings for each question next.

*RQ1: What kind of evidence for teaching and learning in first language do classroom interactions at Yuendumu School show?*

Documentation of the language practices of Warlpiri educators and students in the Warlpiri classroom in this study is crucial for understanding the local enactment and divergence from language-in-education policy. It was also important for understanding the ways in which teaching, and learning occurs in the context of language change. Analysis of classroom interactions showed how Warlpiri children and educators deployed a range of communicative resources to make meaning in the Warlpiri classroom. Educators drew on exemplars of *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ in written and oral texts, imbued with cultural and linguistic authority of elders, to teach the target code. They also deployed plurilingual practices which had interrelated pragmatic and pedagogical functions such as encouraging student participation, attending to student proficiencies and ensuring comprehension of learning content. A combination of conscious scaffolding of the target code and flexible language use was productive in teaching *Warlpiri pirrjirdi* ‘strong Warlpiri’ and *jaru pirrjirdi* ‘strong culture’ as well as other curricular content such as science and history. Children's practices, both target and non-target, are reflective of the input they receive from adults and peers in the contemporary language ecology of Yuendumu community.

*RQ2: How do children as agents in their speech communities understand the role of Warlpiri in their learning?*

Foregrounding children's beliefs, attitudes, and values about their language practices inside and outside the classroom and considering them with those of the wider community is vital in exploring inter-generational perspectives on and experiences of language learning and change

(Bauman & Henne-Ochoa, 2015). The students echoed community language maintenance concerns and expressed pride and positive feelings about being and speaking Warlpiri. They described their experience of the school as an English-dominant arena and suggested that Warlpiri is mostly learned in other domains. The students also demonstrated a plurilingual orientation by including not only varieties of Warlpiri, Englishes, and other Aboriginal languages in their language ecologies but also other world languages which they were exposed to through music, the media and migration (through workers in the local shop). Warlpiri children are growing up in a world where language use is being increasingly characterised by superdiversity and encroachment from English hegemony (as discussed in Chapter 2). This comes with opportunities and challenges as this and next generations navigate their contemporary identities with the very real pressure on Warlpiri knowledge systems, intellectual, social, cultural resources. Analysis of their ideologies showed, as others have done (Kral and Ellis, 2018; McCarty & Wyman, 2009; McCarty, et al., 2019), that young people can hold multiple ideologies of valuing traditional language and global youth culture.

*RQ3: What do Warlpiri educators see as indicators of successful learning in and through Warlpiri?*

Warlpiri educators, operating within a community of practice, have over four decades of inter-community meetings and workshops articulated language maintenance aspirations and explored strategies to achieve these in a complex and not always favourable policy environment. They have outlined the features and functions of Warlpiri which they aim to teach through strategies such as (1) consciously establishing and where necessary (re)establishing the target code through modelling, recasting, prompting and guided performance, (2) deploying relational pedagogies premised on developing integrated knowledge within the kinship system and (3) drawing on linguistic and cultural authority of senior speakers to develop teaching materials, mentor new educators, and teach on bush trips. Successful learning in and through Warlpiri involves navigating complex input and understanding and deploying appropriate 'ways of speaking' for different tasks.

*RQ4: How do the language practices of educators and students appear to be mediated by (and mediate) the individual language ideologies, classroom environment and wider sociolinguistic processes such as contact and change?*

This study documented the complex interactions of ideologies and language practices in contexts of change and the cultural "interface". To answer this question, I drew on Kroskrity's

(2021) language ideological assemblages framework to identify the complex historical, social and linguistic factors, challenges and opportunities interacting in unique ways which impact the current project of language maintenance at Yuendumu school. The challenges to successful maintenance of Warlpiri include an institutionalised monolingual mindset (Clyne, 2006), historical exclusion of local languages in English-dominant institution, a history of ambivalent policy support (Devlin et al., 2017) and pervasive inequalities in remote communities. The opportunities include the tenacity of Warlpiri educators operating within a community of practice in the Warlpiri Triangle to "open up" the implementational spaces for safeguarding their languages and knowledges (Hornberger, 2005). The efforts among speakers and linguists to document and develop resources for future generations is another significant vantage in the Warlpiri context. Finally, efforts to continue to engage young people and their contemporary repertoires and identities in the school context, while not universally endorsed, might build on their sense of ownership and responsibility in the project of maintaining Warlpiri linguistic and cultural knowledge.

This research joins a body of minority language maintenance scholarship that explores the role of the school in supporting linguistic continuity (Hirvonen, 2008; McCarty & Hornberger, 2008; McCarty & Nicholas, 2014; Wyman et al., 2010; Truscott & Malcolm, 2010; Dorian, 2009; Romero-Little & McCarty, 2006). This study highlighted the generative ways Warlpiri educators are addressing concerns about language change. The efforts of Warlpiri educators to carve out space (ideological and implementational) to harness the linguistic agility of students could be supported and strengthened in future with a consistent approach to the incorporation of diverse language practices in programming and intensive, targeted, and sustained language teaching within the bilingual program (and this has been widely called for e.g., see Disbray (2014)). This approach would involve careful consideration of models of bilingual delivery. An approach to language use in the school that transcends the transience of *kardiya* staff would need to support inter-cultural and cross-linguistic collaboration and team-teaching. This model would necessarily be protective of a Warlpiri teaching space, akin to domain differentiation, to develop and follow the Warlpiri Theme Cycle so that educators can influence the flexibility or rigidity of language use on their own terms. This model would also need to consider the plurilingual lives of contemporary Warlpiri students and how to draw on their full linguistic resources for learning across the curriculum. Of course, this kind of approach would take significant ideological and implementational investment. But a first step is to acknowledge the

enormous strength of Warlpiri educators and their long history of dedicated efforts. Also crucial is an acknowledgment of their enormous capital in the classroom, as they share the linguistic resources of their students and can harness these for learning in and of Warlpiri and across the curriculum too.

With regards to the second question concerned with my position as a researcher, this study, relying on generous guidance and input from a panel of Warlpiri mentors and educational leaders, sheds some light on complex language practices in teaching and learning and raised a multitude of further questions. This glimpse could be expanded, enriched, and improved by Warlpiri practitioner-researchers in the future. Action research by Warlpiri educators and students into language use in the classroom and effective teaching strategies would facilitate closer connections to practice. The language multimodal, arts-based work with students revealing strong language awareness and linguistic agility among the next generation of Warlpiri speakers supports the future feasibility of this assertion (i.e., "growing their own" researchers). Of course, language maintenance is not just the concern of endangered language communities alone. It is a concern for everyone working in education in the Northern Territory, for everyone on the continent broadly. Celebrating linguistic diversity and the diversity of encompassed knowledges is a global concern. For me personally, the research for this thesis was a key point in a lifelong process of learning how to work better together to counter widespread language endangerment and loss (Hale, 1998).

It remains to be seen how renewed promises of "investment in bilingual and cultural learning" associated with the NT Department of Education's recently released Engagement Strategy (NTDoE, 2021, p.3) will eventuate given the education system's chequered history of delivery, resourcing, and considering its policy preoccupation with attendance data and standardised testing results. What is likely, given the strong history of community involvement in Warlpiri schools, is that Warlpiri speakers will continue to endeavour to find innovative ways to maintain their much-valued linguistic and cultural knowledge in the face of ongoing changes to contemporary 'ways of speaking' under immense pressure from English. This study of language practices in an endangered language maintenance program has shown that schools can be spaces where the delicate balance of linguistic innovation and continuity in teaching and learning serves future generations of speakers.

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# Appendix A Draft Scope and Sequence Integrated Unit of Work for the theme Warlajja ‘family’

