

The University of Melbourne - School of Social & Political Sciences

MASTER OF SOCIAL POLICY – MINOR THESIS

**Taking Indigenous culture into account: A critical analysis of an early
childhood education program for disadvantaged families.**

This thesis is presented by *Jacynta Marie Krakouer*, student number 178933 to the *School of Social and Political Sciences* in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of *Master of Social Policy* in the field of *Indigenous Education Policy* in the *School of Social and Political Sciences, Faculty of Arts* at **The University of Melbourne.**

Supervisor: Dr Signe Ravn

Date: 24th October 2016

Word Count: 11, 686 words

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	3
Abstract.....	4
Introduction.....	6
Background.....	6
This study.....	10
Literature Review	12
Closing the Gap	12
Indigenous education as a socially constructed ‘problem’	13
Early childhood education as a social policy tool.....	14
The HIPPY program	17
Indigenous learning approaches.....	19
Concluding remarks about the literature.....	21
Methodology.....	22
About the HIPPY program	22
Data collection	23
Research methodology and data analysis	24
Content analysis.....	24
Critical discourse analysis	28
Findings	30
Quantitative findings: Content analysis.....	30
Age 4 activity packs.....	30
Age 5 activity packs.....	31
Combined age 4 and 5 activity packs	33
Qualitative findings: Critical discourse analysis	34
Discussion.....	40
Answering the research questions.....	40
Interpreting the findings.....	41
Implications of the findings for HIPPY Australia	44
Implications of the findings for policy	47
Conclusion	50
Bibliography	51

Acknowledgments

There are several people to whom I owe my thanks, without which this research would not have been made possible. Firstly, to my supervisor Dr Signe Ravn, thank you for your ongoing support and academic guidance throughout the year. It has been a pleasure to have you as a mentor and support figure. Secondly, I am grateful for the support of the Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) and its numerous staff, who have been so cooperative and helpful in both steering the direction of my research and in providing me with access to the HIPPY Australia materials. Special thanks are owed to Professor Shelly Mallett, Dr Eric Dommers, Dr Anita Kochanoff, Fatou Diallo-Roost, Elise Willersdorf, Nicola MacKenzie and Marian Petit.

On a personal note, I give my thanks to my family and friends. In particular, I would like to thank my fiancé, Michael Rudakov, my sister, Tamasin Krakouer, and my friends, Fiona Rigney and Olivia Killeen, for their unwavering support. To you all, thank you for supporting me throughout my academic journey.

Abstract

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) has gained significant policy attention in Australia as a key to closing the Indigenous education gap prior to the commencement of formal schooling. Yet, Indigenous Australians still attend formal ECEC at lower rates than their non-Indigenous peers. The Home Instruction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) is a combined home and centre based ECEC program that works with disadvantaged children and families (including Indigenous Australians) to prepare children for their first year of school. The HIPPY Australia program teaches parents how to be their child's first educator through the provision of structured educational activity packs that parents undertake with their child over a two year period. Using a mixed methods approach combining content and critical discourse analysis, this research critically analysed the compatibility of HIPPY with Indigenous Australians. Quantitatively, this thesis examines the extent to which the forty-five HIPPY Australia activity packs aligned with traditional Indigenous learning approaches. Qualitatively, cultural compatibility was analysed by examining the assumptions about Indigenous parents and families implicitly inherent in the HIPPY Australia activity packs. It was found that the four and five year old HIPPY Australia activity packs had minimal alignment with Indigenous Australian learning approaches and favoured the use of particular Indigenous learning approaches over others. The critical discourse analysis of the HIPPY program highlighted the manner in which the program privileges Western knowledges over Indigenous knowledges. In this way, the HIPPY program is used as a social policy intervention tool to correct the undesirable behaviours of Indigenous parents and families who do not adhere to Western educational and parenting norms. Deficit-based assumptions regarding the knowledge and skills that disadvantaged families brought to the HIPPY program were also found to be prevalent which limited parent

autonomy in educating their children. The findings have implications for engaging Indigenous parents, children and communities in the HIPPY program. In order to improve the cultural compatibility of HIPPY with Indigenous Australians, the HIPPY program should be tailored to local Indigenous contexts through a participatory, community-based approach. This would enable local Indigenous communities to exercise self-determination through the adaptation of the HIPPY program to suit their needs. Future research should focus on obtaining Indigenous parents' and communities' views regarding the cultural compatibility of the HIPPY program with Indigenous Australians.

Introduction

“Early childhood education and care (ECEC) has become a policy priority in many countries. A growing body of research recognises that ECEC brings a wide range of benefits, including social and economic benefits; better child well-being and learning outcomes; more equitable outcomes and reduction of poverty; increased intergenerational social mobility; higher female labour market participation and gender equality; increased fertility rates; and better social and economic development for society at large.”

(Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2016)

Background

The OECD has identified a range of social and economic benefits that stem from participation in ECEC (OECD, 2016). In Australia, there has been increasing policy attention concerning the positive impact of ECEC on later educational and socioeconomic outcomes (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016; Education Council, 2015, Harrington, 2014). Research has shown that children who begin school ‘ready’ to learn – that is, intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally capable of learning without constraints – tend to perform better throughout their primary school years compared to students who are assessed as ‘not school ready’ (Masters, 2016; Liddell et al, 2011; Dockett et al, 2011).

Unfortunately, many children encounter multiple issues that impede their ability to become ‘ready’ for starting school (Armstrong & Buckley, 2011; Boulden, 2006; Bourke et al, 2000; Gray & Partington, 2003; Malcolm et al, 2003; Purdie & Buckley, 2010). In 2015 for example, the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) reported that 22 per cent of Australian children were “developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains”, meaning that they were commencing school already behind their same-aged

peers (AEDC, 2015). Often, children found to be developmentally vulnerable across one or more of the AEDC domains were from disadvantaged backgrounds (AEDC, 2015). This disadvantage can stem from a range of factors, such as children being affected by intergenerational poverty or trauma, or even from children being members of a marginalised community, such as an Indigenous¹ Australian community. To reduce the chances of disadvantage – stemming from low educational attainment – affecting generations of vulnerable Australians, social policy emphasises the need to intervene into the lives of vulnerable children and families during the early years.

Intervening during the early years also presents another main advantage for policy practitioners: the ability to save money on later projected spending costs. Liddell et al (2011) highlighted the financial efficacy of investing in children's early years education. They found that the cost-benefit ratio of investing in early education programs is 2.53:1, that is, the rate of return is \$2.53 for every \$1 invested in ECEC (Liddell et al, 2011). Furthermore, investing in the education of vulnerable Australians also enables future generations to benefit from their parent's enhanced educational attainment. Research attests to the fact that people with higher levels of education, such as tertiary degrees, tend to earn a higher income and spend less time not engaged in the labour market (Richardson et al, 2016). Children who have at least one parent with a tertiary level education also tend to perform better educationally compared to children whose parents have low formal education (Smyth & Wrigley, 2013; Liddell et al, 2011). Consequently, intervention during the early years presents an opportunity to improve the social capital of disadvantaged and marginalised Australians. In this way, ECEC for disadvantaged populations is not just an education issue, but also an issue for social policy.

¹ The terms 'Indigenous' and 'Indigenous Australian' are used throughout this thesis to refer to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

According to Masters (2016), 42 per cent of Indigenous Australian children between the years 2009 – 2015 were assessed as ‘developmentally vulnerable’ across one or more school readiness indicators. This is not surprising considering that Indigenous Australians fare worse than non-Indigenous Australians across a raft of socioeconomic measures, a fact which stems from the ongoing effects of colonisation on Indigenous Australians. For example, the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Report (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, 2014) highlights that Indigenous Australians have higher rates of infant mortality, lower life expectancy, more involvement in the criminal justice system, lower rates of educational attainment and lower socioeconomic status compared to non-Indigenous Australians. Ameliorating Indigenous disadvantage has been a focus of a raft of social policy interventions, including the ‘Closing the Gap’ initiative, which has held bipartisan support in Australia for the past eight years (Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2009).

One aspect of the Closing the Gap initiative for Indigenous Australians focuses on the importance of ensuring that all four year old Indigenous children have access to a high quality, early childhood education. Despite ongoing policy attempts to ‘close the gap’, Indigenous children still have lower rates of enrolment in ECEC compared to non-Indigenous Australians (Kitson & Bowes, 2010; Dockett et al, 2011). As a consequence, lower ECEC participation rates by Indigenous Australians have been constructed as a social problem that social policy needs to address.

Combined home and centre based programs, such as the Home Instruction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY), provide an opportunity for Indigenous parents to participate in an alternative form of ECEC. The HIPPY program is an early childhood intervention and parenting program designed to improve educational outcomes for children by teaching parents from disadvantaged backgrounds how to be their child's first

educators (Liddell et al, 2011). In Australia, HIPPY is undertaken over a two year period with a range of diverse cultural groups, such as Anglo-Celtic persons, refugee and migrant groups and Indigenous Australians (Gilley, 2003; Liddell et al, 2011). HIPPY aims to reduce social disadvantage by upskilling parents and subsequently, preparing children from low socioeconomic and cultural minority backgrounds for their first year of primary school (Gilley, 2003; Liddell et al, 2011; Dean & Leung, 2010). In effect, HIPPY aims to improve equity across educational indicators for disadvantaged children and families. While HIPPY predominately aims to improve educational outcomes, this thesis views HIPPY as a social policy intervention tool that also aims to correct the ‘undesirable’ behaviours of parents who do not conform to mainstream parenting ideals. While aiming for educational equity in the early years is an admirable goal, it is the manner in which ECEC services engage with disadvantaged families – and place a set of expectations upon them – that can be problematic. By teaching parents how to teach their children, there are underlying assumptions inherent in HIPPY concerning the role of parents in educating their children prior to school entry.

