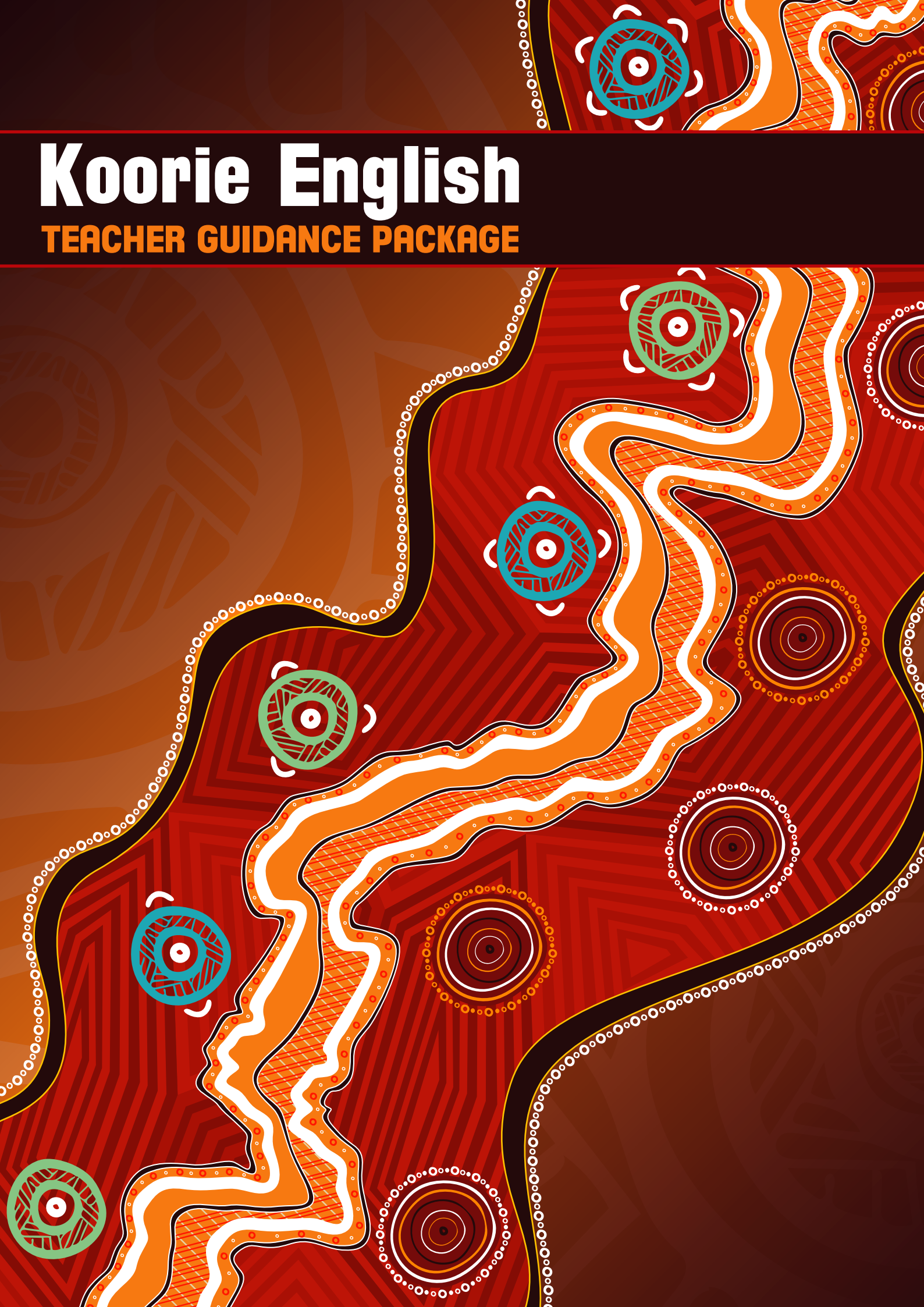


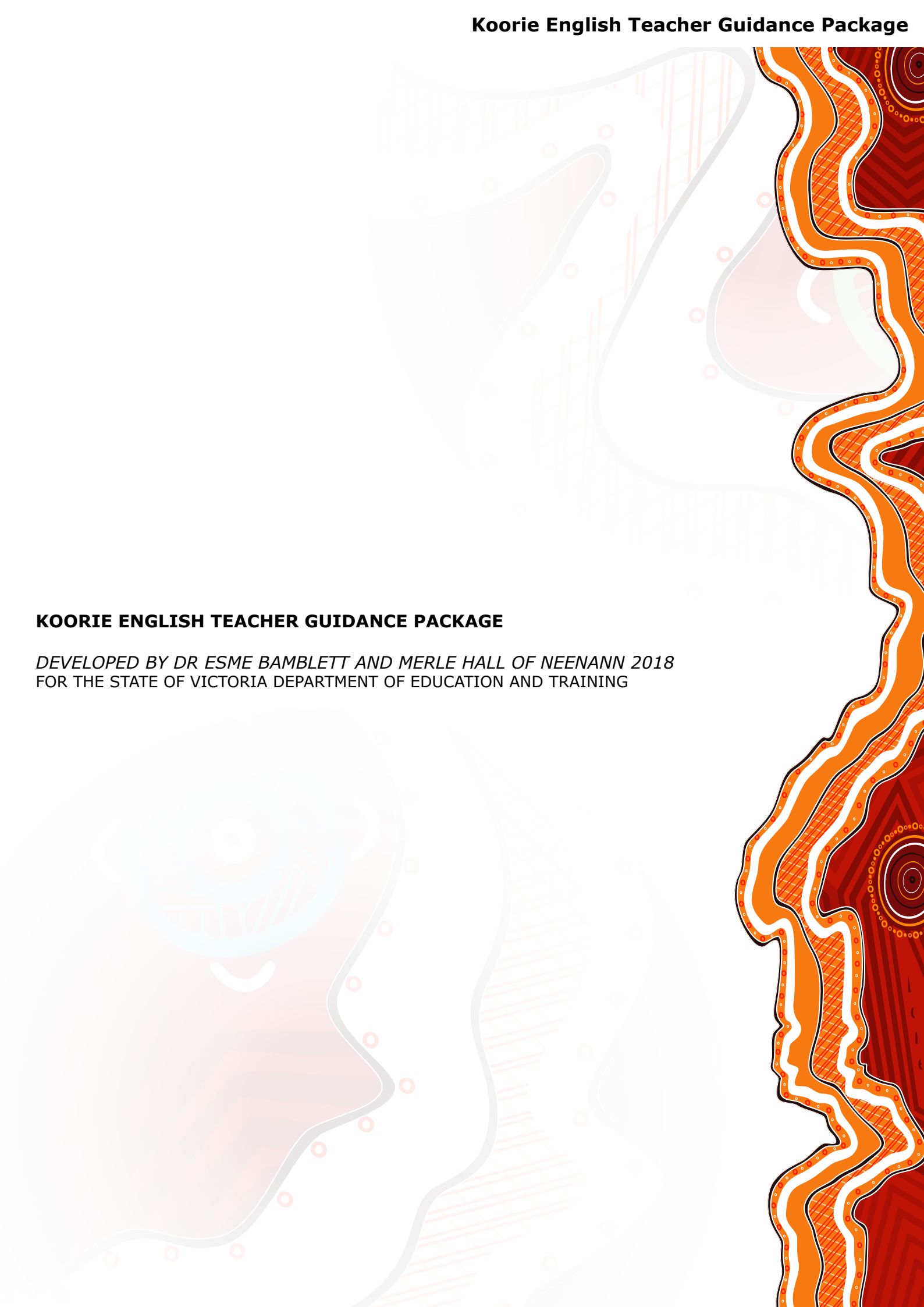
Koorie English

TEACHER GUIDANCE PACKAGE



KOORIE ENGLISH TEACHER GUIDANCE PACKAGE

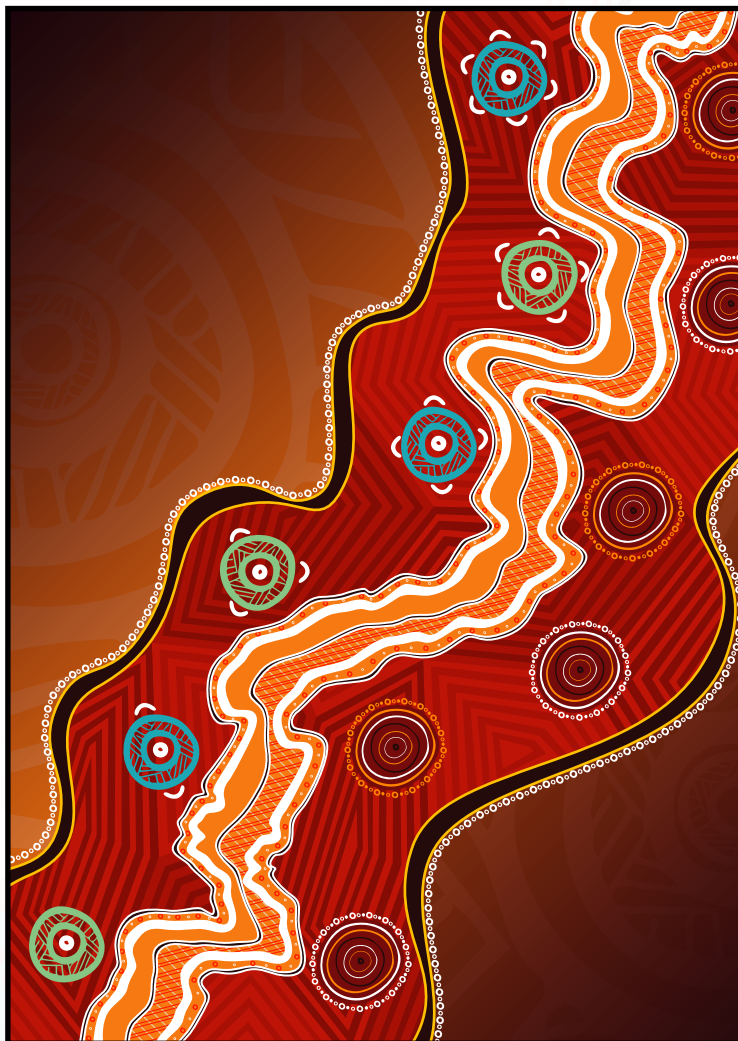
DEVELOPED BY DR ESME BAMBLETT AND MERLE HALL OF NEENANN 2018
FOR THE STATE OF VICTORIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING



About the artwork

It is a graphic representation of the Goulburn River which is described as the 'heart of Victoria'. The circles on the left side of the river represent the six steps in the sequence of learning that a Koorie student will take from speaking, thinking and writing in Koorie English to becoming proficient in code-switching to write Standard Australian English.

The circles on the right of the river represent the education communities that will be reached by this resource and the education process that teachers will undergo in learning about Koorie English.



About the artist

Gary Saunders is a proud Bangerang, Yorta Yorta, Wiradjuri and Dja Dja Wurrung man born and raised in Mooroopna, Victoria. He is a Graphic Designer and musician and has numerous works of art and graphics across Melbourne and Victoria.

Gary is currently the Manager of the Indigital Centre at the Aborigines Advancement League. Gary has previously worked at Fraynetwork Multimedia, the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association, the Indigital Centre and is a partner in a family business, Neenann.

Foreword

VAEAI advocates that all Koorie students must be equipped with the knowledge and ability to make informed linguistic choices. The recognition that Koorie English is a legitimate dialect of English used by some Aboriginal students in Victoria is important for the development of their literacy skills. VAEAI was involved in the 'Deadly Eh Cuz: Teaching Speakers of Koorie English' kit in 1996 because of the importance of acknowledging that for some Koorie students, English is a second language.

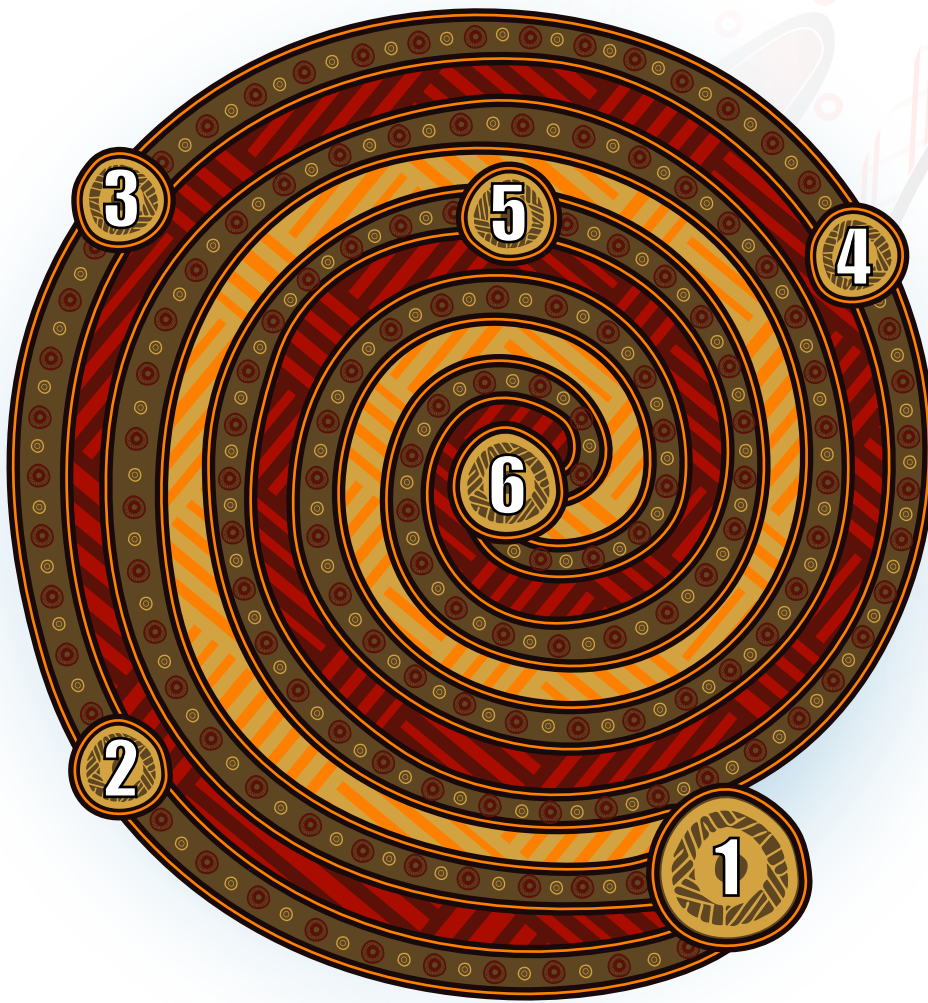
In the same way, VAEAI sees the Koorie English Teacher Guidance Package as contributing to better teaching strategies for Koorie students. The Package has been developed to inform teachers about Koorie English and give them tools to develop strategies that will assist them to improve the literacy standards of Koorie students, leading to better educational outcomes for them.

Koorie students who use Koorie English must be taught to code-switch and by using the Package, teachers will understand that for students who speak and write in Koorie English code-switching is a necessary skill that should be nurtured within the educational system.

It is also important that students are taught the differences between Koorie English and Standard Australian English, without devaluing either dialect because Koorie English is intrinsically linked to Koorie students when instilled with a sense of cultural pride and general confidence will be able to effectively switch between dialects depending on context, purpose and audience. It is expected that the Koorie English Teacher Guidance Package will achieve this.

Geraldine Atkinson
President
VAEAI

Possible Sequence in Literacy Development



This diagram is a graphic illustration adapted from the sequence of literacy development by Rosie McKenry from the 'Deadly Eh Cuz!' kit. It outlined 6 steps:

1. Awareness of Koorie English as a dialect of English
2. Awareness that Koorie English is different from Standard Australian English
3. Awareness that Koorie English is valued by teachers.
4. Confidence to write in and decode spoken Koorie English
5. Development of Standard Australian English skills
6. Ability to choose between Koorie English and Standard Australian English according to the audience and purpose.

Throughout this resource the terms Koorie and Aboriginal are inclusive of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Throughout this resource, the terms 'Aboriginal English' and 'Koorie English' are interchangeable. Aboriginal English refers to a dialect of English spoken by Aboriginal people in other parts of Australia, while Koorie English refers to the dialect of English spoken by Aboriginal people in Victoria and parts of NSW.

