

Anangu Children's Language Workshop
Tjunguringanyi Kutjutu 'coming together as one'
Umuwa, April 30 – May 1 2018

The purpose of this workshop was to bring together diverse people working in Anangu children's language from education, other service providers, research, and the community. The first day of the workshop was dedicated to learning more about the different work everybody is doing and identifying common concerns and goals. The second day focused on discussing tools and resources and strategies for attaining the goals identified during the first day.

People attending were:

Narelda Adamson (Ernabella School)
Mark Ames (DECD)
Eric Brace (ALNF)
Rueben Burton (DECD)
Jude Crabtree (Nintintjaku Project)
Penny Cook (DECD)
Suzie Cottle (DECD)
Lucy Davidson (Melbourne Uni)
Rebecca Defina (Melbourne Uni)
Tapaya Edwards (Amata School)
Jenny Harbutt Philip (DECD)
Michelle Harvey (DECD)
Kathi Herrick (ALNF)
Leigh Hughes (DECD)
Carol Kenny (Ernabella community)
Makinti Minutjukur (DECD)
Rosie Nelson (Pipalyatjara School)
Jacqui Norton (preschool teacher – Pipalyatjara)
Carmel O'Shannessy (ANU)
Tjunkaya Tapaya (Ernabella community)
Angkuna Tjitayi (Ernabella community)
Katrina Tjitayi (DECD)
Umatji Tjitayi (DECD)
Eva Wells (Ernabella School)
Jill Wigglesworth (Melbourne Uni)
Sue Wilson (TAFE SA)
(26 attendees)

Day 1

Welcome and introduction to the workshop – Penny Cook and Rebecca Defina

The purposes of the workshop were to bring together a range of people who are working and/or living in the 'space' of language with young children, to hear from each other and share. Also to hear from and listen to Anangu about their thoughts, knowledge, wisdom, cautions and hopes in this arena.

Notable Strengths

Important to consider what the children bring to learning (Leigh)

Aṅangu kids skip a stage in mark marking developmental progress. They are remarkable. (Jude)

Katrina Tjitayi and others have already produced a wealth of thoughtful research e.g. heart of learning papers (Jude).

Our time is full time. It is really important to look at the resources that are developed by Aṅangu and the time spent by Aṅangu working in education. Aṅangu have been talking about this for a long time. (Rueben)

Below is the list of all ideals identified during the workshop.

Working together

Good strong relationships between Pīranpa staff, AEWs, students, and community

Aṅangu and Pīranpa working together, planning together, and listening together

Information can be shared at big meetings like today

School assemblies held in community (inclusive, involving all community)

Language, community workshop like Warlpiri example

Community involvement

Community language meetings to make decisions/collaborate

Art centre and school to work together

[Concern: Teacher and partnership capacity]

[Note: When we come together we can put the puzzle together. Only some can see there is something missing]

AEW-Pīranpa teacher

More equal balance as the teacher Aṅangu/Pīranpa

One to one Aṅangu and Pīranpa teacher ratio. Mixed pairs working together always

AEWs

More AEWs

Important for AEWs to have certificates that show training in language, Aṅangu domain, Family tree

Induction and mentoring

Mentor/teacher training for younger AEWs

Time for younger AEWs to learn from more experienced AEWs

A process of induction for AEWs

Pīranpa induction by Aṅangu with language courses

Pīranpa induction based on research delivered by Aṅangu

Regular professional learning for teachers delivered by Aṅangu

On the job teacher education – coaching and modelling

Everyday learning, room for flexibility

All teachers do the language course

Teachers need to understand privilege and honour

Language in school

First language before 2nd language

Language/oral language is the number 1 priority

Everything that is said in English by the Pīranpa teacher is also done in Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara

Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara posters around the school

Language certificate for kids

VET language certificate

VET enabling different ways of doing it, for instance Adelaide

AEWs assessing language

More opportunities for language lessons within school

More time spent teaching Pitjantjatjara like from kapati time to lunch or from lunch to home time

Strong language program early years to yr 12. AEWs lead all this work

Every school should have their own review about language, this would be done by AEWs with minimal assistance from Piranpas

Curriculum needs review involvement (e.g. Warlpiri)

Incorporation of language and culture across the curriculum, e.g. science of making spears and hunting

