Evaluating the Northern Territory Bilingual Education Program

Samantha Disbray

Australian Linguistics Society Conference, University of Melbourne, October 2013
Northern Territory Bilingual Education Program

• Established in response to the federal government’s call for remote Aboriginal children to have ‘their primary education in Aboriginal languages’ (Dept. Ed. 1974:6)

• Ran between 1974 and 2008 in 23 schools, providing teaching for Indigenous students in some 24 languages

• Ambiguous attitude and approach to the Program by the NT Department of Education
A map of the Northern Territory of Australia showing Bilingual Schools

1990 Annual Reports from Specialist Staff in Bilingual Programs in Northern Territory Schools

ISBN 0815-0621
handbook for teachers in bilingual schools

department of education darwin nt

The notes contained in this booklet have been put together as an interim measure to give teachers working in bilingual schools, especially those newly appointed, some information concerning the task ahead of them. Included also, because of their information value, are two articles presented as papers at a conference in 1973 - "The English Component of the Bilingual Program" and "Mathematics and the Bilingual Education Program".

The information is not, and could not be, exhaustive. Teachers will find other areas in which they would like guidelines provided. As it is hoped to produce a comprehensive handbook in the near future, all teachers are invited to submit suggestions on what they feel would be useful to include in such a handbook.

W.J. McGrath

DECEMBER, 1973
Recommendations concerning bilingual education in the Northern Territory

Prepared by
Dr. Geoff O'Grady
Dr. Ken Hale

1st July, 1974
bilingual program. And in areas of concern which lie within our particular professional competency, i.e., areas having to do with the role of language scholarship in bilingual education, we were able to gain a rather detailed picture of the linguistic and pedagogical foundation upon which the program is being built.

We are extremely impressed with the Northern Territory Bilingual Program – so much so that we are inclined to assert that this program constitutes one of the most exciting educational events in the modern world. It is, of course, just beginning and has a long and difficult road ahead of it. However, an increasing number of dedicated and highly competent Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are becoming committed to the program and are contributing the total range of their talents to it.

If the force of this initial impetus is enabled to continue apace, and if the effort to achieve maximum integration of the schools into the communities they serve is successful, the academic promise of bilingual education will, without question, be fulfilled.
Walungurru Kuula
(Kintore School circa 1984)
Evaluation Criteria?
Evaluation Criteria?

• Data on student academic outcomes in English literacy and Numeracy
  ➢ most recently, results in 2008 NAPLAN Testing - National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy
Evaluation Criteria?

3 Phases of review of the programs (Devlin 1995)

- Implementation reviews (1974-1979, Progress Reports of the Bilingual Consultative Committee)
- Accreditation Program (1980’s)
- Evaluation Process (1990’s)

• Questions regarding relevance of high stakes national testing and of the claims made regarding comparisons of 2008 NAPLAN data (Wigglesworth et al. 2011) and (Devlin 2009a).

• Overall little student academic outcome data systemically compiled, in schools in the bilingual program and those not in the program
Evaluation Criteria?

- Data on student academic outcomes in English literacy and Numeracy
- Community involvement in schools, teaching training and leadership
- Use of first language and multilingual instruction as a pedagogy
- Culturally responsive curriculum & resources
- Use of first language for cultural and linguistic maintenance

As set out in Bilingual Handbooks, expressed by Indigenous teachers and community members, and as set out in national and international literature (UNESCO 2008a, 2008b; Bernard Van Leer Foundation 2004; Harris 1995; Silburn et al. 2011)
Two-Way

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

(Devlin 2004: 26)
- Community involvement in schools, teaching training and leadership
- Use of first language and multilingual instruction as a pedagogy
- Culturally responsive curriculum & resources
- Use of first of first language for cultural and linguistic maintenance
Training and Up-skilling

Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (RATE Batchelor College)

In school mentors, teacher linguists

Training in own language studies:
School of Australian Linguistics -> Centre for Australian Languages and Linguistics, Batchelor College

80% of 41 trained teachers worked in schools with Bilingual Programs (Batt 2011)

- Community involvement in schools, teaching training and leadership
- Use of first language and multilingual instruction as a pedagogy
- Culturally responsive curriculum & resources
- Use of first of first language for cultural and linguistic maintenance
Karlarlapala-karlarla manu wirlkipala-karlarla manu wirlkipala wita-wita.

At Lajamanu School there are seven classrooms. In Nangala's classroom there are 40 children. In Nungarrayi's classroom there are 19 children. In Jampijinpa's classroom there are 20 children. In Nangala's classroom there are 34 children. In Kandaciepa's classroom there are 20 children. In Napaljarri's classroom there are 18 children. In Jakamarra's classroom there are 26 children.

How many children are there at school?