Early Childhood

Term Two

Warlajja ‘family’					
<b>Warlpiri Knowledge Cycle</b>			<b>Unit Overview</b> <i>Refer to the Key Ideas in the NTILC – Culture Briefly describe how the curriculum and assessment will be organised</i>		
<b>What do students need to learn?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Names for different family members</li> <li>Words of Dreaming stories, and use of symbols, songs, dances, hand signs associated with family/skin.</li> <li>Ways of showing respect for family and kin</li> <li>Use of appropriate symbols and storytelling which relate to family/skin</li> <li>Use of symbols, movement and words which reflect and respect family/skin.</li> </ul>		<b>What do students need to learn?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roles, responsibilities and obligations of particular family members/skins</li> <li>Stories, markings, songs, dances, hand signs belonging to particular skin</li> <li>Connections to country through kinship, including kirja (traditional owner) and kurdungurlu (manager) and the roles of kirja and kurdungurlu</li> </ul>	<p>In this unit students will learn about the significance of Warlajja – family, and how connection through family helps us to know who we are, where we belong and how we should behave. Through Warlpiri students will build understandings of knowing their own and other people’s relationships to Country, and to identify Dreaming stories, songs and dances. They will learn about the ways they relate to family, extended kinship groups and Country, as well as the importance and ways of caring for country.</p> <p>Through Humanities they will develop understandings of the roles, rights &amp; responsibilities of family members. They will describe the interconnections between Warlajja - family as a social systems and the natural systems on their country, including the connections within &amp; between them, and how they impact on each other.</p> <p>Through Visual and Media Arts they explore the importance of visual and media arts in telling and recording stories from own kinship connections, making works as appropriate to demonstrate their understandings.</p> <p>Through Health students learn about the role of kinship and cultural activity in keeping them healthy and safe.</p>		
<b>Band One T - 2</b>			<b>Transition</b>	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>
<b>NT-ILC Cultural Knowledge &amp; Content</b> <i>T - 2 Content Descriptors</i>			<b>History</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People in my family, their lives and how they are related ACHASSK011</li> <li>Important family commemorations ACHASSK012</li> <li>Communicating family stories through photo, artefacts, books, oral histories, digital media and museums ACHASSK013</li> </ul>	<b>History</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Differences in family structures and roles over time ACHASSK028</li> <li>Terms (Warlpiri &amp; English) that signify present, past and future and changes of significance ACHASSK029</li> <li>Differences and similarities in daily lives during childhood ACHASSK030</li> </ul>	<b>History</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>History of a significant person, building, site and/or part of the natural environment in the local community ACHASSK044</li> <li>Cultural or spiritual significance of a historical site in the local area ACHASSK045</li> </ul>
<b>Media F- 2</b>		<b>Visual Arts F - 2</b>	<b>Geography</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Represent location and features of places on simple maps and models ACHASSK014</li> <li>Places people live in and belong to, familiar features, why they are important to people ACHASSK015</li> <li>The Country/Place on which the school/home is located, why Country/Place is important to Warlpiri ACHASSK016</li> <li>Reasons why some places are special to people, how they can be looked after ACHASSK017</li> </ul>	<b>Geography</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Features and location of natural, managed and constructed places, how they change, how they can be cared for ACHASSK031</li> <li>Weather and seasons of places, ways in which different cultural groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, describe them ACHASSK032</li> <li>Activities in the local place and reasons for their location ACHASSK033</li> </ul>	<b>Geography</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The world is represented in geographic divisions, location of Australia in relation to these divisions ACHASSK047</li> <li>Places are parts of Earth’s surface that have been named by people, places can be defined at a variety of scales ACHASSK048</li> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples maintain special connections to particular Country/Place in special ways ACHASSK049</li> </ul>
<b>The Arts</b> <i>Visual and Media Arts F - 2 Content Descriptors</i>			<b>Transition</b>	<b>Year 1 - 2</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore ideas, characters and settings in the community through stories in images, sounds and text ACAMAM054</li> <li>Use Media technologies to capture and edit images, sounds and text for a purpose ACAMAM055</li> <li>Create and present media artworks that communicate ideas and stories to an audience ACAMAM056</li> <li>Respond to media artworks and consider where and why people make media artworks, starting with media from Warlpiri ACAMAR057</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks and design, including considering ideas in Artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists ACAVAM106</li> <li>Use and experiment with different materials, techniques, technologies and processes to make art works ACAVAM107</li> <li>Create and display artworks to communicate ideas to an audience ACAVAM108</li> <li>Respond to visual artworks and consider where and why people make visual artworks, starting with visual artworks from Warlpiri ACAVAR109</li> </ul>	<b>HASS Inquiry Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect data and information from observations and identify information and data from sources provided ACHASSI002, ACHASSI019, ACHASSI035</li> <li>Sort and record information and data, including location, in tables and on plans and labelled maps ACHASSI003, ACHASSI020, ACHASSI036</li> <li>Sequence familiar objects and events ACHASSI004, ACHASSI021, ACHASSI037</li> <li>Interpret data and information displayed in pictures and texts and on maps ACHASSI007, ACHASSI024, ACHASSI040</li> <li>Reflect on learning to propose how to care for places and sites that are important or significant ACHASSI009, ACHASSI026, ACHASSI042</li> <li>Present narratives, information and findings in oral, graphic and written forms using simple terms to denote the passing of time and to describe direction and location ACHASSI010, ACHASSI027, ACHASSI043</li> </ul>	
<b>Health</b> <i>F-2 Content Descriptors</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify people and demonstrate protective behaviours and other actions that help keep themselves safe and healthy ACPPS003</li> <li>Practise personal and social skills to interact positively with others ACPPS004</li> <li>Identify actions that promote health, safety and wellbeing ACPPS006</li> <li>Participate in play that promotes engagement with outdoor settings and the natural environment ACPPS007</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practise strategies they can use when they feel uncomfortable, unsafe or need help with a task, problem or situation ACPPS017</li> <li>Describe ways to include others to make them feel they belong ACPPS019</li> <li>Explore actions that help make the classroom a healthy, safe and active place ACPPS022</li> <li>Recognise similarities and differences in individuals and groups, and explore how these are celebrated and respected ACPPS024</li> </ul>	

F-2 Content Descriptors  
HASS

## Early Childhood

## Term Two

## Evidence of Learning - Listening Speaking Reading/Viewing, Writing/Representing

In and through Warlpiri students are able to: *Refer to Achievement Standards in NT-ILC Bilingual*

<b>T Listening, Reading and Viewing</b>	<b>Yr1 Listening, Reading and Viewing</b>	<b>Yr2 Listening, Reading and Viewing</b>
Recall on or two events from texts with familiar topics	Make connections to personal experience when explaining characters and main events in short texts	Understand how similar texts share characteristics by identifying text structures and language features used to describe characters and events or communicate <u> factual information</u> .
Identify connections between texts and their personal experience		Identify literal and implied meaning, main ideas and supporting detail
Use appropriate interaction skills to listen and respond to others in a familiar environment	Listen to others when taking part in conversations, using appropriate language features and interactions skills	Make connections between texts by comparing content Listen for <u> particular purposes</u>
<b>T Speaking, Representing and Writing</b>	<b>Yr 1 Speaking, Representing and Writing</b>	<b>Yr 2 Speaking, Representing and Writing</b>
Understand that their texts reflect their own experiences	Understand how characters in texts are developed and give reasons for personal preferences Create short texts for a small range of purposes	Discuss ideas and experiences, using everyday language features and topic specific vocabulary Create texts that show how images support the meaning of the text Create text, drawing on their own experiences, <u> imagination</u> and information they have learnt
Communicate clearly in informal group and whole class settings	Interact in pair, <u> group</u> and class discussions, taking turns when responding	Use a variety of strategies to engage in group and class discussions
Retell events and experiences with peers and known adults	Make short presentations on familiar topics	Use a variety of strategies to make presentations

## Evidence of Learning - Culture

In and through Warlpiri students are able to: *Refer to Achievement Standards in NT-ILC Cultural*

**T - 2 Country / Land**

CCL1.1 Recognise some traditional connections to Country through different kin

CCL1.3 Recognise some songs, dances and designs associated with their family and Country

**Yr 3 – 4 People and Kinship**

CPK1.1 Name their own family relationships (skin names, clans, family names) and how to behave with different relations

CPK 1.2 Discuss the choices they can make about their behaviour

**Yr 3 – 4 Natural Environment**

CNE 1.6 Identify actions/activities that damage country and ones that protect country

## Appendix B Overview of the data

	Early Years A	Early Years B	Upper Primary	On country	Student Interviews	Educator Interviews	Workshop recordings	Total
<b>Number</b>	3 lessons + free play	2 lessons	10 lessons	3 days, 5 recordings	11	5 + 3 community members	x4	15 x school lessons 5 x out bush 19x interviews 4x workshops
<b>No. mins /hrs recorded</b>	1hour total explicit teaching  43 mins free play	Approx. 4 hours	Approx. 19 hours	Approx. 1.5 hours	39 mins  +2 A4 page notes	Approx. 3 hours	Approx. 9 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24hours school lessons</li> <li>• 43 min free play</li> <li>• 1.5hours on country</li> <li>• 4 hours interviews</li> <li>• 9 hours workshops</li> </ul> <b>39.5 hours total</b>
<b>No. mins /hrs transcribed</b>	78.31mins	43.3 min	Approx. 12 hours	33.44 mins	39 mins	2.5 hours	Annotated all files (bar 67mins) and transcribed a short section	<b>Approx. 18 hours</b>
<b>No. mins/hrs checked w speaker</b>	2hrs	1.5hrs	2hrs	1hr	1hr	2.5hrs	0	<b>Approx. 9.5 hours</b>

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## Appendix C Example use of Hymes' Speaking mnemonic

### Observation of a teaching event in the Upper Primary Class on 26.09.2018

**Scene:** Upper Primary Classroom, sitting around a table making dioramas of scenes from set text, *Lungkarda-kurlu* 'Blue tongue Lizard'

**Participants:** 3 students, a Warlpiri educator, and a non-Indigenous teacher. Two students are from the Upper Primary class and participated in all the lessons of the unit, and one is sitting in from a lower class as reprimand for misbehaviour.

**Event:** A group of three students is sitting at a large table, working on a diorama depicting the scene in which the protagonist of the text, *Nungarrayi* is running through the bush holding a fire stick. The purpose of the interaction is to check students' progress and to establish the relationship between the students, teachers, and the protagonist, *Nungarrayi*. There is an interruption in English from the *kardiya* teacher concerned about the depiction of a firestick in a students' diorama.

**Act:** The act unfolds in a series of questions directed at the Warlpiri educator from the students and the non-Indigenous teacher. The act concludes with the teacher and students establishing their relationships to the text's protagonist, *Nungarrayi*.

The teaching segment begins with the Warlpiri teacher checking student progress. K1 responds with a question about the protagonist whose skin name is, *Nungarrayi*, "she's running, isn't she?" (line4). At the same time, the non-Indigenous, *kardiya* teacher (KT) walks over and asks in English what the plasticine figure of the protagonist is holding (line2), eliciting a response in English from WT3 (line3). A second child, K2 asks WT3 who *Nungarrayi* is and immediately a third child points to the plasticine figure and calls it by the English kin term "mummy" (denoting mother or mother's sisters in Warlpiri usage) (line 9). WT3 affirms K3's comment as *Nungarrayi* is the child's mother's skin name and K2, repeats their question, "who?" (line 11). In response WT3 points to the figurine and reminds the student that they made it based on the story in the book (line12). K3 and WT3 establish that their "mummies" share the same classificatory sub section, as they are both *Nungarrayi* and WT3 concludes that according to the kin system, they are "sisters" (line 29).

