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# The Pitjantjatjara Summer School: *Kulila*! *Nyawa*! *Arkala*! Framing Pitjantjatjara Language Learning Pedagogy within a University Language Intensive Model

Mary-Anne Gale, Dan Bleby, Nami Kulyuru and Sam Osborne

The Pitjantjatjara Language and Culture Summer School (PLCSS) is delivered over two weeks at the University of South Australia (UniSA) at the beginning of January each year. The university sector in South Australia has a long tradition of offering Pitjantjatjara to a wide variety of adult learners in intensive summer schools. Delivery of the course is centred on collaborative teaching, shared between experienced Anangu and non-Pitjantjatjara (*piranpa*) educators. Students are encouraged to engage in Pitjantjatjara ways of learning using a *kulila* (listen) *nyawa* (watch) *arkala* (try) approach. Grammatical structures and vocabulary are taught first using the *kulila, nyawa, arkala* pedagogy through dialogue, song, story and visual texts, and are afterwards reinforced by explicit teaching. The aim of the school is to strengthen students' understandings of Pitjantjatjara language and culture by immersing them in Anangu (Pitjantjatjara) epistemologies and ontologies, and oral language interactions. This chapter provides an overview of the history of teaching Pitjantjatjara in South Australia in the tertiary sector since 1968, and then outlines the philosophical approach and the resulting methodologies that have been adopted and developed over the years. The course is for adults looking to improve their skills for professional or personal reasons as well as a 4.5 credit course offered at undergraduate and postgraduate degree level.

**Keywords:** Pitjantjatjara, Collaborative teaching, Aboriginal educators, Language-learning pedagogy, Immersion, Oral-language interactions

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# 1 Introduction

Pitjantjatjara is one of several languages that make up the Western Desert language group in central Australia. Historically it has been a dominant language in what is now known as the Aṉangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands in the remote north-west region of South Australia and in the south-west region of the Northern Territory. Pitjantjatjara was the first language in the region to be written down by Presbyterian missionaries who founded a mission at Ernabella in 1937 in the remote north west of South Australia (Edwards 2006). Within the APY Lands, Yankunytjatjara later became identified as a separate language within the region, its speakers associated with communities situated in the east, particularly Mimili and Indulkana. *Aṉangu* (or *yarnangu* in some Western Australian dialects), meaning "person", is a self-referential term in Western Desert languages such as Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara, Ngaanyatjarra, Ngaatjatjarra, Pintupi and Luritja, and is used broadly to refer to people from these language groups. Pitjantjatjara language is the only remaining Aboriginal language in South Australia that is spoken fluently by whole communities, and is still being transmitted to its children as their first language (Simpson 2019). For this reason, Pitjantjatjara has been sought after for many years by non-Aboriginal people with an interest in learning an Aboriginal language, or by people wanting to work or interact in a meaningful way with Aṉangu.

# 2 A Background History

The teaching of Pitjantjatjara language and culture in the university sector began in 1968 at the University of Adelaide with a three week summer school offered through their Department of Adult Education. The course was — and continues to be — offered to adults as second language learners. Often students are people working or preparing to work in Aṉangu communities. This was possibly the first time an Aboriginal language had been taught formally in the tertiary sector in Australia. The summer school was run in the University of Adelaide language laboratory using Pitjantjatjara language learning cassette tapes that were prepared by the missionary Jim Warburton and the Pitjantjatjara man Gordon Ingkatji. Initially the summer school was attended by twenty students, with many of them from the University of Sydney.[1] The class was taught by Nancy Sheppard, who was a fluent speaker of Pitjantjatjara from her years spent as a school teacher (then Nancy Nicholson) at Ernabella mission, and sometimes with the missionary Wilf Douglas and Gordon Ingkatji. The primary methodology was for students to listen to the Pitjantjatjara lessons in the language laboratory. Many of the students went on to do an advanced Pitjantjatjara course in a winter school, also run at the University of Adelaide (Sheppard pers. comm. 2014). The language tapes were accompanied by grammatical lessons and notes that were prepared by the renowned American linguist Ken Hale, who had recently conducted a linguistic survey of Australia's Aboriginal languages for the newly formed Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (founded in 1964, see AIATSIS 2014). This Pitjantjatjara course continued at the University of Adelaide for a number of years.