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1. About this resource

The Koorie English Teacher Guidance Package is an initiative under the Victorian Government's Education State Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, released (2017), which includes a commitment to make available resources to support the teaching of speakers of Koorie English, an essential step in working towards the vision set out in Marrung - Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026:

"Victoria will be a State where the rich and thriving culture, knowledge and experience of our First Nations peoples are celebrated by all Victorians; where our universal service systems are inclusive, responsive and respectful of Koorie people at every stage of their learning and development journey; and where every Koorie person achieves their potential, succeeds in life and feels strong in their cultural identity."

See more about Marrung at www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/aboriginal/marrung_AboriginalEducationPlan2016-2026

The Koorie English Teacher Guidance Package provides information to support teachers of Koorie English speakers to develop strong literacy skills whilst reinforcing their cultural identity. This package has been developed based on recommendations from the 1994 workshop kit 'Deadly 'Eh Cuz! - Teaching Speakers of Koorie English', a 2013 report by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI), Koorie English and Code-Switching in Schools, a review of current research, and consultations with Koorie communities and teachers.

Consultations were conducted in Ballarat, Morwell, Shepparton, Melbourne and Bendigo where there are sizable Koorie communities and where Koorie English is a commonly used dialect. Consultation involved teachers, Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group members, Koorie Education Support Officers and parents.

This package provides advice to teachers on:

- a) How to recognise and value Koorie English as an important community dialect linked to cultural identity and wellbeing; and
- b) How to use established English as an Additional Language (EAL) teaching strategies to develop students' understanding of the differences between Koorie English and Standard Australian English, as well as enhancing their ability to confidently 'code-switch' when speaking and writing, depending on purpose and audience.

Key ideas

Teachers should not feel they aren't supporting Koorie students to meet Victorian curriculum standards by incorporating Koorie English and code-switching into the classroom literacy program.

During consultations for this resource, many teachers said they were unaware that Koorie English is a legitimate dialect or that it can impact on the learning of Aboriginal students. Many teachers reflected that they recognised when students speak Koorie English, but that they previously thought it was 'bad English' and treated it as such. Teachers shared that they found the consultation workshops very worthwhile because they gained an understanding of Koorie English as a dialect.

Teachers observed that students speak Koorie English more when they are interacting with each other. This demonstrates that many Koorie students develop their own code-switching strategies which can be explicitly built on in the classroom to support their literacy development. Teachers also said they noticed many Koorie students write in Koorie English.

Consultations revealed that community members also regarded Koorie English as sub-standard. Parents spoke about Koorie English being constantly corrected and feeling that their community language is inadequate.

This resource explores how, rather than correcting speakers of Koorie English, teachers need to create a culturally supportive environment and explicitly teach these students to understand the features of both their community dialect and Standard Australian English, and to effectively code-switch between the two according to their audience and the purpose of the communication. This requires students to develop their metalinguistic awareness, which can be developed through the same pedagogical approaches used to teach English as an Additional Language (EAL).

In fact, studies have shown there is a direct correlation between recognising and valuing Koorie English and success in the schooling system. Teachers involved in the earlier 'Deadly 'Eh Cuz! Teaching Speakers of Koorie English' action research found that when they recognised Koorie English as a dialect, they were able to develop strategies that enabled them to increase the successful learning of literacy by the Koorie students.

This package references parts of the "The Deadly, Eh Cuz! Action Research" kit written in 1996 by Rosemary McKenry for the Goulburn Valley Aboriginal Education Consultative Group that supported improved practice in many schools at the time it was developed. However, with changes in personnel, awareness of Koorie English as a consideration for teachers has since declined, prompting a call for the advice to be updated and promoted to schools again in the form of the Koorie English Teacher Guidance Package.

2. Background

The Education State Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, released in June 2017, included a commitment to make available Koorie English resources during 2018. The Koorie English Teacher Guidance Package project supports the vision set out in Marrung - Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026:

“Victoria will be a State where the rich and thriving culture, knowledge and experience of our First Nations peoples are celebrated by all Victorians; where our universal service systems are inclusive, responsive and respectful of Koorie people at every stage of their learning and development journey; and where every Koorie person achieves their potential, succeeds in life and feels strong in their cultural identity.” (p.10)

The Package provides advice to teachers on:

How to recognise and value Koorie English as an important community dialect linked to cultural identity and wellbeing; and

How to develop students’ understanding of the differences between Koorie English and Standard Australian English (SAE), as well as enhancing their ability to confidently ‘code-switch’ when speaking and writing, depending on purpose and audience.



This package is based on recommendations from the 1994 ‘Deadly Eh, Cuz! Teaching Speakers of Koorie English’ workshop kit developed for Victorian teachers, the 2013 report by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI), Koorie English and Code-Switching in Schools, current research and consultations with Koorie communities and teachers.

The Deadly Eh, Cuz! Teaching Speakers of Koorie English' kit was produced as a Train the Trainer Kit for teachers and Koorie educators with the following aims:

- To raise the awareness of mainstream teachers-primary, secondary and tertiary-to the reality of Koorie English being the first language of many Koorie students, such language being closely connected to Koorie culture.
- To support teachers and Koorie Educators who are looking for ways to help Koorie students achieve.
- To bring about the necessary changes to policy and classroom teaching strategies so that programs more adequately cater for the needs of Koorie students.
- To collect local stories from students and Koorie Elders so that these can be published as part of the reading material used in education.



To make teachers and Koorie educators aware of available curriculum documents...and to use these documents to investigate how to develop the literacy standards of Koorie and non-Koorie students.

The expected outcomes of the Kit included that Koorie students will improve their Standard Australian English (SAE) literacy and will achieve academic success, teachers and administrators will become increasingly aware of Koorie English in relation to curriculum, teachers and students will become aware of the difference between

Standard Australian English and Koorie English, Koorie students will have a choice of when they choose to speak and write Koorie English and SAE and Teachers will have a variety of strategies and activities to teach Koorie students.

Recommendations from the kit included that students need to be taught that SAE is different to their home dialect and made aware of the situations they need to use it; teachers should provide language training to develop the awareness of different dialects and to be sensitive to the fact that the language of the students is connected to their culture; SAE should not be presented as superior to KE, but rather a different dialect; Koorie English should be incorporated into the curriculum; students should be taught how to link text to what they already know; and, teachers need Professional Development to understand Koorie English and how to teach Koorie English speakers.



3. What is Koorie English?

Aboriginal languages in Victoria have been decimated as an impact of historical policies and practices on Aboriginal people. When Aboriginal people were placed on missions and reserves they were placed with other Aboriginal people who spoke different languages and therefore they could not understand each other. They were not allowed to speak their traditional languages and were forced to learn English. As a result, a dialect of English emerged called Aboriginal/Koorie English. Koorie English is a dialect of English that contains cultural values, concepts and mores of Aboriginal culture, some traditional words, and non-verbal communication. It is the 'mother tongue' of Koorie students, and if recognised and valued as a dialect of English, shows students that their culture is valued.

3.1 What the Literature Says

The difference between a language and a dialect

In order to understand a dialect, we have to understand the difference between a language and a dialect. Several articles have been written about languages and dialects of languages. One of these website articles by Nordquist, R, (2018) defines a dialect as "... a regional or social variety of a language distinguished by pronunciation, grammar and/or vocabulary...The term dialect is often used to characterize a way of speaking that differs from the standard variety of the language."

On the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority (VCAA) website, it states that there are two different ways to view language, the community perspective and the linguistic perspective. "From a community perspective, a language is identified with a particular area of land and group of people who traditionally own or belong to that land. In this view, around 38 languages are identified in Victoria, many of which are further divided according to clan groups and their traditional lands. While many words are shared between groups of Languages identified in this way, there are important differences as well, which may also be reflected in choices such as spelling. From a linguistic perspective, a language is identified by a distinctive set of core vocabulary and elements of grammar. This view focuses on which languages form part of the same group or family, sharing words and grammar".

In his article on the Atlanta website, "the Difference between a language and a dialect" Mcwhorter (2016) questions if there is any difference between a language and a dialect. His view is that there is not much difference and suggests that "a language is a dialect with an army and a navy. The very fact that "language" and "dialect" persist as separate concepts implies that linguists can make tidy distinctions for speech varieties worldwide. But in fact, there is no objective difference between the two: Any attempt you make to impose that kind of order on reality falls apart in the face of real evidence." He further says that "English tempts one with a tidy dialect-language distinction based on "intelligibility": If you can understand it without training, it's a dialect of your own language; if you can't, it's a different language" (p.1).

In the article, 'Dialect and language: are they similar? Are they majorly different' Morehouse (2017) on the LinguaCore website also questions the difference between a dialect and a language and conclude that "[A] dialect is essentially a language that has not been awarded the prestigious title of a language. What's the difference between a dialect and language? Languages are afforded more prestige than a dialect because they are given a title, a nation and a canon of literature that give it its elite status as a language. But is a dialect not a language? A 'code' is a linguistic system used for communication. Languages and dialects are codes. Linguists tend to define a language as the standardized code used in spoken and written form, whereas dialects are spoken vernacular codes without a standardized written system. Despite the different varieties of English spoken throughout the English-speaking world, there is a standardized written form of the language that can be understood by all who are literate in the language"

Another interesting point he makes is that dialects can become languages and he cites the examples of French, Spanish and Italian that were dialects of Latin but are now languages.

Interlanguage

There is a difference between 'interlanguage' and dialect. Interlanguage is transitional as it is a non-standard form of a language that a learner passes through on the way to learning competence in the language.

This is not the case with a dialect. A dialect speaker may be bilingual and speak the dialect on occasion, but this is a matter of choice. The dialect is usually the speaker's first language, the language spoken at home, so there is an emotive element closely connected to a sense of identity. Because communication is constantly being achieved by interlanguage speakers some continue to use this form of language in the long term, not realising that the way they speak does not have the same linguistic patterns as the standard language.

Those with whom the student identifies may understand and use a particular non-standard dialect, but may not realise that this dialect is not necessarily the language of success in the wider community. This may be caused by ignorance, a strong sense of identity, or a blending of the two. Dialect and interlanguage speakers may not have the ability to alter speech according to context.

Koorie English as a Dialect of English

Aboriginal/Koorie English is a dialect of English that is spoken by Aboriginal people throughout Australia. It has the features of a dialect spoken by a specific group in society including accent, differences, in grammatical structure, vocabulary, and has a marker of geographical origin.

Williams (1988) and Hansen, W. (1998) agree that Aboriginal English is a dialectal form of English. Williams states that it "reflects [Aboriginal] language and culture..." The Department of Education, Western Australia also state that "[O]nce discredited as a pidgin language, Aboriginal Language is now considered a variety of Standard Australian English..." Aboriginal English expresses an Aboriginal worldview. It differs from Standard Australian English at every level, from this worldview to the rules for using language (pragmatics), to the meaning of the words and the structures of the texts, to its grammar and sound system." (p.10)

The historical background of Aboriginal/Koorie English has baffled linguists who have different views about it as an English-based dialect. Some linguists believe that Aboriginal English is very distinct from the pidgins and creoles of Australia (Brandl and Walsh, 1982; Sandefur, 1983), while others argue that Cape York Creole, Northern Territory Kriol and Fitzroy Kriol and Aboriginal English are closely related forms (Eades, 1991). Some linguists believe that all dialects of Aboriginal English have arisen from the English language and that Aboriginal English vocabulary is embedded in Aboriginal life.

Haig, Y., Konigsberg, P. & Collard, G. (2005) when discussing Aboriginal English as a dialect state that "Aboriginal English (AE) is the name given to the dialect of English spoken by most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It varies considerably among communities for a range of reasons, including the historical influence of different local Aboriginal languages. AE has great importance culturally, particularly in the many communities where the original Aboriginal languages have been lost. It expresses Aboriginal identity and carries Indigenous history." (p.2)

They contend that it is a dialect because every dialect has "... a range of sounds that are significant or carry meaning.... [that] are systematic and reflect the different histories of the two dialects" (p.3)



Reflection

What is Koorie English?

What different dialects have you heard?

Listen to the difference in the way Koorie students speak in the classroom and how they speak when they are with other Koorie students. What do you notice?

When should Koorie students speak Koorie English and when should they use Standard Australian English?

How can Koorie English be accepted?

Mother Tongue

In the Deadly Eh Cuz! Kit it states: “[A] child’s mother tongue embodies all his or her early life experiences and ingrained language. The mother tongue is always a cohesive linguistic system with its own grammatical/semantic properties. It allows the child to communicate and function comfortably. It channels his or her thought processes prior to starting school. Aboriginal English can be described as the ‘home language’. It is the language of the home, family and community and it is through their language that many Aboriginal children will learn about most of the more important aspects of life, especially their Aboriginality. It is poor educational practice as well as morally indefensible to make a child feel ashamed of his or her parents or friends because of the way they speak. If teachers view children in terms of the deficit model, where schools see literacy only in terms of what the student cannot do, rather than what the student can do, this will make the student culturally unsafe and they won’t be able to learn effectively.

Standard Australian English as a Second Language

In their 2013 report VAEAI asserts that Standard Australian English (SAE) should be recognised as a second language for Koorie students because “children are ‘sponges’ when it comes to early childhood language acquisition. To not be incorporating bilingual or multilingual language in an early childhood education with bi-lingual and multi-lingual speakers (as is predominantly the case in Australia) is greatly undervaluing the immense potential and capacity of early childhood learners, and their ability to share their knowledge with each other and their early childhood educators”. VAEAI goes on to state “...it has long been recognised that learning a second language in conjunction with affirmation of the home or heritage language are key factors in positive and successful experiences of school-based language and literacy development” (p.11)

Malcolm, I.G., Grote, E., Eggington, L. & Sharifian, F. (2002) also assert that SAE is a second language for Koorie English speakers that is not recognised as such and as a result "...their dialect is usually seen as an educational liability and their home language linguistic skills are rarely either acknowledged or even understood within the education system".(p.2) They contend that SAE is a second language for Aboriginal students because "[W]ithin the context of two-way bidialectal education, Aboriginal English has been defined as: A range of varieties of English spoken by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and some others in close contact with them which differ in systematic ways from Standard Australian English at all levels of linguistic structure and which are used for distinctive speech acts, speech events and genres." (p.3)

Tripcony, P. (2000) links the learning of SAE with success in the education system because testing has shown that "... Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students generally are not achieving levels of English literacy competence required for satisfactorily completing the twelve years of schooling, and successfully pursuing a range of post-school education and employment options". Tripcony sees a link between traditional Aboriginal languages and Aboriginal English and she asserts that teaching English as a second language will be more effective with Aboriginal English speakers than other methods of teaching literacy, and she quotes DEET that "most Aboriginal Australians speak Aboriginal english as their first language. These are dialects of english that reflect, maintain and continually create Aboriginal cultures and identities" (DEET [undated] p.13)

If Koorie English is recognised as the first language of Koorie English speaking students, then teaching English as a second language will lead to more successful schooling outcomes for them. Sharifian (2012) says that teaching English as a second language is more difficult than teaching about literacy. He states that "[E]ffective bi-dialectal education is based on four fundamental dimensions: relationship building, mutual comprehension building, repertoire building (including the explicit teaching of differences between AE and SAE, and the learning of SAE to add to their language/literacy repertoire and the development of knowledge of AE to increase the intercultural language/literacy repertoire of non-Koorie students and teachers" (p.71)

Comments from Rosie McKenry

Students for whom SAE is a second language need to be taught the differences between this and their home dialect, and given experience in deciding according to the requirements of a specific situation, which dialect and which genre of that dialect should be used.

When teachers provide explicit linguistic teaching to develop metalinguistic awareness, they need to be sensitive to the emotive element closely connected to the sense of identity students have when using the language spoken at home. The SAE must not be presented as superior. What should be presented is the recognition of both as legitimate forms of English, each with its own purpose and place.