In 2007, the Australian Government provided in excess of \$100 million dollars to support the establishment of HIPPY in 50 locations throughout Australia (HIPPY Australia, 2016). In 2016, the Australian Government provided additional funding to support the establishment of HIPPY at 50 new Indigenous-specific locations throughout urban, regional and remote Australia (HIPPY Australia, 2016). Consequently, HIPPY is now run throughout Australia at approximately 100 different locations and plays a major role in ECEC for Indigenous Australians (HIPPY Australia, 2016).

Research and evaluations into its effectiveness in Australia demonstrate that the program is having successful outcomes in improving the ‘school readiness’ of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, while also improving social inclusion and work

readiness for parents (Liddell et al, 2011; Dean & Leung, 2010; Gilley, 2003). However, to date, there has only been one evaluation of HIPPY's effectiveness with Indigenous Australians (Liddell et al, 2011). This evaluation found that the program was adaptable to various Indigenous Australian contexts and pointed to HIPPY's initial success in improving early childhood educational outcomes for Indigenous children who participated in HIPPY (Liddell et al, 2011). This evaluation was limited in its assessment of the cultural appropriateness of HIPPY with Indigenous Australians.

There is no research that has sought to ascertain whether the overall learning objectives of the HIPPY program are compatible with Indigenous learning approaches and worldviews. Consequently, we do not know if the learning approaches used in the HIPPY model are compatible with Indigenous learning approaches and worldviews, nor do we know if HIPPY is a culturally appropriate model for ECEC intervention with Indigenous Australians. The need to understand the cultural appropriateness of HIPPY Australia with Indigenous Australians is timely, given the fact that 50 new HIPPY sites have been established in 2016 with a focus on delivering ECEC services to Indigenous Australians throughout urban, regional and remote Australia (HIPPY Australia, 2016).

This study

While HIPPY is an ECEC program, the focus of this thesis is not on pedagogy or the HIPPY curriculum. Rather, the focus of this thesis is on how HIPPY is used as a tool for social policy intervention to address Indigenous educational attainment in the early years as a socially constructed problem. In this sense, this thesis uses the sociological construction of social problems, together with postcolonial and critical race theory, as the conceptual framework for understanding how HIPPY is used as a social policy tool to modify the behaviours of disadvantaged members of society. HIPPY is viewed in the

context of an overriding governmental approach to ‘Closing the Gap’ which aims to enforce the conformity of Indigenous Australians to mainstream ideals.

Using sociological, postcolonial and critical race theory, this thesis aims to ascertain the cultural compatibility of HIPPY with Indigenous Australians. Through a cultural lens, this thesis aims to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do the HIPPY Australia age 4 and 5 activity packs align with Indigenous Australian learning approaches?
2. What assumptions about Indigenous Australian parents and families are evident in the HIPPY Australia age 4 and 5 activity packs?

These research questions are investigated by critically analysing the HIPPY Australia age 4 and 5 activity packs using a combination of content analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA). Information targeting both Indigenous parents and children are considered. In total, there are 45 program activity packs analysed as part of the 2 year HIPPY Australia program.

Proceeding this introductory section, this thesis is structured according to the following sections: literature review, methodology, findings, discussion, conclusion and bibliography. This thesis now analyses the existing literature on Indigenous social policy, the construction of social problems, Indigenous ECEC and cultural appropriateness, and, HIPPY and Indigenous learning approaches.

Literature Review

Closing the Gap

In recognition of the fact that Indigenous Australians fare worse across a range of socioeconomic indicators, the Closing the Gap (CTG) initiative of the Australian Government aims to improve Indigenous health, wellbeing and social capital (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016). CTG is an overarching policy framework that guides Indigenous social policy interventions across a range of domains (COAG, 2009). It has been in place since 2008 and includes a number of long-term targets that the Australian Government aims to meet through social policy intervention (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016). In the education domain, one way in which the Australian Government seeks to ameliorate disadvantage is through the delivery of quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) services to Indigenous Australians (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016; Education Council, 2015; COAG, 2009). In particular, the Australian Government aims to meet the CTG target of “95 per cent of all Indigenous four year olds enrolled in early childhood education (by 2025)” (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016). This target is in recognition of the fact that Indigenous Australians have lower rates of preschool attendance compared to non-Indigenous Australians (Kitson & Bowes, 2010; Dockett et al, 2010). However, the CTG approach has been criticised for its lack of consideration of the effects of colonisation on Indigenous Australians, the lack of involvement of Indigenous communities in setting targets, and its promotion of Western, middle-class values concerning health, employment and education (Altman, 2009). In this way, the CTG approach represents a top-down, bureaucratic approach to governing Indigenous affairs (Olsen, 2006). Furthermore, the CTG approach has been described as problematic because of the way in which it positions Indigenous Australians as ‘disadvantaged’ due to their cultural heritage

(Altman, 2009). Research has indicated that there is a growing ‘middle class’ of Indigenous Australians who do not experience economic disadvantage (Lahn, 2013). This challenges the assumption underlying the CTG approach that all Indigenous Australians are disadvantaged.

Indigenous education as a socially constructed ‘problem’

An alternative way in which to understand lower Indigenous ECEC participation rates is to view it from the perspective that social problems – such as Indigenous education – are socially constructed. This perspective analyses how Indigenous education has been construed as a ‘problem’ for Australian Governments to remedy through the CTG approach (Clarke, 2001). In viewing Indigenous disadvantage through a sociological lens, it can be argued that Indigenous disadvantage, stemming from lower ECEC participation, has been socially constructed as a problem for Australian Governments to ‘fix’. Rubington and Weinberg (2003) state that in order for a social problem to be labelled as a problem, it must have the support of a significant proportion of society. This does not refer to the number of people involved in constructing a social problem, but rather, the power of the people involved in naming an issue as problematic (Rubington & Weinberg, 2003). The power of the Australian Government in labelling an issue as a social problem is evident through the policy cycle where a problem is initially identified and then set on the agenda for social policy intervention.

A further step of analysis examines who is responsible for the existence of a social problem. One approach within the social problems literature – termed the deviant approach to social problems – places the responsibility at the individual level for the existence of particular social problems (Becker, 1966). The deviant approach argues that the violation of social norms occur due to ‘inappropriate’ socialisation, meaning that people who are labelled as deviant learn ‘deviant’ behaviours as a result of a lack of

exposure to ‘moral’ environments (Becker, 1966). Moral environments are often assumed to be those in which mainstream values are dominant. Consequently, Indigenous Australians can be labelled as deviant simply because Indigenous worldviews may not align with mainstream worldviews. From this perspective, social policy aims to change the behaviour of ‘deviant’ Indigenous parents not conforming to mainstream ideals by setting a CTG target that expects Indigenous parents to enrol their children in ECEC. The CTG approach assumes that behaviour change can be implemented through exposure to ‘good’ education and parenting practices. It fails to consider the impact that colonisation has had on Indigenous peoples’ willingness to engage with – and benefit from – the mainstream education system.

Early childhood education as a social policy tool

Indigenous education in Australia is relatively new, with Indigenous Australians only being afforded a mainstream education in the past 50 years, since the results of the 1967 Referendum (Burridge, Whalan & Vaughan, 2012). Prior to that, Indigenous Australians were rarely provided with an education, and if they were, it was “restricted by the institutional racism embedded in government policies such as the Aborigines Protection Acts” (Universities Australia, 2011, p. 9). This meant that Indigenous Australians received a second-rate education usually in religious studies, English lessons or training to become domestic servants or farm-hands (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), 1997). The underlying assumption was that Indigenous worldviews were inferior to Western worldviews. In this way, education has been used as a tool to assimilate Indigenous Australians into ‘white’ society by exposing Indigenous people to Western values and worldviews.

Hickling-Hudson et al (2004) argue that because the colonial empire established Western models of education throughout the world, the knowledge taught within

education institutions is hierarchical with Western knowledge systems privileged over the knowledge systems of the 'other'. Vass (2013, p. 86) argues that Indigenous education is "shaped by multiple supporting and competing discourses" concerning race-based assumptions about Indigenous Australians. Western knowledges are assumed to have a higher level of legitimacy than Indigenous knowledges which continues to perpetuate structural inequality and oppression (Hickling-Hudson et al, 2004). As a result of the dominance of Western values and knowledges taught in the education system, Nakata (2004) argues that Indigenous Australians live and learn at the 'cultural interface' whereby they fuse their understanding of Western ways of doing with Indigenous worldviews. Consequently, Indigenous people learn to traverse between 'two worlds' (Nakata, 2004). However, this challenge is often not encountered prior to engagement with ECEC.

Research suggests that ECEC institutions and schools place a set of expectations on Indigenous children that they are not accustomed to in their home environments (Ball, 2012; Adams, 1998; Kitson & Bowes, 2010; Taylor, 2011). This research stems from the work of Bourdieu (1977), who asserted that teachers express unconscious attitudes, dispositions and behaviours in the classroom that tend to reflect their own class position, predominately, the values of the Western middle class. Drawing on a Bourdieusian approach, Rahman (2013) argues that the mismatch between home and school expectations for Indigenous children is a result of the 'hidden curriculum' whereby many of the learning 'rules' reflect Western, middle-class educational values. Corrie and Maloney (1998) further argue that ECEC teachers tend to teach content that reflects Anglo-Australian, middle class values that may not be applicable to children from diverse cultural backgrounds. Educational approaches that privilege certain types of knowledge are not always helpful for Indigenous students, particularly those from remote

communities, who are not necessarily exposed to mainstream Australian cultural values prior to engagement in ECEC settings.

Kitson and Bowes (2010, p. 82) argue that “early childhood services where families are confronted with a contemporary western world view of childhood are seen as ‘white fella’ places and regarded as unsafe by many Indigenous families”. This issue regarding cultural safety in ECEC stems from Indigenous peoples’ past contact with educational systems during colonisation and the Stolen Generations whereby hundreds of Indigenous children were removed from their families while at school (HREOC, 1997). As a result of colonisation, there is a lasting legacy of distrust of the education system by Indigenous Australians, with power imbalances between parents and teachers exacerbating existing levels of distrust (Kearney et al, 2014).