Eventually the Pitjantjatjara language course was moved to Torrens College in 1975 (previously Western Teachers College), which then became Torrens College of Advanced Education (CAE). The course was initially taught by casual staff as a term unit (rather than an

[1] Candidates wanting to serve in the mission field were offered training at the University of Sydney, under Professor A.P. Elkin (also an Anglican clergyman), as early as the 1940s to 1950s. This anthropological and linguistic training was to prepare them for their mission work among diverse cultural groups in Australia and overseas. One such missionary was Beulah Lowe who did Anthropology 1 and Linguistics 1 at the University of Sydney as part of her one year missionary training at the George Brown Missionary College in the suburb of Haberfield in Sydney (Wearing 2007: 27). But to study a specific language students had to undertake the summer school at the University of Adelaide, when it became available in 1968. By this time Elkin had retired from the University of Sydney (Wise 1996).

intensive summer school) called Pitjantjatjara Language 1. Between 1975 and 1982 there were eighty student enrolments in this language unit. Then in 1981 Bill Edwards (once superintendent at Ernabella mission in the 1960s and a Pitjantjatjara language speaker) was appointed as a full-time staff member at Torrens CAE. Edwards was able to offer further Pitjantjatjara units, and by 1983 Pitjantjatjara Language 2 was offered as a term unit, with 26 enrolments. By 1983 the number of students studying Pitjantjatjara 1 reached 95, largely due to the re-introduction of an intensive summer school. A Yankunytjatjara/Antakirinya woman Mona Tur was also employed to teach Pitjantjatjara in a team with Edwards (Edwards 1995: 10).

In 1983, a $90,000 Commonwealth grant was used to employ Brian Kirke as a research assistant, to produce study guides and cassette tapes of language lessons in Pitjantjatjara.[2] These materials enabled the offering of more advanced courses in Pitjantjatjara, beginning with Pitjantjara Language 1 through to Pitjantjatjara 5. Furthermore, these five term-length courses were offered externally for the first time in 1984, with a total of 100 students enrolled in 1984, 57 students in 1985, and 49 students in 1986 (for more details, see Edwards 1995: 7).

In the meantime, the Torrens CAE was amalgamated with other CAEs to become the South Australian College of Advanced Education (SACAE). Then in 1987 the college calendar changed from a term system to a semester system, so the curriculum materials had to be adjusted from five term units to three semester units: Pitjantjatjara Language 1, Pitjantjatjara Language 2, and Pitjantjatjara Language 3. The number of students studying Pitjantjatjara fell over this period, but numbers picked up by 1990 with 60 students studying the three semester units. But in 1991 there was a further structural change, with the SACAE becoming part of the new University of South Australia (UniSA). This meant the units had to be adjusted once again from 6 point semester units to 4.5 semester units. They were taught within the Aboriginal Studies programs offered in the first Faculty of Aboriginal and Islander Studies in an Australian university (Edwards 1995: 7).[3] Cross-institutional enrolments helped maintain student numbers through to 1995, when there were 32 students enrolled in Pitjantjatjara Language 1, but the last year when all three semester units were offered was 1993. This was due largely to the "equivalent full-time student unit" (EFTSU) funding system imposed on universities in an era of economic rationalism. Staffing of courses with small student numbers was made very difficult, particularly for language courses with their smaller cohorts wanting to undertake the more advanced language studies.

By 1996, further restructuring at UniSA saw Aboriginal Studies and the Pitjantjatjara course being taught in the newly formed David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research (DUCIER). In order to boost student numbers, and to meet an increasing demand for Pitjantjatjara language training from outside the university sector, DUCIER decided once again to offer intensive summer schools. In 1992 a one week summer school was offered, once again taught by Bill Edwards alongside Mona Tur, and then in 1994 it became a two week intensive summer school. The use of language laboratories, and teaching the course externally using cassette tapes, became a thing of the past. Students were still given the option of studying the unit for credit towards a degree, either through UniSA or cross-institutionally. This mode of teaching continued until 2004 when Bill Edwards retired from teaching Pitjantjatjara.

[2] These lessons prepared by Kirke are remarkably creative and are still used today by students wanting to improve their conversational Pitjantjara. Kirke had previously prepared Pitjantjatjara language learning materials for the Institute for Aboriginal Development in Alice Springs. He went on to produce language learning kits with tapes for other South Australian Aboriginal languages in the mid-1980s for languages being revived, particularly Ngarrindjeri and Narungga.

[3] Ironically this faculty, which was later restructured and re-named the David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research (DUCIER) was dissolved by UniSA in 2015.

