

## **Implementing the TAFE Certificate 3-4 Program with L1 speakers, and remarks on some other training courses.**

I'd like to pay my respects to the traditional owners of the lands on which we meet.

For the next twenty minutes I want to cover three training situations which I have facilitated, involving Australian languages from two geographic regions, to share information about the work being done, the agency and project links, and some of the issues and strategies involved.

The first and main setting involves training of a small group of first-language speakers of Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara, two closely related Western Desert languages. The adult participants wanted to do a training 'taster' course to get a feel for the new TAFE Certificate 3 & 4 programs and to ramp-up their confidence and capacities as teachers of their languages both within and beyond their group, with both language maintenance and enhanced employment options in mind.

The second setting involves Diyari people who were part of a training process, which itself was an almost incidental yet necessary adjunct to the resources development component of a MILR-funded, *Diyari families reviving language and culture project*. Diyari is an Eyre Basin language from the eastern side of Lake Eyre, and Diyari country is located north and south of the Cooper Creek, in the South Australian end of its 1500 km length.

The third situation, united by contexts and process but fragmented by language and geography, involves the L2 training in (1) Arabana, an Eyre Basin language, to adults through an after-hours community program at the Port Augusta Secondary School, (2) Pitjantjatjara to mostly non-Aboriginal, government staff from FaHCSIA, Families SA, and Housing SA, and (3) Pitjantjatjara to mostly non-Aboriginal adults at the Adelaide School of Languages. One of the current teachers in this program is now an L1 Yankunytjatjara speaker who completed the TAFE taster training program in January this year.

### **1. The TAFE Certificate 3-4 'taster' training program**

#### **1.1. Background/Context**

Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara are spoken by over a couple of thousand people on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara-Yankunytjatjara Lands (APY) in the northwest of South Australia. There are five main communities, each with more than 300 people, and many more homeland centres. Traditional lands for the two groups extend variously into south/southwestern Northern Territory and eastern Western Australia. Neighbours in all directions are related Western Desert languages.

With the movement of people over time to places well outside their country, speakers of the two varieties are now much more widely spread across SA.

Both languages are spoken right through, by entire communities, are still transmitted naturalistically between generations, and are thus learned as first languages. There is considerable anecdotal evidence of language change amongst younger speakers, but there have been no Areyonga-type studies conducted along the lines of *Alive and Kicking*, published in 2004, which addressed the language of teenage speakers of Areyonga Pitjantjatjara.

A bilingual education history was inherited by SA Education Department in 1972 and was supported until early-mid 1980s, at which time it ceased due to a number of circumstances. It was young *literacy champions* at Ernabella in the mid 1970s who illustrated to me, in the way they wrote the word, that Pitjantjatjara was institutionally mis-

spelt. As high-level literates they wrote it as they heard themselves say it – pitjanytjatjara, the palatal nasal for the alveolar nasal.

It was later that I understood that verb class membership was at the heart of the issue. The kids didn't consciously know that. They wrote it as they did because they had a high level of understanding of the relation between spoken sounds and written symbols.

There is an extended history of community print literacy in centres like Pukatja, Amata, Fregon, Indulkana, and Mimili. There is something of a 'bilingual' or, more accurately, an L1 literacy resurgence now, but certain issues keep it off the boil including, now, low level L1 literacy skills amongst younger Anangu Education Workers (AnEW) and seemingly uncertain support from Anangu Education Services (AES), perhaps in the light of pressure from the federal intervention into the Northern Territory and surrounds, and its English-only ideology.

I took a moment to describe these matters because they are, in themselves, firmly in the domain of language maintenance strategies that logically underpin training for fluent speakers of 'strong' languages today.

## 1.2. The TAFE training program

My task in this was to prepare and lead a two week, 60 hour 'taster' program for first-language speakers of Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara.

The lead-in development process involved

- familiarisation with the comprehensive and kind of generic TAFE program,
- initial gathering of likely resources,
- meeting with stakeholders to collaboratively plan course interpretations and teaching-learning focuses
- scoping of the proposed two-week program, and starting to detail the first few days
- planning and developing hands-on student worksheets
- hoping that the combination of spoken, print, commercial, home-made, online and human elements of the program would come together in ways that would interest and challenge participants.