'Deadly Eh Cuz!' 1994

Different Dialects of English

The researchers agree that there are many different dialects of English and that Koorie English is one of them. Eades (1993) states that “[A] dialect is a variety of language which can be understood by speakers of other varieties of the same language and differs from other varieties of the same language in systematic ways (these differences can be found in sounds, grammar, words and their meanings, and language use)”. According to Eades there are many different dialects of English including Standard Australian English, Aboriginal English and Standard British English, Scottish English, Irish English, Standard American English and Black American English. she also says that even within the dialects there are differences according to the geographical location of the speakers.

Reflection

What is Koorie English?
When should Koorie students speak Standard Australian English?

Koorie English Is Not Bad English

One of the most contentious issues that VAEAI (2013) discusses is the fact that teachers mistakenly see Koorie English as ‘bad English’ and therefore treat the mother tongue of Koorie students as a deficit rather than positive, not recognising that the students are bringing to school with them a language that incorporates some aspect of Standard Australian English but also incorporates culture. VAEAI states that this leads to poor outcomes for Koorie students, citing the Commonwealth (1992) that “[A] failure by schools and teachers to identify, accept and take into account the separate features of Aboriginal English is a major factor in Aboriginal children’s poor performance in school.” (p.8)

Eades, D. (1993) agrees that assuming that Aboriginal English is bad English “would be erroneous...for while there are a number of features (particularly grammatical features) which Aboriginal English shares with other non-standard varieties of English there are others which are distinctively Aboriginal”. Harkins (1994) and Eades (1988) contend that features of Aboriginal English appear in different forms or ways from those regarded as standard. They assert that non-standard forms often occur alongside standard forms. Researchers and linguists working on Aboriginal English often note that many people on hearing these non-standard forms assume they are errors. If teachers assume that when Aboriginal students are speaking Koorie English, it is bad English, their tendency will be to automatically correct them. VACL on their website, state that even though the students are good communicators “...schools have often not recognised their language abilities, and assigned them to remedial classes. Sometimes their language is ‘corrected’ in front of the rest of the class, causing ‘shame’ to the child and putting their peer group relationships at risk”(p.8)

Anecdote

What name you call? I turned to find my questioner was Norman, a six year old Aboriginal boy, all smiling eyes and white teeth. He looks bright enough, I thought, what a pity he can't speak properly. I had already made a judgement about Norman's language development and probably without being aware of it, I had linked this language judgement to a further one about his general ability and intelligence."

If as teachers we see these differences as a 'problem' than our response will be to remediate and compensate, to try and stamp out and replace undesirable language. For the Aboriginal child the end result is likely to be a lowered self-esteem."

Dwyer (1984)

The idea that SAE is the dialect that every child should speak leads to the mistaken idea by teachers that any other dialect of English is bad English. As noted by Corson (2001) "Indeed, the very linguistic make-up of English-lexified contact languages connects them to English, rendering them liable to be viewed as impoverished versions of English, and invisible as full, valid languages. This invisibility might almost seem justified, then, if these contact languages are seen as a kind of (just not very good) English. This "standard language ideology". Siegel,(2010,) assigns an inherent superiority to the standard language, restricting other varieties by denigration, correction and exclusion. Educational practices promote these exclusive ideologies so speakers of unstandardized language varieties, perceived as inferior, can become "accomplices in their own domination" (p.186)

VACL states that different varieties of English are fully developed languages that reflect history and culture and are not bad English. "[T]here are many different varieties of English around the world. Some are treated as 'more correct' than others, based on the varieties spoken by the more powerful classes of people at different times. So other varieties are often thought of as just 'bad English'".

Relationship to Traditional Aboriginal Languages

There is a direct relationship between Traditional Aboriginal languages and Koorie English because aspects of Koorie English are influenced by traditional Aboriginal languages as well as adapting to British English. Language is culture and contemporary Koorie English includes traditional cultural concepts, world views and ways of communicating.

Despite the loss of traditional languages in Victoria, some traditional language words have been handed down for generations and today form part of the Koorie English dialect. These words, in the same way as traditional Aboriginal languages, differ depending on where the speakers are from. There are also words in Aboriginal English that came from English words such as the word *gundjibal* that means policeman. It is thought that the origin of this word is 'constable'. In a similar way the word for non-Aboriginal person used by many Aboriginal people in Victoria is 'gubbah', thought to be from the word 'government'.



VACL asserts that "Koorie English reflects some of the grammar of traditional languages. They cite Western Australian studies that have shown that children speaking Aboriginal English base their stories on different principles to their non-Aboriginal peers. They further "state that Koorie English can act like a memory of people's traditional languages. The memory continues regardless of the extent to which the language itself is being passed down".

The website Englishworks has an article that states that Aboriginal English has loanwords from traditional languages. It cites the example of "Billy in Jack Davis's play, *No Sugar* who uses pidgin English but also loanwords from his North West language (*gugja* – lilyroot and *killarla* (tobacco) and *kooris* (women) and *kuliya* (yes)). Such words are often used because there is no cultural or political equivalent in SAE – they reflect a unique cultural heritage". The article goes on to say that the reverse is also true because "SAE also uses loanwords from Aboriginal English to reflect our national identity and the uniqueness of indigenous cultures as part of our own heritage". They give the example that the name change of Ayers Rock to Uluru was cultural "...to reflect the prior rights of the Anangu. Prioritising the indigenous names, Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Kata Juta (The Olgas), over the explorers' names reflects the cultural significance of these landmarks; most importantly these names seek to relegate the settlers' story of conquest and discovery".

The article also states that Aboriginal communities have also shifted from the generic English words to words that relate specifically to their traditional languages. They have moved from using the words "... Aborigines or Aboriginals to specific words from a local Aboriginal language, such as Koori or Murri. Koori is from Awakabal (Newcastle region). The Anangu (Alice Springs), Jawoyn (Nitmulik area); Recently, Aboriginal people decided to resurrect the term "Thamarrurr" to describe indigenous governance; today that name is also used for the region and the region's council. These lexemes capture the cultural, social and political concepts that are typical to indigenous way of life."

Reflection

What are some words you might regularly use that are taken from traditional Aboriginal languages?

However it should be noted that the use of traditional language differs according to the exposure of speakers to SAE. On the website englishworks.com the assertion is that in "...more urban areas where Aboriginal people have a lot of exposure to Australian English, Aboriginal English sounds fairly close to Australian English. For Aboriginal English speakers who have regular exposure to their ancestral Aboriginal languages, the sounds system of their English is closer to the traditional Aboriginal ancestral languages".

Reflection

What strategies will you use to teach Koorie English speakers in your classroom?

Victorian Aboriginal Languages

Prior to colonization shows that Aboriginal people spoke many different languages and dialects of language. The Victorian Corporation of Languages (VACL website, 2018) states that "...there were approximately 250 Indigenous languages spoken in Australia (approximately 40 in Victoria). Some of these had several varieties, and there were altogether about 500 language varieties used across Australia... today there are 38 recognised languages in Victoria, however a lot of the languages "have declined to a critical state. More than three-quarters of the original Australian languages have already been lost, and the survival of almost all of the remaining languages are extremely threatened...VACL staff are working with Aboriginal communities in Victoria to reclaim their lost and threatened languages".

The Aboriginal Languages of Victoria Map is available on the VACL website

Connection to the Traditional Kinship System

Kinship plays an important role in Aboriginal culture and therefore in Aboriginal language. It is important to understand the history of traditional kinship system because Koorie English speakers also use kinship terms in the way they communicate with each other today. Aboriginal people had a classificatory kinship system where there were more people were classified as close kin. Kinship was the core of traditional Aboriginal culture and as such language and culture were interconnected. Elders are called by the kinship terms of 'aunt' or 'uncle' as a mark of respect as well as connection to the traditional kinship systems. When young Koories meet each other, they refer to each other as 'bruz', 'cuz' or 'sis'. Koories will also ask other Koories when they first meet, who their family is and that is how they establish connection.

Bourke and Edwards (1998, 2004) have a comprehensive explanation of traditional Aboriginal kinship. They outline the difference between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal kinship systems. "In Western societies the structures of social interaction and roles and obligations change as individuals move out from the immediate family circle to the wider society. In contrast to this, in Aboriginal societies the family structures and the sets of rights and obligations underlying them are extended to the whole society. As an individual moves out from the immediate family to the local group and to the total linguistic group, he or she is able to identify all other members of the groups by the same relationship terms which apply in the family" (p.102).

They further outline that traditional Aboriginal societies classify more people as close kin stating that the "basic principle of this system in traditional societies is the equivalence of same-sex siblings. According to this principle, people who are of the same sex and belong to the same sibling line are viewed as essentially the same. Thus two brothers are considered to be equivalent. If one has a child, that child views not only his biological father as father but applies the same term to the father's brother. The same principle applies to two sisters with both being mothers to any child either one bears. As a father's brother is also identified as father, the latter's children will be brothers and sisters, rather than cousins." (pp.104-105)

According to Gutman, A. and Avanzati, B. (2013) kinship is a very much part of Australian languages that are, they say "...characterized by a variety of speech registers determined by kinship and ritual. Among the first, we find special ways of addressing in-laws and comrades, of joking and sexual talk. Among the second, initiation rituals, where secrecy is kept by antonymic, restricted and/or fuzzy vocabulary. Taboos condition speech as well, like that forbidding to name a deceased person, directly or indirectly, for some time after death." (p.10)

McConvell, Kelly and Lacrampe agree there is a difference because when kinship terms are extended "...everybody in the social universe becomes kin of some kind, an arrangement called 'universal kinship'. So-called skin systems build on classificatory kinship by adding an extra dimension in which a category name is applied to divisions of people, and specific kinship relationships obtain between these social categories. In contrast, kinship terms in Europe are applied only to members of one's immediate family, with fewer terminological distinctions made as genealogical distance increases" (p.104-105)

Reflection

What kinship terms do Koories use when they speak to each other?

Worldview

Worldview is another very important aspect of Koorie English because students think, speak and act according to their worldview. Partington & Gray (2003) assert that the lack of understanding of the socio-cultural context of language is an issue that impacts on students "[P]ragmatics is an area of language use that may be taken for granted in general language programs. Too often the lack of understanding of different ways of being and behaving is seen more as a behavioural issue in classrooms rather than as a cross-cultural communication issue" (p.164)

Because it is important to understand that Aboriginal worldview is different from non-Aboriginal world view and that it is embedded in Koorie English it is worthwhile to include an extract from the article by Michael Christie, "The Aboriginal World View: a White person's ideas" taken from the 'Deadly Eh, Cuz!' kit because it outlines Aboriginal worldview from a non-Aboriginal persons perspective.

"What does worldview mean? What is Aboriginal worldview like and how does it affect people's behaviour. Is it possible for a white Australian to understand Aboriginal worldview? In this chapter I hope to present a white person's view on these questions. I have three sources of information: eight years living with Milingimbi Yolngu, ten years learning and working with Yolngu language, and as many years reading the work of anthropologists, linguists, and Aboriginal writers. I feel that I have only the remotest understanding of this question but it is one which needs to be thought about and talked about.

What does worldview mean? Although many academics, for one reason or another object to the expression 'world view', to me it sums up pretty well the ideas and beliefs that a group of people holds about its world and the people and things in it. We don't all see the world in the same way (although ethnocentric people may believe we do). Our worldview may be difficult to describe but it affects the way we see the physical world, our possessions, other people and ourselves. Consequently it affects the way we act, the way we think, our beliefs about right and wrong, and our emotional reaction to what happens around us.

What is Aboriginal worldview like? Speaking firstly of those Aboriginal people who have been least affected by the western world I seems that they do not, as white people do, see the world as divided up into identifiable physical objects in here and now which can be counted, analysed and related scientifically. Their world is made up of entities which are related in a quite unscientific (from a white person's point of view) way, but in a spiritual way which reflects the nature of a universe quite different from a white Australian's. There are a number of striking differences. Firstly, the Aboriginal world is not constrained by time or space in the same way or to the same extent as the white world. The Aboriginal world is governed by relationships that are simply not available for scientific study.

A second feature of the Aboriginal perspective is that things cannot be quantified. In a world made up of objects related through their spiritual essences, rather than their physical properties, counting is irrelevant. Value lies in quality and relatedness rather than on quantities.

Another mark of the western world is what has been termed 'the cult of the individual' "...Aboriginal society on the other hand makes an individual's sense of worth depends upon where he or she fits into the group, rather than what he or she can get from it" (p.30)

Christie wrote about what he understood from his experience living in the Northern Territory. Worldview can change between Aboriginal communities living in different geographical and cultural locations.

Christie wrote about what he understood from his experience living in the Northern Territory. Worldview can change between Aboriginal communities living in different geographical and cultural locations.

In his book 'Koorie English' (1989), Enemburu also discusses the importance of taking into consideration worldview when he says that there are two areas that need to be investigated for Koorie children including "the manner in which Koorie children approach and use the interactive situation; and the conceptual framework for the meaning of the words which Koorie children have about their world view." He goes on to say that "[F]or the classroom, this does not necessarily mean separatism, but acknowledgement of basic maxims of the educative process to assist any child known to be within varying forms of codes of communication, either within the same language or between different languages. Furthermore it also does not mean, in the case of Koorie English, that only Koorie can effectively teach Koorie children. What it does mean is that if the assumption of the 'universal child' pervades the educational situation which accepts that all children are presumed to be alike, then the fundamental way in which they are different from their Gubba counterparts is not likely to be recognised." (pp.13-15)

Koorie Culture

The acceptance and valuing of a child's culture promotes effective learning. Language is culture and VAEAI (2013) notes the cultural importance of Koorie English stating that it is "...a rich repository of Koorie culture, and incorporates levels of meanings which relate to traditional Aboriginal values, relationships and ways of life." (p.11) Klenowski (2009) agrees "[L]anguage and communication in traditional contexts are underpinned by the view that language is a key form of interaction that informs and facilitates personal, social, cultural, political and spiritual connections".

The importance of understanding that culture impacts on a child's ability to learn is apparent in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) It also acknowledges that the families and communities in which children live are diverse, and that children's learning and development is enhanced when early childhood professionals respect their cultures and ways of knowing and being. In particular, the Victorian Framework recognises and respects Aboriginal cultures and the unique place of these in Victoria's heritage and future.

The use of Victorian Aboriginal languages in early and later education sends a strong message to Koorie children that their community's language and culture is important as affirmed by VACL on their website, "Koorie English-speaking children do better at school when their home language is affirmed. Encouraging Koorie English is part of a bigger picture of improving cultural inclusivity. Koorie children need an environment that encourages pride in their heritage, their family and their culture. An environment which threatens this pride also threatens the child's capacity to participate in learning at school, potentially leading to effects such as low attendance and lack of engagement in class."

Valuing the mother tongue of Koorie students will enable them to feel culturally safe, accepted and valued and will promote their learning. VAEAI's Submission to the Inquiry into language learning (2011) states "[I]t is also recognised that for Aboriginal children, a school environment that positively reflects the cultural values learned at home is closely related to regular attendance and achievement".

VACCHO (2014) assert that communication styles for Aboriginal people in Victoria differs from non-Aboriginal styles because "...it is a system in which day by day language reflects meaning, values, and culture. The continuing use of Aboriginal communication in South East Australia indicates that a coloniser language is not suitable to fully describe Aboriginal life. Aboriginal communication styles include a complex mix of grammar, language, sounds, tones, timing, politeness, humour, visual communication and body language." (p.4)

Reflection

Why do Koorie children fail at school?
What kind of school would be a high risk environment for Koorie children?

Code Switching

Once Koorie English is recognised as a dialect of English and that worldview influences language, teachers need to be aware of how to teach Koorie students to code switch effectively. VAEAI's comprehensive report to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2013) outlined the need for the Department to recognise Koorie English and code-switching as a solution rather than a problem for Koorie students. VAEAI argues "...code-switching is a necessary skill for Koorie students that should be nurtured within the education system" so that students can make "informed linguistic choices." (p.31)

They put forward the view that for Koorie students to be successful teachers must recognise that Koorie English is a distinct dialect; students need to be taught the difference between Koorie English and SAE; and that effective code switching will occur when students have cultural pride and confidence.

However, it is not easy to teach code switching as the NSW education website states "...Code-switching involves more than being able to speak two or more codes. It also involves being able to judge which dialect will best serve one's needs in any given context. This is determined by things like audience, purpose, content and situation but will also be influenced by individual choice made by each language user."



Reflection

Think about why we need to code switch.