Books in language

Lots of language books

Make own books – strengthens language, culture, family and stories

Pitjantjatjara books available to take home at various places within the community e.g. art centre, youth centre, school

Senior students

Create a space where senior students can hang out outside of school environment

Create opportunities for senior students to go out bush

[Concern: Senior students have a lack of engagement and interest, these students are young men sometimes married men and school is no longer relevant (even though they are still on the list for school)]

Holiday programmes

Kungka nights to involve mingma to talk about iriti and teach skills

School holiday programme to connect to art centre and school. School holiday programme followed up on during term time. Connected to what children learn within school e.g. science, spear making, language

School holiday camping programmes e.g. to Wamikata and Itjinpiri

School holiday programme not just to do disco etc but also books, art, reading, learning from mingma and wati

General

Research that Anangu want, curriculum and learning in Anangu ways of knowing and doing

Knowledge experience and understanding

Follow in footsteps already laid down by Anangu leaders

In the community, Anangu and Piranpa ways are mixed but in the bush, it's just the Anangu. This makes it easier to learn

Day 2

Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances our meeting was delayed and many participants were not able to attend.

Resources

Department for Education

- There is support available through the bilingual preschool support scheme. This can be used to fund older people coming in to talk at the school. There are also funds available from the language maintenance program.
- Pinta pinta programme in Early years.
- Making videos of games in language in Indulkana and also starting to do this in Pukatja as a SACE subject.
- SACE Stage 1 and 2 Australian Languages

ALNF

- Cert IV in Early Language and Literacy
- Also finalising a Cert III course in literacy.

Jude

- She recommends WePublish, an app that can be used to very easily and quickly create small 8-page books from a single printed A3 page.
- She also recommends a comparison of child rearing practices between Anangu and Pīranpa as essential background for people working with children in the APY lands.

Rebecca

- Digital version of the Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara – English dictionary. Currently available as a searchable pdf. Soon to be published as a phone/tablet app as well.

Jill and Carmel

- Are planning on preparing an online course for people to learn more about Aboriginal languages in general, how to pronounce words, language acquisition, and bilingualism. This could be helpful for interested people in general, but also specifically as a professional development opportunity for teachers in the APY lands that can be accessed and completed from the lands.

Makinti

- She was struck by the saying that education is a powerful weapon to change the world and Sam Osborne once reminded her that she (and all Anangu) already have a powerful weapon, their language. Language is a powerful weapon, it holds the land. If you're focussing on a new direction (i.e. pursuing education) you have to take your old powerful weapon (i.e. language) with you.

Recommendations

At the end of this workshop, we identified several practical things that we could do which would work towards the identified goals.

Induction

Incoming Piranpa teachers could be assigned an AEW mentor to assist in their induction and introduce them to the community.

A more high-cost possibility would be for the whole induction of new teachers process to be conducted on the lands and for it to include a language course.

Official acknowledgement of country in language

Jacqui suggested PYEC could develop an acknowledgement of country in language for teachers to try to say so that students can see white teachers having a go just like we are asking them to do.

Books

Establish collections of wordless and Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara text books in central locations throughout communities, e.g. art centres, store, youth centres.

Repository of knowledge

An online repository to store documents, research papers and resources to facilitate access to the work that has already been done. Rebecca has set this up here

<https://unimelbcloud.sharepoint.com/teams/AnanguChildrensLanguage>

At the moment, this is hosted by the University of Melbourne and is by invitation only, all attendees have been sent an invitation and others can request access by emailing Rebecca.Defina@unimelb.edu.au. This was the easiest and cheapest option for now, but will be shifted to a publicly accessible location shortly.

Reference book

Suggestions were made to publish a reference for Anangu Children's language for communities. This would include Rebecca's research on how children learn Pitjantjatjara and chapters from educators, speech pathologists and others. This will be sketched out over the coming years and written at the conclusion of Rebecca's research project in 2020.

Anangu Language Committee

Establishment of a committee of Anangu to make decisions and advise service providers on issues of language. This committee would provide a reference body to collate information and guide individual efforts in this area.

Rebecca has passed on this request to the APY executive and it will be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

We thank everyone who made this workshop possible. If you have any questions you can contact us via email Penny.Cook110@schools.sa.edu.au or Rebecca.Defina@unimelb.edu.au.