Look now at the 3-page handout provided. The full list of the Certificate 3-4 Core and Elective Units are summarized on the first page. In bold are the focuses we explored during the two week program in Adelaide.

1-2 and 4-5 within the nine Compulsory Core Units for Cert 3, were comprehensively addressed: (1) *Define the target Aboriginal language*, (2) *Explore the strength and viability of the target Aboriginal language*, (4) *Develop an understanding of the sound-spelling system*, and (5) *Explore grammatical features of the language*. They were well done.

The numbers 7 and 9 are highlighted because, as L1 speakers in a full-blown TAFE Certificate 3-4 course, participants would all be candidates for exemption through Recognition of Prior Knowledge/Learning (RPK/L). Very high levels of skills were obvious in the training group.

In the Elective Units for Certificate 3 list, numbers 11, 14 and 15, are highlighted for the same reasons. Again, in a full course, participants would all be candidates for exemption through RPK-RPL and would fulfill course requirements based on existing knowledge and learning. This option in fact would go a long way to reducing the 800 hours training required for completion of the program by them.

Within the Certificate 4 Core Units, 1, 2, 5, and some of 4 were all focuses.

Across handout pages 2-3, which are continuous, the planning detail and the adaptations to P-Y contexts of the first two of the nine Compulsory Core Units for Certificate 3 are evident.

This program record was developed for two reasons: (1) as a detailed record of course content and (2) to support participants in their later engagement with TAFE in relation to their own RPL and RPK matters.

A number of language, linguistic, historical, interpretive teaching and learning focuses/leading questions are evident in the large, middle, right-side box on page 3. Discussions in the course were always active and even animated around these.

All of this activity through the two weeks was underpinned and supported by rigorous preparation, daily collaboration with students to engender feelings of content co-ownership, daily planning in the form of a systematic course record, personal reflection and goal setting, lots of scaffolded writing for personal records, and the completion of over twenty targeted worksheets.

An end-of-program, four-page grammar exercise sheet was actually a focused summary of Goddard's Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara Learners Guide (IAD Press). Through this, students were in essence provided with a summary of main grammatical threads in their languages, and a tangible means to retain engagement with that very useful resource.

Because it was a taster course, and because it was being offered prior to state and national TAFE accreditation being completed, assessment as such didn't happen, but all of the criteria for assessment, meeting course requirements and such like, needed for assessment to take place, were part of the process and are built into the short program.

### 1.3 Issues and observations relating to the TAFE training

The overarching innovative training strategy here is the implementation of the program itself, given the identified need for it and the subsequent fact of its development.

Once operational, training strategy considerations shift to focus on the training provider, the person, and the qualities, knowledge and relationships offered, the pedagogy, or teaching approaches, the relevance of program content and the quality and relevance of resources to the students. All of these factors impact on participant motivation.

The use of ICT, and the engagement of participants in the processes that grab them in their worlds out there, outside training, is most important.

That in itself raises the vexed issue of the scope and requirements of the TAFE program, and the significant and extended level of personal commitment needed.

800 hours is a long time, and a large number of challenges make up the course.

However, the absence of thoroughness and high expectations is likely to undersell the very core outcome that drives the need for the training program in the first place.

## **2. The resources development component of the *Diyari* families reviving language and culture project.**

### 2.1. Background/Context

Diyari is an Eyre Basin language, located on the eastern side of Lake Eyre, Cooper Creek Country, SA. It is highly endangered, and is a classic *language revitalisation* program type, with only a very few, older, competent knowers and speakers. The bulk of the geographically-spread community, although ideologically keen, is linguistically out on its margins. The language was described as extinct years ago, but at this point it still isn't.

Over 800 people are identified on the Diyari native title list.

There has been little in the way of accessible resources, immediately useful to a community's learning and revival of its language. No programs existed in community or school contexts.

There is an extended history of contact with whitefellas, starting with German missionaries and Thomas Elder, who intruded in the mid-late 1860s, were met with some resistance but who returned after some killings around Lake Hope and, in one way and another, life changed from then.