Predictors of Success in the School System

Research suggests that the recognition of Koorie English as a dialect of English and allowing Koorie students to code switch between Koorie English and Standard Australian English will be conducive to student learning.

Corson (1983, 1985, 1993) on the Primary English Teaching Association website suggests that there is a link between the recognition and valuing of Koorie English and success in the schooling system when he states that “[R]esearch suggests that a good predictor of success in schooling is the match between a student’s vocabulary and that demanded by the curriculum. He goes on to say that it “...is also an aspect of language that is recognised by students and teachers alike as causing students, particularly those from diverse backgrounds, difficulty”.



Oliver, Haig & Rochecouste (2005) agree that when teachers are interested in student’s language, students are more likely to engage with their learning and experience greater success in the education system”. (p.7)

The Value of Koorie English

Citing the ‘Deadly Eh, Cuz!’ action research, VAEAI discusses how the teacher’s professional development raised their awareness of Koorie English, revealed to them the value of Koorie English and assisted them to develop strategies to use in the classroom with Koorie students.

VACCHO (2014) states that Koorie English is valuable because “Aboriginal people in South East Australia have particular ways of communicating, it is a system in which day by day language reflects meaning, values, and culture. The continuing use of Aboriginal communication in South East Australia indicates that a coloniser language is not suitable to fully describe Aboriginal life. Aboriginal communication styles include a complex mix of grammar, language, sounds, tones, timing, politeness, humour, visual communication and body language.” (p.4)

3.2 Linguistic Characteristics of Koorie English

Koorie English has its own linguistic characteristics that differ from SAE. The report by VAEAI (2013) suggests that schools should recognise that Koorie students bring with them a language from home that is different from Standard Australian English, stating that Koorie English "...carries with it distinctive linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic and conceptual characteristics." One of the problems they cite is that teachers are not aware of Koorie English as a dialect or of the linguistic background of Koorie English or that it has a different grammatical structure to SAE. (p. 5)

These different linguistic characteristics include morphemes, morpho-syntax, pragmatics, lexico-semantics, phonology, the use of questioning, the use of prepositions visual and tactile, movement, humour, and, non-verbal clues,.

Morphemes

A morpheme is a small segment of language such as 's' or 'ed'. An article on the Aboriginal English website discusses how the linguistic characteristics of Aboriginal English differ from Standard Australian English in the use of particular plural and singular morphemes & morphemes that denote tense stating that "[In] Aboriginal English, the plural suffix 's' added to words to denote plural form such as in the word apples, is not used often. However, in Standard English, the plural form of the noun is usually indicated by the addition of s or es to the end of the word, and in agreement with this, the usual 's' is dropped from the present-tense form of the verb." The article also states that the 'ed' at the end of the word to denote past tense is not used either.

The article discusses how possession morphemes are used in SAE but not in Aboriginal English and the use of question tags by Aboriginal English speakers as well as the way syntax-prepositions are used. The other two linguistic features mentioned are the use of the Auxiliary verb and word order that is sometimes not used, and the order of the words sometimes change.

This article contends that when students fail to recognise or use these morphemes it is not because they are not able to, but rather they do not use them in their own dialect of English and therefore need to be taught the difference and when they should use them. For example, a Koorie student who does not use an 's' to denote plural, but rather changes the noun marker such as 'those dog' needs to understand that when writing in SAE, they need to use an 's' to make the subject plural.

Morpho-syntax (grammar)

Aboriginal English has its own grammatical structure that reflects the cultural background of Aboriginal people. An example of grammatical differences is that in Koorie English, the sentence structures differ. An example of this is a question that can be "Where goin?, leaving out the 'you'. Haig et al (2005) state that "It is important to note here that some grammatical forms in AE are similar to developmental forms in SAE. However, as they are part of a stable, adult system these AE forms should not be associated with "delayed" development, immaturity or with having a language problem." (p 6)

Pragmatics (the way language is used in socio-cultural contexts)

The way language is used in socio-cultural contexts is a particular area should be taken into account with Koorie English speakers because language is culture. Koorie students will speak Koorie English when they are playing with their peers and in certain socio-cultural situations. Teachers may not understand that different ways of behaving are linked to culture rather than with misbehaviour.

Lexico-semantics (words and their meaning)

Koorie English speakers can use the same words as speakers of other dialects of English, however the words may have different meanings. An example of some words are family, mob, deadly, sick, Elders, and country that have different conceptual meanings in SAE. In Koorie English for example, the word family may indicate up to 500 close kin (related to the classificatory kinship system) whereas in SAE it may mean 10 people. The word 'mob' to Koories is a warm word used to denote family and community, whereas in SAE it may mean a group of angry people. Deadly in SAE means that something is dangerous, whereas in Koorie English it means amazing and good. Country in SAE means a different geographical country, whereas in Koorie English it means an area of land over which Traditional Owners have custodianship.

Reflection

What is the name for the local traditional owner group where your school is located?

Phonology (sounds)

Koories pronounce their vowel sounds differently from non-Koories. This has implications for Koorie students when they are writing what they hear. If they are hearing the vowel sounds the same as they are speaking them, this is how they will write their words. It is confusing for Koorie students if the sounds are similar such as with pan and fan. Koorie students may hear 'd' instead of 'th' and will therefore write 'dis' instead of 'this'.

Phonology is about sounds in language. The way children hear sounds is important to the teaching and learning of English. Gutman and Beatriz (2013) discuss some of the differences between Koorie English and Australian English "... Australian languages have words composed of more than one syllable. Typically, every word must begin with a single consonant and end in a vowel or a restricted number of consonants. Some languages, though, have words beginning with a vowel. Only a subset of consonants is allowed in initial position and consonant clusters are allowed only intervocalically- The majority of Australian languages have only three vowels: i, a, u, and some also e or o or both. Half of them have contrasting short and long vowels. -There is usually no voicing contrast for stops. In a given language, all stops are voiced or are all voiceless." This has implications for the way children write English because they will spell words the way they hear them spoken. An example of this is the word 'this'. Some Koorie English speakers hear 'dis' and therefore that is the way they write it.

Questioning

If teachers do not understand the differences between SAE and KE, they can misunderstand Koorie English speakers. An example of this is in regard to the use of questioning. The VACL website states that "many Koorie children are not used to direct question-answer conversations. A teacher misunderstanding this may assume the child lacks the knowledge to participate, or is simply unresponsive. Eades highlights some situations where Aboriginal English speakers have been misinterpreted in the court system, including 'yes' and 'no' answers, and a witness being reluctant to look at his questioner. In each case, instead of the court realising that there had been a miscommunication, the Aboriginal witness was deemed to be lying and uncooperative. Children in school experience similar problems when teachers do not realise this kind of miscommunication can occur and think they are 'being difficult', and treat them accordingly".

An article written by the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (VACCHO) (2014) also recognises that the use of questioning by Aboriginal people is different from that of non-Aboriginal people because Aboriginal people do not use questioning as much as is used in SAE (p.6)

An article on the Aboriginal English website expands on the use of questioning in Koorie English stating that it "...is common for Aboriginal English questions to be finished with a question tag. In much of Australia this tag is 'eh?', in South Australia it is 'inna', and in the south west of Western Australia, it is 'unna'. These three question tags have the equivalent meaning of 'isn't it so?' or 'isn't that right?' in Standard English, and therefore performs the role of a marker of solidarity."

Oliver, Haig and Rochecouste (2005) also discuss the way questioning differs between Aboriginal English and SAE speakers, stating that these differences could have an impact on the way Koorie English students are taught. They give the example that these differences "...the question and answer routines commonly used in Australian classrooms...reflects a practice that begins in the talk of caregivers with pre-verbal babies (for example, "What's the matter, Possum? Oh dear, you've got a wet nappy!"). It is also central to Australian institutions such as government (parliamentary question time, senate inquiries), the law (police interviews, court processes), the health system (hospital admissions, examinations) and the media (interviews) as well as in society generally (inquiry counters, interviews for work, research questionnaires). It is the dominant way for SAE speakers to both seek and provide information." (p.11)

Prepositions

Oliver et al state that the use of prepositions by Koorie English speakers is different from SAE speakers because it follows the pattern of local Aboriginal languages. "In Standard English, the order of the major elements of a regular declarative sentence is fairly fixed; the subject precedes the verb and the object follows. However, heavy varieties of Aboriginal English, like the majority of Aboriginal languages, do not restrict the order of phrases in a sentence". Examples of this is saying they are scared 'from' the dog rather than 'of' the dog and "I go 'up' the house, rather than 'to' the house.

Humour

Humour is very important to Koories and is used frequently in Koorie English to connect to each other and as a form of send up. In the VACCHO book 'Koorified' it states that "Aboriginal people use humour to:

- make people feel more comfortable
- talk about a stressful situation in a light hearted way
- allow people to feel included
- to make connection with people
- build relationship and trust

One style of humour is through rhyming of words, for instance, "daughter daughters of the Yorta Yortas" or "my sister from another mister" Accidentally rhyming words when talking is often considered to be funny".(p.7)

Non-Verbal Clues

Koorie English also includes non-verbal clues such as lip pursing, eye contact, silence, gesture, and position in relation to others, visual and tactile and movement and stimulation. Enemburu (1989) agrees that eye contact, lip pursing, gesture and positioning as four types of nonverbal communication codes used by Aboriginal people”(p.7)

Reflection

How do the Koorie students communicate with each other in the playground?
How is it different to the way they communicate in the classroom?

Lip-pursing

Koories use lip-pursing to indicate direction, or to point the person they are communicating with to something or someone. They also use it to let someone know if they want to see them or want them to look at something. This is a common non-verbal communication method is used by Koories and continues to be a part of Koorie English and Koorie culture today.

Eye contact

For Koories it is discourteous to maintain eye contact. In situations where a Koorie is being reprimanded it is highly unlikely that eye contact will be made. When an Elder is speaking, other Koories will most likely hang their heads in respect. Children are not encouraged to look directly at their Elders when they are being spoken to because if they look directly at Elders when they are speaking, it is seen as a mark of disrespect.

Silence

Silence is also a very important part of Koorie English. According to the definition of Dadirri described on the Miriam Rose Foundation website, it is “Inner Deep Listening and Quiet Still Awareness. A reflection by Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr. The word, concept and spiritual practice that is dadirri (da-did-ee) is from the Ngan’gikurunggurr and Ngen’giwumirri languages of the Aboriginal peoples of the Daly River region (Northern Territory, Australia)”. This is also reflective of the use of silence in Koorie English. It is not rudeness or ignorance but rather a deep listening and an important part of Koorie English.

Gesture

Enemburu (p.7) tells us that a Koorie will often sign a response instead of giving a verbal reply and that Aboriginal people often make contact with the person they want to speak to by gently touching their arm. Children will touch a mothers dress or tap her on the shoulder to get her attention. If the mother doesn't respond, the tapping will get harder. Younger students may do this to teachers.

Position in relation to each other

The proximity of people in communication is an important consideration in Koorie English. There is a way that Koories will position themselves to give or receive information. This will tell the listener if they are accepted or not. The distance between a speaker and a listener will indicate whether a listener is listening but not too close to the speaker. Koories may also place themselves in a position that shows respect for Elders and their place in community. The distance between a speaker and a listener is a way of saying "I'm listening but don't get too close".

In traditional languages, a speaker would tell exactly where the listener was when speaking to them. That is the speaker would say where the listener was in proximity to them.

Visual and Tactile

Koories are very visual and tactile people. Traditionally they used observation to learn all about their environment. Koorie English is also about the visual aspect of language as Koories continue to use observation to learn about their environment. They also like to touch to learn.

Movement and Stimulation

Koorie children don't like to sit still for long periods of time as they are used to movement and stimulation

4. Stories

4.1 Koorie English Speaker Stories

Esme Bamblett - A Personal Story by a Koorie English Speaker

When I went to girls' school to do my secondary schooling I was the only Koorie there. I knew that I was different from the other girls, but one obvious difference was the way I spoke.

I had a teacher there who also knew that the way I spoke was different. She was my English teacher, and she used to make me stand up in class and sound out words that began with the letter 'h' because these were the words which I had most difficulty with. I can still remember trying to make sure I sounded out the 'h' on these words but it was very difficult and I didn't succeed. It was very difficult to sound out the letter 'h' when I was not used to saying it.

It annoyed me very much when I had to say the word honour and the 'h' is silent. Because other words that began with the letter 'h' had to be sounded out, I felt that for the word honour the 'h' should also be sounded out.

I also knew that I had to code switch with my language when I went home from school even though back then I didn't know what code switching was. If I had spoken at home the way I did at school I would have been considered a 'gubbah'. (the generic Victorian Aboriginal word for non Aboriginal person).

So it was very difficult being accepted by both the worlds that I lived in. I didn't want to be an outsider in either world, school or home. I found that the easiest thing to do was the minimum in both worlds. I wasn't comfortable giving up my culture just to survive at school and I knew I had to stay in the school system for a certain amount of time. So I became a chameleon, changing with my environment. This chameleon act got me through my school years without jeopardising my culture. However a lot of my peers couldn't do it and consequently dropped out of school by year 9.

When I got to university I found that once again my language was a barrier to success. I found that my cultural outlook was at odds with the mainstream. I took English Literature in my first year of a Bachelor of Arts Degree at La Trobe University in 1971. We studied Othello and the Lecturer believed that Othello strangled Desdemona because of his great love for her. I didn't agree because I believed love doesn't lead to murder. I wrote as much in my essay and was told in no uncertain terms that I was wrong. I believe that we all have a world view and we view literature through that world view. Shakespeare's worldview may have been different from mine but my views came from my cultural background. This incident made me feel that my worldview was wrong.

Koorie English is culture and involves not only different ways of saying words but also has different concepts. When I think of the word 'family' I think of over 500 close kin whereas non Aboriginal people may think of 10-20 people. We call each other a 'mob' and to us that is a protective word, whereas to non Aboriginal people the word 'mob' may be threatening.

When I completed my studies at Toorak Teachers College in 1978, I once again met with language difficulties because I received a low mark on my interview and was told that I had to work on my oral communication if I wanted to teach in Victorian schools. After I was told this I tried desperately to change my oral language, but I found this very difficult.

It was a great relief for me to meet Eve Fesl, an Aboriginal linguist who told me that traditional Aboriginal languages did not have words with the letter 'h' so we didn't have to sound it. Eve encouraged me to keep my language as it is a part of my culture. Despite knowing all this, I still want to 'correct' my children when they speak Koorie English.

As teachers we must recognise that the language that Koorie children bring with them to school is their 'mother tongue' and therefore it is an acceptable and valuable dialect of English that allows them to communicate in both worlds, Koorie and non-Koorie. Our children need to be accepted and valued as important members of the Aboriginal community and a part of this is the acceptance of the language we speak.



Leigh Saunders - A Koorie English Speaker

My name is Leigh Saunders. I am a Bangerang/Yorta Yorta, Wiradjuri, Dja Dja Wurrung man. I was born in Shepparton and I grew up there.

When I was in child care, i attended Lidje Child Care Centre (an Aboriginal early childhood centre) and then Manega Aboriginal School Annexe in primary school.

When I was in Manega, the Goulburn Valley Aboriginal Education Consultative Group worked with Rosie McEnry to develop the "Deadly Eh' Cuz! Kit and I was one of the students in the classroom. Our teacher was one of the teachers on the DVD. After she found out that Koorie English is a dialect of English, she stopped correcting my work and the way I speak, let us write stories using Koorie English and taught us to code switch to Standard Australian English.

My first language is Koorie English. I speak both Koorie English and Standard Australian English because I learnt to code switch when I needed to and therefore I was able to complete my VCE.

I am a proud Aboriginal man and I believe it is important for our mob to keep our culture through our language. Our ancestors were forced to give up part of culture- they weren't able to hunt and gather (being forced onto reserves), to carry out traditional ceremonies, their children were taken away and they were not allowed to speak their languages because language is culture. Koorie English remains as a part of our traditional languages. It is a dialect of English and it is important that it is recognised as one.

Teachers should also incorporate Aboriginal history and culture into the curriculum in the classroom because it is important for all students to understand about our mobs. It is important that Koorie students feel that our culture is valued because then they will learn better.