**Key:** The conversation is informal; the students and teacher are speaking as they work with their craft materials

**Instrumentalities:** the participants are sitting around a table and their hands are busy with the craft materials comprising boxes, paint, glue, coloured plasticine, coloured paper, cotton wool, strong and natural artefacts from the school's playground (rocks, grass etc).

**Norms:** the expectation is that the Warlpiri educator has the answers to the questions. The Warlpiri educator is maintaining the language of the interaction as Warlpiri with some incursions in English from the *kardiya* teacher.

**Genre:** informal conversation making connections between text and students' and the educator's lives

#### Appendix D Table of Languages referred to across all student responses

<b>Language Portraits</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thai</li> <li>2. Vietnamese</li> <li>3. French</li> <li>4. Filipina [sic]</li> <li>5. Spanish</li> <li>6. Portuguese</li> <li>7. Korean</li> <li>8. Japanese</li> <li>9. Chinese</li> <li>10. Hindi</li> </ol>
<b>Language Networks</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hindi (heard at shop)</li> <li>2. Vietnamese (heard at shop)</li> <li>3. Japanese (spoken among other learners with attending school in Adelaide)</li> </ol>

**Appendix E Examples of language portraits referred to in this chapter**



**Dami Language portrait**



**Fortnite language portrait**





Joy Language Portrait



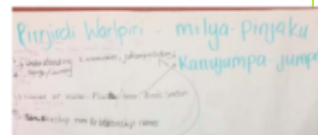
Kurlirra Language Portrait



**Ronaldo Language Portrait**

## Appendix F Table of responses from all communities

<p>Nyiyá yungulu pina-jarrimi?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tarnnga yungulu Warlpiri wangkami, yirdi yungulu-nyanu yirrani pirjirdi 'They should always speak Warlpiri, and they should speak strong themselves'</li> <li>Ngurrara, jukurpa, kuruwari yungurlu tarnngangu mardani kuja kalipajana pina-mani nyampu bilingual program-ria. 'Country, jukurpa and painting should always be (in the program), that is what we teach the in this bilingual program.'</li> <li>Kurdu-kurdu yunguru tarnngajuku wangkami pirjirdi Warlpiri 'Kids should speak strong Warlpiri forever'</li> <li>Kurdu-kurdu wita-ngurlu wiri-kira yungulu-nyanu milya-pinyi warlaja-patu 'Kids from small to big should learn (about/with) their family'</li> <li>Kurdu-kurdu yungurlu tarnnga-juku pina-jarrimi jarlu-patu-kurlu 'Kids should always learn with elders.'</li> <li>Kurdu-kurdu kalu-nyanu milya-pinyi kuja-kalu yanu excursion pina-jarri kalu tija manu jarlu-patu-wana 'Kids learn themselves when they go on excursions, they learn around teachers and elders.'</li> </ul> <p>Junga-mayi kalu pina-jarrimi? 'Are they learning this?'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kurdu-kurdu kalu pina-jarrimi kuja kalu-jana Warlpiri-ri pina-mani Warlpiri lesson-ria 'kids are learning, and they are taught in Warlpiri in Warlpiri lessons.'</li> <li>Pina-kalu nyinami milya-pinyi kalu-nyanu yawulyu, jukurpa manu kuruwari 'Still they are learning about their own ceremony, jukurpa and art.'</li> <li>Kurdu-kurdu kalu pina-jarrimi Warlpiri-ki yungurlu riiti-mani manu wangkami pirjirdi. 'Kids are learning Warlpiri and should be reading and peaking strongly'</li> <li>Kurdu-kurdu kalu-jana purda-nyanyi ngati-nyanu-kari-riangu yimi manu kalu-jana walaparimi 'Kids listen to their mother's stories and they practice them.'</li> </ul>	<p>Learning strong Warlpiri, going deeper</p> <p>In this group, learning was conceptualized along a pathway. Some highlights from this pathway that begins at the beginning of life – FaFT and childcare and progresses to senior years i.e. 9-10 (?).</p> <p>A general principal is that students learn from family e.g. their mother and their father, their teacher....</p> <p>At school, they learn school Warlpiri.</p> <p>Throughout their schooling they should learn about, and understand ceremonies, jukurpa/culture, songs, country.</p> <p>More specifically,</p> <p>From FaFT to year 2, students should learn oral way, including singing along.</p> <p>From year 3 – 5, students learn the names of things – plants, trees, birds, seasons, and also kinship names. Here they are learning from their tartarta, their jaja, their mamiyi.</p> <p>From year 6 – 8, students are reading and writing. Here they are also learning the rules.</p> <p>From year 9 to year 10, students are reading and writing. There is the footy team. They need elder role models inside school and outside school. They are also learning the rule.</p>
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<p>Group 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For Warlpiri language, kids should be learning to understand, speak, read and write strong Warlpiri → speaking is being taught, and reading and writing are a little bit.</li> <li>For Warlpiri theme cycle, knowledge of the themes needs to be taught. → Knowledge is being taught</li> <li>Themes include             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jukurpa</li> <li>Kuyu, miyi, ngapa, waliya – pajirinjaku, hunting skills, yitaki-mani ka, karlami kiki, puranjaku waliya yalyu-yalyu, purranjaku, palka maninjaku ngapa, yarla, ngarkirdi, yunkaranyi, miyi - wanka/yimmi → kids really need to learn about these things</li> <li>Nguru</li> <li>Jurnarpa</li> <li>Purlapa</li> <li>Warlaja – names for all relatives, names for wife, husband – ngapujulangu, markari-langu → kids really have to learn all of this.</li> </ul> </li> <li>For a good social education, kids need to learn             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect for parents, elders, teachers, grandparents</li> <li>Respect yapa law</li> <li>Play nicely with other children, not teasing</li> <li>Learn not to hit when they are angry</li> <li>Learn to get over it when they are upset</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>→ These parts of a good social education are things that kids really need to be taught, and need to understand. They are things that kids are still learning.</p>	<p>Group 4</p> <p>Warlpiri pina-jarrinjaku English "Learning Warlpiri an English"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaking &amp; listening</li> <li>Singing Warlpiri songs</li> <li>Skin names/family (family group, kirda, marriage, kurdu-ngurlu 'from a young age')</li> <li>Warlpiri Themes</li> <li>Season and directions (month, time)</li> <li>Painting, including on body (visit arts centre, symbols, tracks, shapes, kirda, colours)</li> <li>Watching cultural ceremony (Yawulyu, purlapa – symbols, rdaka-rdaka, videos yapa-kurlu 'videos for yapa')</li> <li>Bush trips and Country Visits (Tracks, kuyu, miyi, plan places)</li> <li>Storytelling (elders, sand story)</li> <li>Reading books (running records, group reading, syllables, symbols, phonics, sounds, sight words)</li> </ul> <p>Are kids learning this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A few kids are learning everything</li> <li>Learning from others – parents, elders, family</li> <li>English is strong too</li> </ul>
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## Appendix G *Jinta-jarrimi* 'Becoming One' Report in 2021 showing workshop discussion about Warlpiri suffixes

### Endings on Warlpiri words



In groups, we read 3 readers at different levels.  
 Each group highlighted the endings on words.  
 We wrote these endings up on the board  
 We talked about what they mean and what they do in a sentence

- The level 2 reader had a few endings.
- The level 3 reader had some of the same plus more endings.
- The level 5 reader had a lot of words with more than one ending.

We saw that the endings are part of what the structure of sentences. Some endings are there in every text. Where there are a lot of endings, it makes a book more interesting and meaningful. It makes the language more complex and more like the strong Warlpiri spoken by old people.

It is important to teach endings to students, as well as sounds and words. They will learn to recognize endings by sight.

ENDINGS	WARLPI	WIRI-JARLU
- purda	- purda	- purda
- mayi	- mayi	- mayi
- jaku	- jaku	- jaku
- luu	- luu	- luu
- nyayini	- nyayini	- nyayini
- apa	- apa	- apa
- jangkajja	- jangkajja	- jangkajja
- ngki	- ngki	- ngki
- rlu	- rlu	- rlu
- rna	- rna	- rna
- wangu	- wangu	- wangu

The new Warlpiri dictionary will be published soon. It has a list of all the endings with their meanings and how they are used. This will be a good resource for teaching. Mary Laughren has sent a copy of this list, so contact Mary or Margaret if you would like a copy.

