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Yolngu Education, a Brief Background: Analysis of 5 Texts Concerning Yolngu Education in Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia

ABSTRACT: The paper analyzes pedagogical articles dealing with Yolngu and their knowledge status in the mainstream curriculum. My intent is to find out which arguments the authors use to broaden the curriculum with Indigenous knowledge. For this reason, I aim to answer two questions; how Yolngu people are constructed in texts, and which discourses can be unveiled in those texts. I use discourse analyses to deconstruct writers' issues and attitudes towards Indigenous knowledge and different approaches to integrating various traditions in day-to-day school experiences. I apply Norman Fairclough's methodology but concentrate mostly on the first, textual level. Critical linguistics is an additional tool to deepen the analyses that reveal the emancipatory discourse's predominance.

KEYWORDS: Yolngu education, Aboriginal curriculum negotiation, Both-Ways education, discourse analysis.

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NORMAN FAIRCLOUGH`S METHODOLOGY

Norman Fairclough, an important representative of critical discourse analysis, divided discourse analysis in three dimensions: in the first part a text, an image or a mixture of these, are analyzed in depth; in the second, discursive practice involving the production and consumption of texts is examined; and finally, the third dimension involves discourses` relation to social practice (Winther, Jørgensen, Phillips, 2000, pp. 78–80).

The change in the socio-cultural sphere may be traced through the presence of different discourses that create *interdiskursivity*. We can also speak of *intertextuality*, in which the communicative events are based on earlier texts (Winther, Jørgensen, Phillips, 2000 p. 77). In a particular text analysis, several tools can be applied to disclose how identities are constructed, the metaphors formulated and the grammatical construction implemented. Two major categories are prevailed: *transitivity* and *modality*. Transitivity reveals how processes are united with objects and entities, and modality shows the speaker`s or author`s degree of agreement with given statements. Within the framework of critical discourse analysis, we can also apply critical linguistics, in which analysis of the syntax and choice of words is very helpful to uncover the hidden power relations – for example when personal pronouns are excluded in texts or a recipient becomes paraphrases in the passive voice (Boréus, 2005, pp. 280–287).

EXAMINATION OF TEXTS CONCERNING YOLNGU EDUCATION

Introductions to the Yolngu studies

The concept of *Yolngu* literally means “human being” and is used to refer to Aboriginal people living in North-East Arnhem Land in Australia`s Northern Territory (Milmilany and Tamisari, Milmilany, 2007, p. 2). Yolngu languages comprise about 40 clan languages spoken mainly in Milingimbi, Ramingining, Galiwinku, Yirrkala, Gapuwiyak and other places in Arnhem Land east of Darwin. About 12,000 people speak various dialects of Yolngu.

In 1992 Michael Christie introduced Djambarrpuyngu courses, a Yolngu dialect that could be studied as a university course. Charles Darwin University offers the most elaborate program in Yolngu studies (Amery, 2007, p. 10–11).

Most Yolngu live in remote communities. For generations, they have been practicing traditional law; memorizing the traces of ancestors' journeys; practicing songs, dances and performances; and hunting. Yolngu belong to different clans. Each clan has its own site, speaks its own language and its their own pictures of ancestors. A complexity of people and places creates Yolngu languages status. Language and outer reality are linked, existing at the same time. Children grow up with a lot of language awareness, e.g., being careful not to mention any names that belong to a specific clan or repeat the names of those who died, which could be dangerous (Christie, 2007, pp. 58–59). In the 1980s, a successful bilingual program in Yirrkala and Galiwinku schools was introduced; it lasted about 10 years. There was a high rate of school attendance, and many students learned English, while Yolngu educators worked through action groups that affected the curriculum and integrated knowledge with the help of members from the local community. Elder representatives could contribute their traditional knowledge about what, in their view, ought to be called great Yolngu training. Those discourses created such concepts as "Aboriginalization" and "Both-Ways-education" (Christie, 2007, p. 59).

