

## RNLD/RUIL Internship Program - Intern Report

Over a few days in November, I was given the opportunity to accompany DRIL trainers Ebony Joachim and Amy Parncutt to a flexible workshop in Ceduna, South Australia. After majoring in Linguistics and Indigenous Studies at university and volunteering weekly at the RNLD office, it was wonderful to finally attend a workshop on the ground and see theory put into practice.

The training program developed by RNLD is like no other in Australia. The flexible mode allows for a wide range of content to be covered in just a few days, with trainers catering to the specific needs of the language community and providing assistance without positioning themselves as “experts” in Aboriginal languages. Ebony and Amy excelled at this and through their skill and sensitivity, they created an inclusive learning environment where everyone at the table was encouraged to contribute and learn from one another.

At the Ceduna workshop, there was a strong focus on Master-Apprentice teaching and learning. This involved each participant leading the group through a number of language immersion activities in both the Gugada and Wirangu languages. Such an approach not only allowed everyone to get a good grasp of the vocabulary, but also demonstrated a variety of teaching methods that can be used by participants in the wider community, such as sentence scaffolding and conversational recovery techniques. Alongside the Master-Apprentice sessions, Amy and Ebony also delivered a number of ‘grammar’ modules. On the first day, we delved deep into the area of suffixation. The group covered the locative, ablative and allative suffixes, integrating and re-enforcing each new grammatical ending through language immersion activities. The next day there was a strong focus on tense and on the final day, everyone worked together to tackle sentence structure. It was inspiring to watch as Ebony and Amy guided us all through the basics of Transitivity, and by the end of the day everyone was able to have a go at constructing ergative-absolutive sentences.

Overall, it was a truly valuable experience and I learnt a great deal from each and every person at the workshop. It was particularly insightful to see how the group navigated cultural protocols regarding language ownership and community consultation, and this really highlighted the importance of Aboriginal autonomy in the wider language revitalisation effort. In recognising the knowledge of participants and their role as custodians of the Gugada, Wirangu and Mirning languages, the workshop became a space grounded in Indigenous sovereignty and leadership. I feel privileged to have been included in such a community-controlled approach and would like to thank RNLD and RUIL for providing the fantastic opportunity, as well everyone in Ceduna for so warmly welcoming me into the workshop and sharing their local language and culture.

Prue Grant