Masters in Arts Research Thesis

Knowledge, Discourse and Indigenous Pedagogy in Higher Education:
A Case Study of the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program at the Northern Territory University.

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Date of Submission:
August 2004
Thesis Declaration

I hereby declare that the work herein, now submitted as a thesis for the degree of Masters by research of the Charles Darwin University is the result of my own investigations and all references to ideas and work of other researches have been specifically acknowledged. I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis has not already been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not being currently submitted in candidature for any other degree.

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 21/2/05
Dedication

I dedicate this research to the memory of my grandfather,

Jedi,

Ahmad-Rashid El-Ayoubi
Acknowledgement

Initial research towards this thesis began in 2000. I am grateful and indebted to Dr. Bill Tyler who has provided me with consistent support from that period to the conclusion of the thesis. Dr. Tyler has been diligent in providing direction, critical discussions and pertinent reflections revolving around theory and practice. His professionalism has guided my critical writing and thinking. I acknowledge his focus and attention to detail as well as his thorough readings of my works. I thank Dr. Tyler for all the support, dedication and mentorship he has provided me over the years.

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Abstract

The thesis project explores the complex and contested domains of Indigenous pedagogic discourses in higher education in North Australia through a case study of the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (BATSIS) program offered at the Northern Territory University (1991-current). The BATSIS case provides an opportunity to investigate the social, cultural, political and economic inter-relationships impacting on pedagogy which affect ideologies at a macro and at a micro level. The research project examines the complexities of these issues by exploring dominant representations and constructs of Indigeneity affecting teaching and learning practices in higher education. The research explores the construction of Indigenous identities and their recontextualisation within institutional and administrative policies and their impact on Indigenous knowledge productions in curriculum. The research critiques culturally and socially represented identities in order to assess the importance of including 'fluid' and 'hybrid' relations of diverse cultural perspectives and experiences in pedagogic practices.

Discourse analysis has been adopted as the central methodological approach of this case study as it permits the examination of content and contexts. This is achieved through the documentation and analysis of data sources from official course documents as well as from in-depth interviews with participants.

The central tenet of the thesis is that constructed notions of difference presented in institutional and academic representations are problematic as they reproduce and recontextualise Indigenous knowledge systems. This process impacts on pedagogic practices as it is premised on binary oppositions that hinder the recognition of difference in its multiplicities and its diverse locations of experience. The research explores postcolonial forms of dominant legitimate interpretations and representations that permeate social, pedagogical and administrative practice in North Australian tertiary education. This is done by specifically drawing on the Indigenous knowledges formulated and articulated in the BATSIS program and the pedagogic experience of students and academics. The research project has wider implications to all Indigenous higher education programs in Australian universities as it critiques modes of curriculum production, Indigenous representations and the complexities of Indigenous education and practices.
## Abbreviations and Acronyms

### BATSIS Unit Codes and Titles

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<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>CAS100</td>
<td>Introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS101</td>
<td>Introductory Aboriginal History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRS100</td>
<td>Contested Knowledges</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS102</td>
<td>Introductory Torres Strait Islander History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS110</td>
<td>Introduction to Yolngu Language and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS111</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS160</td>
<td>Introduction to Black Australian Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS170</td>
<td>Introduction to Indigenous Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS203</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identity II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS204</td>
<td>Systems of Indigenous Knowledges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS205</td>
<td>Yolngu Life and Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS206</td>
<td>Yolngu Matha Conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS207</td>
<td>Aboriginal Self Determination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS225</td>
<td>Music in Contemporary Indigenous Cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS226</td>
<td>Sport in Indigenous Cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS229</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Cultural Internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS265</td>
<td>Culture, Communication and Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS280</td>
<td>Indigenous Health Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS285</td>
<td>Indigenous People and the Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS305</td>
<td>Yolngu texts and Conversations</td>
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<td>CAS361</td>
<td>Indigenous Arts and Media Independent Study</td>
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<td>CAS325</td>
<td>Black Australian Life Stories</td>
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<td>CAS350</td>
<td>Indigenous Socio-economic Issues</td>
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<td>CAS380</td>
<td>Sociology of Indigenous Law Ways</td>
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<td>CAS362</td>
<td>Indigenous Literature, Arts and Media Independent Research</td>
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<td>CAS365</td>
<td>Voice, Texts and Pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS370</td>
<td>Indigenous Health and Self Determination</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS259</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Political Economy Internship</td>
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<td>CAS311</td>
<td>Yolngu Language and Culture: Independent Study</td>
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<td>CAS328</td>
<td>Independent Study in Indigenous Issues</td>
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<td>CAS316</td>
<td>Aboriginal Socialisation: Early Childhood</td>
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<td>CAS375</td>
<td>Indigenous Health Independent Study</td>
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<td>CAS376</td>
<td>Indigenous Health Independent Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS381</td>
<td>Indigenous Legal Issues: Independent Study</td>
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Key to interview data transcription references

In the summary of interview response in Appendix VII the following abbreviations are used:

CU = Common Unit  
Y = Yes  
N = No  
+ve = Positive response  
-ve = Negative response

References to interview data are made by citing an abbreviation representing the interviewee (e.g., IS3) followed by the page (P.) and line numbers (L.) in the transcribed interview. (See Appendix VIII: Interview Transcriptions attached CD-Rom in PDF format.)

The abbreviation representing the participants is constructed according to the following table.

I = Indigenous  
N = Non-indigenous  
S = Student  
A = Academic  
# (1-5) = Student 1 to 5 or Academic 1 to 5

References made to Prv. no. indicate text within sections of the revised version of participant IA2 interview transcript, to be found at the end of Appendix VIII.

Examples:
IS1 = Indigenous Student no.1
NA2 = Non-Indigenous Academic no.2
IA2: Prv. no. L. no. = Indigenous Academic no.2 Page revised Line no. version. no.

Acronyms

ABS  Aboriginal Bureau of Statistics
ABSCHOL  The Aboriginal Scholarship
ABSTUDY  Aboriginal Student Assistance Scheme
ACSA  The Australian Curriculum Studies Association Inc.
AEP  Aboriginal Education Policy
AESIP  Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiative Program
AGPS  Australian Government Publication Services, Commonwealth of Australia
ATAS  Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme, Commonwealth of Australia
ATSIC  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
BATSIS  Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
CAE  Colleges of Advanced Education
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CAIS</td>
<td>Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Northern Territory University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU</td>
<td>Charles Darwin University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CINCRM</td>
<td>Centre of Indigenous Natural and Cultural Resource Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEET</td>
<td>Department of Education, Employment and Training, Commonwealth of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEETYA</td>
<td>Department of Education and Training Youth Allowance, Commonwealth of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEST</td>
<td>The Department of Education, Science and Training, Commonwealth of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATSIS</td>
<td>Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Northern Territory University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIRE</td>
<td>Faculty of Indigenous Research and Education, Northern Territory University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HREC</td>
<td>Human Research Ethics Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAPCC</td>
<td>Joint Academic Planning and Courses Committee, Northern Territory University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHMRC</td>
<td>National Health and Medical Research Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTU</td>
<td>Northern Territory University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RATE</td>
<td>Remote Area Teacher Education (a program of Batchelor College during the 1980s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEASA</td>
<td>Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia</td>
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Appendix VIII: Interview Transcripts
Chapter 1.

Pedagogy and Policy in Indigenous Higher Education: Defining the Problem

For Indigenous peoples to participate in Australian society as equals requires that we be able to live our lives free from assumptions by others about what is best for us. It requires recognition of our values, culture and traditions so that they can co-exist with those of mainstream society. It requires respecting our difference and celebrating it within the diversity of the nation.

(Jonas, 2003: 11)

The recognition and disavowal of 'difference' is always disturbed by the question of its re-presentation or construction.

(Bhabha, 1994: 81)

Public debate about Indigenous education in Australia is also a debate about underlining issues defined by social, historical and cultural forces. For many years Indigenous people did not access the tertiary education system, where Indigenous education was alienated and marginalised. Curricula in higher education institutions were dominantly based on a Western view of history, society and culture. For decades, discussions about the importance of equality of access to educational services, equitable educational participation and appropriate strategies and approaches to Indigenous education have fuelled debate from community, government organisations and the public in general.

The fact is, from a base of almost no participation at all, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are still at a disadvantage in the education system. Our students receive some special assistance...because governments recognise how crucial education is to success in other areas of life...

Contributing to our education disadvantage are poor health, poverty, location and cultural factors...

(ATSIC, 1999)

The need to raise Indigenous participation in education has been recognised for many years in government policy and in various sectors of the community. The low participation rate of Indigenous students in education compared to the rest of the population has also been consistently recognised over the years and has become
commonplace in discourses across the academy. A ‘snapshot’ of some statistics indicates the disparities and the crisis surrounding Indigenous education. For example, 33% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children complete schooling compared to a national average of 77% and only 2.2% of Indigenous people have tertiary degrees compared with 12.8% of all Australians (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002b). The disparities represented by these statistics continue to be alarming and stress the urgency in dealing and addressing Indigenous higher education in research.

The failure of Indigenous people to participate equally in the workforce has also been a feature of the educational debate. The unemployment rate for Indigenous adults was 23.0% in 2001 compared to 7.4% for non-Indigenous adults (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2000).

Such discrepancy highlights the high level of inequity and disproportion between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians across social, cultural and economic indicators. A key issue for the Northern Territory, which has been the subject of much discussion, reviews and policy, has been how to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students. The Northern Territory has a higher proportion of Indigenous population than any other catchment area and Indigenous culture in this population has continued to thrive. The 2001 Census recorded that 25.1% of the Northern Territory population identified as being Indigenous. It has also been projected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics that, on current population trends, 50% of the Northern Territory population will be Indigenous by 2010. Although the number of Indigenous enrolment in higher education has increased in the last ten years, it has not increased sufficiently enough in relation to the higher level of Indigenous population in the Northern Territory. Such figures of low Indigenous representation in Australian education continue to be of major concern. The systemic failure to go beyond addressing this situation highlights long-standing issues interconnected with socio-political factors that have long been identified, more recently by *Learning lessons: an independent review of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory* (Collins 1999).

Indigenous differences in learning and the level of low participation in higher education need to be understood beyond forms of disadvantage. As Dodson claims:
Our own unique ways of knowing, teaching and learning are firmly grounded in the context of our ways of being. And yet we are thrust into the clothes of another system designed for different bodies and we are fed ideologies which serve the interest of other people.

(Dodson, 1994a)

The recognition and incorporation of Indigenous cultures in educational curricula for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students is paramount in establishing an intercultural framework where cross-cultural knowledge, communication and negotiation are inclusive. This process is important in the development of content material and pedagogical considerations. Cultural inclusion in this form may be useful in supporting and encouraging Indigenous participation in higher education as well as providing non-Indigenous students with understanding of Indigenous Australia.

Indigenous pedagogic discourses in higher education are complex and contested domains in Australia. The social, cultural, political and economic inter-relationships impacting on pedagogy affect ideologies at a macro and at a micro level. The research project investigates the complexities of these issues by exploring dominant representations and constructs affecting teaching and learning practices in higher education. The research also explores the construction of Indigenous identities and their recontextualisation within institutional and administrative policies and their impact on knowledge productions such as curriculum. The research critiques cognitive and socially represented identities in order to assess the importance of ‘fluid’ and ‘hybrid’ relations of various cultural perspectives and experiences.

The research project draws on tertiary Indigenous experience from North Australia in order to raise issues concerning institutional constructs and practices and to explore postcolonial forms of dominant ‘legitimate’ interpretations and representations which permeate social, pedagogical and administrative practice in higher education. In particular, the research takes the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies at the Northern Territory University as a case study and as a cultural site in order to examine the issues presented.

The experience of undergraduate students in relation to organisational practices from educational, rational administrative and cultural structural points of view is evaluated. The accounts of these experiences are the basis for a critical analysis of Indigenous and non-Indigenous representations from ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ spaces of
interpretation. This investigation allows for the assessment of the extent of such representations, to question their inclusiveness or exclusivity to elucidate how effective such constructs are and how they impact on pedagogic practices, and on intercultural communication.

In particular the following problematics are explored:

- How are Indigenous knowledges produced and reproduced in an institution of higher education?
- How are these knowledges recontextualised and what outcomes do they produce?
- How does Indigenous pedagogic practice differ from that of ‘mainstream’ education?
- Does Indigenous pedagogical practice dissolve conventional insulations and identities and supplant them with a deeper unifying principle of Indigeneity?
- Is there a vocabulary designed for addressing such central theoretical and conceptional issues?

The thesis examines the theoretical notion of ‘difference’ in relation to its institutionalisation in higher education contexts. The underlying problematic presented is whether the recontextualisation of knowledge in pedagogic discourse premised on binary oppositions hinders the recognition of difference in its multiplicities and various locations of experience. The thesis examines by way of a case study, how the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Degree program (BATSIS) is conceptualised and realised in terms of its cultural position at the Northern Territory University. I examine, in particular, the strategies employed which confine difference to homogenised and essentialised domains.

In Chapter Two, I begin by exploring the historical development of Indigenous studies within universities in Australia. This chapter provides an overview of the changes made in the last four decades to the production and representation of Indigenous tertiary education and it underscores the need to understand these from historical contexts and from the production of government or official policies. The chapter explores Commonwealth frameworks such as the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (DEET, 1989) and the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and Johnson (1991) as agents underpinning higher education institutions in Australia. Universities, for example, are required to adopt and put into practice key principles of policy within Indigenous educational programs (Ham, 1996-1997: 19). I explore how current institutions such as the
Northern Territory University (NTU) incorporate modernist legal-rational constructs in its administrative processes to identify key principles such as issues of access and equity, cultural affirmation and inclusivity as well as issues of social justice to maintain constructed domains of effective and efficient spaces of pedagogy within universities.

This chapter also examines external statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), The Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), the Australian Curriculum Studies Association and the National Curriculum Services. It also highlights the national direction regarding Indigenous education, and presents relevant information from national frameworks and their role in establishing local structures.

Chapter Three presents the literature survey compiled of historical and contemporary theoretical discourses relating to and affecting the development of pedagogical constructs of tertiary Indigenous education. It highlights representations of identity and pedagogy in relation to the ‘politics of difference’ and the impact of national policy to illuminate the complexities and mechanisms of dominant representational constructs. The chapter describes the nature of these manifestations and critically assesses the element of ‘truth’ they claim to hold. The examination of the notion of ‘difference’ is pertinent in this chapter, as it questions the models presented by various theoretical frameworks and reviews the construction of difference to explore the ideological assumptions behind Indigenous teaching and learning practices.

Chapter Four describes the methodological framework and outlines strategies employed in the research project. It highlights the usefulness of incorporating Indigenous and non-Indigenous student and academic voices in the research process and in informing the investigation of cultural and pedagogic processes.

Chapter Five presents the case study where I describe and outline the academic program of the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies (BATSIS) offered at the NTU. This mapping of the case study is a means of presenting a structure where we can consider the rationale behind historical curriculum productions and their explicit framing at a national and local scale. The BATSIS program is presented as a case study to investigate content development, client needs, and the construction of represented ideologies in relation to Indigenous knowledge in higher education course materials. The chapter also provides statistics
from the Northern Territory University to present demographic information of Indigenous enrolments and how this parallels with the strategic directions of national agendas. This is presented so as to determine the nature of managerial rationality in formulating ideology affecting Indigenous knowledge constructions and pedagogy itself. This chapter also looks at how review processes define issues of difference and how this becomes institutionalised.

Chapter Six presents a detailed description of fieldwork conducted by processing and analysing in detail the responses from questionnaires by Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, academics, and curricular developers. This is collated to present a local picture. These results are followed up by interviews that probe the data yielded by the questionnaires so as to maximise contributions of participants. The research attempts thereby to investigate representations and productions of discourse practices as perceived by students and those involved in Indigenous knowledge constructions.

Chapter Seven analyses the findings/data to explore the empirical relevance of theoretical frameworks presented in Chapter Two. The analysis of cultural knowledge systems such as pedagogic constructs and their relation to ‘legitimate’ social structure is examined in response to theories of difference. I examine what constitutes difference at a local and national level.

The research therefore is based on analysis and interpretation of attitudes and perceptions by attempting to ascertain responses from a sample of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in tertiary education and government organizations. The aim is, ultimately, to determine what lies at the intercultural interface between the various domains and how this impact on pedagogic practice and productions of knowledge in a specific Indigenous undergraduate program in contemporary North Australia.

The analysis also critiques cognitive and socially represented identities to assess the importance of fluid and hybrid positionalities located within Indigenous cultural spaces and their interchanges with dominant cultures. The evaluation of pedagogic practices including curriculum design, content, assessments, and organisation policy structures are analysed. This is done through presenting conflictual cultural sets of representational practice, and investigating how political, economic and social
differentiation impact on an intercultural understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge frameworks.

Chapter Eight articulates the implications of rethinking Indigenous higher education pedagogy for theory, practitioners and policy makers. The importance of the issues explored is evident from the current literature (for example see Collins 1999) where the need to develop explicit pedagogic practice for an increased Indigenous participation in tertiary education is highlighted. Also emphasis needs to be placed on curricula and pedagogy that encompasses Indigenous knowledges so as to develop knowledge and pride in Indigenous beliefs, laws, social and cultural issues in the education of non-Indigenous peoples.

I hope by this research to contribute and extend significant knowledge in mapping specific teaching/learning practices that may be useful for academic institutions in Australia, benefit Indigenous urban students by recognising implicit needs and identifying cultural myths in pedagogic practice. The importance of opening the debate on discourses in this area is crucial in evaluating current pedagogic practice and reviewing what constitutes successful pedagogic practice in the education of tertiary Indigenous students. The need to ensure that current research practice takes considerable account of cultural spaces that position Indigenous people within pedagogic discourse is vital.

The research is also important as it attempts to highlight Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews so as to focus on perceptions and interpretations of social and cultural issues pertinent to active education. This has the possibility of providing a challenging framework that takes into account the complexities of intercultural communication, issues of power and ensuring 'best practice' takes place in terms of curriculum and assessment of program development. As Collins points out, it is critical that education practices:

...add value to the understanding by students everywhere of the value of our unique Indigenous cultures and languages and their interaction with Western Culture.

(Collins 1999: 130)

In conclusion, the objectives of the research are to:
• Develop an understanding of the productions and representation of Indigenous pedagogic practice in North Australia.

• Explore the relationship between Indigenous and institutional cultural contexts so as to investigate social meanings produced in specific educational frameworks.

• Analyse cultural systems in relation to dominant discourses so as to investigate the multi-faceted concept and experience of identity in contemporary culture.

• Examine the discourse of cultural difference in relation to Indigenous pedagogic discourses.

• Engage in theoretical critical interpretations of cultural practice and spaces.

• Cultivate an understanding of cultural diversity and enhance intercultural awareness within pedagogic practice and the broader Australian society.

• Construct critical discourses of social, educational and cultural issues that impact on us as individuals in a community.
Chapter 2.

History of Indigenous Representation in Higher Education in Australia

The constructed domain of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies has increasingly developed and changed over the last four decades in Australian states and territories. The production and representation of Indigenous knowledges in the curriculum of tertiary education needs to be understood in relation to historical contexts, government policies, social practices and the development of curriculum content. These indicators have a significant impact on pedagogical aims, strategies and practices and also signify changes in aims and goals of university institutions and the representations of Indigenous perspectives in teaching approaches.

For over a century, appropriate strategies to address primary and secondary levels of Indigenous education effectively, let alone tertiary Indigenous pedagogies, were long forthcoming or inadequate. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people rarely participated in higher education courses in the first one hundred and seventy five years of European colonisation. Since colonisation, Indigenous people had been subjected to many government policies implemented without consultation. It is well documented in Commonwealth Government policy and in academic literature that, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, Aboriginal people were segregated onto reserves and missions, many forcefully separated from their families. This form of exclusion not only denied access to education but it also silenced and tore at the heart of Indigenous culture as well as inflicted assumptions and stereotypes regarding the inability of Indigenous people to assimilate Western intellectual knowledge.

The following chapter summarises the major themes in the documentation available on Indigenous educational policies that have influenced the shape and form of Indigenous participation in higher education. It provides an account of government reviews and reforms in terms of their limitations, contributions to change and their influence in Indigenous pedagogic discourses in Australia in the last two decades. The chapter also aims to map out the political and social structures which have historically impacted on the development of Indigenous programs in Australian universities and the level of Indigenous access and equity in higher education.
Indigenous Participation in Higher Education from 1950s – 1990s

The 1950s and 1960s saw the first appearance of Aboriginal graduates in Australia. However, for a number of decades in Australia, education was used as a means of assimilating Indigenous people into the dominant culture (Christensen and Lilley 1997; Mc Connochie, 1982; Schwab, 1998). The assimilationist policies of the time were endorsed by various government institutions and resulted in a fairly confined mono-education.

Prior to the 1970s, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies were predominately an exclusive domain dominated by non-Indigenous academics and confined to the areas of linguistics, anthropology and archaeology. The early 1970s saw the emergence of increased interest by Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people in the field of Aboriginal Studies and the widening scope of this discipline in the humanities and social sciences in this area.

In 1976, the Commonwealth Government authorised the development of educational programs for Aboriginal people. These were assistance programs that commenced in 1978, which replaced the Aboriginal Scholarships support for Aboriginal students (Bourke, 1995).

By the 1980s, Aboriginal Studies were offered either as electives or courses in many tertiary institutions and Colleges of Advanced Education (CAE). Predominately programs offered were within the teacher education field; however, many other disciplines began to incorporate Aboriginal issues and cultural perspectives in a variety of Arts programs. Table 1.0 below is adapted from the original tabulation based on Jordon and Howard (1985) account and provides an example of some courses offered in tertiary education in Australian institutions that were open to Indigenous and non-Indigenous students but particularly focused on increasing Indigenous participation. Each of the programs was facilitated by support mechanisms (then known as ‘Enclave Support’) which included ‘special’ features aimed at encouraging ongoing Indigenous participation, increasing retention rates, strengthening Aboriginal identity and providing general support and space for successful learning.
Table 1.0  Indigenous Tertiary Program 1980s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Courses/programs</th>
<th>Support Facilities for Indigenous Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Cook University</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Islander Teacher Education Program</td>
<td>‘Enclave Support’ provided for ATSI students which included essentially provision for ‘special tuition’, counselling (personal, finance and academic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(ATEP) Diploma of Teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma of Teaching (Primary and Early Childhood)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Rivers CAE (NSW)</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Associate Diploma in Aboriginal Support Teaching;</td>
<td>The Enclave Support. As above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma of Teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia Institute of</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts in Aboriginal affairs in Administration</td>
<td>‘The Support System’. As above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armidale CAE</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Graduate Diploma in Education Studies-Aboriginal</td>
<td>‘Enclave Support’. As above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gippsland Institute of Advanced</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Associate Diploma of Aboriginal Studies.</td>
<td>Aboriginal Support Unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Jordan and Howard 1985
The initiation of such programs, and others to follow, was to have a direct impact on Indigenous participation in the higher education sector. For example, in its higher education report (DEETYA, 2000), the Department of Education and Employment Training (DEET) noted that by 1981 there were 191 Aboriginal students undertaking degree programs and 277 were enrolled in diploma programs. However, Indigenous Australians were still under-represented in higher education in the 1980s. In 1987, for instance Indigenous students accounted for only 0.5% of all Australian higher education enrolments (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Aboriginal Higher Education students, by sex; 1982, 1987-1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Growth ( % pa)</th>
<th>As a % of total student pop.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>854</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>1,933</td>
<td>1,166</td>
<td>767</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>2,565</td>
<td>1,614</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>3,307</td>
<td>2,025</td>
<td>1,282</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3,607</td>
<td>2,286</td>
<td>1,323</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>4,807</td>
<td>2,987</td>
<td>1,820</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy

A rush of government reports and reviews on Indigenous higher education finally began to emerge in the 1980s. In 1984, the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission raised equity issues that incorporated ‘disadvantaged groups’ including Indigenous people (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs 1995). The Miller Report on Aboriginal Employment (1985) also highlighted the increased need for support in Indigenous higher education. Also in that year, the House of Representatives Select Committee on Aboriginal Education (1985) stated that special measures were needed for post school programs. The National Aboriginal Task Force also drew the same conclusions in 1987 (Bin-Sallik, 1991). Equity issues were still a concern for DEET in 1993 and onwards (Baumgart 1995; DEET, 1993b).

In response to these reports, comprehensive government policies began to emerge in the late 1980s and early 1990s. A significant catalyst for policy change was the
national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP), which was endorsed by the Commonwealth of Australia in 1989 and came into effect on the 1st of January 1990. The policy set out twenty one long term goals for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and reflected the following main themes:

- Involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in education
- Involvement with decision making
- Equality of access to educational services
- Equity of educational participation
- Equitable and appropriate educational outcomes

The AEP primarily aims to increasing access, participation, equity and other relevant educational issues for Indigenous people. Keeffe (1990) has argued that administrative and policy-driven government programs form identity constructions that are 'universalistic', 'culturalist' in nature and are thereby depoliticised. From the Commonwealth Governments' point of view, however, it is claimed that:

The AEP attempts to recognise the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's social, economic and political circumstances, cultural values and educational aspirations. It is important that there is a national awareness and recognition of cultural diversity and it is important to take these differences into account when developing the strategies which will lead to increasing levels of educational attainment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

(Yunupingu 1994a: 2)

The direction of Commonwealth policies regarding Indigenous education was moving away from assimilating Indigenous people into the dominant culture and towards policies of self-determination. However, as Hollinsworth (1992) points out, the representation of Indigenous Australians continues to be flawed as the notion of difference was used as a tool to create fixed binary configurations of Indigenous identity.

By mystifying the concept of, culture, in the same way as ethnicity does, and representing it in the form of a unique inheritance, or 'primordial tie', every Aboriginal person is assumed to carry an equivalent amount of knowledge, values and concepts that make Aboriginal culture, enabling the easy incorporation of individuals into government cultural policies.

(Hollinsworth, 1992: 91)
However, in 1991 new policy directions contributed to the development of Commonwealth Indigenous support funding distributed to institutions as part of their base operating grants. (On receipt of such grants, institutions were and are required to develop specific Indigenous education strategies.) Also since 1991, higher educational institutions have funded at least one Indigenous support unit or liaison officer as part of their Indigenous educational strategy (Ham, 1996-1997).

**Indigenous Access to Higher Education**

By 1991 Indigenous participation in higher education had increased, although in relatively small numbers and all institutions reported an enrolment presence of Aboriginal students. Overall the numbers of commencing Indigenous students increased between 1992 and 2001 (see Table 1.2 below). An important consideration when analysing this data is the broadening of the group identifying as Indigenous. For instance, a report prepared by the Parliamentary Library’s Information and Research Services (2003) published on the website of the Department of the Parliamentary Library notes an increase of 265,458 people (1.6% of the population) identified as Indigenous in the 1991 Census. This number increased to 352,970 (or 2.0% of the population) in the 1996 census. The report also suggests that the major contributing factor for this increase is the rise of children of ‘mixed-couples’ as well as changing attitudes towards Indigenous identity where Indigeneity became a positively valued identity. Perhaps other factors not mentioned in the report may include cultural and social shift such as improved data collection and an increase in population shifts from rural to urban.
The figures in table 1.2 suggest that Indigenous higher education enrolments are 'trending steadily upwards'. However, it is important to note that Indigenous participation within the university system has dramatically changed with the implementation of the Howard government's policy (1996-1998) of what some have described as 'mainstreaming' (Brabham et al., 2002). The authors suggest that this 'mainstreaming' can be seen particularly in relation to the changes made to the Aboriginal Student Assistance Scheme (ABSTUDY)\(^1\) in 1996, when this scheme branched into programs such as 'Youth Allowance' and 'Newstart'. Other financial changes to ABSTUDY in 1997 and 1998 are examples of the virtual de-funding of university higher education contributing to the damaging effect on Indigenous participation since 1996. This can be seen in the minimal increases as well as a decrease of Indigenous participation from 1996-2000 as well as the drop in numbers in 1997 and 2000 (see table 1.2 above). However, The Report of the 1994 ABSTUDY Evaluation, prepared for DEETYA (Byrne 1997) questioned the importance of student financial assistance as a determinant in Indigenous Educational participation, claiming factors such as 'lack of self-esteem, lack of encouragement, lack of school and family support as well as racism' are more important contributors than financial difficulties.

\(^1\) ABSTUDY began in 1969 and has since been implemented with the primary objective of encouraging Indigenous people to participate in education. It aims to equalize opportunity for, and improve the educational outcomes for Indigenous students. ABSTUDY provides various forms of financial assistance.
Overall Indigenous participation in higher education appears to be improving. However, prominent socio-economic indicators suggest slow improvement compared with overseas countries. For example, research suggests that the socio-economic status of Indigenous people in Australia compares unfavourably with that of those in Canada (see Moran, 2000).

Table 1.2: Participation in Higher Education as per cent of population 15+ in Australia, and Canada.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development</th>
<th>1986</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>1996</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia (Indigenous)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia (non-Indigenous)</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada (registered Indian)</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada (any aboriginal origin)</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada (Other)</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In its 1993-95 Higher Education Funding report, DEET highlights the improved access available to Indigenous people. This attributed to the substantial funding directed to DEET initiated participation initiatives.² (Bourke, 1995: 6)

This improved access was to have a direct impact on the development of the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (BATSIS) program, as we shall see later. Such government directives attributed to the development, establishment and maintenance of higher education programs. The implication for pedagogy in higher education became apparent as development in this area began to bring to the fore issues surrounding pedagogic practice, curriculum development and the importance of substantive content in Indigenous knowledge systems.

Policy Reviews and Reforms: The Shaping of Indigenous Education

Reforms in Indigenous participation and institutional outcomes continued in the 1990s decade with the aim of increasing participation in higher educational institutions. For instance, in 1993 the Commonwealth announced a review of the AEP, its principal aim being to assess the progress in ‘redressing the educational

² The total Commonwealth outlays for Aboriginal participation Higher Education are estimated to be $56.5 million in 1993, $64.5 million in 1994 and $71.1 million in 1995 (Bourke, 1995: 6). For further details see AEP Joint Policy Statement as endorsed by the Commonwealth of Australia, (1989).
'disadvantage' suffered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.' The review addressed the monitoring of educational outcomes and the adequacy of the consultation mechanism for Indigenous participation in decision-making. The Review Committee noted a growing criticism of the AEP, as it was still perceived to be assimilationist with a strong emphasis on a mainstream approach to delivering education to Indigenous people.

An apparent gap in the literature is any analysis of the tension between depending on government funding (and all the public accountability that entails) and developing community controlled education which embraces a consistent educational philosophy with its own terms of reference. 

(Yunupingu 1994a: 6)

Indigenous leaders and academics of the time called for direct Indigenous participation in policy direction, as this had been historically lacking. These concerns were addressed through the review processes and contributed to the inclusion of the development of a significant goal in the AEP that was directly related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's involvement with decision-making. The Review of the AEP also proposed that the responsibility for educational programs be shifted to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) or an independent bureau to provide Indigenous people with more autonomy in decision-making and administrative processes. This proposal was not implemented and is still forthcoming.

The review also noted the importance, relevance, and appropriateness of curricula for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and for all non-Indigenous students to enhance their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal cultures and societies. Questions were raised concerning what constitutes appropriate curricula and pedagogy and the institutional framework that would allow this to succeed. The review of the AEP was a watershed in Australian history, as it directed Indigenous involvement in educational decision-making and saw the recognition by government to involve Indigenous issues and content in pedagogic practice, as prior to that there was no such involvement. Finally, the importance of Indigenous cultures was recognised at a national level and a discourse of Indigenous pedagogic approaches was beginning to take place. This recognition became a central feature of Indigenous curriculum development and was to be implemented in higher education institutions. This was done through the establishment and arrangements for the participation of
Indigenous members of the community in decisions regarding the planning, delivery and evaluation of educational programs. Indigenous representation in educational administrations, curriculum advisors, liaison officers and academic support positions were to become features of higher educational institutions (see DEST, 2003). Indigenous people were finally being recognised as subjects rather than the objects of the discourse. This new level of involvement was to generate considerable debate on the production of Indigenous knowledges in curricula in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander centres across the nation. Previously, pedagogic practice and development, according to typical historical critiques, had predominantly been formulated through programs for Indigenous people shaped by prevailing institutional racism, welfare compensatory education models and colonial interests (Jennett and Stewart, 1987; and Rowley, 1986).

At this point it is important to address the way in which pedagogical styles informed policy as well as practice in setting up Indigenous programs. A good example to illustrate this is the ‘Two Way’ (see Chapter Three for further detail) educational style of learning implemented in Remote Area Teacher Education (RATE) programs in Batchelor College in the NT. This process in the development of programs point towards ideological constructs within pedagogical styles and underpin policymakers’ approaches to Indigenous education in Australia, New Zealand and Canada. For example, the AEP (DEET, 1993: 6-7) appropriated the ethos of ‘both ways’ education in its 1993 review. The review stated that:

Many Aboriginals and Torres Strait Island people seek ‘two- ways’ education of a bilingual and bi-cultural nature, in order for them to maintain and restore their cultural identity and acquire useful skills for their participation in Australian social and economic life.

Significant changes that took effect after the endorsement of the AEP were to affect pedagogic practice in higher educational institutions and included the following:

- Institutions were now required to develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education strategies as part of their profile documentation. They were also to establish effective and ongoing mechanisms to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to participate fully in institutional planning and decision making relating to ATSI education;
• The transfer of the higher education component of the Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives program (AESIP) to the higher education Funding ACT 1998. This allowed for all funds including teaching and support activities to be allocated to institutions, 'as a single amount within their operating grants, against institutional targets for increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander participation.
• The introduction of triennial funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in higher education.”

(DEET, 1993b: 6)

Mainstreaming Indigenous Education

The AEP policy claimed that the shift in funding was to avoid inequities and to give consideration to Indigenous support funds based on the total of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student loads at an institution. It was also agreed that decisions on Indigenous support funding could not be granted without ‘reliable’ data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander load. It was reported that consultations were held with institutions and Indigenous representatives to reach agreement on process for equitable distribution of funds in higher education. “The consultations universally affirmed that funds should be primarily allocated according to Indigenous load in institutions”(DEET, 1993b: 7) and took the following factors in to account:

• Costs associated with delivery
• Assistance for the provision of support centres for institutions with small ATSI numbers;
• Spread and level of ATSI enrolments;
• Provision of unique courses; and support for multi-campus institutions.

(Rowley, 1986: 7)

The AEP allowed for some adjustments to meet Indigenous needs in higher education. However, according to Bourke (1995), anecdotal evidence exists to suggest that most Indigenous programs were mainstreamed with very little autonomy. As we shall see, bureaucratic processes impinge on change in this area. However, the Commonwealth’s authority noted that:

3 Note: student load is measured in terms of Equivalent full-time Student Units (EFTSU)

Mona El-Ayoubi MA Research Thesis
The importance of institutional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education strategies cannot be over-emphasized. They are the means of ensuring that ATSI education is no longer marginalised, but rather a central part of Higher Education management, planning and review.

(DEET, 1993a: 7)

The AEPs framework involves processes heavily laden with Western rationalistic approaches that prioritise accountability based on the assumptions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are ‘different’ and disadvantaged and therefore require special assistance from those in power. Also significant is that institutions ultimately make the decisions concerning how ‘Indigenous monies’ are spent. For instance, the Commonwealth operating grants are allocated to institutions with ‘full flexibility’ in deciding how to spend the funds (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander funds) according to their educational profiles.

What is meant by ‘equitable distribution’ and ‘appropriate’ levels of Indigenous consultation seems to have been premised on modernist managerial rationalist perspectives and unexamined assumptions of existing power relationships.

Rationalised binary configurations of difference within institutional policy frameworks are ambivalent and universalised. They are dependent on specific outcomes, as the bureaucratic approach is functionalist in its strategy and outcomes and do not appear to take into account local factors such as remote location and specific learning needs. Rationality is often used as a form of legitimation within Commonwealth policy making. The institutional domain, as Sullivan (1996) sees it, is contingent on:

Rationally conceived goals, rationally administered processes for achieving them, rational assessment of the results-These provide the systemic basis of so much of contemporary life that the concept of rationality must be identified as the fundamental determinant.

(Sullivan, 1996: 45)

The recent managerial revolution in university governance in Australia and the global world has dominated policy in the last decade and has impacted on educational institutions in critical ways. The theoretical implications and the specialised vocabulary of this ethos are value laden and imply a paramount order and logic. For example, adjectives such as ‘efficient’, ‘effective’ ‘deficits’, etc. quantify monetary benefits as useful and necessary tools for Universities. The implications of
this on universities are pervasive in that they affect core management practices based on administrative direction and funding arrangements of institutions. As Rosewarne (2002) claims,

Real reductions in Federal funding and the ever-increasing reliance upon non-government sources of income have forced dramatic changes to the raison d'etre [sic] of higher education.

Furthermore, universities are experiencing a form of managerial 'mode of control'. As Patience (1999-2000: 66) asserts, "This is control by detached administrative specialists in which the administrative processes takes precedence over the defining work of the organization." The implications of this at NTU are evident in the centralisation and the administrative restructurings that has occurred in the last five years. This has meant the 'downsizing' of faculties (now defined as 'cost centres' for academic planning purpose), the limiting of academic contracts, demands for further productivity, rationalising 'viable' programs and eliminating courses which have insufficient student demand. Small enrolments are endemic in such a small regional university, yet this consideration appears to be irrelevant. These ideological changes have affected changes in the production, construction and delivery 4 of Indigenous knowledges as well as in curricula development.

Administrative managerial rationality is questioned in discourse analysis as it frames Indigenous knowledges rationally, i.e. in terms of its own definition of rationality. Escobar (in Sachs 1992: 143) notes that "...Western rationality has to open up the plurality of forms of knowledge and conceptions of change that exist in the world and recognise that objective, detached scientific knowledge is just one possible form among many." The cultural politics of difference in this instance positions Indigenous knowledges outside its domain and thus maintains its hegemony over what is seen as 'Other'. For Pusey (1991: 22) such a problematic is inherent in the reliance on rationality for "...criteria that define what counts as costs and benefits; with the loss of social intelligence; and with the number and range of potentially constructive discourses that have been suppressed."

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4 Malin (1992: 2) discusses the impact of mainstreaming on delivery where she states that "...there is a great deal of evidence to indicate that for Aboriginal and other ethnic minority people, becoming a teacher in mainstream schools is fraught with far more complexities and hurdles than for people from the majority culture. And it appears that much of the problem lies in the expectations of the mainstream that cultural minority people fit themselves neatly into a particular mould of the mainstream conception of a good teacher."
In an educational context, such constructions of rationality impinge on curricula, content and delivery as these tend to be driven by public policy legitimised by the state. The recontextualisation of Indigenous knowledge sustains hegemonic practice and is a process of the rationalisation of difference. Pusey (1991: 160) argues that economic rationalism is socially constructed and works as a medium for the reorganization of the State's deliberative capacity as well as benefits the dominant culture through its neo-liberal ideological practice and its continuous faith in its power and hegemony. Such constructs impinge on models of higher education in Australian universities where global quantifiers are employed to determine quality and success based on monetary outcomes and audits. For example, Marginson (1999-2000) claims that “systems of international bench-marking” are the drivers for common patterns of higher education in the global world where “...idealized American University models become the only possible model.” (The negative implications of such globalisation measures on diversity are well documented in the literature elsewhere, see for example Pratt and Poole (2000). Also these models are focused on privileged economic commercial logic, entrepreneurial rationale and market driven behaviours that have traditionally not been present in Australian universities.

In contemporary North Australia, difference is both a political and an economic pursuit. This is reflected in the process of funding allocation for Indigenous students and the competition that exists to capture increased participation levels within the different disciplines. For example, all Faculties competitively seek the Indigenous Support Funds the Northern Territory University is allocated by the Commonwealth. DEST (2002c) Indigenous Australians in Higher Education 1989-2000 highlights the allocation of resources by the Commonwealth to:

...targeted programmes within the broader gamut of AEP with the objective of improving Indigenous outcomes in Higher Education. Some programmes allocate funds to Higher Education institutions to assist them in their support of Indigenous students and others allocate funds directly to individuals.\(^5\)

DEST (2002c: 5)

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\(^5\) These funds include Indigenous Support Funds (ISF), Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS), enabling courses, Away From-Base: Indigenous education strategic initiative programme (AFB), Centrelink ABSTUDY payments, pensioner education supplement that includes ABSTUDY and other Commonwealth support.
Standardised indicators such as ‘access, participation, retention and success’ are among the outcome measures frequently used in institutional strategy documents. These indicators are also used by the Commonwealth to determine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student profile in higher education programs and are funded according to these defined ‘outcomes’.

**Assumptions Underlying Indigenous Education Policy**

National policy and national policy reviews are driven by social, political and economic pursuits. Indigenous education has been a major concern in the Australian national policy environment. Particular concern has been issues of access, equity and participation in educational programs for Indigenous people. Schwab (1995) notes that change to participation and approaches have occurred in various forms at local and national levels. He states that:

> Major shifts in national Indigenous education policy, however, do not appear to have come about as a result of breakthroughs in local educational ‘practice’ or evaluations of programs in the ‘field’. Rather, they are more often propelled by the unique literary genre, the national ‘Review’.

Schwab (1995: 1)

Schwab also argues that although reviews have been crucial tools in navigating Indigenous education policy in Australia, they have been limiting as they may ‘...provide a convenient showcase for displays of official concern and evidence of action through consultation rather than through substantive change.’

Such rationalised accountability of policy formulations is driven by assumptions which frame Indigenous education in categories that are problematic in that they represent models that are westernised in nature. Such models for Schwab (1995), Altman and Sanders (1991a) do not present factors such as ‘historical exclusion and marginalisation, remote disadvantage’ and other issues of cultural appropriateness that are important considerations in Indigenous education.

It can be seen that a review of the last twenty years of Indigenous education in Australia indicates a steady improvement in the level of Indigenous participation in higher education. Reforms, and structural changes in funding arrangements to institutions and programs has initiated and contributed to significant change which have brought forward debate to complex issues in the discourse of Indigenous pedagogy. These have included major issues of access and equity, diversity and
participation. The impact of national policy on pedagogic practices and styles cannot be underestimated, particularly in the current climate of economic managerial rationality taking place in institutions around the nation state.

This research attempts to look at a local case study and investigate how the policy shifts described above play out in practice. How are they enacted and perceived by institutional players with strong links to the Indigenous culture and politics? Have these policies been implemented successfully in Indigenous higher education programs? What affect have they had on the construction of Indigenous knowledge and how inclusive or exclusive are they in maintaining an intercultural dialogue?

While change and improvement in participation has taken place, access and participation remain problematic in relation to mainstream education. Also problematic is the direct implications of national policy on Indigenous knowledge, as the way it is constituted and reproduced within higher education institutions shapes the ideological constructs behind pedagogies thus impacting on programs. In the next chapter, I shall review and explore these factors and their implications on the politics of identity, knowledge productions, theoretical and conceptual issues of pedagogic practice and difference.
Chapter 3. Indigenous Pedagogy in Higher Education: A Review of the Literature

Literature on the production and representation of Australian Indigenous knowledges in the pedagogic practices of tertiary institutions is limited since not a great deal of research appears to have been undertaken on Indigenous higher education in Australia. This chapter reviews and critiques the central tenets of higher educational discourse in Australia as they bear upon constructions of Indigenous pedagogic practice. It considers these discourses in respect of institutional constructs and explores postcolonial forms of dominant ‘legitimate’ interpretations and representations that permeate social, pedagogical and administrative practice in North Australian society. This review will, in other words, attempt to ascertain whether pedagogic theory and practices have adequately grappled with postcolonial theory in an effective and ‘inclusive’ manner.

In particular, this chapter reviews theoretical critical interpretations of cultural practice, pedagogic styles and transmissions to highlight the multi-faceted nature of contemporary culture and its relationship with Indigenous identity. Paying lip service to cultural difference in education is no longer uncritically accepted. Thus the intellectual space to theorise difference within educational planning is considerably more expansive than practice suggests. In contemporary North Australia, difference and cultural identity are both political and economic pursuits that appear fixed in ideologies.

For identity to be explored practically, it is important to rethink traditional interpretations of identity and consider identity as fluid and changing. For instance, as Langton (1981:17) has pointed out, "...[I]dentity for any individual is a multivariate composition, non-fixed, situational, and continually maintained and transformed by culture."

This chapter also examines the theories of difference and identity that underpin the literature. It looks at the discourses of difference that are significant in articulating the role of pedagogy in higher education which incorporates postmodern, postcolonial and critical theory investigated through the discipline of White Studies. The case study explores how difference is to be conceptualised in terms of
Indigenous representation and how it is recontextualised in pedagogic discourse. In what follows, I shall argue that multiple collaborative processes, which draw on various elements of critical discourses, enhance pedagogic practices that address historical, racial, cultural, social and economic positions. Difference which recognises these factors, and hegemonic practice as a political, and social construct is therefore conceptualised in an effort to de-essentialise forms of Indigenous identity and subjectivities. Such an approach is an effective medium and is important as a tool in the classroom as it provides educators with a language, a vocabulary to interact with issues of inequality and engage in social criticism of the politics of difference, politicised agendas to do with institutional issues of power that ultimately affect pedagogic practice. This means refiguring difference outside the binary oppositions of modernism. Creating such frameworks within the discourse of difference is valuable in deconstructing teaching and learning practices and in understanding fundamental political, social and cultural issues that underpin pedagogic practice. The thesis investigates the role of this ‘difference’ and the extent in which it is practiced in the current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program. This is significant as it brings to the fore the interconnectedness of issues of Indigenous identity and culture represented in the curriculum. This therefore brings to prominence the productive nature of Indigenous representations and knowledges, thus underscoring the current problematic in current pedagogic practices.

The chapter then examines the literature and analyses the theories of difference and identity and how they have been applied to Indigenous educational discourses. This is to investigate assumptions underlying Indigenous pedagogy and present the problematic of framing recontextualised Indigenous knowledge and analysis. Awareness of these processes alerts us to practices that suppress and distort Indigenous voice.

**Production and Representation of Indigenous Pedagogic Discourses**

The thesis’ analysis of contemporary production and representation of Indigenous pedagogic discourses reveals the legacies of educational systems in Australian colonial history, as well as its modernist rational persuasion. Through the insights of cultural studies, post-colonial and postmodernist cultural theorists alike have contributed counter-reading positions that have the effect of deconstructing the
Western colonial cannon. Various elements of these theories provide diverse theoretical insights valuable to educators.

Postcolonial theory defies definition. However, Giroux and McLaren (1994: 20) provide some direction:

Postcolonialism challenges how imperial centers of power construct themselves through the discourse of master narratives...Postcolonial theorists offer resistance to social practices that relegate Otherness to the margins of power, they interrogate how centers of power and privilege are implicated in their own politics of location as forms of imperializing appropriation; and, of crucial importance, postcolonialism contests the dominant Eurocentric writing of politics, theory and history.

Postmodern theory also defies definition; however, it offers insight within the discourse of representation and, like postcolonialism, critiques Eurocentric constructs. It rejects universalism and promotes the range of discursive and ideological possibilities in cultural and social forms. As Giroux (1992: 122) argues, “...Postmodernism argues for a view of history that is decentered, discontinuous, fragmented and plural.”

Postcolonial and postmodern theories therefore provide important frameworks to raise central questions regarding the construction of knowledge and power and their relationship to ideology and pedagogic practice. They allow us to critically analyse Indigenous cultural sites of learning and teaching to unpack the social, cultural and historical boundaries influencing curriculum production modes in higher education courses, such as the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies program within the Northern Territory University (NTU).

There is a critical need for educational government organisations and institutions with colonial traditions and modernist origins to incorporate the propositions of these approaches. Bhabha (1994: 67) reminds us that:

The force of colonial and postcolonial discourse as a theoretical and cultural intervention in our contemporary moment represents an urgent need to contest singularities of difference and to articulate diverse ‘subjects’ of differentiation.

Postmodernist and postcolonialist analysis provide empowering decolonisation strategies to unveil the construction of narratives (in this instance knowledge
constructions in Indigenous curricula) and the deconstruction of defined borders in relation to production mechanisms of higher education institutions. Such empowerment allows for the investigation of textual meaning and the repositioning of understandings of social and cultural representations of identity and difference and supports diverse mediums for teaching and learning. Such strategies encompass knowledge frameworks that are not 'dominant' and can be utilized to extend understandings of alternative cultural perspectives to critique various elements of discourse analysis.

