

Editorial

Section A: Teaching and Learning

The concept of technologies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is not a new invention. In fact many communities are on-line and computer literate. No more is this evidenced than by the increasing use of computers by Indigenous primary and secondary students all over the country. It is equipment that cannot be passed over as we head into the future. As chalk was the essential ingredient for many years, so too are computers today.

An interesting article in this journal is a paper by Glenn Auld which outlines the use of touch screens to display simple talking books in Indigenous Australian language. Located in a remote community, three touch screens are used to transform culture by including new digital technologies which represent social practice. The Kunibidji group have spoken through the creation of talking books, which are easily accessible, allowing the preservation of oral histories to occur.

Anna Shnukal's paper shows that while some Torres Strait Islander student difficulties are language-based, misunderstandings can be viewed as opportunities for mutual and respectful learning by the school environment. Non-Indigenous teachers in Torres Strait and Cape York may experience a range of difficulties. Class, language and cultural differences are sure to determine the relationship the teacher has with the student. She explores discipline, curriculum language and spatial concepts and believes it has nothing to do with intelligence or aptitude and everything to do with policy, curriculum, teaching methods and the respect accorded to students and communities.

Section B: Case Study

In this case study, Susan Appleyard looks at the Geraldton community and how it could go about correcting its educational problems. For this to occur a partnership needs to be fulfilled between schools, parents, students, Governments and non-Government organisations and the wider community. An extensive literature search was undertaken to inform the research proposal and a good consultation process was allowed. Among the evidence uncovered, everyone agreed that change need to be made to the curriculum, and parents want their children to gain a good education, but what parents fail to realise is they need to be seriously involved in their child's education if it is to be a success and the need for understanding support staff.

Section C: Teacher Education

Pauline Taylor of the Indigenous Education Training Alliance (IETA) describes the organisation's work in language and literacy pedagogy for Indigenous students and its work to support 'Literacy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students'. IETA realises the gap in educational achievement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners is the subject of national and international concern.

They looked to the national and international academic literature to frame their initiatives. Current curriculum and pedagogical demands of regular classroom practice in Queensland were also considered.

Data collection was gathered over 40 schools across the state, teachers, assistants and others. IETA has attracted national and international attention and they are a group to look out for in the future.

Section D: Books, Articles and Theses

This is a comprehensive bibliography on the Torres Straits by Anna Shnukal which will be of value to many scholars and communities throughout Australia.

Michael Williams
Executive Editor

Jackie Huggins
Guest Editor