Three fundamental concepts were implemented within the curriculum: *djalkiri*, *ganma* and *garma*. *Djalkiri* means foot, footprint or ground. At school in Yirrkala, students danced, painted, wrote and read about representations of ancestral land. Those activities demonstrated how important it was for the entire Yolngu culture as well as its laws. New practices were continued simultaneously with other more academic studies. *Ganma* means a special mixing of salt and fresh water in mangrove swamps near Gumatj seat called Biranybirany. The senior elders from the Gumatj clan introduced the term *ganma* to explain how they conceptualized the meeting of two cultures: Yolngu and Balanda (White):

Ganma is the lagoon, may appear smelly and threatening to white fellows, but it is full of life and very productive as a food source. Water is circulating silently beneath its surface; we can read the spiraling lines of foam on top. The swelling and retreating of the tides, and the wet and dry season fluctuations, can be seen in the two bodies of water. Each of them has its own life (Christie, 2007, p. 71).

Another metaphor related to assembling and interweaving Yolngu and Western cultures was the concept of *garma*. This concept, developed by elders, showed how *garma* could be used in education. *Garma* is a ceremony involving many human groups.

It takes time to organize this ceremony, and many of the skills are secret and negotiated before and during the ceremony while young people embrace their stories, sharing that special place with others. The Yolngu way to learn emphasizes that wisdom can be acquired only by actively participating in the educational process.

Text 1

“Dhinthun Wayawu -- Looking for a Pathway to Knowledge: Towards a Vision of Yolngu Education in Milingimbi.” Franca Tamisari, University of Queensland, and Elisabeth Milmilany, Milingimbi Community Centre, Winnellie, *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, Volume 32, 2003.

This article briefly presents the historical change in education in the Milingimbi community in Northeast Arnhem Land from the mission time to the present. Special emphasis is placed on the challenges, such as the bilingual curriculum integration, whereas Yolngu elders could develop an educational vision that later became implemented within the school practice. It was grounded in cultural identity and responsibility.

Franca Tamisari is of Aboriginal ancestry and a trained anthropologist. At school, she collaborated with Elisabeth Milmilany on a project on the history of education in Milingimbi and the incorporation of intercultural curriculum. She described the initiative, as well as the difficulties and challenges that teachers experienced during this process.

“Yolngu” appear in the text 72 times and forms the central node, that interweaves other meanings. “Yolngu” also stands in contrast to “Balanda” (white person) and connects with other designations and equivalents, which determine the meaning of the text. “Yolngu” occurs as a single concept, which replaces the name of the Aboriginal people with common Yolngu dialects, spoken in North-East Arnhem Land. However, most often “Yolngu” is used as adjective followed by a noun in the plural, or in the form of various persons linked to educational activities; the phrase “Yolngu educators” is mentioned three times, “Yolngu teachers” seven times, “Yolngu staff” twice, “Yolngu education” 15 times, “Yolngu vision” five times, “Yolngu knowledge” three times.

Several phrases connected with “Yolngu” reveal the author’s message regarding Yolngu importance. Adjectives and verbs bring a strong, positive meaning and present Yolngu people as active, energetic agents in the struggle to change the curriculum.

Let me mention some of the expressions: “Yolngu tactics of resistance,” “Yolngu sophisticated ways of knowing,” “Yolngu right to self-determination,” “Yolngu qualified integration of Yolngu knowledge,” “Yolngu education as a complex social and political process.” Tamisari aims to prove that the positive changes toward more influence over the curriculum were made based on the local population’s own initiatives and ideas surrounding the incorporation of various reforms; later, suggestions came from the Education Department in Darwin. However, there are passages in her article in which “Yolngu” is confronting “Balanda,” i.e., the white staff members at the school and in the community, where they were in the minority, 30 among the local population of 1,000. “Balanda” is mentioned 18 times, as in “Balanda teachers” three times and “Balanda Staff.” Neutral forms like “Balanda education” occur, but nowhere in the text is “Balanda” connected with superlative designations. On a few occasions, Yolngu teachers are described as deprived of power, in the inferior po-

sition. The Northern Territory Education Department suggested in 1988 that local Aboriginal teachers take over the teaching as a sign of “Aboriginalization,” the policy intended to strengthen the Aboriginal people and their culture.

