

Creating a digital shell for sharing Indigenous language and culture

Cathy Bow



ICLDC5

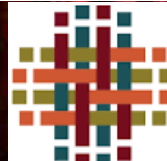
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

March 2-5, 2017



**CHARLES
DARWIN
UNIVERSITY**

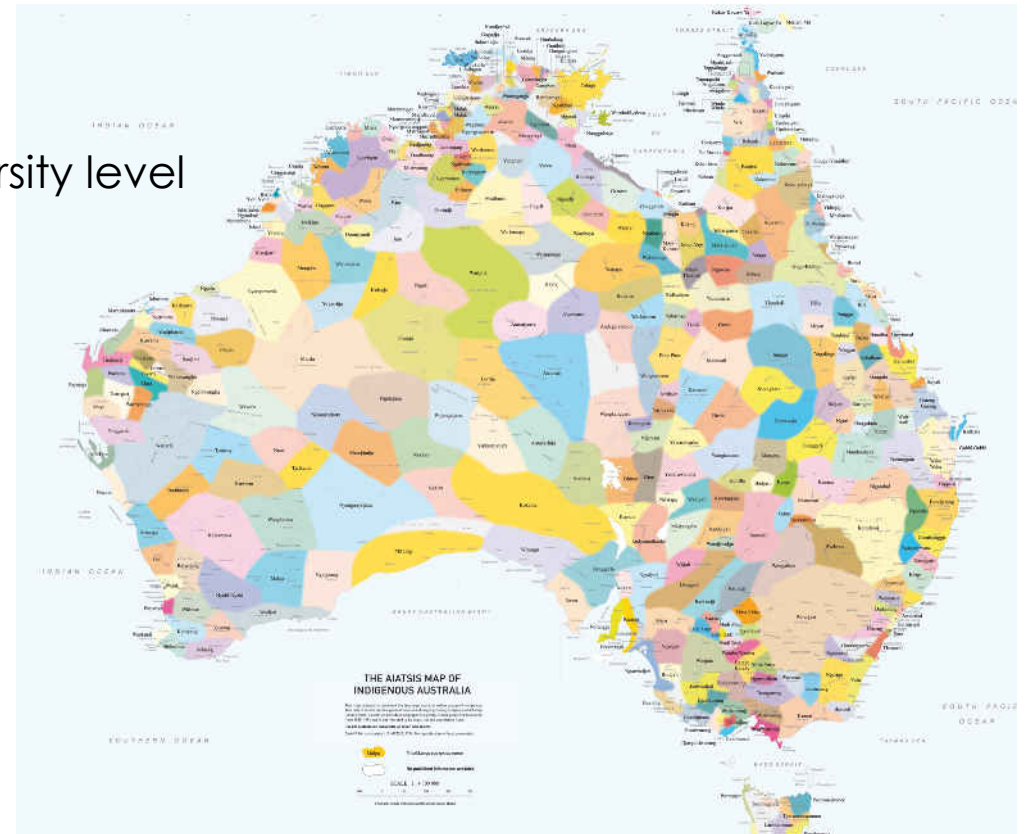
Northern
Institute



**ARC CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR
THE DYNAMICS OF LANGUAGE**

Australian context

- 500 Indigenous languages spoken prior to colonisation
 - 120 still spoken today
 - 13 considered 'strong'
- Of 120, only 6 can be studied at University level
 - 3 in revival
 - Gamilaraay
 - Kurna
 - Wiradjuri
 - 3 still used inter-generationally
 - Arrernte
 - Pitjantjatjara
 - Yolŋu Matha



**CHARLES
DARWIN
UNIVERSITY**

Northern
Institute

Indigenous languages at Uni

- Difficulty of developing new courses
 - Require ongoing engagement with Aboriginal language authorities
 - Sufficient time and funding to properly negotiate the process
 - Develop appropriate pedagogies, resources, administration
- Lack of resources for many languages
- Low enrolment numbers



WHERE CAN I STUDY AN AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE?

Can I study an Indigenous Australian language?