In 2005 Paul Eckert took over running the summer school for DUCIER, also teaching in a team with Mona Tur. Eckert had worked throughout the APY Lands since the mid-1970s and was highly skilled in Pitjantjatjara after devoting much of his career to Bible translation work at Ernabella. Since the mid-2000s, a Commonwealth government policy logic of intervention and its "Closing the Gap" campaign (Osborne 2015: 134) resulted in increasing numbers of non-Aboriginal people working in service provision in the APY Lands. This resulted in an increased demand from employers, who encouraged their staff to study Pitjantjatjara in a summer school but not for credit. From 2011, DUCIER employed someone to work alongside Eckert to offer a Pitjantjatjara course for credit towards a degree. This was called Pitjantjatjara Language and Culture and was offered within a degree in Aboriginal Studies or as an elective for credit in other degrees offered at UniSA or other universities. Eckert ran the two week intensive summer school for eleven years until he retired in January 2016. A feature of Eckert's approach was a language immersion method and an emphasis on involving Aṉangu as central to the model of language instruction. After the retirement of Mona Tur as his team teacher, Eckert insisted that DUCIER employ at least five or six Aṉangu tutors to share the teaching. This extra expense was offset by the steady increase in student numbers undertaking the course each summer. By the time Eckert retired, the course had an enviable reputation, and was so much in demand that there was a waiting list each year. It had become a flagship for publicity for UniSA in promoting the university's commitment to reconciliation. Student numbers were capped at 60 per summer school to make teaching more manageable and ensure that students had regular and direct access to Aṉangu tutors throughout the course.

From 2014–2016 Eckert also ran a training program for Aṉangu tutors in collaboration with Mary-Anne Gale, who had written a TAFE certificate course for training Aboriginal language teachers. This TAFE course was first accredited in 2011, and in 2014 Gale obtained Commonwealth funding to trial the Certificate IV course she wrote in "Teaching an Endangered Aboriginal Language", working with six Aboriginal language groups. Gale was particularly keen to trial the course with a language such as Pitjantjatjara, which remains the only language still spoken fluently by a whole community in South Australia. The format was for the Aṉangu tutors to each be responsible for running their own small group sessions (comprising a group of ten students) throughout the summer school, as well as actively participating in the teaching of whole-group sessions. This participation constituted the "work placement" component of their teacher training. Other more theoretical units in the Certificate IV course were taught during intensive training and planning sessions run for a week before the summer schools began. By 2016 eight Aṉangu students had successfully graduated with their TAFE Certificate IV, along with their newly acquired skills and confidence as Pitjantjatjara language teachers.[4] During Gale's involvement she also coordinated the offering of Pitjantjatjara for university credit students, but in this period the number of these students was capped at six to keep the work-load manageable.

In 2017 Dan Bleby and Sam Osborne took over the role of running the summer school. Bleby is a teacher in the South Australian Department for Education who has many years of experience teaching Aṉangu students in both the APY Lands and at Wiltja Aṉangu Secondary College, a residential secondary college in Adelaide for students from remote Aṉangu communities. Sam Osborne is a former Principal of Ernabella Aṉangu School, currently working as Associate Director, Regional Engagement (APY Hub) at UniSA. Bleby and Osborne continue the philosophy and pedagogy of employing six Aṉangu tutors who take the

[4] The Aṉangu students had to complete a TAFE Certificate III in "Learning an Endangered Aboriginal Language" before they could embark on the Certificate IV. But because the Aṉangu students were already fluent in their language, this was largely achieved through a process of Recognized Prior Learning (RPL). They did however do extra work on their Pitjantjatjara literacy skills for the Certificate III. Over 15 Aṉangu graduated with their Certificate III during this period.