I am now the Manager of the Bert Williams Aboriginal Youth Services and a lot of the young Koorie boys who come through the centre have not had successful outcomes in the education system. When asked about why they did not complete schooling they said it was because they did not feel comfortable at school. Schools need to make our students feel valued.

Reflection

What are some of the linguistic features of Koorie English that Esme mentioned?

Why did Esme describe her behaviour while at school as a chameleon act?

What impact did the teacher's attitude to Esme's Koorie English have on Esme?

Why did Esme decide to continue to speak Koorie English even after she completed her tertiary training?

What did Leigh learn to do at school?

How was Leigh able to learn to code switch?

4.2 Teacher Stories

The following stories have been taken from the "Deadly 'Eh Cuz! Teaching Speakers of Koorie students".

Primary School Teacher 1 -

Many of our Koorie students lack opportunities to read and share books with others. Some children are not given the time to practise and enjoy their 'take home' books. I believe that home reading and sharing books with others is vital in children's literacy development.

I chose one Koorie student in my room having difficulty with reading. Each day the children are given a 'take home' book for them to read to a parent. The parent signs a chart to indicate that this has been done.

My Koorie student was not consistent about bringing back his 'take home' book. Reading records show he would bring it on an average of two days per week. The chart in his book cover to indicate if reading is heard each night was rarely signed.

He was developing one-to-one correspondence with spoken words by pointing but this was not consistent. He would point on top of the word, not under, and was uncomfortable holding a book. He used two hands – the left hand to point to the words on the left page and the right hand to point to words on the right-hand page.

He used pictures to provide visual clues to what he was reading but he did not recognise written words.

Sample records of writing show my student used conventional letters in writing but he could not independently use letter/sound relationship. He could hear initial sounds in words and he recognised 13 of the 15 letters taught at the stage but that had not transferred over to his writing. His writing did not have spaces between words.

He enjoyed 'show and tell' and was confident, often directing others.

He had not borrowed a book from the library since the beginning of the year. His library bag was lost. He enjoyed reading books we shared in class, especially 'big books' (books with pages large enough for the whole class to read at once) but he did not choose to read in his free time.

The suggested research plan was to provide my student with a variety of reading audiences with which he could share and enjoy books. By providing reading audiences, I could involve him in the reading process, he would be practising his reading skills and his enjoyment and interest in books would be fostered.

I organised another book cover to stay at school so that my student would have a book accessible at all times. I arranged for older Koorie students in Years 5 and 6 to hear him and all the Koorie children in my room read each day after lunch. He was heard read by parents daily and by the class teacher three times a week on 'take home' books. The teacher and the children in the class share reading activities daily. We read a class sentence on his stories/sentences or a part of a book we sharing. We point, identify letters and take part in other incidental reading.

Evaluation and reflection

My student has enjoyed the variety of reading audiences and has benefited both from the extra engagement in the reading process and from the positive attention he has received.

The extra practice has resulted in his increased reading skills and he now shows more interest in books.

He has gained confidence in himself, his approach to reading and in his ability to stay on tasks and complete them.

He has progressed in reading. He is reading level 2 books in our reading scheme. He has developed one-to-one correspondence with the spoken word, he points under words, and he is comfortable holding a book.

He uses the reading strategies of reading for meaning and prior knowledge of language structure. Visual clues are beginning to develop and he is beginning to cross check his guesses with the pictures.

In writing he shows development in letter/sound relationship using mainly initial letters for words and sometimes other letters. Spaces are not yet consistent. He reads his stories well.

He can recognise all 21 letters taught so far and uses them confidently in his writing. He enjoys all communication and loves to talk, act and have turns at activities. He will sometimes choose to read as a free time, enjoyment activity.

These outcomes are positive. However, to bring about lasting change involves commitment from home. My actions could have involved more communication with my student's parents and given them another opportunity to be involved

in hearing him read, returning his book cover, bringing back his library book etc. This would have provided them with further information about the importance of reading.

A even wider reading audience, e.g. our Koorie educator and our specialist teachers, may also have been beneficial, as would reading 'Koorie-relevant' books.

I feel I have gained from my involvement in the Koorie English Literacy Program (KELP) through increased knowledge of Koorie English culture. This understanding can be transferred to the classroom to help Koorie students, showing I value and accept them, and to help me, through my interactions, to relate to them appropriately.

Year 4 Teacher

James is a Year 4 student who arrived at our school at the beginning of third term in 1994. He is an average student who tries very hard. He is very receptive to ideas and compliments and is very keen to learn.

James lives with his grandmother, whom he calls 'Mum'. There had been a bit of a custody battle, out of which James was emerging without too many hassles, although he was a bit aggressive for a few weeks.

During James's first few weeks at the school, the normal notices about camps and excursions were being sent home. When I gave James his, he quietly told me that 'Mum can't read.' When I asked him later if there was anyone at home who could read the notice, he said, 'Poppy, but he isn't always at home.' So I read the notice to him, explaining what it was all about, and marking where 'Mum' had to sign.

A few days later, Mary, James's 'Mum', came up to the school, with a teenager (moral support?), to ask me about the notice. I explained the notice to her, and told her any time she wanted anything clarified she was quite welcome to come and see me. For the next few months everything was okay, and Mary only came to see me if anything was very important. Then just before the end of Term 3, Mary came up to school. My children were with the other Year 3/4s in the hall singing. She was talking to our Aboriginal educator, telling her about some problems she was having. A message was sent over to me that Mary was upset, and needed someone to listen, so she sat and explained her worries to me. When she had finished, I think she was very relieved. Since that day, she has not been as scared of coming to see me about any problems she has, or things that may affect James.

I admire this lady for her strengths, and her love for James is very clear. Not only is she looking after James, but she has been helping out another Koorie family, which she is doing out of the goodness of her heart.

I think the relationship that Mary now has with the school is one which we all try to encourage, but is not always reciprocated. James has benefited from this experience, as he is glad that 'Mum' feels okay about visiting his teacher.

Reflection

This action research has shown me how important GOOD communication between parents, teachers, Koorie educators and students is to the educational life of all children. The research has given me a glimpse of how communication can work, when used to foster good relationships with students and parents.

Things which still need to be worked on:

- We must keep communication channels open, especially between Koorie educators, parents, teachers and students.
- We must not become complacent about the role of our Koorie educators in our schools. They are that vital link that must be strengthened between Koorie families and schools.
- When we as educators can become more aware of our children's home life, we are able to help them cope at school, building a strong relationship with them, in a caring/understanding environment. This can be said for all students, from any background, race or religion.

Reflection and evaluation of KELP

- Not everything that was planned happened. The KELP was only one of the many things we had to do as teachers, and we found it hard to stay focused at times.
- It made us more aware of problems, helped us see how and some of the children's problems are.
- All children in our classes need individual attention and assistance.
- Most children showed enjoyment and enthusiasm from the extra time given to them.

- The involvement and communication between parents, teacher and our Koorie educator has improved.
- Teaching is about relationships. The KERP has helped us develop relationships with children.
- The KERP has created a wider reading audience, that is, given children the opportunity to read to people other than the class teacher, such as other adults, senior students and students from other classes.
- We have been shown the need for more Koorie-relevant books.
- We no longer assume that all Koorie children are low achievers.
- We are much more aware, open, tolerant, appreciative and understanding of Koorie culture, children, families etc.
- With our large class sizes, it was difficult to find time to focus on individual children, sometimes just to talk and listen.
- As a result of our KERP training and the way it has affected our teaching, most children are displaying a more positive attitude towards school.
- All teachers should have an opportunity to be informed if there is to be empathy and understanding.
- Through the KERP our increased knowledge of Koorie culture has encouraged us to focus on the positive aspects of our children's learning.

Postscript

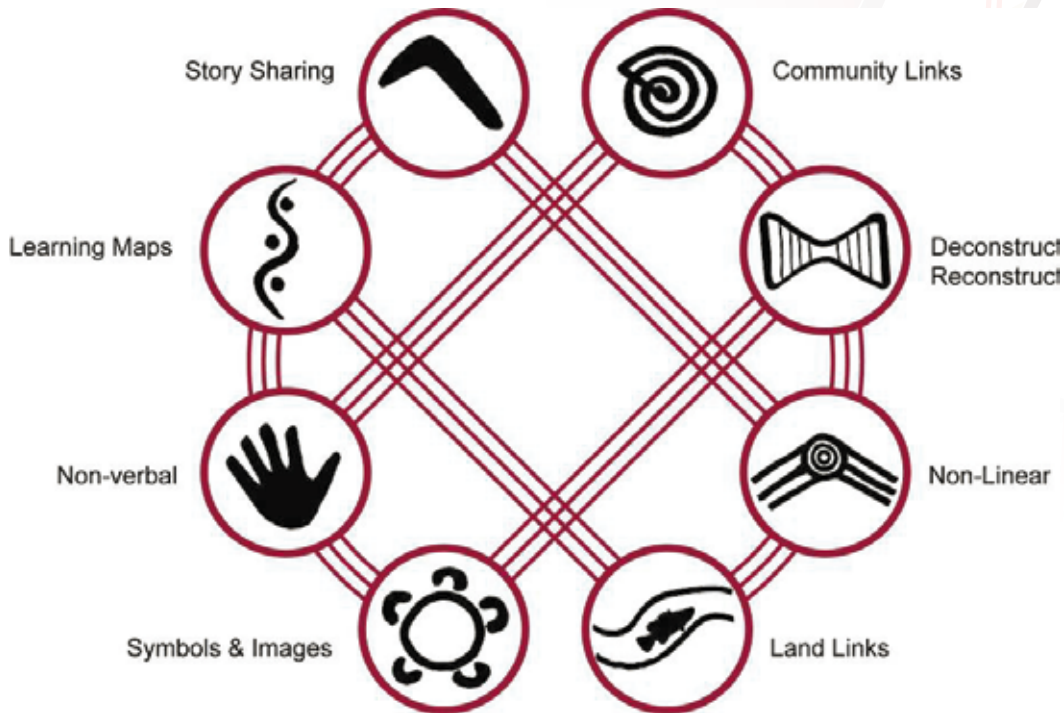
When we look at the overall problems for some of our Koorie students in a predominantly non-Koorie environment, the literacy aspect almost seems of minor importance compared with the social and emotional needs of these children.

We are just touching the tip of the iceberg when we acknowledge this, and we can probably do more to help these children by simply getting to know them, their culture and their outside school life.

To get all children to stop disliking school and to feel comfortable and secure is possibly the immediate goal, and educational gains will flow on from this.

8 Ways Learning Model

The 8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning is a pedagogy framework that allows teachers to Include Aboriginal perspectives by using Aboriginal learning techniques. Listen to "The 8 way learning model" explained at the Australian Indigenous College on youtube. The following diagram is a graphic illustration of the 8 Aboriginal Ways Learning Model. This model is on the FUSE website.



Reflection

How does the eight ways of learning relate to what you have learnt about Koorie English?

5. Creating a Culturally Inclusive Learning Environment

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

The Victorian Curriculum, the Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026 and the Australian Curriculum all discuss the importance of creating a culturally inclusive learning environment for Koorie students to ensure successful educational outcomes.

Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2016

Marrung is a strategy to ensure that all Koorie Victorians achieve their learning aspirations and realise the full benefits of the Education State. Marrung is the Wemba Wemba word for the Murray Cypress pine tree, representing branches of education and knowledge.

To achieve its vision, Marrung encompasses actions that aim to:

- Create a positive climate for learning and development where services demonstrate the highest levels of respect and inclusion and, as a result, Koorie children and learners of all ages feel strong in their identity within all services.
- Build community engagement in learning and development so that, through partnership and collaboration, services work together with Koorie people to find innovative ways to improve outcomes in local communities.
- Build a culture of professional leadership where success for Koorie Victorians is core business for all educational leaders.
- Achieve excellence in teaching, learning and development at all stages so that: young Koorie children are on track in their health, development and well-being, and their early learning experience sets them up for life; and, Koorie students engage fully throughout their schooling years and gain the knowledge and skills to excel at year 12 or its equivalent

The aim is for Koorie learners to transition successfully into further education and employment, and have opportunities to access education at all stages of life. In order to do this, teachers need to look at how they view the dialect of Koorie students.

The term 'deficit model' refers to the situation where schools see literacy only in terms of what a student cannot do, rather than what the student can do. Students for whom Standard Australian English is a second language, such as those whose first language is Koorie English are seen as having a 'language problem' instead of being seen as potentially bilingual.

As mentioned earlier, some Koorie students' problems in school stem from language differences. Some students come to school speaking Koorie English and must learn to code switch to SAE. Misunderstandings between students and teachers also arise from different social perspectives. Therefore it is important for teachers to examine their own thinking in regard to these issues.

Reflection

What are your personal attitudes to Koories?

Where do your attitudes come from- media, family, personal experience?

If your attitudes are negative towards Aboriginal communities, what can you do about it?

Do you know any people/organisations in the local community that you can contact about Aboriginal issues?

The Victorian Curriculum

The Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority

On the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority (VCAA) website it states that schools need to recognise Koorie English as the first language of Koorie students and Standard Australian English as the second language. They state that "student's for whom SAE is a second language need to be taught the difference between this and their home dialect, and given experience in deciding according to the requirements of a specific situation, which dialect and which genre of that dialect should be used. Schools need to decide how they will incorporate Koorie English into the curriculum and how teachers will conference students regarding their writing".

Aboriginal perspectives is a requirement of the Victorian Curriculum. Each of the Learning Areas in the Victorian Curriculum include Aboriginal perspectives in either Content Descriptors (mandatory) or Elaborations (examples). The Victorian Curriculum also includes Achievement Standards in Victorian Aboriginal Languages at levels F-2, 3-6 and 7-10.

This supports all students to gain awareness, knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal perspectives across a range of topics. The revised version of the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework recognises and respects Aboriginal cultures and their place in Victorian heritage and future, including as an important area of practice.

The VEYLF identifies five interconnected learning and development outcomes for all children from birth to eight years, which are: Identity, Community, Wellbeing, Learning and Communication. These five outcomes have been linked to the first three levels of the Victorian Curriculum F-10 which then provides more opportunities for Aboriginal perspectives to be incorporated within early years learning and development.

Efforts such as those represented by the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples, consistent national standards in the Australian curriculum and mandatory requirements in the Victorian curriculum represent important contributions in the process of righting historical wrongs, and respectfully acknowledging the continued importance and relevance of indigenous cultures in contemporary societies across the world.

The Australian Curriculum

Incorporating and strengthening Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum is important when it comes to creating a culturally safe and welcoming environment for Koorie students and their families and also allowing educators to gain awareness and knowledge of Aboriginal cultures at a local, state and national level.

The Australian Curriculum sets consistent national standards to improve learning outcomes for all young Australians. Two distinct needs have been identified in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education:

- that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are able to see themselves, their identities and their cultures reflected in the curriculum of each of the learning areas, can fully participate in the curriculum and can build their self-esteem.
- that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority is designed for all students to engage in reconciliation, respect and recognition of the world's oldest continuous living cultures.

The Australian Curriculum requires that schools incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders histories and cultures as one of three cross-curriculum priorities to be embedded across all subject areas. To supplement the Australian Curriculum, the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AIT-SL) has outlined new Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST), which include requirements for both the teaching of Koorie students as well as teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content to all students.

The APST requires that all teachers possess specific training and experience in:

Focus area 1.4: Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students:

- Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

Focus area 2.4: Understand and respect Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians:

- Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.

DVD 'Deadly Eh, Cuz!'

Watch the 'Deadly eh, cuz! DVD on FUSE.

As a teacher it would be useful for Koorie students to know the difference between KE and SAE, pointing out that both have their place, both should be respected, both are dialects in their own right, but that students need to be able to choose which dialect they use according to audience and purpose.

Reflection

What did the teachers in the DVD learn about Koorie English?
What was a result of the teachers learning about Koorie English?

- For them?
 - For the students?
 - For the schools?
- After watching the DVD what did you learn?

Code Switching

Code switching means switching from one dialect to another. In everyday life everyone code switches often (change the way we speak or write) according to what we think is the most suitable way to do this, bearing in mind our audience and the purpose of our communication. If we want to impress our peers we probably choose to speak like they do but if we want to impress a stranger who may give us a job we probably try to speak more formally.