Yes, you can! One of the most important aims of ULPA is to increase the visibility and availability of Indigenous Australian languages to all Australians. If you are keen to study an Indigenous language, talk to your university about how it can be incorporated into your degree.

Can I study an Indigenous Australian language?

How many Indigenous languages are there in Australia?

Benefits

- Workforce development
- Increase visibility
- Support language advocacy
- Inform language policy
- Cross-disciplinary interest
 - Medicine, environment, education, law, etc



Digital shell project

- Proposal to create a **digital shell**
 - used by any language group to share knowledge
 - linguists, educators and language authorities work together
 - identify language materials, negotiate access, authority
- Students access web-based resources under authority of language owners as part of tertiary courses
- Arrangements for payment, access, supervision, assessment, teaching, etc would be negotiated separately with Unis
- Seed funding from Australian government



**CHARLES
DARWIN
UNIVERSITY**

Northern
Institute

Pilot project – Bininj Kunwok

- Bininj Kunwok – language family from West Arnhem Land, NT
- Actively involved in language resource development
- www.bininjgunwok.org.au
- Social media (Facebook page, Twitter)
- Mailing list of people receiving “**Karriborlhme Kunwok - Let's learn words!**”
- Kunwinjku aterials in the Living Archive of Aboriginal Languages



Bininj Kunwok

kunwok dja mankarre kadberre—our language, our culture

KURED

NJALE

BENGDAYHKE

NJALENJALE

NGURRIWOKBEKKAN

BININJ

BLOG

BIM

KANDIWOKMUNKEWE



CHARLES
DARWIN
UNIVERSITY

Northern
Institute

Living Archive materials

Living Archive of Aboriginal Languages

A digital archive of endangered literature in Indigenous languages of the Northern Territory

Search the LAAL collection

Search

Home

Map

Place

Language

People

Books

Home > Language > Kunwinjku

Language: Kunwinjku

Grid List Popularity

Filter

Details

The collection contains 133 books published in the Kunwinjku language.

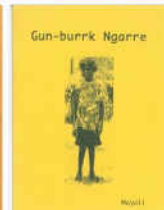
133 books



Bu nguriborlhme Kunwinjku
Manakgu, Andrew
Kunwinjku; English
Gunbalanya (Oenpelli)



Kunhi bu kunkare birihwaribuni
Managu, Andrew G.
Kunwinjku
Gunbalanya (Oenpelli)



Gun-burrk Ngarre
Kunwinjku; English
Barunga



Jatdi Na-yahwurt
Galmur, Judy
Kunwinjku; English
Barunga



www.cdu.edu.au/laal



CHARLES
DARWIN
UNIVERSITY

Northern
Institute

Pilot project – Biniinj Kunwok

- **Stage 1 Feb – June 2016**
 - Meet with Biniinj elders on country to agree on key people and scope of resources
 - Explore online tools or bespoke options for digital shell
- **Stage 2 June – Aug 2016**
 - Populate shell with existing resources from LAAL and BK website
 - Ethics approval and recruit volunteer learners to test site
- **Stage 3 Sept – Nov 2016**
 - Run pilot trial – 4 units (3-4 hours a week), available over 12 weeks
- **Stage 4 Dec – Jan 2017**
 - Data collection and analysis
- **Stage 5 Feb – Mar 2017**
 - Final report and financial acquittal



Stage 1 - establishment

- Establishment of **Bininj Kunmayali** – ‘People’s Knowledge’ committee
- Work with local Bininj in Darwin to develop resources
- Technical development
 - Decision to use **WordPress**
 - free, accessible, flexible, customisable, easy to use platform
 - Researched Learning Management Systems
 - Selected **LearnPress**
 - additional plugins for forums, quizzes, glossaries, etc



Lois, Cathy, Jill, Donna, Andrew, Murray, Andy



Stage 2 - development

- Audit of materials available in Bininj Kunwok
 - videos, books, audio, websites
 - digital and analogue
- Selection of appropriate resources for **4 week** course
- Building the shell
 - Bininj Kunwok language materials in sequenced units
 - Generic information about Aboriginal languages for use by other groups
- Ethics approval
 - Learners agree to give feedback
- Recruitment of volunteer learners via Bininj Kunwok website mailing list



Stage 3 - run pilot course

- Ran 1 September – 30 November 2016
- 4 units spread over 12 weeks
- Released fortnightly
- 150+ volunteers (non-Indigenous)



Useful phrases

You might find these phrases useful when speaking to Bininj.