The mission at Killalpaninna, on **Ngapa ngarrimatha** *Flood waters*, or the Cooper Creek, closed in the early 1900s, leaving behind an impressive and quite massive language and culture print record. Additional to the ten culture volumes was a four-volume, Diyari-Old German dictionary. This was morphed into a Diyari-English version in a 1970s, AIATSI-funded project. Recently, as an adjunct to the current project, an English-Diyari version has been created by Bernhard Schebeck. This is currently being readied by him for online access as a research dictionary, to be located on the Diyari Aboriginal Corporation (DAC) website.

The DAC is in many ways a remarkable coordinating body for its geographically-spread community (Broken Hill, Marree, Port Augusta, Whyalla, Adelaide and elsewhere).

## 2.2. The *resources development project* and the training it generated

The project was fortuitous, growing out of a chance meeting in the outback Marree pub, and an informal conversation with the Diyari Corporation executive about possibilities.

Due to circumstances the activity became based in Port Augusta, but travelled a bit, and a *Diyari resources development group*, loose at first and then pretty fixed in its composition, began meeting quite regularly.

Resources previously developed in Arabana contexts (western side of Lake Eyre) provided the templates for the Diyari resources undertakings.

As systematic digital recording of the language content proceeded it required unpacking grammatically, in order that clear meanings and descriptions could be built into the emerging materials.

Language explanations from the key contributor, an Elder, a female with quite astounding capacities in a language once considered extinct, were nonetheless somewhat restricted. That's the nature of things.

Recourse was formally taken to Peter Austin's Diyari grammar, prepared in the mid 1970s as his PhD focus. In that sense, a training program concurrent to the resources development commenced.

In the process for example (1) the initially uncertain use of **nopara** *that mid distant thing* was moved in the direction of its earlier, and now comprehensible, **nhawu-parra** *he/it mid distant thing*, (2) the use of auxiliary verbs that optionally follow the main verb and mark tense/time became appreciated, (3) the confusing behaviours of some /i/ and /u/ final words, in changing to /a/ final with the addition of certain suffixes became apparent, and (4) the pronoun system became knowable with the preparation of simple charts with sample sentences, all drawn from the grammar, and all helping to make meaning in the resources explicit, and out in the open.

The group came to have its own internal dynamic, born of kinship but related also to the different supportive roles that members came to fulfill and capacities they offered.

To this point the tangible outcomes of the resources project include a print and CD-ROM companion set. A second teaching-learning print and voice-recorded program is

increasingly close to completion, proudly titled, **Ngayana Dieri yawarra yathayilha! Lets talk Dieri!**

### 2.3. Strategies, Issues and observations relating to training

The Diyari process throws up some interesting observations useful to community training:

- ensure that the best community people and certainly the authoritative, knowing and sharing elders, as well as willing, focused, and organizationally-skilled others, are encouraged and brought in to training processes,
- use available material resources to link with community knowledge to maximise outcomes,
- involve linguists as necessary to interpret technical materials like PhDs,
- use digital recording equipment, which can be as simple as Audacity downloaded onto a laptop, with an external mike and a set of \$50 speakers for playback,
- communicate with all stakeholder groups and work transparently,
- be open about setting old knowledge within new learning and understanding contexts,
- engage a range of semi-speakers in projects and seek to grow their capacities and draw on their potentially good voice qualities. The oldest speakers often have frail voices and may not be the best recording voices. In those cases, if little kids can't hear the talk they can't learn to talk through modeling it.

### **3. *In situ* training of Aboriginal people co-teaching government and other agency staff, and co-teaching in school programs – in effect, working for outcomes that involve the application of one's own language. The languages are Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara and Arabana**

#### 3.1. Backgrounds/Contexts

These have already been briefly summarised.

#### 3.2. The training program – processes/focuses

The *in situ* training settings were in government and senior secondary school sites. Learner-participants were (1) Aboriginal adults, mostly of the target language group and wanting to engage in revival and maintenance activities involving their language, and (2) non-Aboriginal adults engaged through work in Closing the Gap focuses, or Families and Community Services focuses, or otherwise simply interested and supportive persons including police, teachers, and other socially active and aware individuals.

