

Acknowledgement to Country



Kangaroos, caves and
spirits in the air:

Factors in cross-dialectal text
comprehension of
Aboriginal English
speaking students.

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What is our research about?

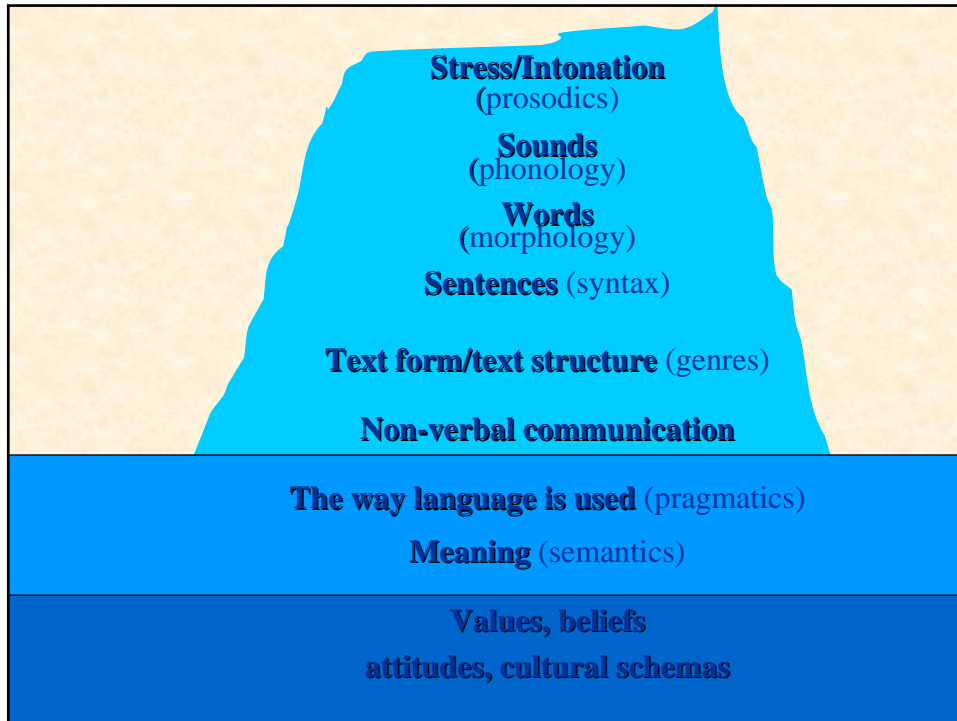
- Possible miscommunication between Aboriginal students and their non-Aboriginal educators/curriculum, which can influence educational outcomes
- Aims:
 - Examine educators' understanding of Aboriginal students' narratives (project 1)
 - Explore Aboriginal English speaking students' comprehension of texts written in SAE (project 2)
 - Inform best practice
 - Improve outcomes for students



“The moment teachers hear a student talking Koori English, they think the kid speaks broken English and has a learning problem”

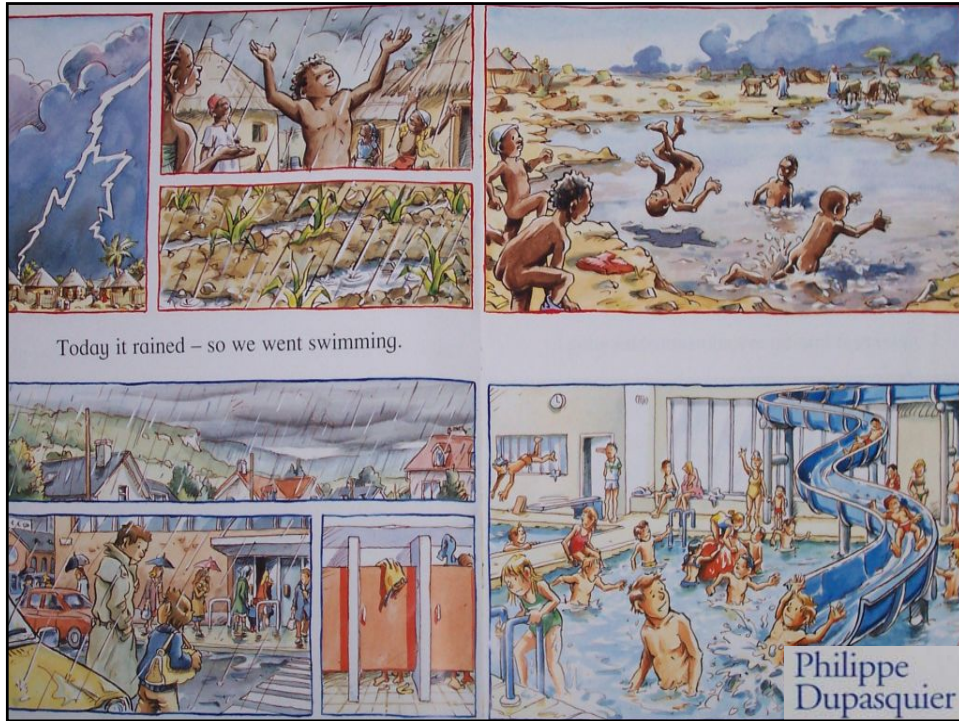
Mark Rose, personal communication.