- ▶▶▶ yeledj yiwokdin = speak slowly
- ▶▶▶ minj bekkam = I can't hear you
- ▶▶▶ yiyawoyhyimen = say it again
- ▶▶▶ ngawakwan = I don't know
- ▶▶▶ nuk = I don't know, I'm not sure
- ▶▶▶ adju = maybe, I don't know, I'd have to think about it (different meanings depending on context)
- ▶▶▶ burrkyak = no, nothing
- ▶▶▶ yikarrme bakki? = Have you got any smokes?
- ▶▶▶ burrkyak, minj ngakarrme = no, I don't have (any)

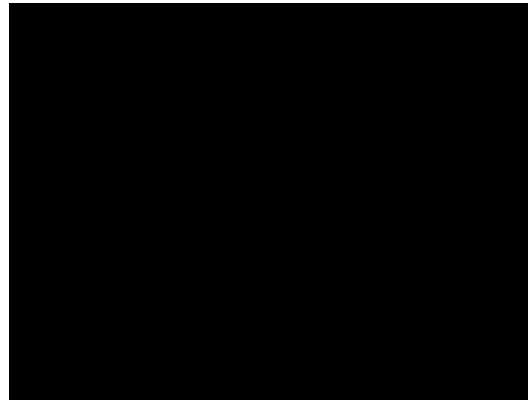


CHARLES
DARWIN
UNIVERSITY

Northern
Institute

Stage 3 - Course content

- Videos of Bininj talking about topics
 - Some subtitled in English, some in Kunwinjku
- Lessons explored details of these topics
 - Skin / kinship systems
 - Grammar and vocabulary
- Audio files for vocabulary, pronunciation



- 📄 Introduction
- 📄 Cultural information
- 📄 Pronunciation
- 📄 Useful phrases
- 📄 Vocabulary
- 📄 Reading
- 📄 Grammar
- 📄 Practice
- 📄 Activity
- 📄 Njalenjale



UNIT	1	2	3	4
Theme	Introductions			
Cultural info	Skin systems			
Vocabulary	Skin names, verbs, nouns			
Useful phrases	Introductions			
Grammar	Basic sentences, 1sg			
Pronunciation	Overview, spelling			
Reading	<i>Duruk kanan...</i>			

UNIT	1	2	3	4
Theme	Introductions	Family matters		
Cultural info	Skin systems	Skin & family		
Vocabulary	Skin names, verbs, nouns	Kin terms (reference, address)		
Useful phrases	Introductions	What do I call you? etc		
Grammar	Basic sentences, 1sg	2sg, 3sg, verbs		
Pronunciation	Overview, spelling	Vowels		
Reading	<i>Duruk kanan...</i>	<i>Kokok wam ..., Kakkak nang ...</i>		

UNIT	1	2	3	4
Theme	Introductions	Family matters	Coming & going	
Cultural info	Skin systems	Skin & family	Grandparents/ grandchildren	
Vocabulary	Skin names, verbs, nouns	Kin terms (reference, address)	Kin terms, animals, places,	
Useful phrases	Introductions	What do I call you? etc	'Speak slowly,' 'I don't understand,' etc	
Grammar	Basic sentences, 1sg	2sg, 3sg, verbs	Q&A, past tense, plural pronouns	
Pronunciation	Overview, spelling	Vowels	Nasals, h, retroflex	
Reading	<i>Duruk kanan...</i>	<i>Kokok wam ..., Kakkak nang ...</i>	<i>Wurdwurd birriwam ..., Baleh yabok?</i>	