Therefore, within the context of this study, pedagogy is not confined to the classroom. It is defined and posited as central to any political practice that questions how individuals learn, how knowledge is produced and how subject positions are constructed. Giroux (1992: 81-2) reminds us that pedagogical practice refers to the forms of cultural production that are inextricably historical and political:

Pedagogy is, in part, a technology of power, language and practice that produces and legitimates forms of moral and political regulation, that construct and offer human beings particular views of themselves and the world...To invoke the importance of pedagogy is to raise questions not simply about how students learn but also how educators...construct the ideological and political positions from which they speak.

This chapter explores the way pedagogic discourse within this framework facilitates an analysis that highlights the particular problems of representation and recontextualisation of Indigenous knowledge productions and identity. From this context, we can examine how educational knowledge is a major regulator of the structure of experience.

Therefore, to summarise, critical discourses such as postcolonialism and postmodernism provide a useful basis in which to investigate these issues as well as investigate the contradictory process of social interaction and representations as opposed to 'accurate' and 'truthful' representations espoused by modernists.

**Developing a Theoretical Position**

There are extensive literatures that critique modernist discourse analysis, by developing a postmodernist perspective that highlights the significance of

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6 Modernity in this instance is defined as a post-traditional historical period marked by industrialism, capitalism, the nation-state and forms of surveillance. (See Barker, 2000 and Cahoone, 1996)
recognising and accommodating difference. Giroux (1992: 123) asserts that postmodernism "redefines culture and experience within multiple relations of difference that offer a range of subject positions from which people can struggle against racist ideologies and practices." This challenges the boundaries of modernist discourse on representation, subjectivity and history in that: "Modernism builds its dream of social engineering on the foundation of universal reason and the unified subject, (whereas) postmodernism questions the very notion of meaning and representation" (Giroux, 1992: 188).

Significant in modernist theory has been the embracing of Habermasian communicative theory. Hemmens and Stiftel (1980, in Jackson 1998), claim that communicative theory is limited in its capacity to develop theoretical and practical paths to address cultural difference. However, it can be said that communicative theory may be useful in broadening cultural awareness and in undertaking a change in personal perspective, although, its epistemology and ontology appear to be universalised. Young (in Jackson 1998: 217) claimed that communicative theory seems to be limited in its capacity to address and formulate pedagogic strategies in an Indigenous context. According to Young's criticism, modernists seek to transcend difference rather than regard it as a resource for public reason in democratic discussion. This important constraint will be discussed in relation to the production of Indigenous knowledge in pedagogic discourses.

Much of postmodernist critique and discourse is sceptical towards modernist grand theories and portrays them as 'fictions'. Threadgold (1990: 3) suggests that all grand theories, all knowledges are regarded in this sense as constructions of fictions. Postmodernists argue that social critique needs to be local, historically specific and not universalised or generalised into meta-narratives. Class, race and gender are rejected in favour of tools of difference analysed locally. Lather (1991: 1) urges those engaged in the production of educational discourse to question their engagement as the textual outcomes and positions developed would always be 'contingent, positioned' and 'partial'. On the other hand, commentators such as Harvey (1990: 117) suggests that:
Commentators who want to resist the end of metanarratives in social and political analyses, argue that postmodernism is in a dangerous position in that by dispensing with metanarratives it downplays the significance of political economy and the circumstances of global power.

There are other writers who reject postmodernism within the theoretical domain of critical theory. They argue that postmodernists provide little pragmatic certainty in how to develop and apply useful pedagogical methodologies. This is sometimes read as a failure for postmodernists to provide beneficial and practical insight into cultural dominance and socio-economic marginalisation of Indigenous people (see also Soja and Hooper, 1993; Watson and Gibson, 1995). My reading of pedagogic discourses has nevertheless been generally sympathetic to postmodernist theoretical currents within the humanities and social sciences, and these insights have informed my subsequent investigation in pedagogic practice and process in North Australia, specifically at the Northern Territory University (see Chapter Four).

McLaren (1994) argues that despite the limitations of postmodernists to construct an ‘emancipatory politics’, critical postmodernism can offer educators a medium for problematising the issue of difference and diversity in conducting and extending deeper debates over pedagogy and social transformations.

**Difference, Indigeneity and Pedagogy**

As may be apparent, the discourse of culture is a contested zone between (and within) many disciplines where competing meanings of truth are presented. For instance, Barker (2000: 350) argues that:

"Issues of cultural representation are ‘political’ because they are intrinsically bound up by questions of power. Power, as social regulation which is productive of the self, enables some kinds of knowledge and identities to exist while denying it to others."

Perhaps a worthy note within Western contexts is the need to consider both the commodification of language and the privileging of the social relations of productions within Indigenous knowledge in relation to tertiary curricula. Such productions are rationalised and ‘naturalised’ within a Western context as predominant modernist practices prevail into collapsing difference within Indigenous identity. This is apparent in funding allocations aimed at Indigenous education that often include non-Indigenous tertiary students.
Differences, however, may be veiled in coexisting within the broader cultural framework as a form of oppression. As Mohanty claims:

\[
\text{difference cannot be formulated as negotiation among culturally diverse groups against a backdrop of presumed cultural homogeneity. Difference is the recognition that knowledges are forged histories that are ripened with differentially constituted relations of power; that is, knowledges, subjectivities, and social practices are forged within 'asymmetrical and incommensurate cultural spheres (Mohanty, 1989-1990 in Giroux and McLaren, 1994: 181) }
\]

By constructing Indigenous identity through differential cultural classifications, there is a danger of treating tertiary students as 'victims', thus limiting their access and participation in higher education. (This will be elaborated on in the latter chapters.) Such essentialised constructions of difference racialises identity through its institutional cultural components of racism and therefore their conflation with power and privilege (Bowser and Hunt, 1996).

Significant here is an opposing theoretical framework of difference as articulated by some postcolonial theorists where diversity in difference is celebrated. These theories articulate a useful framework and provide a methodology that decolonises pedagogical practices by placing importance on different knowledges, producing oppositional knowledges and providing a language for contesting knowledges (see Mohanty, 1989-1990 and Pettman, 1992). A field known today under the heading of White Studies has articulated such critical discourses in this area.

Extensive literature in White Studies and its link to power and privilege is conveyed in a range of disciplines (see for example Giroux, 1997; Kincheloe, 1999; Morrison, 1992 and Winant, 1997). Much of the focus in this emerging field is on deconstructing knowledge frameworks that are bounded in the ways that Whiteness operates as the norm to define "Others" and is thus used to maintain its power and privilege (Giroux, 1997). Manglitz (2003), for example, draws attention to the way the norm of White privilege masks the inequitable distribution of power.

\[E\]ducators have looked at the impact White privilege has had on the curriculum and instructional practices within schools and have called for a critical pedagogy of Whiteness as part of a critical multiculturalism that would examine the social construction of all identities as well as the interplays of history, culture, power and ideology that define difference.
Maher and Tetrault (1997, 2000) too explore assumptions of White privilege which impact on classroom delivery within higher education classes. They examine the fixed assumptions of Whiteness in institutional ideological frameworks, in intellectual domination and in the recontextualisation of classroom knowledge.

**White Studies and Conceptualising Identity**

White Studies according to Epstein (1993) and Ng (1995) critique antiracism education, particularly practices and constructs that maintain and endorse White hegemony and acknowledge race as a central axis of power.

Critical and radical theories, particularly postmodernist feminist theories are contested by some Indigenous academics for not dealing with the construct of Whiteness in pedagogic practices. Moreton-Robinson (2000) for instance argues that

> Through the use of discourse and deconstruction analysis, heterogeneity is revealed, similarities and differences dealt with. However ...the shift to include difference does not include identifying whiteness as a difference that warrants interrogation.

(Moreton-Robinson, 2000: 53)

Moreton-Robinson notes that the pedagogic practice within higher education institutions portray Whiteness as culturally central thus normalising it in their pedagogical practice. She notes that

> Their pedagogy is inclusive of the race of the Other but masks the subject position ...which they teach. In denying whiteness as a racial identity, race is removed from white agency in their analyses and this can diminish their students’ scope for self-reflection as an anti-racist practice.

(Moreton-Robinson, 2000: 131)

In recent years, Indigenous peoples have begun to contest the construction of identity and positionalities by White people (for instance see also Langton, 1999; Moreton-Robinson, 2000; Nakata, 1997 and Rigney, 2001).

The Inaugural Forum of Indigenous Scholars was held in Australia in March 1999. It was titled *Indigenous Research Methodology: Critique and Reflection*. The aim of this forum was to highlight issues pertinent to Indigenous tertiary education. It attempted to “... critically analyse the production, reproduction, legitimization and dissemination of knowledge within universities to assess the benefit of these
processes for Indigenous Australians" (Rigney, 2001). Some of the main issues highlighted included the following:

- The domination of Western ontologies, epistemologies and axiologies
- The cultural and racial production and legitimation of research
- Inadequate process for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledges in Australian universities
- The urgency of Indigenous scholars to determine through community consultations research needs and priorities.

(Rigney, 2001: 3)

At this forum Indigenous scholars engaged in the development of counter positions/discourses and highlighted the need for educational methodologies to be located in non-colonial spaces. Indigenous scholars called for critical reflection and analysis of specific standpoints in the production and representation of Indigenous knowledges. "From such reflections we are able to create spaces in which de-colonising and anti-colonial discourses can take place. This opens up diverse futures possibilities for the representation of Indigenous knowledge." (Roberts, Oxenham and Walker, 1999: 1)

Other Indigenous scholars have highlighted these forms of representations as problematic. Langton (1993: 27) states that:

There is a naïve belief that Aboriginal people will make ‘better’ representations of us, simply because Aboriginal gives ‘greater’ understanding. This belief is based on an ancient universal feature of racism: the assumption of the undifferentiated Other. More specifically, the assumption is that all Aborigines are alike and equally understand each other, without regard to cultural variation, history, gender, sexual preferences and so on.

Such Indigenous theorists have stressed the importance to consistently rethink, analyse, construct and deconstruct perspectives in our pedagogic domains to reflect on the positions produced and represented. Moreton-Robinson (2000), in her provocative investigations of cultural representations and practice asserts:
An engagement with the politics of difference as multiple standpoints, oppressions, subjectivities, subject positions, identities and locations provides us with a way of understanding the heterogeneous and heteronomous representations of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, class and nationality. However, the effect of such theorising is to make a politics of difference in practice colour blind in terms of whiteness and power evasive in that all differences are rendered equally significant.

(Moreton-Robinson, 2000: 63)

Historically, Indigenous peoples were represented as ‘noble savages’ and ‘primitives’ in Australia, as well as globally. Such projections asserted the ‘Other’ to be like a ‘child’ and therefore ‘susceptible-to-being corrupted’ and in need of protection by the colonisers (see Said, 1984).

Muecke (1994) highlights the construction of Aboriginality in dominant discourses by describing how European perspectives’ limit ‘our ways of knowing’ Aboriginal people. He argues the consistency of Australian discourses to represent ‘Aborigines’ in anthropological, romantic and racist domains.

The usage by dominant academic discourses in describing Indigenous people as ‘them’ and ‘their’ is significant. The usage of such language is a reminder of the consistency of the construction of the ‘Other’ and labels such as ‘disadvantage’ that distinguishes difference by separation. (Gee, 1990: xv) notes ‘language is always and everywhere integrated with and relative to social practices constituting particular discourses’. For example, even well meaning academics (such as the one below) are ‘blind’ to the relevance of language as a power tool in maintaining power relations.

For a long time, the existence of Indigenous knowledge and knowledge systems was denied. When their [emphasis added] existence was acknowledged they were generally deprived of cognitive standing and dismissed as primitive, mystical and unscientific…

(Whitt, n.d.)

As may be evident, the discourse on difference is extensive as well as a contested domain. What may be evident is that traditional modernist representation of Indigineity in relation to identity and difference as a constructed ‘Other’ is inadequate. Giroux (1992) states that modernist discourse has not been able to formulate an adequate understanding of racism that is useful cultural criticism for a pedagogic discourse. He succinctly states that:
Race and ethnicity have been generally reduced to a discourse of the Other, a discourse that, regardless of its emancipatory or reactionary intent, often essentialised and reproduced the distance between the centers and margins of power. With the discourse of modernity, the Other not only ceases to be a historical agent, but is often defined within totalizing and universalistic theories that create a transcendental rational white, male, Eurocentric subject that occupies the centers of power while simultaneously appearing to exist outside of time and space. ...and is reduced to the imagery of the colonizer.

(Giroux, 1992: 113),

Such representations have been and are overwhelmingly critiqued by the academy. Indigenous academics stress the need to stop writing about Indigenous people as the 'Other' and note the importance of listening to the voices of Indigenous peoples of Australia without stereotyping and homogenizing 'Other'. Dominant culture persists on difference that is divisive and divergent. Pedagogies remain limited in their potential to encompass knowledges of a diverse nature voiced and positioned by the subjects of investigation.

Articulating Voice and Plurality

In a sense critical postmodernists who have argued for the plurality of voices and narratives have explored this figuration of difference and authors such as Giroux (1992) have argued that such configuration of difference contributes to what he calls a 'border pedagogy'. He argues that central to this discourse is the engagement of students in knowledge where they “move in and out of borders constructed around coordinates of difference and power”. He also argues that ‘border pedagogy’ provides students with opportunity to express feelings of race from their perspective and allows educators to analyse racism as a structural and ideological historical force. For Giroux (1992: 140), this pedagogy allows:

Teachers to restructure their pedagogical relations in order to engage in open and critical fashion fundamental questions about how knowledge is taught, how knowledge relates to students’ lives, how students can engage with knowledge, and how pedagogy actually relates to empowering both teachers and students.

Conceptualising difference in this way has to a certain extent been adopted and espoused by postcolonial and feminist critical theorists we have discussed. For instance, Giroux (1992), and Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) have called for a radical
pedagogy defined as ‘border pedagogy’. They rightly address issues of power and politics and challenge institutional and ideological boundaries historically constructed in forms of privilege and exclusion. Giroux (1992: 135) notes, “Border pedagogy offers students the opportunity to engage the multiple references that constitute different cultural codes, meaning and languages.” He suggests this framework engages teachers and learners in critical questions about “how knowledge is taught, how knowledge relates to students’ lives, how students can engage with knowledge, and how pedagogy actually relates to empowering both teachers and students” (Giroux, 1992: 140).

There is value in this approach, as already suggested, particularly in conceptualising theories of representations and their application in the classroom. However, it does not clearly identify strategies in which to determine how pedagogic discourse appropriates Indigenous knowledges and selects and evaluates them in teaching and learning contexts. In the Australian national framework for example, the production of curricula in terms of content, methodology and structure is dependant on institutional strategic direction governed by principles of national policy that the university adheres to. This is not only aligned with funding opportunities but is also aligned with a managerial rationality driven by modernist ideology, inequities and power issues discussed earlier. Curriculum is therefore specifically constructed and is vested in economic and bureaucratic interests before it is even delivered and practiced in the classroom. “Any curriculum is the outcome of exercises of power. Power is exercised in attempts to define what the curriculum should be; that is, power is the successful imposition of one’s preferred meaning upon a situation” (Pusey, & Young 1979: 28). Such problematics underlie pedagogic practice because they appropriate knowledge constructs, select, pace and evaluate curricula into a framework which is specific and limited to institutional goals thus further limiting multi-layered frameworks, such as border pedagogy. What role do bureaucratic administrators and management have in the structure and production of knowledge and how do they affect the structuring of the learning contexts in the BATSIS program will also be subject to investigation in this thesis.

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Problematic of Indigenous Pedagogy

Culture, Race and Positions of Difference

In current postmodern discourses and critiques, much attention has been given to culture, place and identity. ‘Cultural contexts’ and the ‘place of culture’ have been well documented in education and critical theories (Eagleton, 2000; Giroux, 1992 and Keeffe, 1990). However, it is important to describe and interpret the broader historical, political and cultural contexts in relation to the politics of difference in order to establish how Indigenous identity and representations have been positioned in dominant discourses.

A significant and influential concept important to discussions of ‘cultural politics’, stems from the Gramscian notion of ‘hegemony’ that involves "processes of meaning-making by which a dominant or authoritative set of representations and practices is produced and maintained" (Gramsci in Barker, 2000: 351). While initially the concept of hegemony was developed in relation to class, it was later broadened in its scope to power relations of sex, gender, race, ethnicity and identity. The influence of postmodernism and the ‘politics of difference’ made an impact on ‘cultural politics’ by highlighting language and discourse, the ‘discursive construction of identity’, the anti-essentialist characterisation of the social, the positions of power and the stress on the ‘politics of difference’ (Barker, 2000: 355).

Derrida’s contribution to these discourses has also had major influence in the academy. For Derrida, language is an unstable system of "differential signs that generate meaning through difference rather than correspondence with fixed transcendental meanings or referents to the ‘real’" (Derrida in Barker, 2000: 73).

There is no original meaning outside of signs, which are a form of graphic ‘representation’, so that writing is in at the origins of meaning. We cannot think about knowledge, truth and culture without signs, that is writing.

For Derrida, meaning cannot be fixed as language is ‘non-representational and meaning is unstable, thus ‘differance’, where meaning is always ‘deferred’ (Weedon, Tolson and Mort, 1980: 199).

Derrida goes a long way in undermining the historical opposition between writing and speech. Interestingly, though, Derrida identifies the prevalence of speech over
writing in the 'logocentric' privileging of presence and the apparent self-presence and immediacy of speech. However, in the end, Derrida subverts the dominance of speech over writing as he draws out their interdependence over and above any hegemonic binary opposition. It is important to note that such a dependence on meaning within a structured framework is problematic as it is a Western construct and does not take into account other meaningful signs, such as Indigenous experience and feeling.

McLaren (1994) contests the positions of difference offered by Derrida, Lyotard and Baudrillard and describes it as ‘ludic postmodernism’. He states that such an approach to social theory is limited in transforming 'oppressive social and political regimes of power' (McLaren, 1994: 198). For McLaren, ‘ludic postmodernism’ is occupied by a reality that constitutes a “continual playfulness of the signifier and the heterogeneity of difference”. As such, ludic postmodernism constitutes a moment of self-reflexivity in deconstructing Western metanarratives, asserting, “meaning itself is self-divided and undecidable” (Ebert, 1991). Difference therefore needs to be understood in its social contradictions that involve various patterns of domination and relations of oppression and exploitation. Thus there is a need for pedagogues to be concerned with ‘economies of relations of difference’ within historically specific contexts that are consistently open to contestation and transformation. (Ebert, 1991: 207) As structures of difference that are always multiple and unstable, the oppressive relations of totalities (social, economic, legal, cultural, ideological) can always be challenged within a pedagogy of liberation (McLaren, 1994).

A counter argument to this ‘branch’ of postmodernism is what is sometimes known as ‘radical critical theory’ (Zavarzadeh and Morton, 1991), ‘oppositional postmodernism’ (Foster, 1981) and ‘critical postmodernism’ (Giroux, 1992). These theories reject the ludic critique as too focused on textual theory of difference. They argue the importance of social and historical constructs prevalent in theories of difference in that “difference is politicized by being situated in real social and historical conflicts rather than simply textual or semiotic contradictions” (McLaren, 1994: 199). Ebert states that:
We need to articulate a theory of difference in which the differing, deferring slippage of signifiers is not taken as the result of the immanent logic of language but as the effect of the social conflicts traversing signification.

(Ebert, 1991: 118)

On the other hand, postructuralist theorists such as Foucault propose the discursive nature of power where discourse is seen to ‘constitute knowledge and its objects, social relations and social identity’ (Fairclough, 1992b: 8). Foucault describes this relationship as follows:

...that in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality.

(Foucault, 1970: 52)

Singh and Dooley (2000: 217) pursue this element of discourse explored by Foucault and present a relevant and interesting study in relation to the discourse of identity and difference where they look at issues of power and ‘control relations’ in the classroom. They state that “[T]hrough the communicative principles of selecting, organising, pacing and distributing school knowledge, pedagogic agents relay the boundary relations of power and socialise individuals into these relations”. The study integrates postructuralist concepts with Bernstein’s theory of pedagogic discourse7 where the authors focus “...on the strength of the power relations structuring categories of knowledge, and the strength of the control relations determining who selected, organised and evaluated the distribution and acquisition of knowledge” (Singh and Dooley, 2000: 230). Another important focus in their study is the issue of construction of cultural identity and difference produced for ‘consumption’ and the ramifications this has on learning.

The critique of postmodern discourse in relation to difference is significant not only in highlighting the complexities of identity and culture but also the associations to do with issues of power raised by Foucault and others. This insight brings to prominence the productive nature of Indigenous representations and knowledges,

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7 See Bernstein (1990, 1996 and 2000) where he articulates and theorises pedagogic discourse. He examines instructional and regulative discourses where he looks in detail at knowledge construction and organisation and the implications of this on those who transmit and acquire knowledge; power relations associated with this and the ideological functions it serves. See also Rose (1999) and Singh and Dooley (2000) for further discussions on this.
thus underscoring the problematic in current pedagogic practices. The production of content for curricula in tertiary institutions, for example, is problematised in this thesis in order to determine how power is situated, who produces knowledge and for whom is this knowledge produced. This approach may uncover “the symbolic structures that create and sustain social differentiation” (Edles, 2002: 224). In this context multiple identities cannot be positioned in fixed domains, as they involve various ways of exploring cultural, historical and institutional arrangements. Urban Indigenous identity thus cannot be confined to a simple (binary) form of difference which is dichotomized and proliferated, but rather needs to be understood in terms of multiple domains where learning can take place in multiple and in-between spaces. Such ‘hybrid’ positioning problematises the current dominant boundaries of pedagogic practice where binary oppositions of ‘black and white’ are constructed in the discourse of difference. For instance contemporary ‘black urban’ identities cannot be confined to a mono-cultural subjectivity, particularly if the students’ values and construct identity from experience of both ‘black’ and ‘white’ culture. Complex, multiple and heterogeneous realities may and do exist in the classroom making it difficult to define identities through binary oppositional locations where codes of a single and unitary culture are often a product of binary positional constructions, i.e. neither ‘black’ nor ‘white’. Rose (1999: 217) has alerted us of the inappropriate effects of positioning pedagogic methodologies within dichotomised oppositions. He suggests that this inhibits the development of learning methodologies in Indigenous education and “...that systematic understandings from both perspectives are required to design and implement appropriate language pedagogies.”

Dualistic constructions of identity are thus problematic as they bind identity to confined and limited definitions of self. The recognition and awareness of difference at various levels within and outside subjectivity is an important consideration for useful and appropriate pedagogic practice. This allows Indigenous learners and educational practitioners to be aware of the possibility of multiple or in-between identities. Such a process has been referred to as ‘hybridity’.
In Cultural Studies hybridity denotes a wide register of multiple identities, cross-over, pick-'n'-mix, boundary-crossing experiences and styles, matching a world of growing migration and diaspora lives, intensive intercultural communication, everyday multiculturalism and erosion of boundaries.

(Hybridity, 2001: 221)

**Hybridity as a Metaphor**

As a metaphor 'hybridity' is useful in capturing ways in which learning can take place in a space of difference which is created by individuals and is not located in conduits of racial classifications, but rather allowing for various meanings across time and across diverse cultural contexts where boundaries shift: "Recognising the in-between and the interstices means going beyond dualism, binary thinking and Aristotelian logic" (Pieterse, 2001: 228).

Thus, according to Pieterse (2001), hybridity is important because it problematises boundaries. This is significant within the scope of the study as it allows for the investigation of boundaries within knowledge productions in terms of content outlined in a curriculum construction such as the BATSIS program. Does the program, for example, cater for students who are not confined to a positional space of identity?

Pieterse (2001: 219-20), asks important relevant questions in this regard:

> What about difference within, what about those who move...in between categories and combine identities? Why should the recognition of one identity be acknowledged and another left behind...What about the recognition of difference not perceived.

'Hybridity' is therefore useful as a theoretical and analytical tool by bringing to the fore the problem of essentialising cultural difference in dualistic thinking. From an anti-essentialist theoretical perspective all social and cultural experience has value. Anti-essentialism challenges the dominance of particular knowledges and recognizes representational roles to do with power (Graham, 1992). The recognition of hybrid spaces may therefore allow for movement away from homogenous representations of Indigenous identity allowing Indigenous students to negotiate identity borders, engage in biculturalism, move in-between cultural and social spaces as they choose, creating intercultural experiences and diverse spaces for learning and teaching. This takes us away from essentialised knowledge systems and pedagogic discourses that

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confine identity and knowledge and allow us to engage in multi-layered discourses transcending binary categories.

Perhaps as an expression or metaphor 'hybridity' connotes negative biological and racial inferences to do with inter-breeding.

As a word it (hybridity) came of age in the 19th century ... In French 'bricolage' has long been a common term. Mixing, blending, melting and merging are other terms and nuances with longer lineages than the quasi-scientific term 'hybridity'... Why of all terms hybridity has stuck is probably because of the preoccupation with biological and 'racial' differences and the intellectual imprint of genetics, which are essentially 18th-19th Century problematics.

(Pieterse, 2001: 237)

'Hybridity' has been criticised for its shortcomings in explaining issues of power and inequality. Some have also argued that it is 'meaningful' only as a critique of essentialism and that its assertion that all cultures are 'mixed' is trivial (see Friedman, 1997; Pieterse, 2001: 221 and Young, 1995). 'Hybridity' should not be perceived as a racial categorization within the context of this study. My interest in 'hybridity' is its signification in cultural representations and in the process which recognizes an 'in-between'8, a variety of cultural and social experiences relevant to the discourse and construction of identity in the Twenty First Century. Perhaps an appropriate vocabulary is lacking to describe identities with a mixture of cultural and social historical experience.

Processes such as 'hybridity' and 'border crossing' are therefore useful in establishing a framework to interrogate the principles underlying Indigenous education policy and practice. This framework supports the inquiry into Indigenous pedagogy in the BATSIS program to determine the extent of the recognition of difference in the production of curricula, in the content delivery and in the recontextualisation of Indigenous knowledges and discourses. These signifiers will help to determine the implication of policy on the style of teaching and learning adopted in the classroom.

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8 In Australia, perceived 'in-between' identity was punishable through policy of assimilation with the removal of 'half-castes' from Indigenous families- since government systems did not permit multiple identities.

Mona El-Ayoubi MA Research Thesis
Essentialist Assumptions in Policy and Practice

As demonstrated in some detail in Chapter Two, the central goals and aims of the AEP include the following:

- Involvement of Aboriginal people in educational decision making;
- Equality of access to educational services;
- Equity of educational participation;
- Equitable and appropriate education outcomes.

(DEST, 2003)

Important questions are needed to examine the underlying principles of these aims as national policy directs the strategic direction and operational planning of institutions such as universities. As discussed earlier, these are laden with modernist or ideological construct that essentialises difference, rationalise bureaucratic frameworks and convey institutional racism. Do addressing inclusive strategies, such as involvement in Indigenous decision-making; issues of access and equity and the provision of frameworks in place, adequately deal with recognizing difference critically and openly? It appears that the principles underlying the AEP are based on lip service principles that acknowledge diversity and difference peripherally. The involvement of Indigenous people in educational decision-making for example does not necessarily take into account the multiplicities of cultural and social experiences of contemporary Indigenous identities as intersected by gender, age, location, and experience of colonisation. Nor does equality of access provide educational strategies in combating racism. Equitable participation and appropriate educational outcomes insinuate an ‘Otherness’, a surface reading of difference where Indigenous identity is relegated to a space of disadvantage and fixity.

The Australian Curriculum Studies Association Inc. (ACSA, 1989) considers that:

... Australian education systems have failed to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, in education attainment, participation, retention and positive identity. Education systems have also failed to assist all students to develop informed understandings of the cultures, histories and contemporary lifestyles of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people.

To this extent, the AEP does not sufficiently, adequately and explicitly “adopt policies and practices in administration, organisation, and strategies of teaching and assessing that recognise the specific cultural, social and educational needs of...
Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students" (ACSA, 1989). Indirect assumptions made in the policy acknowledging diversity and difference through access and equity rhetoric does not necessarily establish explicit policies and practices for combating racism, understanding the positionalities of identity nor develop strategies for appropriate pedagogic frameworks. Binary configurations of difference underlay the AEP principles where Indigenous experience is confined to a particular identity. Questioning national and institutional conceptualizations of Indigeneity and the power of their influence in recontextualising pedagogic discourse is crucial in investigating the extent of this within the BATSIS program and within higher educational practice. In the next section, we explore pedagogic genres that have attempted to incorporate a 'holistic' approach to pedagogic practice by incorporating cultural and social issues of diversity in their methodology. The extent of this success is also examined.

Institutional Representation of Indigenous Education

Pedagogic Discourses

Many of the discussions in the literature that takes place regarding Indigenous pedagogic discourses are in regard to 'literacy' within schools. These discussions are at times limited as they encompass what is presented as a homogenous construction of Indigenous education. However, these discussions are useful in that they provide a gateway to issues pertinent to Indigenous tertiary education, (content, context, process, and identifying specific frameworks). However, the invisibility of tertiary Indigenous discourse provides us with significant elements for consideration. For instance, the way schematic frameworks are recontextualised and reconceptionalised alerts us to the dangers of practices that allow for the distortion and suppression of Indigenous forms by non-Indigenous people involved in knowledge production. I will treat in turn some of the major theoretical positions underpinning Indigenous pedagogy that include systemic functionalism and 'Two-Way' education.

Systemic Functionalism

Systemic functionalist approaches to learning and two-way education have had considerable influence in the discourses of Indigenous pedagogies. There are numerous pedagogical models constructed by systemic functionalist perspectives (see Halliday, 1975, 1978; Ivanic, 1990), however, for the purpose of this review I
will focus on the ‘genre based pedagogy’ popular in Australia and sanctioned at undergraduate levels in the NTU.

The methodology and practice of systemic functionalism and ‘Genre-based’ approach, (neither necessarily inclusive nor specific to Indigenous pedagogy) stresses the usefulness of teaching text in stages that include ‘modelling’, ‘joint construction of a text’, ‘individual construction of text’ as this curriculum strategy allows for a circular representation (Derevianka, 1990). The central features of this theoretical model of language are that it endeavours to “describe in a systematic way, the relationship between language use and context (Callaghan and Rothery 1988: 19). It provides a focus on how language is ‘structured to mean’ and how it allows students to “achieve their purpose in social contexts” (Callaghan and Rothery, 1988: 15).

Christie, (1991: 145) describes the functional status of language in the following way:

Language is as it is because of the functions it serves humans in the building of the relationships, the negotiation of experience and the construction of knowledge and information…it is not something that merely ‘clothes’ or ‘gives expression to’ ideas, knowledge or information.

This view asserts the tension of this functional practice and suggests the need to reconsider the social change that consistently takes place in culture. However, a critical note for consideration is to pinpoint who is positioning and articulating this change and to what extent are Indigenous people ‘allowed’ to position themselves within this context of change.

The genre model incorporates two elements of text, one is related to the ‘social purpose’ of the text and the other are related to variables of the ‘immediate context’ (See Callaghan and Rothery 1988 and Watson and Gibson, 1995). They provide for both ‘stability’ and ‘flexibility’ and can accommodate ‘variation and social change’ (Christie, Martin and Rothery, 1989: 146). This assumes that immediate context is understood and read in a particular ‘truthful’ fashion by the pedagogue. How can this be assured and how are the changing identities of the learner located?

As opposed to this approach, the postcolonialist critique provides a number of ways to create heterogeneous cultural identities and reading positions in the current state of hybridity, as distinct from homogenous functionalist doctrines (see Ashcroft,
Griffiths and Tiffin, 1989). Systemic functionalist theory of education is therefore too prescriptive and carries the danger that teachers may read and depend on their literal formula. Though this theory provides a structuralist approach through its presentation of methodology as a ‘recipe’ outlook approach, it does not adequately allow for the fluidity and hybrid changes encountered in contemporary classrooms.

A structuralist and functionalist theoretical framework alone is therefore inadequate in constructing Indigenous knowledge in tertiary curricula. Postcolonialist theorists have argued that knowledge does not necessarily need to be positioned in opposition to or against learning dominant discourses; rather, it suggests ways to deconstruct them and extend the boundaries to be inclusive of Indigenous representations and cultural difference beyond ‘surface difference.’

...struggles over what counts as knowledge in the curriculum, what languages are used, and whose literatures are represented, are struggles between competing interest groups over what will count as legitimate knowledge in educational institutions. The construction of Knowledge can be seen to be discursively contested terrain rather than a neutral apolitical process.

(Walton 1996: 112)

Bernstein (1990) has contributed significantly to the process of knowledge construction in the classroom. He provides a complex theoretical perspective that is structuralist in its approach and may require greater thought and application than the scope of this thesis permits. However, for the purpose of my analysis, there are elements of Bernstein’s pedagogic discourse model that are attractive. These provide strategies that I do not fully adopt but which inform my strategic principles and direction in discussing knowledge systems in terms of how they may be recontextualised, evaluated and produced.

Bernstein (1990: 184) contributes important insights in this area and proposes that the concept of pedagogic discourse includes
... a recontextualizing principle which selectively appropriates, relocates, refocuses, and relates other discourses to constitute its own order and orderings. Pedagogic discourse then is a principle which removes (delocates) a discourse from its practice and context, and relocates that discourse according to its own principle of selective reordering and focusing. In this process of the delocation and the relocation of the original discourse the social basis of its practice, including its power relations is removed.

(Bernstein, 1990: 184)

It is important to recognise at this point that elements of a structuralist theoretical model are utilised in the research project by applying Bernstein's (1990: 180) complex model of pedagogic discourse and its structuring principles. He considers the framework of a 'pedagogic device' which he describes as the condition for the production, reproduction, and transformation of culture where distributive rules, recontextualizing rules, and rules of evaluation apply.

Important for this research is Bernstein's formulation of the principles of the way in which knowledge is relayed. For Bernstein (2000: 28-39), the pedagogic device is mediated through 'distributive rules', 'recontextualisation' rules and 'evaluation rules'. These processes are important considerations for the thesis as they support the examination of the implication of ownership of the device and how power is perpetuated through discursive means to establish specific ideological representations. For example, distributive rules may regulate access to different forms of knowledge by various groups, recontextualisation rules construct official knowledge of the 'what' and 'how' of pedagogic discourse and the evaluation rules may provide the criteria in which knowledge is transmitted and acquired (Bernstein, 2000: 114).

For Bernstein (1996: 225-6) the official recontextualising field is affected by the state as it legitimises official pedagogic discourse, thus undergoing further recontextualisation through the pedagogic recontextualised field when policy is interpreted and delivered by academics. This is again recontextualised through the processes of knowledge acquisition. For the purpose of this thesis, Bernstein's work will be limited to the model of the pedagogic device with particular consideration of the recontextualisation principle as constructs that may have the potential to identify discourses that are privileged and disadvantaged in higher education policy. These principles provide a means to analyse issues of power and control to determine modes of transmission as a result of the way that content is classified and the way
that interactions are framed. Such constructs are used in order to describe the structural and functional elements of teaching practice to examine pedagogic discourse and the enabling pedagogic device.

It is important to note that aspects of my analysis are sympathetic with Bernstein’s (1990) structures of pedagogic device that is useful in interpreting the reproduction of knowledge in classroom settings.

This is demonstrated in Chapter Seven, where I investigate how Indigenous knowledge is reproduced and recontextualised in practice, and the impact this has on the knowledge itself, in terms of how the knowledge is transmitted, evaluated and rationalised. I examine how discourse is thus embedded within regulative principles of current practice which impact on constructions of identity. In particular, focus is given to the way individuals interpret and reproduce Indigenous knowledges in a higher education setting, as opposed to the rigorous examination of the internal principles of the pedagogic device, derived from Bernstein’s structuralist framework.

Refiguring Indigenous Pedagogy

Learning Style Theory and Two-Way Education

The concept of ‘Two-Way education’ was first coined in 1974 by Pincher Nyurrmiyarri in Daguragu NT of and with the Gurindji people. Its meaning was to highlight the teaching of Aboriginal and English language and culture in the classroom as well as the need for pedagogies that included an exchange between the Europeans and Aboriginal people involved (Nicholls, 1995).

Pincher’s proposal involved therefore the more radical dimension of a two-way exchange of knowledge between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people with the Aboriginal people trying to learn and understand the aims and methods of the European programs, while the European teachers in turn would make an effort to learn the language, culture and aspirations of the Aboriginal people.

(Nicholls, 1995: 35)

Christie, M. (1985) and Harris (1990), argued that Western and Indigenous domains are distinctly different, separate and unconnected. However, for Yunupingu (1994:
9) education is a ‘dynamic balance’ between differing worldviews of the Yolngu and Balanda people. The Garma Cultural Studies Institute, for example, asserts on its website the importance of developing partnerships and collaborative relationships for learning with Indigenous people and the wider community. This ethos is the essence of Garma, where balance between cultures and Australian people are implied. Literally, according to Christie (2000: 12),

Garma is an area within the mangroves where salt water is coming down from the land. Garma is a still lagoon. It may appear smelly and threatening to whitefellas, but it is full of life and very productive as a food source. Water is often taken to represent knowledge in Yolngu philosophy. In the garma, the water is circulating silently beneath the surface...The swelling and retreating of the tides, and the wet season floods, can be seen in the two bodies of water. Each body of water has its own life.

This process is also used as a metaphor to describe education and learning. This notion is significant to this research and is worthy of a lengthy quote. Christie (2000: 12-3) states that:

what happens in the processes of knowledge production in a school where we have two different cultures (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal), is to the Yolngu elders akin to what they see happening in the Garma Lagoon. For education to be genuine, natural and productive, both cultures have to be presented in such a way that each is preserved and respected.

The recognition of the presence of two different cultures was addressed in an influential theoretical framework underpinning Indigenous education in the last two decades. This was the ‘learning styles’ theory developed by Harris (1990) in Culture and Learning: Tradition and Education in Northeast Arnhem Land. The dependence of this approach in pedagogic practice is problematic as it does not take into account the importance of ‘Garma’ and the need for Indigenous students to engage in both Western and Indigenous knowledge systems. Generally this theory posits that there are significant differences between the learning of ‘ Aboriginal’ and ‘White’ people.

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9 Yolngu are the Aboriginal peoples of North East Arnhem Land in Australia's Northern Territory. (Yothu Yindi Foundation, 2002)
10 Balanda is the term used by Yolngu to define European peoples who inhabit Australia, “Balanda & whitefellas’ (from the Macassan for Hollander)” (Yothu Yindi Foundation, 2002: online)
11 http://www.garma.telstra.com/education.html
In particular, Harris identifies ‘five major Aboriginal learning strategies’ that distinguishes ‘their’ learning. They include:

- Learning occurs by observation and imitation as opposed to instruction;
- Learning by trial and error as opposed to verbal instruction and demonstration;
- Learning occurs through ‘real life’ situations as opposed to artificial settings and ‘practice’
- Learning Context involves specific skills as opposed to generalised principles;
- Learning is through personalised context-specific skills as opposed to formal instruction.

This theory in its historical context did challenge the dominant discourse of assimilationist education strategies. The ‘learning style’ concept was taken up by numerous educators and academics, and to this date is practiced widely within schools and institutions around Australia as appropriate Indigenous pedagogic practice. For example, Wollongong University and the Faculty of Education in the Northern Territory University and community schools such as Maningrida have employed this perspective.

Harris’s theoretical work breathed new life into Aboriginal Education. Not only were Aborigines viewed as just as educable as the next person, but also Aboriginal cultural mores and practices were legitimated, indeed for virtually the first time since colonisation, they were conscripted into the service of education.

(Nicholls, Crowley and Watt, 1996: 6)

**Contesting Indigenous Pedagogies**

McConvell (1991), however, criticises Harris’s view and suggests that inappropriate assumptions are made in relation to ‘Aboriginal’ people and their capacity to learn Western modern ways of knowing. Other critics, such as Brabham et al (2002), argue that Harris’s approach is racist, colonial, stereotypical and oppressive as what is important is not racial and biological differences but socio-cultural differences. He implies that it is the educator who needs to challenge his/her own approaches and not the learners themselves who should need to do so. Critical discourses, however, suggest for example that educators need to understand how difference might be constructed within political and ideological domains that affect their practices. Hall in Giroux (1992: 137) argues that educators need to uncover for themselves as well as for their students “the deep structural factors which have a tendency persistently...”
not only to generate racial practices and structures but to reproduce them through time which therefore account for their extraordinarily immovable character.” Harris et al (1980) are deficient in this regard because they insinuate bounded racial practices that are fixed in separate representation and an assumed Indigenous identity. For example, Harris (1990: 19) claims that “in the case of Aboriginal and Western culture, they are basically incompatible and therefore...culture domain separation is the most positive form of biculturalism.” This view suggests that Aboriginal and Western domains should be separated so that Indigenous knowledge does not become affected or diluted by dominant western cultural discourses. This approach is problematic as it is binary and extreme and does not seem to allow space for Indigenous learners to negotiate Western learning styles. Indigenous knowledge frameworks differ to Western frameworks, however representations and identity are moveable and negotiable and do not necessarily stand in oppositional domains. Rose (1999: 222) proposes an interesting consideration in relation to perceived Western Indigenous pedagogy where he argues that “...theories are recontextualised and legitimised in Indigenous education by portraying a unique set of characteristics for Indigenous students – psychological, cultural or ideological – for which competence practices are then argued to be uniquely appropriate.” Again deficiencies exist in locating Indigenous competencies occurring in a defined cultural domain where fixed representations of cultural identity define pedagogy. Rose (1999: 237) suggests that “What is needed is a pedagogy that makes the forms of school discourses visible to Indigenous learners, so that they have an equal opportunity to acquire them, a pedagogy that takes their discursive experience as a starting point...” This is explored further within the diverse body of material that makes up White Studies where the role of the educator is seen as an important element in refiguring definitions of ethnicity as a social and historical construct. Such a perspective allows for the analysis of whiteness as a racial category, thus creating awareness of issues of racism and their impact on the reproduction of knowledge aimed at Indigenous students.

Harris (1990) with the text ‘Two-Way’ Aboriginal Schooling, Education and Cultural Survival has since updated the ‘Learning Style’ theory.
...Harris identifies what he holds to be the 'basic' differences between Aboriginal and Western belief systems - religious versus positivistic thinking; relatedness versus compartmentalisation; cyclic verses doing; contrasting views of work and economics; contrasting views of authenticity.

(Nicholls, Crowley and Watt, 1996: 7)

Nicholls et al. argue that Harris’s approach is binary and reductionist as the sets of beliefs presented are 'mutually exclusive' and 'virtually oppositional’. They argue that the two 'basic' categories of people 'are perceived as having cultural differences as to render mutual understanding or meaningful exchange, difficult if not impossible' (Nicholls, Crowley and Watt, 1996). They note the importance of analysing the field of Indigenous education in relation to "...its location within the broader field of economic, social and political power” in Australia. They also argue that 'the reality of contemporary Aboriginal life and the diversity of expressions of Aboriginality are not seriously considered by Harris and those who subscribe to his approach.” (Nicholls, Crowley and Watt, 1996) Certainly this argument is relevant to the Northern Territory tertiary experience where the diversity of Indigenous students from urban locales is dominant within higher education programs.

Continued practice of teaching and learning methodologies that do not resist the 'homogenising effect' (Jones and Natter, 1997: 144), where identities are reduced to the mere categories that collect them, are in danger of becoming tautologies. For example, Indigenous Australians are often homogenised irrespective of the linguistic diversity, environmental and economic relationships.

Said (1984) has articulated the hegemonisation of the 'Other' in the case of the 'Orient' where questions about who has the power to construct the 'Other' are raised. Pedagogies that absorb, reduce or appropriate the 'Other' dominate and devalue 'Otherness'. The 'Two-Way' framework implies that Indigenous people cannot engage with non-Indigenous learning domains successfully, without impacting negatively on Indigenous culture. For example, Christensen and Lilley (1997), who support Harris's views, suggest in the DEETYA study that 'alternative assessment' practices need to be modified for Indigenous students as Indigenous culture is an oral rather than written based culture. They recommended more focus on oral assessment in higher education mainstream programs.

The traditional teaching and learning mechanisms of this 'Otherness' limits the subjectivities of the learner, undermining capabilities and narrowing challenges and
thus ensuring a represented interpretation without acknowledging various meaningful interpretations that may also be represented. Altering expectations and performance on the basis of skin colour cannot be uncritically accepted. McDaniel and Flowers (1995) argue that such assessment methodology proposed by Christensen and Lilley (1997) create a ‘welfare dependency’ that limits the potential of student performance that is not constituted through culture but is institutionalized.

Systemic functionalist theory, ‘learning style’ theory as well as ‘Two-Way’ education theories attempt to contextualise learning so as to incorporate an Indigenous pedagogic framework. The aim was to be ‘inclusive’ and ‘open minded’ in practical teaching/learning approaches to account for difference and to cater for it. However, it is important to note that non-Indigenous people predominantly constructed these theoretical frameworks for Indigenous students. Therefore indigeneity is positioned within a dominant cultural construct and as such reconstitutes knowledges and learning from a position of power. Recognising difference and catering for it in pedagogic practice is inadequate by itself as socio-economic relations of power need to be distinguished so as to locate forms of signification in order to “...organize subjects according to the unequal distribution of privilege and power.” (Ebert, 1991: 205)

Thus, curriculum such as that offered by Aboriginal Learning Style theories, according to Nicholls et al (1996), are products of view of Indigenous culture that is apolitical and ahistorical. I have argued the inadequacy of such a framework in its limitations of surface reading of difference and its underlying assumptions regarding specific and fixed subjectivity.

‘Two-way’ education and the ‘learning style’ theories were initially constructed for Indigenous students in schools in North Eastern Arnhem land in the Northern Territory. The models aimed at incorporating Indigenous culture, language and systems of knowledge into the school curricula. However, many Australian academics reconstructed, recontextualised and appropriated the methodology for Indigenous students in tertiary education. For example, ‘Two-Way’ education was practiced in the Remote area Teacher Education (RATE) program at Batchelor College for most of the 1990s. This blanket of constructing Indigenous identity in the name of a ‘different and specialized’ pedagogical methodology maintains educational homogenous practice and also sustains and preserves the stereotypical
discourses of how Indigenous people learn; all disguised under the already dense discourse of difference. For example, Indigenous students participating in higher education at NTU are confronted with the myths of supposedly ‘not making eye contact with staff’ or that ‘learning visually is more appropriate’. These constructed positions for the ‘disadvantaged’ (a label often used to describe Indigenous people) are subsumed by relations of power. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) suggest that:

\[\text{...in any given social formation (of) the different [pedagogic authority] tends to reproduce the system of cultural arbitraries characteristic of that social formation, thereby contributing to the production of the power relations.}\]

In conclusion, this chapter has reviewed and examined theoretical critical discourses impacting on Indigenous pedagogic practices in higher education in the Northern Territory. It has examined contemporary production of representations of pedagogic discourses where critique of modernist theory was highlighted and its limitation in recognising difference adequately was problematised. Through the insights of postmodernist, postcolonialist and white critical studies, I have shown the significance of recognising local, historical, political, racial and economic representations in unpacking the complexities of difference. We have looked at how difference may be positioned and represented in confined pedagogic spaces where dominant constructs and hegemonic practices appropriate and recontextualise Indigenous knowledges and identities. These boundaries confine and hinder multiplicities of experiences and subjectivities. These representations and reproductions ultimately impinge on pedagogic practices as they contain issues of power, racism and may be driven by institutional processes determined by political agendas in the form of policy.

I have also argued how pedagogic frameworks and learning styles applied in higher educational classrooms are driven by dominant ideology assimilated in curriculum content which theoretically incorporates Indigenous knowledge systems within a discourse of difference confined to homogenised and essentialised domains. The problematic presented is whether the recontextualisation of knowledge premised on binaries hinders the recognition of difference in all its multiplicities and hybrid forms.

The literature review undertaken in this chapter supports an examination of how difference is conceptualized and recontextualised in the BATSIS program. In
particular the critical theoretical positions presented allow us to investigate the extent the BATSIS program incorporates 'different' pedagogic styles in its methodology and investigate assumptions of Indigeneity (if any), which guided the development of the program.