#### 3.3. Strategies, Issues and observations relating to training

These training contexts, involving only a few Aboriginal trainees but which are long-standing and real in several South Australian metropolitan and country locations, hinge on the negotiated and community-owned involvement of speaker-as-trainee and co-teacher in the teaching process.

The same sets of issues apply to the *in situ* training as for the other scenarios above, regarding resources, access to expertise, personal qualities within the teaching team, reflection and personal goal setting by the teacher-trainee, considered expectations in the training context re performance, strong communication links with school leadership, and of course, after hours site access and clear assessment processes negotiated and understood.

**TAFE CERT 3 & 4. SUMMER 'TASTER' COURSE. UNI SA MAGILL CAMPUS. 10-21 January 2011**

**Certificate 3. Core Competency Title 1.**

**Define the target Aboriginal language**

Elements & Performance Criteria	Time	Range of Variables. Resources. Comments.
<p><b>1 Identify the accepted name and spelling(s) used today for the target language</b></p> <p>1.1 Identify the commonly accepted name for the target Aboriginal language</p> <p>1.2 Identify the accepted spelling of the target Aboriginal language</p> <p>1.3 Identify accepted alternative spellings for the target language</p> <p>1.4 Identify any other names and spellings that have been used over the years for the same target language</p> <p>1.5 Identify the names of any dialects of the target language</p> <p>1.6 Identify spelling variations that may have been used for the various dialects of the target language</p>		<p><b>Tindale</b> sheets; <b>worksheets 1, 2</b></p> <p>Spelling - Pitjantjatjara–Pitjanytjatjara, Yankunytjatjara; See TAFE Cert 3 Unit 1 <b>Range of variables</b> pp3-6/153</p> <p>From the west, Pitjantjatjara is referred to as Nyangatjatjara in <i>Tjukurpa Pulka</i>; Pitjantjatjara as Wirtjapakantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara as Walarinkunytjatjara, etc. The 'corporatisation' of the names is a recent phenomenon; Trudinger's first letter/report re the establishment of the school at Pukatja – not yet aware, in the letter, of the two varieties P &amp; Y</p> <p>Dialects as/and Languages (<b>worksheet 4</b>)</p> <p>See dialect/language names examples in "<i>Draft Resource Guide for the Indigenous Languages of SA</i>" Cother &amp; Gale, University of Adelaide, 2005</p> <p>Gugada, etc; see <i>Spelling variations</i> extra sheet; <b>Tindale</b> sheets online at <a href="http://www.ausanthrop.net/resources/ausanthrop_db">www.ausanthrop.net/resources/ausanthrop_db</a></p>
<p><b>2 Identify the traditional location of the land and people who speak and identify with the target Aboriginal language</b></p> <p>2.1 Discuss the controversial nature of land and language boundaries in contemporary Australia</p> <p>2.2 Discuss and locate the traditional lands of the people who speak and identify with the target Aboriginal language</p> <p>2.3 Describe the people of the target language, from a perspective of the speakers themselves – group-led session; students to elaborate and present, subsequently</p>		<p>Horton map; Tindale <a href="http://www.samuseum.sa.gov.au">www.samuseum.sa.gov.au</a>; problems with this with respect to Antikirinya-Yankunytjatjara-Pitjantjatjara-etc as regional varieties of the single WD language (Sutton 2011) and therefore part of the 1000 (revised up) figure (Dixon) rather than as part of the '270' distinct languages figure.</p> <p><a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pitjantjatjara_people">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pitjantjatjara_people</a> <a href="http://waru.org/">http://waru.org/</a>,</p> <p>The notion of boundaries in Aboriginal Australia - fixed/rigid or fluid; traditional access (<b>worksheet 3</b> online links, access, information)</p> <p>Old knowledge, old stories; languages &amp; place names – Waliny, Wamikata, etc in country around 'Pitjantja-' communities</p> <p>See TAFE Cert 3 Unit 1 <b>Range of variables</b> pp3-6/153</p>
<p><b>3 Discuss the current distribution of people who speak and identify with the target Aboriginal language</b></p> <p>3.1 Locate the current distribution of people who speak and identify with the target Aboriginal language.</p> <p>3.2 Discuss and identify reasons for this distribution</p>		<p>Reasons include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• urbanisation – people moving to towns and cities</li> <li>• removal of children in assimilation era</li> <li>• government reserves – co-locating different groups</li> <li>• church missions – bringing groups together</li> <li>• dispersal due to pastoral/farming, mining, nuclear bomb and rocket testing,</li> </ul> <p>'Human alarm/curiosity/etc' movement during colonizing events – telegraph line and rail line construction in 1800s drew people to Oodnadatta ([k]udna-thata Arabana, now WD), south to Daisy Bates, east to Coober Pedy (Kupa Pitj V Kupapinthe (<b>worksheet 3</b>))</p>
<p><b>4 Describe the linguistic identity of target Aboriginal language relative to neighbouring Aboriginal languages.</b></p> <p>4.1 Identify the linguistic identity of the target language.</p> <p>4.2 Describe the linguistic identity of the target Aboriginal language relative to its neighbouring Aboriginal languages.</p>		<p>Investigate linguistic features of target language (case system, verb classes, pronouns, common words; etc) with respect to neighbours (use the voice-enhanced powerpoint comparing WD Pitjantjatjara and Eyre Basin Arabana and Diyari linguistic features) (<b>worksheet 5</b>), are the neighbours linguistically close or more distant?</p> <p>Conduct online searches (<b>worksheet 3</b>).</p> <p>Explore resources available in neighbouring languages – Goddard Yankunytjatjara PhD, Eckert Wangka Wiru, Hercus Arabana-Wangkangurru, Austin Diyari PhD, Platt Gugada, etc</p>