UNIT	1	2	3	4
Theme	Introductions	Family matters	Coming & going	Karrinahnarren
Cultural info	Skin systems	Skin & family	Grandparents/ grandchildren	Staying safe / showing respect
Vocabulary	Skin names, verbs, nouns	Kin terms (reference, address)	Kin terms, animals, places,	Kin terms, verbs, nouns
Useful phrases	Introductions	What do I call you? etc	'Speak slowly,' 'I don't understand,' etc	'Is it OK to go there?' 'Who do I ask?'
Grammar	Basic sentences, 1sg	2sg, 3sg, verbs	Q&A, past tense, plural pronouns	Dual, trial, inc/exc, negative
Pronunciation	Overview, spelling	Vowels	Nasals, h, retroflex	Stops, r / rr, diphthongs
Reading	<i>Duruk kanan...</i>	<i>Kokok wam ..., Kakkak nang ...</i>	<i>Wurdwurd birriwam ..., Boleh yabok?</i>	<i>Kokok dja ..., Yun yikarrme</i>

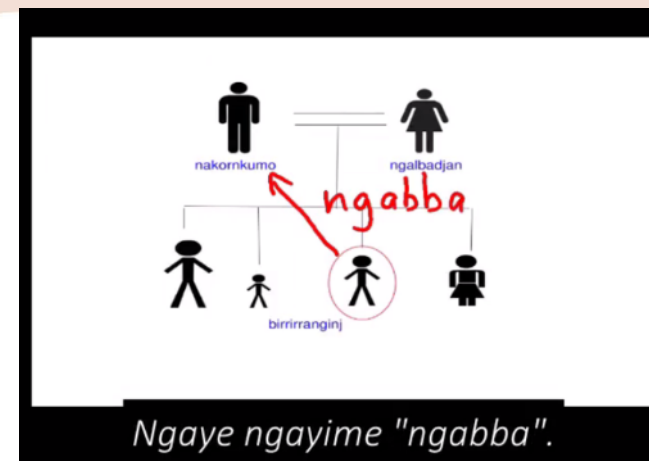
Stage 3 - Course tasks

Unit 1 – Introductions

- Present text and audio/video in Kunwinjku:
 - *My name is* ____
 - *My skin name is* _____
 - *I come from* _____
 - *I live in* _____
 - *I'm learning Kunwinjku.*

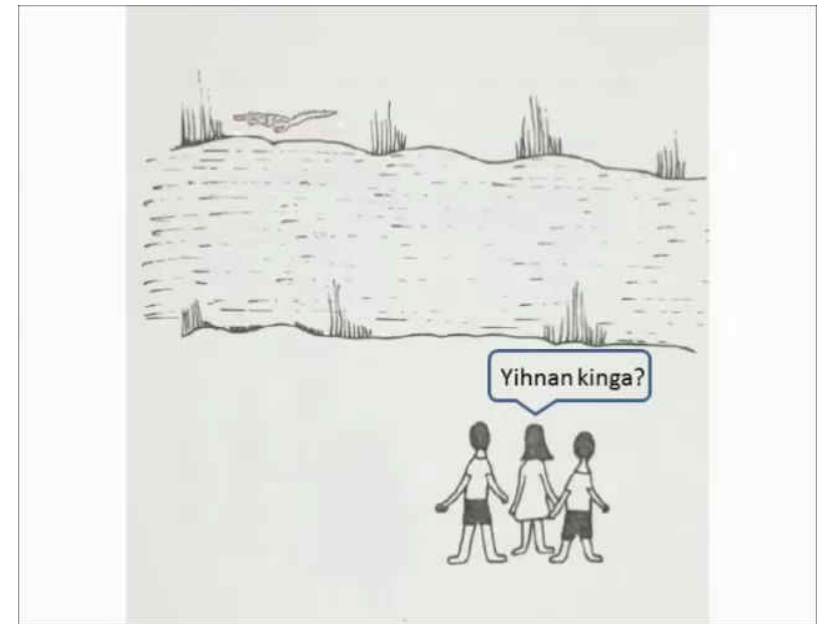
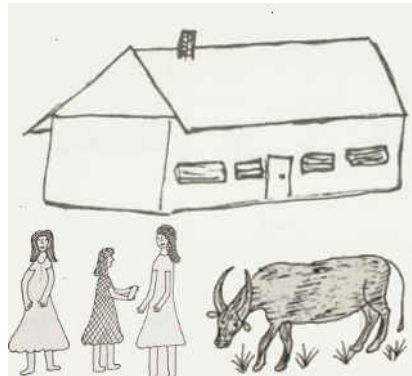
Unit 2 – Family matters