Consequently, participation in formal centre-based ECEC may not be a viable option for some Indigenous families, due to a range of reasons such as transport and access difficulties, unwillingness to engage with the mainstream education system, or affordability of centre-based ECEC programs. Yet, social policy – particularly the CTG approach – dictates that involvement in some form of education prior to the commencement of school is necessary in order to achieve educational parity in the early years (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016; Masters, 2016). Educational parity in the early years is an admirable goal, however, the manner in which some ECEC services engage with parents, and place a set of expectations upon them, can be problematic. For example, it can be argued that all parents are made to feel responsible for their child’s early educational success – or lack thereof – by virtue of their engagement with ECEC. In this way, ECEC is used as a social policy tool to correct the ‘undesirable’ behaviours of parents who do not enrol their children in formal ECEC, which according to the CTG approach, is more prevalent across Indigenous families than non-Indigenous families. The

HIPPY program is one social policy tool designed to ‘encourage’ Indigenous parents to participate in the ECEC system by offering an alternative to centre-based ECEC.

The HIPPY program

Originating as a program for bilingual, educationally disadvantaged children in Israel, the Home Instruction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) was introduced to Australia by the Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) in 1998 after years of success in the United States (U.S.) (Liddell et al, 2011). HIPPY Australia is based on the U.S. HIPPY model, but has been broadly adapted to the Australian context. The first HIPPY program in Australia operated in a multi-culturally diverse context with immigrant families in inner suburban Melbourne (Dean, 2007; Barnett et al, 2012). Since then, HIPPY has been rolled out to over 100 locations throughout Australia and plays a major role in providing ECEC services to Indigenous Australian communities (HIPPY Australia, 2016). What distinguished HIPPY from other ECEC programs was its approach to fostering the involvement of parents from disadvantaged backgrounds in the education of their child, instead of only involving educational staff – such as teachers – in the education of preschool aged children.

HIPPY is a combined home and centre based program whereby parents are taught to be their child’s first educator through home-based educational activities (Liddell et al, 2011; Barnett et al, 2012). Australian research has found that HIPPY improves children’s academic, social and emotional skills, while improving parental skills, communication and involvement in education (Dean, 2007; Dean & Leung, 2010; Liddell et al, 2011; Gilley, 2003). These findings are supported by previous international research on HIPPY in the U.S and New Zealand (Baker et al, 1998; Barhava-Monteith et al, 1999; Johnson et al, 2012).

In regards to child outcomes in Australia, children participating in HIPPY have reported improved self-confidence and enjoyment in learning (Dean, 2007; Dean & Leung, 2010; Liddell et al, 2011). Gilley (2003) also found that parents reported that their child improved academically as a result of participating in HIPPY. Parent outcomes associated with HIPPY include improved parental communication with children (Dean, 2007) and improved parenting style, namely a reduction in ‘hostile parenting’ (Liddell et al, 2011). Significantly, studies focused on HIPPY with newly arrived immigrants have found that HIPPY can and does work with culturally diverse groups (Gilley, 2003; Dean, 2007; Dean & Leung, 2010).

To date, there has only been one evaluation of HIPPY’s effectiveness with Indigenous Australians (Liddell et al, 2011). Liddell et al (2011) used a case study approach to evaluate the effectiveness of HIPPY at five Indigenous-specific sites throughout Australia in urban, regional and remote locations. Several benefits were reported by Indigenous parents and professionals, including improved parenting skills, better relationships between parents and children, increased parental confidence to engage with teachers, and improved knowledge regarding school expectations for both the parent and child (Liddell et al, 2011).

The one HIPPY study involving Indigenous Australian families found that HIPPY was modified in all Indigenous-specific locations in order to improve parental engagement in the program (Liddell et al, 2011). Liddell et al (2011) suggested that modification of the HIPPY materials may be beneficial in order to better suit parental literacy levels and Indigenous cultural contexts. They concluded that “it is reasonable to say that HIPPY holds significant promise as an appropriate and acceptable program with Indigenous communities and aligns with the Australian Government’s Indigenous early childhood development initiatives” (Liddell et al, 2011, p. xii).

Consequently, understandings of HIPPY's effectiveness with Indigenous Australian populations are still premature. This is a gap whereby future research can contribute to enhancing our knowledge of HIPPY's compatibility, effectiveness and cultural responsiveness with Indigenous Australians. This thesis seeks to fill one gap in the current evidence base by ascertaining the compatibility of learning approaches used in the HIPPY Australia materials with Indigenous Australian learning approaches.

Indigenous learning approaches

Although assumptions that Indigenous learning approaches are unique to non-Indigenous learning approaches are contested, research has found that there is a variation in the learning approaches used by Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (Hughes & More, 1997; Malin, 1998; Yunkaporta, 2009; Perso & Hayward, 2015). This difference stems from traditional Indigenous Australian lifestyles and ways of being, such as oral storytelling and the intergenerational transmission cultural knowledge, that were strongly evident prior to colonisation (Norris, 2010; Hughes & More, 1997).

There are several different Indigenous learning approaches identified in the literature, including preferences for learning by observation and imitation and learning in real life settings (Harris, 1984). Other Indigenous approaches to learning include learning as a relational processes, learning from mistakes, and learning as an active process (Fleer & Williams-Kennedy, 2002). Yunkaporta (2009) proposed a model whereby Indigenous learning occurs in eight, interconnected ways. Based on Indigenous knowledges from western New South Wales, Yunkaporta's (2009) "eight ways of learning" model states that Indigenous people learn via sharing stories, symbols and images, relationship to land and in non-verbal ways. Yunkaporta's (2009) model is designed for use in schools to strengthen Indigenous traditions, practices and knowledges (Yunkaporta, 2009, p. 1).

Another model, proposed by Hughes and More (1997) contends that Indigenous learning approaches reside on a continuum with traditional Indigenous learning approaches sitting at one end and mainstream, Western learning approaches situated at the other end of the continuum. In an analysis of the existing literature on Indigenous learning approaches, Hughes and More (1997) highlighted the following seven, recurrent learning approaches:

1. Learning through observation and imitation (rather than verbal instruction);
2. Learning through trial, error and feedback (personal and doing, being able to learn from one's mistakes);
3. Group, cooperative learning (as opposed to individualistic learning);
4. Holistic, global learning (whereby the entire concept is first presented before being broken down into its abstract or sequential parts);
5. The use of images and imagery (as opposed to verbal instruction);
6. Context-specific, real-life learning (as opposed to learning abstract concepts); and,
7. Spontaneous learning (as opposed to structured learning).

By contrast, Hughes and More (1997) state that mainstream learning approaches focus on: analytical learning; verbal description to explain concepts; abstract thinking; presentations by the teacher; and, individual learning tasks of a competitive nature. However, Hughes and More's (1997) model is only applicable to remote Indigenous contexts due to a lack of research evidence concerning Indigenous learning approaches in urban or rural contexts.

While the field of Indigenous learning approaches is a contested space, there is consensus that the knowledges valued – and taught – by Indigenous Australians differ

from mainstream, Western knowledges (Hughes & More, 1997; Yunkaporta, 2009; Nakata, 2004, 1995).

Concluding remarks about the literature

The literature review has noted the role of ECEC in improving Indigenous educational outcomes, and more broadly, in improving Indigenous social and economic outcomes. However, there is a paradox concerning the role of ECEC for Indigenous Australians. On one hand, ECEC is tasked with preparing Indigenous children to fit in and adapt to Western schooling contexts. On the other hand, ECEC must also ensure that Indigenous children's cultural knowledges and strengths are valued so that Indigenous children and families feel comfortable participating in the Western education system. Research attests to the importance of culturally appropriate ECEC services in order to improve Indigenous educational attainment in the early years (Kearney et al, 2014; Kitson & Bowes, 2010). Yet, there is a divide between what the education system expects of Indigenous Australians and what Indigenous Australians expect of the education system. This divide stems from different cultural values and knowledges. In order to ensure that education is not seen as a colonising activity for Indigenous Australians, it is paramount that the education system be culturally responsive and respect Indigenous ways of learning. This thesis will now seek to ascertain if one ECEC program, the HIPPY Australia program, provides learning opportunities that are culturally relevant for Indigenous Australian participants.

Methodology

This thesis analyses one specific early childhood education and care (ECEC) program, the Home Instruction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) program, which is a home and centre based early intervention program specifically designed to work with disadvantaged families (Liddell et al, 2011). More specifically, the HIPPY activity packs are analysed to ascertain the cultural sensitivity of the HIPPY program with Indigenous Australians. This section contains information on the manner in which the HIPPY activity packs were analysed by describing the methodological process. The scope of this research was decided upon in collaboration with the researcher's University of Melbourne supervisor and researchers at the Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL) Policy and Research Centre.

A formal partnership exists between The University of Melbourne and the BSL. Since the BSL hold the licence to operate HIPPY Australia, contact was made with the BSL to outline the student research project and initiate collaboration to advance the research agenda. Through dialogue with the BSL, gaps in the literature and evidence base for HIPPY Australia were identified. The scope of the research was discussed and it was agreed that research involving Indigenous Australian knowledges would assist HIPPY Australia to better understand the program's effectiveness with Indigenous Australians. Access to the HIPPY Australia program materials was granted.

About the HIPPY program

In Australia, parents commit to undertaking HIPPY with their child over a 2 year period prior to the beginning of school entry (Gilley, 2003; Dean & Leung, 2010; Liddell et al, 2011). Each parent is assigned a home tutor who is usually a member of the local community that has previously completed HIPPY with their child (Gilley, 2003; Barnett

et al, 2012). An additional aspect of HIPPY includes the employment of home tutors from disadvantaged communities (Liddell et al, 2011). Tutors meet with parents once a fortnight to teach the program material to parents (Gilley, 2003). Program materials contain a set of age-appropriate activity packs that parents complete with their child five days per week (Barnett et al, 2012). ‘Role playing’ is used as the main teaching method, with tutors playing the role of ‘teacher’ and parents playing the role of ‘child’ in the home-based tutoring sessions (Baker et al, 1999; Gilley, 2003). Following home-tutoring sessions, parents complete the activity packs with their child. In this way, parents are taught how to be their child’s first teacher by undertaking educational activities with their child in the home (Barhava-Monteith et al, 1999). All activity packs and literary novels are provided to parents. This assists disadvantaged families to provide their child with access to books and educational materials in the home.