Recognising pedagogic genres with fixed reproduction of knowledge in the form of curricula is crucial in highlighting the repression of 'hybridity' in the classroom. 'Hybridity' may allow for anti-essential forms of difference to take place and is crucial in providing a space for the plurality of voices and experiences and the shifting of boundaries that need to be recognised in pedagogic practices and discourses. This movement in-between various domains may enable us to create 'momentary spaces' to engage in a variety of dialogues to enhance our understanding of what it means culturally, historically, racially and socially to be constructed as 'Other'. Such a mechanism may allow the redefinition of positionality that are located within fixed domains. The 'academy' can be accused of appearing to take diversity and locality in its investigations of indigeneity. It may need to hold the mirror to itself to recognize how it engages and constructs this discourse of 'Other' that it veils as 'difference' to redirect the gaze and reposition its framework.

Critical theory, White Studies and the notion of 'hybridity' are useful perspectives for consideration. They provide insight and processes for application to BATSIS and other higher education programs. These theoretical frameworks allow for the raising of important questions central to the research. Do assumptions of White privilege impact on classroom delivery in higher education classes? Are there fixed assumptions in place in pedagogical approaches? Are differences created in curriculum content to imply Indigenous pedagogy? Are there learning differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students? How is identity constructed and represented in this discourse. Are there specific cultural frameworks required for successful participation in Indigenous higher education?

It is important to note that hybridity addresses and brings to the fore the problem of essentialising and homogenising cultural difference significant to the pedagogic problematic presented. It is useful in establishing a framework where we can incorporate a variety of cultural experiences and make use of these in the classroom. The metaphor helps to interrogate underlying principles of ideology that frame, code represent and recontextualise identity. However, further examination of this
framework is outside the scope of this thesis and further research is needed in this
dimension. It is important to continuously rethink constructed perspectives in
pedagogic domains to deconstruct identity positions produced and represented.
White Studies provide us with the methodology that decolonises pedagogical
practices. There is value in diverse knowledges and in producing oppositional
frameworks for investigation as well as helping to articulate a language to contest
fixed frameworks.

Finally this chapter has highlighted binary opposition productions that explicitly
differentiate between the theories discussed earlier. However, such binary
configurations do not provide strategies for an inter-face between Indigenous and
non- Indigenous students and academics alike. This conclusion is not new; what is
new is how we incorporate this in teaching practices. Perhaps a paradigm shift is
needed that takes into account elements of Foucault on 'issues of power', Derrida on
‘deconstruction’, Bhabha on ‘third space’ and critical postmodern theory on
‘deconstruction and border crossing’. These are all different moments and processes
in which to explore and review domains of pedagogic practice that integrates flexible
learning and delivery not bounded in relational issues of power, fixed ideology and
narrow definitions of knowledge and identity.
Chapter 4.

Pedagogy and Experience: Strategies for Researching an Indigenous Higher Education Program

The force of colonial and postcolonial discourse as a theoretical and cultural intervention in our contemporary moment represents the urgent need to contest singularities of difference and to articulate diverse ‘subjects’ of differentiation.

(Bhabha, 1994: 72)

The methodology employed follows assumptions about the nature of knowledge in Indigenous pedagogy as presented by critical theoretical discourses. The methodology in this research thus pursues postcolonial and postmodern theoretical frameworks that formulate and incorporate multiple perspectives. Exploration of alternative theoretical models such as White Studies in the previous chapter is central to the consideration of material generated in this process.

This case study of the BATSIS program at NTU has been assembled through a process of document analysis and interviews. These data sources have then been subjected to analysis of their content, the results of which have in turn been considered within the framework of discourse analysis. The document analysis has examined the contents of curricula, policy material from NTU, funding bodies such as the Commonwealth and NT governments, as well as extended interviews with a selection of staff and students who have experience in the BATSIS program. Overall, qualitative methodology incorporating critical theoretical discourses using inductive, interpretive and descriptive analysis is applied. This approach brings to the fore tensions in binary and fixed positionalities that essentialise identity constructions and experience.

The case study provides us with an example of an educational cultural process and its implications including the formal construction of knowledge, in the form of curricula content, and its application as it is reflected in classroom pedagogy. Specifically, the BATSIS case study examines representations of Indigenous knowledge systems and the pedagogies employed.

The BATSIS program provides a framework to examine its content production, curriculum representations and its pedagogic application. The methodology also
supports the evaluation of a number of formal and informal perspectives including institutional structures and their teaching and learning practices. For example, the formal structures of assessment and content from the data collected are used to determine Indigenous representations of knowledge and how they are articulated through curricula constructions and their delivery in the classroom.

Multi-methodological approaches collectively operate to broaden the scope of research and take into account specific cultural contexts that may be overlooked with a mono-methodology. This is to reflect representativeness and to explicate diverse positionalities. To put it another way, multi-methodological approaches and processes are the basis of the methods employed where the focus is on contextual, inclusive, involved, and socially relevant practice (Sarantakos, 2000: 149; Weiss and Wodak, 2003: 172).

For example, the utilisation of in-depth interviews enables optimising the participants’ responses by exploring subjectivity and intensive dialogue between researcher and the participant where intrinsic features of cultural experience can be analysed. The purpose is to interpret meaningful actions and interpretations as symbolic constructs laden with meanings. This is particularly useful in the Indigenous contexts where participants’ oral fluency may provide the basis for valuable text. This is supplanted through documentary methods and a survey of BATSIS curricula content.

Case study: The BATSIS Program

The Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (BATSIS) program offered at the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies at the Northern Territory University is used as a case study to investigate the representation and production of Indigenous knowledge in pedagogic discourses. As a cultural educational site, the Faculty and the BATSIS program provide a useful and valuable case study unique in that they are situated within a Western institutional framework where the Faculty is philosophically and geographically positioned in opposition to so called ‘mainstream’ education taught around the campus. The investigation of the representation and production of knowledge in this context is significant to the case study as the methodology applied seeks to explore the form of Indigenous pedagogic styles used and to determine the extent of their construction. How does this occur,
who is involved in the process, and are essentialised assumptions of identity implicit in this?

The case study provides a multi-dimensional space where Indigenous, non-Indigenous students and academics occupy a variety of identities and bring a wealth of diverse experience to explore mechanism of pedagogic discourses important to the research. Such a space allows us to open up the discourse of difference where defined and bounded representations may lie invisible in everyday assumptions about the nature of curricula and of teaching methods so as to open these areas to alternative forms of enquiry understood from various social, cultural, political and institutional domains.

Methodologically, I have deliberately chosen to be eclectic in the approach to this investigation, employing thematic, discursive, narrative and metaphorical methods in order to explore the various approaches and frameworks for analysis and thereby to ‘open up’ the various issues of representation in pedagogic discourse.

**Discourse Analysis**

Discourse analysis has been adopted as the central methodological approach of this case study as it permits the examination of content and contexts. This is achieved through the examination of “textual” representations of the program by studying the contents and meanings of documents in order to establish the discursive practices in which texts are produced and interpreted (Phillips and Jorgensen, 2003: 61). The process involves in-depth interviews with participants and the collation of historical content from texts such as unit outlines. The recording of oral histories to illuminate the experience of participants in their own voices provides “textual” sources for the examination of the practice substantiated by the policy documents.

This methodology is important because it provides an overview of theoretical constructions in relation to Indigenous knowledges within institutions, the influence of national policy structures on productions. This is then analysed from the interface of delivery of the program.
Phillips and Jorgensen (2003: 61) explain:

...discourse is a form of social practice which both constitutes the social world and is constituted by other social practices. As social practice, discourse is in a dialectical relationship with other social dimensions.

Critical discourse analysis provides theories and methods for the empirical study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains.

Discourse analysis therefore helps us to study both contexts and content of documents. Sarantakos (2000) refers to this as 'manifest content 'and 'latent content'. The unit outlines (curriculum) will provide the framework for ‘manifest content where the text and the actual structure (i.e. descriptors used: methodology, assessment, description, etc) will be analysed for their language usage, their visible content to determine specialised knowledges to indicate Indigenous pedagogy. Specifically data sought from this content analysis of the selected documents draw on dominant categories and causal relationships. 'Manifest Coding' 12 is assigned to unit outlines ‘Descriptive analysis’ and ‘Contextual analysis’ is applied. In particular, ‘Objectives’ and ‘Descriptions’, and ‘Methodology’ and ‘Assessment’ of individual units in the course are decoded through descriptive detailed notes drawing on the course documentation. This is to explicate ‘cognitive representation of social reality’ (Sarantakos, 2000: 283).

The unit outlines accredited by the institution for the BATSIS program provide good documentary material to uncover a variety of textual representations. After applying analysis to texts such as documents on policy and curricula, the views of a number of stakeholders are elicited through interviews and questionnaires to clearly present the experience of curricula developers and students alike. This is done through thematic presentations where participants were asked to contribute discussion revolving around themes that included the following:

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12 Manifest Coding in this instance refers to "...the identification of presence and frequency of visible, surface text elements such as words, sentences, symbols, etc " (see Sarantakos, 2000: 283).
• Indigenous knowledge productions,
• The pedagogic approaches and experience in the classroom,
• Notions of difference and its embodiment in teaching and learning practices,
• Constructions and assumptions of identity and
• Perceived Indigenous representations.

The responses were then collated in the form of textual data. This was done systematically and in detail so as to critically analyse the Indigenous educational experience to investigate the interface of representations between the official frameworks and the subjective experiences.

**Documentary Analysis**

Official documents provide detailed textual data. This includes texts from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy (DEET, 1989), the Northern Territory University Strategic Direction policy (NTU, 1992) and curriculum documentation, including reaccreditation of the BATSIS degree program and unit outlines produced by academic staff. These were assessed, transcribed and analysed. Specifically, BATSIS unit outlines from the streams in ‘Yolngu language and culture’, ‘Indigenous Arts and Media’, ‘Contemporary Indigenous Issues’, ‘Indigenous Legal Issues’ as well as ‘Indigenous Health and Community Development’ were ‘unpacked for their content’. Unit outlines were ‘unpacked’ through the classification and categorisation of three main elements: description, assessment and delivery. Firstly, each stream was classified and categorised according to the units offered. The descriptions, articulated under the objectives listed in the individual unit documents, were summarised to identify the knowledge systems embedded in the text. Secondly, the form and shape of assessment items for each unit was mapped out to determine the percentage value awarded to student participation, tutorial presentation, workshops and essays. Thirdly, the delivery of each unit was interpreted though the teaching methodology outlined in the documents. This included a summary of the course descriptions in relation to teaching methods where structures (i.e. lectures, seminars, workshops) and other special features were identified to determine the relationship to the theoretical construction of curriculum knowledge and its practical application in the classroom (see Appendix VI for data transcriptions for these documents.)
These results were then considered in relation to the national and institutional policy frameworks as articulated in the AEP and the NTU Strategic Direction on Indigenous Education. This examination attempts to determine how institutional bureaucratic structures may impact on Indigenous representations of knowledge produced in curricula activities and in teaching and learning practices. These documentations were investigated to elicit how these are represented, reinterpreted and legitimised and whether they reconstruct and maintain homogenous and or differential constructs of pedagogy.

This approach involves the mapping of main themes and constructs and the frequency of their textual appearances where underlying meaning is conveyed through the unit outline documents. This provides patterns and a framework for the analysis of representations of Indigenous pedagogic knowledges inferred and or hidden through the text. For example, content in unit outlines provides explicit and implicit references to assessment and pedagogic methodological processes. In this context, local interpretations of national frameworks can be analysed through the investigation of thematic content of communication and aim to make inferences about "...individual or group values, sentiments, intentions or ideologies as expressed in the content of communication..." (Mahr, 1995: 280).

The selection of documents described serve as representative samples as they encompass national and local strategies that are employed in teaching and learning practices. Predominately these were also collected as they reflect the specialisation of the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in producing Indigenous knowledge in curriculum to serve the needs of a student and to determine the extent of an Indigenous pedagogic discourse.

The analyses of the stated documents are then critiqued. This critique allows for the examination and articulation of representations of knowledges constructed thus determining the process of productions in curricula and in policy formulations. The interpretive, contingent and political nature of knowledge productions described by cultural theorists is important in bringing to prominence the productive nature of power and knowledge.

13 See for example Giroux (1992), Grossberg (1989) and Foucault (1972)
The content analyses of the documents are thus subjected to discourses of difference so as to reveal ideological constructions of identity and assess how particular forms of knowledge are institutionally embedded in curriculum. The questions thus posed include who produces knowledge and for who is this knowledge produced, how it is constructed and represented and how do these affect pedagogic discourses in higher education institutions. Discourse analysis of texts allows then for the extraction of data contained within them. The aim and context of such analysis deals with topics as a writer’s cognition, attitudes and messages that underlie the context to examine the contextualisation of knowledges produced (Krippendorff, 1980). Here attention is drawn to the tradition of critical theories and in particular cultural studies frameworks where pedagogy can be investigated as a form of cultural production rather than the transmissions of particular skill, body of knowledge, or a set of values. "To invoke the importance of pedagogy is to raise questions not simply about how students learn but also about how educators...construct the ideological and political positions from which they speak" (Giroux, 1992: 81).

In this context, the basis for selecting formal documented texts serves to illustrate how knowledge and issues of power in relation to difference are framed in the BATSIS program. This is analysed through the treatment of textual documentations as historical and social constructions of knowledge transmitted through bounded pedagogic practice. Hence the reproduction of unit outlines provides an insight into practices of dominant cultural groups and how texts legitimate and theorise content knowledge for Indigenous education. This approach uncovers "...the symbolic structures that create and sustain social differentiation..." (Edles, 2002: 224). Critical theoretical discourses investigated therefore become as Giroux (1992: 166) fluently puts it,

...a critical referent for understanding how various practices in the circuit of power inscribe institutions, texts, and lived cultures in particular forms of social and moral regulation which presupposes particular vision of the past, present, and future.

**Interviews**

Qualitative methodology in this instance captures the experiences of learners and curriculum developers so as to formulate an in-depth understanding of the social world and interactions of the institution and its participants. This is because the
study aims to explore pedagogic experience from the ‘inside’ rather than the ‘outside’. Responses from interviews provide qualitative data with detailed descriptions collected for analysis to develop insight into student and the educator’s experience. As Edles (2002: 179) claims, "Systems of meaning help explain complex, multivariate relations and historical events and that these meanings can be located in doctrines." This is crucial in gaining an understanding through critical analysis of how knowledge through discourse is structured, constructed and interpreted in the institution’s history.

The content from interviews is collated and analysed to evaluate and compare the experience of students and academics of the BATSIS program and in particular of specific units which they have been involved in. The experience and perspectives of participants are transcribed in detail so as to critically reflect the pedagogic application of theoretical frameworks described in unit outlines and other course documents. This is to explore participant responses in relation to the incorporation of various pedagogic genres, and how these are constructed, applied and practised.

Questions for participants were devised to reflect thematic concepts described briefly above and in detail in the literature review (see Chapter Two). This was done in order to ascertain the interface between the theoretical and the practical (see Appendix VII). Responses from participants were organised around themes that included:

- Indigenous knowledge and curriculum,
- Indigenous knowledge productions,
- Indigenous participation in knowledge productions, pedagogy and difference,
- Issues of identity and
- Issues of representation.

The aim of adopting this approach is to stress the political and complex nature of communication and knowledge and to investigate how the recontextualisation of knowledge in curricular activities can influence and predetermine educational outcomes. This is important as it can raise questions as to the political processes inherent in course construction and delivery. For example, the data gathered through the process of interviews aim to extract perceived constructions of differentiated identity and examine if they impact on pedagogic practices in the classroom and on the outcomes achieved by Indigenous students. This is to ensure that the Indigenous voice is presented so as to recognise differences as multi-faceted experiences.
articulated by students, academics and not institutions and dominant discourses alone.

Qualitative analysis of the interviews is achieved through ‘structuration’\(^{14}\) where the responses are transcribed and the content explicated according to a set of themes. Central questions were then organised under thematic headings to draw responses from participants and included the following constructs:

- Who produces knowledge and for whom?
- How is this knowledge represented and recontextualised and how does this affect higher education pedagogic discourse?
- Do assumptions of ‘White privilege’ impact upon classroom delivery?
- Are there fixed assumptions in place in pedagogical approaches?
- Are differences constructed in curriculum content and do they imply a particular Indigenous pedagogy?
- Are there learning differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students?
- How is identity constructed and represented in current pedagogic discourse?
- Are there specific cultural frameworks required for successful participation in Indigenous higher education?

The data from this is then compared to the discourse analysis of the textual documents to determine teaching and learning methodologies practiced in the units offered in the BATSIS program. This is later analysed to determine how recontextualisation of Indigenous knowledge is taking place in the classroom and to determine the extent of representation of Indigenous knowledge in curricula.

Responses are then analysed comparatively with responses collected from the contextual and content analysis undertaken from the documents. Methodology and Assessment are again revisited to determine causality and differences or similarities between theory and practice.

**Participants and Samples**

Cultural background, experience in curricula development, experience of teaching and learning in the BATSIS program and age were considerations in the selection process. (Representativeness is also supplemented through analysis of curriculum documentation described earlier.)

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\(^{14}\) Structuration in this instance involves the development of structures such as themes by putting them in order so as to investigate formal content criteria (see Marying, 1988: 75; and Sarantakos, 2000).
Participation in the research was voluntary. Individual staff and students were approached informally in contexts such as the campus coffee shop or around the Faculty. Attempts were made to contact another five students (one full time and four part-time); these attempts were unsuccessful. Those staff and students who were contacted successfully were verbally invited to participate; the research was explained as to the topic, a brief abstract, the confidentiality of the individual contribution and the protection of their privacy. Participants were asked to consider the invitation and contact the researcher if they were willing to contribute.

This targeted selection of participants was undertaken in such a manner on the basis of the small number of students who were enrolled in the BATSIS program and the number of academics who had experience in the curriculum development and teaching of the program. These approaches were made to all currently enrolled BATSIS students, whether undertaking the program as a major or as an elective in another program; likewise, all Faculty staff with an involvement in BATSIS were approached; from these invitations to partake, all but one staff member was willing to participate.

Subsequent to agreeing to participate a meeting for the interview was arranged and each individual was provided with an overview of the research including aims and objectives. Participants were formally informed regarding the process of the interview. It was explained that privacy would be maintained throughout and after the research and that participants may withdraw at any time from the interview and or research. Consent forms were signed and copies of the project title, abstract and researchers details including the details of the University’s ethics representatives were provided as copies for the participants (see Appendix I, II, III for each of these instruments).

All participants who agreed to collaborate in the research were given the option to either answer a written set of questions or to participate in a recorded questionnaire/interview. All chose the recorded interview. In total ten participants were involved; five were students (three Indigenous and two non-Indigenous) and five were academics (three Indigenous and two non-Indigenous). All participants had been involved in the BATSIS program either as learners or teachers. Five students interviewed were undertaking a degree program and one a graduate diploma. All academics interviewed had involvement in the Bachelor of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander Studies in higher education, including work as curriculum developers. Their experience ranged from two months to ten years.

Collection (Interviews)

The total number of students enrolled in the BATSIS program for semester one and two, 2002, included six full time enrolments and four part-time. From this sample, five full time students responded and were interviewed. For the same period there were seven full time Higher education academics teaching at the Faculty, of which four responded and were interviewed. One Indigenous academic who had previously taught in the program was also interviewed.

Administration of Instruments

Written consent was obtained from all individuals who participated in the project. Participation in the project was voluntary. These included senior staff members and managers, coordinators, academics and students. Participants were informed of their rights to withdraw at any time from their involvement in the research.

The Plain Language Statement and Consent form were provided for all participants (see Appendix III and II respectively). Those who gave consent were contacted and suitable arrangements were made for the questionnaires (see Appendix I) and interviews to take place. Participants were also provided with a full verbal explanation of the purpose, the process and the participants’ role in the research. This was explained as accurately as possible and included the approach and the process of the research itself as well as its methodology. Flexibility in terms of the questions asked also took place as some participants have consciously decided to focus on particular themes. This is significant as it allows the participants to highlight important areas for consideration that the researcher may have overlooked. Such participatory methodology is a form of ‘systemic inquiry, with the collaboration of those affected by the issue been studied, for purposes of education and taking action or effecting social change’ (NAPCRP, 1998).

The National Health Medical Research Council (NHMRC), higher education Committee (HEC), Centre for Indigenous Natural, Cultural Resource Management (CINCRM) and NTU ethics policy were followed and there were no variations to the standard.
All participants in the project were provided with the opportunity to view information, such as transcripts of interviews, wherever possible and at any time during the project. Data collected and analysed is securely stored with limited access to protect the privacy and anonymity of all participants. Subject identity is anonymous and is only known by myself. Names and positions were coded to protect the identity of participants.

Following the examination of the thesis, copies will be distributed to individuals who request one, the appropriate Faculties, government organisations and the library at CDU (Charles Darwin University, previously known as the Northern Territory University).

**Ethical Considerations**

Like all methodologies, discourse analysis is said to have weaknesses that may be of ethical concern. "Discourse analysis is not sufficient in itself for analysis of the wider social practice, since the latter encompasses both discursive and non-discursive elements. Social and cultural theory is necessary in addition to discourse analysis" (Phillips and Jorgensen, 2003: 69). Narrow and biased interpretation in this method may undermine the validity of the data, however, the multi-faceted theoretical and methodological approaches used here help to widen and limit such narrow interpretation. It may be suggested that descriptive analysis is an invalid tool, however, "...descriptive tasks in content analysis should not be underestimated in their scientific importance or in their practical significance" (Krippendorff, 1980: 159).

**Personal Factors**

Perhaps, at this point, it is important to acknowledge my relationship to the subject and the field of this research, i.e. my position as an academic working at the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. Having taught parts of the BATSIS and other social science subject areas within the field of Indigenous education, there may be perceptions centred on conflict of interests. It is therefore important to note that historically the maintenance in relation to accreditation and of the BATSIS program in the Faculty has been under some scrutiny and criticism from many academics that have both developed and taught in the program. This will become apparent from the transcripts presented in Chapter Six. This zone has been contested...
philosophically over the seven years that I have been at the Faculty and continues. As a program, BATSIS has been subjected to internal criticism and scrutiny by academics responsible for its development and presentation, the voicing and debating of issues of knowledge production has been contextualised by the politics of identity and confined notions of difference.

As a lecturer, I was concerned that this was impacting on students, academics and the content, thus effecting pedagogic practice and educational outcomes and issues of quality. My interest in knowledge productions, culture and pedagogy as well as my positionality as a pedagogue in the Faculty, offers a terrain through which intercultural communication and cultural representations can be refigured. As an academic, I see it as my role in the academy to support the constructions of new social relations and engage in critical discourses to develop better understanding of our students and us. Some academics may argue that this may bias my observations and interpretations of events and procedures. However, I found, on the contrary, that this experience has helped to build a good rapport with the participants where open and honest dialogue took place in many instances. There may have been omissions that participants had made because of this relationship. To counter this possibility, semi-structured interviews took place to allow for participants to collaborate and discuss issues important and relevant to the thesis.

It is hoped that these limitations are dealt with in inclusive, valid and representative modes.

Methodological Limitations

Interpretive methodology allows us to highlight significant social interactions and how they impact on pedagogies pragmatically and symbolically. The interpretive discourse analysis is useful as it "...is one of the most important methods of identifying and sorting out the symbolic scaffolding behind and within action, and hence, that textual discourse analysis is one of the most important ways to illuminate culture in the symbolic sense..." (Edles, 2002: 173).

This is mostly descriptive in nature as well as communicative. There are some social theorists who identify weaknesses in qualitative methodology in research practice (eg. Stergios, 1991; and Vlahos, 1984). They raise concerns regarding problems caused by subjectivity, objectivity and the representative nature of findings.
However, in the context of this study where exploration of Indigenous and institutional knowledges are surveyed, such a methodology provides an approach to academic activity in specific cultural contexts. Although predominantly qualitative methodology is used, the research process also employs fundamental aspects of quantitative methodology where a hypothesis is constructed and measurements of data analysis including statistics are applied. This is complemented by participant observation where the emphasis is the explorations of the theoretical frameworks in relation to representations and productions of Indigenous pedagogic discourses. In effect, there is a focus on active involvement in the process of data collection where interviewing plays a pivotal role in the analysis and conceptual frameworks of the methodology. On the other hand, quantitative methodology is applied through the use of random sampling of grades and assessments so as to analyse reductive data and explain why particular representations have taken place. Such utilization is important as it allows for dynamic approaches where quantitative elements may complement and supplement qualitative research activity (Sprague and Zimmerman, 1989: 82).

There are limitations that exist in mono-methodology approaches; for example, Berger et al (1989) warn of problems and errors in interviewing where recording, evaluation and instruction errors may occur and distort the process of data collection. Particular care was taken to ensure and prevent such occurrences from taking place.

In conclusion, the methodological processes employed incorporate multi-methods of investigation which draw on the central thematic formulated in the research. This is in turn, guided by theoretical frameworks presented in post-modernist and post-colonial theories. Theoretical frameworks such as critical discourse analysis from the discipline of cultural studies in the social sciences and humanities are examples of methodological approaches employed. They are pluralist in nature and include interpretations from official course documents, policy structures and participant responses. These are then subjected to analysis of course content descriptions and discussions from interviews using interpretive ‘encoding’ and ‘decoding’ processes. Thus, elements of a variety of methodologies are incorporated and are not solely determined by any one particular theoretical or methodological position. This framework supports the different domains we encounter in contemporary Australian identity and go beyond stereotypical representations of dualistic ‘Otherness’. The methodology supports the exploration of tensions between binary essentialism and
alternative constructions which de-essentialise constructions of identity and representations impacting on teaching and learning practices.

Drawing on multi-methodological frameworks provides rich spaces of discourse and analysis that utilise cultural difference practically and beyond theoretical prescriptions of the dominant discourse. For example,

postmodernism and postcolonialism remind us that participant observation is an interpretive process that takes place in a specific political and historical context and that all social scientific writing—especially ethnographic writing…

(Edles, 2002: 172)

This opens up the boundaries of pedagogic discourse and allows for meaning to take place in a third space where considerations of social, cultural, economic and political constructions take place. It is within this framework that the methodologies discussed in this chapter are hoped to support the investigation into the way that the BATSIS was developed and implemented at NTU.
Chapter 5. NTU Batchelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

This chapter begins by presenting the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (BATSIS) degree program offered at the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies at the Northern Territory University. It provides detailed descriptions of the development of the BATSIS program with reference to institutional context in higher education. It aims to provide a framework to map out the various elements of how Indigenous knowledge is constituted and produced within institutions such as a university.

The chapter provides an outline of the historical development of a tertiary Indigenous program in North Australia. In particular I explore the specifics of a national policy framework on the production and maintenance of Indigenous knowledge and their representation in curriculum offered to Indigenous and non-Indigenous students at the Faculty. I will document the NTU’s strategic direction in order to ascertain how organisational institutions directives are informed by national policy structures that inform pedagogic content and practice in the classroom.

The detailed documentation of the overall course structure, rationale, aims, methodology and assessments provides a basis to determine the ideological constructs represented. The emergence and maintenance of the BATSIS program over the last decade provides insights into the framing and codification of cultural difference positioned in both Western institutional and Indigenous constructs. This informs our mode of inquiry into the research topic and investigates the theoretical pedagogical models presented and implied in the course documents and how these are practised and recontextualised in the classroom.

History of the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

The Northern Territory University was established in 1989 following the amalgamation of the University College of the NT with the Darwin Institute of Technology. By 1990, the Division of Aboriginal Education became the Centre for
Aboriginal and Torres and Islander Studies (CAIS) situated in the NTU at Casuarina campus.

The early 1990s saw structural and directional changes to higher education in the Northern Territory. This was largely due to the Dawkins reforms in the late 1980s, the establishment of the AEP in the early 1990s and the relatively new status of the university situated in what is classified as a remote area of Australia. These changes saw a structural and focal shift in the Northern Territory University in the 1990s.

The emergence of the AEP at a national level had significant impact on the structural and directional changes at a local level at the University. This was a direct result of the federal government’s implementation of the AEP across Australia. For example, the Northern Territory University’s Strategic Plan outlined objectives and strategies for Aboriginal Education across the Territory for the 1990 to 1996 triennium. This was in accordance to each of the twenty one goals of the AEP discussed in Chapter Two and was to have major influence on the NTU’s future strategic direction regarding Indigenous higher education and Indigenous knowledge productions.

‘Goal 21’ from the AEP for instance, explicitly stated that it was important to “provide all Australian students with an understanding of, and respect for, Aboriginal tradition and contemporary cultures.” The importance of this goal was reflected in the strategic direction of the University with its new focus on Indigenous education. This is highlighted in the following quote:

[The NTU]... will have a special reputation in Aboriginal education, for teaching Aboriginal students in both mainstream and specially constructed programs, and for teaching Aboriginal skills and culture to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

(NTU, 1992)

Another significant goal identified in the AEP in the early 1990s, which was to also have an impact on NTU’s strategic direction, was the focus to increase Indigenous participation in higher education. Through CAIS, NTU incorporated provisions for academic support services where the focus of the centre was to encourage excellence in Indigenous studies and research and to develop a capacity for consulting work in Aboriginal education.
The University, in its Strategic Plan, also indicated a determination to improve education for disadvantaged groups, including Aborigines, and especially to see Higher Education and research into Aboriginal issues developed in CAIS. (Berzins and Loveday, 1999: 201)

These changes had a direct relationship to the national Aboriginal Education Policy as the implementations of this policy included firstly the development and support for an Indigenous Faculty and secondly the allocation of funds to encourage and ensure that these frameworks were adopted. For example, in 1993 a grant from the Department of Employment and Education Training (DEET) Priority Reserve Fund provided $500,000 for the curriculum development for a degree course in Aboriginal Studies. Also in that year Council approved that CAIS become a Faculty (Berzins and Loveday, 1999: 204).

**NTU and the Construction of Indigenous Knowledge Systems**

CAIS thus emerged as a Faculty in 1995 where it changed status from a Centre and became the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (FATSIS). The Faculty in a short time was to offer two new postgraduate programs, including the BATSIS undergraduate course.

Furthermore, the Commonwealth allocated $31.25 million over the 1990 to 1992 triennium in order to enable the Northern Territory Department of Education to implement the AEP strategies. In addition to this, funds were also directed to the following:

- Tutorial assistance to tertiary students according to the guidelines of the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS).
- To establish an Aboriginal committee made up of community representatives

These directional and funding changes shaped the operational and strategic planning for FATSIS. For example the 1996-1999 Strategic Plan (FATSIS 1996) document articulated its mission by stating that the
Faculty...endeavours to provide a culturally sensitive learning environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People...The Faculty also seeks to add to the advancement, elaboration, refinement, transmission and presentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) knowledge within the curriculum of its courses...

(FATSIS, 1996: 1)

The document also stated its values which included 'the importance of Indigenous knowledge and culture' and the 'involvement and responsiveness to the needs of ATSI communities' as key characteristics of the activities of the Faculty. These principle factors and others were to also guide the Faculty and were again explicitly noted in its Operational Plan 2002 (FATSIS, 2001).

The 'mission', 'aims', 'values', and 'principles' of the Faculty were again, in response to AEP policy. Specifically, Goal 3 of AEP recognized the need “to establish effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal students and community members in decisions regarding the planning, delivery, and evaluation of post-school education service, including technical and Further Education College, and higher education institutions.” This goal required tertiary institutions to develop specific strategies to encourage Aboriginal representation on their boards or councils. Both the NTU and FATSIS complied theoretically with this in organisational documentations discussed. This formal adherence to policy in institutional documentation legitimised the proposal of a BATSIS degree program. It appeared that the NTU now had an incentive to be inclusive in their Indigenous representation in higher education as it gave them direct access to funding sources.

The Emergence of the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Program

The environment in the early 1990s was therefore ripe for the development of a program such as BATSIS. In fact the initial proposal for a BATSIS program specifically stated that “the proposal was a direct outcome of the objectives and strategies set out in NTU's Strategic plan for CAIS 1992-1994 which was based on the directional recommendations of the National Aboriginal Education Policy...”

(FATSIS and Brown, 1994: 2)

The philosophy and rationale behind the 1995 BATSIS proposal was namely to promote and foster ‘knowledge with respect to Indigenous issues’. The proposal also
coincided with debates and discourses of the time in relation to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, the High Court Decision in the Mabo Case, Native Title debates, the emergence of Land Rights Legislation and the ongoing process of national reconciliation. In a sense there was a National urgency to develop Indigenous studies, increase Indigenous higher education involvement and create an awareness of Indigenous issues in Australian culture.

As well as being an educative tool to achieve greater awareness and understanding of ATSI people and issues by the general community, the course would play a significant role in providing for the educational, community resource, and research needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community itself.

(FATSIS and Brown, 1994)

"The Northern Territory University has the opportunity to lead Australia in Aboriginal teaching and research" (FATSIS and Brown, 1995: 11). It also stated the need to expand higher education activities at the institution.

An interesting note in the document plan points to the confusion in determining which 'sources pay for which services', as CAIS was then funded by technical and further education as well as higher education sources. The document highlights these administrative difficulties and calls for their urgent attention. Concern relating to the role and function of the management committee and its relationship to the Academic Board was also noted. "As a matter of urgency CAIS should pursue the establishment of an effective Aboriginal Advisory Committee; this will require consultation with the Vice-Chancellor" (FATSIS and Brown, 1994: 27).

The Centre for Aboriginal and Islander Studies (CAIS) according to the NTU's Strategic Plan has the "...role in the provision of technical and further education courses, enabling courses and assisting Aboriginal students enrolled in standard degree courses" (FATSIS, 1992). It was within this framework and environment that the degree program was to be proposed and developed.

**Institutionalising Indigenous Knowledge Systems**

The proposal was first presented in 1994 at the Joint Academic Planning and Courses Committee (JAPCC) and at the Academic Board. The first degree in Indigenous studies at NTU was accredited by these committees and offered to students of Indigenous and non-Indigenous backgrounds.
Predominantly, the course was streamed into the following majors. These specialisations continue to be represented in the course outlines.

- Contemporary Indigenous Issues;
- Yolngu Language and Culture;
- Indigenous Health and Community Development;
- Indigenous Arts and Media;
- Indigenous Resource Management;
- Indigenous Legal issues.

The current 2003 BATSIS program offered at the Faculty of Indigenous Research and Education (FIRE)\(^\text{15}\) has been reaccredited several times since its first introduction and its last accreditation was in September 2000. The documentation consisting of unit offerings, the Joint Academic Planning Committee (JAPC) endorsed structure of the course, assessment and methodological approaches as well as the rationale for the delivery again.

The following is a descriptive documentary of the course documents in relation to the need and rationale for the program. This process is useful in articulating definitive local constructs of Indigenous higher education and its relationship to the national framework. Highlighting these structures contribute to understanding the process of Indigenous knowledge productions in institutional organisations and assist in deconstructing the positionalities of pedagogic discourses within the BATSIS degree program.

**Rationale and Aims**

Public debate about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues has revealed a lack of knowledge of the social, historical and cultural background of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders and of the underlying issues concerning race relations.

(FATSIS, 2000b: 14)

The recognition of this lack is thus addressed in the BATSIS program so as to facilitate the development of community knowledge within these fields and offer students a variety of options and skills to address such “imbalance in access to resources and opportunities available to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders’

\(^{15}\) FATSIS officially changed its name at the end of 2002 to the Faculty of Indigenous Research and Education (FIRE)

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(FATSIS, 2000b). It seeks to respond to Indigenous communities and generate research needs in the disciplines of land and sea management, economic development, language, education and health service delivery. The accreditation documents explicitly state that BATSIS directly responds to NTU’s needs and plays a role in providing education programs, which support Indigenous and non-Indigenous needs to people seeking in-depth understanding of Indigenous Australian issues. It also identifies language maintenance as a high priority.

In addition, the course in particular aims to:

- “Provide a cultural and intellectual resource for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- Provide students with an understanding of and respect for Aboriginal tradition and contemporary cultures;
- Encourage students to be self-reflective of their attitudes and practices and to be appreciative of diversity in the context of a multicultural society;
- Prepare graduates to pursue their professions with awareness of the implications their activities may have in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait context;
- Offer an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective on, and critique of, subject matter and issues in traditional academic courses;
- Promote awareness and understanding of the socio-economic and political endeavours of Indigenous peoples in the context of international Indigenous struggles.”

(FATSIS, 2000b: 5)

The documents again record that the course is a direct outcome of the objectives and strategies set out in NTU’s Strategic Plan (CAIS 1992/94, based on the recommendations of the National Aboriginal Education Policy). In particular, the BATSIS course claims to fulfil a number of aims and objectives identified in the strategic direction of the university. Here it highlights one of the recommendations addressed in the NT Review\textsuperscript{16} of the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (this will be addressed in some detail later). As part of its rationale, the BATSIS course documents specifically point to the role and service delivery of FATSIS in the provisions of specialized units in Indigenous issues, history and culture as identified in the Faculty review.

\textsuperscript{16} FATSIS underwent a review in 1999 as part of a cycle of NTU’s ‘rationalisation’ of all of its faculties.

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Also, the rationale of the program\textsuperscript{17} claims to be grounded in NTU's Strategic direction in supporting Indigenous development, providing an integrated strategy between vocational education and higher education, providing flexible and open delivery of courses and maintaining cross-cultural awareness, an understanding in course delivery, student support and extra-curricular activities (FATSIS, 2000b: 13). The course documentations also state meeting the higher education strategy in a number of areas. A significant point made is that the role of "the curriculum and the teaching approaches applied in the delivery of the BATSIS are designed to be inclusive of students from a range of equity target groups." (FATSIS, 2000b: 13)

In meeting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy, BATSIS aimed to addresses a variety of objectives of Indigenous education at NTU by:

- "addressing aspects of equity and access to higher education…
- developing the quality and relevance of education to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- developing the opportunities for Indigenous people to be involved in a range of careers ...increase the Indigenous involvement in the delivery of units...
- providing improved linkages
- providing an opportunity for the development of tertiary literacy skills in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- preparing Indigenous students for post-graduate study…
- providing one of a range of opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People to develop an appreciation of their history, culture and identity."

(FATSIS, 2000b: 14)

\textbf{Articulating an Indigenous Pedagogic Framework}

An overview of methodological approaches to pedagogic practice is identified as incorporating a range of delivery styles subject to unit relevancy and resources. Delivery frameworks utilize workshops and practical experience to apply theoretical knowledge systems. Active participation is emphasised between students and community. "Significant input by local Indigenous community members and

\textsuperscript{17} The aim of the Faculty as stated in marketing pamphlets for this period was "to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with educational opportunities. The courses offered lead to either employment or mainstream Higher Education courses." and appointed a Ranger Chair in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies in May 1995 (FATSIS, 1996; Mortley, 1999). It was during this period that the BATSIS degree program was established under this new Faculty status.

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academics is an important component of ensuring that the delivery of the units is relevant and up to date...student knowledge and contribution is valued and encouraged where appropriate” (FATSIS, 2000b: 5).

Assessment descriptions focus on the acquisition of practical skills useful for employment within the region with the aim of acquiring an understanding of culture and the issues facing Indigenous people.

In summary, the formal document of the reaccreditation of BATSIS was endorsed by NTU in December 2000. Overall, the document articulates the need for a degree program pointing to national policy, strategic direction of the university and the higher education strategy. It highlights the importance of the degree program in providing a crucial role in education and training, and in supporting the needs of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in gaining an in-depth understanding of Indigenous issues. The document also addresses the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy where it addresses issues of access and equity, meeting Indigenous student needs, increasing Indigenous participation in higher education, providing linkages with Aboriginal communities, maintaining Indigenous knowledges amongst other provisions. It is important to note that the document does not explicitly state or identify an 'Indigenous pedagogy' used in the rationale, assessment, methodology nor delivery other than that the course ‘...will incorporate a range of delivery styles relevant to the subject material...' (FATSIS, 2000b).

The Effects of Ideology on Institutional Processes

As part of its decentralising and rationalising strategies, the NTU in 1999 undertook a review of FATSIS that was to have an impact on redefining the role of the Faculty and the position of the BATSIS program within the University. The Review’s terms of reference included the “assessment of academic and operational frameworks to identify initiatives and appropriate strategies to identify opportunities for improved operational efficiency and effectiveness” (NTU and Mortley, 1999). Other terms of reference included the raising of matters in relation to the position of the Faculty with other areas of the university in terms of its efficiency and effectiveness and to consider relevant matters important to the Faculty during the time of the review.

In the review findings and recommendations, the committee expressed the need for a Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and in the University’s role to
“develop, maintain and preserve the knowledge of Indigenous language, history, culture” as well as the need to “provide a place and focal point for a sense of Indigenous ownership and identity” (NTU and Mortley, 1999: 4). It recommended that the degree programs in the Faculty (BATSIS and Resource Management) be utilized as electives and common unit options across the university.

The report also highlighted financial difficulties, duplication of courses, schisms between the research and teaching sector, and differing views held by many regarding the role and focus of the Faculty.

On the decline of overall student enrolments in FATSIS, the Review stated that reasons from staff included the changes made to ABSTUDY, Youth Allowance, and limitation to travel entitlements and changes to living allowances.

In general the Abstudy [sic] argument is used as something of a pretext to explain the fall-off in enrolments which are far more significant in scale and scope than would be warranted by the Abstudy [sic] explanations. The situation is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have outgrown FATSIS as it is presently structured.

(NTU and Mortley, 1999: 6)

The documentation presented here in relation to the Review of FATSIS is crucial as it provides us with an overview of the contested domain of Indigenous pedagogic discourse as well as signifies the representation of Indigenous knowledge and education within the university. The review in a sense formalised the role of the Faculty in the area of Indigenous education and provided a change in direction related to perceptions of the nature of Indigenous pedagogy and its delivery outside of the Faculty. For example, in relation to ‘duplication’ of courses it was concluded that it would not be possible to reproduce entire curriculum with a specific Indigenous pedagogy and that it is not desirable to attempt to transfer Indigenous students out of curriculum offered in other Faculties around the university “in an attempt to offer a professional pedagogy specific to them only” (NTU and Mortley, 1999). On this subject, it was also noted that Indigenous students appear to have rejected such an approach ‘with three-quarters of them electing to enrol in the other professional and vocational Faculties across the university’.

The review report also noted that responses from various individuals included the “recognition of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogy and teaching
approach" (NTU and Mortley, 1999). It is significant to note was that the review committee contested this proposition by stating that it was:

not convinced that there was a strong case for this, beyond the view that there are always learning differences and always a variety of educational needs to which a university should respond.

(NTU and Mortley, 1999)

The report acknowledged that there were students who saw the Faculty as important and appreciated the services and accessibility to staff. However, there were other Indigenous students who ‘expressed indifference towards FATSIS and its facilities’ (NTU and Mortley, 1999).

Using BATSIS as a case study provides a constructive space to investigate pedagogic discourses within an institutional content in higher education. Contextualising BATSIS historically, culturally and socially establishes a framework where we can investigate mechanisms such as policy and their significant impact on institutional strategic direction, allocation of funds and the emergence of new curriculum in the form of the production of Indigenous knowledge at NTU.

This chapter has outlined in detail the theoretical model used in formulating an Indigenous course structure. The mapping of rationale, aims, methodology and assessment identified in course documents provides valuable modes of inquiry where we can examine the style of pedagogy that informs the curricula. Observations from these textual representations support the investigation of assumptions made regarding the institutionalisation of difference within a higher education context. How is difference framed and coded within such texts is a crucial element in understanding pedagogic implications that appear to be directed by political and organisational constructions of identity.

The examination of the BATSIS program is therefore central to the theoretical problematic of the research as it brings to prominence the productive nature of Indigenous representations of knowledges and identity as presented in the curriculum and as claimed by the course content. How is pedagogic discourse framed within an Indigenous program? Are issues of representation and recontextualisation of Indigenous knowledge productions and identity problematic? Do educational frameworks regulate learning and teaching experience? The case study also investigates how the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Degree
program (BATSIS) is conceptualised and recontextualised in terms of its cultural position at the Northern Territory University. I examine, in particular, whether the strategies employed confine difference to homogenised and essentialised domains. Specifically I explore the role of this ‘difference’ and the extent in which it is practiced in the current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program.

This is significant as it brings to the fore the interconnectedness of issues of Indigenous identity and culture represented in the curriculum bringing to prominence the productive nature of Indigenous representations and knowledges, thus underscoring the current problematic in current pedagogic practices.

In the next chapter, I explore the problematics outlined above in relation to the experiences of academics and students engaged in the BATSIS program examining issues of representation and the impact this has on identity, student outcomes and constructed notions of differences.
Chapter 6.
Pedagogy: Institutional Representations and the Contextualisation of Indigenous Knowledges

Chapter Five provided an overview of the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (BATSIS) program at the Faculty and described the formal rationale for the importance and inclusion of Indigenous knowledge systems at the Northern Territory University (NTU). It presented the case study of the BATSIS degree program. It also explored the historical and political development of the program by looking at national policy implications and the influence this had on the NTU’s strategic direction in formulating and articulating a discourse in Indigenous knowledge. The chapter also investigated the development of a FATSIS site and its role in formulating an Indigenous pedagogic framework.

Chapter Six on the other hand investigates pedagogy, institutional representations, and the contextualisation of Indigenous knowledges. There are two main sections to the chapter. In the first section, a description is provided of the formal structure and curriculum content of the BATSIS program. The theoretical concerns and analytic methods that informed the study are then explained by the presentation of documentary evidence. This is done through the analysis of the BATSIS curriculum content where unit descriptions of course materials are described. In the first section, particular focus is given to the descriptive objectives of unit outlines (see Appendix IV for further detail), assessment processes articulated (see Appendix V for specific detail of each unit assessment), and the pedagogic methodology applied (see Appendix VI for specific unit methodology outlined).

The second section in the chapter outlines the practical application of pedagogic practice as experienced by staff and students at the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. This is followed by an analysis of the themes in the transcriptions, emerging from the interview data collected from Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and students.
Part A: Formal Structure and Curriculum Content

The BATSIS program is not unlike many undergraduate programs in structure. Core, prerequisite and elective units\(^{18}\) are its essential features. It is a three-year full time course and operates under the Bachelors' Degree Common rules (see Charles Darwin University Website). Like other degrees, the BATSIS program also articulates into postgraduate studies. The BATSIS program is organised under six ‘streams’ made up of units that focus on particular specialisations (see Appendix IV for specific unit description). The ‘streams’ include the following specialisations:

- Yolngu Language and Culture
- Indigenous Arts and Media
- Contemporary Indigenous Issues
- Indigenous Legal Issues
- Indigenous Health and Community Development
- Indigenous Resource Management\(^{19}\)

Overall the BATSIS program "endeavours to establish the issues of Indigenous knowledges in the repository of knowledges in Universities". It therefore "offers an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective and critique of subject matter dealing with past and evolving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander society and culture" (see FATSIS, 2002).

Core Units in the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (BATSIS)

Table 1.3: There are four core units offered at the introductory level that are compulsory for all students undertaking the BATSIS degree program\(^{20}\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS100</td>
<td>Introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS101</td>
<td>Introduction to Aboriginal History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS102</td>
<td>Introductory Torres Strait Islander History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRS100</td>
<td>Contested Knowledges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{18}\) A unit is a higher education subject focusing on specific content areas and is awarded the equivalent of 10-credit points on successful completion.

\(^{19}\) This stream has not been included in the survey and in the analysis of course material as it is part of another degree program and is not the scope of this case study

\(^{20}\) Students can choose to do the equivalent of these units offered in external mode through Open Learning Australia (OLA)

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Each of the core units deals with particular disciplinary areas; however, the overall aim is to provide students with an introductory understanding of Indigenous viewpoints in various social, cultural, historical and economic contexts.

CAS 100 presents a broad range of topics and overview of contemporary issues in Indigenous societies. It also encourages the development of knowledge of Indigenous pre and post-contact history. Unit descriptions state that the unit explores issues at the interface of Indigenous and non-Indigenous societies.

CAS 101 provides students with an introduction to Australian historical issues relating to Indigenous peoples. The focus is on 'hidden histories', myths, settlement and nationhood and their political and social implications. It also looks at the historical representations of Indigenous peoples. Issues of identity and factors impacting on current societies are also analysed.

The CRS 100 unit is situated in the Resource Management degree program and is also a requirement for students undertaking a BATSIS degree program. It attempts to provide an understanding of the contingent nature of knowledge systems. Historical Western scientific traditions, as well as dominant knowledge systems, are examined in relation to resource management issues. It looks at notions of local, global and universal knowledge in the discourse of Western scientific traditions. It also presents issues of different cultural and historical contexts to create awareness of cultural histories and impacts on maintenance of local resources.