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## Appendix H List of literacy activities observed

### *Early Years A*

- Group reading (teacher holds big book)
- Referring to posters on the wall, chanting
- Play stations with sensory letters, tracing activities
- Singing
- Teaching students hand signs, *rdaka-rdaka* ('hand-signs') for animals

### *Early Years B*

- daily phonics, counting, reciting days of the week from wall posters
- group reading (teacher holds big book and students follow along with little copies)
- tracing, copying, worksheets
- strong emphasis on writing their own name using templates

### *Upper Primary*

- individual reading and reading running records (at least 3 times per week) run by a member of the literacy production team
- bingo
- oral recounts
- written recounts
- group reading (teacher and students holding text)
- role play
- group negotiated text
- word study (identifying nouns and verbs)
- making a word list from a story as a group
- story map
- making a class book
- Assessment: recounting a story orally
- Teacher using *rdaka-rdaka* (hand signs) in class ('where are you going?', 'wait', 'right skin for marriage')
- Individual reading

### *Bush trips and follow-up sessions*

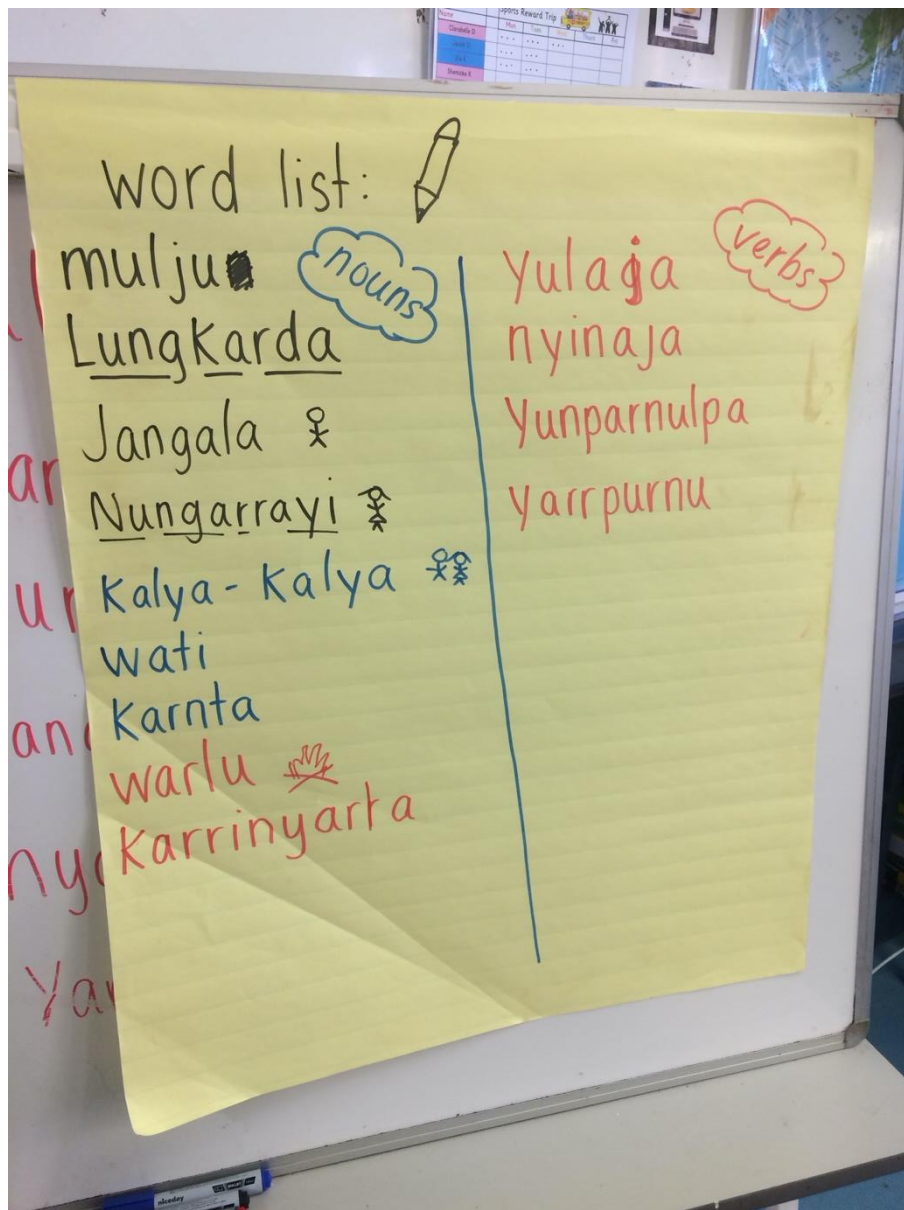
- oral storytelling
- *yawulyu* ('body painting')
- sand stories
- using maps on country
- Follow up recount poster
- Follow up drawing map of camp
- Follow up drawing map of route and significant sites

## Appendix I Referring and Addressing practices in the data

Type	Referring	Addressing
English personal names e.g., Roger	Commonly used by educators	Commonly used by educators
Warlpiri personal names e.g., Yamurna	Less common by educators and students	Less common by educators and students
Initials of first and last name e.g., RM for Roger Martin	Common by educators and students	Common by educators and students
Nicknames e.g., <i>Wawu</i> or <i>Witapawu</i> 'little one'	Common by educators and students	Common for educators
Minimal descriptions e.g., <i>karnta-jarra</i> 'two girls'	Common by educators	Sometimes used by educators
<i>Kumunjayi</i> (a substitute name for someone who has died, or a word that resembles it)	Common for educators and students	Common for educators and students
Skin names e.g., <i>Nungarrayi</i>	Common for educators and students	Common for educators and students
Kin terms e.g., <i>yapirli</i> 'paternal grandmother'	(Used in triangulations, see next)	Common for educators and students
Triangulations e.g., possessed skin terms <i>nyuntu-nyangu tartarta</i> 'your mother's father and his siblings'	Commonly used by educators	-
Verbal cross reference e.g. <i>yangka purlka-pawu</i> (that dear old man)	Used by educators	-
Free pronouns, Warlpiri and English	rare	common



**Appendix J Sample Word List for *Lungkarda-kurlu* 'Blue Tongue Lizard'  
unit of work**



**Appendix K Sample Cloze worksheet for *Lungkarda-kurlu* 'Blue Tongue Lizard' unit of work**

Lungkarda-kurlu CLOZE

4. Lungkarda Nungarrayilpa nyinaja muljungka ngulalparla yulaja yirraru Jangalaku.

5. Yunparnulpa kalya-kalya-ku.

"M, m, m, m", yulaja-lpa. Yulajalparla watiki yaliki Jangala -ku.

6. Jangalarlu-jurlpa warluju yarda yarrpurnu kujalpa nyangu Nungarrayirliji.

7. Yanulpa, yanulpa kujalpa-rla jurnta paliya warluju Nungarrayi-kiji.

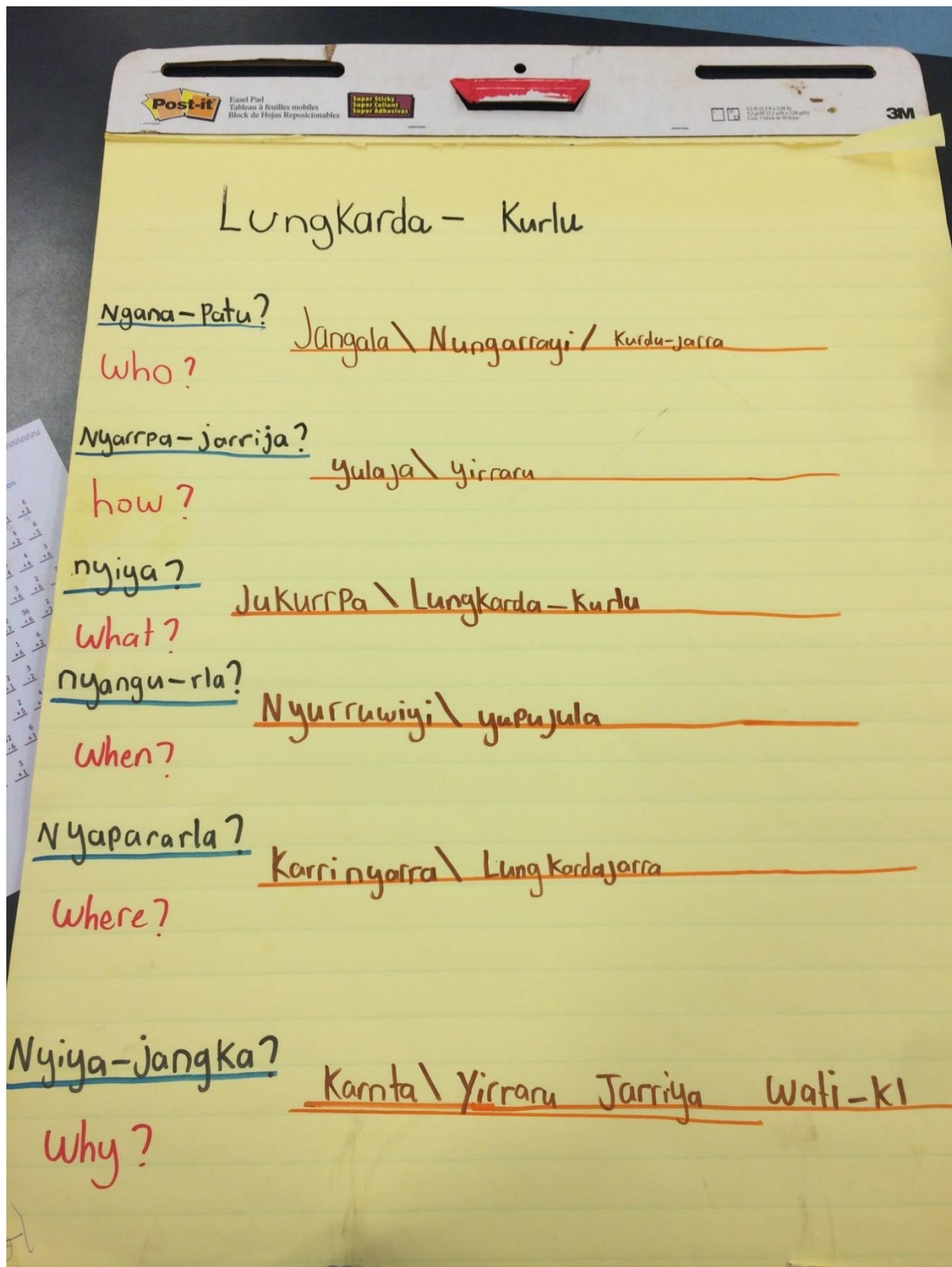
8. Warlu-julpa jangkaja-juku wurnturu.  
Ngulalpa yulaja-juku Jangala-kuju.