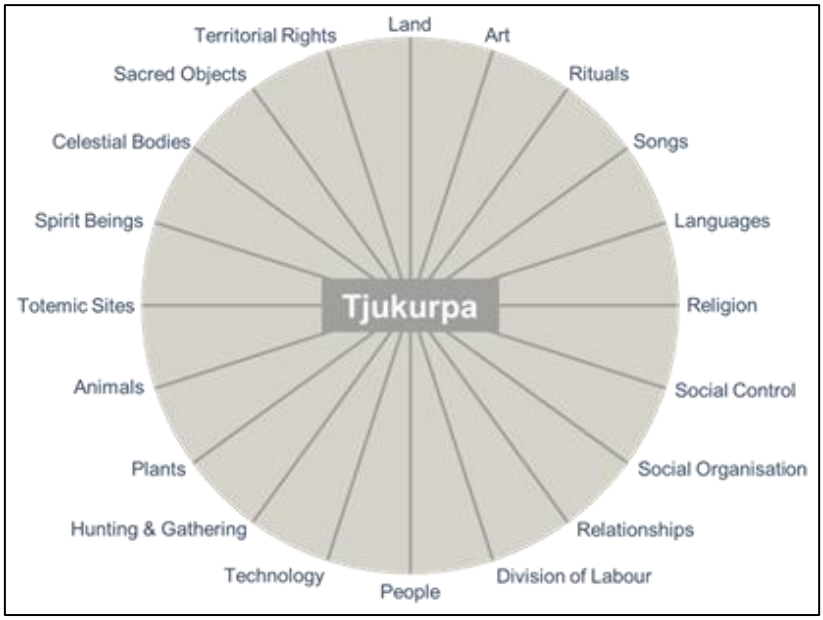
lead in teaching small group sessions. Student numbers remain capped at 60, but the credit student numbers have been increased (in January 2019, the credit students were capped at ten). The partnership between Bleby as the primary teacher and Osborne as the coordinator of the credit program made this increase possible. For students studying for credit, standard university course fees apply for a single semester unit, while non-credit students paid $1,700 for the 2019 summer school, with an additional cost of approximately $200 for books and language learning resources as required (University of South Australia 2018).

The current (developing) approach is described below by Bleby, Osborne and Nami Kulyuru (an experienced Anangu teacher who has a long-standing involvement in the summer school), with a focus on the pedagogy and philosophy of the school. These aspects have been developed over time through the input of the Anangu teachers, whose number and involvement increased under Eckert's time. The structure of the school was shaped by their teaching styles and ways of knowledge-sharing, reflecting Anangu epistemologies, ontologies and axiologies. The approach seeks to guide students not just to learn about Anangu language and culture, but to also reflect on their own standpoints and "situatedness" in largely Western cultural and educational frameworks. The goal is that in developing such an awareness, students will be better placed to interact with Anangu in more dialogic, relational and power-sensitive ways.

# 3 Pitjantjatjara Language and Culture Summer School (PLCSS) Pedagogy

Oral narratives, both formal and informal, are central to knowledge sharing in Anangu society. Primarily, Pitjantjatjara law/lore is shaped by *Tjukurpa*, recounted through narratives retracing the "journeys and interactions of the ancestor beings as they lived, died and created the various land and celestial forms in the creation period" (Osborne 2015: 128). These beings engage in "hunting and gathering foods, making implements, punishing offenders, fulfilling kinship obligations, performing ceremonies, painting on rock walls, and marrying within specified section groups, so people in each generation are to follow these examples in their daily lives" (Edwards 2006: 104). *Tjukurpa* provides a holistic framework for living and knowledge sharing, within which all things are interrelated (see Figure 1).

**Fig. 30.1** Elements of *Tjukurpa*, a holistic framework (source: Edwards 1994)



This is in stark contrast to Western education, in which knowledge is "disciplined" (Nakata 2007) into separate and distinct subjects. So how does a Western university language course reconcile these contrasting worldviews within a two week summer school devoted to the teaching of Pitjantjatjara language and culture?

## 3.1 *Kulila*! *Nyawa*! *Arkala*! An Aṉangu pedagogy

*Tjitji Pitjantjatjara tjuṯa mama, ngunytju, kami, tjamu munu walytja kutjupa tjuṯanguṟu kuliṟa nyakula arkalpai.*

"From early childhood, Pitjantjatjara children are always listening to, watching, and mimicking their parents, grandparents and other family members." (Kulyuṟu and Bleby 2017)

Pitjantjatjara was a predominantly oral language, without a traditionally written form, and the vast majority of communication continues to occur in non-written forms. Aṉangu children learn within this environment through watching, listening and imitating family and community members. The focus on non-written communication as the primary medium of education sees narrative, song, and physical movement (in the form of gesture, facial expression and dance) prioritized as key tools for teaching and learning. These ways of teaching and learning can be considered Aṉangu community pedagogies.

The Pitjantjatjara Language and Culture Summer School (PLCSS) draws on these pedagogies in the context of a Second or Foreign Language (L2 FL) course, in which the learners are both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people wanting to learn an Aboriginal language which is still spoken by children (Giacon and Simpson 2012). The timetable is structured so that the first hour and a half of every day is set aside to observe, learn and practise a Pitjantjatjara dialogue. Pens, papers and written versions of the dialogue are prohibited to students in these sessions in the first three days. The two person dialogue mimics a realistic scenario in which one person arrives at another person's camp fire and is offered a cup of tea, followed by general enquiries about the purpose of the visitor's visit (see **Appendix**).