CAS 102 examines the relationship between Torres Strait Islander peoples’ perspectives of history with that of non-Torres Strait Islander people. The unit also analyses the features of Torres Strait Islanders society and the historical forces that have shaped it. Traditional histories and contact histories prior to colonisation are examined along with colonial impact on lifestyle.

All the core units have assessable items that include participation, tutorial presentation and an essay, with the exception of CRS 100 that has an exam. Two of the core units do not specify the percentages allocated to assessment items. However, CAS 100/101 allocate ten percent for attendance and participation and between thirty and forty percent for the essay. Fifty percent is allocated for tutorial presentations in CAS 100 compared to only twenty percent for CAS 102; however, twenty percent is allocated to workshops for the latter unit.
The core units all feature lectures, tutorials and/or seminars in their delivery of the content material. CAS101 specifically state that lectures and/or workshops are to be delivered by Indigenous people. The CRS100 unit description of the methodology describes the use of a combination of resources, including the World Wide Web.

**BATSIS Specialised Streams**

**Indigenous Health and Community Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS170</td>
<td>Introduction to Indigenous Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS280</td>
<td>Indigenous Health Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS370</td>
<td>Indigenous Health and Self Determination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS375</td>
<td>Indigenous Health Independent Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS376</td>
<td>Indigenous Health Independent Research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall the content in the Indigenous Health Units focus on the development of frameworks to address Indigenous issues. In particular, emphasis is placed in each of the units on identifying and analysing political, social, economic, historical and cultural factors that impact on Indigenous health. This is stressed in all the unit descriptions, including the independent research units. The units also focus on the relationship of Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews to provide an overview of the discourse of Indigenous Health issues. These include concepts such as self-determination, community control, social justice and community development processes.

The assessments of units in this stream consist of a combination of tutorial presentations, essay and participation. The percentages for each item of assessments do not appear on the unit descriptors. Independent study and research units are assessed through the presentation of one major essay.

Lectures, tutorial, seminars and or workshops are the features of all the health units in this stream, with the focus on ‘face to face’ delivery as the primary methods employed. No other methods are described in the unit descriptions.

**Contemporary Indigenous Issues**

The focus of this stream is centred on contemporary social, cultural and political issues to do with Indigenous identity and representations within the dominant discourse. The units examine notions of self-determination, Indigenous knowledge systems, organisational structures and colonialism. The units also aim to provide an Indigenous perspective on social, cultural and historical matters (for example, see Mona El-Ayyubi MA Research Thesis 87).
The scope encompasses a wide variety of issues from sustainable ecology with kinship to education and technology. Generally the units aim to present students to socio-economic and political issues affecting Indigenous populations. Some of the units, such as ‘Indigenous Socio-economic Issues,’ emphasise comparative perspectives to do with regional and international perspectives.

The independent research units aim to provide students with practical skills and develop understandings of government departments and organisations including other political and economic institutions. These research units allow students to focus on particular areas of interest to examine a variety of issues including traditional cultural, historical and socio-political/economic contexts in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. They aim to examine how these factors have impacted on contemporary Indigenous issues.

The introductory levels of units in this stream are assessed through the submission of a combination of assessable items including tutorial participation and presentation as well as essays. CAS101 is the only unit in this stream that does not specify the percentage of the assessments. However, units at this level generally allocate twenty percent to participation and attendance, twenty percent for tutorial presentation, twenty percent for workshops and forty percent for essays. The exception to this is the unit CAS204 that allocates forty percent to tutorial presentation. This is significantly higher than the other units in this stream.

The advanced units in this stream allocate forty percent for the essay and a variation in the percentage proportion allocated for workshop papers, where one unit (CAS316) allocates sixty percent for various workshop activities and another (CAS350) allocates ten percent for workshop and ten percent for attendance and participation.

The independent study unit consists of a seventy percent report and thirty percent essay whilst the research unit comprises of a one hundred percent paper.

The main and consistent methodological features under this stream include the use of lectures, tutorial and or seminars, with Indigenous representation as lecturers, guest speakers and the facilitation of workshops for the delivery of the content. The exception to this is CAS316, which is delivered in external print mode.
### Yolngu Language and Culture

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS110</td>
<td>Introduction to Yolngu Language and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS111</td>
<td>Yolngu Languages and Culture II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS205</td>
<td>Yolngu Life and Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS206</td>
<td>Yolngu Matha Conversation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS305</td>
<td>Yolngu Texts and Conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS311</td>
<td>Yolngu Languages and Culture: Independent Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS312</td>
<td>Yolngu Language and Culture: Independent Research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall this stream aims to provide understanding of written and oral fluency of Yolngu languages including grammar and functional reading and vocabulary. Three year level units provide further development of reading and writing skills including advanced conversational and story telling skills. They further develop skills of analysis and discussion of Yolngu narratives. Units also aim to develop skills in translation, interpretation and conversation in Yolngu languages. They examine Yolngu knowledges including various aspects of kinship and moiety systems as well as song, ceremonies and paintings. Overall units at all levels teach issues of land, history, philosophy and science produced by Yolngu writers and storytellers. Some units (CAS110/111) stipulate that it does not simply use “anthropological and linguistic approaches, as this does not do justice to the Yolngu world of experience” (see Appendix IV).

The higher-level units are said to develop skills in the negotiation, elicitation, recording interpretation and transcription of Yolngu texts as well as to extend students understandings of Yolngu knowledge.

The Independent research units aim to develop research interest in Yolngu language and provide in-depth training to include negotiation between communities and non-Indigenous culture. The independent research units aim to provide students with the opportunity to develop and implement co-operative projects between Yolngu and non-Yolngu researchers to benefit both communities and provide practical experience in applying skills developed through the Yolngu Language and Culture stream.

All the introductory level units in this stream do not include an essay as an assessable item. First year subjects allocate ten percent for attendance and participation whilst second year subject allocate twenty percent and third year subjects allocate thirty percent. At the introductory level the percentage allocated to tutorial presentations range from thirty to sixty percent with one unit allocating forty-five percent.
A significant proportion is allocated to workshop activities and these range from forty-five to ninety percent.

The research units consist of the submission of a project valued at one hundred percent.

Predominately, delivery in this stream takes place in small groups with 'class instructions' being the features. Resources such as CD ROM programmes and audio visual aids are also employed. The focus here is on language practice including pronunciation and story-telling activities. CAS205/CAS305 utilise Indigenous staff who are 'first language speakers.'

**Indigenous Arts and Media**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS160</td>
<td>Introduction to Black Australian Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS265</td>
<td>Culture, Communication and Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS325</td>
<td>Black Australian Life Stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS361</td>
<td>Indigenous Arts and media: Independent Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS362</td>
<td>Indigenous Literature, Arts and Media: Independent Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS365</td>
<td>Voice, Texts and pictures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The units under this stream examine a variety of topics and issues relevant to the Arts. Units in the Arts focus such as CAS225 examine the value of music in traditional Aboriginal society. It also investigates the development of Aboriginal music and examines historical influences that have helped to shape Aboriginal contemporary life. Other units (CAS229) stipulate the provision of providing a learning environment to develop insights in Aboriginal art, music, media, dance, arts and craft and the maintenance of language. This learning framework is to provide experience and critical analysis in working in organisations and communities to promote and maintain Indigenous culture and well-being.

The literature units under this stream provide a historical overview of Aboriginal writings so as to generate discourse on social, political and cultural implications of Aboriginal authors. They also look at issues of human rights as expressed by the authors. Written media is studied to promote acknowledgement of Aboriginal historical well-being and to look at expression of cultural deprivation. Other aspects of story telling are examined in the literature. Another focus under the literature topic is to introduce critical theory of biography and autobiography by using a range of approaches, with the main focus being the consideration of 'Black Australian Life Stories'. Constructions of identity and the processes of production are other elements examined.
The media units intend to introduce students to a variety of cultural studies approaches to Aboriginal use of contemporary communication media. They examine issues such as land rights, education, politics, health and socio-economics and look at the dissemination of information and various other cultural materials. They aim to critically analyse media functions and forums to raise important Aboriginal issues. Units under this topic also intend to create an appreciation of Aboriginal culture and well-being and worldview in relation to Aboriginal understanding of history since colonisation.

The independent research units allow individual study and research in Indigenous arts and media to extend students knowledge base as well as providing an opportunity for in depth understandings of the chosen area of study so as to prepare for further research awards. They also aim to provide students with developing skills in critical analysis of data and literature to critique production modes, such as social, historical, political, and economic, and their cultural implications to contemporary media. Theoretical considerations of Aboriginal cultural and historical productions are examined as well as exploring the European forms and techniques used. They also provide students with experience in writing a mini thesis. Again Independent research units such as CAS362 explicitly state that they 'promote enquiry and analysis into theories and construct relating to discourses of Indigenous media, arts or media'.

All units at a one hundred and two hundred level in this stream allocate twenty percent to participation and attendance with the exception of CAS265, which only allocates ten percent. Units at every level assign forty percent to tutorial presentation. Only one unit in this stream includes workshops as assessable items (CAS325). Forty percent is allocated to essays at one hundred, two hundred and three hundred levels with the exception of CAS365, which allocates sixty percent.

The independent study unit places seventy percent value on a report and a thirty percent value on an essay, while the research unit comprises of one hundred percent essay.

Lectures, tutorial and or seminar presentations are the major delivery modes of this stream. Two units (CAS265 and CAS225) do not specify delivery or methodology. CAS160 highlights interaction with Aboriginal writers as a methodological feature as does CAS365, stating explicitly workshops involving 'Aboriginal authors, producers,
directors, etc.' The internship unit specifies the use of action research methods and the participation of daily operations within a chosen organisational area.

**Indigenous Legal Issues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAS285</th>
<th>Indigenous People and the Law</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS380</td>
<td>Sociology of Indigenous Law Ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS381</td>
<td>Indigenous Legal Issues: Independent Study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The issues presented in the unit descriptions under this stream include legal and judicial concepts that maintain law and order in Indigenous society, particularly in North Australia. The law and practice of Aboriginal interaction with non-Aboriginal legal system in relation to international, constitutional, family and criminal law is also a focus. The examination of Indigenous legal systems under non-Indigenous law is another element of this stream.

The independent research unit provides students with the opportunity to do individual work on various aspects of Indigenous interaction with non-Indigenous legal systems in Australia so as to extend knowledge and in-depth understanding of the area. The emphasis is on critical analysis of social, political or cultural factors that impact on Aboriginal well-being, community development or human rights issues. The units also aim to develop independent research skills in preparation for further studies in the discipline.

The only unit that allocates value to attendance and participation (ten percent) as well as tutorial presentation (thirty percent) is CAS380. The two others allocate one hundred percent to an essay, with the former unit assigning forty percent to this.

Lectures, tutorials and/or seminars are the methodologies employed within this stream. There are no other methodological features described.

All independent study and research units within each of the streams describe methodological approaches that focus on independent/individual work as well as the appointment of a supervisor.

In conclusion, this section has provided an overview of the specialised streams within the BATSIS program. It has also presented detailed descriptions of individual units as outlined in the course documents, with focus on unit objectives and descriptions, assessment processes and the methodology applied.
Part B: The Practical Application of Pedagogic Practice from Experience

This section is structured under thematic headings where I look at how Indigenous Knowledges in curricula are produced and analysed and the extent of Indigenous participation in this knowledge production. The teaching and learning experience, as well as the methodological approaches are also presented from the viewpoints of the participants. I explore the extent of learning differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and examine how identity may impact on the level of participation in the classroom. I investigate institutional Indigenous representation at both a macro and micro level by examining the construction of identity as perceived by staff and students from various cultural sites and positions.

The experience of participants is described in some detail (see Appendix VIII). This is central to the theoretical problematic of the research and brings prominence to the perceived productive and the recontextualised nature of Indigenous representations of knowledges in pedagogic practices.

Indigenous Knowledges in Curricula

This sub-section describes and interprets the viewpoints presented by the ten subjects interviewed including academics and students in relation to the importance of Indigenous knowledges in the curricula.

Consistently, the majority of subjects interviewed stated the importance of Indigenous knowledges in the program. Seventy percent of respondents explicitly stated the very importance of Indigenous knowledges within the BATSIS program. One subject offered no direct response whilst two others implied importance without directly stating it as such.

Academic Responses

For one Indigenous academic, Indigenous knowledge was described as ‘critical’ because it allowed academics and the Faculty to present:

Indigenous point of views that is not written, this becomes critical because a lot of balandas have written about Indigenous knowledge systems

(IA2: P. 48, L.23-27)
Another Indigenous academic stated the ‘paramount’ importance of Indigenous knowledges in that they ‘can’t be profiled high enough’. This participant compares the representation of knowledge at NTU with another Southern institution and suggests that:

"Even if it is tokenistic, at least it’s accepted here [NTU] that Indigenous knowledge is valid and can be currency. Whereas it’s been my experience at Southern University that they don’t even have a concept of what I’m trying to articulate when I talk about the acknowledgement of Indigenous knowledges and Indigenous ways to teaching. It’s new; they don’t want to know what it means."

(IAS: P. 89, L. 17-21)

The legitimisation, validity and the presentation of Indigenous knowledges appear to play a significant role in presenting historical and contemporary issues within the BATSIS program for the above subjects. This point is further stressed in the following quote by another academic participant:

"One of the major issues of course is to provide the consensus of Indigenous viewpoints in it (BATSIS). That sometimes becomes exceptionally difficult because that is not in the literature. To rely solely on what you believe, common knowledge, I guess, is the easiest way to say it. I think in terms of general political, and in terms of general social thrust and conversations and issues in this point of time. So that, [in] developing those programs, it is necessary to project that, because that is embedded in the notion of Indigenous knowledge. When you look at knowledge systems- to give Indigenous point of views is not about what’s written - it becomes critical because a lot of Balandas have written about Indigenous knowledge systems -.... one of the things is to scan issues about how Indigenous knowledge is generated and projected - this relies on the issues of feelings and that’s fairly important."

(IA2: Prv. 48, L. 18-28)

This Indigenous academic discussed the historical perceptions of Indigenous knowledge systems at the University:

"You see, no one really I don’t think, kind of had a notion of what you did with Indigenous knowledges or Indigenous knowledge systems or trying to redirect discussions with Aboriginal people which is basically what it is, now I think one of the major issues was who was to teach the Indigenous knowledge."
It doesn't necessarily mean that the subject matter had to be only taken from texts written by Indigenous people/s or that it is presented in such a way that one would assume a "discipline" of Indigenous knowledge. It is this issue which in the long run will engage Indigenous knowledge theorists in being able to determine a corpus of knowledge which has the ilk of the Indigenous. This of course may eventuate in the coding system of knowledge as history, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, etc.

(IA2: Prv. 54, L. 17-27)

An important consideration raised by the above Indigenous academic was that, historically, Indigenous programs had been marginalised and that the importance of developing a program such as BATSIS was to set up institutional processes so that the critical issue of Indigenous knowledge could be presented within a degree structure in a Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. This, they suggest, is significant because it would cease to marginalise Indigenous knowledge that were taught by disciplines such as Anthropology, and pre-history programs and so forth. (see IA2: Prv. 53, L. 33-45).

However, for another Indigenous academic, not only did Indigenous knowledges play an 'extremely important' role in the curriculum of BATSIS program, but it was also important to reflect Indigenous content and contexts as well:

Ninety percent of the content is Indigenous. The readings are all by Indigenous people because it is extremely important (to present) an Indigenous perspective, they can read about what Indigenous people say about Indigenous issues and that is really important. It also brings out differences too, Indigenous people say things that are different, so not only in respect to what Indigenous people say about themselves but also the differences that often mirror domains between Indigenous people themselves. They have diverse views and that's really important too, to have that.

(IA4: P. 70, L. 33-40)

Although one non-Indigenous academic provided no direct response to the importance of Indigenous Knowledge in the curricula, the response does imply importance but differs in comparison to Indigenous responses. For example,
The key point in a sense, I guess, in terms of Aboriginal knowledge and the curriculum, is that knowledge is owned by people and it's expressed in the language that relates to the knowledge itself and that the knowledge and the language relate to particular areas of land and that they are sort of political principle that comes out of the ... philosophy...

(NA1: P. 12, L. 33-38)

Student Responses

Student responses conveyed the importance of Indigenous Knowledges in recognising alternative worldviews and gaining an understanding of Indigenous issues as well as strengthening Knowledges. For example, one non-Indigenous student states that:

... it's just really important to value other people's way of understanding the world because you've got to understand that there are limitations to whatever framework you use, and so you can utilise as many of them as possible...

(NS4: P. 42, L. 22-25)

This student also acknowledges the complexities of knowledge and addresses the significance of addressing the issues in some detail as opposed to just acknowledging that knowledge systems exist.

... knowledge is so highly contextualised that if you take it from North East Arnhem land and try and deposit in Darwin, I don't know if it would really work. I would like to see more of a focus on analysing what those frames of understandings actually are rather than acknowledging that they exist.

(NS4: P. 42, L. 36-39)

For Indigenous students, Indigenous knowledges in the BATSIS program were also recognised as important because they supported students' learning. For example, one student states that Indigenous knowledge:

...has deepened my knowledge of Indigenous issues across Australia and across the world rather than my own Indigenous background.

(IS3: P.26, L. 26-28)

Another student articulates how this knowledge has supported their understanding of self and identity. The subject declares:
I’ve taken most of the Indigenous units because I am trying to learn about my Indigenous background. I think that’s something that is really important for me. I’ve come to realise that only in the last couple of years and I feel like if I am going to move on, if I’m going to accept who I am I’m going to have to learn and therefore I decided this is how I thought I’d go about it.

(IS5: P. 78, L. 9-12)

It’s been really good; it’s a bit funny I guess - Some people ask why don’t you ask your family [about Indigenous knowledges], ...I can learn with other Indigenous people and try to get their perspective and try to go through it together.

(IS5: P. 78, L. 16-18)

The subject also highlights the importance of playing a role in correcting the misunderstandings and the homogenisation of Indigenous knowledges in the classroom.

...I’ve done a lot of units this semester on Indigenous issues, sometimes it’s very funny to hear non-Indigenous people talking about Indigenous issues, and most of the time, just to get it correct, or so that they know the whole story you usually have to speak... For example, Indigenous people being grouped into one, one Aboriginal, one clan or something like that. You have to make it clear that you know there is many and not all one...

(IS5: P. 79, L. 48-51)

For this student, Indigenous knowledges play a 'very important' and 'very comforting' role in the curriculum because “... Its comforting to know that issues like this are being discussed and people are understanding and they’re knowing... that should be done more” (IS5: P. 80, L. 8-11).

Over all, the majority of respondents perceive the importance of the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge systems within curricula in the higher education program. Significant is the point made by a number of academics in relation to the presentation of Indigenous studies within a Western institutional framework. This they state legitimises and formalises the discipline and provides a space to theorise Indigenous knowledge, present it from an Indigenous perspective and to teach both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in the field. Students both Indigenous and non-Indigenous highlighted the need for Indigenous perspectives and voice within the academy.
Indigenous Knowledge Productions

This section deals with questions raised with all participants in relation to the incorporation of Indigenous knowledges in curricula. It also deals with getting viewpoints on the process of the production of Indigenous knowledge systems to ascertain from respondents their understandings regarding how knowledge is constructed or produced, how and by whom. The notion of ‘production’ was clarified in these terms to respondents. The differing positions and viewpoints regarding the construction of Indigenous knowledge by academics for the curriculum presented and described below:

Overall, sixty percent of subjects (thirty percent students and thirty percent academics) stated that Indigenous knowledges were incorporated well in the curriculum. Twenty percent said both ‘Yes and No’ whilst ten percent ‘did not know’.

When participants were asked to comment on their knowledge of the process in the production of Indigenous knowledges in the curricula in which they were teaching or learning, the responses between the students and academics varied widely. For example, thirty percent of students claimed that they did not know how this knowledge was produced and twenty percent (one Indigenous and one non-Indigenous) clearly stated that this knowledge was produced from ‘personal perspective’ where they give an example of one BATSIS unit that conveyed this process in the classroom.

Considering that the reproduction of knowledge for curricula has traditionally been the domain of academics, the responses in relation to this were generally more detailed, with only one participant who was not in a position to respond as the participant had been at the institution for a short period of time.

Academic Responses

It appears that the role of academics and the process of Indigenous knowledge productions for curriculum within the BATSIS program is a contested zone where opinions differ and contradict one another, as we shall see in the responses below. However, an interesting point that is raised in relation to process is the legitimation of this knowledge within a university framework. This point is highlighted by a non-
Indigenous academic but was echoed in earlier discussions by an Indigenous academic regarding the place for Indigenous knowledges within universities.

**Non-Indigenous Response**

I would describe the process as being one of trying to find ways of authenticating Indigenous epistemologies and practices within the rubric of traditional university degree structure, which depends in a way upon a quite a foreign epistemology of content and transmissions. So that in a way, what we've been trying to do is implant [Indigenous] philosophies of knowledge and representation and all the sorts of rules and protocols that they imply with the whole credentialising process that's at work in a development of a university degree...there is possibly of almost duplicidness in there, where you're trying to do two things at once or you're trying to do one thing and make it look like something different.

(NA1: P.11, L. 25-37)

It is interesting to note at this point that the participant recognises the dominant constructs which exists in institutions and the need to construct Indigenous knowledges to fit within this framework. Important too in the point made about 'authenticating' and 'credentialising' Indigenous epistemologies and practices into a context that differs in both content and transmission to that of Indigenous structures. The participant also suggests below that there is room for integration of Indigenous knowledges within the university as this is recognised a high priority by the institution.

But I think that the university is big enough and flexible enough to allow for that and I think that certainly the fact that the university's charter states quite publicly and at quite a high level, that the integration of Indigenous knowledges enter the work of the university as a high priority, probably means that we've got quite a bit of flexibility to explore those sorts of ideas.

(NA1: P.11, L. 25-37)

One participant with much experience in the development of Indigenous curricula and in higher education also noted the compliance that is needed in developing content in a university institution where specific dominant structures are set in place which adhere to policy and protocol. This participant also claims that both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people were instrumental in producing Indigenous knowledges for the BATSIS program. The participant claims that:
The Advisory Committee decided on the main ‘policy’ thrust of the content for the specific units and the overall design of the degree structure though this was promulgated by the senior academic Indigenous staff and relevant academic staff, both Indigenous and Balanda, designed the unit outlines. We had to produce curriculum information in the design format as set by the University. The reason for that of course is locked into that codification system that exists in universities which require standard format for curriculum submissions.

(IA2: Prv.52, L. 4-11)

Other participants who supported the view of a collaborative and consultative process of Indigenous knowledge production included non-Indigenous academics, who stated that their role was to work with other non-Indigenous academics in the development of units in the higher education program. One of these participants continually highlighted their collaboration with Indigenous advisors in the production of materials for their specialised stream in the BATSIS. The respondent gives the example of a unit that she/he developed in order to "implant an alternative epistemology or a sort of contested epistemology into the overall academic traditional academic structure of a university degree" (NA1: P. 11, L. 15-17). This participants' role in the process was to:

set up a group of advisors, (one of the advisors became the lecturer) and I formalised the arrangements for the negotiation and the supervision of the content, and the protocols as to what ought to be taught and how they ought to be taught.

(NA1: P. 12, L. 16-19)

The role also included the functional development of everyday pedagogic practice where the participant was responsible for strategies and approaches. For example, they were to:

set up [program] and then to work out how to approach it on a week by week basis, then to work with an [Indigenous academic] so that she did the lectures and developed regimes of assessment and feedback and then diversify from your basic introductory things to research base things to conversationally based units...

(NA1: P. 12, L. 40-43).

On whether other BATSIS streams were also constructed in this manner and ensured that Indigenous knowledge is negotiated in terms of curriculum, a non-Indigenous responded by saying:
I confess I don't know ... But I imagine that in fact there's nothing particular about language that implies an Indigenous epistemology. I think that it would depend a lot on the style of teaching of the person that taught it and it would also depend a lot, I think, on the constituency of the student population, if there were a lot of Indigenous students I think you would end up with treating subjects in a different way. I'm not sure, but I think that certainly in so far as the different ways in which Indigenous people hold their knowledge, I imagine that they are recognised and to a certain extent foregrounded I would hope by most of the streams in BATSIS.

(NA1: P. 12 L. 45 and P. 13, L. 1-6)

Another non-Indigenous academic also stressed on a number of occasions the collaborative process of their experience in the development of Indigenous knowledge in another stream in a differing specialisation. NA3, for instance, stated that consultation between the non-Indigenous community and the Indigenous community took place to determine the need for a higher education program. Course development was undertaken by Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics (see, NA3: P. 55, L. 44-52 and P. 56, L. 8-26). He/she also stated that non-Indigenous academics developed a concept proposal and this was scrutinised by Indigenous academics. Concept proposals were then sent around Australia for comment and feedback, and then final documents were produced (see, NA3: P. 56, L. 19-26).

A non-Indigenous academic participant developed a unit for another higher education program within the Faculty that was also used as a core unit in the BATSIS program. This academic participant states that this unit:

underpins everything that the rest of the degree is based on so that you can get people thinking about knowledge contestations and different knowledge systems rather than within it. It sets the contexts for a lot of the other stuff that happens in the degree which is, which can be probably construed as being a lot more straight sciences, straight social theory and stuff.

(NA3: P. 56, L. 46-49)

Like NA1, NA3 was also reluctant to comment on whether this process was consistent with other streams within the BATSIS program. Instead NA3 claimed peripheral involvement in the curriculum development of BATSIS program.
...my job in developing the curriculum for BATSIS was really offering to do the writing up of materials so it can get through the accreditation. Because it was during that period of time where things lapsed and the University accreditation people were saying do something or else you will lose the degree...I didn’t really actually have any content or philosophical sort of input into it...

(NA3: P. 57, L.2-7)

Indigenous Voices

In comparison to the above non-Indigenous views, most Indigenous academics interviewed discussed the need for Indigenous voices and for direct participation in the production of knowledge for the BATSIS program. Comments such as ‘just as another contributor’, or ‘observer’ were predominant in their response to involvement in the production of Indigenous knowledges. In addition there were strong responses highlighted such as “It was run more by the Associate Deans or the Heads of Schools...They engineered and directed the traffic. They were non-Indigenous” (IAS: P. 85, L.11-13).

I thought there were [was] far too much non-Indigenous input and it was directed by some very strong –and one in particular person with the Indigenous knowledge but I think it was still guided by a lot of non-Indigenous thought and concepts.

(IAS: P. 95, L. 17-19)

I still worry about how much involvement there [was] from non-Aboriginal people. Even if they were acting on behalf of us, I just didn’t think there was enough Indigenous voice.

(IAS: P. 95, L. 29-31)

Although this academic was a representative on the BATSIS Advisory Committee, he/she felt this involvement was limited and only paid ‘lip service’ to Indigenous involvement and was therefore not very comprehensive.

To put it in a cynical way, it’s that feeling of tokenism that I often get in academia about having that Aboriginal voice. It doesn’t matter if they contribute or offer much in the way of development. But it’s important to say at the end that we had this Indigenous person involved, we had that one, its just ticking off. I feel very strongly about that!

(IAS: P. 85, L. 23-26)

The participant acknowledges that, although he/she was initially the only Indigenous person on the committee, this later changed where members of the community were invited (Larakia) with other Indigenous academics but that this was not on a
consistent basis. The Centre for Indigenous Natural and Cultural Resource Management (CINCRM) was also involved (IA4: See P. 85 and 86, 1-6). This participant also suggests that he/she hoped their involvement was of value and helped to build the program. "I mean I managed to get some ideas across, I don't know if they were accepted and taken on, you know just giving me lip service, I'm hoping that some of them were seen as valid comment" (IA5: P. 85, L. 42-44).

It is interesting to note that this participant also had involvement in the production of curriculum at a southern university and on comparing experience with NTU suggested: "I'm working again in that same situation with more non-Indigenous people" (IA5: P. 86, L. 31), thus hinting that this 'exclusion' was not particular to NTU.

This participant continues to articulate frustration with development processes that incorporate inappropriate content under the guise of Indigenous knowledge systems. The example that is given is the inappropriateness of classifying 'coloured people' from different cultures as having knowledge about Indigenous theory and Indigenous content. On Indigenous knowledge constructions in higher education programs, IA5 states:

...we are teaching this in Australia and we are teaching this in an Indigenous Australian program, so I'd like to think it reflects the Indigenous people of this country. When I said that, why don't we introduce some Aboriginal theorists into here, ... one of the people said 'but who are they'?

(IA5: P. 87, L. 40-44)

I'm not dismissing those other theorists; it's the same with Sociology when I did Sociology back in my undergraduate years, the whole idea of having to rely on concepts and theories from ...ancient theorists who are probably not relevant to our time and space. ... I'm talking about Marx and other theorists and all those Sociologists that emerged. I'm thinking why are we hanging on their every word? Why does Aboriginal education have to follow the traditional academic ways of looking at theory? I think we've got this exciting opportunity to develop something else. That's ok, white fellas can react to that and develop their stuff, but we see it very differently.

(IA5: P. 87, L. 3-11)

When asked if there was room for both, the response was that 'comparative analysis was 'really important' (see P. 88, L. 18-23). Implied here is the significance of
incorporating an Indigenous and Western viewpoints of theory and discipline as this provided scope for presentation of both perspectives and thus provided space for analysis of the two.

The experience of another Indigenous participant in Indigenous knowledge production for curriculum has also been designated as being in an 'advisory' capacity. On the specific process of this, participant says “... we talked about how it should be developed, how it should be, what are things that we wanted to see, what and how do we see things and so there were a lot discussions…”(IA4: P. 68, L. 14-16).

Like the previous participant, IA4 proposes the need for direct Indigenous involvement so as to offer alternative knowledge systems written by Indigenous voices and experiences. He/she professes that:

... we really need Indigenous perspectives, to get Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum we need to have what Indigenous people say about themselves rather than what white people say about Indigenous people. I think (that) a lot of courses; Indigenous courses are really about what white people say about Indigenous people. This is the kind of stuff that we challenge...

(IA4: P. 68, L. 49-52, and P. 69, L. 1-2)

**Student Responses**

It is important to note that the following comments and reflections from a non-Indigenous student who has undergraduate experience from another southern university, as criticism is voiced about the lack of input by Indigenous academics in their experience at FATSIS.

One student participant comments on his/her NTU experience and the lack of knowledge he/she has on the construction and production of Indigenous knowledge in developing curriculum by stating:

I don’t know what the process is when you’re developing a program. I don’t even know who actually decides the curriculum let alone developing it. I think people need to be aware about that, what actually is delivered in the curriculum content, in the course. I think that’s really important. I don’t think anybody would know if you ask them something about ...decision making how curriculum and content [is constructed], I don’t think they’d know.

(IS1: P. 7, L. 29-35)
Another student compares the process with experience from another institution and states that units at a southern university clearly articulated Aboriginal Terms of References (ATR) which:

...were really excellent, they were all taught by Indigenous people and they had an ATR, and that's why I'm a bit confused, I'm not sure whether this Faculty has, an Aboriginal Terms of Reference and it was compiled by Darling Oxenham. ... It was like the ethics and protocols of the way non-Indigenous and Indigenous domains teach one another and practitioners and stuff.

(NS2: P. 18, L. 41-45)

This student asserts the importance of ATR in providing a framework for understanding specific Indigenous cultural contexts, learning methodologies, outcomes achieved and how Indigenous studies are taught. The participant suggests that expectations are spelt out and defined clearly at the beginning. The student passionately makes the following statement in relation to this:

It completely sets the cultural boundaries and cross-cultural contexts in the way of learning and everything and the way the knowledge is taught and how it's been taught.

(NS2: P. 18, L. 49-51)

This student suggests that Faculty FATSIS units did not cover this element through an introductory unit as did the southern university, where a specific program was developed to ensure that the process and the production of Indigenous knowledges was understood and clarified to students (see, NS2: P. 9, L. 4). The program was called

Indigenous Identity and Representation' and that introduced the entire [framework], this is how you respect this culture and it was a complete introduction to the academic study of Indigenous learning and non-Indigenous learning...I think that is really crucial. Like everyone should do that unit before they even undertake any other Indigenous issues or topics.

(NS2: P. 19, L. 4-8)

The student participant does claim that Indigenous perspectives and cultural sensitivity issues were covered to some extent in the units. However, they lacked Indigenous representations (NS2: P.21, L.7):
... Indigenous people involved in the classes, whether Indigenous teachers or students, would make a difference because you get Aboriginal viewpoints when your discussing things. You are not all just sitting there non-Aboriginal people talking about Aboriginal issues, you know, like you need both side[s] of the world.

(NS2: P. 22, L. 12-16)

Evident in this section are the complexities and deep associations respondents made to the production and incorporation of Indigenous knowledge systems within the BATSIS program. The voices presented convey important perspectives and issues for further consideration that I shall later explore in Chapter Seven. However, important notions such as theorising, contextualising and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems within an institutional framework are issues highlighted by academics. Other important notions raised included protocol in the form of formal structures such as ATR. Other factors of concern included adequate Indigenous input and collaboration as opposed to tokenistic gestures.

Indigenous Participation in Knowledge Production

On the issue of sufficient Indigenous involvement in the decision making process for developing curriculum content in the BATSIS program, fifty percent of all participants said 'no' that it was insufficient whilst thirty percent said 'yes' and twenty percent did not make an explicit comment.

One Indigenous academic believed sufficient involvement in the production and decision-making processes for content was adequate as Aboriginal people wrote the unit material. This participant notes that:

Most of the unit descriptions within the program in ATSI Studies are written by Aboriginal people or at least the intent of the content was. Four units I can think of are all written with that in mind- Media Communication, Contemporary Issues was [academic’s name: Indigenous] and [academic’s name: Indigenous] certainly myself and [academic’s name: Indigenous]. The content of all those issues [was] generated by Aboriginal people. In its final written form, again, it was merely to satisfy the codification element of knowledge systems. Most of the literature of course was [written by] Balandas (non-Indigenous). So where we could find materials generated by Indigenous people we used that.

(IA2: Prv. 52, 27-36)
However, thirty percent of Indigenous participants did not believe that sufficient and adequate involvement is in place. One response highlights this, when an Indigenous student states that:

> There are many non-Aboriginal people out there who work hard to produce this [Indigenous content] to help Aboriginal people, but too much of it is written by non-Aboriginal people.

(IS3: P. 31, L. 15-16)

Furthermore, the participant concluded; “Well it’s hardly Aboriginal studies if it’s written by non-Aboriginal people” (IS3: P. 31, L. 20). When the student was asked how they knew that the curriculum was written by non-Aboriginal people, the response was “Well for example at FATSIS, there isn’t many Aboriginal staff. You know, so therefore not many Aboriginal staff had input.” (IS3: P. 31, L. 32-33).

A response from a non-Indigenous academic suggests that the reason behind insufficient involvement is the small number of Indigenous people employed. They state:

We don't have enough Indigenous academics to take control of that [on sufficient Indigenous involvement] but I think that would happen in the future. It could potentially happen and I don’t think there is any sense in which Indigenous interests have been excluded in the curriculum development. It's more that we haven’t had the critical mass to really make that a truly Indigenous degree.

(NA1: P. 16, L. 42-44)

An important point raised by an Indigenous academic (and it was not a common response) was the need for inclusive approaches in sharing information amongst academics in the form of workshops taking place for curriculum writers to allow for brainstorming and the sharing of ideas and resources (see, IA4: P. 75, L. 1-15).

“Support for people teaching in the area, I think that’s really important thing we should be looking at and I think often that’s not there” (IA4: P. 75, L. 22-37).

**Sufficient Coverage of Indigenous Knowledges**

On the issue of whether Indigenous knowledges were covered sufficiently in the participant’s disciplinary area of specialisation, a variety of responses were received. Overall, thirty percent of all participants stated sufficiency but in many instances this was qualified. Twenty percent felt that there was not sufficient coverage with a further ten percent stating that this was ‘difficult to answer’. Interestingly it is
important to also record that twenty percent of respondents gave a ‘yes’ and ‘no’ answer as they claimed that this was dependent on the subject area.

Perhaps it is interesting to note that only one respondent of all respondents gave a positive response to this question without changing positions and or qualifying the answer. This was a first year Indigenous student and responded in the following way:

They are such broad topics but from what I have covered so far, I think they’ve done a very good job. History, Health and Education- they’ve done the whole general overview as well as they could and I think they’ve done very well.

(IS5: P. 80, L. 20-23)

A non-Indigenous academic asserts sufficient Indigenous knowledges coverage in their program (not BATSIS), however, the response is a little ambiguous as it does not specify nor clarify whether ‘those people’ are Indigenous or non-Indigenous people. For example, they declare:

Those people who have been closely involved on a full time capacity have ... worked like crazy to ensure Indigenous knowledge systems, Indigenous perspectives on issues are grounded at every opportunity, and that involves opening up discussion to it, bringing in the people from land councils and Larakia nation...


Yet this participant also discusses the possible development of ‘another unit’ in order to present ‘stronger Indigenous voices in the degree’ as... ‘we’ve got a lot of Western stuff up there’” (see, P. 62, L. 29-31). This is an instance of a mixed response to the question as alluded to earlier. The same participant for example suggests that Indigenous knowledges probably need to be made more explicit within the Faculty (see, NA3: P. 64, L. 42-46). Further to this indecisiveness, the participant is unable to comment on whether Indigenous knowledges are incorporated well in BATSIS program given that they have had direct involvement in the accreditation process. This will be investigated further in the next chapter.

A participant who now works at another ‘Southern University’ but who has had experience in the BATSIS program discusses in some detail the problems of adequate coverage of Indigenous knowledges in curricula. Although IA5 believes that ‘healthy’ coverage existed in the content of the BATSIS program, criticisms
were also aired in relation to its staleness and its closeness to Anthropological influences. The participant states:

I thought it was pretty healthy actually, there wasn’t all that Kumbaya stuff. It leaned a lot into Resource Management… Also, I think it was also a little bit more too anthropological as well, and that was a problem I had with it. But like I said I was only a little ant here so. … I did have problems with it when it finally got up and was running- that regurgitation all the time- no growth and no new ideas coming in. I know essentially you can have the guts of what you want to teach but I think also you have to introduce new elements. You’ve got to be really proactive and you can’t get up there year after year and talk about that same stuff. At the same time that doesn’t just happen in Aboriginal Studies...

(IA5: P. 90, L. 41-52)

However, the participant also declares that Indigenous knowledges are not adequately covered in their disciplinary area because ‘they’re not seen as valid’ at a Southern university. (This participant currently has a position at a southern university.)

The Aboriginal Education Centre [southern university] there in my opinion, …exists as a marketing strategy at the University. It’s to attract international students, full fee paying students so that they can be offered some aspects of Aboriginal culture from ‘real’ (actually not real Aborigines) Aborigines. So, that debate comes into it all the time, ‘real’ and ‘unreal’ Aborigines. So that these people coming out into Australia, mostly American, rich Americans- but there’s a sprinkling of European people, France in particular. They come here to have the Aboriginal experience and they were having it-‘dreaming’ stories, it’s ‘Kumbaya’ stuff.

(IA5: P. 89. L. 41-48)

Another Indigenous academic who also has teaching experience at another tertiary institution in the area of Indigenous studies too claimed that Indigenous knowledge is written and packaged for particular markets and that the validity of the knowledge content is also questionable. This participant claims that in the last academic position held, he/she was told to make sure that ‘academic standards were not compromised’. The academic also asserted that he/she came upon this attitude at NTU as well.
I just find it really highly offensive that somehow Indigenous stuff is going to bring down standards at [a] university course and I don’t understand where that’s coming from...it’s quite racist in a way... its written and it’s tailored and it’s packaged in a way that white people can understand...

(IA4: P. 69, L. 8-14)

The reason given by Indigenous academics for the lack of adequate coverage in the curriculum within the BATSIS program is said to be primarily because of the low percentage of Indigenous academics in higher education institutions.

Part of the problem is the low number of Aboriginal people that are on the ground, it always comes back to that and that’s a problem across the board and not even with just curriculum. But I mean how do you address it? I just want to say that’s the one thing I appreciate about the Northern Territory University that they do acknowledge through that old man [Indigenous community elder] who is recognised as an Adjunct Professor or something like that. I think we need more of that and more consultation with those people, that they actually become part and parcel of the fabric of the University...

(IA5: P. 95, L. 36-43)

Another academic Indigenous viewpoint suggests similar concerns, however; he/she claims that adequate collaboration with Indigenous people did take place with the development of the BATSIS program. He/she states:

Well sufficient in terms of the last BATSIS program that was written...The advisory committee was specified in terms of issuing process. Our biggest difficulty was to find people 1) who are, Aboriginal people, who understand process and 2), understand the means of an undergraduate level of Aboriginal studies and due to that, I think scanning down the number of people that were on it, there were sufficient Aboriginal people.

(IA2: Prv.51, L. 17-23)

Student perspectives too indicate negative criticism in relation to sufficient coverage of Indigenous knowledges and suggest that too little Indigenous involvement in content development takes place. The following Indigenous student asserts the need for BATSIS units to be produced by Indigenous people:

Mona El-Ayoubi MA Research Thesis 110
...and not just some white academic who writes books, cause what seems to be happening is that all the texts are written by white people, they are only writing the texts for their careers...that’s a problem I think, because the lecturers take what these non-Aboriginal people are saying as gospel...

(IS3: P. 28. L. 41-46)

He/she suggests that perhaps the Faculty does not have appropriate networks to engage an adequate level of participation and that the community should be utilised more than it currently is.

There are a host of guest lecturers that can be used for various things here and have a lot more knowledge about those particular issues and I’m not sure that the Faculty has established that network with these people and they probably should have because the Faculty is here for the Aboriginal community and the rest of the community.

(IS3: P. 27, L .42-46)

The above student view is interesting and correlates with the following Indigenous academic who suggests that:

...ideally we should be probably looking at content, we should also be looking at communities. For example, I’m sure there are a few people that would say why aren’t you teaching more about Larakia stuff and I think that would be justified. Because I don’t think that we’re doing that enough. We could also be challenged by the Larakia people in terms of how many Larakia people we have as guest lecturers...

(IA4: P. 74, L. 10-14)

Another student perspective also voices concern regarding the adequacy of Indigenous coverage in curriculum where he/she declares, “if you’re dealing with Indigenous knowledge, it’s not Indigenous knowledge that’s written from Aboriginal perspective” (IS1: P. 5, L 6-7). This participant also notes that references to Indigenous writings are needed so as to look across worldviews (P. 4, L. 40-43).

Perhaps it is important to note that this issue was discussed in detail and concern by Indigenous academics was stronger as opposed to a more passive response from non-Indigenous academics. A strong point repeatedly made had to do with the writing of Indigenous knowledge in content curriculum by non-Indigenous people. A very strong response from one of the participants highlights the importance and the complexities of these issues:
... how obscene is it that a non-Australian, non-Aboriginal woman can own copyright on Indigenous intellectual property. To me that is the worst thing that could happen. I keep one [the publication by a non-Indigenous woman] in my personal library. I say look at this obscenity—how did this ever happen. People like her have done dreadful damage, they’re the people we do not need, we need those Indigenous professors here telling us and sharing their knowledge not through that conduit of the time of some white anthropologist or historian or whatever. ‘Piss them off.’

(IA5: P. 96, L. 13-19)

The importance of alternative knowledge frameworks in addressing significant Indigenous issues provide another alternative philosophical construct as distinct from ‘mirroring’ or generating knowledge that is already conveyed in other disciplinary areas.

... the extent to which we involve oral histories in parting this (Indigenous knowledge) is critical...Now the Stolen Generation is a classic example of where the stories about what the government did, the missionaries did are well and truly documented in terms of policy and process, but no one has ever really done extensive issues in terms of how Aboriginal people have more or less reacted or suffered the after effects etc. and so forth. And that’s fairly extensive, some of that has now been documented and going into biographies, etc and so forth, but not in a thoroughly documented way. That might come. But that influence has got to be there, otherwise we are merely repeating some of the main constructs in the other disciplines and that’s not what the issue of Aboriginals Studies, Cultural Studies, should be doing.

(IA2: Prv. 51, L. 33-45)

Important issues raised by the above Indigenous academic need highlighting because he/she articulates significant and focal notions relevant to the production of Indigenous knowledge within an institutional domain. The issue in relation to limited knowledge written by Indigenous people due to a ‘lack of coding’ is interesting because it alludes to differing production modes practiced. For example, the commodification of Indigenous knowledge and a market driven educational product signifies the difference in production in an institution compared to an Indigenous process. Important to highlight also is the lack of knowledge in written text in relation to crucial issues such as the Stolen Generation. The participant above discusses the need to document such knowledge from an Indigenous perspective otherwise there is a danger of merely repeating main constructs that are taught in
other disciplines. What is significant here is the need to construct Indigenous knowledge systems that articulate Indigenous voice and that it is this process that ultimately differentiates the content production from that of other disciplinary areas.

Perhaps this section can be best concluded by the thoughts of an Indigenous student who acknowledges the importance of an integrated approach where alternative perspectives are needed in a higher education program. The participant in this case suggests that Indigenous and non-Indigenous people need to be involved in curriculum development because it ‘needs to be cross sectional’ (P. 29, L.6-7).

Overall, Indigenous knowledge systems have been acknowledged as predominantly important in the BATSIS program from both academics and students alike. Knowledge production that does not incorporate Indigenous participation and voices limits Indigenous perspectives and narrows the field of Indigenous studies. This is a common response from many participants. Incorporating Indigenous voices and texts in the production of knowledge for content material was a concern that was raised by some strong academic Indigenous voices. The problems, complexities and adequate coverage of Indigenous knowledge by Indigenous people at an institutional site is limited by factors of codification and expectations. This will be further analysed in the next chapter.

On the other hand the majority of students interviewed highlighted the need for further Indigenous participation and community involvement as well as applied experience within the content and context of the BATSIS program. This is echoed by the majority of academic staff interviewed where further coverage of Indigenous epistemologies, voices, community involvement and Indigenous ways of teaching as well as practical experience and skills were features that were articulated as needing to be directly present and strengthened.

The Teaching/Learning Experience

Student’s Learning Experiences in Indigenous Studies

Participants were asked to comment and describe their learning experiences in higher education units, which included Indigenous content and contexts. Sixty percent of the students interviewed responded positively and directly. Twenty percent gave no direct response and another twenty percent gave a negative response. Although students’ comments throughout the interviews generally reflect a positive interest
and commitment to their Indigenous studies, the responses for this question appear to indicate problematics with pedagogic practices and methodologies in terms of their validity and appropriateness to Indigenous studies. However, it is important to note that sixty percent of student participants directly stated that their learning has been useful in their studies. These responses are valuable and will support analysis in the next chapter on the presence or lack of Indigenous pedagogy within the BATSIS program.

A number of students voiced their concern regarding teaching practices that lacked stimulation in terms of rigorous analysis, repetition of material across the program and some dependency on personal reflection as opposed to use of academic frameworks. Examples of such comments follow:

A non-Indigenous student voiced a number of concerns in these areas and presented an explicit response. This student also had experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies elsewhere in Australia and makes comparisons between the two. In this instance, the respondent claims that:

... what I was taught here [FATSIS] was more removed. In ...
[another state], in the classes, I felt much more connected, maybe because Indigenous people were teaching, and the substance of the topics were so much more in-depth. It felt more authentic, more genuine.

(NS2: P. 19, L. 12-15)

Again, it appears that the lack of Indigenous participation is an issue for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Another predominant issue that was highlighted continuously was the very small number of students in the classroom. Overall this student was not satisfied with the program and ultimately chose to withdraw from studies within the Faculty. Responses such as "I haven't felt it very stimulating or challenging" (NS2: P. 19, L. 24) were a common and passionately articulated feature of the interview.
I was expecting greater Indigenous participation in the classroom...but I can't pin point it. Just the atmosphere of the classroom and the academics, maybe it was because there's only two or three people in the classes. I mean there is a class called [student identifies specific unit], and I ended up not going because it was just me and [student's name: Indigenous] like and the lecturer. It was like, am I going to do a presentation in front of the lecturer and no other students, what sort of presentation is that? I just lost enthusiasm for it. So I stopped going.

(NS2: P. 19, L. 30-39)

Furthermore, this student asserts throughout the interview that the content and the delivery of curriculum have not met his/her needs. He/she states that:

I feel that a lot, a lot, it isn't really valid. I don't know if that's because of the perception, a lot of people have the perception that NTU as an entire university isn't the greatest really, maybe I've adopted that kind of perception myself.