9. Yanu-rla Jangala-kuju manurla purdangirli karrija wirlinyi-rlarni.

<del>yulaja</del>	<del>warluju</del>	<del>wurnturu</del>
<del>Jangalaku</del>	<del>nyangu</del>	Yanurla



## Appendix L Question list for *Lungkarda-kurlu* 'Blue Tongue Lizard' unit of work

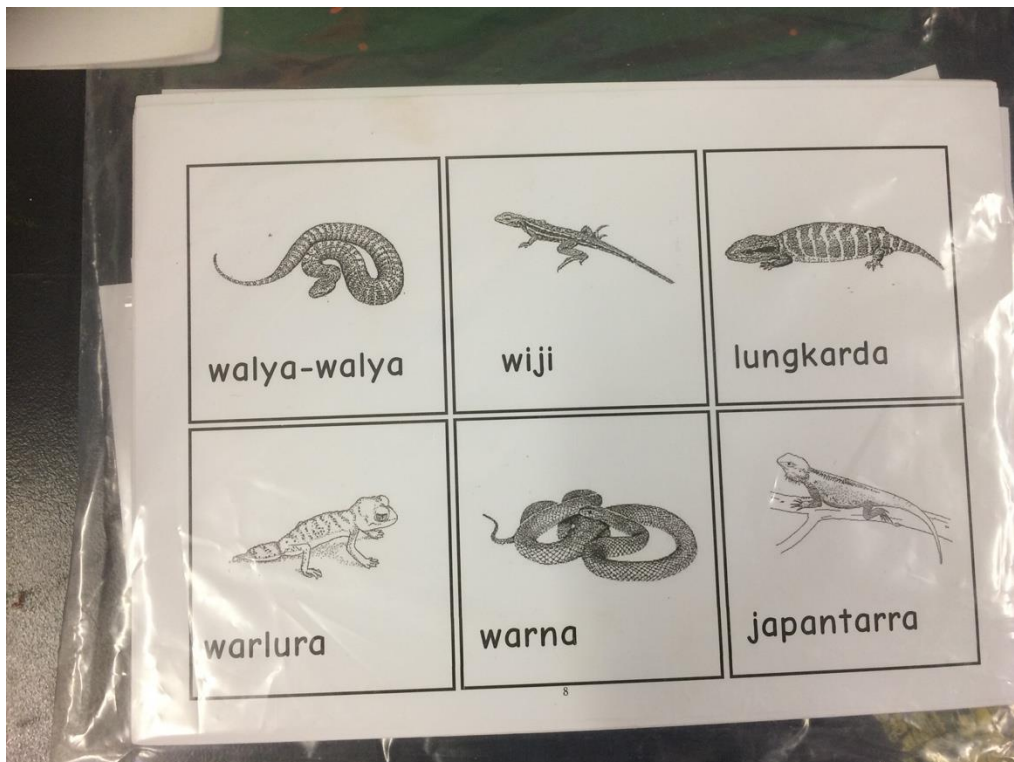
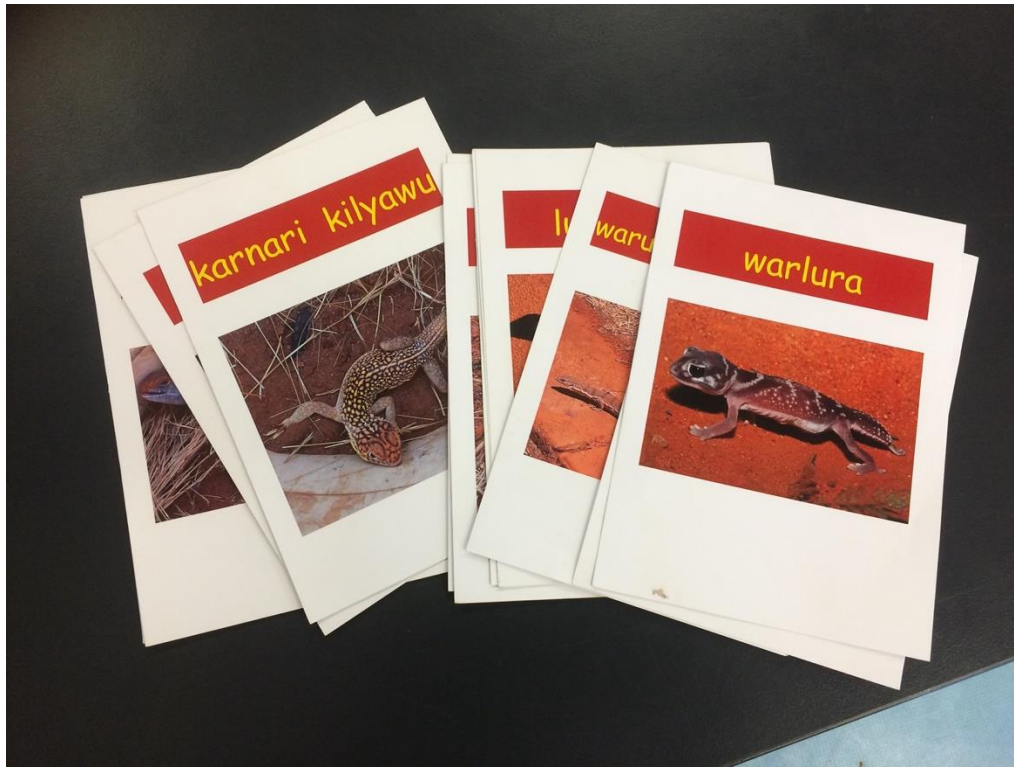


## Appendix M Sample Story Map

Yirdi: [REDACTED]

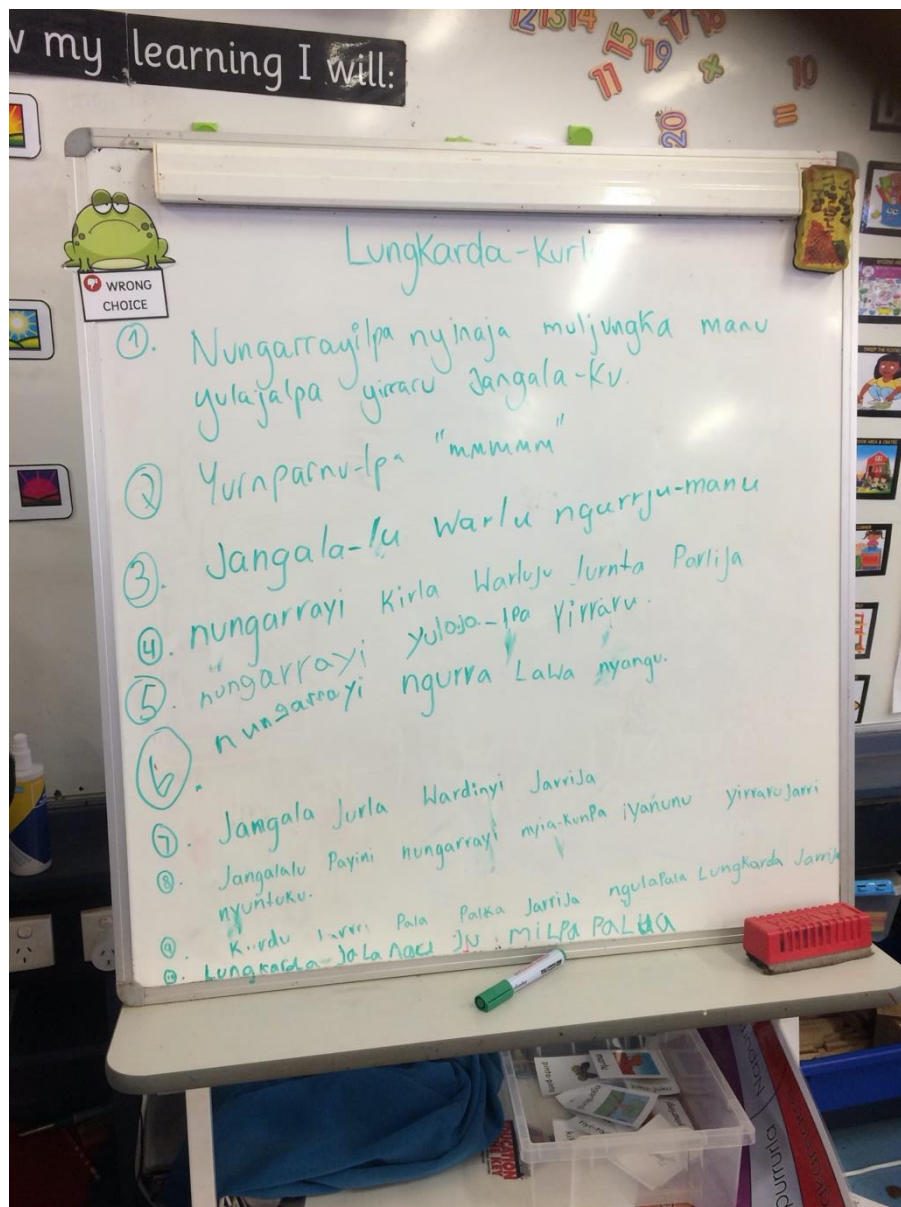
Pina yirrakalu yimi nyampu puku jangka  
Lungarda-kurlu