<p><b>5 Describe the social and cultural relationship of the target Aboriginal language to its neighbouring Aboriginal languages.</b></p> <p>5.1 Describe the traditional social and cultural relationship of the people who speak the target language with the neighbouring language groups.</p> <p>5.2 Discuss how relationships may have changed during earlier-contact and modern times.</p>		<p>Traditional relationships with neighbours – what's still known and what's being handed on, today, with respect to information about older relationships and new realities?</p> <p>Demographic shifts since contact and the impact on relationships within and between groups. Issues with respect to land and native title today - Arabana and Antikirinya determinations. How are historic relationships lived out today? Who contributes to native title determinations, and in what spirit – are these matters discussed at the wider community level? Collaboration with Elders for this information – establishing the older story/knowledge.</p>
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Discuss/develop a brief statement about you, your mob, and neighbouring groups known to you, in your 'training profile diary/record'. Refer to information offered in the **Range of Variables** p3-6/153, and performance requirements the **Evidence Guide** p6-7/153. Implications for RPL-RPK.



**Certificate 3. Core Competency Title 2.**  
**Explore the strength and viability of the target Aboriginal language**

Elements & Performance Criteria	Time	Range of Variables. Resources. Comments.
<p><b>1 Discuss and identify the ways the target language is being used today.</b></p> <p>1.1 Identify fluent speaker cohorts and assess the use of the language across the community.</p> <p>1.2 Identify whether/ways in which the community of older speakers uses Pitjantjatjara or Yankunytjatjara distinctively, and whether older speakers remain typically multilingual.</p> <p>1.3 Discuss how much the younger generation is using Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara and whether use is increasing or decreasing, or changing in some way.</p> <p>1.4 Reflect on the state of the target languages as used today; consider the place of English in relation to target language use; are there Anangu who get by as English-only, non-speakers of Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara.</p> <p>1.5 Discuss and identify purposes and functions the TL has in the community today – are there any functions for which Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara are not used, or functions for which English is not used at all.</p>		<p>Who is considered to be 'fluent' with respect to Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara – entire communities? Just Elders? Are generational speech differences acknowledged? What do older people think of the speech of younger people/younger people think of the speech of older people/younger people think of the speech of younger people? Are distinctive community-'lects' emerging? What about the old special speech styles – tjaa paku/anitji, alpiri, on top of wangka uti</p> <p>Is 'baby talk' still recognized in terms of language development (see entries in P-Y Dictionary). Describe multilingualism amongst teenage speakers – is it the home language plus English? Discuss the nature of the English, and the sources that mostly influence its up-take – music, other Aboriginal speakers of English, educators and others in the community, Anangu speakers of English. Is there a distinctive Anangu English.</p> <p>Younger people's use of Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara: phonological, lexical, grammatical, discourse-level changes and shifts compared with older speakers? Document any changes with respect to eg forms in the P-Y Dictionary, in Wangka Wiru, in Goddard's Yankunytjatjara PhD and Learners' Guide. Be specific. For example, select lexical domains (eg, creature terms) and make comparisons; look at grammatical forms such as inalienable possession, switch reference marking, etc, and compare.</p> <p>Discuss Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara genres in use today: songs, poems, story-telling, etc</p> <p><b>This focus links with Cert 3 Core Units 4 and 5 and Cert 4 Core Unit 5.</b></p>
<p><b>2 Discuss and list ways that the use of the TL could be strengthened in the community</b></p> <p>2.1 Discuss and assess future prospects for Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara as community speech systems.</p> <p>2.2 List ways and means TL use could be encouraged and increased in the community.</p>		<p>Describe the situation of Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara in relation to emailing, texting, social networking – facebook and twitter. Is there a P-Y 'shorthand' in these media? What language is used in government meetings? Are interpreters required? Is there a bilingual P-Y/English school program at your community? Discuss the place of print resources, old and new - such as Kalayaku Puuta, Ngayulu iriti tjitji nintiringkunyja. Do artists write stories to accompany their paintings in P-Y?</p>