(NS2: P. 23, L. 18-20)

This participant discusses the formal structure of content in unit outlines and says that "...everything is structured out fine but in reality it's not really taught to the greatest degree" (NS2: P.19. L.43-44) and "...it was ok, but it wasn't to my expectational standard..." (NS2: P. 20, L. 7).

I mean each week, it's just such a heavy topic you could go into it, like make one topic one week an entire unit in itself. But I just think that because there was such limited amount of students, there wasn't enough interaction and discussion of topics... I mean, it was good, we did cover stuff, but more students and more interaction I think.

(NS2: P. 19. L. 48-51 and P. 20, L. 1-2)

When asked to compare experiences and the proportion of students with experience elsewhere, this participant states:

we had about 15 people in each class, and it would probably be about, 8 would be Aboriginal...

(NS2: P. 20, L. 28-29)
I'm bit concerned about my bias, because I'm comparing a lot of the lecturers here to the lecturers I had in [southern university]. I had fantastic Indigenous teachers there because...they used their own experience, they were Aboriginal themselves, they related to the students. I think maybe population as well, the population of [southern university] is greater and it just feels like everything is so much more, if you can understand what I mean, yeah.

(NS2: P.20, L.11-12 and P. 20, L. 16-20)

The negative pedagogic experience has led this student to withdraw from the program and Aboriginal Studies.

I diverted away from Aboriginal studies altogether now.

(NS2: P. 20, L. 39)

Leaving the degree in [southern university] I was really passionate about the whole issues and I thought coming up here [The Northern Territory,] its [student’s interest] actually been reduced, I thought it would increase.

(NS2: P. 20, L .44-45)

... due to the experiences I’ve had through the Grad[uate] Dip[лома] so far, I don’t want to continue and I’m just going to leave it as a grad[uate] certificate and I’m even two minded about whether I should continue studying at NTU altogether or whether I should go to another University...from this Faculty, I didn’t get what I wanted, so I haven’t done mainstream at NTU and I don’t know that’s any better but I don’t know if I want to take the chance of finding out.

(NS2: P. 24, L. 31-37)

Like the previous participant, NS4 also has experience in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program from another university and also criticises the teaching practices encountered in the BATSIS program.

In relation to the teaching approach, this student suggests that teaching is done:

...through anecdote and telling stories about personal experiences which seems to be side tracked but is still useful in terms of understanding issues of racism [and] in terms of personal experience..

(NS4: P. 39, L. 8-11).

My frustration with my [student identifies specific subject] subject was [that] it felt like a lot like a school class. It just didn’t have that higher level of analysis, which is what I would find in a normal higher education.

(NS4: P. 41, L. 4-6)
When I came up here, I expected that there would be a different approach to learning and one which was much more based on the idea of alternative histories and alternative ways of understanding. But those actual frameworks and understandings haven’t been utilised as an actual sort of channel for learning. And so the approach is very much again very Western university paradigms... Although I do think there is a lot of validity in that traditional university structure and I learn really well in most contexts which is one of the reasons I wanted to get out of that and try and think about the world differently.

(NS4: P.39, L. 15-32)

This student articulates his/her interest in pursuing different and alternative ways of thinking and experiencing the world. She/he states that perhaps this is an unrealistic expectation within a university.

Perhaps you actually do need to go out into communities or go overseas or whatever to have that sort of experience as well as that understanding...

(NS4: P. 40, L. 19-21)

This student highlights the issue of repetitive and overlapping content as also was a concern with the previous student participant. He/she states:

... there’s been quite a high level of overlap between subjects so that would, rather than repeating the same, it’s not really repeating, it hasn’t been that repetitive, but there was more room and expansion on that in specific areas.

(NS4: P. 42, L. 46-50)

This participant also suggests that an international perspective of Indigenous issues is needed for comparative analysis and that this should be made explicit in the course material (see, NS4: P. 42, L. 44-50 and P.43, L. 1-9).

Another student participant interviewed suggests that positive or negative learning experiences are dependant on the lecturer who is delivering the material and the level of commitment in terms of employment stability. He/she states:

...my opinion is that what students will extract from those units comes down to whose teaching them. It’s important I believe to have someone who actually cares about the direction of the program, the BATSIS program, and is not just doing it as a part time employment position to manage the money.

(IS3: P. 26, L. 36-40)
This participant again stresses the role of the pedagogue in the outcome of the learning experience of the student:

Obviously there are some teachers who think they are better teachers than they really are, that's a problem because the students feel intimidated by their presence in the classroom... the teaching staff should be able to handle constructive criticism by their students.

(IS3: P. 27, L. 31-38)

Unlike the non-Indigenous participant, this Indigenous student acknowledges a positive aspect of learning experiences in that the program has extended his/her knowledge on national Indigenous issues. He/she states:

...It has deepened my knowledge of Indigenous issues across Australia and across the world rather than my own Indigenous background. So you're able to get more of a perspective on what's happening around the world and clearly the BATSIS units you are able to do some topics that touch on other Indigenous people across the world.

(IS2: P. 26, L. 26-30)

This again differs to the viewpoints put forward by another Indigenous student in that the program has supported their understanding of their cultural background. For instance, this participant states that he/she have”... taken most of the Indigenous units because I am trying to learn about my Indigenous background. I think that's something that is really important for me” (P.78, L. 9-10).

The small number of students in classes (expressed earlier by a non-Indigenous student participant) is again voiced in the next observation and reflects the small number of Indigenous participation within the BATSIS program and highlights the implication of this.

Most of the students were not Aboriginal, in those units, the Aboriginal students are expected to know a bit more than the others and they're there to learn and its not their role, they're not on a wage, so a lot of the Aboriginal students are expected to provide the direction in terms of classroom discussion.

(IS3: P. 26, L. 45-47)

Another Indigenous student supports the expectations of students to perform in the classroom when it comes to Indigenous content. They state that:
In some of the lectures including Indigenous perspectives, Indigenous topics, you sometimes, you feel intimidated, I mean a lot of people are looking at you and expecting you to react in a different way, which can be very intimidating. Sometimes you don’t know what that’s about, but most of the time, you do feel like you’ve got to act a bit differently, or you’ve got to say something, and if you don’t speak up, you know your not really getting involved.

(IS5: P.77, L. 28-33)

On content, IS3 states that “…with some of the BATSIS units you can go through 13 weeks and not barely pick up a great deal” (IS3: P32. L.35-36). The participant in this instance is referring to the lack of substance and the repetitive nature of the units in the BATSIS program and that this lack is largely due to the instructors. The student stated that “…this is because of the staff teaching it.” (IS3: P.32, L. 40) and that:

Most of the resources are written by non-Aboriginal people [and do not provide] a lot of confidence as to the accuracy of it.

(IS3: P. 27, L. 22-23)

An academic who has also learning experience as a student in another Faculty describes his/her experience with Indigenous content and context taught as ‘superficial’: He/she states:

...well we better mention the Black-fellas in here, because we are talking about Australian history. That’s problematic everywhere, even where I am in the [southern university]. They try to introduce an Indigenous theme but it never does it justice, it’s just a mention. I always talk about Aboriginal people being the Footnotes of Australian History (I think I might’ve stolen that from Geoffrey Blainey)-‘Melancholy afterthoughts’.

(P. 86, 50-52 and P. 87, L. 1-3)

In summary, student responses to the questions of direct learning experience in the BATSIS program provide a good overview of the varying attitudes and positions. Non-Indigenous students have articulated the need for a structured, substantial and a directed approach both in the delivery and the content of the course material. The experience of students who had attended university in other states is interesting as it allows comparative reflections of teaching and learning practices and this was something that the students used as a point of reference to articulate their concerns and expectations of the NTU experience. Many of the students both Indigenous and
non-Indigenous voice concerns regarding the smallness of classes and the negative impact this has on learning. Some Indigenous students articulate the benefits of the program in enriching a better understanding of Aboriginal cultures. Recognition of existing expectations of Indigenous students to perform in the classroom is something that is also voiced.

**Academics’ Teaching Experience in Indigenous Studies**

In comparison to student responses on the question of pedagogic practice and experience in Indigenous studies, academics were more positive in their response. Mainly issues discussed in relation to this were to do with process and methodology as opposed to reaction to content and specific style. In some cases academics did not directly respond to the question and focused on other related issues such as principles and approach to teaching. Overall, thirty percent of academics interviewed stated that their teaching experience has been positive whilst twenty percent stated that they have had negative experiences. This negative response reflected a dominant position articulated by Indigenous academics.

It is interesting to draw on the responses from academic participants regarding pedagogic practices. These responses vary tremendously and it is difficult to see commonalities between the responses. This analysis may later provide insight on either the nature of ‘Indigenous pedagogy’ or the existence (or lack of) Indigenous pedagogic practice within the BATSIS program and Indigenous Studies in general. This issue will be explored in the next chapter. However, the variation in responses is described and interpreted in this next section.

One Indigenous academic (who had previously taught BATSIS units in the NTU and is now an academic in another state) recounts his/her initial experience of a unit taught at a southern university. His/her response to the content for that unit implies a sense of incredulous disbelief. This participant states:

> I laughed; I just said please I can’t teach this stuff... the first two introductory lectures were pure ‘make believe fantasy, Kumbaya’, totally disrespectful which treated some of those Dreaming stories as entertainment. I wasn’t prepared to entertain at that level.

(IA5: P. 90, L. 1-6)

Although this participant continues to work at the Southern university he/she no longer teaches this unit and a Koori person from a ‘contemporary urban setting’ is
now responsible for its delivery and its modification. The next comment implies a level of antagonism (experienced at a southern university) or a variation to experience and approach to delivering Indigenous content in different contexts.

As a lot of Koories in NSW, especially on the East Coast, have had terrible impact with colonisation. They've lost a lot of culture, language, they've lost their stories and a lot of them are discovering this stuff themselves and I don't see that they're in a position to represent it truthfully. Although I'm not judging them, I'm celebrating the fact that they want to go back and do that stuff but I don't think you can teach it when you are at a level, when you are learning it yourself. I find that really tragic and problematic and now that I am at the head of the Centre, of course I have to address these things. All the time, being respectful of their journey, their experience in the historical setting. Taking into account all that. In the meantime [southern university] doesn't want anything to change, they want us to get those American students and fill them up with some nice little groovy stuff and let them go back to America and talk about all this wonderful Aboriginal culture...

(IA5: P. 90, L. 9-19)

The importance of respect in the classroom and the recognition of various knowledge systems in the classroom is an important element for this participant who states:

I'm big on respect... I think it's really important, when I say respect I'm not talking about that day-to-day interaction between people, although that too is very important to me. I'm talking about respect for other people's knowledge, other people's approaches to that whole agenda of education whether at the teaching or the learning level - Just giving people the space to explore their own ideas. That another person can have some knowledges and some ideas that I may not have considered...I always try to instil that in my day-to-day interaction...As a teacher and a learner, I take that on...you've got to respect that other people have other knowledges - whether they're Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal.

(IA5: P. 35-52)

This participant has also had previous extensive experience in teaching within the BATSIS program. From the participant's observations and tutoring experience in the program, he/she stresses the need for ensuring that Indigenous students are skilled in a number of approaches, even though there is a dilemma for such recognition and approach. He/she states:
there was the standard Western approach, with set questions and set tasks, and set assessment... It kind of makes your job easier when you're really busy. But there were times when I questioned that approach, when I thought, as an Aboriginal person I should be able to assess someone at a different level. Taking into account the oral tradition is really important here. That was another part of the assessment that I thought we should've been able to assess people with the oral examination more than a written one. At the same time, there is a bit of a dilemma there for me because I want Aboriginal students to develop those really good writing skills. So I don't want to dismiss it altogether and say it's not important, but I think there could be a place for oral assessment and written assessment. That's what disabled most of our students here at [NTU] was the written tasks, but at the same time I might say to you, now that I've been exposed to more non-Aboriginal students in [identifies another state], they write just as badly. It's not an Aboriginal problem

(IA5: P.88. L, 50-52 and P. 89, L. 1-9)

Another viewpoint presented by an Indigenous academic participant explicitly highlights the unique Aboriginal styles of teaching because of the very fact that the content and the issues are Indigenous. He/she claim:

... we’re also bringing to our Indigenous experience, we’re also challenging belief systems...also bringing in Indigenous people who talk about their own experiences and those kinds of things can be confronting. I guess in terms of the content, it’s important but also the values and belief systems are challenged of students.

(IA4: P. 69, L. 14-23)

Furthermore, this participant discusses the importance of pedagogy which includes personal approaches.

...teaching about yourself, teaching from that part of your life it’s not like you’re coming and teaching about something that’s completely alien to yourself. So you’re sort of teaching about who you are, it’s all part of who you are... It certainly [is] like you’re teaching an extension of yourself, the teaching isn’t divorced from your own personal, there’s no boundaries and that can be a good thing but it can also be quite intensive.

(IA4: P. 9, L. 28-35)

On the reason behind the intensity of feeling on this issue, this participant passionately declares the relationship between the reality of the content and the reality of the Indigenous experience. He/she asserts that:
Because you don’t get away from it - You’re just constantly teaching about yourself, day after day after, day, about your life, about things that happened there, what you’ve experienced even though in actual fact I don’t talk about this stuff personally. It still means that discussing, for example, I’ve always got family who is in prison, Death in Custody is a major concern for me, their protection and all that kind of stuff. If you teach about Stolen Generation, I have members from my family who were taken away, so it’s constant, talk about housing, I’ve got friends who can never afford rent and there’s always rumour of being turfed off their houses. So it’s that kind of thing, you’re not teaching that that’s completely alien to your life.

(AA: P. 69, L. 39-46)

A student participant interviewed who has had experience in tutoring in the BATSIS program found the teaching experience ‘extremely empowering’ (IS1: P3, L. 5) because other worldviews (IS1: P. 3, L 6) were explored. However, he/she also implies that there is a need to move away from localised content and personal issues and suggests a broader framework for the content.

it was a little bit too overwhelming for some of the students. ...I think the content needs changing because there are important issues out there. There’s always going to be stuff about the Stolen Generation, I think we need to start looking beyond that ...the national level and at the political level. We need to start to look at those sorts of processes; we’ve dealt with the issues, now we can look at where it is. I think it’s [BATSIS content] stale we need to look at (it from an) international level.

(IS1: P. 3, L. 40-48)

This participant, like the previous Indigenous academic, also stresses the importance of personal issues and the sensitivity of the content as well as diverse debates within this context.

I was able to look at other people’s worldviews and how they thought about issues that affected me personally, so on that level, it was extremely sensitive situation.

(IS1: P. 3, L. 6-12)

In the following quote, it is interesting to note the recognition and the verbalisation of Indigenous pedagogical practices from a non-Indigenous academic in that this is the only reference to such pedagogy from all participants interviewed. Although the participant coordinates another Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program, he/she is also responsible for the delivery of a unit within the BATSIS program. When

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asked to provide an example of Indigenous pedagogy, this academic states that this entails a lot more negotiation (see P. 58, L. 9). It is important to point out that this participant also found it difficult to elaborate on this point, but did state that this process entailed:

... negotiated aspects of delivery and negotiation aspects of the outcomes, being more open to what constitutes work that you're likely to have in the classroom, being open to negotiated timelines and negotiated curriculum a lot more perhaps...a more student centred approach to the teaching as opposed to the teacher centred approach.

(NA3: P. 58, L. 21-25)

A significant point which will be elaborated further in the next chapter is whether this process of collaboration is particular to an Indigenous pedagogy or whether it takes place in other pedagogic frameworks and practices. However, the participant recognises the importance of such an approach in empowering the individual, and in acknowledging diverse knowledge systems and in teaching practices.

The process of teaching actually opened me up to the idea of different knowledge systems that I acknowledged peripherally. But actually teaching the unit forced me to think much more deeply about those issues, because if you're actually teaching that you've got to know it inside out. ... It actually completely changed the way I teach, and the way I see myself in the classroom... because those power structures do exist, you're more aware of them and you can subvert them more explicitly. Well I can subvert them more explicitly now [as] I'm more aware of what's going on, or what are some of the things going on. So it's changed the way I teach and its changed the way I think about teaching. I now incorporate practices which you could possibly describe as being Indigenous pedagogical practices.

(NSA: P. 57, L. 46-52, and P. 58. L. 1-5)

The participant reinforces the positive element of this teaching approach. He/she suggests that this pedagogic process is important for both the educator and the students because individuals gain a different understanding by the end of the semester (see. NA3: P. 58, L. 46-50).

When another non-Indigenous academic is asked to comment on his/her teaching experience outside his or her own BATSIS stream/specialisation, the response is ‘I can’t really answer that’. It is important to note that this participant does also have experience in developing and delivering Indigenous content outside the BATSIS
program. However, he/she offers the following comment from observations of Indigenous content outside the Faculty:

... I can say that some of our students who are also studying [participant identifies another discipline at NTU], complain to us about the way in which they feel, somehow marginalised or even oppressed by the objectification of Aboriginal structures kinship and political and social economies as is represented through those discourses. And I think that some of those students who complain about that, have a valid complaint and some of them are just not willing to take on the sort of rigor that's required by those discourses. I think that we deliberately tell our students that we have been advised by the advisors in Arnhem land to avoid the sorts of objectivised representations of Aboriginal culture that come from anthropology and linguistics and because of that, the anthropological linguistics stuff is added on as an additional way of understanding some of the complexities that [Identifies an Indigenous academic's name] explaining; rather than the framework [within] which those representations should be subsequently understood.

(NA1: P. 14, L. 1-13)

Overall, Indigenous academics present issues of romanticising Indigenous content within teaching practices so as to satisfy market demand. Formal pedagogic structures such as assessment, teaching approaches and equipping students with writing skills are recognised as important, however, Indigenous academics present the dilemma associated with complying with such structures. For instance, a number of Indigenous academics discuss the importance of recognising oral narratives, valuing personal experience and feeling and understanding what it is to be Indigenous. These factors, it is suggested impact on content and delivery of the material and possibly imply an Indigenous pedagogic framework. On the other hand, non-Indigenous academic staff discuss teaching approaches that encompasses collaboration and the recognition of a variety of knowledge systems in the classroom. This, it is suggested, is Indigenous pedagogy. The objectifying of Aboriginal structures into mainstream disciplines is also a concern to some Indigenous academics.

**Teaching Methodologies**

All participants were asked to describe the teaching methodology they either practiced as academics, or experienced as learners in units that have included Indigenous content at the Faculty. Overall, the majority of responses stated that the
methodological approaches were Westernised and structured. Perhaps this issue is blurred with the previous responses to questions relating to learning and teaching experiences of both academics and students. The aim here was to get participants to explicitly and directly discuss specific pedagogic frameworks and approaches that they utilised or benefited from in the classroom. Unfortunately direct responses were not always provided, with the exception of two academics who explicitly responded and directly described their methodological approaches below.

One academic participant elaborates on the structure of a two-hour class where collaborative teaching occurs with another Indigenous academic. This participant states that the class is constructed in two phases (NA1: P. 13, L. 13). Distinctions are drawn between the roles of each teaching individual in the session, where one is responsible for delivering Indigenous knowledge production and representation, and the other is responsible for the formal elements of the program. This collaborative approach is described in the following manner:

The first one is taken for an hour and a quarter by an Indigenous academic... students spend their time concentrating on little stories in various languages about particular topics and each week it's a different thing...An online data base is used where students translate narratives and bring to the class. Indigenous academic then tells the story from own personal perspectives and talks about how she relates to that particular language or her people that tell that story, so that people are always speaking themselves within and against the discourses that are central in terms of the content of the curriculum. The next hour [another academic Indigenous] comes in - Who doesn't understand what Indigenous academic was talking about, who hasn't had their assignments passed back? So a whole lot of bureaucratic stuff but also a lot of quite complex grammatical things - So basically the Indigenous academic is there centrally exhibiting the [Indigenous] rules of representations and knowledge production, and the students really enjoy that and I just come along and try to sort out some of the more purely linguistic problems.

(NA2: P. 13, L. 21-33)

Another academic acknowledges the strong focus on Westernised pedagogical approaches and declares "...the greatest difficulty there would be actually coming to the task of developing curriculum, teaching in classes from a strongly Westernised and very scientific history" (NA3: P. 67, L. 19-21).
In relation to specific methodological approach he/she claims that teaching Indigenous students involves ‘negotiated timelines’, ‘negotiated curriculum’ and includes ‘a more student centred approach, as opposed to a teacher centred approach’ (see P. 58, L. 23-25). On the question of whether this approach is appropriate to both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in the classroom, the response is that the “... the sort of stuff that works well with Indigenous people works well with anyone” (P. 59, L. 22-23). Asked if this could be applied in the reverse, the participant states that this is a different process because of cultural experiences and proficiency levels of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. A student centred approach is also an approach that this academic considers to be superior.

I think that’s probably a different process because white people or Western people are acculturated into a system that they are proficient at which is not necessarily one that maybe Indigenous people, particularly Indigenous communities mightn’t be proficient at. So going the other way may not necessarily be right, ... One of the things that I think is really important about that process was the evaluation of knowledge within the classroom, in a sense, to subverting that conduit metaphor if you like, between the teacher and the students. So yes, trying to break that down as much as you can which is almost impossible but giving space for people in the classroom to actually bring their knowledges and experience and to actually validate them within the classroom, that’s important...

(NA3: P. 59, L. 27-40)

The following academic, like IA2, acknowledges the variety of methodologies that can be used and states that this is dependent on the individual and their worldview. This is an interesting viewpoint, as it indirectly implies individual teaching styles:

... there is a variety of methodology, I think people have a right in the way that they teach units, ... I remember when I was teaching history, teaching Indigenous stuff, somehow people thought you’re teaching the truth, but I don’t think there is such a thing as truth, I think there is views, ... but that’s not to say that one is better than the other or it’s a view, it’s a world-view.

(IA4: P. 70, L. 5-11)

This academic participant discusses the teaching methodology used at another tertiary institution in the south and states that this primarily included the facilitation of interchange between students.
I was trying to create an exchange between the students... learning between the students, Indigenous students and the White students, learning between the White students and the Indigenous students. I was trying to create more of that.  

This participant is another academic who states that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program is structured within a Western framework and acknowledges reasons for that. However, he/she also likes to see alternative and practical methodological approaches that draw on the Indigenous community and Indigenous knowledges so that students can gain an Indigenous understanding as well as a Western one. This response is an interesting one as it is not a common feature that is articulated by other academics, but is certainly a dominant feature in student discussions, as we shall see later.

there is a lot more that students could be exposed to- because of unfortunately we teach in the classroom, we’re teaching in ways that are very similar to Western, I can understand it too, because it’s manageable if you teach in that way... One of the ways I was thinking of, is fieldtrips where you get community members to actually talk to students... You usually get well-spoken Indigenous people who teach. I think that’s fine, but I also think that students would benefit by people who don’t speak well, speak English well, people who don’t deliver in the class; people who are in our communities. So I think it’s really important for students to be exposed to that...There’s a whole range of Indigenous perspective, and the community may have quite a different way at looking at the world than I do. I feel they’re not getting that.  

This participant believes that such an approach achieves successful pedagogic outcomes:

A lot of those of students went on to form support clubs to do with Indigenous issues and they went on to politicise Indigenous stuff. They did something with that knowledge and I thought that was really rewarding... That those students can see other ways of thinking about that stuff and they’re challenging the stereotypes in the community.  

A student centred approach, more flexibility and an incorporation of a number of methodologies as opposed to standard Western frameworks are the important features articulated by the following Indigenous academic.
I think we should be more flexible, and I'm not just talking about Aboriginal people in our approach in how we teach. There is room I think to get out of that standard rigid Western academic style of teaching. I have huge problems with the way teachers [students who are studying teaching] are taught and the methodology used. You know, everyone is approached as an empty vessel that you just have to fill up with all this knowledge and I find that really insulting. That's why I'm saying there should be more flexibility. You should be able to say that 'I'm not here as the person with all the knowledge', and it's about that power thing.

This participant discusses current development of curriculum which incorporates Online technology and hopes to see elements of both multi-media and face to face learning take place in methodological approaches in the future.

I am hoping to develop a more friendly approach for Aboriginal Studies for online delivery. So it's a little bit different in that focus. Content is very important of course, but it's still got to be in a way that we can deliver it through that other forum. It's not stand up in front of a class lecture and that kind of stuff - Although we have considered that somewhere a long the way. But at the moment, we are trying to get it up for online.

In summary, academic participants discussions mainly centred on the value of student centred pedagogical approaches and the need to incorporate and recognise a variety of methodological approaches in the classroom. Student participant responses varied and these are described and interpreted in the next section.

One student participant who also has experience teaching in the classroom described the methodology used as one which incorporated readings that provided a 'foundation (IS1: P. 3, L. 18) and a framework' (IS1: P. 3, L. 20). It also provided 'some sort of grounding to discuss the issues' (IS1: P. 3, L. 32).

Another participant discussed in some detail the informal and inadequate nature of the methodology experienced through the delivery of many lecturers. In some instances, the student participant claims, in some classes, there were no methodological processes to speak of. He/she states for example that one lecturer '... just read from her notes ... she had her notes, and she read that out and that was the lecture and I did not find that stimulating at all... ' (NS2: P.21, L. 9-11).
This student then insinuates that an academic should be familiar with material (NS2: P. 21, L. 11-12) and therefore not rely on reading notes. He/she declares that such a methodology is neither helpful nor useful.

Another teacher kind of complained about not being paid… the efforts of teaching I think must have been lacking … like he was just bagging the whole entire place all the time. Not just the Faculty but the Vice Chancellor of this uni. just going down and this sort of stuff.

(NS2: P. 21, L. 13-19)

However, the student participant does speak positively of an Indigenous lecturer whose approach he/she found useful. He/she states:

He[she] has a lot of wisdom and [has] got a lot of knowledge as well and he shares that which is really great as well, is a good lecturer, covers the topics, uses the board and presents well.

(NS2: P. 21, L. 36-39)

Like another Indigenous academic articulated earlier, this student participant also suggests an applied pedagogic framework that gives students’ experience. This is seen as worthwhile rather than just covering the topics once a week with few students. This student participant put forward a final comment on this issue and suggests a need for a more academic structure and less personal and unprofessional form (see P. 24, L. 41-43). This view, is also supported by another student, participant who states that drawing on a host of lecturers from the Indigenous community would provide practical and useful experience as well as extend and link the Faculty with the wider Indigenous community (see IS3: P. 27, L. 44-47).

Another participant who has experience in learning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies within FATSIS and another Faculty stipulates that methodological differences between the two Faculties were predominately in personal and formal structures. She/he states that the FATSIS units are ‘more personal, they’re smaller and you get interactive group discussions (which) usually come out of them,’ whereas the units at the other Faculty consisted of ‘a large group (where) you don’t have that interaction, those discussions you have to wait to the tutorial classes’ (see, IS5: P.79, L. 11-13). The personal and informal approach experienced at FATSIS is the preferred approach for this student. Perhaps it is important to note that compared to the previous student, this student is undertaking his/her first year in the BATSIS degree program.
I like the FATSIS units because they are smaller and we have discussions... It's not where you go in and write notes down, it's sit down, we'll have a big discussion and we'll get the whole, what you don't understand and what you need to understand. I found that a lot in FATSIS units, you don't get that as much in your Arts units.

(IS5: P. 79, L. 17-21)

This respondent reinforces a preference for the FATSIS approach because "You learn a lot more I think. It gets personal, and I feel sad, that's good I mean personal experiences help people to learn and to get to know one another, I like that" (IS5: P. 79, L. 25-26).

This preference differs from the response of another student participant who has claimed that the personal approach has some value but needs to be incorporated with other academic tools such as analysis. This element he/she describes as lacking in some of the units that they undertook in FATSIS. He/she also stresses that the methodology experienced incorporated the "...idea of knowledge as something which you acquire (and that this) is a very Western one rather than knowledge is something which is generated collectively" (NS4: P. 47-49). This response is an interesting one considering the number of times different academic participants stated that their methodology tried to move away from such a paradigm. The participant also stipulates their awareness of a dominant Western pedagogical framework.

In terms of subjects which I've done, they seem very much to be constructed along sort of Western university line rather than in terms of Indigenous knowledges and different understandings.

(NS4: P. 44. L. 36-38)

This participant then provides examples that demonstrate standard practice in some units:

ATSIS and Cultural Studies are very typical of lecture tutorial structure which I find is pretty easy to digest and the [participant identifies unit] has been really good because it’s more of a seminar presentation because the class is so small it means it’s really good way to learn, to be in a small group of people that are all pretty motivated about what they’re doing.

(NS4: P. 41, L. 6-10)

This section has mapped out the responses of both academic and student participant responses to the issue of teaching methodology. It can be seen that the main concern for academics and some students is the emphasis on Western pedagogical
frameworks that are commonly practiced within Indigenous programs, particularly the BATSIS degree. Academics appear to recognise the ideological dilemma that this encompasses and efforts are made to incorporate student centred approaches into pedagogic practice. However, student responses predominately disagree with this and state problems in actual practice and structure. A common criticism which students note is the lack of alternative methodological frameworks and the limited use of community representatives and pragmatic learning approaches which skills students with practical experience. Perhaps it would be worthwhile to conclude this section by noting all responses regarding the appropriateness of the methodologies discussed and described by students and academics. Overall forty percent of all participants claimed that methodologies utilised were appropriate to their teaching and learning. (Thirty percent of this figure was the response from academics.) While forty percent of all respondents said 'Yes and No' regarding appropriateness (thirty percent of this figure was the response from students). Finally, ten percent said 'no' and the other ten percent gave no direct response.

Difference

Differences in the Process of Curriculum Development

Comparative practices with other NTU higher education programs, as well as other universities, further supports an investigation into the processes of the development of curriculum. This allows for the examination of differences between faculties in relation to teaching and learning practices. Looking at difference in practice from various positions helps in determining the existence of 'unique' or 'specialised' processes that may or may not be elements of the development of Indigenous knowledge in higher education curricula. Whether there are differences in the process of development at FATSIS compared to the development of units elsewhere is the focus for this next section.

Overall, forty percent of all academic participants interviewed had had direct involvement in the development of curriculum taught by FATSIS at NTU and thirty percent had experience in developing units outside the Faculty. Ten percent had indirect involvement at another university while another ten percent had direct involvement at another institution. It is also worthwhile to note that forty percent of academics interviewed had held a managerial or a coordination role at the time of or prior to the interviews.
It is also interesting to note that thirty percent of participants made reference to the importance of 'enhancing,' 'validating', 'theorising' and the 'authentication' of Indigenous knowledge in their experience of curriculum development (see, NA1: P.11, IA2: P. 48, and IA5: P. 87). In the words of one academic:

Most of the units, particularly those that are orientated towards ATSIS studies, have all been written with the point of view of enhancing the basis of Indigenous knowledge. It's always been my notion regardless of the accessibility of some of our knowledge in our systems, that there is a corpus that can be generalised and objective. So I would feel that any person who is around the discussion both in terms of expertise, experience, writing, publishing etc. and so forth should be able to deal with it.

(IA2: Prv. 48, L. 10-18)

Another twenty percent of academic participants interviewed indirectly refer to differences in the process of curricula production by suggesting that the development of units for FATSIS programs engages in specialised Indigenous Knowledges. This it is claimed, is represented and formulated by Indigenous people themselves. Academic discussion in describing the process of unit development centred around the importance of 'collaboration', 'negotiation' and the 'involvement of Indigenous communities' through 'community meetings and talking to people' for the accumulation of content (see, NA1: P. 12, L. 23, and NA3: P. 56, L. 8-10). It is important to contrast this response with responses from Indigenous academics in relation to Indigenous knowledge production discussed earlier as it appears that there exists a conflict of views. For example, Indigenous academics have highlighted the lack of Indigenous involvement in curriculum production and in formulating strong community links. This will be analysed in some detail in the next chapter.

An Indigenous academic with experience outside NTU refers to the process of development as involving 'romanticised' ideals and 'tokenistic' gestures of representation where there is little Indigenous involvement (see IA5: P. 86, L. 32 and P. 90). Another non-Indigenous academic indirectly refers to differences between NTU faculties in relation to Indigenous involvement and representation in the production of content material. He/she states that the traditional:
A significant observation to note from the response of another participant regarding differences in the production of curriculum between programs is perhaps their unwillingness to discuss this issue at the interview. Worthy of note is that this academic has been at the Faculty for a significant period of time and has had direct involvement in the reaccreditation process of BATSIS as well as other higher education programs. He/she was not able to comment about differences in the process of the development of units from one degree to the other. Instead his/her response entails long silences and consists of the following remarks:

I'm just trying to think what knowledge I actually have of the unit development process. Not really, I don’t think. Like I've seen on the surface what appears to be happening and I guess I can see there is a difference there, but then I don’t know what’s been going on behind the scenes in terms of people thinking in their offices. All I came across was the product that they gave to me, the products that they gave to me to incorporate it into the documentation.

Differences in Teaching Practices

All student participants were enrolled in units offered by FATSIS as well as units in other faculties around the University. Participants were asked to comment on units taught at FATSIS compared to units taught elsewhere in the University. Ninety percent of student participants stated that differences in teaching units existed between faculties. Another ten percent implied difference but did not respond directly to the question. This commonality in the findings is significant and is therefore detailed to provide a framework for analysis in the next chapter. Student responses predominantly centre their discussions on the personal frameworks in operation at FATSIS compared to the formal structures that exist elsewhere.

In fact all the students either alluded or directly articulated differences based on personal teaching styles experienced at FATSIS. For instance the following student
highlights the 'academic' approach at another Faculty compared to the 'down to earth' approach at FATSIS.

I found that from the lecturers down here (FATSIS), the lecturers are more down to earth, a bit more approaching, not so much academically, of course they are but, I found that more over there (Arts) than here.

(IS5: P. 77, L. 7-9)

Another student who compares BATSIS units with units from the Bachelor of Arts (BA) confirms this. The participant suggests that Arts units were theoretical, difficult and had a different focus. In the participants' own words, the Arts units 'were hard', 'very theoretical contact' (IS1: P. 2, L. 13), 'based on a lot of readings' (IS1: P. 2, L. 14) and 'provided a foundation for Aboriginal studies' as well as a 'historical focus' (IS1: P. 2, L. 16). BATSIS units on the other hand were 'dealing with contemporary identity issue' (IS1: P. 2, L. 16). “There’s a big difference there...delivery of lectures was a totally different process from Arts and here” [FATSIS], (IS1: P. 2, L. 17-18).

The above Indigenous student did see value in this ‘personal’ approach because he/she could identify with the issues presented. Another Indigenous student also echoes this view:

I think that a lot of the people [are] over here [FATSIS] - because they are Indigenous, I think you can relate to them more. If you have problems, personal, they know how to treat you and relate to you. You don’t find that very much over there [Arts]....

(IS5: P. 77, L. 14-17)

This personal approach is perceived as useful because it has ‘complimented’ students’ studies within the ‘two different perspectives’ (IS1: P. 2, L. 40-41). This participant states:

It’s really different because the issues are more contemporary. They’re more cutting edge, they’re more to do with stuff like your own identity, whereas you’re actually doing stuff about different people, but when you are doing units with FATSIS its more to do with yourself, perspectives from yourself rather than other people- with other Aboriginal groups.

(IS1: P. 2, L. 24-34)

A non-Indigenous student participant also suggests that the teaching approach at FATSIS is based on personal framework as opposed to formal structures he/she has
experienced elsewhere at a 'southern university'. This participant also sees some value in this approach. He/She states:

…teaching through anecdote and telling stories about personal experiences which seems to be side tracked but is still useful in terms of understanding issues of racism in terms of personal experience rather than in terms of sort of, academic abstractions in social causes and so on.

(NS4: P. 39, L. 8-11)

Interestingly, another non-Indigenous participant (who also has experience of ATSI units in a ‘southern university’) also voices concern over the teaching process practiced at FATSIS. This approach he/she declares is inadequate and informal and is compared to teaching and learning practices elsewhere. He/she states:

…the way the classes were structured were different to mainstream, it was much more like a realist approach. It wasn’t just a lecturer and a whole bunch of students taking notes. It was interactive between the lecturer and the students, so or even the lectures were like tutorials. And all the issues were contemporary and they all, you know, all Indigenous issues and stuff.

(NS2: P. 22, L. 41-45)

Again, this participant states teaching differences exist, as units he/she enrolled in at FATSIS were ‘not very academic’. The frustration in the voice and tone of this student brings to the fore the teaching dissatisfaction he/she experienced. He/she comments on the lack of facilitation and the lack of communication about learning expectations. He/she at length states:

I feel that it’s not very academic, like I put in papers and the lecturer said in order to get better marks, you should have used theories like related views...and I said hang on a minute, we haven’t even discussed any sort of theories in class and its Aboriginal and socio-economic Issues. Right, so, it’s kind of like we were talking about contemporary issues in today’s society, how/where/what theories do you want me to take from? He said, take from like you know, sociology or anthropology, and we never even touched on any of that [passionately] and I’m, like how am I supposed to incorporate that into our topics... then I ended up getting High Distinction for all 3 papers and he said,’ Oh I thought I’ll just give it to you anyway because the university is not paying me’ or whatever... its not structured properly you know nothings proper. I just, I can’t, can’t find the right words. I don’t know how to explain it...

(NS2: P. 23, L. 24-37)
On the other hand, another participant suggests, "Most people in BATSIS are there to pick up knowledges about Indigenous people, not about theory" (IS3: P. 30, L. 24).

For this Indigenous participant, Aboriginal Studies is not theoretically based because he/she says that the issues are often too personal.

... I believe that when it comes to BATSIS, or Indigenous studies at all, I think that they can’t be too theoretical, you can’t be theoretical about people being ripped away from their parents, you can’t be too theoretical that people die in jail, you can’t be too theoretical about alcohol and substance abuse because students don’t pick up on it. You know, I don’t think believe it’s a course that can involve too much theory, I think that the people often involved in delivering it have to realise they’re delivering Aboriginal studies and that’s what it is.

(IS3: P. 16, L. 22)

All student participants including Indigenous and non-Indigenous students mention small class sizes at FATSIS as a distinguishable difference which impacted on teaching styles. Two examples are highlighted below:

... over in Arts the lectures are more larger, so teaching styles are more for larger groups and they’re not very one on one and personal. FATSIS has a smaller group so you get a more approachable teaching style than you do over at Arts

(IS5: P. 77, L. 21-23)

The other student felt disadvantaged by being in a small class where he/she comments on "...the lack of students- I wanted more students" (NS2: P. 23, L.25)

With regard to responses from an academic perspective, IA4 acknowledges the value of personal perspectives in the classroom because of his/her experience and personal proximity to Indigenous issues.

Comparing the above Indigenous views to the non-Indigenous academics, the responses vary again and have a differing focus. For example, one non-Indigenous participant discusses the importance of flexibility when it comes to teaching Indigenous students in the classroom in order to produce outcomes. He/she states:
...My experience is that Indigenous people within the classroom I teach, I tend to try and be as flexible as I possibly can ... I try to balance the flexibility that I think they sometimes require with the expectations with the external bodies if you like, employers and whatever, the expectations that they have of people who are coming the other end with degrees.

(NA3: P. 63. L. 15-19)

This respondent continues to suggest that the flexibility with Indigenous students is a practice that is not 'culturally based' and that he/she would do the same thing 'for struggling non-Indigenous students' (NA3: P.63. L.23). He/she continues:

Bare in mind that I’ve got to try to be flexible in terms of their [students’] needs which, might be practical needs, or it might be cultural obligation, it might be anything like that. It might mean that they just need more time to do stuff and to do redrafts and redrafts or something like that...balance all that sort of stuff with the need for them to be able to be proficient at what they’re doing when they come out at the other end of the degree. And also if you like, in terms of time lines...


An interesting comment from an Indigenous participant is useful to include within this context as it contradicts the viewpoint presented above. This Indigenous academic suggests that FATSIS has conformed to a 'missionary mentality' when it comes to teaching Indigenous students. Creating difference in teaching approach disadvantages Indigenous students and is unhealthy. In his/her own words:

I think there’s a dreadful missionary mentality that exists with a lot of non-Aboriginal staff towards Aboriginal people and it is not helpful. Here I’m sorry to say at FATSIS that missionary mentality (I don’t know about right now), but its been alive and well ever since I worked here, and I’ve actually been head on with non-Aboriginal staff about it and I’ve been seen as being inflexible and hard...I actually had a few ‘run ins’ with my Head of School about this very issue because she thought I was being hard, and I was disadvantaging their development which I didn’t think I was and that maybe I was a traitor to my own people. Yeah it was like you of all people need to be sympathetic but that’s why I’m like that because I am sympathetic and I don’t want us to be at the bottom of the ladder...

(IA5: P. 92, L. 18-30)

The above view is indirectly supported by the Indigenous academic participant and also contradicts the non-Indigenous academic response discussed earlier in relation to a flexible approach used with Indigenous students. The Indigenous participant in

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this instance discusses a formal teaching approach that is neither as flexible nor lenient to Aboriginal students.

the same standard is expected. I can only talk on an individual basis. I’m a tough one, I’m not into extensions and rewrites unless it’s under extreme circumstances, it has to be genuine sickness, or but I know some, especially the non-Aboriginal [with my experience at the Northern Territory] were very lenient and probably didn’t have really good practices in place because they felt that they were disadvantaged, that there was a disadvantage factor and I agree that there probably is, historically, politically and a lot of other ways but at that level a lot of students take advantage of that.

(IA5: P. 91, L. 46-52, and P. 92, L. 1-7)

Perhaps the final word in this section goes to the following participant who articulates a different nature and aspirations of students who undertake a particular stream within the BATSIS program. Although the response is positive in relation to contributions from these students, it also suggests indirectly a focus on less formal outcomes compared to higher education students elsewhere. He/she declares:

... Students who do [Indigenous] Studies and [a specific unit] are different from most of the students in the university. These students are not first and foremost trying to get some sort of credential that will render them employable so that they don’t have quite the same sort of professional aspirations ...I think that they come excited about the possibility of alternative knowledges and alternative ways of thinking and talking and being- because of that, by and large, the students we get are pretty imaginative, pretty lateral thinking, pretty involved in politics and culture in the community.

(NA1: P.11, L. 44-50)

It is important to note that the issue of learning differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students presented some difficulties for a significant number of respondents. The variety of different responses regarding this also highlights the complexities associated in relation to identity, pedagogy and teaching and learning approaches. Indigenous student participants raise issues concerning the difficulties of theorising Indigenous knowledge, and the personal and flexible approaches encountered at FATSIS. Non-Indigenous participants on the other hand, raise concerns regarding the informal and personal teaching and learning approaches encountered at the Faculty. Lack of facilitation and limited understanding of
learning expectations were also concerns voiced. All student respondents made reference to small class sizes and the impact this has on learning.

Indigenous academics explicitly stated that teaching approaches used do not differ to the approaches used with non-Indigenous students. This perspective was not a familiar view formulated by non-Indigenous academics who asserted a more 'flexible' and 'lenient approach' to the teaching of Indigenous students.

**Learning Differences between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Students**

Learning differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students was an issue that many of the participants interviewed found difficult to answer. There were many hesitations and silences, particularly from academics and comments such as 'I don’t know' and 'yes and no' were common features. Overall fifty percent of all who participated stated that 'Yes' differences do exist whilst ten percent said 'no'. A significant forty percent stated 'yes and no' and the response was often qualified with statements such as 'it depends'.

The following Indigenous participant indirectly acknowledges the cultural context of individuals and other factors which influence how students learn. For instance, urban upbringing has meant that this participant 'knows what to expect' from Western education. An interesting point also made by this participant and not raised by any other participant is that Indigenous people tend to learn best in groups whilst non-Indigenous people learn individually.

I've been brought up in a European Western style..... I know what to expect, its different but I know the kind of rigid guidelines you have to follow. With Indigenous people I found, you try to learn together. I like that, very good, it's very comfortable and it's very special. With other people, they tend to learn on their own. It's very intimidating to come out of high school and then go to university and learn in a very rigid way...

(IS5: P. 81, L. 37-44)

Another student participant who also acknowledges context states:
I think it depends very much on the context that Indigenous students have... if they’ve been raised in an urban environment and gone through a typical school system. I doubt that there’s really that much difference in learning styles because I think that your learning style is something which is learnt, it’s not something which is like biological or intrinsic to your ethnicity...

(NS4: P. 44, L. 6-10)

Some participants also presented mixed responses. For instance, one Indigenous participant states that there is difference between the way Indigenous and non-Indigenous students learn however, he/she cannot identify it. Later, the same respondent in discussions regarding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies support (ATAS) program, suggests that having an Indigenous identity predicates a ‘different sort of learning process.’ He/she says:

I’ve been able to utilise a tutor, an ATAS tutor. I would say that I would not be able to get through without my tutor and I’ve had him for about two years now and it just wouldn’t be possible. When you’re writing an essay, when you need to edit stuff or when I’m it comes back to my identity like being an Indigenous person who comes from a different sort of learning process, that whole thing about grammar...

(IS1: P. 6, L. 45-50)

Responses from another Indigenous student participant suggests mixed feelings regarding differences between the experiences of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in higher education. For example, he/she distinguishes between academic learning and the knowledge needed to engage with an institution. Specifically, this participant articulates the difficulties of dealing with ‘administration’, as this process is a difficult one experienced by many Indigenous students who have to learn it along the way (IS3: See: P. 30, L. 30-33).

... even the Faculty of ATSIS do not provide that sort of basic information, they promote it but they don’t provide basic information to students about what the university is. What studies you can do, what you can do, you know a major. These are things that Indigenous students here you hear talking about but have nowhere to go to find out about it, not even their own Faculty.

(IS3: P. 30, L. 36-41)

However, the same student participant then asserts that there is no difference in the way Indigenous and non-Indigenous students learn as one is in a university environment and all students need to ‘adapt and learn’ in that environment (see, IS3:
P. 30, L. 51-52, and P: 3, L. 1-2). Then the student suggests that perhaps differences in learning do occur after all between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students because of the support available to Indigenous students.

The only difference in learning would be the assistance that people get. [Some non-Indigenous] people [can go] to the tutorial then can go home and talk to someone who’s been to university. Most Aboriginal students can’t do that; they don’t know anyone else to provide that direction which is all about learning as well.

(IS3: P. 31, L. 6-9)

However, for another student participant, learning at the Faculty was both different and difficult and the response implies differences of learning and teaching practices. He/she describes a lack in learning frameworks and directions and suggests that his/her previous learning experience dealing with Indigenous content took on a different form.

The whole theories thing, ... I didn’t know Aboriginal issues included theories from other disciplines, obviously they do now ... I was sitting in the class all through semester and I feel that I’m sitting on my own and I’m doing my own work. I’m a post grad and I should have known theories...Is everyone expecting me to know what to do? No one showed me, no one, no one told me how to reference properly or any of these sorts of stuff. In [another capital city], it went right through in-depth; before you started all your units you had all of that stuff.

(NS2: P. 23, L. 43-51)

Definitive responses from participants and the suggested reasons for differences in learning approaches provide interesting results are worth further investigation. The following response includes an example where the non-Indigenous participant directly states distinctions between personal and formal processes of learning:

My [participant identifies unit] subject which has been frustrating and interesting, simultaneously, where the approach has been about sharing personal experience and talking about your understanding of issues from... experience basis rather than a critical analysis basis which I think is useful in terms of, useful because people have amazing experiences and it’s really good to be able to share those. ... I don’t really feel like I’m learning a huge amount from that. But that is a different approach to learning which may suit other people better than it suits me.

(NS4: P. 38, L. 36-43)
This student suggests that the reason behind this different approach may be because of the existence of both TAFE and higher education students in the same class. He/she also suggests that it may be because of the number of Indigenous students in the class thus implying that this process caters for the different learning styles of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the classroom. The student participant then questions the validity of such an approach.

And in that process, like a large number of Indigenous students, so perhaps it caters for that, to that demographic, I'm not sure, I don't know if that’s actually a valid reason to structure a course like that.

(NS4: P. 39, L. 1-3)

The next section deals with the responses from academic participants interviewed. The majority acknowledge learning differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. As for some of the responses recorded from student participants, the following academic also proposes context as an important element that needs to be considered when responding to this question of difference. He/she states:

I think that’s definitely the case but then again it's not because of any genetic pre-disposition to learn in particular ways, it’s because they've been brought up in particular environments which cultural environment, which prioritise relatedness and maybe environmental experience above intellectual or verbal sources of knowledge and argument. I think that you would find that many people from the working classes and from other sorts of cultural groups in society would have very similar things. I think you need to try to find ways of accommodating for those within the university context, but at the same time position the sort of more academic discourse as being important for political and cultural reasons.