Community involvement in schools, teaching training and leadership

Use of first language and multilingual instruction as a pedagogy

Culturally responsive curriculum & resources

Use of first of first language for cultural and linguistic maintenance

Development and implementation of a Local Curriculum

Galtha Rom and Ganma at Yirrkala School

Dhanarangala Murrurinydji Gaywanagal, later Gattjirrk at Milingimbi School

Warlpiri Theme Cycle – 4 Warlpiri schools: Lajamanu, Yuendumu, Willowra, Nyirrpi

- Community involvement in schools, teaching training and leadership
- Use of first language and multilingual instruction as a pedagogy
- Culturally responsive curriculum & resources
- Use of first of first language for cultural and linguistic maintenance
Warlpiri Theme Cycle

Ngurrarre

Place

- Warlaja
  - kirda-manta
  - kirdu-ngurrre
  - The family
- Jukurrpa
  - The law or dreaming
- Kuruwarri
  - Dreaming designs
- Purlapa
  - vawulvu
  - Ceremonies
- Ngurna
  - Home
- Nagpa
  - Water
- Kuyu
  - Game, meat
- Watiya
  - Trees and plants
- Miyl
  - Vegetable foods
- Parna
  - Delicacies
- Nyurru-wiyi
  - The past
- Palka
  - The body
- Jurnarrpa
  - Things made
  - Manufactured items
- Jaru
  - Language

1987 SACE Development document
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term Year</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Ngapa Water</td>
<td>Watiya Trees &amp; plants</td>
<td>Jurnarrpa Possessions, belongs, tools, artifacts</td>
<td>Juju, Yawulya &amp; Purlapa Monsters, Ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Palka Body</td>
<td>Warlalja Family and kin</td>
<td>Kuyu Meat animals</td>
<td>Jaru &amp; Rdaka-rdaka Communication &amp; Hand signs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Jukurrpa &amp; Kuruwarri Stories &amp; Designs</td>
<td>Nyurru wiyi History</td>
<td>Ngurra / Walya Country &amp; Home</td>
<td>Miyi Vegetable Food</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resource Development

- 300+ Pitjantjatjara titles
- 400+ Pintupi-Luritja titles
- 700+ Warlpiri titles

- Primers
- Reader sets with work books
- Posters
- Flash cards
- Teaching handbooks
- Planners

- Community newsletters
- Calendars

- Audio-visual collections

- Community involvement in schools, teaching training and leadership
- Use of first language and multilingual instruction as a pedagogy
- Culturally responsive curriculum & resources
- Use of first of first language for cultural and linguistic maintenance
minyma
minyma miinyma minyma
minyma minnyma
minyma minyma mminyma
minymaa minyma

yalka

kutjupa

yanangu

minyma

minyma

m_nym_
k_tj_
Ngurra puntu nyinangu yaanguardu tjutalingku, pungu yuwankarra, mirri, ngurra kutjupanguru. Wati pampa kutju wantikatingu.
Wirliya-kurlu

yankirri wirliya

wardilyka wirliya

Reading Level One
Ngurlu Watiya-warnu

Wurajl-wurajl, murturnapatulu yanurnu kuurlu-kurra kurdu-kurduku milki-yirrarnjaku ngurluku.

Kilka-mani

Warlu ka jankami.
Pardarni kalurla pirilyiki.
Napaljarri Wirri ka kilka-mani ngurlu.
School and Community Newsletters
documented school & community events, promoted community literacy
Karntamatu kalujana
jirrmonja nyirnami
yanangka kurdu-kurduku,
ngawurruwurrapuru.

The women are sitting
with the children
in the shade, during the
very hot weather.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Janyuwari</th>
<th>31</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JANTIYI</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANTIYI</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAWIYI</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WINIYI</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAYIYI</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PURATIYI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JARRITIYI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluating the Northern Territory Bilingual Education Program: A wider Criteria set

- Community involvement in schools, teaching training and leadership
- Use of first language and multilingual instruction as a pedagogy
- Culturally responsive curriculum & resources
- Use of first of first language for cultural and linguistic maintenance
It’s really important to us that we keep our language strong. We don’t want to lose it. I know, I worked at Yuendumu Language Centre for ten years and fourteen years here at Willowra school. English is really hard for kids in transition and pre-school to understand, but Warlpiri they can understand easy. They learn it by looking at the alphabet. We don’t want to lose bilingual education, we want our kids to learn both ways. (Helen Morton, Warlpiri Triangle 1998)

We used to support each other and work together. But now, this four hours English, it’s separate. We don't really know what we are doing, we don't know how to fit Warlpiri. Warlpiri is important too, for our kids, because they understand Warlpiri. They can start learning a lot of new things, school things in Warlpiri. And before it was working really well, when we had team planning, support from a teacher linguist, learning togethers, team teaching, all of that. (Barbara Martin 2009)
Thanks to the staff in NT schools, who have shared their insights and commitment to educating their family and community and to past staff in the Bilingual Education Program for sharing their experiences and expertise.

Thanks for listening.

samantha.disbray@cdu.edu.au