## OVERVIEW

### TAFE CERTIFICATE 3

#### **LEARNING AN ENDANGERED ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE**

**345 HOURS IN TOTAL**

Note RPL processes re achievement of competencies:

“students must demonstrate a high level of literacy and oral skills in their own language...”

**COMPULSORY CORE UNITS. nine (245 total hours) Engaging with 1, 2, 4, 5 & 9-RPL, & some of 3 & 7.**

- 1 Define the target Aboriginal language**
- 2 Explore strength and viability of the target Aboriginal language**
- 3 Identify language resources in the target Aboriginal language
- 4 Develop an understanding of sound and spelling system of the target language**
- 5 Explore grammatical features of the target Aboriginal language**
- 6 Compose new texts in the target Aboriginal language
- 7 Translate texts from English into the target Aboriginal language
- 8 Use electronic resources available in the target Aboriginal language
- 9 Develop communicative competence in the target Aboriginal language.

**ELECTIVE UNITS. minimum of three (100 total hours) Engaging with some of 11, 14, & 15**

- 10 Explore natural environment in the target Aboriginal language
- 11 Write and translate songs into the target Aboriginal language**
- 12 Compose and deliver a speech in the target Aboriginal language
- 13 Explore developing an electronic dictionary in the target Aboriginal language
- 14 Operate a personal computer
- 15 Access and use the internet.

### TAFE CERTIFICATE 4

#### **TEACHING AN ENDANGERED ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE**

**458 HOURS IN TOTAL**

**COMPULSORY CORE UNITS. eleven (398 total hours) Engaging with 1, 2, 5 & some of 4**  
\*\*Cert 4 Core 5 links with Cert 3 Core 5

- 1 Explore different approaches to teaching Aboriginal languages**
- 2 Develop techniques for teaching an endangered Aboriginal language**
- 3 Explore teaching the target Aboriginal language through contemporary functions
- 4 Explore protocols and ethics of teaching an endangered Aboriginal language
- 5 Use the terminology to talk about the target Aboriginal language**
- 6 Undertake a work placement
- 7 Plan assessment activities and processes
- 8 Design and develop learning programs
- 9 Plan, organise and deliver group-based learning
- 10 Apply First Aid
- 11 Contribute to OHS processes.

**ELECTIVE UNITS. minimum of two (60 total hours) Not Engaging with Cert 4 Electives**

- 12 Plan and prepare a series of lessons in the target Aboriginal language
- 13 Present a series of lessons in the target Aboriginal language
- 14 Assess and evaluate lessons in the target Aboriginal language
- 15 Create electronic presentations
- 16 Assess competence
- 17 Ensure children's health and safety
- 18 Identify and respond to children and young people at risk of harm
- 19 Make a presentation
- 20 Support development of student research skills.

**GW. Compiled 08.01.11**