- Introduce your (immediate) family, e.g.
 - *My mother's skin is Ngalngarridj*
 - *She calls me djedje / I call her karrang*
- Introduce someone else and their family
 - Bininj colleague, or two video options



Stage 3 - Course tasks

- **Unit 3 – Coming and going**
 - Construct 5 sentences about each picture
- **Unit 4 – Karrinahnarren** - Free choice
 - Talk about family
 - Read aloud a Kunwinjku story
 - Describe pictures



Stage 3 - additional features

Forums

Bininj Kunwok language course > Forums

Forum	Topics	Posts
Feedback forum This forum is an opportunity to interact with other learners and the course facilitators about the course. Your comments here will form part of the data collected for the research project (as outlined in the Plain Language Statement). Registered users can post new topics and respond to other posts. Remember to keep it civil.	23	138
Unit 3 Forum Any comments about unit 3? Tell us what you think.	5	26
Unit 4 forum Another opportunity to tell us what you think. Where do you think the course should go, if we were to create more units?	6	13

Quiz page

Test yourself with these multiple choice quizzes

Unit 1:

Pronunciation quiz

Skin systems quiz

Unit 2:

Family matters quiz

Skin and family names quiz

Unit 3:

Grandparents quiz

Unit 4

Extended family quiz

Linguistic terms

Here you will find definitions and explanations of some of the more technical terms

- adjective
- adverb
- affix
- alveolar ridge
- consonant
- diphthong
- dual
- glottal stop
- inclusive/exclusive
- moiety
- morphology
- noun
- noun class
- object
- orthography
- part of speech
- phonology
- plural
- possessive
- prefix
- preposition
- pronominal prefix
- pronoun
- retroflex
- root
- singular
- stop
- subject
- suffix
- tense
- transitivity
- trial
- verb
- voicing
- vowel
- word order



CHARLES
DARWIN
UNIVERSITY

Northern
Institute

Stage 4 - data collection

- Survey emailed to all participants at close of pilot course
- Eliciting feedback about all aspects of course
- Some participants will be asked to do follow-up interviews
- Analysis and report due to funding body April 2017

*** 5. Prior to starting this course did you have any connections with Bininj speakers of Kunwinjku?**

none

previous connections but not currently active

some current connections with Bininj

I live/work in a Bininj community but have minimal interaction with Bininj

I live/work in a Bininj community and interact with Bininj on a daily basis

Other (please specify)

*** 6. Please indicate your main reason for doing this course**

currently working in Bininj community / with Bininj people

previous involvement with Bininj community / people

possible future involvement with Bininj community / people

general interest in learning an Indigenous language

interest in learning a language online

to assist with an academic research project

Other (please specify)