Data collection

The following materials were provided by HIPPY Australia:

- 30 x Age 4 HIPPY Australia activity packs. These packs are used by the HIPPY tutor and the parent to teach 4 year old children engaged in the HIPPY program. There are 30 packs in total for use at age 4. These packs are divided into colour categories (5 x Orange, 5 x Blue, 5 x Yellow, 5 x Green, 5 x Purple, 5 x Red).
- 15 x Age 5 HIPPY Australia activity packs, ordered from 1-15. These packs are used by the HIPPY tutor and the parent to teach 5 year old children engaged in the HIPPY program. Because most Australian children commence school at age 5, the number of packs are halved in the second year of HIPPY which allows additional time for school-related, homework tasks to be completed at home.

- 15 x Age 5 HIPPY parent packs, ordered from 1-15. These parent packs are designed to be used in conjunction with the age 5 activity packs and contain information for parents about the intended benefits of each activity.
- Other miscellaneous HIPPY materials, such as handbooks, DVDs, story books, reports and pamphlets.

While a range of program materials were received, it was decided that data analysis would be restricted to the age 4 and 5 activity packs only. This decision was made in order to ensure that only the materials used by both the parent and child would be analysed. Consequently, the age 5 parent packs were not analysed as part of this research because they are designed for use by the parent only (and not the child).

Research methodology and data analysis

The research methodology used a mixed methods approach by applying a combination of quantitative content analysis and qualitative critical discourse analysis (CDA) to the data (Krippendorff, 2013; Fairclough, in Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002). Content analysis was used to view the textual data as a whole that goes across the spectrum of information intended for both parents and children. Conversely, CDA was used to investigate the nuances between information designed for the parent versus information designed for the child. Content analysis thus enabled the textual data to be looked at in its broad form as meta-data, while CDA enabled a critical, in-depth analysis of data. Data analysis was limited to the entire collection of age 4 and 5 activity packs. All data was coded manually.

Content analysis

Krippendorff (2013, p. 10) states that “content analysis entails the systematic reading of a body of texts, images and symbolic matter, not necessarily from an author’s or user’s

perspective”. Essentially, content analysis is a research methodology that enables the researcher to make inferences from texts (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Content analysis uses controls and rules which make the analytical process systematic and objective (Krippendorff, 2013). One of the controls used in content analysis is the application of codes to the data (Cohen et al, 2007). Haney, Russell, Gulek and Fierros (1998) state that codes can be either *emergent* or *a priori*. Emergent coding establishes the codes after an initial reading of the data, whereas a priori coding establishes the codes prior to data analysis (Haney et al, 1998). A priori coding can be informed by past research, while emergent coding is informed from the data itself (Haney et al, 1998).

This thesis applied a priori coding to the activity packs. A priori coding was chosen because of the researcher’s analytical interest in assessing the HIPPY materials in light of the existing literature. Hughes and More’s (1997) model – seven recurrent Aboriginal learning styles – was chosen to inform the codes because it was based on the recurrent themes evident in an analysis of the research literature. A recent Indigenous learning styles model – the Yunkaporta (2009) ‘Eight Ways of Learning’ model – was also considered during the development of codes. Yet, it was not chosen because the model was developed based on research in one geographic locality and therefore, is not necessarily applicable to Indigenous communities throughout Australia. This thesis required a model that was applicable to a wide range of geographic contexts because HIPPY is delivered nationally to urban, rural, regional and remote living Indigenous Australians (HIPPY Australia, 2016).

The literature regarding Indigenous learning approaches was distilled into seven codes:

- Code 1 – Learning through observation and imitation;
- Code 2 – Learning through trial and feedback

- Code 3 – Group, cooperative learning
- Code 4 – Holistic, global learning
- Code 5 – Images and imagery
- Code 6 – Context-specific, real-life learning
- Code 7 – Spontaneous learning

The researcher systematically read, re-read and coded each activity pack available to families at ages 4 and 5 of the HIPPY Australia program. When coding the activity packs, the researcher considered the learning opportunities available to both the parent and the child. Since the HIPPY Australia program aims to teach parents how to teach their child (Liddell et al, 2011), an underlying assumption was that the HIPPY activity packs would provide learning opportunities for both the parent and the child.

Activity packs were coded sequentially from age 4 through to age 5. After the initial coding, the researcher re-read all 45 activity packs to check that coding was consistent. After having completed the second coding exercise, the researcher counted the number of times a code had been used per activity throughout the data set (i.e. throughout the 45 activity packs). Microsoft Excel (Excel) was used to record the number of times data were assigned to each code, with the unit of analysis being activities. For example, if several pictures were used in one activity, code 5 (images) was still only counted once. After recording the frequency of learning approaches throughout the data set, the percentage use of learning approaches was determined using Excel. Excel was also used to create visual representations of the data. Below is an example that demonstrates the data coding process the researcher used.

AGE 4: RED 1		
Contents		
SHARING	Kuppi's Clever Surprise Plan	2
DOING	Kuppi's Clever Surprise Plan	4
MAKING	Blending sounds /b/	6
MAKING	Discovery	11
DOING	Discovery	14
THINKING	Matching sound /b/ and letter b	16

Figure 1: Contents page of HIPPY International, 2014 – Age 4, Red 1 Activity Pack

Figure 1 displays the contents page of the age 4, red 1 activity pack. As demonstrated in figure 1, the age 4, red 1 activity pack has 6 activities in total for the parent to complete with the child. Data were analysed by determining which learning approaches were used in each activity. Codes could be assigned only once per activity, meaning that for the activity pack age 4, red 1, each code could only be assigned a maximum of 6 times (i.e. the total number of activities available). For example, in figure 2 (below), there are nine pictures used in the activity “Blending sounds /b?”. However, code 5 (images and imagery) was only assigned once to the activity, despite the use of multiple images in the activity.

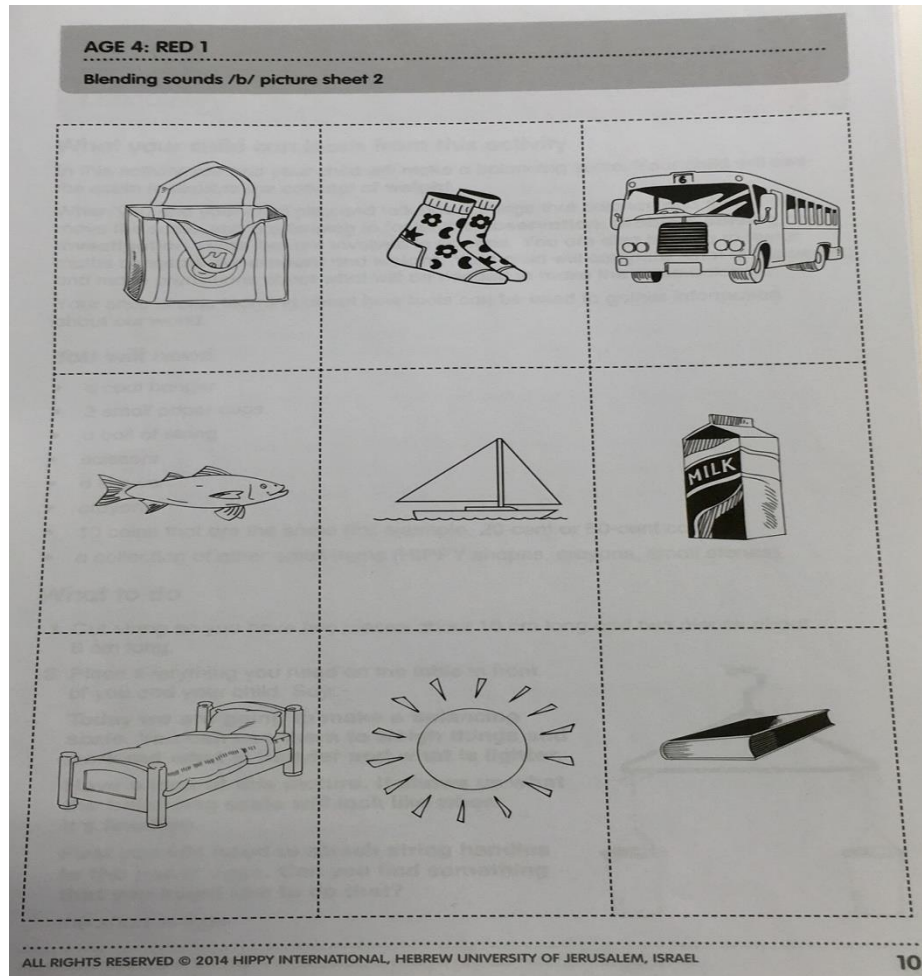


Figure 2: HIPPY International, 2014 - Age 4, Red 1 Activity Pack, p. 10

Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was conducted using Fairclough's (1992, cited in Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002) three-dimensional methodological framework. This framework concentrates on the interrelationship between three elements:

1. "The linguistic features of the text (text);
2. Processes relating to the production and consumption of the text (discursive practice); and,
3. The wider social practice to which the communicative event belongs (social practice)" (Fairclough, 1992, cited in Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002, p. 68).

Firstly, an analysis of the text in the HIPPY activity packs was undertaken. This was completed by analysing the linguistic features and structure of the text, in particular, the use of vocabulary and grammar in the HIPPY activity packs. Secondly, an analysis of discursive practice was undertaken, with a focus on the production and consumption of the HIPPY activity packs. An analysis of the genres and discourses evident – either implicitly or explicitly – in the HIPPY activity packs was undertaken, with particular focus given to the intended audience for the text. The nuances between text designed for the parent and text designed for the child were identified and analysed. Thirdly, and finally, social practice was considered via an analysis of whether or not the discourse within the HIPPY activity packs either reproduce or restructure the existing order. That is, an analysis of whether or not the HIPPY activity packs either challenge or simply reproduce the status quo concerning discourse about Indigenous Australians was undertaken. The implications that the HIPPY discourse has for broader social practice with Indigenous Australians was analysed by drawing upon postcolonial theory and critical race theory.