Reflection

- How do you code switch on the phone when you are:
- Speaking to a friend?
 - Speaking to a family member?
 - Speaking to your boss?
- When would Koorie English speakers code switch?
- When should Koorie students code switch?
- How can teachers assist Koorie students to code switch?

Aboriginal Cultural Texts

It is important for Koorie students to access books written and illustrated by Koories so they feel that their culture is valued and therefore feel culturally safe in the classroom. To introduce Aboriginal cultural perspectives in the curriculum, audit the literature in the classroom to see how many Koorie texts there are. and if there are none or very few, search for other Koorie texts that can be used (see the resources section).

Reflection

Focus on the Koorie students you teach.

Think about what you expected of them at the beginning of the year and consider how you came by these expectations.

To what extent do you think your expectations of your Koorie students will affect the way you teach them?

After learning about Koorie English, have your expectations changed?

Teacher Expectations/Assumptions

Teacher expectations may be based on assumptions and can have a huge effect on Koorie students. If the expectations are low, students will tend to work at that level. Therefore teachers should have high expectations of all their students.

Discussion Points to be Used With Peers

1. The role teachers play in improving the environment for Koorie students.
2. Different approaches that would be useful for teaching Koorie students?
3. How can the organisation of the classroom support Koorie students learning of literacy?
4. What attitudes and practices of teachers can lead to successful learning of literacy for Koorie students.

6. Classroom strategies to support code-switching

Consultation

During the consultations teachers raised a number of questions that highlight the need for classroom strategies to assist teachers.

How do you educate other teachers about this issue?

How can observation of code switching with siblings, community and friends assist teachers?

Can you hear the difference when Koorie students speak in Koorie English?

How do Koorie students write in Koorie English?

Are teachers confident to teach in Koorie English?

What can you do about the pressure on teachers to teach SAE?

How can you change any pre-conceived ideas, stereotyping or ignorance about Koorie English that teachers may have?

What do you do if teachers don't value Koorie English?

What should teachers do when they lack cultural knowledge?

How do teachers assess students writing in Koorie English?

Is there Professional Development for teachers about Koorie English?

Is individual teaching culturally appropriate?

Strategies to Improve Classroom Practice

The biggest challenge that teachers raised is the expectation from the Department of Education that all students in the school system must learn to speak Standard Australian English at appropriate levels. National benchmarks for students as stated on the Education and Training website that the NAPLAN tests assess all students in Years 3,5,7 and 9 each year "using common tests in reading, writing and language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy". It's accepted that students who achieve below these minimum standards will find it difficult to progress satisfactorily at school. Most students achieve at least the benchmark in reading, writing and numeracy yet a significant proportion of Indigenous students do not. While the pattern of Indigenous achievement generally reflects that of all students (that is, Indigenous and non-Indigenous combined) there are large gaps between the achievement of Indigenous and all students (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007).

This puts added pressure on teachers when they teach students for whom English is a second language, because they have to begin with the assumption that they are teaching SAE to students who do not speak a different language at home.

Recognise that Standard Australian English is a Second Language for Some Koorie Students

While there is little research into the acquisition of SAE by non-standard speakers there is a lot of evidence to show that second language learners learn best when their first language or mother tongue is strong.

The benefit of having a strong first language or dialect is that a person has a wide linguistic pool with which to think, or understand to process what is going on. A strong first language also supports a strong sense of identity.

It is the same for Aboriginal students. If their Aboriginal English is strong, they will be able, more easily, to switch linguistic codes from Koorie English to SAE, whenever they see the need. This does not mean replacing one with the other. It means that the student will be conscious of having access to two useful dialects and will be able to choose which will provide the most advantage in particular circumstances.

Accept and Value Koorie English

It is important that teachers not only accept that Koorie English is a dialect of English but they also value that it is the language that children bring from home and therefore is the 'mother tongue'.

Learn to Recognise Koorie English Speakers

Koorie English speakers can be recognised by their pronunciation, the way they sound their vowels, body language (such as eye contact), through their different dialogue, their different accent, gesture, use of traditional words and different grammar.

Utilise Koorie English in the Classroom

Once teachers accept that Koorie English is a legitimate dialect of English, their teaching methods for Koorie English speakers will change. They will allow the students to speak in their dialect and then learn how to code switch depending on the audience and the purpose.

Observation

Observe Koorie English speakers interacting with their peers and community members to gain an understanding of when and why they use Koorie English. Watch how they code switch according to their audience to assess their ability to code switch effectively.

Listen to Koorie students as a valuable way of developing an understanding of the phonology of Koorie English to assist Koorie students when they have to write in SAE.

Koorie students may write in Koorie English if they are comfortable and feel that their language is acceptable. Some Koorie students may not write at all if they don't. Accepting the dialect of Koorie English writing is the first step to helping students to code switch.



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Reflection

What do I know about Koorie culture?
What strategies do I use to teach Koorie English speakers in my classroom?

Teachers don't have to teach in Koorie English but need accurate information to have the understanding and knowledge of how to teach Koorie English speaking students to code switch to SAE depending on the audience and purpose.

Professional Development

Giving teachers information and resources about Koorie English will lead to changes in the way they view Koorie English. Discussing issues about Koorie English with each other will also lead to a greater awareness.

Therefore schools should support teachers to have Professional Development about KE. Any Professional Development should be taught in collaboration with local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups and/or community members.

Because in Education policy it is imperative that all Australian students achieve a certain standard of SAE does put pressure on teachers. One teacher commented "this has the effect of putting pressure on teachers to "perform" high performance in students achieving good grades in literacy and numeracy. Therefore teachers feel "pressured" to enforce SAE." However, information about Koorie English will inform teachers and lead to a change in any stereotypes or negative ideas that they may have about Koorie English and enable them to teach Koorie students to achieve high levels of literacy.

Teachers who lack of cultural knowledge need to be educated about Aboriginal people and histories through a cultural awareness/education program to understand the need for them to embrace the language that Koorie students bring with them from home.

Assessment

Teachers don't have to assess Koorie English of their students, rather they should assess the success of students code switching between KE and SAE.

One on one teaching on a withdrawal basis has a definite advantage because the student is free of social distractions, however, teachers need to be aware that withdrawal from the class may suggest to other students that the student has remedial needs, leading to 'shame'.

Create a Culturally Safe Learning Environment

The teachers consulted said they felt it is important to create a culturally safe learning environment for students. To do this when teaching Koorie English students means to value the mother tongue of the students and make them feel comfortable about speaking the language they bring from their cultural backgrounds.

Build Relationships With Students and Their Families

Recognise the importance of building a relationship with the families of the students because the kinship structure is important to Koorie students. It is important to do this so that the relationship between the home and school will not appear so different to the students.

Allow Opportunities for the Students to Engage in Koorie Perspectives Across the Curriculum

Language is culture and Koorie English reflects the culture of Koorie students. Therefore incorporating Koorie perspectives in the curriculum will further provide opportunities for the students to feel culturally safe and will make them feel comfortable enough to speak in their dialect. This will lead to strengthening the identity of the Koorie students.

It is important to include Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum so that students understand that literacy is social. Curriculum has been developed that incorporates Aboriginal perspectives across subjects (included in the resource section). The Language map on the VACL website shows the location of each Victorian language group and can assist in the recognition of the language group in the area where the school is located. This will assist in including Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum.

There are also language apps available from Apple app (noted in the resource section) that have traditional words of some Victorian language groups.

Examples of Koorie English Stories Compared with SAE

1. The day I killed a turkey.

The Day Killed A Turkey (KE)

One day me and my cousin went hunting for kangaroos it was fu till that one watr turkey bit the bait and ran a way, me and my cousin grabed the spears and chased him when we stoped the turkey ran off i hour latr me and Ayden had more bait not for th roos the water turkey so we grabbed bread and a few hours later the water turkey came back for the bread then ne and my cousin chucked the spears i got the water turkey in the gut my cousin got the head

Written by Ian Briggs

2. My brother and I.

Me and Bruz

Wun day me and my bros was walking don toun wen we saw some mobs in da park. We stopt and wen over to dem. Dey said dey wer goin to da pictures. We didn wan ta go so we kep walkin.

We wen along a bit an saw big dawg. It started running at us and me and bros start running down the road. Bros beat me and dawg bit me. I started screaming at im so he stopt and picked up a stik. He thre it at the dawg and it im in the ead. The dawg bark and run off. Me and bros ran ome.

Dad come and aks me wat hapen. Bros told dad and dad said he gonna go and killem da dawg. Me and bros didn wan im ta do dat. We was scared of da dog. But dad got a big stik and wen lookin for dat dawg. Wen dad got to wer da dawg was it wa gon. We wen ome and dad sad don go der agin. We didnt.

The Day I Killed a Turkey (SAE)

One day my cousin and I went hunting for kangaroos. It was okay until one water turkey bit the bait and ran away. My cousin and I grabbed the spears and chased him. When we stopped the turkey ran off. One hour later Hayden and I had more bait, not for the roos, but for the water turkey, so we grabbed bread and a few hours later the water turkey came back for the bread. Then my cousin and I threw the spears. I got the water turkey in the stomach and my cousin got him in the head.

My Brother and I

One day my brother and I were walking down town when we saw some people in the park. We stopped and went over to them. They said they were going to the pictures. We didn't wnt to go so we kept walking. We went along a bit and saw a dog. It started running at us so my brother and I started running down the road. My brother beat me and the dog bit me. I started screaming at my brother so he stopped and picked up a stick. He threw it at the dog and hit it in the head. The dog barked and run off. My brother and I ran home.

Dad came and asked me what happened. My brother told dad and dad said he was going to go and kill the dog. My brother and I didn't want him to do that. We were scared of the dog. But dad got a big stick and went looking for that dog. When he got to where the dog was, it was gone. We went home and dad said "don't go there again". We didn't.

Comparing Koorie English Words and Their SAE Counterparts

Dat - that	Djas - just	Killim-kill him	Emiyu- emu
Dis- this	E's-he's	Big mob-big mob	Nyus to-used to
Dose-those	Em-him	Propa-proper	Mitter-mister
Bin-been	Yuntupela-you the fellow	Cuz-cousin	Tvelv-twelve
Hunding-hunting	Mookie-ghost	Seen-saw	Stric-strict
Oliday-holiday	Nother-another	Ard-hard	Das-that
Youse-you	Ownlotion-own relation	Bight-bite	Enry-Henry
Toda-today	Gunna-going to	Avin-having	Wen-when
Aks-ask	Dere-there	Den-then	Owda-how that
Ya-you	Deadly-great	Goin-going	Whatshadoin-what are you doing
Gamin-pretend	Moogela-a liar	Gwarmi- mental	Djarmbi- mate
Everythink-everything	Wif-with	Mimini-woman	Nyukun-look

KE and SAE Sentences

1. KE Nomo, putim apostrophes when thadun blanga dijun.
SAE No more putting in apostrophes when they don't belong in there.
2. KE I ad a filladafish meal en den we were on da way.
SAE I had a fillet of fish meal and then we were on the way.
3. KE We wen strtaight toda beach en i learnt owda boogie board. It was chup.
SAE We went straight to the beach and I learned how to boogie board. It was great.
4. KE `e fairly busted out laughin'
SAE He burst out laughing
5. KE Real big mob over der
SAE There are a lot of people over there
6. KE When `e comes back I'll flog im
SAE He'll be in trouble when he comes back
7. KE We was `avin dinner
SAE We were having dinner
8. KE Where was youse
SAE Where were you
9. KE I'll aks im
SAE I'll ask him
10. KE Hey djarmbi, whats hadoin?
SAE Hey mate what are you doing?
11. KE ey cuz wat's appening?
SAE Hey cousin what's happening?
12. KE Wen ya goin?
SAE When are you going?
13. KE Toda re youse goin ta toun? SAE Today are you going to town?

Different Dialects of English

There are many different dialects of English. The English Language In 30 Accents (Animated) and/or English Variations (Part 1) The Forking Tomatoes on Youtube provide examples of different dialects of English. Listening to different people speak different dialects highlight the differences.

Kinship

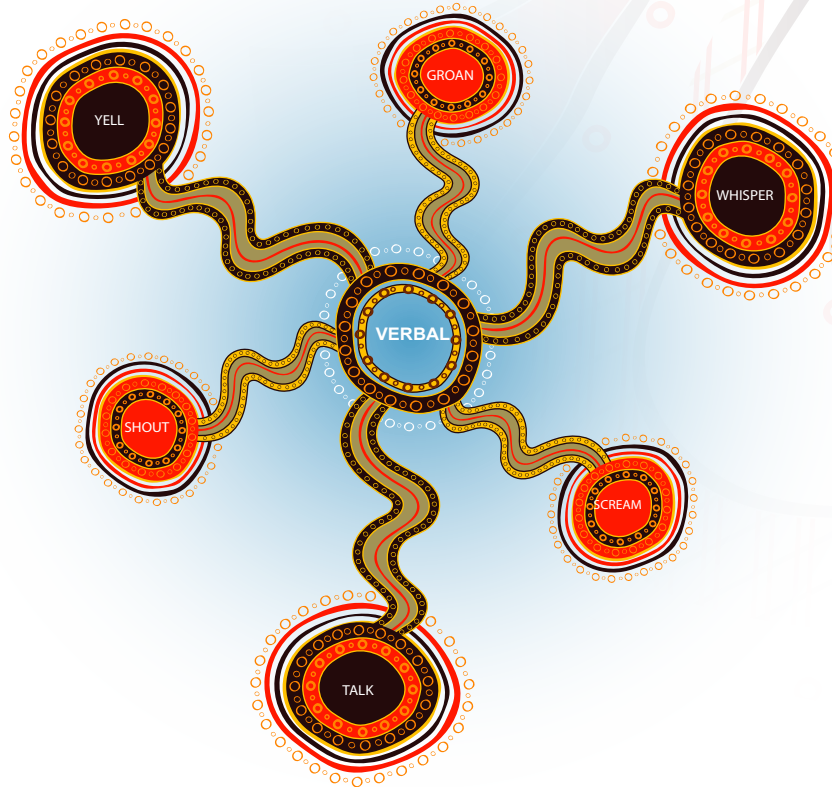
'Bruz', 'cuz', 'sis', 'aunt', 'uncle'. Koories call each other by their kinship relationship to each other. An example of this is that a mother will call her children 'mum' indicating that she is in the mother relationship with them. An aunt would call her nieces or nephews 'aunt' indicating that she is their aunt.

Koories when meeting another Koorie will often refer to them as 'bruz' or 'cuz' depending on their kinship relationships.



Different Forms of Language Maps

Verbal Map



Non-Verbal Cues



Culture Through Song

Aboriginal artists and have dialects that can be distinguished in the songs. Artists such as Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu 'Gurrumul History (I was born blind) on Youtube and Archie Roach 'Took the Children away' two examples of dialects.

Language Development

Code switching

Once there is an acceptance of Koorie English as a legitimate and valuable dialect of English the process of teaching children to code switch can begin. Koorie students may know how to code switch when they come to school but some may need to be taught when it is necessary to code switch and how to do it.

Audience and purpose

What is the concept of 'audience and purpose' and how does it relate to writing and speaking in both informal and formal language. Introduce the terms Standard Australian English (SAE) and non-standard Australian English (Non-SAE) and develop activities that demonstrate these.

Reflection

When should students speak KE or SAE - who is the audience and what is the purpose?

The identification of both SAE and Non-SAE will enable students to switch from one to the other effectively. They will be able to translate everyday sentences from SAE to KE and vice versa.

Engaging a local community member who speaks Koorie English as a first language to come into the classroom and tell their story and/or tuning into a local Koorie radio station is one method of recognising Koorie English dialect.

Encouraging students to identify when they are writing in Koorie English and when they are writing in SAE will create an awareness of when phonetic spelling is required and when standardised spelling is expected.

To ensure that the curriculum is inclusive, involve Koorie students at all levels.