Today it rained,
so we went swimming





Today it rained - so we went swimming.

Philippe
Dupasquier

Project 1

Understanding an Aboriginal English speaking student's text



Description

1. 6 teachers, 4 AIEOs from 3 PS and 1 HS
2. 8 passages → listened to twice → produce 2 recalls
3. Participants read text version (recorded)
4. Data analysis:
 1. Recall protocols of idea units
 2. Comparison of order of idea units
 3. Compare Ab'l/Non-Ab'l recalls



Recalled information

Recall type	<i>E.g.: My uncle was chasing the kangaroo</i>
Correct	<u>My uncle was chasing the kangaroo.</u>
Partial	<u>My uncle was chasing something.</u>
Distortion/ reinterpretation	<u>The dog</u> was chasing a kangaroo.
Addition	The uncle was chasing a kangaroo and <u>he ran over it./ There was a cave.</u>
Omission	Neither uncle nor chasing of the kangaroo recalled.



Chamnan et al. (2004)

Here's Mervyn with his teacher again.

- **M:** an' we – an' we like this kangaroo like cause we couldn't – couldn't –'cause we they was all at dis water pond there was big mob of 'em an' um we ran over dis liddle one an' we came back to look for it but it wasn't there **an' um we went right along this water pond** lookin' for this one little one an' then went under the car each time we tried to run it over so they—as they ran over the next hump they ran over one of the fences with them clipper things in it sharp things and the tyre went flat
- **J:** oh no
- **M:** An' an' den my uncle grabbed it an' said **you stupid Kangaroo!** blew his head off



Addition

- Original: An we went right along this water pond.
- Recalled: They were **in a cave**.



Omission and distortion

- Original: An an den my uncle grabbed it [kangaroo] and said 'you stupid kangaroo' blew his head off.
- Recalled: The uncle was sort of yelling and telling off the person who was driving saying 'What did you do'?

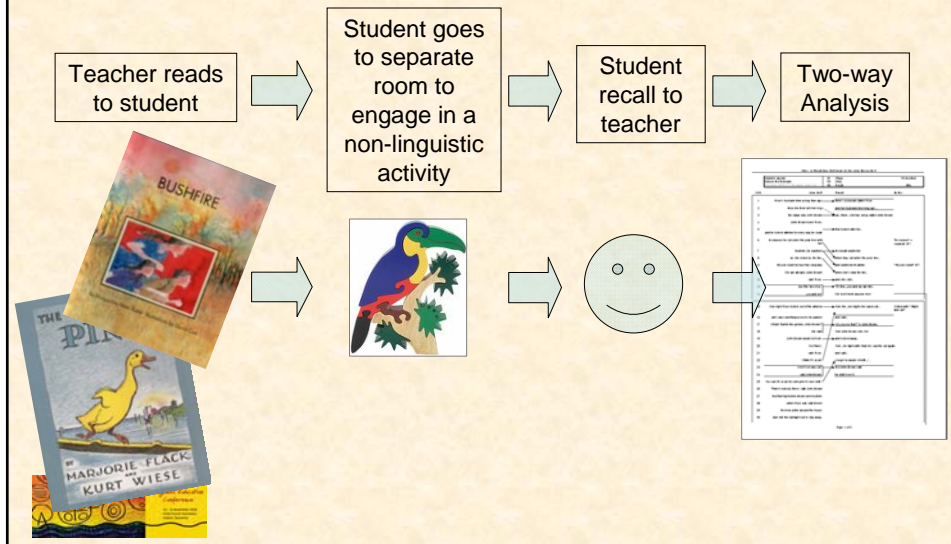


Project 2

Aboriginal English speaking
students' comprehension of texts
written in SAE



Story reading/recall procedure



Story 1: THE STORY ABOUT PING, by Marjorie Flack and Kurt Wiese

Once upon a time there was a beautiful young duck named Ping. **Ping lived with his mother and his father and two sisters and three brothers and eleven aunts and seven uncles and forty-two cousins....**

Their home was a boat with two wise eyes on the Yangtze river.