Many teachers at the school apparently expressed skepticism. Tamisari writes: “Everybody agreed: ‘they are not able to.’ and again: “I was taken by a forcefulness and the finality of those statements” (Tamisari, Milmilany, 2003, p. 2). She believed there were probably other reasons Yolngu teachers did not want to take over: as a subtle opposition to any proposals imposed on them from the top. Continuing criticism directed against school policy, she writes, Yolngu teachers could experience *restrictions* (emphasis added) for a long time. Tamisari pointed out that the idea behind “Both-Ways education” did not originate from the Australian authorities but was already practiced during the mission period, after the Methodist Church arrived in 1923. She mentions two known and admired Yolngu leaders, Makarrwala and Batanga, who during that time worked as mediators between two cultures. In recognizing the language barrier between Yolngu and Balanda teachers and the consequent lack of information=sharing, which resulted in the exclusion of Yolngu staff from decision-making, the Action Group started meeting weekly to discuss ideas that were then taken to the general meeting for further discussion (Tamisari, Milmilany, 2003, p. 3). Tamisari mentions the language barriers; however the problem was with Balanda, who seemed to lack the good will to share information.

This interpretation is reinforced in the next sentence. Yolngu teachers, who met in the Action Group, had the opportunity to speak their own language without being “misunderstood or intimidated by the formal structure and agenda of the School general meetings dominated by the Balanda Staff” (Tamisari, Milmilany, 2003, p. 3). Here we have again the descriptions of the Yolngu in passive voice: “were dominated,” “were, therefore, being misunderstood,” victims of an uneven power structure at the school. Even while Tamisari writes about “Aboriginalization,” an emancipatory initiative initiated by the authorities, she distances herself by partially putting it in quotation marks or claims that such initiatives have previously come from Yolngu themselves. According to her, a huge gap existed between official rhetoric and good intentions to provide more space for the Aboriginal knowledge in the curriculum and the actual conditions at the school. I mentioned some important steps and Yolngu initiatives to implement the curriculum. The first concrete outcome of the intercultural curriculum project, “The Arts Wheel,” was developed and introduced in the school in 1988. Initially the program was implemented only on Fridays; then it changed to more elaborate study form during the school week. The round shape called *Mokuy* that was placed in the school gave the students cultural inspiration. *Mokuy* is an idea, incorporated through practical classroom exercises, that brought the opportunity of learning about rituals and the proper way to act, dance, sing and practice traditional knowledge.

Students strolled around the classroom and learned skills from their clans, then regrouped and had the opportunity to learn other clans’ histories. In 1990, Elizabeth Milmilany suggested that Yolngu knowledge should cover 50 percent of the curricu-

lum. After consultation with the clan elders, the program was renamed *Dhanaranga-la Murrurinydji Gaywanagala* (DMG).

This name is related to a central authority to mediate and resolve conflicts and disputes, as well as transfer knowledge between groups to achieve consensus. The program provided the way to a real intercultural education and was very innovative in terms of both structure and content.

The principles of the new curriculum:

1. Yolngu language studies for all students and their families.
2. Yolngu studies of Yolngu culture's positive impact on the environment.
3. Developing language studies – literacy in both Yolngu and English.
4. The curriculum should be 50/50 Yolngu and Balanda knowledge and worldview.
5. Yolngu people are responsible for curriculum and promote parental cooperation across the whole school (Tamisari, Milmilany, 2003, p. 5).

Finally, I would like to quote some Yolngu teachers who summarized the curriculum grounds:

We don't want to lose our culture with too many Balanda ways of living. In other words we don't want to learn more Balanda education and less Yolngu education, or more Yolngu education and less Balanda education. We want to learn both with even understanding (Faye, Matjarra, Charles Manydjarri, Gwen Warmbirriri, Nancy Djambutj, see Tamisari, Milmilany, 2003, p. 5).

Yolngu are mentioned 76 times, in comparison to *Balanda's* 19 times. It is not only the number of words but above all the elements that can be replaced with *Yolngu* and stands for its equivalence. Phrases emphasize Yolngu vision, strength, sophisticated tactics and initiatives, and expressions of action and change. *Balanda* is bound up with problems, misunderstandings, authority. A great challenge for Yolngu was the mandatory acquisition of English to communicate with white teachers, another disadvantage that deepened the inequity to *Balanda* educators and authorities.

Text 2

Local Versus Global Knowledges: A Fundamental Dilemma In Remote Education.” Michael Christie, keynote speech, Society for Provision of Education in Rural Australia National Conference, Darwin, October 2005.