Aṉangu tutors work with small groups of students, generally sitting outside, to demonstrate the dialogue, providing very little clarification or translation into English. Students must rely on the use of props (e.g., a billycan, pannikin, fire, tea, milk and sugar), gestures and role-play to develop understanding gradually. Further insights are gained through the more traditional Western sessions focused on grammar and vocabulary that are offered inside the classroom following the morning oral language sessions. As the course progresses, these oral sessions (still held outside) move from memorizing the dialogue to using simple sentences to describe elements of the physical environment (e.g., tree, leaf, bark, grass, creek) and wooden artefacts used for teaching purposes (boomerangs, spears, dishes, digging sticks). By the end of the third day, written versions of the dialogue are provided to students to consolidate their learning. For a number of students, this handover of a single sheet of paper (the dialogue in writing) is associated with instant relief from panic and grief.

Privileging oral forms of the language is challenging for many tertiary students who are used to being provided with readings and other preparatory texts prior to the course. As universities increasingly move to online teaching, there is an increased expectation by students that all resources be provided online in readily accessible digital and written forms. In contrast, PLCSS students are advised that there is no pre-reading or preparation required, and to "come with an open mind". Coming into an unfamiliar learning environment without familiar supports or methodologies can be confronting for many students, and can lead to low levels of resistance. The first assessment task is a performance of the dialogue at the end of the first week, which can further fuel students' anxiety, especially as the teachers insist on withholding the written version for the first half of that week. It is not uncommon to hear feedback along the lines of, "I understand what you're trying to do, but this isn't how I learn!" Or, "I am a visual learner,

not an oral learner. I need to see the written text first". To which we respond, "But that is not the way Aboriginal people learn their languages, and indeed, not how all children (including you!) learned their first language."

Such comments are illustrative of the discomfort felt by predominantly Western-educated students as they come into contact with Aṉangu ways of teaching and learning. As the majority of students participating in the course are working with Aṉangu or in Aṉangu communities in some capacity, this discomfort is an important element of their learning in the summer school. The experience of having to engage in unfamiliar ways of learning and operating provides them with valuable insights into the experiences of many Aṉangu who have to work with *piṟanpa* in their own communities. Making this discomfort explicit to students invites them to reflect on their own interactions and assumptions when working with Aṉangu. By the end of the second week, the students in the summer school start to understand and appreciate why they were encouraged to first *Kulila!* (Listen!) and *Nyawa!* (Watch!), and then to *Arkala!* (Try!). They learn that this is not only a good way to learn the Pitjantjatjara language from their Aṉangu tutors, but a good way to approach the way they work with Aṉangu when in the APY Lands.

## 3.2 *Atja-atja*

As Pitjantjatjara children begin their attempts at language, they develop a basic "baby talk" known as *atja-atja*. For example, the word *kangkuṟu* (senior sister or female cousin) is commonly spoken by small children as *kaku* or *tjatju*. As children progress in their oral language development they are gently corrected by adults, who model the correct sounds and structures (Kulyuṟu and Bleby 2017).

The communicative focus of the PLCSS allows Aṉangu teachers to use similar approaches in teaching Pitjantjatjara to adults. Modelling fluent language use through demonstration, repetition and gentle correction allows students to engage with the unfamiliar sound systems and language patterns of Pitjantjatjara. Once again, Western reliance on written representations of sounds is set aside to focus on listening, watching the mouth (and tongue where possible) and mimicking sounds. During the more theoretical and formal teaching time in the day, students are given a graphically illustrated phoneme sound chart, and the differences between English and the Pitjantjatjara sound and spelling systems are explained. Again, the emphasis is first on *Kulila!* (Listen!) and *Nyawa!* (Watch!), and then *Arkala!* (Try!).