(NA1: P. 15. L. 51-52, and P.16. L. 1-6)

Perhaps it is important to note at this point, that not all academics had Indigenous students in these classes at the time of the interview, yet differences were still attributed as a feature of various learning processes that take place in the classroom. For instance the following response is an example:
If we did have [Indigenous] students in the classroom, of course, they would be working on exactly the same activities, but achieving completely different things. The Indigenous students would already know all the answers but would be searching around ways of representing it and the Balanda would already know ways of representing but not know what the answers were. But it would be quite easy to develop collaborative relations there.

(NA1: P. 15, L. 20-23)

The majority of academic participants interviewed had difficulty in responding to this question and some responses were difficult to unpack from the transcripts. However, this reaction is significant and is worthy of recording in order to deconstruct and investigate. Thirty percent of responses received from this group gave ‘yes and no’ answers. Examples to illustrate this follow:

One academic responds to his/her own learning experiences as a student and states that:

That’s a really hard thing for me to answer because I was one of those people who never had difficulty with school. I was one of these people that really enjoyed school and really liked it and most Indigenous people don’t. I loved it; I loved learning. I liked learning about things that were foreign to me. My education was very [overseas] based because in those days they had no Australian studies when I was at school because we were learning about England or Europe and I loved that…

(IA4: P. 73, L. 8-12)

An instance where an academic found this question to be difficult and took some time to respond to the question of learning differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students within their classroom is recorded below. Many nuances exist in the text and it is difficult to unpack the response: For example, he/she states that “You can say that of any student” but then states that “...some Indigenous students are much more visual and some are much more vocal and [at] writing skills not that good” (P.73, L. 20-24). Whether this is a different experience to non-Indigenous people, the response is also difficult to unpack but the participant suggests that differences do exist in that Indigenous students have difficulty in academic writing and therefore this differentiates their experience from non-Indigenous students. This participant states:
It probably is but you don’t hear that. I don’t hear that from non-Indigenous students, I think that non-indigenous students say, that’s not quite true, …I have heard one or two non-Indigenous students who say ‘I don’t like academic writing’ but generally you don’t hear [about it], but you do hear that from Indigenous people constantly- ‘I can’t think like that, I can’t write like that.

(IA4: P. 73, L. 28-32)

Another academic participant, who also finds this question difficult to respond to states that this issue “is a hard one because you can’t speak for everyone as other people have different experiences” (IA5: P.94, L.4-5). This participant does however, suggest that when it comes to specific content such as environmental knowledges Indigenous students are more adept than non-Indigenous students but they fail to realise their competence in this area and they do not have the Western tools to articulate that knowledge. This participant also suggests that Indigenous students react to conceptual frameworks from the social sciences less positively, thus implying learning differences. In the participant’s own words:

I find that Aboriginal students... react in a far more positive way to environmental stuff than they would to the other concepts like sociology, history... literature. [Indigenous students] have a good command of [environmental] knowledge. That’s where that whole idea of pedagogy comes too. … It’s land linked-it’s how they can make that link back to the land, that knowledge is there, then they can articulate it through how they know how things work in that ecological and environmental way. That’s the thing I think where they have huge power and they don’t realise it though. They say, ‘oh I don’t understand science, science is really hard’, but they’ve got it, they know that stuff, and they just don’t have the Western tools to either articulate it or write it.

(IA5: P. 94, L. 23-33)

It is interesting to note that this same participant also highlights an issue that is not articulated by any other participant and that is the issue of self-esteem and confidence in the classroom. He/she suggest that these students are competent and do discuss ideas amongst each other outside of class but not in the classroom. This participant gives the following example from experience:
I've got two good talkers who are very confident and are very opinionated and I've got three quiet who just sit back. But they talk it up out of class, which is typical of Aboriginal students, and it's very disappointing because you know they have some brilliant ideas and thoughts. They share it with you but they don’t articulate it in class. It's that confidence thing you know, age-old problem.

(IA5: P. 91, L. 32-36)

Again it is difficult to unpack the response from another participant who initially suggests that Indigenous and non-Indigenous students do learn differently, but indirectly change their answer at the end of the statement by suggesting that there may not be differences after all. He/she suggests:

Yes, decidedly so- on the cognitive basis, because of language differences... My experience has been that English is such a prepositional language and most of our Englishes are generated around Creoles, generated by vernaculars, which have mainly suffixes of languages, the use of prepositions is so often disregarded. I find that with my students...the same problem exists with balandas students, and I started to notice it with Jewish students we had, and I also noticed it with [other non-Indigenous] students.

(IA2: Prv. 50, L. 44-53)

Very long silences exist on learning differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students by another academic. Again, the question is responded to both in the negative and the positive.

It’s a very hard question. I don’t think they do...good pedagogy is good pedagogy... Westernised people actually learn despite the Western structures for learning... it's quite possible, and I think that my experience would probably reflect it, the things that we possibly describe as being Indigenous pedagogy is actually good pedagogy all around. So in that sense there isn’t a difference, there is a difference because Westernised people if you like haven’t been acculturated into this didactic conduit metaphor type of learning, their acculturated to learn quite well and probably learn in spite of those sorts of things.

(NA3: P. 64, L. 26-37)

This section has presented a number of varying positions articulated by students and academics. Significant in the responses has been the difficulty for many of the respondents to clearly articulate a position centred on approaches and perceptions in relation to learning differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Cultural contexts, assumptions about how Indigenous people learn and support
mechanisms are factors raised. Teaching at FATSIS (according to respondents) differed to teaching that took place elsewhere where the emphasis in FATSIS was on informal structures and processes. It is important to reiterate the difficulty academics felt in relation to the issue of learning differences. The long and careful consideration, as well as silences with responses in this area, may be attributed to the sensitivity and complexities surrounding pedagogies centred on Indigenous students. I shall analyse this further in the next chapter. Also significant is the contradictions and uncertainty of the responses raised.

Difference in Treatment between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Students

The question of difference in the treatment of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in higher education classes by academics and other students is an important one as it presents issues related to pedagogic practices and may tell us something about learning processes and expectations placed on students' identity.

Overall fifty percent of all participants stated 'yes', that differences in treatment did exist while twenty percent said that such differences did not exist. While another twenty percent stated both 'yes and no' and ten percent did not give a response. Not all participants explained responses in the interview. However, those responses that were recorded are described below:

The twenty percent who stated that there were no different treatments between identities were responses from student participants. An example of such a response comes from the following student who states:

I haven’t been treated any differently and I haven’t seen anybody else be treated differently. What I’ve experienced though has been pretty different, some of the lectures and the teachers have actually expected a little more, so no I haven’t experienced anything like that.

(IS5: P. 80, L. 52, and P. 81, L. 1-3)

A student response that differs to the preceding one suggests that "Indigenous students expect to be treated differently" (IS1: P.5, L. 23). Other comments on this issue appear unclear except in, the last part of the text; the respondent states that by the final year Indigenous students "need to meet certain standards" (see P. 5, L. 29-30). This participant thus implies that difference in academic treatment is undesirable as ultimately the same outcomes are expected from final year degree students. An issue that is also highlighted by this participant that is important to
note, is the issue of lowering standards for Indigenous students within the Faculty (see, IS1: P. 10, L. 35).

Some interesting responses from academic participants were recorded. Generally the explanations tend to lean towards agreeing that there are differences in treatment between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students by students and academics alike. However, the direct responses to this issue were non-committal as 'yes and no' were recorded as the dominant answer.

One academic viewpoint offers an interesting and well-considered response highlighting the need for academics to generally consider how they position Indigenous students in the production of discourse. He/she state there is positiveness in providing a framework for Indigenous students to speak for themselves. In his/her own words:

I suspect so, and I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing. I think from the readings I've done and the supervision of research that Indigenous students feel bad that they are asked to somehow represent Indigenous issues to everybody in the classroom. I think that lecturers need to be very careful about the way in which they position Indigenous students in terms of the production of discourse. However, I think the fact that lecturers ask Indigenous students to speak like that is a positive sign in so far as it represents some sort of democratisation of the production of knowledge in the classroom. I'm not saying that's always and everywhere a good thing and I'm not saying that's not without its problems...

(NA1: P. 15, L. 37-44)

Another response from an academic who suggests that differences in treatments do occur. "There are still pockets of people who don't have any expectations of Indigenous students or have low expectations of Indigenous students; people treating Indigenous people differently" (IA4: P.72, L. 1-5). They also comment on their experience in terms of how other non-Indigenous academics still treat Indigenous academics in a negative and a derogatory way. The following example illustrates this point:
I [and another Indigenous academic] went to a meeting the other day and we were still treated like stupid Aboriginal people by other staff members at the University and that was really quite, towards the end of the meeting they changed their attitude, I suppose but when we first walked in, we were stupid Aboriginal people. For example, we were talking about that we want to put our courses online or external, basically we were trying to find out whether it should be external hard copies or should we do it online and just sort of saying to us ok, DON'T YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE, WHAT WHY ARE YOU DOING IT LIKE THAT, THIS IS THE WAY WE DO IT, WHY AREN'T YOU DOING IT LIKE THIS!! [Raised voice] They were abrupt and very rude.... I mean we ended up finding some common ground in the end; they tested us out.

(IA4: P. 72, L. 17-32)

Another Indigenous academic also state that his/her experience suggests that differences in treatments do take place but that he/she discourages it. He/she state:

I would hope that it doesn’t happen, though my experience has been that it does happen...Both in terms of rejecting the Aboriginality of students and sometimes over compensating for the ‘victim’s’ lack of opportunity in formative years.

(IA2: P. 50, L. 12-17)

...To me a student is a student and my job is to facilitate the learning process where if there is a rewrite the person must deal with the rewrite themselves, as specified in the unit outlines, and I will provide the discussion for the student to realise the most effective way to present analysis.

(IA2: P. 50, L. 40-44)

For the following Indigenous academic who has had experience teaching in the BATSIS program, (and is now teaching elsewhere) differences in treatment of students did not occur at NTU. However, he/she suggests that it does occur in the institution they are currently at.

I didn’t feel that here in the Northern Territory, but I might feel it in [southern university] because all tutors at the Aboriginal Education Centre are Aboriginal and I think they tend to be a little bit protective of Aboriginal students. This is a little bit of a battle that I’m having with Student Support Officer at the moment who feels she’s their house mother or something. I say let them grow up, they’ve got to grow themselves and they’ve got to take some hard ...

(IA5: P. 91, L. 46-52, and P.92, L.1-7)

Finally, it is worthwhile to note that some academics felt uncomfortable with the subject of difference between the treatment of Indigenous and non-Indigenous
students in the classroom. Some participants were almost reluctant to answer the question. For example, long pauses and silences exist in the transcript where statements are incoherent and thus difficult to transcribe. For example, one participant was unsure of the response presented but did recognise differences in treatment (see P. 62, L. 48-52, and P. 63, L. 1-6). The question was then rephrased and asked again. Again long silence and another response is offered but not related to the question at hand.

Perhaps this section can be concluded by stating the inherent dilemma faced by academic participants in relation to ethical considerations of egalitarian treatment of students. This was a reality of their teaching practices.

**Identity**

**Constructions of Identity**

The social and cultural constructions, interpretations and positionalities of identities are an important factor for consideration when investigating pedagogic practices and knowledge productions for curriculum. The expectations and representations that exist within the classroom within higher education institutions impact upon the learning processes and affect teaching practices. Assumptions and expectations regarding behaviour accorded to specific identities influences the dynamics in the classroom between students and academics of differing cultural background/ethnicity.

The participants were asked to describe views and attitudes in relation to Indigenous identities. Participants were also asked whether individual identity is questioned or made reference to in the classroom. It is hoped that the responses to these issues will allow for an investigation of what constitutes identity constructions and interpretations and whether this affects the dynamics of inter-cultural communication and understanding.

A number of student participants acknowledge the complexities of identity and its emotional implications. The following participant articulates the complexities, and acknowledges the immensity of Indigenous diversity, and how specific agents of socialisation such as the media misinterpret this. He/she states that:
Indigenous identity, is incredibly complex and complicated, because, although there is an incredible diversity in Indigenous cultures which is very well documented, there's not a huge acknowledgement of that in the media or the political sphere. So rather than getting a view of Indigenous people which incorporates that, you get a very sort of homogenised view, which is not actually true.

(NS4: P. 41, L. 23-27)

The non-Indigenous student participant continued to eloquently express the contested representations of identity in terms of differences between self-identity constructions and how this is misinterpreted by non-Indigenous people. He/she states:

So, it's not so much that Indigenous identity is constructed which is the issue. It's the fact that the identity, which is constructed, doesn't actually correspond with the reality of the way Indigenous people see themselves and their culture. I think that's probably the central issue with that is that the two views are conflicting...

(NS4: P. 41, L. 34-38)

However, another non-Indigenous student participant is ‘shocked’ by the diversity of Indigenous identity he/she has encountered in the Northern Territory, as it does not correlate with his/her previous constructions of Indigenous identity. He/she states that”... in terms of Indigenous identity and what I feel about it, I had a culture shock because Aboriginal people up here are different from down [another capital city] and I guess I didn't take that into consideration” (NS2: P. 21, L. 48-50). This viewpoint points to the important notion of national constructions of Indigenous identity and the impact it has on perceptions. The homogenisation of Aboriginal identity in this instance is significant as it represents pertinent issues which need further analysis.

On the personal nature of identity and its elements of confusion, one Indigenous participant highlights the significant basics of identity constructions and the importance of a teaching/learning framework that supports the discussion and unpacks the issues involved, so as to empower and provide self-esteem for Indigenous students in higher education.
I feel the issue of identity is a very confusing one and I think a lot of people are really confused out there... but it really comes from within. You have to have an understanding about who you are, where you come from and what makes you tick. For myself, I don't think I've doubted. I have been able to talk strongly about certain issues and what it actually does come down to is you know principles about yourself. When you are looking at principles colour does not come into it at all or identity does not come into it...

(IS1: P. 4, L. 8-15)

The participant also asserts the relationship between identity and emotion and the ‘need to step out of that in the end’. He/she states:

I suppose that’s where the problem is, being able to step out, being able to go into it self and go back out of it and being objective so that what people have to do is to keep doing that. And I suppose that needs to come with the curriculum giving people confidence to be able to come in and out of situations and debate certain things without being emotional. I suppose that needs to be learnt in the first year. I think that’s a really, really important point especially for Indigenous people... It’s not a user-friendly, academia, so they need to be equipped in the first year to be able to be objective and to come in and out of those domains.

(IS1: P. 4, L. 20-28)

I’ve been in classes where I’ve been the only Indigenous student for a long time, I’ve always been myself. That’s been strength. Its’ been an initiative I suppose too and it gives me that dominance.

(IS1: P. 5, L. 36-37)

It is interesting to convey a number of Indigenous views on identity constructions as it reflects the diverse personal, cultural and political representations involved as well as the importance of cultural and social contexts that shape identity constructions.

The following Indigenous participant acknowledges the diverse and fragile nature of Indigenous identity and the need to strengthen knowledge of self, including the experience of multiple identities. The participant acknowledges the university and the BATSIS program in supporting him/her to learn about who they are, and to ‘get that connection back’. He/she states:
I was brought up in a European Western society. I'm Indigenous and that kind of affected me. I didn't go out bush or do all the traditional stuff that my cousins might have done... when you got older, it hit me, it really started to affect me and I thought well I've got to do something about it and I decided that doing university and to have that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective, to do that and to get that connection back.

(ISS: P. 78, L. 22- 27)

The contested nature of identity, and the various constructions created of what Indigenous identity constitutes, is reflected in the following quotations. The academic participant highlights stereotypical representations of Indigenous identity and insinuates a mono-cultural construction by 'others'. He/she states:

... people look at me and can see that I'm Aboriginal. ... In a way I'm fortunate; whereas I've got friends who get challenged and people do bring it up and say are you Indigenous [because they have blond hair and blue eyes] whereas I've never had that because obviously I've got, whatever the Aboriginal look is. I certainly have that stereotypical view of what an Aboriginal person looks like. So that that's Aboriginality, people that see me automatically know...

(IA4: P. 70, L. 20-30)

Another example of the contested nature of identity can be seen in the following quote, where the participant discusses his/her experience with the Kooris in NSW and the status he/she attributes to certain constructions over others. He/she put forward the following comment:

I mean, with the colonial impacts because a lot of them [Indigenous people] were underground for a long time, so I'm not questioning their identity here, I'm just saying that they are just learning about being Aboriginal... I know this is going to sound so dreadful but I have to say it-when a lot of the Kooris talk to me, it's like [me] talking to a white fella and that's my experience.

(IA5: P.94, L. 9-16)

This section has highlighted the contested nature of Indigenous identity. It has alluded to the emotional and personal attachments individuals have in relation to how identity is constructed both at a national and local level. The representation of Indigenous identity as a homogenised entity is an important issue. Perhaps an insight shed by a non-Indigenous participant clearly concludes this section as it points to the instability of identity constructions is "the fact that the identity which is constructed..."
doesn't correspond with the reality of the way Indigenous people see themselves and their culture."

**Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Classroom Participation.**

To explore issues of whether identity constructions by both academics and students' impact and influence the dynamics in the classroom, all participants were asked to describe expectations which existed in the tutorial of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Eighty percent of those interviewed stated that assumptions and expectations existed when it came to discussions regarding Indigenous knowledges. Non-Indigenous students tended to expect those students who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders to be ‘spokespeople’ for Indigenous people as a whole. It is important to note that the majority of classes within the BATSIS program have a small number of Indigenous students and that in many units (excluding CAS100) there are none. A typical response is illustrated in the quote below:

Most of the students were not Aboriginal, and in those [FATSIS] units, the Aboriginal students are expected to know a bit more than the others and they’re there to learn and its not their role, they’re not on a wage, so a lot of the Aboriginal students are expected to provide the direction in terms of classroom discussion.

(IS3: P. 26. L. 45-47)

Presented below are the viewpoints expressed in relation to such ‘expectations’. The majority of Indigenous student participants interviewed expressed the difficulties ‘expectations’ caused in placing a burden or in ‘intimidating’ them into speaking on Indigenous knowledge systems. Student examples of such statements follow:

…it’s an extra burden [for] Aboriginal students, especially when Aboriginal students aren’t really open about coming forward and engaging in those sorts of discussions in a classroom environment, and, for them to do more than they should, I believe, it’s not a problem, but it shouldn’t be occurring.

(IS3: P. 26, L. 52, and P. 27, L. 1-3)

There's an assumption there, that because you're Aboriginal, you know about Aboriginal culture, so it's an extra burden on Aboriginal students and it shouldn't be.

(IS3: P. 27, L. 7-8)
The next quote also illustrates a similar viewpoint. The participant also notes that students come from a variety of different disciplines and thus handle Indigenous perspectives differently.

In some of the lectures, which include Indigenous perspectives [in] Indigenous topics, you sometimes feel intimidated. I mean a lot of people are looking at you and expecting you to react in a different way- that can be very intimidating. Sometimes you don’t know what that’s about, but most of the time, you do feel like you’ve got to act a bit differently, or you’ve got to say something, and if you don’t speak up, you know, you’re not really getting involved. You know, you get that sometimes- but you have to tackle it in your own way.

(IS5: P. 77, L. 28-34)

Indigenous academic participants interviewed confirm student responses regarding the pressure to speak about anything Indigenous in the classroom. The following two quotes are an example:

...if there’s anything Indigenous that comes up, they all turn around to the Indigenous people in the class who are expected to know everything. I sort of experienced a little bit of that when I was at uni myself. Indigenous people get really ‘pissed off’ with that because anything Indigenous that comes across, everyone turns around and expects them to answer. That can be really annoying...

(IA4: P. 71, L. 41-45)

and

I think it’s a perennial problem when there is an Indigenous student (or students) in the room. The non-Indigenous expect them to do most of the talking on those issues and that’s true of the situation. Although we’re talking at 300 level students now and it’s probably not as problematic as it would be at lower level and I’m very lucky it’s a kind of balanced class.

(IA5: P. 91, L. 21-24)

The following non-Indigenous academic states that inevitably there are pressures on Indigenous students to respond when it has something to do with Indigenous knowledges. He/she also states that as lecturers they try to ensure that Indigenous students don’t feel that they have to comply with the expectations:
I think I probably make a conscious effort to try and make sure that it doesn’t, like to try and make the Indigenous students in the classroom feel as though they don’t have to [speak on behalf of all Indigenous people]. That there’s no expectation to become the spokesman for Indigenous people in Australia. I think there’s probably an expectation, although it’s probably not explicitly acknowledged by the non-Indigenous students that here we have a real life Indigenous person in our mists that are going to be able to give us the answers.

(NA3: P. 60, L. 38-43)

Interestingly only twenty percent of academics interviewed suggest that speaking from different positions can be used as a positive tool in the classroom to share worldviews, and to provide students with the opportunity of speaking from their own position using their own voice.

In [one of the BATSIS] units, certainly everybody’s required to speak from their own position, identifying the different discourses which contribute to knowledge on a particular issue and find themselves in a position in relation to those discourses and to argue for themselves properly. Now that seems to me to be pretty consistent with any sort of Indigenous philosophy of knowledge. It’s not anything precious about it, because its Indigenous, it just happens to be a very good epistemology and it happens to fit in pretty consistently with some of the findings of structuralism and post structuralism so that in fact, it has quite a good pedigree in terms of other philosophical practices in a tertiary institution.

(NA1: P. 16, L. 28-35)

The following participant discusses the importance of allowing for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities in bringing discussions to the fore so that this can be contextualised and understood from the varying positions that may exist in the classroom. He/she states:

I think there are two sides of the story there. One, is as far as Indigenous students’ concerned, the aim is to deal with the discussion rather than to reject ‘red neck’ ideas outright. To say ‘red necks’ are racists and disregard it - to find ways to manipulate their contexts to an advantage where I might be able to acknowledge them as people. On the balanda side of the issues, very few people understand exactly how Aboriginal people have to cope with certain issues- and so much of the inequality and recklessness in the system- and on that basis, there should be reasonable sharing...

(IA2: Prv. 49, L. 40-46)
Once you get one ['redneck’] on side in terms of thinking beyond the stereotypes, you can generate that. But to hide them off is distinct danger because the black group would merely then reinforce the stereotypes that they’re victims and the white group attitudes is actually important because then you can get the ‘redneck’ point of view, to see or understand the basis/origin of their ‘redneck’ ideas.

(IA2: P.50, L.1-7)

The Indigenous responses indicate that without a doubt there exist expectations from non-Indigenous people regarding speaking on any related issues to do with Indigenous knowledges.

Although the following analyses are not a result of a direct question specifically related to the investigation of interpretations of why these expectations take place in the classroom, they are a result of detailed comments of the preceding questions where participants were asked to comment on the existence of any expectations. They have been included as they may signify important dimensions for consideration in the investigation of pedagogic practice within the BATSIS program.

The following response is interesting as it conveys an interpretation from a student regarding the motivation of academics when drawing on Indigenous students to discuss Indigenous issues in the classroom.

I think also the lecturers do feel a little uncomfortable with Aboriginal people in the class...because when they’re doing a presentation or something. They continuously look at the Aboriginal students to reinforce themselves therefore the Aboriginal students who are doing something such as BATSIS, I would advise them not to be involved and not to participate too much and just to sit down and go with the flow.

(IS3: P. 28, l. 15-16 and L. 24-27)

The participant also brings to the fore the reluctance of non-Indigenous students in engaging in discourses with and about Indigenous people.

I think that non-Indigenous students are reluctant to talk about things that involve Indigenous people around Indigenous people. I think it’s because they’re unsure about what they’re saying. I would think the same way if I were going to be talking about Chinese culture and Chinese people, I think it’s natural.

Another non-Indigenous participant agrees and discusses fear as a reason why non-Indigenous students are reluctant to discuss issues in relation to Indigenous knowledges. He/she suggests that:

I think people are scared to say anything which will get them into trouble because it is such a touchy issue in society and so easy to make a slip of the tongue and say something which is potentially insulting to someone. And I think political correctness is a big part of it...

(IS4: P. 45, L. 46-47)

However, it is interesting to note a differing response from another non-Indigenous student participant who brings to the fore an alternative viewpoint as to why they as a student regard Indigenous participation as important:

I think it is important for Indigenous people to speak up on Indigenous issues in the same way that its important for women to speak up on issues of sexism or Croatian people to speak out on issues of racism within society because until you actually get a perspective of the people who are being marginalised in society, it's really, it continuously constructed by dominant culture and it's the construction by dominant culture which is often a part of their approach within society. But at the same time, because of the incredible diversity of human experience you can't expect that everything an Indigenous student says is representative of the Indigenous community, which I think is what tends to happen...

(NS4: P.41, L. 48-52, and P. 42. L.1-3)

This view is shared by an other Indigenous student participant who states that non-Indigenous people are very keen to learn about Indigenous culture and thus look towards Indigenous students to discuss Indigenous issues which the non-Indigenous students are not sure about. He/she states:

I found that most people are really interested in Indigenous issues, it's amazing - this semester I found that a lot of people want to know about Indigenous issues and this is very important

(IS5: P. 77, L. 44-46)

The Indigenous participant continues to state that talking about personal issues in the classroom is uncomfortable, yet he/she acknowledges the difficulties that can be encountered when discussing such topics as kinship.
... non-Indigenous students are interested to know, your views on it [Indigenous issue], which is good. I don't feel comfortable talking about my personal issues in Arts units. [In] Anthropology for example, we touch on a lot of kinship and family issues, though I'm happy to talk about it in general terms. I'm not really comfortable talking about personal things. [For example, when we discuss] kinship issues-Western people don't understand it very well - we have an exercise on it and a lot of them [Western people] ... [find it a] very hard thing to understand... it's who you are ... and it makes you think a lot about what they [non-Indigenous people] must be thinking about your own identity...

(IS5: P. 79, L.33-42)

The above responses from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students are important because the students highlight the dynamics that take place in the classroom. Students also recognise the difficulties of positioning Indigenous identities into a particular framework. However, students also recognise the interest, curiosity and the need to learn about Indigenous knowledges.

**Institutional Indigenous Representations**

All participants were asked to comment on their thoughts regarding Indigenous representation within the culture of the University. Twenty percent of overall respondents said they did not know and ten percent did not offer a direct response. However, the majority of respondents in this sample (seventy percent) commented on the negative elements of institutional representation. No positive comments were recorded.

Comments recorded are categorised into the following sections: Indigenous representations within FATSIS, Indigenous representation in other NTU faculties and University representations. Although the question did not focus on the faculty level of representation, many participants commented at this level, as well as at the institutional level.

**Indigenous Representation at FATSIS**

Not all participants commented on Indigenous representations in FATSIS. However, one academic discussed this and noted the 'positive' and 'legitimised' representations at FATSIS compared to the negative representations constructed by other disciplines in other faculties.
I think that we deliberately tell our students that we have been advised by the advisors [Indigenous communities] to avoid the sorts of objectivised representations of Aboriginal culture that come from anthropology and linguistics and because of that, the anthropological linguistics stuff is added on as an additional way of understanding some of the complexities that Indigenous academics [states an academic’s name].face.

(NA1: P.14, L.8-13)

The same academic then reconsiders the above position and acknowledges that not all elements of Indigenous representations have been positive and that this needs strengthening. He/she states:

...One of the things, that's happened over the last few years is that Indigenous people don't feel united in their cause, they don't feel particularly comfortable in the context of the Faculty despite everybody's best efforts and I think that's something we can work on and I think that's something that's improving... The special Indigenous nature of the knowledge which is produced within the Faculty will be much more exciting, interesting and worthwhile

(NA1: P.17, L.16-21)

Another response from a student participant indirectly suggests the negative nature of representation within the Faculty where students are 'comforted' and thus disadvantaged because of their indigeneity. He/she states: “...you know what we do here is to comfort students. It stops at that point and I don’t necessarily know the reasons beyond that, but it’s very interesting” (IS1: P.5, L. 52). This point is echoed earlier in relation to Indigenous pedagogic practice where some non-Indigenous academics discussed the notion of Indigenous pedagogy. Classroom practice in some instances included providing ‘flexible’ approaches when dealing with Indigenous students where learners were given many opportunities for rewrites of papers and reviewed timelines for submission of papers. It will be interesting to examine this in some detail in the next chapter, to determine the impact of this on Indigenous students and the overall representation of how Indigenous people learn.

**Indigenous Representations in Other Faculties**

Given that a number of students and academics had teaching and learning experience in other disciplines situated in faculties around the Northern Territory University, it was important to get an insight from participants regarding Indigenous representation in spaces outside FATSIS.
Not a great deal of comment was made on perceived representation of Indigenous students outside the Faculty. However, an indirect response in relation to this can be seen from the following comment that was in response to teaching methodologies outside the Faculty. The respondent implies that 'oppression', and 'objectification' of Indigenous knowledge systems are products of constructed representation in other disciplines. He/she states:

[A number]...of our students who are also studying Anthropology complain to us about the way in which they feel, somehow marginalised or even oppressed by the objectification of Aboriginal structures, kinship, and political and social economies as is represented through those discourses.

(NA1: P.14, L. 1-4)

And I think that some of those students who complain about that, have a valid complaint and some of them are just not willing to take on [laugh] the sort of rigour that's required by those discourses.

(NA1: P. 14, L. 5-8)

The above statement also implies that unlike FATSIS, other faculties in the university are more rigorous in teaching and learning approaches. This is an important consideration as it implicitly insinuates differences in teaching styles and suggests that FATSIS approach is not as rigorous and is therefore less demanding on students.

In another response, a participant comments on the small number of Indigenous students in higher education. This small representation, this respondent argues, increases expectations of those Indigenous students who are enrolled in higher education.

... I haven’t found many Indigenous people over in higher ed [education], you know. They’re all over here [FATSIS] doing certificate courses. I’d like to see more of them. We joke around a lot, about Indigenous higher ed. [education], you’ve got a lot of expectations, you’ve got to succeed and you know it’s pretty daunting and it’s a lot to expect from a few people doing higher ed[education] ...I haven’t seen or experienced any racism so far...

(IS5: P. 81, L. 14-19)

Other participants on this subject interpreted representation in terms of Indigenous involvement in outside bodies such as the Student Union. Respondents noted the difficulties associated with that in terms of time and commitment overriding studies.
For example, an academic points out that Indigenous representation can be successful only when students spend a significant amount of time in such roles. He/she also notes that the consequence is the impact it has as students often withdraw from higher education altogether. In the words of the Indigenous academic participant: "They [students] spent more time in the Union, working, within the student union, representing NTU at national forums and international forums - dropped out" (see, IA2: P. 51, L. 23-27).

This viewpoint concurs with another Indigenous student response, insinuating that Indigenous students who are represented in associations outside study do so to the detriment of their own study. This respondent states that:

A lot of the students are involved with the student Union and also with the Indigenous association... I see a lot of these people that have been here [FATSIS] for so many years and still in the same place, its pretty, sort of, it’s a bit sad and its also disciplining yourself.

(IS1: P. 5, L. 42-47)

Another participant talks about representation in terms of students' presence in various disciplines. He/she states that preparatory programs such as law is important for Indigenous people because it creates:

an identity to those groups of students that actually come through [higher education programs]...there are law students who have come through that particular [preparatory] program, so you start to identify them as Law students or Art students... That program [is] starting to give them identity and you’re starting to see enclaves of students who’ve come through and increased population and you only see them in mainstream in higher education. That’s really interesting that they’re starting to come through those programs and be identified by that program...

(IS1: P. 6, L. 19-28)

**Indigenous Representation at NTU**

Academic and student participants alike commented on the lack of Indigenous representation at the university. Descriptions such as 'tokenistic', 'limited' and 'stereotypical' were common features in the comments recorded.

Limited Indigenous representation was the response recorded from the following participant:
Every now and then, I guess, on the website you have a brown face, but that's mostly a Timorese or something like that. I think there is a large section of the university which is oriented toward professional training and it doesn't see the university as a place for the development and celebrations of alternative knowledge systems...Aboriginal students are pretty much absent from the ethos of a University.

(NA1: P. 16, L. 11-17)

This student participant also states that NTU currently represents itself as being a ‘frontier university’. ‘It's the Top End, it's tropical and there are Crocodiles; ’ it’s ‘exotic, and different’. He/she states that the representation of Aboriginal people at the University is implicit rather than explicit implying that this is tokenistic as only certain aspects of Indigenous culture is portrayed. The example given is Aboriginal art and its representation on the web site (see, NS4: P. 43, L. 35-50).

The following comments convey the views of a number of participants who suggest that the negative nature of Indigenous institutional representation impacts negatively on the representation of Indigenous knowledges in the Northern Territory.

The view of one academic participant is that Indigenous representation is ‘uncritical’, ‘stereotypical’ and tokenistic’.

Very uncritically, stereotypical, but I think it’s out of ignorance ... certainly not a malicious thing or anything like that. It’s just that no one knows anything different. When you look at some of the promotional materials, it’s getting better I think, but there’s still a lot of that stereotypical sorts of ideas, and tokenistic in a way.

(NA3: P. 64. L. 8-11)

Racist representation was the concern of the following respondents where one participant states that racism still exists today in the culture of the university. An example is given of his/her first year experience on entering a classroom:

...I walked into a class, and lecturers will look at me as if to say ‘what are you doing here’, you know, so the racism that exists in NTU is not verbal, its more, body language rather than anything else. ...people who lecture in Aboriginal issues and don’t have the simple skills to talk to an Aboriginal person...

(IS3: P. 30, L .6-19)

Racist representation as a feature of NTU is a view also supported by the following academic who strongly puts forward the following view:
When I first came here, [NTU] there were people pointing out to me, there are people in the university here that are very supportive of FATSIS, now those people are the most racist people, the most arrogant, ignorant people I’ve ever met in my life. Now I think what the difference is and I’m willing to say that I think, they can relate to the non-Indigenous people here quite well and that’s fine. And I think that again they know that Aboriginal people know their place, so that challenges us to know their place but they don’t like Indigenous people who may not necessarily, you know, won’t stay in place or who are quite challenging and would challenge other people in the University. I think there is that, I think people don’t like Indigenous staff and I think that goes for students as well.

(IA4: P. 72, L. 44-52)

Another strong view is portrayed by another academic, who suggests the lack of Indigenous representations in Indigenous academic support positions at the University where non-Indigenous people occupy that role. This, he/she suggests, does not promote nor represent Aboriginal students nor empower Indigenous people:

Well they’re not, they’re completely discarded, I think. The most dangerous and the most sickening thing that’s happened here at the Northern Territory University is having non-Indigenous people in the Indigenous Academic Support. I think that’s so obscene, I still can’t believe it, that’s allowed to happen. At the same time they’re talking about empowerment and the promotion of Indigenous academics. Well how you ever going to do that? That is the perfect opportunity to promote your Aboriginal students and guide them through some kind of career. I thought the NTU would have taken the advantage and the opportunity to do something like that. I was terribly disappointed when I heard that that was not what was going to happen here and I still think it’s still the wrong thing.

(IA5: P. 92, L. 47-52 and P. 93, L. 1-3)

Finally, the only participant who is undecided about whether the representation is positive or negative offers the following response:

...I still feel that there’s this gap there and you know, it’s something bigger but it’s not going anywhere. I think the university views us pretty well, but there’s something that is not out there...I don’t know, maybe it’s reconciliation maybe, you know, I just don’t know how to express it you know, sort of like a bit of a gap there.

(IS5: P. 81, L. 26-28)
This section has conveyed the views and responses transcribed regarding Indigenous representation at the NTU. The collated responses predominantly convey negative representation at both the micro (Faculty) level and the macro (institutional) level. Comforting Indigenous students and the lowering of standards were concerns raised at the FATSIS level. The high expectation of Indigenous students to perform, the pressure of involvement in extra-curricula activities, and non-Indigenous construction of Indigenous identity were other areas of concern. At an institutional level, the responses recorded suggest that tokenistic, romanticised and limited constructions were common features which participants highlighted.

**Cultural and Academic Support for Indigenous Students**

**Academic Support**

Indigenous students studying at NTU have a number of avenues for access to academic support. This includes the Academic Support lecturers located in each faculty within the university. It also includes the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS), which is funded by the Department of Education and Science Training (DEST). ATAS is currently managed and administered by FATSIS. Most of the Indigenous students interviewed utilised ATAS services, however not all did, as we shall see from some of the responses in this section.

Academic participants interviewed who commented on adequate academic support for Indigenous students generally believed that this access was sufficient. For example, one non-Indigenous academic states that support mechanisms were good at FATSIS and that they have improved over time.

An interesting response from one non-Indigenous academic participants suggests that the provision of a physical space such as FATSIS is itself a service because it supports Indigenous knowledges. He/she states:
I think there are good support mechanisms here. They probably have improved over time… I think as an organisation, as a Faculty, as a Centre in the University, it's a site within the University. I think there's always been something that's strong here… Just the fact that there is a site I think is important and obviously it waxes and wanes in terms of all sorts of other complicated issues. But I think underlying all the waxing [and] waning, there's still a strong support thing and the fact that the university recognises Indigenous knowledge by having the Faculty, of having the Centre, or having classroom counts for things. It is important.

(NA3: P. 66, L. 14-22)

An Indigenous academic suggests that there are currently adequate academic support mechanisms at the Faculty. He/she put forward that:

There are mechanisms for support systems; whether they [students] get the support is another thing... academic support is always available if it deals with social, marital, money etc. [concerns] and so forth. [However], I don’t feel that we’re here to propagate that handout mentality... we certainly propagated any available scholarships which came around. The Morning Star Scholarship is an example. Most cadetships are well and truly publicised to students when they come in, certainly good support in the library if they know how to use the librarian properly- and I think that in terms of other issues like the student union. We’ve always had a student rep [representative] there to get involved with major global issues.

(IA2: P. 52, L. 47-50, and P. 53, L. 1-11)

The following Indigenous student accesses specific unit lecturers rather than the Indigenous support lecturers as he/she thinks that "Most of the issues are about the class, so it’s just been better to go to them - if not them, I just usually go to fellow students" (P. 83, L.48-49). However, he/she does note that support lecturers at FATSIS have performed well in this area. He/she claims that: "I think they’ve done a great job and they have a number of different people. If you can’t reach one person then you can go to someone else” (IS5: P. 83, L. 7-9).

The student had also completed the pre-Arts program (preparatory program for Indigenous students) before enrolling in a higher education degree. He/she state that: “this made the transition [from high school] so much easier. This student had initially enrolled in BATSIS and received a letter from the Arts Indigenous academic support lecturer making them aware of the program (see, IS5: P. 83, L. 1-3).
Adequate and culturally appropriate support for another Indigenous student who is also doing units in another faculty and who accesses the academic support lecturers, believes that academic support is not appropriate as the person in that position is not Aboriginal. This participant states that people in these roles should understand Indigenous needs of students such as social relationships. Non-Indigenous support lecturers may think they understand these needs “they go out and do fieldwork and stuff in communities but down here in the urban that’s totally different” (IS1: P. 8, L. 21-22).

...They really come from that mentality you know, they've worked on communities and they think they have the knowledge but they don't have the knowledge, totally different, especially the social circumstances.

(IS1: P.8, L. 33-35)

This participant was not aware who the support lecturers were at FATSIS even though he/she were enrolled in one or two units. He/she state that "I suppose if I was doing a lot of stuff down here, I suppose I'd know them, but no I don’t know them. I do know people at SITE Faculty [Faculty of Science, Information Technology and Education] basically they've been around a lot” (IS1: P. 8, L. 50-51).

On why this participant knows the Academic Support lecturers in SITE and not from FATSIS, the response is that lecturers are ‘more visible over at SITE.’ (IS1: P. 9, L. 9-11)

For another Indigenous student, the lack of academic support at FATSIS was a main feature of his/her discussion in this area. He/she recounts negative experience and the lack of receiving any such support. The student’s tone is littered with frustrations and disappointment. For example, the student talks about the administrative difficulties experienced when attempting to enrol in a postgraduate course on completion of the BATSIS degree. Many contradictions about process and procedures are outlined and reflect the students’ frustrations at not receiving the academic support needed to pursue further studies (see, IS3: P. 36, L. 41-48). He/she states:
I don’t think the Faculty is serious about having Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander graduate students for one reason or another. I can say that from my own experiences...I certainly had discussions with the [academic’s position] in the Faculty who basically tried to deter me from doing such things and suggested that I do graduate certificates, this sort of stuff and that’s happening to an Aboriginal student in the Faculty of Aboriginal studies.

(IS3: P. 36, L. 48, and P. 37, L. 1-2)

The student then outlines the difficulties that Indigenous students have to deal with in the academic world and how the lack of academic support has in a sense forced the student to seek further studies in another Faculty at the university.

They’re all the things you have to contend with as an Aboriginal student, it’s not just the racism that exists, its not just the feeling of being uncomfortable... As much as I hate to say it, the stuff you have to put up [with] from your own Faculty! I just go to another Faculty and do it there, take my memories with me...And that’s the sort of stuff that happens up here, they want people to come here to keep the Faculty going, that’s about it. There’s all that sorts of stuff. Aboriginal students have to contend with as well I’m sure it happens right across the country.

(IS3: P. 37, L. 3-13)

I have finished BATSIS and now I’ve got nowhere else to move. I’m going to have to go to another Faculty... there’s just nowhere for me to turn here at the Faculty. I can’t do honours. I can’t do masters until I do honours...I just want to do Indigenous studies...The honours is not accredited and people are saying don’t do that, do this. So in terms of issues facing Aboriginal students, a lot of these issues are coming from Aboriginal people- Because in the Aboriginal community, certain people want to achieve things but don’t want Aboriginal people to achieve the same things.

(IS3: P. 37, L. 18-28)

ATAS Support

The Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance scheme is accessed and utilised by some Indigenous students to support their higher education studies and to promote success in higher education. The following Indigenous student declares the usefulness of the ATAS in supporting study. For example, the respondent found ATAS useful in aiding academic writing and structure and in explaining the expectations involved in academic writing. The first year student states:
It's so much easier, just having that support and I think that's what it's all about... Usually it's for about two hours, will just go through the lectures or go through the readings or if you have an assignment and just go through what to expect or, what we should discuss. So we do like a rough draft from an essay and then I'll go away and I'll do the rough draft and just from then on just go through the rough draft and talk about my topic. ... It's a way to debrief, get through stuff and to relax because it is 'full on' sometimes.

(IS5: P. 17-30)

Another Indigenous viewpoint suggests that there was no need to seek support from the ATAS scheme but notes that none of the coordinators at FATSIS asked if the student needed this support (IS3: See, P. 33, L. 44-50). This student compares FATSIS experience with another Faculty and notes that:

Staff from LBA [Law, Business, and Arts Faculty] continuously asked me if I needed it (ATAS support) and they continuously reinforcing [reminding] me that it is there if I want it, to get better grades. [The] ... Indigenous Academic Support Lecturer [in Arts] who is continuously ringing Indigenous students at home asking them about the progress, asking them if there is anything they need.

(IS3: P. 34, L. 10-13)

Cultural Support

On the issue of culturally adequate support for Indigenous students undertaking a degree program at NTU, most Indigenous participants did not directly comment. However, twenty percent of Indigenous respondents felt that this was inappropriate. I provide a detailed account of the participants' comments below because the accounts were passionately presented and the participants wanted to provide sufficient information to adequately convey their concerns and experience. These respondents noted the superficial nature and the uncomfortable environment experienced at FATSIS. For example, the following student notes that "...from what I've seen in all honesty, the Faculty prides itself on providing extra assistance to Aboriginal people but they don't" (IS3: P. 31, L. 43-45). The student also states that students are not adequately informed and are included only peripherally in social activities. In the students' own words:
... because it's an Aboriginal faculty, they[staff] should be providing some information to students, otherwise students just don't know what's happening. There are closed doors, there are people walking around flat out, and it's not [a] very friendly environment, despite them [FATSIS staff] priding themselves on that. ... Having BBQ's and so on hasn’t helped students of higher education students at all.

(IS3: P. 31, L. 52, and P. 32, L. 1-8)

An important point made by the student is the need for recognition for those who are successful in higher education studies. He/she recounts how they were awarded prizes for receiving distinctions at the Faculty of Law, Business and Arts, and although he/she received distinction in some units within the BATSIS program, this was not recognised as an achievement by FATSIS and was therefore not awarded a prize (see, P.45-49). He/she claims:

Often with Aboriginal students, they don’t have a family to reward them, so it would be good if the Faculty (FATSIS) rewarded them, and provided them with a bit of incentive to keep going; because that just doesn’t exist in this Faculty.

Incentive, you know, people, all people want [is] a pat on the back for a job well done and it happens at the other Faculties but it doesn’t happen here [FATSIS], where it’s needed the most.

(IS3: P.32, L.49-51, P.33, L. 1-2)

...if the student for example, got an award from another Faculty, it looks as though the Faculty here (FATSIS) doesn’t care, it doesn’t care whether I did good or bad...Other Faculties have shown a lot more interest in Aboriginal and the higher education of Aboriginal students than this Faculty.

(IS3: P. 33, L. 5-9)

The student participant passionately explains the importance of this kind of encouragement at the university and its appropriateness as it provides a recognition avenue that is not present at home. Criticism is also voiced regarding the inadequate recognition by FATSIS coordinators in not recognising that he/she was a BATSIS student. The implication is that this is inappropriate and should not have happened.

He/she declares:
People need to feel proud of what they’re doing and [the Faculty] need[s] to praise the students... That’s something that doesn’t go down very well, things such as confidence, you’ve been there all this time and they still don’t know what I’m doing. It’s not like, it’s BATSIS they don’t have heaps of people in them, with students so that’s something, you know you work hard, you do the stuff, the assessments, same as everybody else and uh there’s no reward system in place.

(IS3: P. 36, L. 28-35)

The concerns raised by the above student in relation to adequate support is also voiced by another Indigenous academic who states:

At this Faculty [FATSIS], the saddest thing, is that I’ll never forgive them for, is that I’ve never had a skerrick of support as an Indigenous academic from the beginning... Well, it was seen that I was becoming too out of lead I guess, and that maybe I was possibly becoming more and more of a threat... We need to have more positions for senior lecturers and more specialist positions in Aboriginal education including those Indigenous professors from out bush who don’t have Western education. I just became too big for my boots I guess. I never got any support; I fought on a daily basis with my head of school. I wanted to be more flexible in my approach with Aboriginal education, it’s very disappointing and yes in the end I had to leave here because I couldn’t get a position here...

(IA5: P. 96, L. 25-42)

He/she continues to state that support mechanisms for Indigenous people in Western institutions is minimal and only pays lip service to the deep issues and that it is full of rhetoric. He/she declares:
The saddest part to say about my whole academic journey is that I have had most of my support from non-Aboriginal people...there is no support mechanism in Western education institutions for Aboriginal people. Bit of lip service and sometimes some of us are lucky to be chosen as the 'chosen rep' or 'pet native' as I call them. That happens and I always say to those 'pet natives' who it does happen to- I say take advantage of it, go for it. I'm not jealous for a minute, if they think that you're the rising star, gobble it up, go for it. But that's how it works, it's really insidious and it's the most dreadful thing, and it's really killing our mob as far as advancement goes. I mean I've been abstaining from being involved with some of the Indigenous higher education network meetings on the South Coast because I'm sick of the rhetoric... But I know for a fact that I'm going to hear the same bullshit I've been hearing for 10 or 15 years and this is the sad thing.

This section has presented responses regarding the issue of adequate support for Indigenous students and staff at the Faculty. The responses in relation to this vary where some students noted the importance of accessing ATAS and the Indigenous Support lecturers in helping with higher education studies. Some students noted the inappropriate use of non-Indigenous staff in academic support positions. Student and staff participants felt only individuals who were Indigenous and therefore had the Indigenous knowledge could fulfil this role. Indigenous participants who directly responded to this issue highlighted in some detail concerns, frustrations and lack of real support at FATSIS. Comparison was made between other faculties at the university in providing better support and in recognising the attributes and achievements of the participants.