Michael Christie's article analyzes the concept of “remote education.” He aims to show that education in remote parts of Australia, where Aboriginal people have their communities, tends to be regarded in the capital, Canberra, as a problem to be solved by the central authorities. Christie analyzes the concept of *the local and the global knowledge*, its value and validity from the Aboriginal population's perspective. He also emphasizes that life in remote communities is a conscious choice for the Aboriginal population; there, in place of their ancestral history, they find grounds for their identity.

The central concept of the entire article pinpoints “remote education.” The adjective *remote* is used 24 times in various contexts, usually in conjunction with *education*.

At the same time, it is clear that Christie adds positive values to this concept when he says “remoteness implies heterogeneity”. There are expressions that bind *remote* with *place*, “remote place” or “very remote place.” He further links *place* with *education*: “education to place,” “place consciousness,” “the issues of place,” “in the right place,” “place identity to remote teaching,” “phantasmagoric place.” *Place* in turn binds local and *remote*: “local place,” “academic theory of place,” “local landscape.” Christie finally unites *local* with *knowledge*: “knowledge is local,” “local knowledge.” In this way, the chains of equivalencies joined knowledge’s concept with the local site.

At the same time Christie rejects the negative perception of “remote education” as he deconstructs the authorities’ rhetoric when they talk about the “problems of remote and rural education.” According to Christie’s interpretation, this view, which he terms “Canberra view” or “the metro-centric view,” gives rise to a compensatory perception of country that should, according to authorities, be leveled to the national standard. This view, Christie continues, only intends to use education to create labor for industries that would be “productive, competitive, and innovative and in the tune with international market requirements” (Australian Department of Primary Industries and Energy in 1989; see Christie, 2005, p. 3).

He claims that bureaucrats and academics are blind in their opinions about the alleged disadvantages of being a student, or a student at the Australian Countryside. Authorities do not realize that the solution to these problems lies in the communities, whose people are familiar with their history, their strength and their own traditions and, through these skills, achieve more power in negotiations with the government (Christie, 2005, p. 3). According to Christie, the centralist approach also applies when the authorities are striving to achieve the same standard of language skills in English (English literacy) that applies for the whole country at the expense of bilingual education in Aboriginal schools (Christie, 2005, p. 3). A number of words are tied together with the central power and unified vision of knowledge.

The article juxtaposes two approaches to educational goals. The assimilative discourse, represented by school authorities in Canberra, is antagonistic to the emancipatory discourse for which Christie pleaded, in which local knowledge and the population are expected to increase their more power and authority. An imbalance exists: the power to decide on school forms is located primarily in the central institutions.

Christie writes about the “metro-centric” approach, behind which profound economic interests dominate school policy. He critically assesses the government’s education policy: “Nervous insistence on English literacy, governments of all colors and at many levels abandoned their commitment to bilingual education, the bureaucrats and academics of »the remote city of Canberra«” (Christie, 2005, p. 3).

Christie further notes that the feeling of *remoteness* depends on perspective and is a concept related to power. According to him, the authorities should recognize the strengths and benefits of local, Aboriginal peoples’ traditions and skills. He speaks

about “traditional knowledge practices,” “traditional ecological knowledge,” “ecological knowledge,” “useful knowledge,” “knowledge of local minds,” “Yolngu reorienting white researches,” “Yolngu aspiration for truly remote education,” “from the Yolngu perspective.” Therefore, to address the empowerment and strengthening of the local Aboriginal population, Christie urges the authorities to continue intercultural policies from the 1980s. The text consists of several discourses that create a high level of interdiskursivity.

To promote a discourse or an idea, an author may include personal pronouns that make the reader feel placed on the same conversational level. Christie often uses personal pronouns: “when *we* talk of our work in terms of rural education” (my italics), *we* are special precisely because each of our places are different,” “*we* do well to start with close examination of the notion of ‘remote,’ “when *we* are remote *we* are not remote from a single, unified centre” (Christie, 2005, p. 4). Words revealing the management discourse are “innovation,” “research initiatives,” “knowledge production” and “knowledge management.” The article also includes an academic discourse when Christie uses philosophical terms connected with Yolngu knowledge and pedagogical issues: “epistemology,” “Yolngu philosophers,” “identity theory.” Christie continues: “Ever since colonial times, there has always been something phantasmagoric about rural and remote Australia” (Christie, 2005, p. 8). He further mentions *garma*, the traditional Yolngu ceremony in which people come together from far and wide to “re-create their world and their identities through performance.” At the same time, there are clear features of the text that support the author’s authority and raise his credibility. Christie mentions his 25 years teaching in remote communities in Arnhem Land.