Findings

This section presents the findings from quantitative content analysis and qualitative critical discourse analysis (CDA). It begins by presenting the quantitative content analysis findings, which are presented according to the following sections: age 4 activity packs; age 5 activity packs; and, combined age 4 and 5 activity packs. Subsequently, the findings from qualitative CDA are presented.

Quantitative findings: Content analysis

Age 4 activity packs

The age 4 activity packs contained 183 activities in total. This meant that a learning approach could be applied a maximum number of 183 times throughout the age 4 activity packs. Figure 3 (below) displays the percentage of code assignment, for codes 1-7, in the age 4 activity packs.

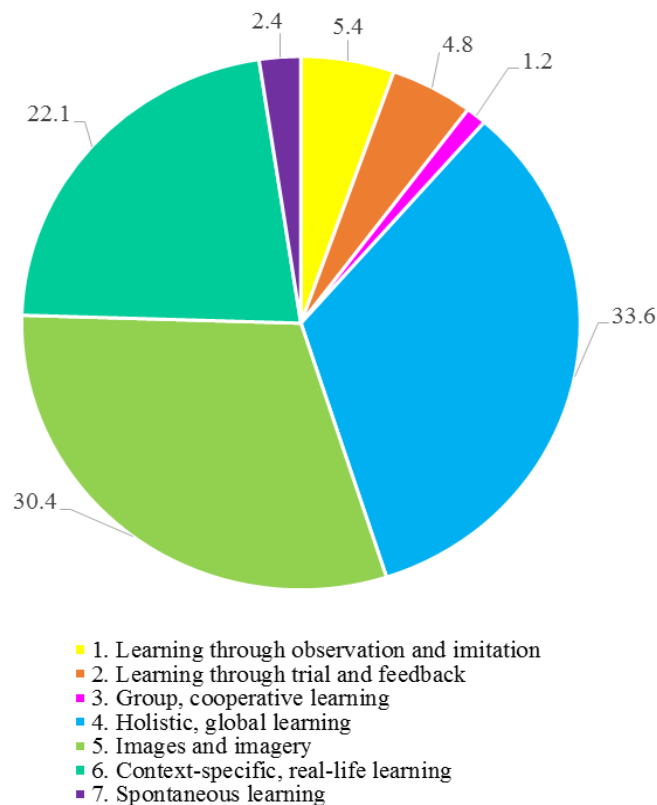


Figure 3. Percentage of code assignment (codes 1-7) in age 4 activity packs

Figure 3 (above) demonstrates that the age 4 activity packs provided the most opportunity for holistic, global learning (33.6%), followed by learning through images and imagery (30.4%), and then, context-specific, real-life learning (22.1%). The age 4 activity packs provided minimal opportunity for parents and children to learn through observation and imitation (5.4%), trial and feedback (4.8%) and spontaneity (2.4%). The age 4 activity packs provided the least opportunity for group, cooperative learning (1.2%).

Age 5 activity packs

The age 5 activity packs contained 78 activities. This meant that a learning approach could be applied a maximum number of 78 times throughout the age 5 activity packs.

Figure 4 (below) displays the percentage of code assignment, for codes 1-7, in the age 5 activity packs.

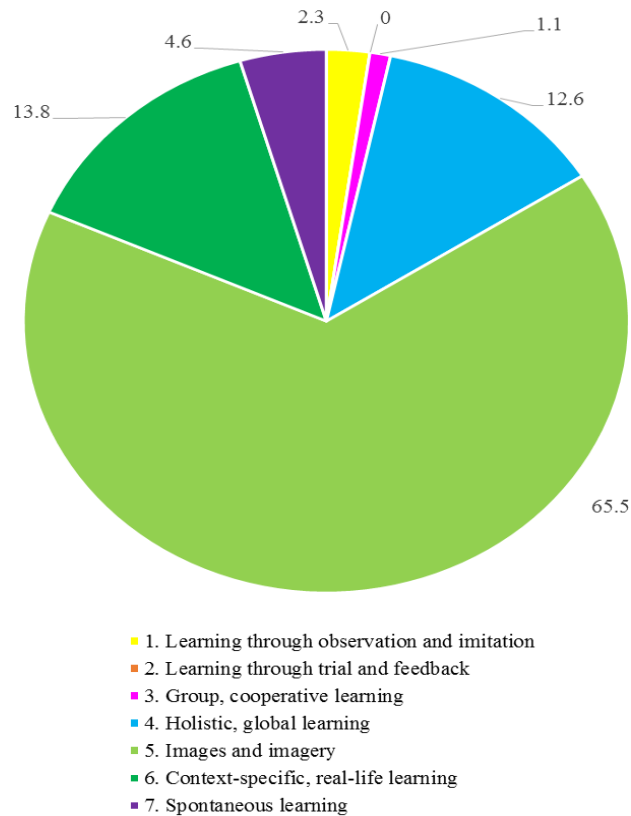


Figure 4. Percentage of code assignment (codes 1-7) in age 5 activity packs

Figure 4 (above) demonstrates that the age 5 activity packs provided the most opportunity for learning through images and imagery (65.5%), followed by context-specific, real-life learning (13.8%), and then holistic, global learning (12.6%). The age 5 activity packs provided minimal opportunity for parents and children to learn through spontaneity (4.6%), observation and imitation (2.3%), and group, cooperative learning (1.1%). The age 5 activity packs provided no opportunity for learning through trial and feedback (0%). As figure 3 and figure 4 demonstrate, there was a difference in the learning opportunities made available to parents and children at age 4 and 5.

Combined age 4 and 5 activity packs

There were 261 activities in total throughout the data set (the combined total of activities in the age 4 and 5 activity packs). As a result, a learning approach could be assigned a maximum number of 261 times throughout the data set (i.e. the total number of activities available in age 4 and 5 activity packs). As highlighted in Figure 3 and Figure 4 (above), there was a difference in the frequency of learning approaches applied between the age 4 and 5 packs. Table 1 (below) shows the frequency of code assignment throughout the data set, displayed in numerical frequency and percentage formats.

Table 1: Frequency of code assignment throughout data set

CODE		FREQUENCY OF CODE ASSIGNMENT			
		Age 4	Age 5	Combined total (Age 4 + Age 5)	
		Frequency	Frequency	Total frequency	Total percentage (%) ²
1	Learning through observation and imitation	27	2	29	5.0
2	Learning through trial and feedback	24	0	24	4.1
3	Group, cooperative learning	6	1	7	1.2
4	Holistic, global learning	167	11	178	30.5
5	Images and imagery	151	57	208	35.6
6	Context-specific, real-life learning	110	12	122	20.9
7	Spontaneous learning	12	4	16	2.7

² The total percentage has been calculated using the following formula: Total frequency ÷ Sum of all total frequencies for codes 1-7 × 100. For example, to work out the total percentage for code 1, the following calculation was used: 29 ÷ 584 × 100 = 5.0%

Table 1 displays the difference in the type of learning opportunities offered to children in parents in the age 4 packs, compared to the age 5 packs. In the age 4 packs, holistic, global learning was assigned the most number of times (167 times out of 183 activities), whereas in the age 5 packs, images and imagery was assigned the most number of times (57 times out of 78 activities). Using the total percentage calculations, images and imagery was applied the most throughout the data set (35.6%), followed by holistic, global learning (30.5%), and then context-specific, real-life learning (20.9%).

Using the total percentage calculations, the combined age 4 and 5 packs provided minimal opportunity for parents and children to learn through observation and imitation (5.0%), trial and feedback (4.1%) and spontaneity (2.7%). The combined age 4 and 5 packs provided the least opportunity for group, cooperative learning (1.2%).

Qualitative findings: Critical discourse analysis

The text throughout the Home Instruction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) activity packs are written in plain language. Analysis found minimal usage of complex or ‘difficult to understand’ words in the text aimed at parent and child audiences. While the use of plain language is suitable for children aged 4 and 5 years old, plain language is also used for text directed only at parents (i.e. text that is not intended to be read to the child). The use of plain language throughout the HIPPY activity packs, particularly for text designed only for parents, is evidence of the underlying assumption that the intended parental audience have poor English literacy skills. HIPPY is based on the premise that children from low socioeconomic backgrounds do not have access to home environments that are as educationally or literacy rich as the home environments of their more advantaged peers (Dean & Leung, 2010). By extension, this assumption means that parents are also from literacy poor home environments. Consequently, the plain

language used throughout the HIPPY activity packs is framed by language-deficit theory which assumes that disadvantaged parents have fewer words in their vocabulary comparative to socioeconomically advantaged parents (Smyth & Wrigley, 2013). This assumption is based on research that argues that disadvantage equates to parental low formal education and/or low literacy levels (Smyth & Wrigley, 2013).

Since the intended HIPPY audience is families from disadvantaged backgrounds, the HIPPY text reproduces discourse relating to disadvantage whereby disadvantage equates to low formal education and hence, low English literacy skills. It is assumed that the HIPPY text will be consumed by readers with low literacy skills only. In regards to Indigenous families who are presumed to be disadvantaged as a consequence of their Indigeneity, assumptions about low literacy skills within the HIPPY text are problematic, particularly in terms of engaging Indigenous families from educated backgrounds. Wider social and policy practices also assume that Indigeneity equates to disadvantage, as evident in media and policy discourse that frequently refer to ‘Indigenous disadvantage’ (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016; Hogarth, 2015; Vass, 2013).