## Appendix N Sample flashcards and bingo games

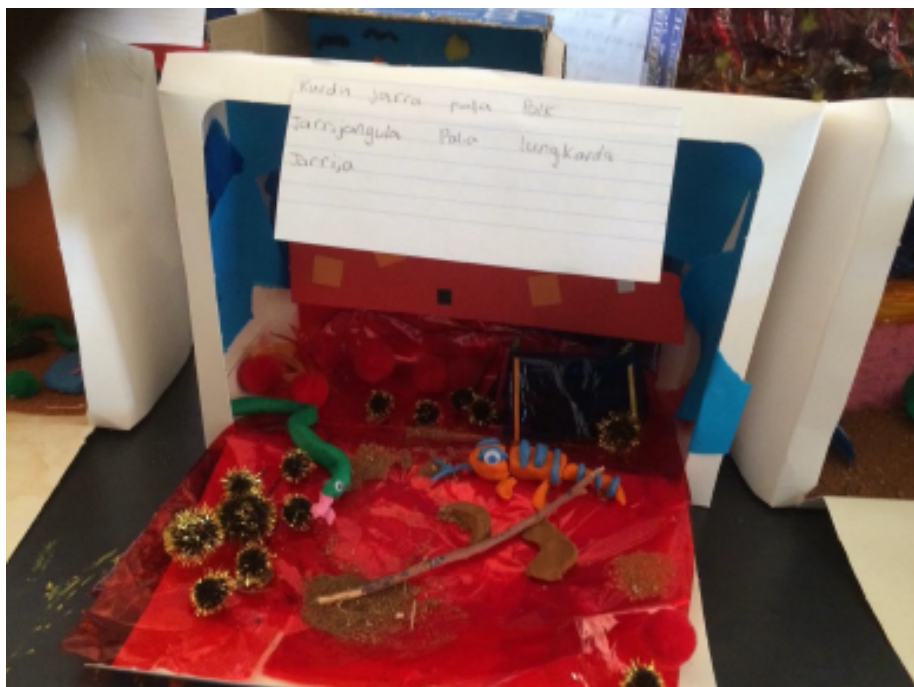


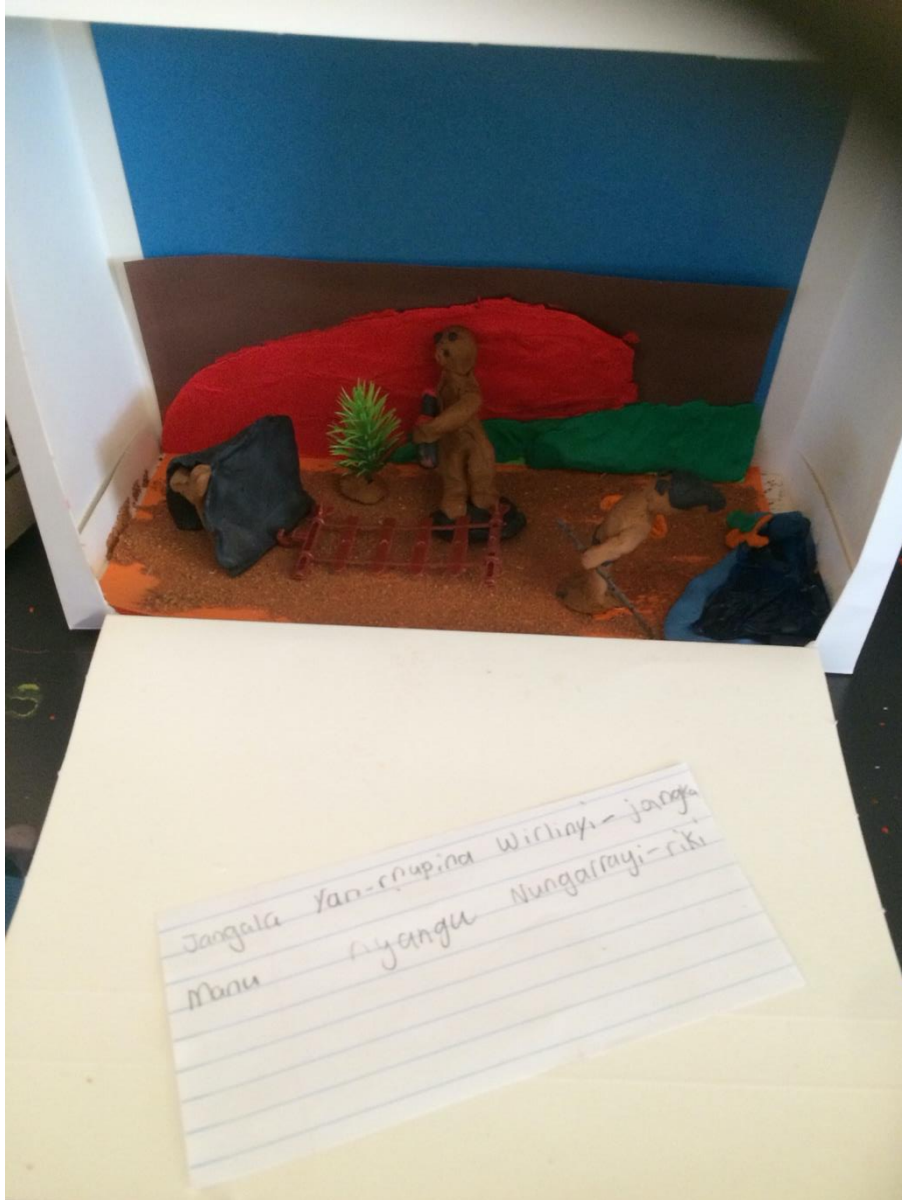


## Appendix O Sample group negotiated text



## Appendix P Children's dioramas





Jangala Yan-rupina Wirhaya-jacga  
Maau Ayangu Nungarayi-cibi

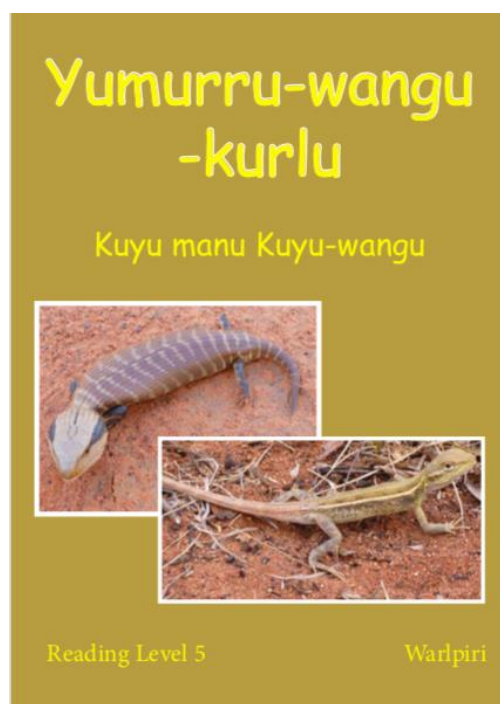


# Appendix Q Class Book

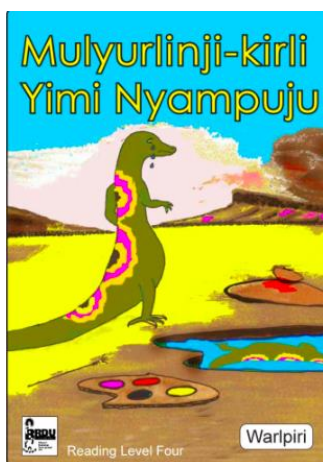


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## Appendix R *Yumurru-wangu-kurlu* 'About Reptiles'



## Appendix S *Mulyurlinji-kirli Yimi Nyampuju* 'Story about a perentie'



## Appendix T Students retelling *Lungkarda-kurlu* story

### K9 (Ronaldo)

- 1K9: *Nangala-rla yula-ja Jungarryi-ki yangka ya-nu wirlinyi*  
Nangala-DAT? cry-PST Jungarrayi-DAT ANAPH go-PST hunting  
'Nangala was crying for Jungarrayi who went hunting.'  
{ this student has mixed up the protagonists skin names }



- 2      *Nangala-rlu yunpa-rnu nyanu kalya-kalya-ku “mmm”*  
 Nangala- ERG sing-PST REFLEX right-skin-DAT “mmm”  
 ‘Nangala was singing for her husband “mmm”
- 3      *Parnka-nja yanu Nangala-ju warlu-kurlu*  
 run-INF go-PST Nangala-TOP fire-COM  
 ‘Running, Nangala ran along with the fire’
- 4      *lawa- jarri-ja jurnta-rla.*  
 without-INCHO-PST away-DAT  
 ‘it went out’
- 5      *Jangala-ju yanu-rnu pina wirlinyi-jangka, kuyu-kurlu*  
 Jangala-EUPH go-PST-hither back hunting-from meat-COM  
 ‘Jangala came back from hunting with meat’  
 {the student rectifies the earlier mistake, and corrects the skin name}
- 6      *wangka-ja-rla Jangala-ju no mm thing Jungarrayi-ki*  
 say-PST-DAT Jangala-TOP no mm thing Jungarrayi-DAT  
 ‘Jangala said to him no mmm thing Jungarrayi’  
 {student shows confusion over skin names }
- 7      *wangkaja-rla “nyiya-ku-npa yanu-rnu?”*  
 say-PAST-DAT what-DAT-2SG go-PST-hither  
 ‘(he) said to thim “what did you come for?”’
- 8      *Yanu-rnu-rna-ngku tumaji-rna-ngku yirraru- jarri-ja*  
 go-PST1SG.S-2SG.S too.much-1SG.S-2SG.O lonely-INCHO-PST  
 ‘I came to you because I was missing you a lot’
- 9      *Kurdu-jarra-lku-pala lungkarda jarri-ja-lku, yeah. Karrinyarra-rla.*  
 Kid-two-after-2DU blue.tongue become-PST-after yeah Karrinyarra-LOC  
 ‘After that two kids then became blue tongue lizards, yeah. At Karrinyarra.