He also uses the categorical modality: “Darwin” is remote, “there is a different understanding of geography here,” “the spaces in which rural or remote students learn and their teachers teach are in a sense phantasmagoric” (Christie, 2005, pp. 3–4; my underlining).

There is no doubt that the entire text is permeated by a strong fascination with Yolngu people and desire to exalt their value, to preserve their traditional knowledge and obtain new funds to continue the bilingual, intercultural pedagogy. Christie praises Yolngus’ ecological thinking; the reader understands the complexity and diversity of their identity. Applying several discourses within a text points out a strong and broader community development, which Fairclough calls as *marketization of discourse* (Winther Jørgensen, Phillips, 2000, pp. 90–91). One may also wonder which of the discourses are excluded, i.e. what the discursive field looks like. It is clear that the assimilative discourse is banned and totally excluded. Yolngu are portrayed as a group that chooses to remain in the country: “Many recipients of very remote education live very deliberately by choice; in the very remote places because they want to be in control of their young people education” (Christie, traditional, 2005, p. 5).

Text 3

“It was like Walls of the Classroom Came Down Around Us: Teaching From the Country Student Forum,” Christian Clark (2009).

This text is a contribution that students created during an international seminar in the Northern Territory that began in 2008, officially ended in 2009 but continued into 2010. The workshop called *Teaching From the Country* was meant to develop web-based applications with Yolngu language, while researchers from Darwin University and foreign guests cooperated with the Yolngu educators, who stayed in the local communities.

Within that project, distance education in reverse was applied: teachers would remain in remote places and students on campus in Darwin, at Charles Darwin University. Michael Christie could leave his duties at the university for one year and had the opportunity to participate, together with international experts and researchers. The text is a collective creation, but it was Christian Clark who made a selection and summary. It includes all the names of people who participated in the seminars, teachers who stayed in the country and Michael Christie. It is divided into short chapters that summarize aspects of the workshop with regard to the content, personal experiences and views concerning the difference of those seminars from other, more traditional academic gatherings.

Students spoke explicitly about empowerment. They appreciated the Yolngu teachers, who imparted a sense of authority and security in areas of knowledge that students were taught. Some participants felt that “it was like we were brought more into the Yolngu world than they were brought to ours” (Clark, 2009). Other noted that it was very rare that Yolngu had control over the learning process.

Students had the opportunity to observe their teachers in the classroom on the big screen, rambling round in the local community in their natural environment in Arnhem Land. Students admitted that the form of learning was very different from more conventional University courses. They could better understand traditional Yolngu knowledge in the right context and were amazed how much their Aboriginal teachers could share about these traditional places. The participants were really convinced, that knowledge was situated and linked with the site. Some participants admitted that they had begun thinking more about their own assumptions and undergone in-depth personal development during the course. Afterward, they were able to critically examine other skills they had previously learned at university.

Students also praised Yolngu teachers and said they were “more human” than other teachers. Even here in that text, we can trace the invigorating, liberating discourse. The Aboriginal teachers lectured from home, where they felt truly surrounded by the symbols, myths and representations that strengthened them as teacher and individuals. One participant admitted: “My presence in the Yolngu studies classroom was quite a wonderful experience. I came with some knowledge but left knowing the I really only started to learn and so I have an entire new road ahead of me” (Clark, 2009).

Text 4

Both-Ways: Learning From Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow Celebrations Strengthening, by Robyn Ober, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education* Volume 32, Supplement 2009.

Robyn Ober discusses how the idea of “Both-Ways” philosophy and the foundation for the curriculum could be implemented at Batchelor Institute providing education for Indigenous students. This article aimed to show what “Both-Ways education” was and what principles could be applied to it in a practical context. “Both-Ways” education unites Australian Indigenous knowledge with Western and is all about “respect, tolerance, and diversity.” Furthermore, Ober claims: “Both-Ways is a continuous question rather than a definitive answer” (Ober, 2009, p. 34).

The metaphor of “Both-Ways” is also “state of mind,” “philosophy of education.” Ober points out that it is an Aboriginal concept and Aboriginal people have greater insight into its significance.