Analysis found that text instructions for parents are also frequently accompanied by images that depict activities ‘in action’. One explanation for this finding is that the images are offered alongside text in order to aid parent understanding of activities. This is probable considering that HIPPY was originally designed for use with bilingual parents in Israel. However, the use of ‘explanatory’ images alongside text is further evidence of discourse that assumes that disadvantaged families possess low English literacy and comprehension skills. Again, this assumption has implications for engaging Indigenous families from educated backgrounds or those Indigenous families in which English is their first language. Behrendt (2006) argues that social practices often portray Indigenous

families as living in remote locations and speaking languages other than English, however, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census data indicates that the majority of Indigenous Australians actually reside in urban locations and speak English as their first language (Hughes & Hughes, 2013).

Each HIPPY activity contains detailed instructional text for parents. These detailed instructions tell the parent specifically what to say to their child as part of each activity. For example, text used to guide parents through HIPPY activities includes explicit instructional words and phrases directed at parents, such as: “say (x)”; “place the picture sheets in front of your child and say (x)””; “point to the picture and say (x)””; “ask (x)””; “place (x) in front of your child and say (x)””; “give your child (x) and say (x)” (HIPPY International, 2014). Analysis of the textual dimension of the HIPPY activity packs found that structured, scripted activities – particularly in question and answer formats – were prevalent. Below is an example from the age 4, orange 3 activity pack that demonstrates the use of explicit, step-by-step instruction for HIPPY parents and children:

*“1. Say: **We’re going to play with these shapes and talk about colours.***

Place all the blue shapes in front of your child. Point to them and say:

All these are blue. What colour are they?

Blue

Give me all the blue shapes.

2. Put all the blue shapes to one side. Place the red shapes in front of your child and say:

These shapes are red. What colour are they?

Red.

Give me all the red shapes.

1. *Place the red and blue shapes, mixed together, in front of your child and say:*

Give me all the red shapes.

Point to a blue shape.

What colour shape am I pointing to?

Blue".

(HIPPY International, 2014 – Age 4, Orange 4 Activity Pack, p. 5).

The aforementioned text from the HIPPY age 4, orange 4 activity pack is evidence of the scripted nature of the HIPPY activities. The example demonstrates how the parent is expected to follow the structure and the script outlined in the activity when teaching their child about colours. Text in bold font is intended for the parent to say to their child as part of the activity. Expected answers of the child are also provided. However, the use of explicit instruction limits parent autonomy and the ability of parents to explain activities to their child in their own words. Consequently, interactions between parents and children are controlled as part of HIPPY activities. This discursive practice results in exchanges between parents and children that are not spontaneous or naturally occurring. Rather, communication is forced as a result of the scripted nature of the HIPPY activity packs.

Another discursive practice throughout the age 4 activity packs was the presentation of information intended solely for parents. This information spoke to the learning benefits of particular activities for children, as well as the skills that were necessary for healthy child development, namely 'sharing', 'thinking', 'doing' and 'making' skills. An example of this discursive practice, from the age 4, blue 3 activity book, is presented below:

“In this activity your child will work with the concept of size. Being able to compare the difference between the pictures and matching them by size uses visual discrimination skills. Working and playing with size will help your child become more aware of the sizes of things and be able to compare different objects in relation to their size. These experiences help with maths skills.”

(HIPPIY International, 2014 - Age 4, Blue 3 Activity Pack, p. 8).

In the above example, it is assumed that the parent needs to be educated about how their child may benefit from being able to visually discriminate between objects of different sizes. This discursive practice assumes that the parent possesses little to no knowledge about child skill development or the benefits of different activities, which reinforces discourse pertaining to disadvantage and low formal education. This discursive practice has implications for engaging Indigenous families who are not educationally disadvantaged in the HIPPIY program. Furthermore, analysis found that the associated benefits of different activities are framed by Western educational norms and are closely aligned with the school readiness indicators set by the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC). Consequently, Western knowledge and educational values are privileged in the HIPPIY text. These knowledges and values may not be shared by all Indigenous families, as argued by Ball (2012), who states that some Indigenous families value different areas of skill development prior to school entry comparative to non-Indigenous families. Implicitly, the discursive practice of providing educational messages intended for parents not only aims to ensure that parents conform to

Western educational and parenting standards, but also privileges the preferred knowledge of Western educational institutions.

The use of plain language, explicit instructions and scripted activities is also evidence of the underlying assumption that disadvantaged or culturally diverse parents should not be provided leeway to adapt the text, arguably because they lack the ability to teach their child effectively according to Western norms. Consequently, the use of explicit, step-by-step instructions as part of educational activities reinforces the existing status quo: firstly, that early educational instruction should be carried out in accordance with Western teaching norms, and, secondly, that culturally diverse families should adapt to Western parenting standards, expectations and norms. Hence, the discourse evident within the HIPPY activity packs privilege Western knowledge, specifically that knowledge which relates to early educational practices and parenting norms. This has significant implications for not only engaging Indigenous families with the HIPPY program, but also for the cultural compatibility of the HIPPY program with Indigenous Australians.

Discussion

Answering the research questions

This thesis set out to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do the Home Instruction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) Australia age 4 and 5 activity packs align with Indigenous Australian learning approaches?
2. What assumptions about Indigenous Australian parents and families are evident in the HIPPY Australia age 4 and 5 activity packs?

In regards to research question one, the quantitative findings noted that three Indigenous learning approaches (holistic, global learning; learning through images; and, context-specific, real life learning) were used extensively throughout the HIPPY activity packs (more than 45% of the time). Conversely, the remaining four Indigenous learning approaches (group, cooperative learning; spontaneous learning; learning through observation and imitation; and, learning through trial and feedback) were barely used throughout the HIPPY activity packs (less than 12% of the time). These findings demonstrate that the HIPPY activity packs favoured the use of some traditional Indigenous learning approaches over others and that as a whole, the HIPPY activity packs have minimal alignment with traditional Indigenous Australian learning approaches. For example, it is not uncommon for children's literature, such as Dr Seuss books, to contain images as well as content that can be related back to children's everyday lives. However, the opportunity to include less commonly used Indigenous learning approaches – such as spontaneous learning – are lost in the HIPPY activity packs. It is important to note however, that these findings are only applicable to remote Indigenous Australian contexts due to

the lack of research evidence regarding urban and rural Indigenous learning approaches. Future research should focus on the differences between urban, rural and remote Indigenous learning approaches throughout Australia.

In regards to research question two, the qualitative findings noted that a range of assumptions about disadvantage, educational attainment and Indigeneity were implicitly inherent throughout the HIPPY activity packs. These assumptions were that disadvantaged parents have low literacy levels, that disadvantaged parents have low levels of formal education, and that Indigenous Australians as a group are disadvantaged. Vass (2013) argues that deficit-based assumptions about Indigenous education are prevalent, particularly in government discourse (such as the Closing the Gap policy approach) where the need to ameliorate Indigenous disadvantage is frequently broadcasted. In this sense, the HIPPY packs reproduce existing discourses about Indigenous disadvantage. These discourses of Indigenous disadvantage can be harmful, as argued by Bamblett (2015), who asserts that labelling Indigenous people as disadvantaged can be disempowering.

Interpreting the findings

In combining the quantitative and qualitative findings, it can be argued that the HIPPY activity packs have limited cultural compatibility with Indigenous Australians. The quantitative findings note that there is limited use of the full range of Indigenous learning approaches throughout the HIPPY activity packs. Hughes and More (1997) argue that learning approaches are situated along a continuum, with Indigenous learning approaches situated at one end of the continuum and Western learning approaches situated at the other end of the continuum. Using the notion of an Indigenous-Western learning approaches continuum, it can be argued

that HIPPY's lack of compatibility with Indigenous learning approaches means that the learning opportunities available in HIPPY are synonymous with Western learning approaches. This assertion is supported by postcolonial theory, which includes the work of Bourdieu (1977), who argued that educational institutions tend to favour the knowledge and educational practices of the Western, middle-class. Bourdieu's (1997) work has been extended by a range of modern educational theorists in the postcolonial tradition – such as Nakata (1995), Tuhiwai-Smith (2012), Rahman (2013) and Vass (2013) – who all argue that educational practices in Australia and New Zealand tend to privilege Western knowledges over Indigenous knowledges and practices.

HIPPY's limited compatibility with Indigenous learning approaches is also evidence of the desire to ensure that educational exchanges in the program are controlled and kept aligned with Western educational practices. Indigenous learning approaches tend to be more spontaneous comparative to Western learning approaches, and consequently, provide more leeway for Indigenous parents to adapt educational activities to suit the cultural and learning needs of their children (Hughes & More, 1997). However, the qualitative findings noted the scripted, controlled nature of the HIPPY activities which provide limited scope for parents to explain activities in their own words or to modify the activities to suit their children's needs. In this sense, the HIPPY program favours Westernised approaches to education and learning.

In privileging the knowledges and educational practices of Western education institutions, the HIPPY program also attempts to ensure that Indigenous parents adapt to Western educational and parenting norms. Consequently, the HIPPY

program implicitly aims to correct the ‘undesirable’ behaviours of Indigenous parents who may not adhere to typical Western parenting practices, such as teaching your child how to read before they commence school. This practice fits within the deviant school of social problems theorising which suggests that the causes of social problems – such as low Indigenous educational attainment – are individualistic in nature. Implicitly, the HIPPY program aims to improve Indigenous socioeconomic, health and educational outcomes through altering individual behaviours to fit within Western parenting and education norms. Consequently, the HIPPY program sends a message to culturally and linguistically diverse parents – such as Indigenous Australians – that Western knowledges and educational practices are superior to ‘other’ knowledges and educational practices, and that their conformity to Western parenting norms is required in order for their child to succeed educationally.

The qualitative findings also noted deficit-based assumptions about the knowledge that Indigenous parents bring to the HIPPY program, as well as assumptions about HIPPY parents having low formal education and/or low literacy skills. These assumptions are framed by language-deficit theory which assumes that disadvantaged parents have fewer words in their vocabulary comparative to socioeconomically advantaged parents, and that disadvantage equates to low-formal education and/or low literacy levels (Smyth & Wrigley, 2013). However, research has noted the emergence of a growing Indigenous ‘middle class’, particularly in urban Australia, where increasing numbers of Indigenous people are employed in the professional workforce and earn an income equivalent to the Australian average (Lahn, 2013). Consequently, it is inaccurate to assume that Indigeneity equates to disadvantage, particularly considering that approximately 76

per cent of Australia's Indigenous population reside in urban communities (Behrendt, 2006; Hughes & Hughes, 2013). For Indigenous parents and families, deficit-based assumptions can be particularly disempowering due to their colonial history of dispossession and disempowerment at the hands of European colonisers (Bambllett, 2015).