## 3.3 *Tjukurpa Ayini-ayini*

*Aṉangu tjuṯangku tjukurpa ayini-ayini wangkapai waṟungka itingka, mutukangka ankula, puṯingka, kuulangka unngu munu uṟilta, munu kiminitingka.*

"Aṉangu have humorous stories they share around campfires, on long road trips, on Country, inside and outside of schools and in their communities." (Kulyuṟu and Bleby 2017)

Throughout the PLCSS, different forms of oral narrative are used as key teaching strategies. In planning for the course, each Aṉangu tutor prepares two narratives to perform in naturally paced Pitjantjatjara for the students. The first is described as a "family narrative", and describes each tutor's family history. Photographs are collected from a range of sources, including the Aṉangu online community archive (*Aṟa Irititja*) and social media, and incorporated into their oral narratives. The second presentation prepared by the Aṉangu teachers is a *tjukurpa ayini-ayini*, or humorous anecdote. These favourite stories, tried and tested over time, have been honed through regular retelling in the contexts mentioned above. The telling of these stories (two each by all six of the Aṉangu tutors) occurs in the more relaxed afternoon sessions, and are much anticipated, knowing that some of the *tjukurpa ayini-ayini* will be very funny and full of action and laughter.

These narratives act as engaging and powerful models of fluent speaking in real contexts. The stories are then retold at a slower pace with short breaks in between each line. Finally, they are retold slowly with interpretation provided. Repetition is another important pedagogical feature for allowing students to engage with oral language contexts. An additional benefit of these stories is that they contain valuable insights into Aṉangu ways of thinking, being, and knowing. Aṉangu teachers often present their stories for students through role play, incorporating gesture, rhythm and other important elements of oral communication. Some Aṉangu teachers go to great lengths with their props, and stand-in participants, as they try to re-enact a scene from one day out bush in the APY Lands. One example is a story told by Paul Andy, who recounts how a couple were travelling back to their community in a newly bought Volkswagen Beetle. The car broke down on the rough corrugated roads, some distance from the destination. The man went to check under the bonnet, only to find the engine was missing! He and his wife were forced to camp overnight on the side of the road, until another car approached the following day. The couple flagged down the car, and asked the *piṟanpa* driver if he had seen an engine anywhere along the road. It was at this point that the *piṟanpa* man, familiar with the fact that Volkswagen Beetles' engines are located at the rear of the vehicle rather than under the bonnet, was able to show the man the engine, reconnect a loose wire, and send the couple happily on their way. This scenario was so well narrated by Paul, and acted out by other members of the team, that it did not matter if students did not comprehend all of the language. Stories like this provide memorable examples of Aṉangu humour, often centred on small misfortunes. The sharing of these kinds of stories forms strong relational bonds, and themes often emerge as the Aṉangu tutors jointly prepare their stories prior to the school. For example, one summer school was declared "Year of the Donkey" due to the proliferation of stories emerging relating to the large number of wild donkeys near the APY community of Ernabella. These themes often find their way into the students' oral performances at the conclusion of the school.

## 3.4 *Inma*

*Inmaku pakalpai; inma inkapai; tjitjiku inma; inma/ngura/walka tjungu ngaṟanyi.*

"Dancing, singing, children's songs, ceremony, land and art are all integrated." (Kulyuṟu and Bleby 2017)

*Inma* refers to a number of things, including song and ceremony, and provides another valuable resource for language learning. Singing and song, including traditional song cycles, community music and hymnal singing, play a central part in Pitjantjatjara life. Traditional songs are drawn from *Tjukurpa* and are a powerful tool for social/cultural maintenance and memory work. Just as songs continue to act as mnemonic devices for learning Pitjantjatjara knowledge in contemporary Pitjantjatjara society, so too are they used as a mnemonic device for learning language in the summer school.

Each Aṉangu tutor at the PLCSS selects one or more songs to teach to the class. These range from children's songs translated from English (e.g., *kata, alipiṟi, muti, tjina* — "Heads, shoulders, knees and toes"), Pitjantjatjara children's songs which "borrow" the melodies of traditional songs from other languages (e.g., *Kiilykiilykari* — the budgerigar, sung to the tune of "Li'l Liza Jane*"),* or Pitjantjatjara songs with deeper meaning (e.g., *Kulila* —the Pitjantjatjara land rights song). It was quite endearing one year to watch, for example, a group of older men who attended the summer school together, singing the children's song in Pitjantjatjara (with actions and great gusto) "Heads, shoulders, knees and toes". These men were about to head off to the APY Lands, on a South Australian government contract, to build and improve the dirt roads. To this day those men can probably still remember the Pitjantjatjara words for "Head, shoulders, knees and toes", plus "eyes, ears, mouth and nose"!