We note that the term, according to the author, is very dynamic, changing and hard to define in simple terms. However, it possesses a certain meaning, appearing in several places, and aims to strengthen Aboriginals’ identity and empower them, both as individuals and in their professional lives (Ober, 2009, p. 35).

Several expressions in the article highlight the metaphoric meaning of “Both-Ways Education.” Ober cites, for example, Berna Timaepatua, who spoke of the tides as a metaphor for “Boths-Ways”: “As the tide comes in, it is known knowledge; as it goes out it takes new knowledge that is gained to be used and applied to real situation” (Ober, 2009, p. 37).

There were three main reasons to practice “Both-Ways education” at the school:

1. Sharing studies by exchanging knowledge not only with students, but also with the entire local community, family, friends, siblings and colleagues.
2. The studies are student-centered, adapted to their different needs, to strengthen reading, literacy, numeracy and other academic skills, but mainly the local native culture, songs, ceremonies, history and traditions as important identity bearers.
3. To strengthen and enhance Aboriginal identity (Ober, 2009, p. 38).

Ober also writes about her own experiences as a student at the Institute. She explains that studies confirmed her Aboriginal identity. She became interested in Aboriginal languages, for her first language was *Aboriginal English*, or *Murri English*. Ober adds that she did not know that she could study her mother tongue at the university. She completed her studies at Charles Darwin University in Darwin, and in 2007 she became the Master in applied linguistics. Throughout the text, we can trace a firm voice, calling for more empowerment for the Aboriginal population. “Both-Ways” education interweaves two knowledge sources, Aboriginal and Western, but the Aboriginal worldview is given more space and importance throughout the text. “Indigenous” along with “Both-Ways education” occurs 14 times, while “West-

ern knowledge” only three. There is also a sense of depth, mystery and difficulty in translating into concrete terms what “Boths-Ways” would mean. One of this educational metaphor’s three main goals is to strengthen Aboriginal identity. The balance of power is still far from real, to the white-majority population’s advantage, so the long-oppressed Aboriginal people need to emphasize their own traditions:

This concept of Both-Ways is an injunction to redress the imbalance and find a new balance that enables students to appropriate white knowledge whilst keeping strong “Indigenous” mind “and being careful not to drift unwittingly or unthinkingly into ‘white mind’” (McCormack, 2003; see Ober, 2009, p. 35).

Text 5

Research project to preserve Indigenous languages in NT on 2/11/2011.

This text is a short news report from the Australian Research Council and is available on the Charles Darwin University website. It says the council decided to provide \$430,000 to researchers at the university to create a digital archive for literature in danger of disappearing in 16 different Aboriginal languages in the Northern Territory. Michael Christie from Charles Darwin’s School of Education and Brian Devlin won the grant for the project, *A living archive of Australian Indigenous language*. The project will also engage various local Aboriginal communities. This grant was established by the Innovation Minister, Senator Kim Carr, to support research in vital areas, develop new ideas to create jobs and raise the quality of life for all Australians. The text is written in a conventional news discourse; at the same time, it has traits of management discourse. The institution reports information, about the new research funds. The text presents several forms of future events: “they will build a digital archive,” “new ideas,” “investment in research vital for development.” This text, along with other educational articles, provide a comprehensive educational discourse surrounding Darwin University and Yolngu research.

It is an example showing that texts carrying on a strong promotional discourse affect other texts and even non-discursive social practice. The grant came to Darwin from another organization operating at the federal level. At the same time, this practice creates new texts, including Aboriginal literature and culture, that will strengthen the emancipatory discourse in the Northern Territory.

HOW ARE YOLNGU CONSTRUCTED IN THE TEXTS?

Yolngu are constructed in texts through a variety of properties, but also by contrast to represent the white Australian population. To use such expressions as “ecological Yolngu knowledge,” “Yolngu vision,” “Yolngu sophisticated ways of learning” and “Yolngu right to self-determination”; a number of positive features and properties are attributed to Yolngu, who appear strong and confident in asserting their rights.

At the same time, they are represented as victims of discrimination. Franca Tamisari writes about "Yolngu tactics of resistance." She also wants to prove that it was the Yolngu who, already in the 1920s, practiced "Both-Ways" educational philosophy.