Implications of the findings for HIPPY Australia

The assumptions evident in the HIPPY activity packs have significant implications for engaging Indigenous parents and families with the HIPPY program. Firstly, the assumption that Indigenous families engaging in the program are disadvantaged may reduce the acceptability of the HIPPY program with some Indigenous communities. For example, the assumption that Indigenous parents engaging with the HIPPY program have low literacy levels – and by extension, low formal education – is particularly problematic for those Indigenous parents who do in fact, have strong English literacy skills and a high level of formal education. In urban Indigenous communities, there is a rising number of Indigenous Australians who are educated and would arguably classify themselves as 'middle class' (Lahn, 2013; Behrendt, 2006). Given the deficit-based assumptions implicitly inherent in the HIPPY program, it is likely that this emerging 'middle class' of Indigenous Australians would not view the HIPPY program as able to meet their needs. This is because parents are not able to exercise their discretion or judgement in terms of adapting HIPPY activities to suit different contexts or needs. In effect, Indigenous parents are limited in being able to educate their children in a manner that supports and extends their cultural strengths.

It must also be remembered that Indigenous Australians are a diverse and heterogeneous group, with varying skills, assets, strengths and needs. For those Indigenous Australians residing in remote communities, who may prefer a home-based early childhood education and care (ECEC) program to a centre-based program, deficit-based assumptions about disadvantage and parental knowledge implicit in the HIPPY program are still problematic. Research has suggested that some Indigenous children experience a different set of expectations in their home environments comparative to their school environments (Ball, 2012; Adams, 1998; Kitson & Bowes, 2010; Taylor, 2011). In early childhood education, one of the central challenges relates to ensuring that Indigenous children and parents are able to become familiar with Western educational expectations, whilst not rejecting Indigenous knowledges and practices as inferior to Western ways of doing. As a result, HIPPY has a role in enabling Indigenous families to use their existing cultural strengths and learning preferences, while also exposing Indigenous families to new ways of learning or teaching. This challenge speaks more broadly to the role of HIPPY in preparing Indigenous children and parents for mainstream school while also ensuring that the program is culturally-sensitive to the diverse needs of Indigenous Australians. However, as the findings demonstrate, HIPPY is limited in terms of its cultural compatibility with Indigenous Australians because it has a tendency to privilege Western knowledges, educational practices and parenting norms.

Roberts (cited in Kitson & Bowes, 2010), a director of an Indigenous ECEC service, suggests that early childhood programs should incorporate both local, cultural knowledge and mainstream knowledge. The central goal is to teach

Indigenous families – and children in particular – to ‘code-switch’ or ‘walk in both worlds’, whereby they are able to utilise their cultural strengths when necessary, and yet, not also feel overwhelmed by the values perpetuated by the mainstream education system (Kitson & Bowes, 2010; Rahman, 2013). However, in order to be able to achieve ‘both-ways learning’ – that is, to enable Indigenous children and parents to feel strong in their culture while also feeling strong in their ability to navigate the mainstream system – it is crucial that HIPPY sites with high numbers of Indigenous residents engage the local Indigenous community in the facilitation of HIPPY at all levels. This means that the local Indigenous community needs to be heavily involved in establishing the HIPPY program together with the local HIPPY service provider. This could mean that local Indigenous community members are employed by the HIPPY service provider to facilitate the HIPPY program.

Kitson and Bowes (2010) state that community-initiated programs tend to be more responsive to the needs of the local community comparative to programs that do not engage the local community. This is reflected in the findings of Liddell et al (2011, p. 105) who stated that HIPPY was most successful in those Indigenous communities where the community wanted the program. Liddell et al (2011) further stated that a local desire for HIPPY also improved the longevity of the program because the Indigenous community felt a sense of ownership of HIPPY. In their evaluation of an Indigenous governance program, Roche and Ensor (2014) found that the program was efficacious because it was Indigenous-controlled and owned. Roche and Ensor (2014, p. ii) further stated that for Indigenous people “strengthening culture and enhancing their voice and control, are in and of

themselves, an intrinsic part of the development process, and are central to achieving development outcomes.”

HIPPY has a crucial role in empowering local Indigenous people and communities to take ownership of early childhood educational programs. This is fundamental to the principles of self-determination and is of particular importance for Indigenous Australians considering their colonial history of dispossession, disempowerment and assimilation. Local Indigenous engagement in the facilitation and modification of the HIPPY program has the power to not only successfully engage Indigenous parents and families in the program, but also to improve Indigenous early educational outcomes more broadly. This is because local involvement in governing HIPPY has the potential to ensure that the needs of the local Indigenous community are met.

Implications of the findings for policy

The findings of this thesis speak to the manner in which Western educational practices are prioritised in the HIPPY Australia activity packs and therefore, marginalise Indigenous knowledges and practices. Numerous pieces of research have argued that the education system is dominated by the values of the Western middle class (Rahman, 2013; Kitson & Bowes, 2010; Smyth & Wrigley, 2013; Bourdieu, 1977; Ball, 2012) which has implications for policy practitioners who wish to ensure that Indigenous families not only engage with ECEC, but are also able to thrive within the mainstream educational system. There is a need for Indigenous Australians to be able to access culturally-appropriate ECEC that can both expose Indigenous families to mainstream knowledge while integrating local cultural knowledge. This is of particular importance considering that one of the

targets of the Closing the Gap policy is that 95 percent of all Indigenous four year old children be enrolled in ECEC by the year 2025 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016). As highlighted by the findings of Liddell et al (2011), Indigenous engagement in the HIPPY program improved when there was local ownership of the program. Consequently, the best way to ensure Indigenous engagement and attendance at ECEC services are to ensure Indigenous ownership and governance of local ECEC services.

However, from a social policy standpoint, policy practitioners also need to consider the manner in which social problems are framed as well as the assumptions that are made about the causes of social problems. For Indigenous Australians, health, social, economic and educational inequality have been attempted to be ameliorated for decades through varying policy approaches, such as the Closing the Gap approach. Policy practitioners need to critically analyse how Indigenous inequality is framed through competing discourses and question the validity of placing the responsibility for the existence of inequality at the individual level. Given Indigenous Australians' history of dispossession, disempowerment and arguably, attempted genocide, it is important to examine how communities, societies and governments contribute to the existence of a social problem. Policy practitioners must then consider why a social problem exists, and who benefits from labelling a social problem – such as Indigenous inequality – as problematic. In order to ensure that solutions offered to Indigenous-specific social problems are effective, it is necessary to obtain the perspectives of Indigenous Australians about the causes and solutions to such social problems.

The principles of self-determination are therefore paramount for Indigenous Australians at all levels of social policy. Self-determination for Indigenous Australians espouses their right, as a people, to have a say in economic, educational, social and cultural matters that impact their lives. It is a cornerstone of effective practice with Indigenous peoples, as reflected in the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, whereby it states that “Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs” (United Nations, 2008). Australia is a signatory to this Declaration, which means we, as a nation, have an obligation to ensure that our Indigenous peoples are involved in social policy governance at local community, state and federal levels in order to effectively ameliorate Indigenous inequality.

Conclusion

This thesis found that there is minimal use of traditional Indigenous learning approaches in the age 4 and 5 HIPPY Australia activity packs and that Indigenous parents engaging in the HIPPY program are assumed to be disadvantaged, with low literacy skills and low levels of formal education. These findings suggest that the cultural compatibility of HIPPY with Indigenous Australians is limited, which has implications for engaging Indigenous parents and children in the program. The assumption that Indigenous people engaging with the program are disadvantaged, as well as the prevalence of deficit-based assumptions about the knowledge that Indigenous parents bring to the HIPPY program, has implications for the acceptability of HIPPY with Indigenous communities. Nonetheless, the manner in which Western, middle-class values are perpetuated by the mainstream educational system is not unique to Indigenous Australians. Research has noted the tendency of education systems to reflect values of the dominant culture throughout the world. Indigenous children and families do need to be exposed to mainstream knowledge prior to school entry in order to ensure that they possess the skills to thrive in a mainstream educational setting. However, Indigenous children, parents and families also need to be able to access culturally-appropriate ECEC so that they feel culturally safe within the mainstream educational system. The dual role of the ECEC system in both preparing Indigenous children and families for mainstream school, while simultaneously enabling them to feel culturally safe, is no easy feat. Local Indigenous governance, at all levels, is required to achieve this task, from grassroots input into service delivery to Indigenous engagement in high-level policy-making processes and decisions.