Statistics

Activity submissions

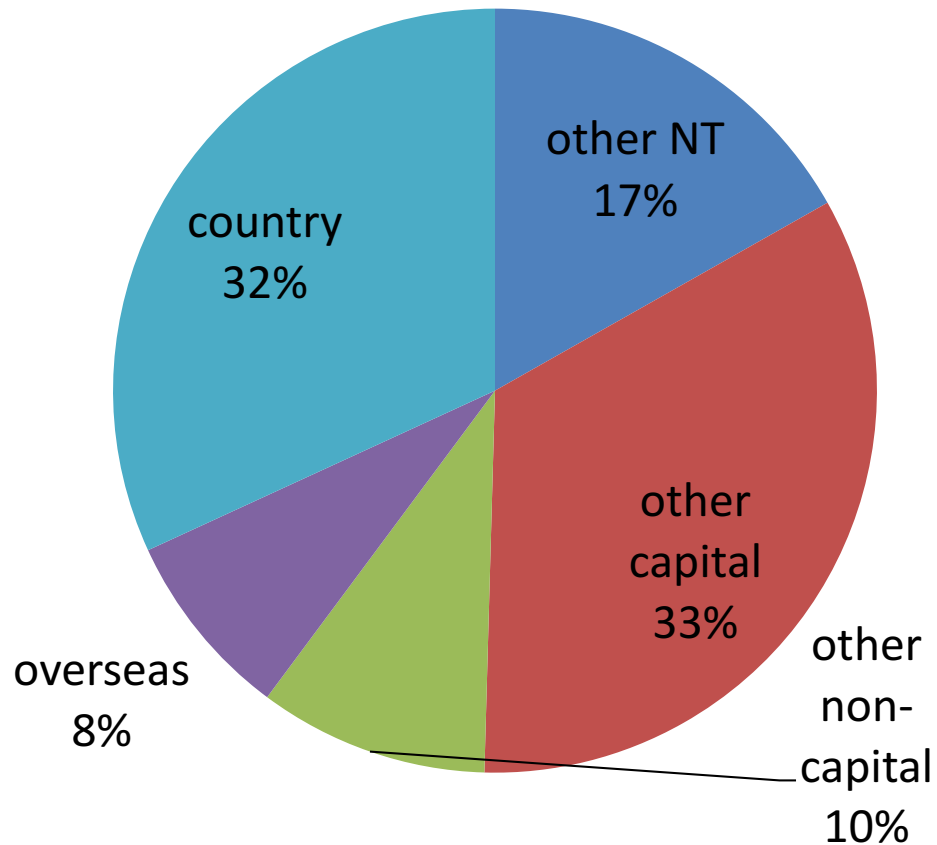
Interested	155
Consented	131
Logged in	113
Started	??

UNIT	No.	%
1	43	38%
2	27	24%
3	19	17%
4	12	10%



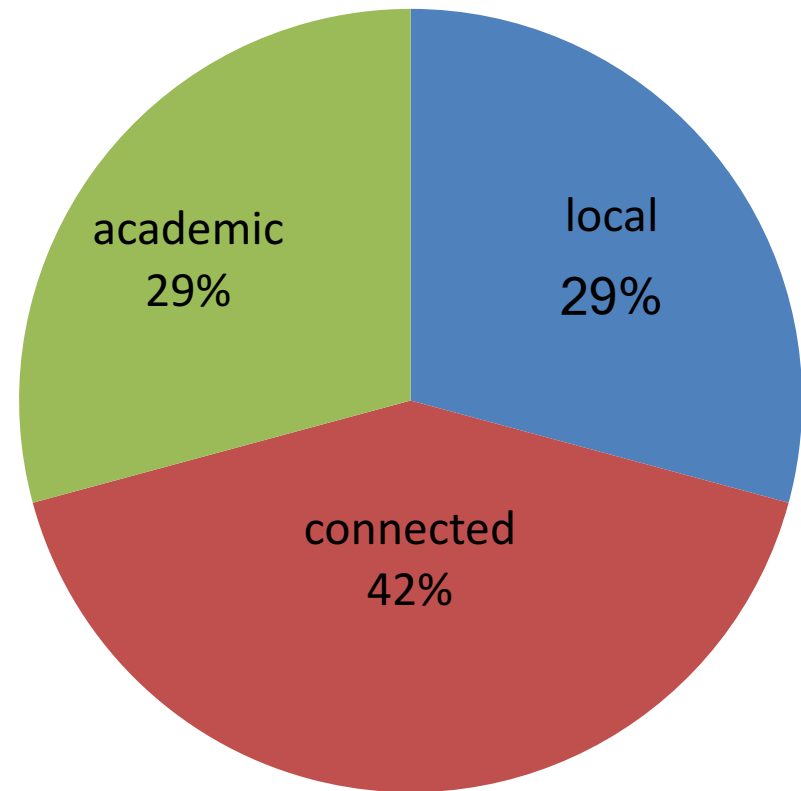
Location

(n=113)