**K10 (Sims)**

- 1 K10: *Nungarrayi-rla yula-ja Jangala-ku.*  
*Nungarrayi-DAT cry-PST Jangala-DAT*  
 ‘Nungarrayi was crying for Jangala
- 2      *Jangala-ngu warlu purra-ja eh lawa...Nangala-ngu*  
 Jangala-ERG fire burn-PST eh no Nangala-ERG  
 ‘Jangala had a fire going eh no Nangala’
- 3      *Nungarrayi-rli Nangala-ngu Jangala-ngu nah Nangala-ngu*  
 Nungarrayi-ERG Nangala-ERG Jangala-ERG nah Nangala-ERG  
 ‘Nungarrayi Nangala Jalanala nah Nangala’

- 
- 4        *Nangala-ngu nah Nangala-ngu nya-ngu warlu*  
 Nangala-ERG nah Nangala-ERG see-PST fire  
 ‘Nangala nah Nangala saw a fire’
- 5        *parnka-nja pa:::rnka-nja ya-nu.*  
 run-INF run-INF go-PST  
 ‘running nah running she went’
- 6        *Nangala-ju and xxx lawa-jarri-ja-rla warlu*  
 Nangala-TOP and no-INCHO-PST-DAT fire  
 ‘That Nangala and xxx the fire went out on her’
- 7        *Lawa-jarri-ja jurnta-rla warlu... warlu*  
 no-INCHO-PST away-DAT fire ... fire  
 ‘it went out, it went out, that fire.. the fire’
- 8        *yula-nja-lpa janka-ja Nangala-ngu-lpa nyangu-juk warlu.*  
 cry-INF-PST burn-PST Nangala-ERG-PST-IMPF see-PST-still fire  
 ‘Crying she was making a fire, Nangala was still looking at the fire’
- 9        *Jangala ya-nu wirlinji Jakamarra-ku Jakamarra*  
 Jangala go-PST hunting Jakamarra-DAT Jakamarra  
 ‘Jangala went hunting. For Jakamarra, Jakamarra’
- 10       *Jakamarra yanu-rnu wirlinyi-jangka nyangu Nungarrayi.*  
 Jakamarra came hunting-from saw Nungarrayi  
 Jakamarra returned from hunting and saw Nungarrayi  
 {he is suddenly unsure of the protagonist’s skin name}
- 11       *annn wangka-ja-rla, “nyiya-ku-mpa yanu-rnu?”*  
 and say-PST-DAT “what-DAT-2SG come-hither  
 ‘and he said to her, “what have you come here for?”’
- 12       *an Nungarrayi, Nungarrayi wangkaja*  
 and Nungarrayi, Nungarrayi say-PST  
 ‘and Nungarrayi, Nungarrayi said’
- 13       *“ya-nu-rna nyuntu- nah ya-nu-rna*  
 come-PST-1SG. You -nah come-PST-1SG  
 ‘I came [for] you- nah I came’
- 14       *Yanu-rna nyuntu-kurlu ahh yanu-rna nyuntu-ku, yirraru*  
 came-1SG you-COM ahh came-1SG you-DAT lonely  
 ‘I came with you ahh I came for you, [I was] lonely’
- 15       *Ngula-jangka-ju kurdu-jarra pala palka-jarri-ja.*  
 that-after-TOP child-two-2DU manifest-INCHO-PST  
 ‘and after that two children were born’

- 16 *Kurdu-jarra-pala palka jarri-ja*  
child-two-2DU manifest-INCHO-PST  
'two children were born'
- 17 *manu lungkarda jarri-ja pala.*  
and blue tongue manifest-PST-2DU  
'And both became blue tongue lizards'
- 18 *an lungkarda-kurlu-ju milpa yalyu-nah yalyu-yalyu*  
And blue tongue-COM-TOP eye blood nah blood-redup  
'and the blue tongue lizards' eyes were bleeding'
- 19 *Ngula-juku*  
that-still  
'the end'

### K17 (Williams)

- 1 K17: *Nungarrayi ka nyinami warlu-nga yujuku-rla.*  
Nungarrayi 3PRES sit-NPST fire-LOC humpy-LOC  
'Nungarrayi is sitting by the fire, by the humpy'
- 2 *an Nungarrayi Nungarrayi-ki-rla warlu jurnta-lawa-jarri-ja.*  
And Nungarrayi Nungarrayi-DAT fire away-absence-INCHO-PST  
'and Nungarrayi the fire went out on Nungarrayi'
- 3 *Nungarrayi-ng ka nganayi-ma-ni warlu.*  
Nungarrayi-ERG 3PRES do-CAUSE-NPST fire  
Nungarrayi is doing something to the fire.
- 4 *Jangala ka yaninjaani<sup>86</sup> marlu-ku.*  
Jangala 3PRES go.Impf kangaroo-DAT  
'Jangala is going to get kangaroo.'
- 5 *Jangala-ngku pajirni marlu.*  
Jangala-ERG cut-NPST kangaroo  
'Jangala will cut the kangaroo.'
- 6 *Jangala ka yaninjarni kurlarda-kurl, parraja-kurl*  
Jangala 3PRES go-IMPf spear-COM coolamon-COM  
'Jangala is going with his spear and coolamon'

<sup>86</sup> This is a reduced form of *yaninja-yani*

- 
- 7        *Jangala ka    yanjarni kapala    karri-nja-wana.*  
 Jangala 3PRES go.Impf 3DU.S        stand-mpf-by  
 ‘Jangala comes and the two are standing side by side’
- 8        *Jangala and Nungarrayi mayi?*  
 Jangala and Nungarrayi INTERR  
 ‘Is it Jangala and Nungarrayi?’
- 9        *Jangala and Nungarrayi kapala nyinami mulju-ngka. Karrinyarra-rla*  
 Jangala and Nungarrayi 3DU.3SG sit-NPST soakage-LOC Karrinyarra-LOC  
 ‘Jangala and Nungarray are sitting at the soakage. At Karrinyarra.’
- 10       *Jangala and Nungarrayi kurdu palka-jarri-ja-lku-lu-palangu*  
 Jangala and Nungarrayi child become-INCHO-PST-then-DU-DU.S  
 ‘Jangala and Nungarrayi two babies were born to the two of them’
- 11       *an lungkarda-jarri-ja    pala*  
 and blue tongue-INCHO-PST DU  
 ‘and both became blue tongue lizards’

## Appendix U Glossed longer examples from the thesis body

(8.6)

- 1 WT3: *nyanyi    kanpalu? Yunparnu-lpa kalya-kalya-ku “mm mm” yulajalpa.*  
 see-NPST PRES2PL sing-PSTImpf rightskin-DAT mm mm cry-PSTImpf  
 ‘Can you all see? She was singing for her husband “mm mm” and crying’
- 2        *Yula-jalpa-rla    wati-ki    yali-ki    Jangala-ku. Nyanyi ka-npalu?*  
 cry-PSTImpf-DAT man-DAT that-DAT Jangala-DAT see-NPST PRES-2PL  
 ‘She was crying for the man, Jangala. Can you all see?’
- 3        *Nungarrayi an    nyampu Jangala. Mmm kurdu-kurdu ngurrju.*  
 Nungarrayi and this    Jangala. Mmm child-redup good  
 ‘Nungarrayi and this is Jangala. Mmm kids, good.’
- 4        *Jangala-rlu-ju-lpa?                  warlu-ju    yarda yarrpu-rnu kuja-lpa*  
 Jangala-ERG-TOP-PSTImpf fire-TOP more burn-PST thus-after  
 ‘Jangala was lighting another fire when’
- 5        *nya-ngu Nungarrayi-rli-lki. Nyanyi ka-npalu? Yanu-lpa yanu-lpa*  
 see-PST Nungarrayi-ERG-then see-NPST PRES2PL go-PSTImpf go-PSTImpf  
 ‘Nungarrayi saw him. Can you all see? She went and went’
- 6        *kuja-lpa-rla jurnta-pali-ja warlu-ju    Nungarrayi-ki-ji.*  
 thus-PSTImpf-DAT go.out-PST fire-TOP Nungarrayi-DAT-TOP  
 ‘the fire went out on Nungarrayi’

- 7        *Warlu-ju-lpa            janka-ja-juku wurnturu*  
fire-TOP-PSTImpf burn-PST-still far.away  
'The fire was burning still far away'
- 8        *Nyanyi-kanpalu? wurnturu jankam ka angka?*  
see-PRES2PL far.away burn-NPST INTERR  
'Can you all see? It is burning far away, isn't it?'
- 9        *Ngulalpa yula-ja-juku Jangala-ku-ju.        Nyanyi kanpalu?*  
PSTImpf cry-PST-still Jangala-DAT-TOP see-NPST PRES2PL  
'She was still crying for that Jangala. Can you all see?'
- 10       *Nungarrayi ka yulami?            Jangala nyanyi ka tumachi*  
Nungarrayi 3PRES cry-NPST Jangala see 3PRES too.much  
'Nungarrayi is crying? she is seeing Jangala '
- 11       *wurnturu-nyayirni angka? Yanu-rla Jangala-ku-ju            manu-rla*  
far-very INTERR go-PSTImpf-DAT Jangala-DAT-TOP and-DAT  
'too far away, right? She went to see Jangala but found that Jangala'
- 12       *purdangirli karrija wirlinyi-rlarni.        Nyanyi kanpalu? Nungarrayi*  
behind stand-PST. hunting-gone see PRES2PL Nungarrayi  
'had gone hunting. Can you see? Nungarrayi'
- 13       *warrirni ka-rla wirlinyi-rlarni.        Jangala ya-nu-rnu ngurra-kurra*  
search-NPST PRES3SG-DAT hunting-gone Jangala go-PST-hither home-ALL  
is looking for him while he is gone hunting. Jangala came home'
- 14       *ngula nya-ngu Nungarrayi-lki,manu-rla wardinyi-jarri-ja karnta-ku-ju.*  
that.one see-PST Nungarrayi-then and-DAT happy-INCHO-PST woman-DAT-TOP  
'he saw Nungarrayi then and became very happy because of that woman'
- 15       *Nyanyi kanpalu? Nyampu-rla Jangala-ju nyampu-rla purdangirli*  
see-NPST PRES2PL this-LOC Jangala-TOP this-LOC behind  
'Can you all see? Here is Jangala and here behind is Nungarrayi '
- 16       *Nungarrayi-ji. Ngurra-ngka-lk. Jangala-ju-rla wangkaja "Yuwa*  
Nungarrayi-TOP home-LOC-then Jangala-TOP-DAT say-PST hey  
'Nungarrayi at home and then Jangala said to her, " yes"'
- 17       *nyiya-ku-mpa yanurnu?' Nungarrayi-ji wangka-ja*  
what-DAT-2SG go-PST-hither Nungarrayi-top say-PST  
"what did you come for" Nungarrayi said,'
- 18       *"Nyuntu-ku-rna-ngku ya-nu-rnu warlu nyan-ja-rla*  
you-DAT-1SGS-2SG.O go-PST-hither fire see-PST-LOC  
'I came for you because I saw the fire you burned'