The following words can be found in the following find-a-word puzzle:

KE	SAE	KE	SAE	KE	SAE
deadly	good	appy	happy	youse	you
Dem	them	usta	used to	hall	All
aks	ask	bros	brother	cud	could
gon	go on	dose	those	es	Hes
cuz	cousin	djillawah	toilet	moola	Money
djarmbi	mate	moodjela	liar	gungi	policeman

KE and SAE Find-a-Word

D	H	M	O	O	D	J	E	L	A	T	O	I	L	E	T
P	C	O	U	J	I	N	G	O	N	K	B	M	D	D	C
P	G	P	H	A	P	P	Y	T	S	K	A	R	E	O	S
O	H	A	L	L	C	U	D	E	M	D	Y	A	A	S	E
L	R	P	O	M	O	O	L	A	E	C	O	P	D	E	D
I	A	J	U	S	T	A	Q	V	D	N	U	P	L	F	J
C	O	U	L	D	H	S	G	M	E	O	S	Y	Y	G	A
E	O	U	S	E	M	G	U	E	M	T	E	M	G	N	R
M	C	U	D	O	R	O	N	H	B	T	Y	O	O	P	M
A	A	L	L	A	R	O	G	T	E	H	O	N	O	T	B
N	H	E	S	E	P	D	I	J	Y	E	U	E	N	H	I
B	R	O	T	H	E	R	P	Y	P	M	R	Y	A	O	G
Q	P	O	I	B	U	S	E	D	T	O	I	R	L	S	H
O	F	A	S	D	J	I	L	L	A	W	A	H	S	E	N

7. Resources

“Ways of Being, Ways of Talk”

‘Ways of Being, Ways of Talk’ material was published by the WA Department of Education and Training in 2007 and is available on request in appropriate alternative formats including Braille, audio tape and computer.

It consists of a series of four, fifteen to twenty-minute videos, supported by scripts and resource papers. The individual videos are entitled:

- A Shared World of Communication
- Moving into Other Worlds
- Now You See it, Now You Don't
- Two-Way Learning and Two Kinds of Power

Each video deals with a discrete topic, but also links to the others in the series and are designed to assist:

- teachers' wishing to engage students in the critical analysis of language difference and literacy; presenters wishing to facilitate professional development in Aboriginal English;
- non-Aboriginal service providers who work with Aboriginal clients and

Aboriginal service providers who work with non-Aboriginal clients.

The videos are intended for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal audiences.

Each video is designed to stimulate a curiosity about the whole series.

The project derives the ABC element of its title from the following foundation principles: A - accept Aboriginal English (AE); B - bridge to Standard Australian English (SAE); and C - cultivate Aboriginal ways of approaching experience and knowledge.

“Understanding stories my way: Aboriginal-English speaking students’ (mis)understanding of school literacy materials in Australian English”.

This was developed by Farzad Sharifian and the Department of Education WA. This material is available on request in appropriate alternative formats including Braille, audio tape and computer.

Aims, significance and background

One of our kids got into big trouble for calling one of his classmates 'horse' but in our home talk 'horse' means 'smart'. (An Aboriginal or Islander Education Officer.)

Anecdotes such as the above are evidence of miscommunication between Aboriginal-English speaking students and their non-Aboriginal classmates and teachers. This is due to differences that exist between Aboriginal English and other varieties of English spoken in Australia, including Australian English. But such miscommunication does not

Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL) Resources

These resources are useful because Koorie English includes words from traditional Aboriginal languages. VACL has worked with local Aboriginal community members to develop a number of Language Apps. These apps can be downloaded from the App Store. They have been included because participants consulted wanted to have resources included that incorporated Aboriginal languages in the specific Traditional Owner areas.



Gunditjmara Digital Resources

Students at Heywood & District Secondary College, Warrnambool Primary School, Merrivale Primary School and Warrnambool East Primary School have all contributed to a suite of six Aboriginal language apps featuring local Gunditjmara languages. Launched on the 26th October 2015, the six interactive digital storybook apps feature five traditional Gunditjmara Creation Stories and one original story about friendship and reconciliation, written by students at Warrnambool Primary School. With the support of key Gunditjmara Elders, Laka Gunditj Language Worker Joel Wright, Koorie Engagement Support Officers, principals, teachers and local artists, students have beautifully illustrated six stories and recorded narratives in four languages; Peek wurrung, Dhauwurd wurrung, Keerray woorroong and English.



Gunnai/Kurnai Digital Resources

A set of six Gunnai/Kurnai story books originally published in 2008 have been redeveloped into digital resources and released as six brand new Aboriginal language apps featuring Gunnai/Kurnai language of the Gunnai/Kurnai peoples of Gippsland in east Victoria. Launched on Monday 14th December 2015 at Dala Yooro Pre-School in Bairnsdale, the six interactive digital storybook apps feature traditional Gunnai/Kurnai Creation Stories including why Kowern the Echidna has spikes on his back and how Wurrin the Sun was made. These stories are supported by illustrations and narration from Gunnai/Kurnai community members and artists. Interactive digital story books are a great resource for children of all ages to develop reading and comprehension skills and can be used as part of a lesson plan or reading strategy and to help children learn spelling and pronunciation.



Woi Wurrung Digital Resources

In 2015, VACL launched three interactive digital storybooks at Thornbury Primary School, featuring Creation Stories of the Wurundjeri People in both Woi wurrung and English. As part of the project 15 Indigenous students from Thornbury Primary School were selected to create illustrations and record narratives for the digital storybooks. The student's creative use of language, art and technology has enabled the telling of Balayang Wurr Garrabil-u (Why Bats are Black), Dulaiwurrung Mungka-nj-bulanj (How the Platypus Was Made) and Gurrborra Nguba-nj Ngabun Baanj (Why the Koala doesn't Drink Water) to a global audience.



Wemba Wemba Digital Resource

Introduction to Wemba Wemba language

Launched in 2016, Swan Hill Primary School students have created a Wemba Wemba Language resource in the form of an interactive digital app, which contains word list categories accompanied by images and audio, in Wemba Wemba. The student's creative use of language, art and technology has resulted in an interactive app with 13 word categories, including animals, body parts, counting, placenames, phrases, objects and songs. This digital project is a partnership between Swan Hill Primary School, Traditional Owners, Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL), Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. (VAEAI) & Miromaa Aboriginal Language and Technology Centre. The development of these digital resources will support language reclamation and revitalisation activities in Victorian schools and communities.



Wadawurrung Digital Resource

Introduction to the Wadawurrung Language of the region that encompasses the Geelong and Ballarat areas of Victoria. Produced in partnership with the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation and the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages.



Tyalingi App

This App is an introduction to the Tati Tati, Mutti Mutti, Latji Latji and Wadi Wadi languages of north-western Victoria. The content in this app was developed by Brendan Kennedy and the Aboriginal community in Robinvale, in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages.



Taungurung App

This App is an introduction to the Taungurung Language of central Victoria. The content of this app was developed through a series of workshops with Taungurung community and Buxton Primary School students. These workshops were led by Dhaagung Wurrung (Taungurung) Elder Aunty Lee Healy, Linguist and Project Coordinator with Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation. Content was developed in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages.



“Making the Jump: A Resource Book for Teachers of Aboriginal Students”

A book written by Joyce Hudson and Rosalind Berry
 "The focus of Making the Jump is the acceptance of Aboriginal students' home language, and the use of that language as a jumping off point for teaching Standard Australian English. It is a valuable classroom resource for teachers working with students whose home language is Kriol or Aboriginal English."
 Originally published: 1997
 Authors: Rosalind Berry, Joyce Hudson

VAEAI Website



The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) website has many resources that teachers in schools can access. VAEAI is a state-wide Koorie Community organisation consisting of eight regions. These regions are divided on the basis of traditional networks with a number of Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (LAECGs) within each region. The local advisory arrangements are solidly embedded in local Communities through LAECGs, which are constituent units of VAEAI and have representation on the VAEAI Representative Council (VRC). Membership to the LAECG is open to all members of the Koorie Community in their respective localities. On the website in the section Resources for Schools and Families there are a number of resources that teachers can use including the following:

- Koorie Education Calendar
- Koorie Perspectives in Curriculum Bullet
- Protocols for Koorie Education in Victorian Primary and Secondary Schools
- Tuckerbag Classroom Resources Database: Indigenous Perspectives in the Classroom
- Learning about the Stolen Generations: The National Sorry Day Committee Resource
- Koorie Education Resources Register
- Koorie Skills Register
- School-Community Partnership Agreements
- Victorian Indigenous Honour Roll
- Koorie English and Code Switching
- Constitutional Recognition



Honey Ant Readers – Indigenous Books & Resources Beginners Set

For young Indigenous emergent readers. Includes features of light Aboriginal English (AE) with the text gradually and systemically moving into colloquial Standard Australian English (SAE) across the 15 books. The resources encourage interactive learning and prepare the young beginners for reading. A significant and popular adjunct are activities which have a focus on phonics and grammar, such as original songs and rhymes.

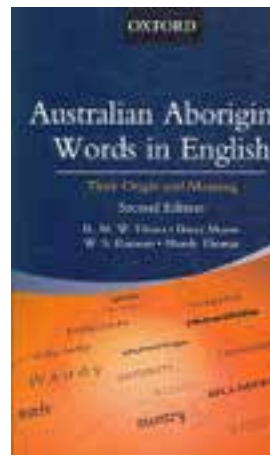


Available at honeyant.com.au

Australian Aboriginal Words in English: their origin and meaning

In 'Australian Aboriginal Words in English: their origin and meaning' compiled by Dixon, Moore, Ramson and Thomas the authors have identified over 400 Aboriginal loanwords from 71 different languages across Australia.

Origins and sources for the loanwords have been researched in the text as well as a brief introduction to Aboriginal languages. As the authors highlight, many Aboriginal loanwords originate from early points of settlement; for example from the Sydney languages of Dharug and Gadigal there are everyday words such as corroboree, boomerang, dingo and waratah which later became universally used across Australia. This book provides a lot of the content for this research guide with several other sources listed in the further reading section.



'Adventures of the Little Black Trackas'. Published by Neenann

Written by Merle Hall. Graphic design and illustrations by Gary Saunders
Published by Neenann, 40 Borrack Crescent Mernda 3754



This resource is a collection of four books, "Welcome in Bangerang" country poster with "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" and a CD, created for children aged 1 to 8. The children's books and CD teach Bangerang language words. Through these vibrant books children discover Koorie culture and learn about habitat and environment.

The four books are:

- Adventures of the little black trackas: Yedabila (animals)
- Adventures of the little black trackas: Bamanebala (insects)
- Adventures of the little black trackas: Djunda (bird)
- Adventures of the little black trackas: Wala yedabila (water animals)

Each book features a different child who takes readers on a tracking journey. The readers are asked questions, learning Bangerang words as they look closely at the animals, birds, insects and habitat. Each journey starts with an introduction by the narrator who is the little black tracka. Readers accompany the little black tracka and learn about habitat and Aboriginal culture. The fifth book 'Adventures of the little black trackas: Yakapana (Family)' is in production.

Available by email from:

Merle Hall: merlehall@hotmail.com

Gary Saunders: indigital@live.com

Gurranyin Borinya Cultural Enrichment Kit

Written by Esmerelda Bamblett

Published by Neenann

This kit contains Teachers notes and activities for students designed to strengthen identity and learn about Aboriginal culture. It also contains a book for primary school students called "The Secret Stone", a play for early secondary students called 'Daisy Chain', and a DVD of the story of the eagle as an analogy for the history of Aboriginal people. Each section is named for a Victorian Language group-

Section 1: Ngarri-the Bangerang word for story,

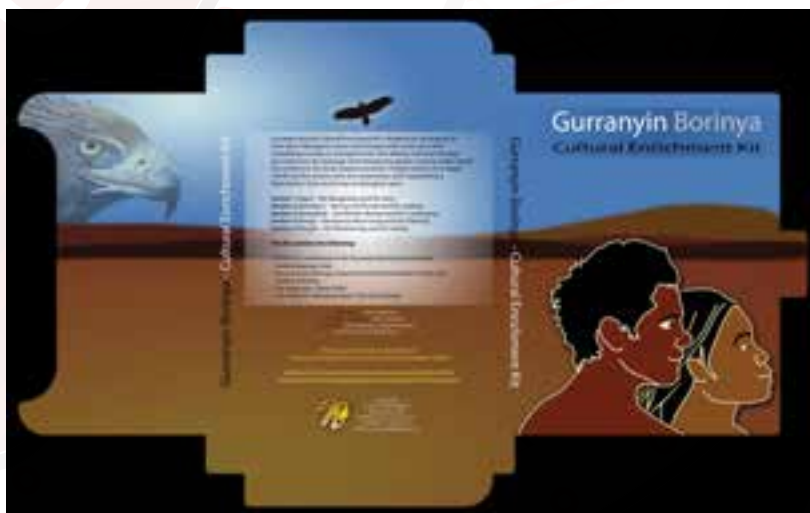
Section 2: Nyembera-the Gunnai/Kurnai word for wating,

Section 3: Boonyabuk-the Wemba Wemba word for connecting,

Section 4: Wanga, the Keeray Woorroong word for listening and

Section 5: Nganak, the Woivurrung word for seeing.

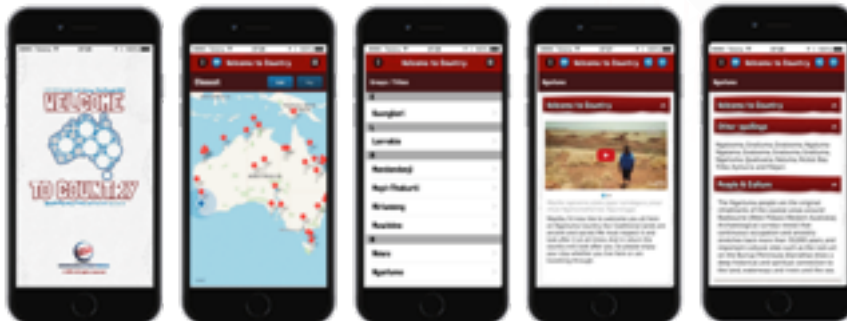
Available from Esmerelda Bamblett: esmerelda4@bigpond.com



Wel2Country app

The Welcome to Country iPhone app. delivers a simple 'Welcome to Country' video introduction~ to Australian indigenous culture, including basic cultural protocols that are tribal boundary geo-specific^. It can be downloaded from the App Store. It's free! The app. uses the GPS function of the iPhone to deliver a Welcome to Country video (or text/image version) to the user via a push notification. Where available within a tribal boundary^, the video will be of a traditional owner (or elder) welcoming the user/visitor to their country It gives the user a solid appreciation of the many cultures and languages groups that exist in Indigenous Australia. The app. also teaches users some simple, relevant information about Indigenous culture and the customs of the tribe within that tribal geo boundary. As such, the Wel2Country iPhone app. can be used by tourists, schools, employers, government departments, by tourism bodies and many other user groups and individuals.

One of the Welcome to Country languages on the app is from the Wurundjeri people in Melbourne.



VACCHO Website

Koorified is available on the VACHHO website. Koorified Aboriginal Communication and Well-Being”
[...www.vaccho.org.au/.../Koorified-Aboriginal-Communication-and-Well_ Being.pdf](http://www.vaccho.org.au/.../Koorified-Aboriginal-Communication-and-Well_Being.pdf)

It was developed through a partnership between VACCHO and the School of Nursing and Midwifery at LaTrobe University. It was written for anyone who has an interest in communication and Aboriginal people. This resource focuses on the many styles and continuing use of Aboriginal communication.



8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Consultations

Consultations were undertaken in five areas of Victoria, Ballarat, Morwell, Shepparton, Melbourne and Bendigo to give teachers and community members an overview of Koorie English. Participants were asked what they see as issues and challenges for teachers if they are to recognise Koorie English speakers. They were also asked to fill in a survey at the end of the session. The outcome of these consultations is included. The Ballarat and Morwell workshops were a full day and Melbourne and Shepparton, half a day.

Ballarat Workshop

There were four teachers and three community members at the Ballarat consultation. The teachers were completely unaware that Koorie English is a dialect of English and had not previously had any information about it. They were happy to participate in the workshop and felt that it would be good for the students if teachers have an understanding about Koorie English and how it may impact on the learning of literacy.

Participants were shown the DVD that was included in the 'Deadly Eh Cuz!' kit and they all found it useful because it included teachers, speakers of Koorie English and LAECG representatives perspectives about Koorie English.