In conclusion, this chapter has firstly, presented the formal structure and curriculum content of the BATSIS program. It has described unit information including the methodology and assessment requirements for each of the units within the various disciplinary areas. Secondly, the chapter has also presented in detail the responses and perspectives of students and staff who have had teaching and or learning experience in the program. The course structure and the curriculum content of the BATSIS program was then analysed to investigate issues of pedagogy, institutional representations, and the contextualisation of Indigenous knowledges in a higher education institution. The practical application of pedagogic practice as experienced by staff and students is fundamental to the research project. It reflects on the interface between the theory and practice, between content and delivery and between...
teaching and learning framework, thus underpinning constructed, represented and recontextual discourses of Indigenous knowledges in curricula.

What is clear from the transcribed interpretation of course documentation is that the units described predominately conform to institutional structures and requirements. This is reflected in the formal course outlines, the delivery, and in the assessment methodology ascribed. The next chapter shall analyse this finding in relation to the construction of Indigenous knowledges in higher education. I will specifically analyse the various disciplinary streams within the BATSIS program to determine and articulate the elements that constitute the pedagogy. I will also examine how this impacts on Indigenous knowledge frameworks and representations and determine the extent of recontextualising Indigenous knowledges.

The perspectives and experiences of staff and students emphasize the complex and contested facets of Indigenous knowledge discourse and pedagogy. The transcriptions point to important and interrelated elements of identity, difference and cultural positionalities. Transcriptions also point to Indigenous knowledge productions, their application in the classroom as well as the methodology employed to deliver pedagogy based on cultural contexts to accommodate Western and Indigenous perspectives.

The next chapter shall offer critical reflections and discussions organised under thematic structures utilising the findings gathered from the BATSIS case study in light of the theoretical framework presented in the literature review embedded in pedagogic discourse.
Chapter 7.

Indigenous Pedagogy and the BATSIS Program: Discussion of Findings

The construction and representation of knowledge, discourse and Indigenous pedagogy in higher education are the central issues of this thesis. This chapter will examine the BATSIS case study presented in Chapter Six. Specifically, it will critically analyse the constructions of Indigenous pedagogic practice in relation to methodology, assessment and the delivery of the undergraduate Indigenous program at the then Northern Territory University. The analysis in this chapter draws on postmodern and critical theory to critically analyse teaching and learning frameworks which impact on Indigenous construction of knowledge in curricula.

In examining the construction of curricula, program delivery and the experience of staff and students it has been established that there are problematic frameworks in how ‘difference’ is conceptualised and recontextualised in terms of Indigenous representation and pedagogic discourse respectively. The historical development of Indigenous frameworks and constructions of curricula, its methodology, assessment and delivery of what was the Batchelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (BATSIS), provides an avenue to interrogate the structures that were intended to embed Indigenous knowledge and pedagogic practice within this specialised field of pedagogic discourse.

The following discussion of BATSIS requires analysis of the central role the politics of difference plays, as formed around the issues of Indigenous identity and curricular representation of culture. The analysis also brings into question the institutional issues affecting pedagogic practice and the productive nature of Indigenous representations and knowledges. In developing this analysis it recognises that beyond concepts of difference and issues of identity there are real historical, political, social, economic and cultural factors that shape and constitute the approach of individuals and institutions in constructing frameworks of representation. It is the purpose of this analysis to examine these factors in an effort to de-essentialise various forms of identity and subjectivities. To understand fundamental social and cultural issues underpinning pedagogic practice requires refiguring difference outside the opposition of binary representations.
The critical textual analysis of curriculum documents and the recounted experience of participants, staff and students allows the examination of ideological constructions of identity and particular forms of knowledge that are institutionally embedded. Indigenous worldviews are purportedly articulated through the structure of the programs offered and in the organisation of the content within each of the disciplinary streams that support it, be they Health, Language, Culture or Resource Management. The extension of these modes of Indigenous knowledge production as disciplines to substantive individual units allows this examination of the descriptive language of curriculum construction. It is this language that provides indicators of the variation in knowledge constructions and representation. The questions thus posed include:

- Who produces knowledge and for whom?
- How is this knowledge represented and recontextualised and how does this affect higher education pedagogic discourse?
- Do assumptions of 'White privilege' impact upon classroom delivery?
- Are there fixed assumptions in place in pedagogical approaches?
- Are differences constructed in curriculum content and do they imply a particular Indigenous pedagogy?
- Are there learning differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students?
- How is identity constructed and represented in current pedagogic discourse?
- Are there specific cultural frameworks required for successful participation in Indigenous higher education?

These questions are as important to the development of pedagogic practice today as critical discussion of such assumptions in any curriculum environment, Indigenous or non-Indigenous. I shall argue for the importance and inclusion of multiple approaches to teaching and learning practices so as to broaden student experience to effectively engage in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledges whilst undertaking an undergraduate program in Indigenous studies.

**Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the BATSIS Curriculum**

Chapter Two highlights the importance of recognising historical contexts, government policies and social practices. These are external drivers of the direction and development of the production and representation of Indigenous knowledges in curriculum content in university tertiary Indigenous programs. Such frameworks have had significant influence on the pedagogical aims, strategies and delivery of the
BATSIS program. Specifically the Aboriginal Indigenous Education Policy (AEP) has had a direct influence on the construction of Indigenous knowledge as articulated by this program. The AEP and its goals for instance shaped the direction for change within institutions across Australia and dictated strategies with the intention of increasing Indigenous participation in higher education.

The AEP (DEET, 1989) was a strategy that contained funding implications for universities and saw the introduction of specific schemes such as ABSTUDY within programs such as Youth Allowance and NewStart to increase opportunities for Indigenous students in higher education. It required institutions to establish provisions for non-Indigenous students to also partake in Indigenous programs so as to value Aboriginal and Islander knowledge systems within the academy. Such government directives attributed to the development, establishment and maintenance of Indigenous higher education programs within many institutions.

Such official Commonwealth Government initiatives in the form of policy and review provided impetus to discourses of Indigenous pedagogy, the value of Indigenous knowledges and created opportunities for Indigenous contribution at the institutional level. Such policies also influenced the way in which pedagogical styles such as 'two-way' education were developed and was to later inform policy and practice in establishing dedicated Indigenous higher education programs. This influence was borne out in the development of institutional mechanisms to enable Indigenous involvement in planning, decision-making and participation in tertiary programs, as Institutions were required to develop Indigenous educational strategies as part of their profile documentation. For instance, the Northern Territory University developed mechanisms through its Strategic Plan (1990-1996) to ensure that Indigenous higher education and Indigenous knowledge productions were in accordance to each of the twenty one goals outlined in the AEP (See Chapter Two). For example, 'Goal 21' from the AEP explicitly stated the importance of providing "all Australian students with an understanding of, and respect for, Aboriginal tradition and contemporary cultures." This goal was reflected in the strategic direction of the University and is highlighted in the following quote:
[The NTU] ... will have special reputation in Aboriginal education, for teaching Aboriginal students in both mainstream and specially constructed programs, and for teaching Aboriginal skills and culture to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

(NTU, 1992: 2)

Another example, which also highlights the interface between policy and institution, can be seen through the NTU’s strategic direction, where focus was on increasing Indigenous participation in higher education. Again this was an identified AEP goal incorporated by the university through the establishment of CAIS and the provisions for academic support services to encourage, and support Indigenous students in participating successfully in higher education. Such recognition and inclusion of services by the NTU had a direct relationship to the AEP directives. The University was implementing policy through the development and support of Indigenous programs and through the allocation of funds to cost centres. The University was also being rewarded by the Commonwealth Government for its compliance to policy and provided large grants for curricula development in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (see Chapter Five for specific fund allocations).

The establishment of the BATSIS program in 1991 was therefore a direct result of the AEP. The historical documentation (see Chapter Five) for initialising the BATSIS program recognised the central principles of the AEP and incorporated notions such as the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and culture as well as responding to the needs of Indigenous communities. The BATSIS proposal rationalised its purpose by directly addressing the goals of the AEP and thus legitimised its orientation and the need for its inclusion in the academy.

The organisation of the BATSIS program (see Chapter Six A) was formulated to incorporate the AEP principles and was streamed into a number of disciplinary areas. Indigenous knowledges in curriculum were formally constructed around these streams, including its methodology, assessment and delivery. The documentation analysed in Chapter Six investigated the representation and contextualisation of Indigenous knowledge systems within the specific unit outlines and course materials contained in the degree award. The BATSIS program was not unlike other undergraduate programs offered at the University in that it remained structured around core units, electives and disciplinary streams.
Indigenous Knowledges

The construction of content for the BATSIS program embedded important issues of Indigenous knowledges. The core units for instance revolved around introducing students to historical, social, cultural, political, economic and environmental issues important to contemporary understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems and worldviews. These units were configured so as to be included in the repository of knowledges within Australian universities, offering Indigenous perspective on contemporary society and culture. This framework was developed further in each of the streams presented (Health, Contemporary Issues, Language and Culture, Resource Management, Arts and Legal Issues) and were intended to provide space and sites for Indigenous discourses in a variety of contexts, including colonisation, kinship, education, philosophy, media, law, and so on. Promoting enquiry and analysis into theories and constructs relating to discourses of Indigenous issues was a predominant structure embedded in all streams. The streams provided an avenue for the focus on both a broad range and specific issues affecting and impacting on Indigenous knowledges from historical and contemporary points of views.

The dissemination of Indigenous knowledges in all streams, in terms of methodological delivery in the classroom, largely conformed to Western pedagogic frameworks. For example, each of the units at all levels, in all streams consisted of lectures, tutorials and or seminars as the major mode of delivery. Some of the units included workshops and stipulated the involvement of Indigenous presenters of lectures and workshops. These aspects will be revisited below. The significance here is that pedagogical frameworks in theory and as presented in the documentation are indistinguishable from those of the majority of mainstream degree programs. The formal assessment processes in place predominately took the form of essays, tutorial presentation and participation and again were indistinguishable from assessment methods in most other degree programs. This is obviously a function of local institutional requirements. Compliance is needed in developing content within university structures where the adherence of policy and protocol are required as instruments of accountability and equivalence. So, if the mechanisms of assessment and the modes of delivery are the same, can it be that the difference that was previously absent be located simply in the content? I will argue that the recontextualisation of Indigenous knowledges is a function of framing and...
codification of Indigenous knowledge within institutional constructs. This recontextualisation has been an essential feature in its methodological pedagogic application and the experience of its students and practitioners. Before this can be done however, it is important to reflect upon several of the focal issues raised by the participants in the research regarding the perceptions and experiences in relation to Indigenous knowledges in curriculum.

**Indigenous knowledges in Curriculum**

The framing of Indigenous knowledges within a codified system of knowledge was important in bringing Indigenous issues and knowledges to the mainstream. It was also important in validating and legitimating its existence within the Western dominant paradigm that our higher education system represents. The problematic occurs in the process of production where content, methodology, assessment and delivery insinuate bounded constructions which recontextualise Indigenous knowledges. It will be shown that these processes essentialise knowledge and constrict alternative constructions of knowledge and limit innovative pedagogic practice. More significantly the lack of innovation in the pedagogy has misrepresented Indigenous knowledges in a way that relocates the primary contexts of Indigenous experience. Unveiling the production of knowledge in Indigenous curricula is crucial in deconstructing the borders in which production mechanisms operate. For Nakata (2002: 9) "it is time to generate a new purpose for Indigenous studies, to shape it to ensure that it is also an enquiry for Indigenous people,...” they also suggest this distinction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems cannot be localised to a specific set of facts but that

... studying Indigenous knowledge in a Western institution was a different enterprise from learning the deeply embedded cultural and social meanings of those forms of knowledge in their own contexts. Study of Indigenous knowledge distorts and reduces its meaning to fit Western knowledge and disciplines.

The data and responses collated from student participants also echo these concerns. For many students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, the presentation of alternative knowledge systems, worldviews, and perspectives was fundamental in pursuing BATSIS. For example, for some Indigenous students, it provided a learning framework and shared experience with other Indigenous students (see IS5:
P. 78, L. 9-12). Indigenous knowledge systems should also represent a means of valuing "other peoples way of understanding the world and is important ... whatever framework you use, and so you can utilise as many of them [knowledge frameworks] as possible" (see NS4: P. 42, L. 36-39).

Indigenous knowledges in the BATSIS program were identified by respondents in the research as central features and of paramount importance in the course. One academic noted the importance of acknowledging the 'validity' and 'currency' of Indigenous knowledges (IA5: P. 89. L. 17-21). The significance of these comments is that they speak to the intention of the presence of a program such as the BATSIS within a Western institution of higher education. The university provided an avenue for Indigenous studies so as to "...engage Indigenous knowledge theorists in being able to determine a corpus of knowledge which has the ilk of the Indigenous" (IA2: P. 54, L. 29-30). Through this process, Indigenous knowledges could move away from the margins of other disciplines such as anthropology, thereby representing Indigenous perspectives, content, worldviews from an Indigenous context and specialised pedagogic space. The production of knowledges within this framework thus legitimised Indigenous knowledges. An observation made by one of the academic respondents articulates this point precisely by stating that the process of Indigenous knowledge production is incorporated in

... trying to find ways of authenticating Indigenous epistemologies and practices within the rubric of traditional university degree structure, which depends in a way upon quite a foreign epistemology of content and transmissions. So that in a way, what we've been trying to do is implant [Indigenous] philosophies of knowledge and representation and all the sorts of rules and protocols that they imply with the whole credentialising process that's at work in a development of a university degree ... (NA1: P. 11, L. 25-37)

The official objectives of the program as presented in the course documents aimed to provide an intellectual framework for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge systems in higher education. The aims and objectives were laudable because recognition was given to the importance of validating, theorising and legitimating Indigenous knowledge within the academy. Nakata (1998b: 4) recognises the need for such inclusion and suggests that such a framework would ultimately interrelate to the process of teaching where "...students are tutored to view and understand the
position of Indigenous peoples through the same systems of thinking, logic, rationality that have historically not served Indigenous interests at all.”

The implementation and the delivery of the program as experienced by the participants however, suggests, that the process of the methodology as opposed to the aims and objectives, was problematic, not so much for the contextualising of Indigenous content in formal Western structures, because this is not always problematic and is important for meaningful intellectual communication and inclusion within the academy, but for failing to provide a cohesive and explicit methodology appropriate for Indigenous knowledges as well. The delivery of the content does not only need to occur at a structured and formal level but it also needs to provide a space that allows Indigenous voice, Indigenous positions and Indigenous processes that may lie outside bureaucratic and rationalised frameworks.

It is important at this point to recognise the dominant constructs at play in fitting Indigenous knowledges within a specific bounded construct. This of course is problematic because the process dictates that knowledge ‘fit in’ to a construct that does not necessarily take into account alternative representations of knowledge and its dissemination. Indigenous knowledges did not traditionally fit into a particular structure or schema and a number of Indigenous academics pointed to this difficulty. Indigenous knowledge has traditionally not been bound by institutional frameworks. Rather it has incorporated notions of ‘feeling’, ‘experience’, ‘common sense’ and was ‘not necessarily written down’. “Knowledge for instance is owned by the people and is expressed in the language that relates to the knowledge itself and knowledge and the language relate to particular areas of land ... political principles ... philosophy” (NA1: P. 12, L. 33-38).

It is clear from these perspectives that Indigenous knowledges are located singularly within Indigenous experience. Knowledge that is so embedded or contextualised within Indigenous experience can never hope to be repackaged in any one formal educational program, since this delocation inevitably distorts it. A pedagogic process that is not purely bound by Western intellectualism is needed. A successful pedagogical process that negotiates discourses about Indigenous representations from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous interpretations would incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems beyond a simple intellectual process. Indigenous knowledges are also, as Nakata (1998b: 4) puts forward, “...an emotional journey that often involves
outrage, pain, anger, humiliation, guilt, anxiety and depression.” Indigenous discourses can and do encompass formal frameworks relevant to Western institutions as well as offering Indigenous positions of knowledge, presented through emotion, experience and in production of curriculum. It is in the process of the delivery of the content that there is an opportunity to present alternative knowledge systems. Students called for such presentation and highlighted the need to value Indigenous knowledge representations in this way.

So how was the BATSIS developed and articulated? From the academic respondents’ perspective, it appears that the content development for the BATSIS program involved Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics that had experience in the development of either specific units or overall involvement of the different aspects of the course (see IA1: P. 52, L. 8, and NA1: P. 11, L. 15-17, and NA3 for examples). Non-Indigenous staff, for instance, described their role in working collaboratively through a consultative process with Indigenous people in developing specific units. Significantly, these participants point that their role was to “formalise the process” of Indigenous knowledge production by ensuring it met accreditation rules and was theorised and structured academically. So it appears that there were two sets of knowledges being articulated as the BATSIS: one the Indigenous knowledge of people including community members and Indigenous academics, and the other the 'formal' knowledge of the non-Indigenous academics. On the other hand, Indigenous academics stressed the need for more Indigenous voices and for further direct participation in the production of knowledge. They felt that their involvement was ‘limited’, ‘tokenistic’ and only paid ‘lip service’ to Indigenous involvement. In their view, comprehensive and further input was needed as ‘Too much of it [BATSIS content] was written by non-Aboriginal people’ (IS3: P. 31, L. 15-16; see also IA5: P. 85, L. 23-26, and IA4: P. 68, L. 49-52 and P. 69, L. 1-2).

The exception was an Indigenous academic with considerable experience in the program, who asserted that most of the production of content was written by Indigenous people. These conflicting views of appropriate and sufficient Indigenous input into the production of knowledge by Indigenous academics and non-Indigenous academics again raise issues relating to the contested nature of discourse in this terrain.

So it is was that the policy response at both national and local institutional levels to increase Indigenous participation in higher education brought actual programs to the
point of development. However, the intentions to incorporate substantive Indigenous knowledge systems with the support, input, and direct involvement of Indigenous people is neither transparent nor sufficient within BATSIS. Decision-making involvement appears to happen at 'some' level, and to a 'certain' extent in the development and maintenance of the BATSIS program, but this participation would appear to be inadequately realised in light of the evidence gained from the interviews.

While remaining contested, the production of Indigenous knowledges was mainstreamed within the University. This was important in theorising Indigenous knowledges that had been historically marginalised within university contexts and in legitimising it as a valid body of knowledge within a corpus of officially accredited knowledge. Important too was that the BATSIS program content was embedded within Indigenous issues. However, specific Western frameworks dictated form and process to ensure its mainstreaming meant that its construction was bounded. This has led to polarisation, creating tensions in relation to who should produce Indigenous knowledge and conflict arising to the extent of Indigenous participation in this production. While many respondents in the research highlighted recognition of collaborative and consultative approaches as significant, the collated contested responses, present the production domain as unstable, positioning Indigenous knowledges within binary oppositions. The mainstreaming of BATSIS (inclusion into the University’s corpus of knowledge) thus is represented here as being no different to other modes of curriculum production and delivery within higher education institutions, yet the knowledge itself has been officially differentiated from traditional Western constructions both in content and in modes of teaching and learning. Limited processes are in place to equip and place alternative knowledges within a Western institution to cope with models of difference that are flexible enough to provide alternative modes of knowledge and the space which they may occupy. Knowledge in this way is grounded in the binary model of racial difference and does not solve the issues of power as articulated in Chapter Three. Indigenous knowledge at an institutional level then becomes commodified, is market driven and is an educational product no different to other non-Indigenous programs. This is demonstrated in the contradictions between official document statements of policy and in their realisation in practice.
Documenting Indigenous knowledge from an Indigenous perspective on the other hand is crucial in articulating Indigenous voice that differentiates it from the content production in other disciplinary areas.

**Pedagogic Experience**

Given the limitations in terms of scope and alternative frameworks in which Indigenous knowledges are produced, it is important to examine how this may impact on pedagogic practices in the delivery of the BATSIS program. This examination presents significant considerations for discussion, it reflects on the application of practice from theory and policy. It also allows for analysis of the processes of pedagogy so as to evaluate the extent of Indigenous pedagogic practices. This analysis is necessary in order to examine constructed differences within the discourse of Indigenous pedagogic practices. The substance of this analysis will draw up on the responses of both academic and student participants as this brings into relief the pedagogy in practice.

Chapter Six presented many instances of the gap between intention and practice. Students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, present their frustration that are the result of the tensions between the pedagogic framework and the representation of Indigenous knowledges. Discrepancies between formal curricula content and the personalised mode of delivery typify this tension. Quality of teaching was also problematic. Students recognised factors such as that a positive learning experience was dependent on the academic teaching, repetition of content both within and across units, and the importance of Indigenous content in providing education about culture. These issues largely result from the lack of formal content in the classroom and reliance on personalised delivery that relied on anecdote and recount as substantive representations of Indigenous knowledges.

While students clearly lack knowledge of the production modes and processes, they have articulated the need for frameworks to make transparent the level of Indigenous production within BATSIS and assert the precedence of Indigenous content. The opacity of pedagogic input impacts on curriculum itself, on pedagogy and quality of delivery. One student suggested the need to have ‘Aboriginal Terms of Reference’, a framework that signalled the level of involvement in the production of knowledge, learning methodologies to be used and outcomes achieved within specific Indigenous cultural contexts (see NS2: P. 18, L. 41-45). This, the student argues, ensures that
the process and production is understood and it also sets 'the cultural boundaries and cross-cultural contexts' and thus 'the way' knowledge is taught. Such a framework may have alleviated the experience of repetitive content and the superficial nature of the content in units (See IS3: P. 32, L. 40).

This learning experience of the students suggests, however, that there are confusions and contradictions in place within the learning process. It is difficult to address definitive reasons for this. However, it may be argued that given the need for compliance in the production of Indigenous knowledges in curricula to reflect the rationalised institutional frameworks, that academics are struggling to position an Indigenous pedagogy. For example, should an Indigenous pedagogy include personal reflections, less defined learning structures and content that is less formally structured? Does this accommodate some flexibility in the learning approach that is not there in the production of content? It is important to stress the views by Indigenous and non-Indigenous students alike who suggest and expect a learning framework that is 'different' from other higher education units because they are enrolled in the BATSIS program to pursue different and alternative ways of thinking and experiencing. Before I discuss this further, I will briefly review academic responses of teaching experience in Indigenous studies so as to provide comparative analysis between staff and students.

The tremendous variety of academic responses collected in relation to the process and methodology of delivery of content makes it difficult to see commonalities between teaching approaches and therefore point to a lack of Indigenous pedagogic framework (or an ill-defined one) that is generally utilised. This variation may account for the student comments summarised above. The institutional need for a degree of consistent delivery may also meet student expectations about alternative learning processes and one that articulates a specific style or styles of teaching common to Indigenous pedagogy.

Indigenous academics voice the importance of respect in relation to Indigenous knowledge and that this should be incorporated in the teaching approach. There was also recognition for Indigenous students to be skilled in a variety of approaches including Western models. Some Indigenous academics recognised the difficulties in trying to incorporate an Indigenous framework such as oral traditions over written traditions and assessment that could incorporate this. This created a dilemma in the
appropriate approach to use (see for example, IA5: P. 88. L, 50-52, and P. 89, L. 1-9).

Others discussed the unique Aboriginal styles of teaching which incorporated personal approaches in the pedagogy. "You’re just constantly teaching about yourself, day after day, about your life, about things that happened there ..." (see IA4: P. 69, L. 39-46). Some external factors pointed to were issues of Deaths in Custody, the problems of housing, Stolen Generation (see IS1: P. 3, L. 44-48).

Some academics believed that Indigenous pedagogical practices did take place and consisted of the inclusion of negotiated approaches where 'negotiated timelines and negotiated curriculum for a student centred approach' (see NA3: P. 58, L. 21-25). This is an important approach in empowering individuals and acknowledging diverse knowledge systems in teaching practices. However, such a response was not consistent and certainly not recognised by many academics.

Teaching and learning processes vary from one individual to another; the broad ranges of responses, the various positions practiced and the diversity in approaches do not explicitly imply an Indigenous framework that is commonly shared by staff and students. The contested positions in regard to appropriate teaching approaches highlight the tensions and lack of definition about what is and isn’t an appropriate approach. Perhaps it may be worthwhile to discuss the overall responses collated of teaching methodologies in order to examine specific aspects of delivery to ascertain the existence of unique and alternative teaching approaches that incorporate Indigenous knowledges and perspectives.

Overall, the responses convey Westernised and structured methodologies in place in the delivery of the BATSIS program. Apparent is the lack of explicit articulation that vocalise direct descriptive approaches with the exception of one stream, Yolngu Languages and Culture. This stream is unique in its approach in that it capitalised upon a collaborative methodology mapped out in the delivery and provides a useful contrast to other units. The approach was explicit in describing the importance of including an Indigenous academic whose responsibility was to provide oral narratives based on personal perspective using Yolngu language and therefore Indigenous representations and viewpoints culturally constructed. This was embellished by a non-Indigenous academic staff member, whose responsibility was to ensure the class was adequately administered, and that formal understanding of the
linguistic discipline occurred (see NA2, P. 13, L. 21-33). Evident in the application of methodology in this stream was the 'student-self directed learning approach' where the non-Indigenous academic provided and facilitated a formal collaborative framework that took into account both Western and Indigenous contexts. These frameworks extended from the course documents into the day-to-day classes that are notably absent elsewhere.

Predominately, academics teaching in streams other than the Yolngu Language and Culture in the BATSIS program, acknowledged the emphasis on Western frameworks but also provided a focus on ‘negotiated approaches’ where student-centred approaches played a crucial role. For example, "... space for people in the classroom to actually bring their knowledge and experience and to actually validate them within the classroom ..." (NA3: P. 59, L. 38-40). It is not clear from this participants’ response how these factors in Indigenous representations, voice and accommodating both worldviews operated within the classroom. However, it was perceived that this occurred implicitly in the collaborative methodological process.

Indigenous academics voiced the reliance on a Western model of teaching but emphasised the need for alternative collaborative and practical methodological approaches that drew knowledge from Indigenous communities where regular interchange between cultures took place with the students. Some Indigenous academics stated that students would benefit from experiencing diverse Indigenous perspectives and this would produce successful pedagogic outcomes (see IA4: P. 74, L. 23-35). Others emphasised a need for flexible modes of delivery where assessment due dates were renegotiated and individual learning styles catered for. However, there is little evidence in the responses of participants or activities within the Faculty that such interactions took place in the classroom. Why, one needs to ask, was this framework not practised and made an explicit requirement in the delivery of the BATSIS program. This absence is a feature of students’ discussion, as we shall now see.

Students’ experience of teaching methodologies executed by academics in the BATSIS program reflects both positive and negative perceptions of pedagogic practice. Some students claimed that there was a dependency on informal and inadequate methodology. Students with experience outside the Faculty observed that FATSIS had a more personal and a less structured approach. Reading directly from
notes, for example, was perceived as an inadequate basis for teaching or lecturing
See NS2: P. 21, L. 9-11). Students noted the need to utilise the Indigenous
community to provide practical and real experience about the content delivered (see
IS3: P. 27, L. 44-47). While some preferred this approach, they recognised the need
for integrating these differences with formal academic components. Only one unit
achieved this synergy and only to a limited extent (see NS2: P. 21, L. 36-39). Clear
from student responses has been the importance of integrating Western and
Indigenous methodologies that explicitly present alternative knowledge systems and
Indigenous methods, which accommodate to the Western framework. Although this
criterion is addressed by many academics as vital in presenting Indigenous
perspectives, it is not regularly practiced in the BATSIS streams with the exception
of Yolngu Culture and Language. In a sense it is difficult to see from the responses
gathered a definitive approach that deals with both perspectives, particularly one
which centralises collaboration and Indigenous methods, drawing on cultural values
by Indigenous peoples as well as their representations by non-Indigenous people.
Both students and staff recognise the importance of offering multiple teaching and
learning approaches that draw on a variety of worldviews without excluding or
privileging one approach over another. Such issues can be considered within the
collaborative and student-centred approach that Arbon (2004: 4) elaborates on which
takes into account the needs of the Indigenous community:

Learning communities, lifelong learning and generic skills
have begun to take hold and the call for communities to be
involved has strengthened. This community focus on futures
has turned to learning to address issues of local sustainability
through the gaining of skills and knowledge that allow a
response from the local Indigenous community.

What is interesting, though, is that such an approach is explicit in the theoretical
frameworks in most of the unit outlines examined. In fact, it was how the initial
proposal was rationalised. It was centred on the importance of accommodating
Indigenous knowledges, worldviews, approaches to benefit both Indigenous and non-
Indigenous students and this was explicit in the twenty one goals of the AEP which
the institution had been committed to implement. For example the BATSIS
accredited course document (FATSIS, 2002: 3) explicitly states that:
The Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies services a clear need to facilitate the growth of community knowledge and provide individuals with a range of options and skills with which to address the imbalance in access to resources and opportunities available to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. The qualification also seeks to be responsive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community...

What is apparent is that these issues are addressed and recognised, but unfortunately are not clearly executed in the classroom. Perhaps the teaching and learning process dealing with Indigenous knowledge systems can be differentiated not so much in its production (for reasons already discussed) but in the execution of the delivery, within the processes of teaching and learning. This may be where an Indigenous pedagogy can be framed, clearly defined and practiced. Indigenous pedagogic discourse, which encompasses Indigenous knowledge systems, Indigenous voice and practiced frameworks dealing specifically with the needs and the skilling of students, is important in contemporary educational models. The focus in theory on dominant discourse of Indigenous pedagogy to incorporate culturally appropriate contexts within Western framework is not adequate without attention to classroom practice. Insinuating cultural diversity in the form of theoretical educational processes and theoretical methodologies is also inadequate as it assumes that this is somehow encapsulated in the classroom as it is formally recognised. The urgency in improving Indigenous education is prominent in communities where intellectual and pragmatic skills are vitally needed in strengthening community governance and empowering Indigenous organisations to take control of their own communities. Therefore theorised frameworks need rethinking in terms of how they can be practically expressed and integrated in classrooms.

**Recognising Difference**

Difference in the BATSIS higher education program is conceptualised only as far as representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worldviews. This is evident in the formal documentation of unit outlines within the accredited programs. Explicit focus in the unit outlines is given to the incorporation of community knowledge, the presentation of Indigenous pedagogy suitable to the Indigenous context, and the existence of an Indigenous pedagogy in practice. These constructs are embedded and articulated in the theoretical model of the program. The pedagogic experience, however, lacks such definition as well as a methodology for its practical realisation.
This issue points to the recontextualisation of Indigenous knowledge within practice and within the general discourse of Indigenous pedagogy where the application of the theoretical is neither as explicit nor as focused as the theoretical framework articulated in content. Indigenous pedagogy is thus bounded and reinterpreted within perceived and validated cultural positions. For instance, the delivery of the content predominantly lacked adequate execution in terms of its methodology. This signifies a degree of inclusion of Indigenous knowledge systems framed in theory but not apparent in its practical application. The practical experience of students and particularly that of Indigenous academics reflected this point.

In order to reflect on how difference is reconceptualised in pedagogic practice, it is important to provide an overview of how difference is positioned in curriculum development as well as in teaching and learning practices.

**Difference and Curriculum Development**

Academic participants made substantial reference to the importance of enhancing, validating, theorising and authenticating Indigenous knowledges within curriculum. ‘Most of the units ... have all been written with the point of view of enhancing the basis of Indigenous knowledge ... that there is a corpus that can be generalised and objective’ (IA2: P. 48, L. 6-11). Academics noted the uniqueness of the BATSIS program in its specialisation, Indigenous knowledge systems formulated by Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Some argued that unit production was centred on collaboration, negotiation and the involvement of communities (see NA1: P. 12, L. 23, and NA3: P. 56, L. 8-10). This view of the process was contested by other academics who considered the Indigenous involvement inadequate in curriculum production and in formulating strong community links. For instance, as we saw in Chapter Six, concerns were raised regarding the romanticised and tokenised features of this development where Indigenous representation was included to some extent but only as far as paying ‘lip service’ (see IA5: P. 86, L. 32, and P. 90).

In order for the BATSIS program to be differentiated from mainstream disciplines, difference in the form of adequate Indigenous and non-Indigenous input is required. Diversity of production modes is required to incorporate curricular frameworks that not only stipulate practical application of the methodology but also critically decolonise pedagogical practices. Curriculum needs to be understood in relation to
power as it embeds rational institutional structures. Such structures define what the curriculum should be, since it imposes rigid frameworks, teaching practices therefore encapsulate dominant constructs. This problematic underlies pedagogic practice in higher education because it appropriates knowledge constructs and frameworks to meet institutional goals. This makes difficult the incorporation of multi-layered frameworks such as 'border pedagogy' as articulated by Giroux (1992).

**Difference in Teaching Practices**

All student participants had learning experience in other faculties within the University. This experience allowed reflection upon differing teaching and learning approaches. Significant is the strength of responses received regarding teaching differences between FATSIS and other faculties where students highlighted differences in teaching styles. Students consistently commented on differences to do with teaching styles and positively stated that units taught in BATSIS were ‘down to earth’ and took a personal approach. There was considerable variation in perceptions of the academic rigour or otherwise of BATSIS units among those interviewed.

On the one hand, in contrast to BATSIS units, those taught elsewhere at the university were seen to be ‘hard’, ‘very theoretical’, ‘based on a lot of readings;’ were common features of student comments (see IS1: P. 2, L. 14, and IS5: P. 77. L. 7-9). On the other hand, there was a perception that the ‘down to earth’ and personal elements provided *another perspective* and opened avenues to discuss issues of racism, identity and self (see, IS1: P. 2, L. 24-34, and NS4: P. 39, L. 8-11). Consistently students expressed a desire for these processes to be more balanced. For instance, it was argued that classes needed structure, facilitation and the learning expectations explained (see NS2: P. 22, L. 41-45). Small class sizes were attributed as a cause for the less formal approach at FATSIS. Student’s views on teaching styles present some contradictions. Students variously claimed that the assessment required them to incorporate theory (see NS2: P. 23, L. 24-37), whilst others stated assessment needed to reflect “*knowledge about Indigenous people, not about theory*” (see IS3: P. 30, L. 24). This confusion is perhaps a result of unclarified teaching strategies as well as perceptions of different cultural expectations.

The lack of clarity on appropriate teaching strategies and assessment points to the underlying weakness of internal frameworks for an Indigenous pedagogical practice within the Faculty. Tension between theory and practice, conflict with the actual
learning context, and affect formal academic attainment. This issue goes beyond questions of 'just quality' and places it firmly in the domain of 'pedagogy'. These confusions are confirmed through the inconsistent responses from academics. For example, while asserting the 'value of personal perspectives' (see IS4, P. 56 Chapter Six) in the classroom academics also claimed that teaching styles 'were no different than teaching in other areas.' Some suggested that BATSIS classes had a level of flexibility to account for Indigenous culture and students (see NA3: P. 63, L. 15-19). Yet other responses suggested that FATSIS had conformed to a 'missionary mentality' for teaching Indigenous students (see IA5: P. 92, L. 18-19).

Students who do [Indigenous] studies ... are different from most of the students in the university. These students are not first and foremost trying to get some sort of credential that will render them employable so that they don’t have quite the same professional aspirations ... they come excited about the possibility of alternative knowledges and alternative ways of thinking ... the students we get are pretty imaginative, pretty lateral thinking, pretty involved in politics and culture in the community.

(NA1: P. 11, L. 44-50)

Positioning Learning Differences

The review of the literature (Chapter Three) would suggest that constructing pedagogy on perceived cultural difference necessarily involves patterns of domination and oppression. It is important for academics to recognise that interpretation of differences can be bounded in issues of race driven by historical constructions which can be contested as well as transformed. Reading so called learning cultural traits based on perceived Indigeneity confines learning to a specific framework such as teaching through personal perspective, not providing structural direction or critical discourses to a variety of learning styles. This denies access to other learning frameworks that are formalised and which challenge students accordingly. Difference therefore needs to be understood politically. McLaren (1994) has suggested that difference is politicised and situated in social and historical constructs but that there is a need to also recognise difference as containing textual contradictions. A critique in the discourse of difference that recognises identity and culture needs further consideration when planning for classroom delivery. Confining urban Indigenous identity to binary forms of difference is dangerous, as it does not consider issues of power raised by Foucault and others. Difference needs to be
considered in terms of multiple domains where learning takes place in multiple and in-between spaces. A good theoretical framework such as the critical discourse of pedagogy identified in the literature review accommodates multiple and heterogeneous realities that do and can exist in the classroom. Such a space makes it difficult to position identities into binary oppositional locations (i.e. 'black' and 'white') where individuals are located into single and unitary cultural positions. Theorists such as Rose (1999) have already alerted us regarding the inappropriate effects of positioning pedagogic methodologies within dichotomised oppositions. Such a methodology hinders understandings of world views and alternative perspectives.

The issue of learning differences proved to be difficult for many students and academics, as generally participants did not want to say the 'wrong thing'. It was evident the 'politics of difference' were at play where people wanted to acknowledge differences yet did not at the same time. This was illustrated in the number of 'yes and no' responses. Participants identified the role of cultural context in influencing learning where for example students who have had experience in Western education or who were raised in an urban environment (see for example, IS5: P. 81, L. 37-44 and NS4: P. 44, L. 6-10) were better equipped than those who did not have such experience. Some students acknowledged learning differences to the extent that there were programs such as Commonwealth Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS) that could be utilised to support learning. Thus identity again predicates a 'different sort of learning' because the tutorial scheme itself recognises different learning styles. Academic responses varied widely on the issue specifically in relation to Indigenous learning styles. Claims that cultural and learning factors contributed to how students learn, that Indigenous students learn better in small groups as opposed to individually, or that Indigenous students had difficulties with the writing components of the program present facets of what is perceived as specifically Indigenous learning. Yet other academics believed that Indigenous students learnt differently according to the content of the material presented. For example, students were more adept in environmental issues as opposed to the hard sciences (see IA5: P. 94, L. 23-33). The issues of self-esteem and self-confidence were often perceived to create differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.
The variety of responses recorded and the shifting of answers from ‘yes’ to ‘no’ presents the lack of agreement on consideration of perceived learning differences between students. Yet these perceptions were put forward as substantiating an Indigenous pedagogy by virtue of responding to specific needs. Post hoc ergo propter hoc ‘after it therefore because of it’ difference is measured in terms that in actuality make no reference to cultural forms or experience but is predicated on commonalities of individual traits.

The discipline of White Studies offers important considerations that counter learning positionalities constructed by dominant colonial discourses. Assumptions regarding how best Indigenous people learn require rethinking and deconstructing. These assumptions in turn appear to generate racialised representations that impede successful pedagogies that can benefit students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike. To suggest for instance that Indigenous people can only understand a culturally specific context undermines their capacity as learners who can and do negotiate other spaces other contexts.

The predominant number of participants interviewed claimed that differences in the treatment of students did exist in the classroom and depended on the identity of the learner. Given the ambiguous responses received in relation to learning differences described above, it is important to note how differences in the treatment of students can in fact affect how students learn. This relationship does not appear to be a factor noted by academics. It is important for academics to consider how learners are positioned in the classroom as this ultimately affects the learning process.

‘Negative and derogatory’ action, certain ‘expectations’ and the ‘lowering of standard’ were issues identified (see IS1: P. 10, L. 35, NA1: P. 15, L. 37-44, IA4: P. 72, L. 17-32, and IA2: P. 50, L. 40-44). Given that all students are required to achieve the same outcomes in terms of assessment, skill acquisition and graduate attributes, it is difficult to see the benefit of differential treatment if this implies an acceptance of lowered standards. It is certainly important in any good pedagogy to recognise the various knowledges that learners bring into the classroom, the cultural contexts and the strengths and weaknesses of individuals. Such binding of students into specific spaces of identity can have direct bearing on positive learning, putting learners in opposition and activating social and political constructions of what it is to be Indigenous and thus bringing into play power relations.
There is room for teaching styles to vary from one academic to another, as this is dependent on many factors such as cultural perspective, academic discipline, pedagogic influence and the nature of student groups. However, it is also important to articulate multi-methodologies in Indigenous studies as this helps to provide some framework for an Indigenous pedagogy. It is apparent that the lack of clarity in this area not only affects students experience and their graduate attributes but it also affects teaching in the field because it creates tensions about what are adequate and appropriate frameworks. It is difficult to see, for example, why a variety of approaches cannot be utilised to accommodate the need for 'personal reflection', 'down to earth' practice, the use of oral narratives as well as well-articulated structures that accommodate skilling students in critical academic writing and thinking. The incorporation of this approach would provide the BATSIS program with a unique style of teaching taking into account both Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural perspectives. Such a process may also provide an approach that is different from other disciplines yet valued as an important tool in delivering Indigenous knowledge within a Western institutional framework. This would allow for 'border crossings' to take place, presenting alternative methodologies as well as perspectives to equip students with a number of skills that are crucial for intercultural understanding in modern culture. Articulating voice and plurality in the figuration of difference allow students to configure difference. It provides students with opportunities to engage with issues of race, express feelings from experience and analyse racial structures as ideological forces. Such pedagogy then allows academics to engage critically with the issues, facilitating discourses to create spaces for multiple references that constitutes cultural codes embedded in language and meaning.

Identity

Constructions of Identity

As demonstrated in the discourse of pedagogic practice, the positioning and assumptions of identity confined and constructed into learning spaces based on expectations of identity affect the dynamics of the classroom, particularly between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. This impacts on learning processes and understanding of intercultural communication, thus limiting the scope of culture and the diverse positionalities in which individuals occupy and encounter. Any discourse
on identity is complex and difficult as it encompasses socialisations, emotion, politics and subjectivities that are contested. Indigenous identity is diverse, yet historically it has been positioned in a homogenised manner and is often represented in particular spaces.

... it's not so much that Indigenous identity is constructed which is the issue. It's the fact that the identity which is constructed doesn’t actually correspond with the reality of the way Indigenous people see themselves and their culture (see, NS4: P. 41, L. 34-38).

This is a central issue and its importance is reflected in most of the discussions on identity. For example, a non-Indigenous student admits to experiencing culture shock on encountering Indigenous students in the Northern Territory as this experience differed from experience elsewhere (see NS2: P. 21, L. 48-50). Students and academics point to the need for teaching and learning frameworks that support and empower individuals, as identity is confused and fragile, stereotypical, loaded with emotion and is a projection of self and culture. Fixed constructions of identity limit the multiple identities of individuals, denying as it does the diverse experiences of individuals and the occupation of a number of identity spaces where individuals can draw on their experiences of culture, Western and or Indigenous. Identity therefore needs to be understood in its hybrid multiplicities and this needs to be incorporated in the classroom as it provides important tools of understanding the nature of identity construction and its implications of learning processes and individuals. Hybridity as a metaphor provides a language for creating a space of difference where Indigenous identity is not located in conduits of racial classification. It is perceived as shifting across, in-between and beyond set boundaries of assumed experience. The notion of hybridity allows for critical reflections of identity constructed within boundaries, bringing into the fore the problem of essentialising cultural difference and dualistic thinking. Recognition of hybridity as Said (1993: xxxix) has suggested, incorporates the view that “all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated…” Recognising hybridity in this way is important in supporting a pedagogical framework that allows for movement away from homogenised representations of Indigenous identity. What is needed is a structure, which incorporates the negotiation of identity, borders creating intercultural experiences and diverse learning and teaching spaces.
When interpretations of identity are fixed, assumptions are made about how individuals learn and these may not necessarily correlate to the reality of what is going on.

Assumptions about how Indigenous people learn and in what contexts they learn fragments knowledge systems. This problematic recontextualises identity as it is premised on projected and fixed cultural differences that are bounded by ideology and impede flexible learning to meet the needs of students in the classroom, hindering the interface needed. This is echoed by Indigenous voices in this research where student and academic expectations of Indigenous people often did not reflect Indigenous diverse experience and burdened and intimidated Indigenous students. "There's an assumption there, that because you're Aboriginal, you know about Aboriginal culture, so it's an extra burden on Aboriginal students and it shouldn't be" (see IS5: P. 27, L. 7-8, See also ISS: P. 77, L. 28-34). Indigenous academics reinforce the pressures on Indigenous students to perform in this way and note these expectations are negative as they tend to box Indigenous students into a universalised understanding of what it is to be Indigenous.

What is needed perhaps are formalised protocols to be put in place to support Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and academics in unpacking the difficulties of assumptions and their negative impact on Indigenous learners. Such a framework would open up the discourse of identity and allow individuals to speak from different positions that can then be used as a tool to deconstruct framed and narrow constructions of identity. It is important to note that non-Indigenous students often insist that Indigenous people speak about Indigenous issues. It is important to recognise that this is done in many instances because students are interested in Indigenous knowledge systems and want to understand and hear Indigenous voices (see IS5: P. 77, L. 44-46). This itself can fall into the trap of desire to 'authenticate' the knowledge when in many Indigenous contexts legitimacy of 'authority' is a highly complex and culturally bound position. Both students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous also need to be aware of the problems of the anthropological romance and the subtleties of power and ownership of knowledge that can impinge on such interactions. These processes while examined closely in many other texts are part of the challenge in the development of pedagogy with a 'true' Indigenous voice.
A framework which allows for Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities to contribute to the discussions will open up the channels of communication and allow students to understand the difficulties associated with this discourse but also turn it around so that it can be reconceptualised and understood. These dimensions need to be factored in during pedagogic practice as they de-essentialise identity. Pedagogic practices must allow spaces in the classroom that recognise this because without dialogue, identity will remain fragile and confused and Indigenous people will continue to be alienated in higher education.

It is interesting to note the number of students identifying the difficulties of positioning Indigenous identities yet also recognise the interest, curiosity and the need to learn and experience alternative knowledge systems. This is fundamental and needs to be incorporated in any formal protocols established. Identity then becomes celebrated, de-essentialised and a positive and unique form of pedagogy that incorporates diversity as a tool to enhance learning.

Existing and recognised models of pedagogy such as ‘two-way’ education and systemic functionalist approaches are inadequate on their own. Functional and structural approaches do take into account cultural context, but are limited in adequately dealing with fluid and hybridised identities encountered in the contemporary classroom. The proponents of ‘two-way’ education address distinct domains, separate and bounded. I have argued why such an approach is problematic in pedagogic practice. Rather, an educational approach that creates a dynamic between Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews is proposed by a Yolngu leader, is more useful where knowledge is shared between cultures to nurture learning skills. “Garma is “both ways” learning process” (Yunupingu, 2004) where Indigenous knowledge is maintained and shared with non-Indigenous people and vice versa.

Establishing collaborative partnerships where both cultures are presented, strengthened and respected are important processes of a successful pedagogy and in affect revolve around the notion of Garma described in Chapter Three. Indigenous students negotiate Western educational frameworks and ‘Two-Way’ education systems imply that students cannot. Portraying a set of characteristics of Indigenous identity positions Indigenous students in confined categories where Indigenous representations are constructed and are not representative of student experience, as the data have suggested. I have argued the inadequacy of such frameworks, the limitations to a surface reading of difference and its underlying ideological
assumptions regarding a fixed subjectivity. Representations of Indigenous identity at a micro level irrespectively shape representations at a macro level.

**Institutional Indigenous Representations.**

An overwhelming number of participants commented on the negative Indigenous representations at the institutional level. This included representations made by FATSIS and Faculties across the University. Attention is drawn to the ‘comforting’ of Indigenous students that occurs at FATSIS (see IS1: P. 5, L. 52, and P. 6, L. 53-54).

I have argued the role of recontextualising Indigenous knowledge, pedagogic practice and Indigenous identity in confining learning experiences from particular stances. Situating Indigenous students in a disadvantaged category by lowering standards and changing learning expectations actually limits the skilling of students from a number of levels. Learning within a higher education program encompasses more than the content of the material and it also provides students’ opportunity to learn functional skills such as the management of time, critical thinking and writing, planning and utilising existing resources. Thus any representation that undermines these processes also undermines the full potential and capacity of learners. It is not enough to argue for example that Indigenous students are better visual learners and therefore the methodology must always cater for this. It is important to provide and strengthen skills elsewhere if Indigenous students are to be geared into successfully integrating and contributing into the dominant culture where they are required to meet the rigorous demands of employment agencies.

The different learning and teaching approaches discussed earlier and highlighted by many respondents was that FATSIS units were not as academically rigorous as units taught in other faculties. This in essence is a form of representation as it implicitly positions Indigenous knowledge systems and practices as somehow neither as complex nor difficult.