## 3.5 Assessment

For students enrolled for credit, there are three elements to their assessment, but the focus is on oral performance and the marks are weighted towards this, rather than written assessment. Assessment 1 is an oral performance and dramatization of the dialogue including the use of props, gestures and hand-talk, an ontological feature of Aṉangu communication (for examples, see *Iltyem-iltyem*). All the students have to learn the dialogue off by heart, and perform it without any paper prompts. Students must learn the dialogue for both Person A and Person B (see **Appendix** for the script), and they are assessed by the co-ordinating teachers as well as the Aṉangu tutors. When the Aṉangu tutors were undertaking their own teacher training towards the Certificate IV in "Teaching an Endangered Aboriginal Language", they had to assess each credit student with a mark out of 40 as a part of a unit on assessment. This was challenging, but it was helped by making a video recording of each credit student performing their dialogue, and later comparing their performances. Students are marked on word accuracy, pronunciation, stress and intonation, and gesture and use of props (see **Fig. 30.3**).

**Fig. 30.2** Excerpt from dialogue assessment sheet, with assessment items

**Assessment 1: Dialogue**

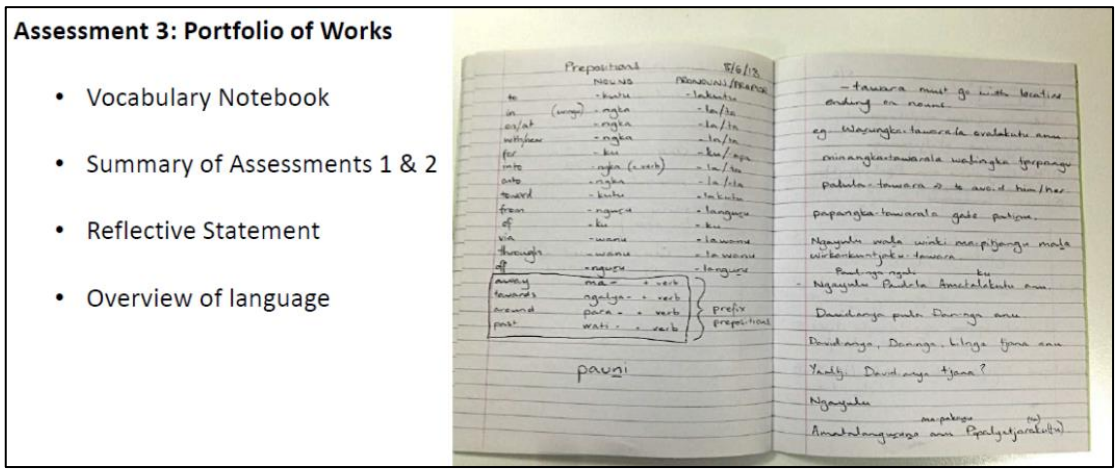
- Word Accuracy
- Pronunciation
- Stress & Intonation
- Gesture, use of props

| PART A .....<br>PART B ..... | Word Accuracy | Pronunciation of words | Stress & Intonation | Gesture, use of Props etc. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A1. Wai! Palyaṉa ma-pitjaku?<br>B1. Uwa palya, ngalya-pitja!<br>Nyinakati!<br>Palyan?<br>A2. Uwa, palyaṉa. Ka nyuntu?<br>B2. Ngayulu palya. | | | | |
| B3. Kapatikun mukuringanyi?<br>A3. Uwa.<br>B4. Tjuka yaaltjiṯu?<br>A4. Kutju<br>B5. Milkakun mukuringanyi?<br>A5. Wiya palya.<br>B6. Nyiiku.<br>A6. Ai, wiṟunya! | | | | |

For Assessment 2, students have to compose and perform a text in Pitjantjatjara by the end of the second week of the school. As with Assessment 1, only students doing the summer school for credit are formally assessed. However, all students have to do a performance in front of the whole class on the last day as part of the celebrations of student achievements. They can choose whether they work in pairs, in groups or as individuals. Many of the students choose to write and perform a song, while others compose and perform humorous skits, plays or simple conversational dialogues. From experience, we have learnt that some credit students can suffer from performance anxiety, so we encourage students not to be too adventurous. Students are encouraged to draw on and build upon the dialogue, songs, stories and other things they have learnt throughout the two weeks, and to work in pairs or groups with other students who will give them extra support and encouragement. The final day of performances is a definite highlight of the summer school. The Aṉangu tutors in particular enjoy sitting on a panel, assessing the performances collaboratively with the course coordinators, and watching the students demonstrate the fruits of all their hard work.

The final Assessment 3 is just for the credit students and is a written portfolio of work that reflects and reviews the whole intensive learning experience (see **Fig. 30.4**).