Some of the points made by the participants about strategies that teachers could use included:

- The need to create a culturally safe learning environment for Koorie English speakers
- The importance of building relationships with students and their families
- The value of Koorie English as the 'mother tongue' of the students
- Giving students opportunities to engage in Koorie perspectives
- Developing tools, strategies and resources for educators to use.

Some of the challenges that emerged include:

- How teachers use or utilise the language within the classroom
- How other teachers can be educated about Koorie English
- How to observe Koorie students code switching with siblings and other people
- Listening to the way Koorie students speak
- Observing the written Koorie English of Koorie students.
- The confidence of teachers to teach Koorie English
- Pre-conceived ideas and stereotyping teachers may have
- Ignorance about the features of Koorie English
- Teachers not valuing Koorie English as a dialect
- Teachers lacking cultural knowledge

Workshop 1:

How do you recognise Koorie English speaking students?

- Through oral presentation – verbal communication with friends
- Assessments as a starting point – do these recognise Koorie English
- Looking at written work
- Observation – eye contact – place in classroom
- Relationships with parents
- System – Enrolment forms – transition plans (early years and different schools)
- English is a second language
- Dropping off sounds such as 'h'
- Body language / eye contact
- Code Switching
- Over generalised words such as 'like'

How do you integrate it without losing it?

What happens if assessment does identify Koorie English – different assessment – different approaches

Workshop 2:

The participants watched the 'Deadly Eh Cuz!' DVD and then discussed it.

Workshop 3:

How do teachers incorporate Koorie English into the classroom?

- Create a culturally safe learning environment
- Build relationships with students and their families
- Value it
- Allow opportunities for the children to engage in Koorie perspectives.
- Classroom practice
- Tools / strategies / resources for educators to use.
- Adapting conscious of learning styles – demonstrating.
- Make it culturally safe.
- PD on Koorie English.
- Follow up with students / tracking / recording
- Positive relationships with family and students
- Fun!
- Student dictionary – spelling of words – SAE and KE words
- Use story apps
- Create posters and books
- Guest Speakers – Aboriginal Role Models
- Reading KE texts – change text to SAE
- Write Koorie Stories
- Create games to teach the difference between KE and SAE
- PD for everyone
- Whether or not families identify
- Other staff who don't think it's necessary

Workshop 4:

Challenges and Issues for teachers

- How to use or utilise the language within the classroom
- Educating other teachers on this issue
- Observation (code changing with siblings etc)
- Listening
- They way they write
- Confidence
- Access to PD because they are not aware of Koorie English
- Pre conceived ideas / stereotyping
- Ignorance
- Fear of not being P.C
- Not valuing Koorie English as a language
- Lack of cultural knowledge
- Strategies to teach Koorie English to Koorie students
- Text books – readers / storybook with KE (resources)
- Koorie people - collaboration / seek advice / consultation / guest speaker
- Teachers don't recognise or know about Koorie English
- Creating a culturally safe learning environment
- Knowledge and awareness
- Access to resources
- Assessment for – to access if it requires intervention not purely KE
- PD – information sharing in relation to KE
- Engagement with families to acknowledge and support Koorie children
- Classroom – social – responses (creating a supportive, safe learning environment)

Workshop 4:

Morwell

There were two teachers and four community members at the Morwell consultation. Once again the Morwell teachers did not have any idea about Koorie English as a legitimate dialect of English, although they recognised that the Koorie students in their schools speak to each other in Koorie English in the playground and when they are interacting with their friends in community settings.

Some of the strategies they thought could include:

- Having Koorie role models come into the school,
- Promoting and celebrating Koorie English and demonstrating its acceptance in the school setting
- Acknowledging to the students that it is okay for them to speak and write in Koorie English
- Having Koorie resources, such as books written in Koorie English.

Challenges and issues

One issue that teachers felt that had to be dealt with was that the curriculum issue is that teachers have to find a way to accept Koorie English at school but make sure that students still learn Standard Australian English.

One teachers experience: was that when the Secretariat for National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) people came to the school and handed out bags to the Koorie students, one Koorie student got passed by until he said he is a Koorie. This was the first time this student identified as a Koorie, but he did so because this school has been building the identity of the Koorie students by providing a culturally safe environment.

The Koorie students would come to school and get told that they speak wrong. The participants said there is a need to educate all school staff about KE so they know how to interact with Koorie students. They also felt that it's not what teachers say, but how they say it. It is important to make the students feel that teachers care about what they are doing.

Workshop 1

How do you recognise Koorie English speaking students?

- How they speak – their grammar
- They code switch in their groups – white kids and black kids
- Their interaction with their peers
- Manner and body language
- Depends who they are with
- Being conscious of it
- Their words are different
- Its dialect
- Recognise there is a difference
- Koorie English differs from place to place

Workshop 2

Participants watched the 'Deadly Eh Cuz!' DVD and discussed it.

- They liked how the teachers talked to the young students about how they see Koorie English.
- They liked the video and felt it was relevant and needs to be included because they said the issue has not aged and there are still those challenges identified in the DVD, so it should be included in the KETGP.
- In prep and grade one is how you see it, is how you write it. Then as they get older they have to learn the skill of reading in Standard Australian English. By grade 6 they can't read at the level they need to be because of the way they have been taught.
- Curriculum Issue – We need to find a way to accept the Koorie English at school but make sure they still learn SAE.
- Teacher has a grievance because he has a short time with kids. He wants to include Indigenous materials but has found it hard. His students will become more involved when they are given Indigenous materials.
- The KETGP should include a list of resources that teachers can use with information on where to get them. Also the year levels that relate to the resources should be included.

Workshop 3 & 4

- Subjects that it fits into – not a stand alone but integrating in the entire curriculum
- Koorie role models – promote and celebrate KE and demonstrate its acceptance in the school setting
- Acknowledge to the child that it is ok
- Koorie resources – books with Koorie English

Shepparton

When asked how teachers and community members recognise Koorie English speakers, participants said through their pronunciation of words, their body language (such as eye contact) and through the different dialogue.

The reasons the community members felt it is important to speak, learn and use Koorie English was because it "...defines who we are and how we communicate around everything we do in life."

When looking at the 'Deadly Eh Cuz!' DVD the participants said that it is a much needed resource that should be re-done and distributed to all Victorian schools.

Participants would like to see Professional Development about the Koorie English Teacher Guidance Package.

They would also like to see an explanation of Koorie English such as examples of pronunciation of the 'h'. They want to see the following included:

- Cultural awareness
- Language posters
- Top 10 tips to embed Koorie English in the school curriculum.

One participant mentioned a WA resource called "Making the Jump" that is an Aboriginal English resource.

One comment was "I think that the DVD 'Deadly Eh, Cuz!' Is a very much needed learning resource that should be re-done and distributed throughout all schools. Good to see all kids in the DVD and see them now all grown up with families of their own."

Melbourne

Participants were asked to look at how they recognise speakers of Koorie English. The participants recognised KE through pronunciation and how students speak, sentence formation and through their written work. They went on to explain how Koorie children drop their 'h', they pronounce words wrong such as bin instead of been and they shorten sentence structure "he go toilet", instead of "he is going to the toilet". Many teachers hear KE mostly out in the playground where the students interact with their own peers and therefore are comfortable to speak their language.

What they wanted to see included in the Koorie English Teacher Guidance Package was:

- Effective code switching methods
- Importance of code switching
- Value of KE and respecting and acknowledging it as a language
- Teachers PD that includes cultural awareness. There should have been whole of school PD of local

Aboriginal history and identity

- Work from a positive model – what do Koorie English speakers have to share and develop further.
- Samples of work from Koorie students
- Videos of Koorie English speakers
- Forms of non-verbal communication in KE
- Teaching ideas such as write/tell a story in KE and then in SAE

Challenges

- Government driven policy agendas all point to SAE for literacy and numeracy. One teacher explained “This has the effect of putting pressure on teachers to “perform” and to expect high performance from their students to achieve good grades in literacy and numeracy. Therefore teachers feel “pressure” to enforce SAE.”
- “Teachers need to be educated around the benefits of embracing and valuing KE and the understanding that it can and will lead to better outcomes through increased engagement of Koorie students.”

Bendigo

What have you observed about how Koorie English impacts on Koorie students?

- Hands on approach
- Language is lost because Australia is becoming Americanised. “We are losing our own identity”
- Koorie students prefer outdoors learning
- Processing words/language
- Relate it back to community connections
- Koories are visual
- Allow movement / stimulation for students
- Relationship / connection to educators and teachers
- Parent connection in early years of school and continue through
- Literacy resources age appropriate for students and families
- Language barrier from home to school
- Body language e.g. eye contact in our culture...not to have direct eye contact is respect
- CUST training will benefit teachers and school
- VCE English barrier
- Koorie English needs to be understood by wider community
- The teachers were unsure about what Koorie English was before today
- Lack of understanding of teachers and teachers need to be aware of KE
- Limited exposure of KE and where do they get the information
- Teachers need to try and not correct kids on their KE because it is part of their culture.
- Our kids change between both worlds.
- There is definitely a language barrier that needs to be addressed.
- There are differences in words and how we speak them.

Participants said “we need to teach kids how to code switch between SAE and KE. We need to switch when the audience changes”.

Reactions to KE and whether it is useful

One woman said she has realised that she has had problems because of her KE. She hasn't always known how to spell things because of the way she says things. One woman talked about having her older son skip the NAPLAN test because he is already having problems before in his own school work.

What do teachers need to know in order to teach Koorie Students?

One teacher did try to refer one of her students to a speech therapist because she thought the student had a speech problem. The teaching of phonetics is geared towards students who already have a clear understanding of language. One participant commented “Teachers these days will jump on speech therapy before actually knowing the child's background or understanding. CALD teachers really need to know and understand KE better. Koorie students will drop off because they get to the place where they need to know SAE and they have been taught too late so they can't keep up.

Many of the participants realised from being taught about KE today that their children are not struggling at school but that they were speaking the language they had been taught since they were young. They are not actually struggling to read or write what they hear because they hear something different to other kids. They said “We think in our language because it is what we grew up with”.

They also commented “We as people are constantly correcting ourselves with our KE. We think before we speak so we know we are saying the right words”. One participant is a qualified teacher but she found it hard to code switch at her school. She would talk to the Koorie kids in KE and come into the staff room and struggle to speak SAE with the other teachers. As a result she gave up teaching Reactions to the DVD “Deadly Eh Cuz!”

The kids seemed happy to be where they were. The teachers on the DVD really learnt from the video. The teachers realised that it was KE and not bad English. The kids were asked to write in KE but didn't even know it was called KE as it was their language they grew up with. The DVD needs to be incorporated into the CUST learning. One teachers likes the positivity of the DVD.

What do you think should be included in the package?

- Grammatical differences need to be looked at. Examples of KE.
- Something around kinship structure and the words we use to describe each other or talk to each other.
- Activities for teachers to include in the classroom.

Appendix 2: Koorie English Surveys

Survey Questions

A survey was undertaken prior to each workshop to ascertain the understanding and knowledge of teachers and community members about Koorie English. Following are the survey questions.

1. What do you think Koorie English is?
2. Why do you think Koorie students speak Koorie English?
3. Do you think that the recognition of Koorie English as a dialect is important?
4. What is a dialect of English?
5. What do you need to know as a teacher to teach Koorie students to speak and write in SAE?
6. As a teacher, do you see a difficulty in allowing students to speak and/or write in Koorie English?
7. How important do you think having Koorie people speak/write in SAE?
8. Where do you think it is appropriate for students to use Koorie English?

Ballarat & Morwell Survey Responses

Teachers thought Koorie English was a combination of language that is used in the home and in the non-Indigenous communities and also a language/dialect that embraces Koorie dialect. The community members felt it was broken English.

The teachers felt Koorie students speak Koorie English because it is the mother tongue that connects family and culture while the community members felt it was the way they communicate with each other and a way of keeping their language going.

When asked do they think schools should recognise Koorie English and whether Koorie children should be able to speak and write in Koorie English the community members said yes because it will help to educate non-Indigenous people and help them to understand. The teachers said yes because it "...recognises the student. It doesn't deny what exists and has developed." They want there to be an understanding of the need for Koorie English to be accepted.

The community members felt it was important for Koorie kids to speak and write in SAE because both forms of English will help the child in their life. They also felt it was good for children to speak Koorie English all the time, so they don't lose their culture.

When asked what the teachers need to know in order to teach Koorie students to speak and write in SAE they said they need awareness of how the KE influences SAE and that they need to accept the students' culture and then help them to adapt to SAE. When asked if they see a difficulty in allowing students to speak or write KE they said there should not be a difficulty, but one teacher explained that "there should be recognition of where the student(s) have come from and what it is. However, there is need to educate children to what exists to allow them the skills to enter work and live in society."

The teachers felt it was appropriate for students to use Koorie English when the student considers it appropriate and when in informal conversations. They believed it is important for Koorie kids to speak and write in SAE, so they can interact and communicate with their peers both Indigenous and non-Indigenous so that when they get into the working environment they can interact with their peers there.

Shepparton Survey Responses

When teachers were asked what they thought Koorie English was the majority said it was the dialect Aboriginal people speak. One teacher explained what she believed it was that "Children learn what they live, before going to school they learn of family, community or even culture." Community members believed Koorie English to be "a way in which they communicate with family and community" and also a feeling of being comfortable when communicating through Koorie English. They felt that children speak in Koorie English because they feel safe and comfortable in doing so and also because it is their first language with SAE being their second language.

All of the teachers felt it was very important for schools to recognise Koorie English as they felt it is the same as learning other languages at school and also it is about respect for culture and community. They also believe it is important for Koorie children to speak and write in Koorie English because its part of their culture and way of life. They did feel the only problem with teaching Koorie English is if the teacher is not knowledgeable on the area. All of the participants felt it was important for Koorie children to speak and write in SAE as it is necessary in the education system and to get through school. The system is all about SAE so Koorie students need to be aware of both their own and the systems way. The participants believed it is important for children to use Koorie English all the time and in everyday life as it is their culture.

Another participant said "I think the DVD of 'Deadly Eh, Cuz! Is a very much needed learning resource that should be re-done and distributed throughout all schools. Good to see the kids and see them all grown up now with families of their own."

Melbourne Survey Responses

Teachers and community members were asked what they thought Koorie English is and they believed it to be a dialect that Aboriginal people speak that is more casual and relaxed than SAE, while the community members said it's the language you learn from your mob and community. They were then asked why they thought Koorie students speak KE and they said because it's a sense of inclusion, it's their home language which has evolved over generations and it's something they have been using since they were babies. They all believed that it was important to recognise Koorie English as a dialect as it is culturally significant, it's about value and acceptance and it will help Koorie students to reach their full potential.

The content that teachers believed they needed to know in order to teach Koorie English was how to do it respectfully and to understand beforehand that this is something the child will bring to the table that will develop the child's education. None of the teachers felt it would be difficult to allow students to speak or write in KE because language is constantly involving and changing and also as one teacher put it that teachers have a duty as a professional to "dispel negative attitudes." They believed it was important for Koorie students to speak and write in SAE also as it will empower them in a positive way and prepare them for what the world has to offer. The majority of teachers and community members said they believed it was important for students to use KE all the time and in every situation however one teacher did say she believed that the students need to know how to code switch and know when to use KE and then SAE.

Bendigo Survey Responses

When asking the teachers what a dialect of English is they said "a local version of English relevant to area of birth or upbringing" and also a variation of English. The teachers thought Koorie English is an English where there is a combination of Koorie words. Another teacher explained that it is "A dialect of English in Victoria that has unique characteristics to its structure, oral presentation and understanding."

The reasons given for Koorie kids speaking Koorie English was because they are familiar with it; it is culturally relevant and they recognise it from their Elders. The teachers felt that in order to teach SAE to Koorie students they needed to have a cultural understanding and the knowledge and understanding of Koorie English. While some teachers did not see a difficulty in allowing students to speak or write in KE because they believed it is important culturally, one teacher did believe it may be difficult just because teachers are not fully aware of KE and not sure how it would work. All of the teachers believed it is important for Koorie students to speak and write in SAE because it is so widely used right up until VCE. They did believe it was important for students to use KE however one teacher did say it was difficult to say because "I feel I need a better understanding. Cultural development and identification is important."

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