Each morning as the sun rose from the east, **Ping and his mother and his father and sisters and brothers and aunts and uncles and his forty-two cousins all marched**, one by one, down a little bridge to the shore of the Yangtze river.

....

... By the time ping was right side up **his mother and his father and his aunts** were already marching, one by one, up over the bridge.

By the time Ping neared the shore, **his uncles and his cousins were marching over, and by the time Ping reached the shore the last of his forty-two cousins** had crossed the bridge!



Recall by Nathan

- N:... Before 'at e's... all of his **'bout 42 cousins** an 'at an' e didn't wanna be swooped so e went to the grass an...
- ...an e saw is boat an e swam back an **all of his 42 cousins** got on the boat ...
- T: Good, and is there anything else you can remember that you want to tell about... about the story?
- N: **He had 42 cousins, 7 somin'else,**



Recall by Sue

T: Okay, what do you remember about the story Toby?

- Um, the fact that they were, Ping was on (all?) very beautiful,
- and 'e was, it was along the Yangtze river **he had forty two cousins**
- um the call that made him come back was um la la la la lay.
- um ... the last to across the bridge that they had to cross was um spanked on the back with a cane um... Ping was his name um Ping um when he was underwater getting a fish the call was made and so he was lost so he hid
- and then um he went to bed in the reeds
- and then next morning there was no-one there and so he started swimming along the Yangtze river and then about maybe when the sun started coming up a bit more some boats came and there like merchant boats big boats small boats
- an' then he found the trail for the rice cakes pieces from the rice cake,
- pieces from the rice cake and he followed that
- and a little boy with a barrel on his back um caught him
- and he was like oo oo oo oo. **and ..um the mother, sister, the brother and the father came**
- and they took Ping and they wanted to cook him for dinner at sunri..sunset
- and the little boy took Ping and dumped him back in the water
- and he heard the call of la la lay
- and he was yet again last but'e still wen' up
- coz he still wanted to be with his **family**

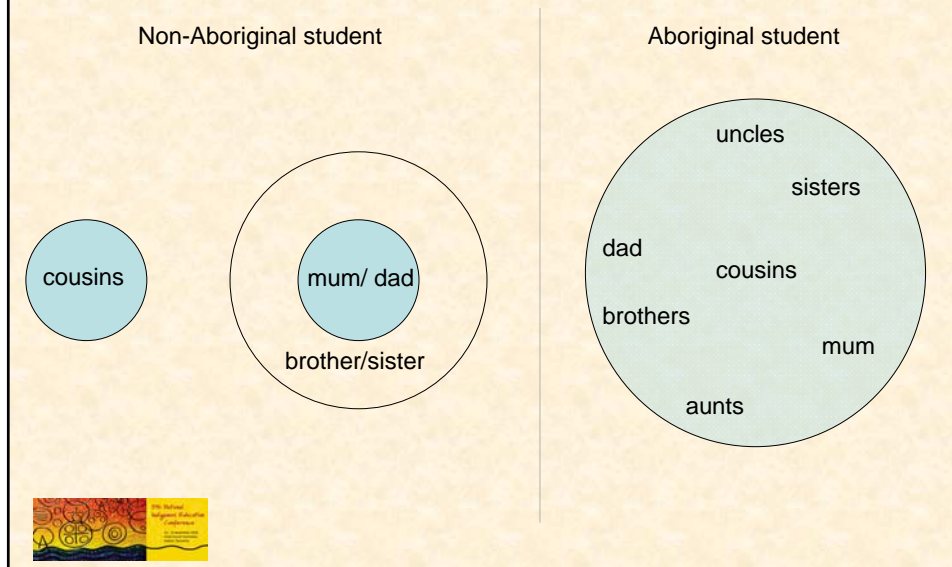


Summary of family responses

Order	Original	Nathan	Jayden	Sue	Matthew
1	Mother and father	42 cousins	42 aunts	Mum	Mum, dad
2	2 sisters and 3 brothers	7 something else	Aunts, uncles,	Sister, brother	37 cousins
3	11 aunts and 7 uncles		Sisters, brothers	father	
4	42 cousins				



Family schema



Story 2: Bushfire (original extracts)

Dais and Geordie couldn't find their home in those strange, aching shapes. **Sheets of iron bent and buckled around black broken stumps.**

'That was the roof', Dad pointed, then looked hard ahead. A moment passed.' It melted the bath!' he murmured aghast.... **The strangest of wails then circled the air.** Faint at first, **like a creature in pain** from far, far away...