Bibliography

- Adams, I. (1998). The educational plight of Indigenous Australian students in the early years of schooling. *UNICORN*, 24(1), 5-15.
- Altman, J. (2009). Beyond closing the gap: Valuing diversity in Indigenous Australia. *Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Working Paper 54/2009*. Retrieved from www.anu.edu.au/caepr
- Armstrong, S., & Buckley, S. (2011). An investigation into the attendance and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students: Research and theory about what works. Retrieved from <http://works.bepress.com>
- Australian Early Development Census (AEDC). (2015). *AEDC national report 2015: A snapshot of early childhood development in Australia*. Retrieved from <http://www.aedc.gov.au>
- Baker, A. J. L., Piotrkowski, C. S., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (1998). The effects of the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) on children's school performance at the end of the program and one year later. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 13(4), 571-588.
- Baker, A. J. L., Piotrkowski, C. S., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (1999). The Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY). *The Future of Children*, 9(1), 116-133.
- Ball, J. (2012). Identity and knowledge in Indigenous young children's experiences in Canada. *Childhood Education*, 88(5), 286-291.
- Bamblett, L. (2015). *Aboriginal advantage: An insider look at an Aboriginal community*. Canberra: Parliamentary Library, National Reconciliation Week lecture. Retrieved from <http://www.aph.gov.au>

- Barhava-Monteith, G., Harré, N., & Field, J. (1999). A promising start: An evaluation of the HIPPY program in New Zealand. *Early Child Development and Care, 159*(1), 145-157.
- Barnett, T., Roost, F. D., & McEachran, J. (2012). Evaluating the effectiveness of the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY). *Family Matters, 91*, 27-37.
- Behrendt, L. (2006). The urban Aboriginal landscape. In After sprawl: Post-suburban Sydney. *E-Proceedings of the Post-Suburban Sydney: the City in Transformation, Conference, Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney.*
- Becker, H. S. (1966). *Outsiders: Studies in the sociology of deviance*. New York: The Free Press.
- Boulden, K. (2006). *The school attendance of Indigenous students: A literature review*. Canberra: Report prepared for the Alliance of Aboriginal Community Schools by the Department of Education Science and Training.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bourke, C. J., Rigby, K., & Burden, J. (2000). *Better practice in school attendance: Improving the school attendance of Indigenous students*. Melbourne: Report prepared for the Commonwealth Department of Education Training and Youth Affairs by Monash University.

- Burridge, N., Whalan, F., & K. Vaughan, K. (2012). *Indigenous education: A learning journey for teachers, schools and communities*. Rotterdam: SensePublishers.
- Clarke, J. (2001). Social problems: Sociological perspectives. In M. May, R. Page, & E. Brunson (Eds.), *Understanding social problems: Issues in social policy* (pp. 3-15). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th edition). Oxfordshire: Routledge.
- Commonwealth of Australia. (2016). *Closing the gap: Prime Minister's report*. Retrieved from <http://closingthegap.dpmc.gov.au/>
- Corrie, L., & Maloney, C. (1998). Putting children first: Programs for young Indigenous children early childhood settings. In G. Partington (Ed.), *Perspectives on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education* (pp. 220-244). Katoomba: Social Science Press.
- Council of Australian Governments (COAG). (2009). *National Indigenous reform agreement: Closing the gap*. Retrieved from <http://www.coag.gov.au>
- Dean, S. (2007). *HIPPY Australian research 1998-2007: Research summary*. Retrieved from www.hippyaustralia.bsl.org.au
- Dean, S., & Leung, S. (2010). Nine years of early intervention research: The effectiveness of the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) in Australia. *Learning Difficulties Australia Bulletin*, 42(1), 14-18.
- Dockett, S., Perry, B., & Kearney, E. (2010). School readiness: What does it mean for Indigenous children, families, schools and communities? Issues paper

- no. 2 produced for the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse. Retrieved from <http://www.aihw.gov.au>
- Dockett, S., Perry, B., & Kearney, E. (2011). The best start to life. *Professional Educator*, 10(3) March, 25-26.
- Education Council. (2015). *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2015*. Retrieved from <http://www.scseec.edu.au>
- Fleer, M., & Williams-Kennedy, D. (2002). *Building bridges: Literacy development in young Indigenous children*. Canberra: Australian Early Childhood Association.
- Gilley, T. (2003). *Early days, much promise: An evaluation of the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) in Australia*. Fitzroy: Brotherhood of St Laurence.
- Gray, J., & Partington, G. (2003). Attendance and non-attendance at school. In Q. Beresford, & G. Partington (Eds.), *Reform and resistance in Aboriginal education: The Australian experience* (pp. 133–163). Perth: University of Western Australia Press.
- Haney, W., Russell, M., Gulek, C., & Fierros, E. (1998). Drawing on education: Using student drawings to promote middle school improvement. *Schools in the Middle*, 7(3), 38-43.
- Harrington, M. (2014). Universal access to early childhood education: A quick guide, research paper series 2013-14. Retrieved <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au>
- Harris, S. (1984). *Culture and learning: Tradition and education in north-east Arnhem Land*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Australian Studies.

- Hickling-Hudson, A., Matthews, J., & Woods, A. (2004). Education, postcolonialism and disruptions. In A. R. Hickling-Hudson, J. Matthews, & A. Woods (Eds.), *Disrupting preconceptions: Postcolonialism and education* (pp. 1-16). Brisbane: Post Pressed.
- HIPPY Australia. (2016). Retrieved from <http://hippyaustralia.bsl.org.au/>
- HIPPY International. (2014). *Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters Australia – Age 4 and Age 5 Activity Packs*. Fitzroy: The Brotherhood of St Laurence.
- Hogarth, M. D. (2015). *A critical analysis of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan* (Masters dissertation, Queensland University of Technology). Retrieved from <http://eprints.qut.edu.au>
- Hughes, H., & Hughes, M. (2013). The undercover guide to Indigenous statistics. In R. G. Craven, A. Dillon, & N. Parbury (Eds.), *In black and white: Australians all at the Crossroads* (pp. 1–19). Ballan: Connor Court Publishing.
- Hughes, P., & More, A. (1997). *Aboriginal ways of learning and learning styles*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Brisbane, 4 December, 1997.
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC). (1997). *Bringing them home: Report of the national inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families*. Sydney: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Retrieved from <https://www.humanrights.gov.au>

- Johnson, U. Y., Martinez-Cantu, V., Jacobson, A. L., & Weir, C-M. (2012). The Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters program's relationship with mother and school outcomes. *Early Education and Development, 23*, 713-727.
- Kearney, E., McIntosh, L., Perry, B., Dockett, S., & Clayton, K. (2014). Building positive relationships with Indigenous children, families and communities: Learning at the cultural interface. *Critical Studies in Education, 55*(3), 338-352.
- Kitson, R., & Bowes, J. (2010). Incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing in early education for Indigenous children. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 35*(4), December 2010, 81-89.
- Krippendorff, K. (2013). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Lahn, J. (2013). Aboriginal professionals: Work, class and culture. *CAEPR Working paper no. 89*. Retrieved from <http://caepr.anu.edu.au>
- Liddell, M., Barnett, T., Roost, F. D., & McEachran, J. (2011). *Investing in our future: An evaluation of the national rollout of the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY)*. Final report to the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations. Fitzroy: Brotherhood of St Laurence.
- Malcolm, H., Wilson, Y., Davidson, J., & Kirk, S. (2003). Absence from school: A study of its causes and effects in seven LEAs. *Research Report 424*. Nottingham: DfES Publications.

- Malin, M. (1998). They listen and they've got respect: Culture and pedagogy. In G. Partington (Ed.), *Perspectives on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education* (pp. 245-274). Katoomba: Social Science Press.
- Masters, G. (2016). *Five challenges in Australian school education: Policy Insights issue 5*. Retrieved from <http://research.acer.edu.au>
- Nakata, M. (2004). Indigenous knowledge and the cultural interface: Underlying issues at the intersection of knowledge and information systems. In A. R. Hickling-Hudson, J. Matthews, & A. Woods (Eds.), *Disrupting preconceptions: Postcolonialism and education* (pp. 19-38). Brisbane: Post Pressed.
- Nakata, M. (1995). Culture in education: A political strategy for us or for them?. *Ngoonjook*, 11, 40-61.
- Norris, D. (2010). *Content fundamentals for a TV show aimed at Indigenous children aged 3 to 6: A literature review and discussion paper*. Retrieved from <http://research.acer.edu.au>
- Olsen, J. P. (2006). Maybe its time to rediscover bureaucracy. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 16(1), 1-24.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2016). *Early Childhood Education and Care*. Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org>
- Perso, T., & Hayward, C. (2015). *Teaching Indigenous Students: Cultural awareness and classroom strategies for improving learning outcomes*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin.

- Phillips, M. W., & Jørgensen, L. J. (2002). *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Purdie, N., & Buckley, S. (2010). *School attendance and retention of Indigenous Australian students: An issues paper for the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse*. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.
- Rahman, K. (2013). Belonging and learning to belong in school: The implications of the hidden curriculum for Indigenous students. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 34(5), 660-672.
- Richardson, S., Bennett, D. & Roberts, L. (2016) *Investigating the relationship between equity and graduate outcomes in Australia*. Report submitted to the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE), Curtin University: Perth. Retrieved from <https://www.ncsehe.edu.au>
- Roche, C., & Ensor, J. (2014). *Independent evaluation of the Central Land Council's community development and governance programs: Policy brief*. Retrieved from <http://www.clc.org.au>
- Rubington, E., & Weinberg, M. S. (2003). *The study of social problems: Seven perspectives* (6th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Smyth, J., & Wrigley, T. (2013). *Living on the edge: Rethinking poverty, class and schooling*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision. (2014). *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key indicators report*. Retrieved from <http://www.pc.gov.au>

- Taylor, A. (2011). Coming, ready or not: Aboriginal children's transition to school in urban Australia and the policy push. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 19(2), 145-161.
- Tuhiwai-Smith, L. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (2nd ed.). London: Zed Books Ltd.
- United Nations. (2008). *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007*. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org>
- Universities Australia. (2011). *National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities*. Retrieved from <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au>
- Vass, G. (2013). 'So, what is wrong with Indigenous education': Perspective, position and power beyond a deficit discourse. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*, 41(2), 85-96.
- Yunkaporta, T. (2009). *Aboriginal pedagogies at the cultural interface* (Doctoral dissertation, James Cook University). Retrieved from <http://researchonline.jcu.edu.au>



Minerva Access is the Institutional Repository of The University of Melbourne

Author/s:

Krakouer, Jacynta

Title:

Taking Indigenous culture into account: a critical analysis of an early childhood education program for disadvantaged families

Date:

2016

Persistent Link:

<http://hdl.handle.net/11343/122193>

Terms and Conditions:

Terms and Conditions: Copyright in works deposited in Minerva Access is retained by the copyright owner. The work may not be altered without permission from the copyright owner. Readers may only download, print and save electronic copies of whole works for their own personal non-commercial use. Any use that exceeds these limits requires permission from the copyright owner. Attribution is essential when quoting or paraphrasing from these works.