- 19 *yirraru manu-mpa-ju. Yanu-pala wardinyi-lki manu-pala nyinaja*  
homesick make-2SG-TOP went-DU happy-then and-DU be-PST  
'you made me feel homesick' The two then went happily and lived'
- 20 *tarnnga Karrinyarra-rla ngapa-ngka. Nyarrpara-rla Karrinyarra-ju*  
long.time Karrinyarra-LOC water-LOC where-LOC Karrinyarra-TOP  
'a long time at Karrinyarra at the waterhole Where is Karrinyarra'
- 21 *kurdu-kurdu? Kuja, kurlirra.*  
child-redup thus south  
'kids? this way, south'
- 22 K1: *Nyarrpa? Karrinyarra?*  
What karrinyarra  
'What? Karrinyarra?' {points towards the south}
- 23 WT3: *Kuja! Kurlirra. Ngana-patu-lpa-lu ya-nu nyurru-wiyi-j?*  
thus south. who-3PL-PSTImpf-PL.S go-PST already-first-TOP  
'Yes that way, South. Who of you went there a long time ago?'
- 24 *Ya-nu-npalu ole-lot ngalipa class.*  
Go-PST-2PL whole.lot 1PL.INCL class  
'You all went there from our class.'

(WT3 16.08.2018, 07:14-08:44)

(8.18)

- 1 E1: *nyampu-wiyi nyampu-rla kuja nganturnu. Well ampu-ju wita nya-ngu, ngula yanu*  
this-first this-PST thus build-PST well this-TOP little see-PST this go-PST  
'first it built the hill here. Well it saw this small one, then it headed '
- 2 *karlarra lku na. Karrku-kurra-lku. Nyampu-rla puta ngantu-rnu. Kuja-rni ya-nu-rnu*  
west-then now karrku-ALL-then this-LOC try build-PST thus-hither go-PST-hither  
'west then and to Karrku after that. It tried to build it here but failed and came'
- 3 *nganayi-ji Warlawurru kakarra yanu-rnu.*  
ANAPH-TOP wedge.tailed.eagle east go-PST-hither  
'that wedge tailed eagle came towards the east'
- 4 E2: *nyampu-ju nganayi kinki nyampu kurdu-kurdu. Kuja-rni-nawu ya-nu-rnu*  
that-TOP. ANAPH monster that child-redup thus-hither-SPEC go-PST-hither  
'that is a monster, kids. It came exactly this way'
- 5 *Warlawurru-ju. Warlawurru ngula-ju. Nyampu-ju kinki. Purda-nyangka-lu.*  
wedge.tailed.eagle-TOP wedge.tailed.eagle that-TOP this-TOP monster listen-IMP-PL  
'the wedge tailed eagle this monster, are you all listening?'
- 6 *yarriri-yarriri ngula yirdi nyampu-ju. Purlka-pardu ka nyina ngula-ngka-ju.*

- ochre-redup. this word that-TOP old.person-DIM 3PRES sit-NPST there-LOC-TOP  
'this word is yarriri-yarriri this is. The old person sits there'
- 7 *Nyampu-ngurlu kinki! Kapi nyampu-rla ngurra-ngka ngurrju-mantarla.*  
there-from monster FUT there-LOC. home-LOC good-make.IRR  
'from here the monster. It would have made a sleeping place. It put the ochre here.'
- 8 *Karrku nyampu-rla-ji yirra-rnu. Karrku yangka kanpa mani inya-rla?*  
karrku there-LOC-TOP put-PST  
'put Karrku there. Do you get that ochre from there?'
- 9 *Karrku-inya kalu mani karrku karlarra.*  
karrku this PRES-3PL get-NPST ochre west  
'Karrku ochre there they get ochre, west.'
- 10 *Nyampu-rla kapili mantarla karrku-ju. Lawa nyangu lani manu*  
here-LOC FUT.PL get-IRR ochre-TOP. NEG see-PST afraid and  
'here they would have got ochre (but didnt). It didn't see, and'
- 11 *Juurlpu-ngku. Jurlpu-ngku lani-ma-nu nyampu-jangka-ju.*  
bird-ERG bird -ERG frighten-CAUSE-PST this-from-TOP  
'the bird, the bird frightened him/her away from here'
- 12 *Yinya ya-nu Nyirrpi-kirra, yatijarra. Karrku inya karlarra.*  
here go Nyirrpi-towards north Karrku this west  
'it went that way, towards Nyirrpi, north. Karrku is west'
- 13 *Yinya-kurra ya-nu. Nyampu-jangka pangkarlangu yanu*  
here-ALL go-PST this-from monster go-PST  
it went there from here, the monster went
- 14 *karlarra-lku yangka jaka ka ngunami karlarra-purda. Nyampu-wana-jangka*  
west-then ANAPH bottom 3PRES lie west-facing this-DIREC-from  
'west then and then its bottom is lying facing west, from this way'
- 15 *karrku- ngka kuja-purda yangka. Kurdu-kurdu Nyirrpi-wardingki-patu?*  
*Karrku-LOC thus-facing-ANAPH*  
'That way from Karrku. Kids from Nyirrpi?'
- 16 KK: Yuwayi! Yeah! Yeah!  
yes yeah yeah
- 17 E2: *yeah milya-pinyi kankulu*  
yeah know-NPST PRES2PL.O  
'yeah you all know this'
- 18 E1: *yangka karrku-ng kujakalu-nyanu mapa-rni.*  
ANAPH karrku-ERG COMP.PRES3-O-REFLEX smear-NPST  
'they would paint themselves up with karrku ochre'

- 
- 19            *Business time, kurdiji time, inya-na ngurrju-ma-nu*  
 business time ceremony time there now make-CAUSE PST  
 'business time, during ceremony      and that's how they did it'
- 20 E2:        *so yangka ngula-ngka ka nyina inside-i nyampu-jangka na*  
 so ANAPH this-LOC 3PRES be-NPST inside-EUPH this-from now  
 'so in here it lives inside and after this now'
- 21            *and cave-i            ngula karla            karrimi nuu-rna ngaju*  
 and cave-EUPH    this PRES-3DAT    stand-NST    no-1SG I  
 'and I haven't been in that cave'
- 22            *warrkarnu ngula-ngka Karrku-ngka lawa-juk(u) climb-PST*  
 there-LOC Karrku-LOC no-still  
 'climbed up there on Karrku, not yet'
- 23 E1:        *yuwayi*  
 'yes'
- {lines omitted}
- 28 E1:        *nyampu-ju purda-nyanyi ka-nku-ju-lu?*  
 this-TOP listen-NPST    PRES-2S-1O-PL.S  
 'This, are you listening to me?'
- 29 KK:        mmmm yes!
- 30 E1:        So, I got *jukurrpa* there too.  
 so I got my dreaming there too
- 31            *Nyampu-jangka parnkaja. Family ngaju-nyangu all there*  
 here-from            run-PST    family 1SG-POSS all there  
 'from there it ran my family all there'
- 32            *yuwayi Kintore-kurra he bin go up and down. nyampu jukurrpa*  
 yes Kintore-ALL he bin go up and down this dreaming  
 'yes towards Kintore he went up and down, this dreaming'
- 33            my grandfather bin show me *nyampu warringiyi*  
 my grandfather PST show me this grandfather  
 'my grandfather showed me this grandfather'
- 34            *an ngaju-ku-palangu-patulu yangka walku-jarri-ja.*  
 and 1SG-DAT-KIN-PL ANAPH      gone-INCHO-PST  
 'and my father's brothers are no more'
- 35            So I got my *jukurrpa* too.  
 'so I have my dreaming too'



- 36 E2:        *kurdu-kurdu ampu-j yirdi, yarriri-yarriri*  
child-redup this-TOP word yarriri-yarriri  
'kids, this word is *yarriri-yarriri* '
- 37 E1:        *an nyampu-ju jukurrpa is wardapi jukurrpa purda-nyanyi ka-nku-ju-lu?*  
and this-TOP dreaming is goanna dreaming listen-NPST PRES-2S-1O-PL.S  
'and this dreaming is goanna dreaming, are you mob listening?'
- 38 KK:        yeah

(Warlawurru jukurrpa E1&E2 01:13-04:06)