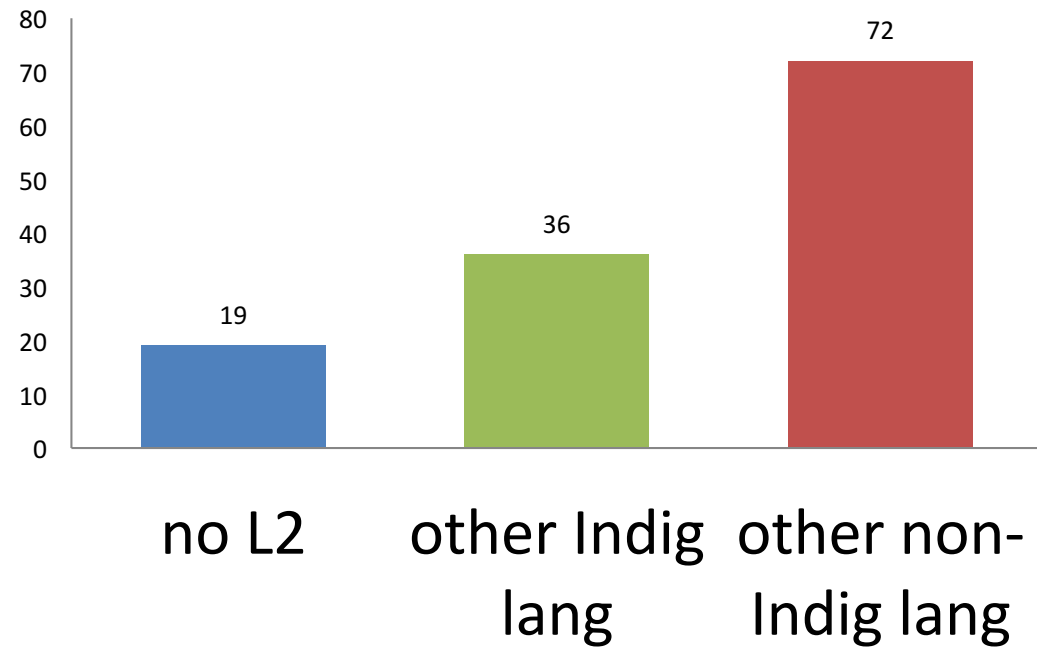
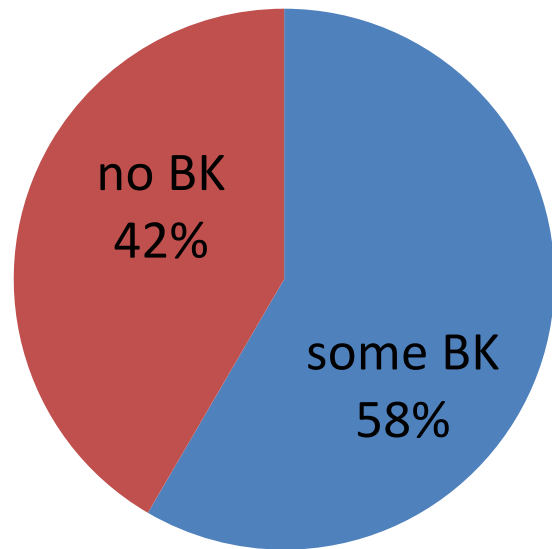
Classification

(n=113)