Yolngu appear in selected texts as people with extraordinary knowledge about their environment. Their wisdom and experiences concerning the environment are presented as unique and very useful in the contemporary, globalized world.

Michael Christie, who has worked with the Yolngu language for 25 years and speaks Yolngu, expressed that "there's always been something phantasmagoric about rural Australia." Tamisari writes about Aboriginal teachers who could not determine much at meetings with other staff in the school of the Millingimbi. At the same time, the white teachers were seen as friendly and helpful. Homi Bhabha speaks of "mimicry" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 86) and "imitation," in which the Colonized Other is constructed as appearing like colonial power's population, but not quite. There is the fascination of the exotic, while at the same time the Other is perceived as a threat and needs to be assimilated. Christie's discourse is liberating, however; as several post-colonial scholars state (Mills, 2004, p. 107), it is never just one discourse.

WHICH DISCOURSES ARE PRESENTED IN TEXTS?

Discourses that appeared in the analyzed texts fall within the framework of a larger discourse, which can be called school or educational discourse. By analyzing these texts, we reveal that almost all contained the liberating social-critical emancipatory discourse. The high interdiskursivity pointed to ongoing continuing change in the local community of the Northern Territory. Michael Christie and other teachers and researchers of Yolngu spoke about the need to include Aboriginal knowledge in the national curriculum, as well as the idea of raising the motivation for Aboriginal students. This emancipatory discourse, which seems to be strongly anchored in Australian educational discourse, affects many new ways to create learning environments and provide more intrinsic value to the oppressed Aboriginal population.

The current Australian National Curriculum consists of integral intercultural elements. Indigenous culture, history and language are considered one of the three priority areas (Australian National Curriculum, 2016).

The driving force behind the emancipatory education policy was the Labor Government that came to power in 1972. All efforts to "open up" -- improve school results on the basic level, increase student attendance, include students with special needs in regular classes, and bring communities and school together -- improve conditions for Aboriginal students (O' Donoghue, 2000, pp. 51–52).

At the same time, conservative governments have tried to implement various assimilative policies toward Australian Aboriginals. This process was called "de-Aboriginalizing" through education. Aboriginal students became subject to racist treatment at school. Much has changed since that time, but many Aboriginal students still feel deeply alienated in the school environment (p. 55). In Christie's article the assimilative discourse was contested; in the other texts it simply did not occur. It

constituted the discursive field of Yolngu education in analysis of the selected texts. This does not mean it is not present in the school debate. Christie mentioned it in his article as “dangerous and strong” (Christie, 2005, p. 5). On the other hand, the emancipatory discourse is apparently a dominant discourse surrounding the Yolngu today.

ARGUMENTS FOR EXPANDING CURRICULUM WITH YOLNGU KNOWLEDGE

Several arguments that came to light during the discourse analysis can be summarized in five categories:

1. Arguments that highlight the **subjective value of Yolngu knowledge**.
2. Arguments concerning **Yolngu ecological consciousness**.
3. Arguments dealing with **social justice**.
4. Arguments that pinpoint Yolngu **cultural inheritance**.
5. Arguments that emphasizes **the usefulness of Yolngu knowledge** throughout Australian society.

These arguments acquired as well in the text that dealt with research funding. That text was created by an organization at the federal level.

INTERTEXTUALITY AND SOCIAL PROCESSES

Critical discourse analysis aims to demonstrate the relationship between language and social practice (Winther, Jørgensen and Phillips, 2000, p. 76). The link between these levels embraces the discursive practice that encompasses the production and consumption of different texts in the context of a particular discourse. By analyzing the intertextuality, we can unfold the way the texts based on past production create a discourse.