**Fig. 30.3** Elements of Assessment 3 — Portfolio of Works




# 4 Conclusion

When students are asked at the end of each Pitjantjatjara language summer school to write evaluations of their learning experiences, they inevitably respond with a comment about the positive relationships they developed with their group's Aṉangu tutor. The collaborative teaching model with *piṟanpa* and Aṉangu educators sharing the teaching enables students' thinking to shift from a Western-facing epistemological approach towards Aṉangu ways of knowing, being and doing. The aim of the intensive two weeks, particularly for the non-credit students, is to equip participants to work alongside Aṉangu, and to enter into a new space in which they seek to understand and be understood by those with whom they may work in the future, or with whom they are already working in the APY Lands.

> As the brochure for the 2019 summer school says:
>
> The Pitjantjatjara Language Summer School will benefit those who have contact with Pitjantjatjara people in the course of their work. People completing the Summer School should be able to enter into elementary conversations with Pitjantjatjara people. There will also be historical and cross-cultural information within the curriculum. Consisting of oral practice, elementary vocabulary, basic grammar and written exercises, the School will be conducted with sessions of role-play with an emphasis on oral fluency, small group sessions for revision and practice or oral language and grammar sessions. It will provide structures on which students can build to enable further progress in the language.
>
> This two week program will be delivered with the assistance of six traditional tutors from the APY Lands and northern parts of South Australia. The tutors, who come from communities such as Umuwa, Ernabella and Amata will work with small groups of participants throughout the course and will provide first-hand knowledge of the Pitjantjatjara language and culture from a traditional Aboriginal perspective.
>
> By the end of the course the students will be:
>
> - familiar with a basic vocabulary of approximately 300 words;
> - familiar with the sounds of the language and be able to reproduce them;

- have a basic grammatical knowledge with an understanding of the four noun and four verb classes, and four or five tenses of the verbs in each class;
- be able to converse in simple sentences.

(University of South Australia 2018)

For those who are interested in having an intensive cross-cultural encounter, in a safe and supportive environment, learning the only strong Aboriginal language still spoken in South Australia, then this is the course for you! It is taught in collaboration with quality Aṉangu educators who will challenge the way you think about learning. Look out for the next Pitjantjatjara intensive summer school, run every January for two weeks by the University of South Australia. *Palya?* (OK?)

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# Appendix 2018 PLCSS dialogue script

**A1.** **Wai! Palyaṉa ma-pitjaku?**
*Hey! Can I come over?*
**B1.** **Uwa palya, ngalya-pitja!**
*Yeah, sure, come over!*
**Nyinakati!**
*Sit down.*
**Palyan?**
*How are you?*
**A2.** **Uwa, palyaṉa. Ka nyuntu?**
*Yeah, I'm fine. And you?*
**B2.** **Ngayulu palya.**
*I'm fine.*
**B3.** **Kapatikun mukuringanyi?**
*Would you like a cup of tea?*
**A3.** **Uwa.**
*Yes*
**B4.** **Tjuka yaaltjiṯu?**
*How many sugars?*
**A4.** **Kutju**
*One.*
**B5.** **Milkakun mukuringanyi?**
*Do you want milk?*
**A5.** **Wiya palya.**
*No, thanks.*
**B6.** **Nyiiku.**
*Here you go.*
**A6.** **Ai, wiṟunya!**
*Mmm, lovely.*
**B7.** **Yaaltjinguṟun pitjangu?**
*Where did you come from?*
**A7.** **Mimililanguṟuṉa pitjangi.**
*I came from Mimili.*
**B8.** **Yaalaṟan pitjangu?**
*When did you come?*
**A8.** **Mungartjiṉa tjarpangu.**
*I came yesterday.*
**B9.** **Nyaangka?**
*How did you come?*
**A9.** **'Bush–Bee'ngkaṉa pitjangi.**
*On the Bush Bus.*
**B10.** **Munta-uwa, palya.**
*Of course, I see.*
**B11.** **Nyaakun pitjangu?**
*What did you come for?*
**A11.** **Inmakuṉa pitjangu.**
*I came for a concert.*
**B12.** **Kan yaaltjingka ngarinyi?**
*And where are you staying?*
**A12.** **Ngayuku malpaku ngurangka.**
*My friend's house.*
**B13.** **Tjinguṟuṉanta mungawinki nyakuku.**
*Maybe I'll see you tomorrow.*
**A13.** **Uwa, palya.**
*Yeah, okay.*