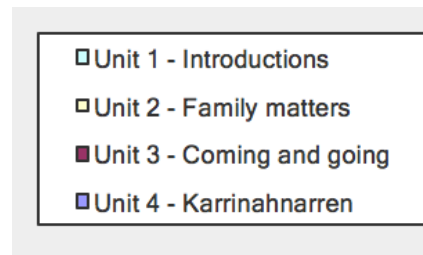
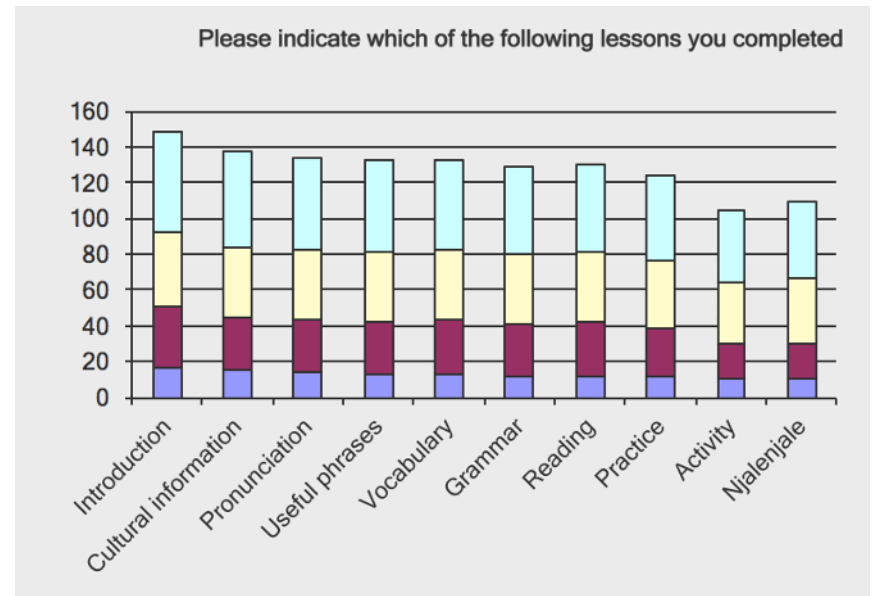
Language Knowledge

Prior knowledge of Bininj Kunwok



Feedback from participants

- Preliminary findings
 - 56 survey responses
 - Overall rating of 4/5
 - Most popular components
 - Videos of people speaking
 - Reading 'books'
 - Connections with community
 - Most difficult aspects
 - Finding time
 - Technical aspects
 - Appreciated opportunity to learn



Challenges – technical

- Limitations of free WordPress site
 - Plugins don't play well together
 - Forces certain pedagogical decisions
 - Formats for videos stored in CDU Library
- Learning Management System plugin
 - Difficulty setting up lessons
 - Complicated login system
 - No tracking of participants
 - Add-ons didn't work (quizzes, profiles)
 - Update lost all lesson links
- Updated version of LMS works better



Challenges - linguistic / admin

- Complexity of language
 - Polysynthetic
 - Very complex verb phrases
 - Noun class system
- Large number of learners
 - Vast array of experience
 - Management of forum
 - Assessing activity submissions
- Time frame
- Bininj ownership

		SUBJECT (intr)	With verb-re	INDEPENDENT	ENGLISH
1st	SG	nga-	ngare	ngaye	I, me
	DUALINC	ngarr-	ngarre*	ngarrku	I + you
	DUALEXC	ngane-	nganere	ngarrewoneng	I + 1 other (not you)
	TRIAL INC	kane-	kanere	karrewoneng	I + you, and 1 other
2nd	PLURALINC	karri-	karrire	kadberre	I + you and others (3+)
	PLURALEXC	ngarri-	ngarrire	ngadberre	I + 3+ others (not you)
	SG	yi-	yire	ngudda	you (1)
	DUAL	ngune-	ngunere	ngurrewoneng	you (2)
3rd	PLURAL	ngurri-	ngurrire	ngudberre	you (3+)
	SG MASC	ka-	kare	nungka	he, him
	SG FEM	ka-	kare	ngaleng	she, her
	DUAL	kabene-	kabenere	berrewoneng	they 2
	PLURAL	kabirri-	kabirrire	bedda	they 3+



Next steps

- Expand generic information about Australian languages
 - Phonology, ergativity, kinship systems, etc
- Explore opportunities for further development
 - Interest in extending to full semester course in Bininj Kunwok
 - Interest from different language communities
 - Incorporate some 'face-to-face' activities
- Negotiations with universities
 - Incorporate into existing courses
 - Accreditation and assessment issues



Acknowledgments

- Andy Peart
- Dr Murray Garde
- Jill Nganjmirra
- Seraine Namundja
- Bininj Kunmayali
Language Project
Committee
- Prof Michael Christie

Mah, bonj



Donna, Murray, Roseanne, Lois, Jill, Seraine, Julie, Cheryl, Frank, Andy, Andrew



**CHARLES
DARWIN
UNIVERSITY**

Northern
Institute