

How can Aboriginal Teachers use culturally enhanced approaches when teaching foundational skills for reading and writing in the early years?

by Melissa Kirby

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the degree of

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under the supervision of Hilary Yerbury & Katherine Bates

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Certificate of Original Authorship

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I, Melissa Kirby declare that this thesis, is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of *Master of Education (Research)* in the *Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences* at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Abstract

This study, conducted by an Aboriginal teacher of foundational literacy, addresses the question of how Aboriginal teachers use culturally enhanced approaches when teaching foundational literacy skills. It used the Kapatı method of data collection through yarning to gather descriptions of the pedagogical approaches and practices used in teaching literacy as well as insights into a range of related topics raised by the five Aboriginal teachers who agreed to take part in this study. The themes arising from the content analysis showed how they developed their own pedagogical approaches, complying with and subverting the mandated pedagogical approaches. It has also shown how they believe that while they may be valued for their cultural knowledge, it is more difficult to be recognised for their expertise in the teaching of literacy. The findings of the study hint at the challenges inherent in developing literacy in Standard English, in a context where this may be seen as the colonisers' language, the language which displaced traditional languages. This study could have far-reaching implications both for the practice of teaching foundational literacy and for scholarship and research. It has certainly been able to demonstrate how the use of a social pedagogy can be a subversive activity.

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Babaa, Gunii, ngaadhi gaga, ngindu yaadhumaadhuguuy, ngadhu gadharay ngindu gulibaa.

Dad, mum and my brother, you are really amazing, I respect you three!

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