Like a seal raising back its long neck, Mum looked to the sky, then held out her arms with fingers spread wide. Her loose cotton dress bulged round (**there was a baby within**).

In a long, steady breath from deep inside, her unhappy **song flew up so high that valley and hilltops resounded in echoes**, carrying her message to the **world of beyond**.

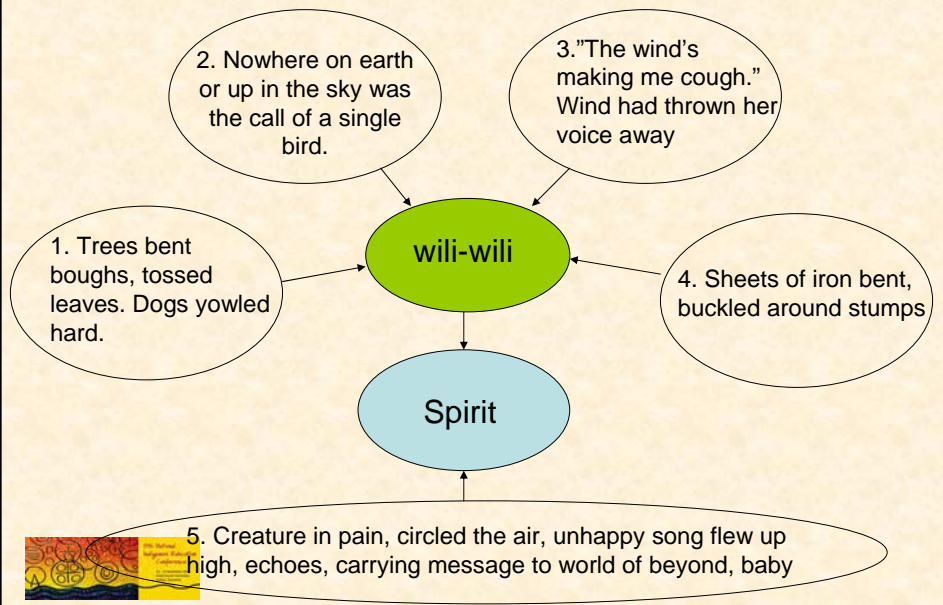


Gary's Recall

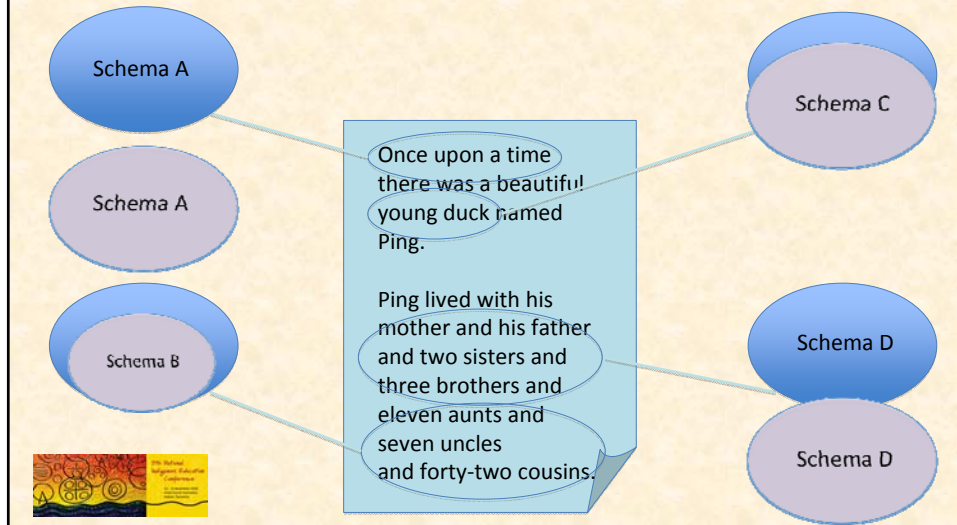
- An' the two kids was on the other side
- An' the mum, in her dress, there was a baby
- ...an den the spirit went up in the air ...
- An den...



Spirit schema



Comprehension: Matching schemas



Implications for the classroom

- Equally strong expression of cultural schema amongst both urban and rural students
 - Grammar only analysis does not consider this cultural schema → deficit view
 - Need for bicultural pedagogy
 - Students need opportunities to demonstrate understanding in variety of ways/languages
 - Students need explicit teaching of language to demonstrate understanding
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