In the analysis presented in the paper, we could assume which central themes reoccur in the new texts and reinforce the discourse. Franca Tamisari mentioned *ganma* and important ceremonies for Yolngu people, and she extensively presented and explained them from a historical perspective (Tamisari, Milmilany, 2003) She described specifically how this intercultural approach would materialize in curriculum work, where the knowledge from both the Australian curriculum and Yolngu curriculum would be realized. In the introduction to the Yolngu studies, *ganma* and *garma* were mentioned in addition to the concepts of “Aboriginalisation” and “Both-Ways education” (Christie, 2007, pp. 9–21). The third text dealt with an evaluation of a workshop (Clark, 2009). Students talked about Yolngu strength and safety when they were taught from the Country and also underlined how that way of teaching the Yolngu strengthened empowerment. In the fourth paper, presented by Robyn Ober (Ober, 2009) http://www.regents.ac.uk/study/undergraduate-study/programmes/ba-hons-fashion-marketing/#tab_course-content “Both-Ways education” was described, and its ideas were applied to another school in the Northern Territory, the Batchelor Institute. In her article several new concepts were added to “Both-Ways education.” Ober emphasized that “Both-Ways education” was important with re-

gard to learning processes and the social context while the family, the local Aboriginal community, the school and the entire home Community were involved. She also mentioned that strategy would strengthen Aboriginal identity (Ober, 2009, p. 32). The final text, a news report on Charles Darwin University's website (2011), concerned new funding for the digitization of Aboriginal literature in 16 languages, granted by the Australian Research Council. That embodies how the dominant emancipatory discourse, which for many years revolved around Yolngu education in the Northern Territory, resulted in the creation of another official text behind which a change in the social sphere was established.

An institution at the federal level decided to outsource specific funds, \$430,000, to continue research into Aboriginal languages of this Northern Territory.

In this way, new texts in various Aboriginal dialects could be produced, more researchers and Yolngu teachers would be employed, and the emancipatory discourse regarding Yolngu would be reproduced. Several factors create discourses that both affect and are affected by the outer social practice. Global changes have a clear impact on discourses concerning curriculum theory for all students. However, Indigenous learners are more vulnerable to these factors. At the global level, several often antagonistic processes affect educational discourses. Global forces, such as the OECD or the World Bank, make economic impact on educational discourses, so we have to consider "marketing of education" (Priestley, 2002, p. 131).

While these forces are operating, language is borrowed from the management discourse. Therefore governments with stronger opposition to those forces aim to provide the national, centralized curriculum (Priestly, 2002, pp. 131–134).

CONCLUSION

This essay is also a discourse. *Yolngu* occurs many times and dominates the whole text. By referencing the selected items, where Yolngu and their traditional knowledge is presented in a positive way, my paper reproduces the liberating discourse.

To create a full picture of the different forces operating and struggling to create discourses of Yolngu education would require a longer study in which other texts on education would also be included. Intercultural education enhancing unique Indigenous knowledge needs to obtain a significant place in the curriculum and is fundamental to the struggle for every individual's right to a dignified life. Long discriminated against, oppressed and devalued, the Indigenous people have a right to empowerment. Above all, their profound ecological awareness needs to be more valued than ever in human history.

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**EDUKACJA YOLNGU, KRÓTKI ZARYS GENEZY: ANALIZA PIĘCIU TEKSTÓW
DOTYCZĄCYCH KULTURY YOLNGU W ARNHAM LAND, TERYTORIUM
PÓŁNOCNE, AUSTRALIA**

ABSTRAKT: Artykuł analizuje teksty dotyczące Aborynów z grupy etnicznej Yolngu oraz status ich wiedzy w standardowym australijskim planie zajęć. Moją intencją jest przedstawienie argumentów, na podstawie których autorzy tekstów pragną uzasadnić rozszerzenie standardowego planu zajęć o tradycyjną wiedzę Aborynów z tej specyficznej grupy etnicznej. Z tego powodu mam zamiar odpowiedzieć na dwa pytania: W jaki sposób członkowie grupy Yolngu są konstruowani w tekstach oraz jakie dyskursy możemy w tych tekstach odczytać. Do badania tekstów stosuję analizę dyskursu, aby zdekonstruować poglądy i nastawienie autorów w stosunku do tradycyjnej wiedzy i różnego rodzaju działań na rzecz integracji odmiennych tradycji

w codziennej praktyce szkolnej. W pracy tej stosuję metodologię Normana Fairclough, jednakże koncentruję się jedynie na pierwszym poziomie analizy tekstów. Krytyka lingwistyczna jest dla mnie dodatkowym narzędziem w celu pogłębienia analiz, które wskazują na dominację dyskursu emancypatorskiego w wybranych tekstach.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: edukacja Yolngu, Negocjacja Aborygeńskiego planu zajęć, Edukacja Dwóch Dróg, analiza dyskursu.

