

RNLD/RUIL Internship Program Report: Karen Mezentsef

In early December I participated in my first community-based training workshop led by DRIL trainers Margaret Florey and Emma Murphy at Mabu Yawuru Ngan-ga, Broome. There I met a group of passionate people focused on revitalising the Yawuru language, aiming to ensure the younger generation, and critically children, continue to speak Yawuru. To address this, having a dedicated language centre has enabled the community to engage in activities such as developing a new language app (Yawuru Ngan-ga – available on Android and iPhone), facilitating Yawuru language teaching in local schools, and spearheading plans to offer further language training at tertiary level.

The training model developed by RNLD allows participants and trainers to pinpoint which particular skills should be focused on during the workshop by examining how best to build upon the participants' existing skill set. The flexible outline of the program permits the trainers to tailor the workshop to the specific needs and interests of the group.

RNLD's DRIL training model helps to build participants' autonomy as the tasks are at all times in the hands of the participants. Utilising a tactile learning approach, trainers facilitate learning through guidance whilst allowing participants to take charge of their own learning. Tasks were repeated until the participants were confident in their abilities and felt that they could move onto new learning opportunities. I learned how important it is to support the existing culture within the workshop group, understanding which people work best together, and how essential it is to be flexible in content delivery in order to facilitate the group's specific training needs.

During the workshop, participants and trainers worked together to achieve results, with a fast-developing camaraderie that kept everyone focused whilst also enjoying themselves. Quality language resources were produced, including: wordless books for language teaching exercises, adjustable to differing learner levels; an edited film introducing vocabulary dealing with simple verbs (such as *eat, drink, sit, stand*), and nouns involving family (*mother, son*) and the landscape (*sun, shade, rock, grass*); and also high quality audio recordings of the same vocabulary which can be used in future language resources.

The group learned new skills and built upon existing knowledge in software such as: Audacity, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Movie Maker; learned practical implementation of metadata collection; usage of video and audio recording devices; and methods for planning, designing, and creating language resources. Quality language resources were produced by the workshop's completion, which participants could immediately use in their own language teaching. Seeing tangible results inspired the participants, giving them the confidence to be able to develop future projects independently.

Throughout the workshop I assisted DRIL trainer Margaret Florey in training participants in how to correctly record metadata for their resources, how to use programs like Microsoft Word and PowerPoint to create and edit language resources, and how to use the Zoom Q3 video recording device, and Zoom H1 audio recorder to create good quality recordings. I also had the opportunity to lead the group in how to edit and create a film using Windows Movie Maker. Proud of their efforts, on the last day they premiered the finished film to a responsive workshop audience.

It was fantastic to see participants, who at first downplayed her own language ability, leading the group in Master-Apprentice language training by the end of the workshop. Likewise, others who at the beginning stated she was not good with technology, learned how to record and edit the audio and video recordings that had been created during the workshop.

I am grateful to RNLD and RUIL (Research Unit for Indigenous Languages) at the University of Melbourne for giving me the opportunity to engage in community-based training, and for the staff and community at Mabu Yawuru Ngan-ga for welcoming me into their language centre, allowing me to impart what knowledge I could offer to help build their existing skills. At the end of the workshop I traded contact details with participants, offering ongoing support with any of her (and her colleagues') future linguistic and technological questions. It was such a positive experience for me, solidifying my belief that I wish to focus on similar such endeavours in my future linguistic career, and I hope to visit Broome again soon!