Overall, Indigenous representations at NTU were perceived by many of the participants to be of negative, tokenistic and of stereotypical nature. At the same time, Indigenous representations on promotional materials such as the website are perceived as exotic and different perpetuating stereotypical representations. Some argued that such a representation on the website (http://www.cdu.edu.au) is racist by
nature because it signifies ignorance of Indigenous knowledge systems and Indigeneity. It is difficult to see how this can empower Indigenous students and provide a learning space that respects difference in all its diversity. Negative Indigenous representation at a macro and micro level within the institution instils a particular ideology of Indigenous people. Issues of power need to be considered in this context because it is non-Indigenous people who are creatively constructing Indigenous identity. What are needed are Indigenous voices represented on side with non-Indigenous voices so as to allow critical representations, voice and alternative construction to take place. This is crucial in creating a learning environment that is rich in cultural diversity, provides encouragement for Indigenous students to engage in modes of production about themselves. Negative Indigenous institutional representations support recontextual notions of Indigenous identity that ultimately affects the practice of the institution, including the practice of the classroom as the representations become institutionalised and accepted unconditionally in the psyche of Individuals. Constructed notions only legitimise a framework that supports institutional rhetoric that impedes the development of successful learning environments.

Pedagogic discourse is thus constituted within a representational framework. The analysis to date highlights the particular problems of such representation and recontextualisation of Indigenous knowledge productions and identity. Educational knowledge thus becomes a major regulator of practice and therefore of pedagogic experience.

Cultural and Academic Support for Indigenous Students

The importance of perceiving the Faculty itself as a source of support also emerged as an important issue. Poor communication about available resources taint perceptions about the experience of being within an institution that takes engagement with Indigenous culture and access to higher education seriously. Academics interviewed expressed that adequate support mechanisms were in place at FATSIS for Indigenous students. These, it was suggested, come in the form of ATAS and having a culturally safe Indigenous site for students to access. Student respondents relate confusion and difficulty accessing many substantive benefits from these resources.
It is important to note that not all Indigenous students accessed ATAS and generally went to unit lecturers for queries. Another student was not aware of the support lecturers at FATSIS but did know of support lecturers at other faculties. For another student, FATSIS support was described negatively as experience with administration, enrolments and procedures for postgraduate studies were fraught with difficulties and confusion. The students describe in detail their frustration and disillusionments with the process. One student for instance describes how academic staff tried to dissuade him/her from further studies, having postgraduate courses in place that were not accredited and general discontent with staff for lack of encouragement and support. The student eventually moved on to another Faculty for further studies (see IS3: P. 36, L. 48, and P. 37, L. 1-2, and P. 37, L. 3-11, and P. 37, L. 18-28).

Some of these concerns are also raised by an Indigenous academic who says that support for Indigenous academics is minimal.

In conclusion, I have argued that pedagogic discourse is the process of recontextualisation as it appropriates from the primary content such as Indigenous knowledges embedded in the curriculum. Bernstein's recontextualisation principle is active in current pedagogic practices where the institution legitimises official pedagogic discourse where it undergoes further recontextualisation when it is interpreted and implemented by academics (Bernstein, 1990: 185-7). The recontextualisation is then appropriated in the methodology where pedagogic practice, including delivery and assessment, are the processes in which the contextualisation occurs. In this manner, pedagogy relocates itself into a secondary discourse, which does not necessarily convey the theoretical construction of the knowledge itself. It therefore leads itself to the representation process whereby understandings of culture and identity become something other than what is actually being presented. This is because it is grounded in discourses of race. What is needed therefore is a critical theoretical perspective that looks behind identity and representation and into issues of power. This requires a move away from traditional symbols of identity and difference as well as reformulating the political zone of difference entrenched in the privileging of race.

The production of Indigenous knowledge in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies higher education program was instigated by changing policy that supported the formalisation of an Indigenous studies program at NTU. The theoretical content
presents issues of Indigenous knowledges offered at a variety of streams to ensure Indigenous worldviews from historical, political, social and environmental perspectives. This was important in theorising Indigenous knowledge within the academy as historically this was only lacking and conveyed within other disciplines that represented Indigenous knowledges from dominant positions. The production of Indigenous knowledges in the BATSIS program attempted to be inclusive in involving Indigenous people in the production modes and in decision-making. Whether this has adequately occurred is contested and varied from individual to individual. Theorising Indigenous knowledge validated and legitimised its content within the institution as well as insinuating the existence of an Indigenous pedagogy. Apparent from the research is that having an Indigenous knowledge system in place does not necessarily mean that Indigenous pedagogic practices are also in place. This is an important finding as it highlights the inconsistent pedagogic processes in practice that need to be further developed, articulated and framed. Pedagogic practices within the BATSIS process vary from one unit to the next depending on the academic staff member involved and personal principles that guide their teaching. The emphasis on personal and reflective structures within FATSIS appears to be insufficient and does not adequately formalise methodology and delivery of content.

I have argued that the interpretation of difference from a cultural surface is problematic as it too recontextualises and relocates Indigenous knowledges within a confined frame which affects the practice of teaching and learning. Binary and oppositional construction of difference is problematic in allowing for multi-approaches to take place where learning is not restricted by fixed boundaries which rely on assumptions entrenched in ideology, politics and racial classifications. Projected differences in the production of curricula imply differential and diverse positions that are not adequately structured within the pedagogic practice. The experience of academics and staff suggest that a well described and structured approach that conveys Indigenous knowledges appropriately, including collaborative models of learning, are lacking. Students are thus expected to know invisible learning frameworks that do not support the learning experience and causes confusion and uncertainty in terms of what is required. What is needed is a model that appropriately represents Indigenous knowledges within a Western academic institution.

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Chapter 8.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Low Indigenous participation in education and employment continue to be of concern in contemporary Australian society. The recognition of Indigenous cultures in curricula also continues to have importance in establishing intercultural frameworks inclusive of cross-cultural communication processes where negotiation and collaboration are significant in exploring pedagogies that support students academically and practically. This research project has explored the complexities of knowledge, discourse and Indigenous pedagogy in higher education by examining the Bachelor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies offered at the then Northern Territory University (now Charles Darwin University). The relevance of this work to current educational debates and policy frameworks lies in its contribution to the examination of the issues around the development of effective strategies in Indigenous higher education delivery and participation. The importance of this is paramount as it is interrelates to social, cultural and economic factors that affect outcomes of participation in Indigenous knowledge systems.

This following concluding chapter presents a summary of the research, theoretical reflections, recommendations for practice and consideration on implications for further research.

Summary of the Research

This research project has investigated pedagogic discourses and their complex and contested domains where social, cultural, political and economic contributors affect ideologies and practice at both micro and macro levels, the classroom and the institution. The case study of BATSIS has identified dominant representations and constructs affecting teaching and learning practices. It explored the construction of Indigenous identities and their recontextualisation within pedagogic practices and the impact on knowledge production in the curriculum. This allowed critique of difference (Chapter Three) as well as socially represented identities, formulated in fixed spaces of interpretation such that difference was articulated in terms of assumptions about race. This critical approach led to an examination of difference in institutional practices affecting pedagogy, highlighting the recontextualisation of knowledge in pedagogic discourse premised on binary oppositions: formal/informal,
Indigenous/non-Indigenous, reflective/personal. Conceptualising difference in this manner was shown to be problematic as it confines identity and cultural experience to homogenised and essentialised domains.

The importance of understanding the inter-relation of modes of production and representations of knowledge in curriculum was demonstrated through the historical contexts of Indigenous higher education (Chapter Two). We saw the effect of government policies and social practices upon the assumptions underlying selection of and their resulting influences on processes of methodology and delivery in the classroom. These historical mechanisms were to shape Indigenous programs and knowledge systems within higher education universities. Political instruments such as policy statements, especially the AEP (DEET, 1989) were discussed in order to map out Commonwealth Government actions and responses addressing the need to increase Indigenous participation and bring Indigenous knowledges into universities. Also examined were the efforts to promote access and equity for Indigenous Australians through higher education via the adoption of active and inclusive decision-making processes that were opened to Indigenous participation.

Indigenous knowledge was therefore mainstreamed in universities and was asserted as a valid and theoretical framework for inclusion in the corpus of university knowledges. This mainstreaming was two-way in that it was also designed to make Indigenous knowledge systems available to non-Indigenous students. This movement was politically driven by the desire to increase Indigenous participation and representation in tertiary education as well as to encourage non-Indigenous students to study Indigenous knowledge systems. This initiative was a watershed (1990-1995) in the Australian academy as Indigenous knowledge systems were given a space outside traditional disciplines. This approach was distinctly different to traditional representations of Indigenous knowledges in disciplines such as anthropology, where the focus was on studying Aboriginal peoples as opposed to Indigenous knowledge and worldviews. The significance of the historical review presented in Chapter Two brought to the fore the power of Commonwealth Government reforms and policy in creating structural change that was to greatly influence the development of Indigenous knowledge programs such as BATSIS.

This initiative to incorporate Indigenous perspectives was seen through the adoption of AEP strategies and principles by the NTU that became central to the formulation
and implementation of Indigenous knowledge systems in curriculum. The research assessed these new arrangements and highlighted the processes of the implementation of Indigenous pedagogic discourses with features such as curriculum advisors, academic support positions and the development of Indigenous content and pedagogic strategies. Through the examination of historical debates and discussions regarding discourses of Indigenous pedagogy and appropriate strategies, I have demonstrated through critique how the construction of knowledge at a formal level was instigated. This was seen through the response by the Northern Territory University to develop BATSIS in relation to policy frameworks. Commonwealth Government policy was therefore instrumental in the influence and the establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bachelor degree program at the Northern Territory University. National policy thus played a direct role in instigating and standardising Indigenous knowledges intended to improve access, participation and educational outcomes not only for Indigenous students but also non-Indigenous students. The program was rationalised and legitimised within the bureaucracy of a tertiary institution governed by increasingly dominant rationalist and functionalist approaches.

The inclusion of Indigenous knowledges within the corpus of the academy was also crucial in developing frameworks for theorising Indigenous knowledge systems and validating them as legitimate knowledge structures. The recognition and acceptance that Indigenous knowledge systems had value was a part of wider social and political developments, as was seen in the policy developments examined in Chapter Two. Within the academy such historical shifts in thinking were fundamental in changing attitudes and perceptions about alternative epistemologies. Provisions for inclusion were substantiated through the development of higher education programs, mechanisms for Indigenous community input and a focus upon the individual Indigenous experience. Indigenous knowledge therefore became part and privy to the educational mainstream no longer confined to marginalised positions in disciplines that studied Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Again, this approach was a distinct contrast to previous traditional disciplinary approaches such as anthropology, human geography, pre-history and archaeology where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were the subject of study.

BATSIS was therefore structurally presented not unlike other programs in other disciplines, where lectures, tutorials and assessments complied with expected...
Western institutional frameworks. There was little room for deviation from this form, thus confining Indigenous knowledges to codified and framed functions of the University. This in a sense bounded Indigenous knowledge to Western interpretations. However, the course documentation signalled flexibility in the pedagogic delivery where methodology and practice was to convey Indigenous worldviews and incorporate a framework which could differentiate BATSIS from other higher education programs. This was to come in the form of articulated objectives and aims in the course accredited documents where Indigenous representations and voices, the involvement of Indigenous communities and the utilisation of practical fieldtrips ensured that Indigenous representations were being upheld.

The examination of the formal construction of Indigenous knowledge for the BATSIS program was important because it allowed for parallel analysis between theoretical content construction and its practical application in the pedagogic delivery (Chapter Seven). This process brought to the fore the form and shape of classroom delivery, where Indigenous knowledge was reproduced and recontextualised outside the theoretical formal content and within ideological assumptions to do with Indigeneity and apparently essentialised notions of difference. These factors were to influence Indigenous representations and position identity within a fixed and singular place affecting pedagogic practices. The lack of correlation between the theory and practice was problematic as it affected teaching frameworks where it was difficult to determine clarity and commonality in verbalising and conceptualising Indigenous pedagogy. This impacted on the delivery of Indigenous knowledge as the methodology applied was constituted in ideological constructs embedded in the discourse of pedagogic practice. This was to have a profound influence on perceptions of Indigenous identity, notions of difference and was to shape pedagogic practices (Chapter Six). For example, assumptions of Indigenous identity were reflected in the way in which difference was conceptualised, bounded by perceived experience and expectations through representations that were recontextualised. The effect of this on the pedagogic experience was demonstrated through the responses of students and academics alike. (Chapters Six and Seven)

Theory and practice of Indigenous knowledges reflect different things. Indigenous participation, worldviews and community involvement in the production and
presentation of curricula needs to occur in theory and in practice, as it is insufficient to recognise it purely in the formal course documentation.

Students and academics recognised the importance of multiple and alternative methodologies for disseminating Indigenous knowledges where collaboration, flexibility and alternative worldviews were said to be features of such an approach. Tensions however, arose in practice, as students reported difficulty in seeing the application of this framework or recognition of Indigenous pedagogy. The intention of academics to incorporate appropriate practice that pointed to an Indigenous pedagogy was perceived to be lacking by the students.

The methodology utilised in the research project consisted of a case study of the BATSIS program at NTU where formal document analysis and interviews were processes employed. These provided data sources which were subject to discourse analysis. The document analysis included the examination of content in curricula, policy material from NTU, funding bodies such as the Commonwealth and NT governments. Extended interviews with a selection of staff and students also provided data for discourse analysis. Overall, qualitative methodology that incorporated critical theoretical discourses using inductive, interpretive and descriptive analysis was applied. This methodological approach brought to the fore tensions in binary and fixed positionalities that essentialised identity constructions and experience.

**Theoretical Reflections**

The central and critical findings from this research project point to essentialised notions of difference that lead to binary constructions of identity. This construction of identity has been identified as problematic because binary definitions of race do not adequately acknowledge students' various experiences and worldviews. Also problematic was the assumptive features of essentialism which led to highly contextualised ideological understandings of race. These assumed frameworks for recognising difference, reconceptualise identity and represent difference in polarised schisms. A binary definition of race leads to a lack of correlation between official content presented in curriculum and pedagogical practice. It raises concern in relation to knowledge production and the practical application of Indigenous pedagogy, limiting alternative methodologies and representations.
Pedagogic practices conceived in essentialised binary locations present a ‘lethal’ combination, reliving traditional practices of assimilation, which deny culture and diversity of student experience. This approach distorts and neglects the development of an Indigenous pedagogy in practice as dominant educational frameworks intrude, represent, reproduce and recontextualise Indigenous knowledges and identity. This impinges on alternative processes of knowledge productions where content, assessment, methodology and delivery are bounded in Western dominant paradigms. Significant here is the apparent misrecognition of Indigenous knowledges and pedagogy that differentiate it from other knowledge systems through its pedagogic practice but rather assimilates and racialises knowledge into the corpus of the academy. This has led to polarisation, creating tension in relation to who should produce knowledge and how should Indigenous knowledges be taught and by whom?

Findings from this research project also point to a lack of formal approaches to Indigenous pedagogy that support open and continuing discourses about teaching and learning approaches. The absence of continuous evaluation and review of methodology was to have further implications on the delivery of the content material. Synergies of formal and informal teaching strategies also appeared to be absent. There is no inherent conflict between modes of delivery or content as formal or informal. The problematic is in defining and articulating the elements in relationship to each other and ensuring that frameworks are in place that encompass Indigenous personal reflections of knowledge as well as theorised notions of knowledge. A pedagogy that has representation from Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff would present plurality, where students and staff would have the opportunity to voice experience from particular perspectives to establish a space for the analysis of race, power and ideological constructs. Such pluralism allows for the engagement of fundamental questions about how knowledge is taught and how students can engage with such knowledge. Moving from one boundary to the other offers students the opportunity to engage in multiple references that constitute various cultural codes, meanings and language (Giroux, 1992:135). Collaborative and consultative approaches, which incorporate both formal and informal teaching, need to be actively included in an Indigenous pedagogy.

De-essentialised processes of difference and identity that may contribute to the development of inclusive, diverse and collaborative approaches which maintain integrity of alternative knowledge systems and alternative pedagogic practices

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enhance learning and create pluralistic teaching and learning spaces. Such an integrative approach attempts to recognise and support the diverse needs of students to strengthen formal academic skills and to create awareness and understandings of the variety of perspectives and voices in Indigenous knowledge systems and in contemporary Australian culture.

Establishing an 'interchange' between Western and Indigenous teaching and learning models extends beyond existing singular positions of leaning. This approach makes the process of pedagogy explicit and avoids doubt and confusion from students and academics about expected teaching frameworks. Formal and informal approaches can be integrated, rather than being dependant upon each other as servants of political and institutional need. Movement away from binary oppositions may support the development of theorising Indigenous pedagogy so as to formalise Indigenous knowledge beyond official documentation.

The formal inclusion of Indigenous voice in teaching methodology would enhance Indigenous participation and provide avenues for the presentation of Indigenous knowledges that go beyond tokenistic gestures which only pay lip service to Indigenous involvement. This was a concern articulated by many of the participants. Indigenous issues, knowledges and experiences can thus be understood outside singular positionalities but rather from various domains of identity and difference. Indigenous identity cannot be confined to a mono-culturally conditioned subjectivity in contemporary Australia. Complex and heterogenous realities do exist in the classroom. Codes of a single and unitary culture are products of binary positional constructions. A pedagogy that incorporates Indigenous and non-Indigenous voice in the BATSIS program would make the program unique, as it would differentiate it from mainstream education. In this context, multiple identities are not positioned in fixed domains as they involve various ways of perceiving culture and knowledge. Learning thus occurs in multiple domains and in-between spaces. Such a process would move away from dominant boundaries of pedagogic practice where binary oppositions of 'black and white' become eroded. Any approach to representing Indigenous knowledge must confront students with diverse experiences; and identity in fixed positions fails to recognise this.

It is important to recognise that students want access to Indigenous knowledges and worldviews. Indigenous and non-Indigenous students want access to academic skills
that support an education that provides tools for strengthening learning. Some Indigenous students also seek tools and access to resources to strengthen their communities and enhance and maintain the knowledges for which they are responsible. Such individual motivations belong to the students themselves; the responsibility of the academy is to acknowledge the diversity and structure pathways to achieve outcomes. It is inappropriate to suggest that Indigenous students prefer informal teaching methodologies because they are Indigenous. Like non-Indigenous students, Indigenous students should have access to diverse approaches according to the contexts of study.

In order to limit the recontextualisation of Indigenous identity and Indigenous knowledges it is important to refigure the conceptualisation of difference. Current interpretation of difference in the classroom by academics and students suggest a degree of instability where Indigeneity is confined to singular spaces. I have discussed in detail previously that such misrepresentations confine any real understanding of contemporary culture and limit the scope of relevant pedagogies. Indigenous students can and do engage in a variety of cultural spaces, they do and can appreciate formal structures as well as reflect on personal experience and articulate narratives that are both oral and written in form.

**Recommendations for Practice**

Confining Indigenous students in marginalised spaces purely because of identity becomes a disadvantage. It binds learning to a fixed space and we have seen the problems this creates. Understanding identity through the metaphor of hybridity is crucial in providing a learning place where difference is defined by individuals and not defined and located in conduits of racial classifications. There is a need to allow for various meanings across time and across diverse cultural contexts where boundaries constantly shift as opposed to confinement. It is important to recognise notions of hybridity in the pedagogic space as it provides movement away from homogenised representations of Indigenous identity. It thus allows students to move in-between cultural and social spaces as they choose, engaging in intercultural experience and accessing diverse range of teaching and learning styles. This also provides movement away from essentialised knowledge frameworks and movement towards multi-layered discourses transcending binary categories. Hybridity is important for the recognition of a variety of cultural experiences. At a practical
level, this promotes evaluation of current pedagogic practices where crucial is the need to rethink, analyse, construct and deconstruct perspectives encountered within institutional practice. This allows for effective teaching improvements where the focus is on reflective evaluation that is transparent, where academic staff are able to engage in critical discourses of teaching practices to continuously review what works and what doesn’t so as to ensure quality.

Conceptualisation of difference from assumptive interpretations based on notions of race maintain and endorse white hegemony and position pedagogy in an axis of power. The case study established how such a framework causes divisions and tension in the classroom as it generates oppositions and representations of identity reproduced and recontextualised. This was demonstrated through the practical pedagogic experience of participants that classroom practice on this basis are ineffective as they create dichotomies and assumptions about Indigenous identity, thus limiting differing cultural experiences of individuals. Teaching practices that endorse these flawed principles generalise and homogenise the Indigenous identity thus confining culture fixedly. Such a conceptualisation of difference continues to position Indigenous students to a confined category of ‘Other’, undermining capabilities and narrowing challenges for students, limiting learning performances that are constituted through institutions. Difference cannot be contextualised within such a limited space where supposed cultural representations ultimately impinge on pedagogic practices as embedded are issues of power and racism driven and perpetuated through institutional processes.

Perhaps an integrative learning framework is worthy of consideration as it allows for the representation of various knowledge systems that have equal value in the classroom. A practice that encompasses in depth understanding of multiple perspectives and complex cultural meanings where value is not positioned either here nor there but is negotiated through a third space creating objective and considered processes of learning. This overcomes deficiencies of binaries and dependencies on a dominant pedagogic discourse.

The Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies ceased to exist in 2004 due to institutional reorganisation, as the Northern Territory University became the Charles Darwin University (CDU). Suffice to say that a number of areas and functions became centralised and FATSIS was replaced with the School of
Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems (SAIKS), within the Faculty of Law, Business and Arts. Indigenous education however, was not confined to the business of the school, but was to be reflected in other Faculties and other schools within CDU. It is important to note that the BATSIS program remains in the school and Indigenous knowledge systems continue to be recognised by the institution as important components of the academy. There is thus an opportunity to configure Indigenous knowledge systems in the curriculum that is representative and inclusive and one that goes beyond the rhetoric of institutions.

To sum up this section, the findings of this study tend to support pluralistic approaches for pedagogic practice. The utilisation and clear involvement with Indigenous communities provides an opportunity for an important resource to provide practical, real and alternative worldviews significant to the development of Indigenous content and delivery within the university. This supports the development of an Indigenous pedagogy allowing pedagogic practices outside dominant Western constructs. The integration of Western and Indigenous methodologies presents the incorporation of various knowledge systems providing students with diversity and critical thought to alternative epistemologies. This approach can be supported through the formulation and incorporation of an Indigenous Terms of References for teaching and learning. This can provide students with an understanding of the process of curriculum production and the cultural contexts for learning to explicitly define protocols. This provides clarification and embeds explicit teaching strategies that explain, discuss and define pedagogic practices within Indigenous knowledge systems. Such an approach develops teaching approaches that present plurality through Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices to provide multi-methodological approaches drawing on Western and alternative models of teaching and learning as well as diverse representation of knowledge.

The presentation of an Indigenous pedagogy that reflects formal and informal processes of learning provides access to alternative knowledge systems and methodologies to consider the wide experiences of students and to showcase the breadth and diversity of Indigenous knowledges. This supports pluralistic approaches, which vocabularises pedagogy that defines and makes visible a learning process where students have an opportunity to access specific tools and takes discursive experience into account.
It is important to note that for such a space to be effective and successful, transparent reviews, evaluations and critical open discourses need to be consistently applied to the teaching and learning approaches so as to critically evaluate their appropriateness. This requires recognition of difference and its multiplicities in the classroom transforming current teaching and learning practices that do not bind Indigenous learning frameworks to conceived ideological reflections.

In conclusion, it can be seen that knowledge, discourse and Indigenous pedagogy is a complex domain encompassing a number of contested zones. Indigenous knowledge systems in curriculum needs to be understood in relation to specific contexts such as historical policy developments and changing Institutional strategic directions. The production of Indigenous content theorised and validated in the academy alone is not sufficient for presenting Indigenous knowledge systems adequately. Important is the consideration of the application of this content to determine its relevance and appropriateness to students. Also important is the discourse of identity and difference in understanding recontextualisation processes that embed notions of power and issues of race that determine pedagogy not suitable for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. The delivery of Indigenous knowledge systems through curriculum offers an opportunity to rethink our pedagogic practices in order to ensure that they reflect pluralistic strategies that present diverse perspectives and do not restrict identity in fixed and singular spaces. The importance of this is paramount in contemporary Australian culture where assumptions about how Indigenous students learn impinge on learning and limit the capacity of students to engage in diverse spaces of collaboration and worldviews. Structured, formal and flexible approaches can be figured to ensure that access to the academic tools for all students provides a good grounding for future directions.

This is important as it brings to the fore debate and discourse of Indigenous pedagogy that is vital in ensuring that best practice takes place, that quality and excellence in delivery are adequately portrayed and that practice reflects the laudable aims and objectives of the BATSIS program.

This research project has formulated central problematic in higher education within current Indigenous pedagogic practice and contexts. It is important to recognise that the critique and findings explored here have wider implication to all higher education programs around Australia and not just for the Northern Territory. The relationships
between binary and racialised notions of difference, the underdevelopment of a uniquely Indigenous pedagogic practice in Western Institutions and the difficulties of recognising diversity within and Indigenous pedagogy are substantive issues in the examination of knowledge, discourse and Indigenous pedagogy in higher education. The research explored how these notions impacted and affected one another. Additional research is needed to examine further the implications of the findings highlighted here. Specifically, does a binary definition of race necessarily lead to a lack of correlation between official statement and pedagogic practices? Under what conditions does a theoretically informed view of racialised difference lead to a hybridised pedagogy? Are these necessarily self-supporting or do they hold inherent contradictions? Supplementary research to explore the implications of these issues, questions and concerns in relation to higher education programs outside the Northern Territory would provide useful parallels for further critique and continuing discussions.
Appendix I  Interview Questions

1) What degree program are you enrolled in?
   Or
   Have you been involved in the development of curriculum for a degree program?

2) What stage of your studies are you at?
   Or
   At what stage of the curriculum development were you or are you involved in?

3) Do you identify as an Aboriginal and/or a Torres Strait Islander person?

4) Are you enrolled in any higher education units that cover Australian Indigenous content? If so how many and with what faculty?
   Or
   Have you been involved in curriculum development that deals with Indigenous content? If so in what capacity?

5) Have you or are you enrolled in units that are taught by the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies at NTU?
   If so, is there difference in the way the unit/s is taught compared to your experience with units taught outside the faculty?
   Or
   Have you or are you developing units that are taught by the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies at NTU?
   If so, are there differences in the process of development compared to other units you have been involved in developing elsewhere? Please explain your answer.

6) How would you describe your experience in higher education units that have included Indigenous content and contexts? For example:
   Has your learning/teaching been useful in your studies/curriculum?
   And/or
   Has your experience been positive or negative? Please explain your answer.
Please discuss and explain your views and experiences on teaching practices that have covered Indigenous content in the material. For example, describe the teaching methodology? Is this methodology appropriate to your learning/teaching?

Please describe your views and attitudes in relation to Indigenous identity/ies. Is your identity questioned or made reference to in the tutorials? Please explain your answer.

How important do you think Indigenous knowledges are in the curriculum you are studying/teaching? Why?

Do you think that Indigenous knowledges are sufficiently covered in your discipline area? Please explain your answer.

What else would you like to see covered or not covered?

Describe what ‘expectations’ exist in the tutorial of Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students regarding discussion participation relating to Indigenous knowledges. Please provide examples.

Do you think that Indigenous students are treated differently to non-Indigenous students by other students and/or academics? Please explain your answer.

How do you think Indigenous students are represented in the culture of the University?

Do you think Indigenous students learn differently to non-Indigenous students? Why and how?

Comment on what you know of the production of Indigenous knowledges in your curriculum. Do you think they are inclusive or exclusive?

Do you think that Indigenous knowledges are incorporated well in the curriculum? Why?

Do you think Indigenous people have sufficient involvement in the decision making process of what to include/exclude in the curriculum content? Please explain your reasons.
Explain the difficulties and the successes of your experience in tertiary education.

If you identify as an Indigenous student have you ever:

Accessed the ATAS tutorial scheme? If so has this helped you in your studies? Please explain your answer.

Or

Accessed the Indigenous Support Staff at the faculty you are enrolled in?

7) Has this been useful for your studies? Please explain your answer.

8) Do you think there are adequate and culturally appropriate supports for Indigenous students (or curriculum writers) undertaking a degree program?

9) Please feel free to make any other comment/s regarding your teaching/learning experience that you consider important and has not been covered by the questions here.
Appendix II

Consent Form

CONSENT FORM BY ADULT

I, ..............................................................................................................

..............................................................................................................

Hereby consent to be participate in a study to be undertaken by ...

Mona El-Ayoubi

of ..............................................................................................................

The Northern Territory University.................................................................

and I understand that the purpose of the research is

to investigate teaching learning experiences in higher education and to look ache

methods used in teaching Indigenous students

I acknowledge that:

• The aims, methods, and anticipated benefits, and possible risks of the study,
  have been explained to me by Mona El-Ayoubi.

• I voluntarily and freely give my consent to my participation in such study

• I understand that aggregated results will be used for research purposes and may
  be reported to scientific journals and academic journals.

• Individual results will not be released to any person except at my request and or,
  my authorisation.

• I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the study to which my
  participation to the research study will immediately cease and any information
  obtained from me will not be used.

Signature: .................................................................................................. Date: .............................
**Appendix III**

**PROJECT:**

**CHIEF INVESTIGATOR:**

**ASSOCIATE RESEARCHER:**

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:**

You are invited to assist in this project by allowing me to interview you and or fill out a questionnaire. I will take notes which will then be taken away to be put together with all the other information I collect. (I am seeking 20 individuals to take part in the interviews). The information you give will help us understand your experience in a higher education University.

The purpose of the project is to look at attitudes and views in relation to Indigenous teaching and learning. It is to look at how meaning is made in different cultures and to determine the impact of interpretation on teaching and learning as well as content material.

**BENEFITS OF THE STUDY:**

This study will help in the development of teaching and learning ways that best suit student needs. It will help us to look at problems and successes to higher education and how we can improve students’ educational environment. This information may be useful to teachers when they are writing material for the classroom and when then are teaching.

**WHAT WOULD BE EXPECTED OF YOU?**

If you decide to take part in this research you will be asked to answer a set of written questions or participate in an interview. This will be to relate to your experience in higher education. If you agree to be interviewed, I will arrange for an audio recording device to record your comments. Notes will then be taken to be put together with all other information we collect. There will be no limitation on how much time you take to answer the questions, either in written form or orally.

**DISCOMFORTS / RISKS:**

There are no specific risks associated with this study.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Full confidentiality of your name and those of any other people mentioned in the interview will not appear in the transcription. Your responses will be kept confidential and used only for presenting research results.

Your name and address must be known to the researcher, so she can find you, but it will never be mentioned in the report of the research, and your personal details will be locked away, quite separate from the other material.
YOUR PARTICIPATION: 
I would be grateful if you did participate in this study but you are free to refuse to participate. Even if you do decide to participate, you may withdraw from the research at any time.

If you decide to participate, please fill in the consent form which is attached to this letter, and mail it in the reply paid envelope provided. After this is signed, you may still withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty of any kind. I will contact you soon to arrange for a time that suits you best.

Whatever your decision on this matter, thank you for devoting some time to reading this statement, and considering its contents.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY 
If you wish to see the responses, arrangements will be made for you to do so. A transcription of the responses will also be made and you are welcome to arrange a time to read them if you wish.

PERSONS TO CONTACT 
If you have any questions about the project, please contact the researcher, Mona El-Ayoubi on ph: 0409697931 or Email: mene@octa4.net.com

If there is an emergency or if you have any concerns before commencing, during, or after the completion of the project, you are invited to contact the Executive Officer of the Northern Territory University Human Ethics Committee on 8946 7064. The Executive Officer can pass on any concerns to appropriate officers within the University.
# Appendix IV  Data: Descriptions and Objectives of BATSIS Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>YEAR 2000</th>
<th>Unit Objectives 1</th>
<th>Unit Objectives 2</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>Unit Descriptions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS100</td>
<td>Provide an overview of contemporary issues in Indigenous society</td>
<td>Study major socio-political and cultural issues impacting on contemporary Indigenous society and appreciate Indigenous viewpoint of impact of colonisation</td>
<td>Examine the effects of policies that have impacted in Indigenous societies during the last century.</td>
<td>Broad range of topics covered. Encourage students to develop fundamental knowledge of Indigenous pre and post-contact history, lifestyles, culture and current issues as well as explore issues relating to the interface of Indigenous and non-Indigenous societies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS101</td>
<td>Examine Australian history from an Indigenous perspective</td>
<td>Examine relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous versions of Australian History</td>
<td>Develop critical analysis of how features of Indigenous History have been shaped by historical forces and identity factors impacting on current Indigenous society.</td>
<td>Introduction to Australian Historical issues related to Indigenous peoples. Focus on 'hidden histories', Australian historical myths, settlement and nationhood in relation to their political and social implications. Brief survey of Aust History; examine unanswered questions in relation to the past and the treatment and representation of Indigenous Australians.</td>
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<td>Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRS100</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Develop understanding of contingent nature of knowledge systems.</td>
<td>Understanding of history of Western scientific tradition and events shaping current dominant knowledge systems in dealing with resource management issues.</td>
<td>Recognise validity and importance of local knowledge systems in current globalising and universalising cultural influences. Identify and understand utility and problems in universalising and totalising nature of Western scientific tradition.</td>
<td>Concerned with issues of knowledge production and its relation to management of resources in North Australia. Introduce issues of knowledges and philosophies regarding knowledge productions and investigate the impact these have on approaches to management of resource in different cultural contexts. Emphasises contingent knowledge upon social and cultural histories and how awareness of this affects ways in which people operate to develop, manage and maintain resources in contexts where different cultural and historical contexts are involved.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS102</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Examine frameworks to address history of Torres Strait from an Indigenous perspective and to examine the relationship between the Torres Strait peoples' perspectives of history with that of non-Torres Strait peoples.</td>
<td>Examine critical analysis of features of Torres Strait society and how it has been shaped by historical forces and examine ways in which historians can analyse contemporary Torres Strait society</td>
<td>Provides discourse of the Torres Strait Islander peoples understanding of their traditional histories and contact history of other groups prior to colonisation. Examines aspects of colonial impact on lifestyles and the 'de-racination of cultural traits. Also examines effect of introduction of Christianity into the Islands.</td>
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<td>Unit</td>
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<td>CAS110</td>
<td>Provide basic understanding of Yolngu languages to achieve grounding in sounds,</td>
<td>Develop language learning and fluency, understand depth of Yolngu knowledge and</td>
<td>Develop the emergence and recognition of human rights expressed in the writings of</td>
<td>Introduction to life and language of Yolngu people in North East Arnhem land. Focus on Yolngu languages. Provides basic grounding in vocabulary, sounds and grammatical systems, various aspects of kinship, Yolngu life.</td>
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<td>grammar, vocabulary for useful everyday community interactions</td>
<td>appreciate the preservation of knowledge through song, ceremonies and paintings</td>
<td>Aboriginal writers.</td>
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<td>and how this is celebrated in contemporary Yolngu life</td>
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<td>CAS111</td>
<td>Develop oral fluency in Dhuwala language</td>
<td>Develop research interest in particular Yolngu language</td>
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<td>Unit is an extension of CAS110 but focus on Gupapuyngu, and Dhuwala language. Develop oral fluency in the language and a research interest. Yolngu life and language will not be in a purely anthropological or linguistic form as this approach does not do justice to the Yolngu world of experience.</td>
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<td>CAS160</td>
<td>Provide historical overview of the writings of Aboriginal authors and to generate</td>
<td>Study the use of written media by Aborigines to promote acknowledgement of their</td>
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<td>discourse on social, political and cultural implications of Aboriginal writers</td>
<td>historical well being</td>
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<td>Study the emergence and recognition of human rights expressed in the writings of</td>
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<td>Aboriginal writers.</td>
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<td>CAS170</td>
<td>Develop a framework to address Indigenous issues</td>
<td>Examine relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldview</td>
<td>Provides an intro to health issues specifically related to Indigenous peoples in Australia. The emphasis will be on the historical social, and political factors impacting on Indigenous health. The Unit will compare and discuss Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews and the inter-relationship to well being.</td>
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<td>CAS204</td>
<td>Examine literature and discourses relating to how Indigenous Australians originally thought about reality</td>
<td>Examine religion and social organisation governing adaptable lifestyle</td>
<td>Examines unique knowledges of culture and society and tensions, which ignore such knowledge and their impact on planning, and implementation of development. Knowledges examined include religion, social order, technologies-their ramifications in contemporary community development, conservation and ecological, management.</td>
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</table>
Further develop reading and translating skills in Yolngu languages

Learn about Yolngu land, history, philosophy and science-texts produced by Yolngu writers and storytellers

Examines disempowerment of Indigenous groups

under colonial rule and reconstruction of productive Indigenous society following the end of colonisation. Examination of interpretation of self-determination by the global Indigenous groups. Major focus on struggle of Australian Indigenous groups

Examines historical influences which have shaped essential values of Aboriginal life. Focus on country and Western music which Aboriginal people readily absorbed into cultural life styles.

Surveys the development of Aboriginal Music, examines historical influences which have shaped essential values of Aboriginal life. Focus on country and Western music which Aboriginal people readily absorbed into cultural life styles.
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<tr>
<th>Unit Year</th>
<th>Unit Code</th>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>CAS226</td>
<td>Examine realm of sport as reliable litmus test of the nature and level of racism</td>
<td>Examines constructs of identity placed on Aboriginal sportspeople</td>
<td>Study frame of institutional policies that generated policies of geographic</td>
<td>Discussion on race politics in social and political life of Australia. Presents amalgam of history, politics, sociology and sports reflected in achievements and lives of Aboriginal people. Impact on Aboriginal people on recognition of human rights.</td>
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<td>in Australian society in official and private discrimination arena</td>
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<td>isolation impacted on Aboriginal sports people. Study framework of Aborigines</td>
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<td>CAS229</td>
<td>Provide pragmatic learning environment to develop insights in Aboriginal art,</td>
<td>Provide experience in working in organisations or communities which promote and</td>
<td>Develop critical analysis of cultural organisational structures</td>
<td>Study at first hand essence of cultural well being in contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Focus can be art, music, dance, song, arts and craft, herbal medicine and lifestyle. Assigned supervisor from the Faculty and a co-supervisor from selected communities.</td>
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<td>music, media, language learning/maintenance, dance and arts and craft.</td>
<td>maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural well being</td>
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<td>CAS265</td>
<td>Examine approaches of use of contemporary mass communication media by Aboriginal</td>
<td>Critically analyse media functions as forums for raising pertinent Aboriginal</td>
<td>Study involvement in mass media to promote Aboriginal well-being and worldview</td>
<td>Introduce students to range of cultural studies approaches to Aboriginal use of contemporary communication media. Examine functions of media in terms of raising forums (land rights, health, education, politics, socio-economics) for Aboriginal provisions and dissemination of information and cultural materials.</td>
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<td>people, organisations and institutions</td>
<td>issues.</td>
<td>in relation to Aboriginal understanding of history since colonisation.</td>
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<td>CAS285</td>
<td>Become familiar with key concepts in Aboriginal law and culture which arise between Aboriginal people and the non Aboriginal legal system</td>
<td>Issues arising from the law and practice of Aboriginal interaction with non Aboriginal legal system in relation to international, human rights, constitutional, criminal, family law and evidence</td>
<td>Legal issues that arise from Aboriginal claims to distinct consideration in Australian legal and political systems.</td>
<td>Presented through the study of specific themes that include: Indigenous legal systems under non-Indigenous law, Royal Commission and the Criminal Justice Issues, Indigenous participation in the Non-Indigenous Legal System.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS305</td>
<td>Develop reading and writing skills in Yolngu languages</td>
<td>Develop advanced conversational and story telling skills</td>
<td>Learn and discuss Yolngu land, history, philosophy and science by texts produced by Yolngu writers and storytellers.</td>
<td>Prerequisites CAS211. Develop skills of analysis and discussion of Yolngu narratives, both oral and written, in Yolngu languages. Focus is on Yolngu writers on land and language.</td>
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<td>Unit</td>
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<td>CAS316</td>
<td>Acquire knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal issues and its impact on diverse early childhood settings.</td>
<td>Study critically diverse cultural differences in child rearing practices that effect social and educational settings.</td>
<td>Knowledge effecting social relationships and learning patterns. Insight into Aboriginal cultural issues across a spectrum of settings which impact on the development of the Aboriginal child.</td>
<td>Examine and reflect on critically selected Indigenous issues in arts, history, contemporary issues and implication for early childhood services and education. Focus on patterns of child rearing in Aboriginal society that have direct bearing in cognitive, social and language behaviour.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS350</td>
<td>Examine contemporary Indigenous socio-economic circumstances</td>
<td>Formulate study using standard criteria of health, housing and employment.</td>
<td>Examine social and cultural aspects, which distinguishes Indigenous situation. Examine historical circumstances that have led to contemporary position.</td>
<td>Examines the nature of contemporary socio-economic circumstances using standard criteria of health, housing and employment. Emphasis on Indigenous social and cultural aspects, which distinguish the Indigenous situation of the historical circumstances, including government policies, economic forces and social attitudes which have led to development of the contemporary position.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS380</td>
<td>Introduce students to Indigenous legal, juridical concepts.</td>
<td>Examine studies in dispute processing, peacekeeping, coronal enquiry and various ways of law and order.</td>
<td>Examine aspects of customary law and their recognition by Aust. Legal system.</td>
<td>Introduce Indigenous legal and judicial concepts-dispute processing, peacekeeping, coronal enquiry and keeping law and order in Aboriginal society. Customary law- social and legal institutions, their recognition by Australia. Legal system, Judiciary and officials of civil and legal systems engaged with Aboriginal law makers in North Australia providing essential study areas in law, social work, etc.</td>
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<td>CAS362</td>
<td>Promote enquiry and analysis of constructs or theories relating to discourse in Indigenous literature, arts or media.</td>
<td>Extend knowledge base and depth of understanding of this chosen area of interest.</td>
<td>Develop independent research skills in preparation for further research awards.</td>
<td>Individual study and research in Indigenous literature, arts or media. Supervisor is assigned to assist student in development of proposal in area of interest and to plan the methodology through either critical analysis of the literature, critiques of productions by Aboriginal people or a research plan into social, political, economic or cultural implications of the production.</td>
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<td>CAS365</td>
<td>Study theoretical constructs of Aboriginal cultural productions in contemporary media</td>
<td>Examine circumstances and histories of productions. Examine Aboriginal writings in English and transcribed oral narratives in films, drama, music and paintings.</td>
<td>Study discourses on criticisms by Aborigines and non-Aborigines of the Aboriginal works</td>
<td>Theoretical considerations of Aboriginal cultural and historical productions. Material includes Aboriginal writings on English, Aboriginal criticism, transcribed oral narratives, films, drama, music and paintings. Approach: consideration of circumstances of the material produced contact with European culture and strategies dealing with such circumstances. Explore how Aboriginal people have used European forms, techniques and appropriate publication mechanisms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS370</td>
<td>Examine relationship between Indigenous health, social structure and dominant culture in Australia.</td>
<td>Identify political, economic and historical aspects of health related to Indigenous self-determination.</td>
<td>Analyse processes and philosophical framework underpinning Indigenous community control of health and delivery of appropriate health services.</td>
<td>Examine relationships between issues of social justice and Australia. Indigenous health. Political, economic and historical aspects of health are considered related to Indigenous self-determination. Focus on development of knowledge and understanding to community control and community development processes.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>CAS259</td>
<td>Provide pragmatic learning environment to develop insights and appreciation of theoretical knowledge</td>
<td>Develop skills in practical application of infrastructure of organisations and institutions in area of political economy</td>
<td>Critical analysis of the need and purpose of government department and Individual organisations with vested interests in Aboriginal development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>CAS311</td>
<td>Develop skills in the negotiation and elicitation of Yolngu knowledges in Yolngu languages, including obtaining permission, negotiating parameters and providing feedback.</td>
<td>Develop skills - elicitation of texts and their transcriptions translation and interpretation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>CAS312</td>
<td>Develop and implement co-operative project btw. Yolngu and non-Yolngu researchers for benefits of both communities.</td>
<td>Develop skills in negotiation and elicitation of Yolngu languages, includes obtaining permission, negotiating parameters and providing feedback</td>
<td>Develop skills in elicitation of texts, transcriptions, translation and interpretation.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Unit Objectives 1</td>
<td>Unit Objectives 2</td>
<td>Unit Objectives 3</td>
<td>Descriptors</td>
<td>Unit Descriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS328</td>
<td>Study area of special interest in traditional cultural context, traditional, colonial or postcolonial historical context, socio-political or educational context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.</td>
<td>Develop individual research techniques, planning a project and in writing a mini thesis.</td>
<td>Develop skills in critical analysis of data.</td>
<td>Individual study and research in Indigenous studies. Supervisor is assigned to assist student in development of proposal in area of interest and to plan methodology to the research topic. Process requires regular meetings with supervisor for discussion and feedback on progress.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS361</td>
<td>Study area of special interest in Indigenous Arts and media</td>
<td>Develop skills in individual research techniques, planning research project in writing of mini thesis.</td>
<td>Develop skills in critical analysis of data.</td>
<td>Individual study and research in Indigenous arts and media. Supervisor is assigned to assist student in development of proposal in area of interest and to plan the data collection through either critical analysis of the literature, critiques of productions by Aboriginal people in films or art, or a research plan into social, political, economic or cultural implications of the production.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS375</td>
<td>Promote enquiry and analysis of ideas, theories related Indigenous health and community development</td>
<td>Extend knowledge base and depth of understanding in area of interest.</td>
<td>Develop independent research skills in preparation for further research awards.</td>
<td>Individual work in Indigenous health and community development issues in Australia. Emphasis on critically analysing key historical, social and political factors impacting on Indigenous health. Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of current research of chosen field.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Unit Objectives 1</td>
<td>Unit Objectives 2</td>
<td>Descriptors</td>
<td>Unit Descriptions</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS376</td>
<td>Promote enquiry and analysis of constructs or theories relating to discourse in Indigenous literature, health issues.</td>
<td>Extend knowledge base and depth of understanding of area of interest/defined minor research project.</td>
<td>Develop independent research skills in preparation for further research awards. Examine protocols and ethics in research with Indigenous people.</td>
<td>Individual study and research in Indigenous health. Supervisor is assigned to assist in proposal; development and plan nature of methodology and support students in research project.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS381</td>
<td>Extend knowledge and depth of understanding of area of interest.</td>
<td>Study interaction of Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal legal system.</td>
<td>Develop independent research skills in preparation for further research-based awards.</td>
<td>Individual work on aspects of Indigenous interaction with non-Indigenous legal system in Aust. Emphasis on critical analysis of social, political, or cultural factors impacting on Aboriginal well-being, community development or human rights.</td>
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### Appendix V  Data: Assessment Details of BATSIS Units

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Unit YEAR 2000</th>
<th>Participation and or attendance</th>
<th>Tutorial Presentation</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT</th>
<th>Essay</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>50%</td>
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<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS101</td>
<td>Combination Unspecified</td>
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<td>% Not specified</td>
<td>% Not specified</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRS100</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>% Not specified</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<td>10% x 2</td>
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<td>CAS110</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>15% x 3 class work exercises: 15% x 3 open book test</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS111</td>
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<td>15% x 3 open book tests</td>
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<td>CAS160</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS170</td>
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<td>% Not specified</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>% Not specified</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS203</td>
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<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS204</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS205</td>
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<td>20%</td>
<td>Journal writing</td>
<td>20% x 3 translations</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>

Mona El-Ayoubi MA Research Thesis

233
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Participation and or attendance</th>
<th>Tutorial Presentation</th>
<th>Workshops</th>
<th>Essay</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>20%</td>
<td>60% 20% x 3 oral tests</td>
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<td>Personal dictionary assessment and testing</td>
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<tr>
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<td>20%</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>40% 20% x 2 tutorial presentations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS226</td>
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<td>40%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS229</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Major report 6,000 words % not specified, 1500 word essay % not specified</td>
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<td>10% 5% x 2 class introductions</td>
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<td>CAS280</td>
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<td>% Not specified</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5500 word essay % not specified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS305</td>
<td>30% Attendance and fluency</td>
<td>30% 10% x 3 Oral tests</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>10% x 4 translations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS316</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>60% 30% x 2 activities books</td>
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<td>CAS325</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40% 20% x 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10% x2 workshops</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Participation and attendance</td>
<td>Tutorial Presentation</td>
<td>Workshops</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>CAS350</td>
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<td>10% critiques of weekly readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS380</td>
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<td>CAS362</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Significant doc 8000-10,000 words</td>
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<td>40%</td>
<td>20% x 2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Not specified</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>% Not specified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS259</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Research project (includes reports, recording, transcription, translation, presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Research project (includes reports, recording, transcription, translation, presentation)</td>
</tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Significant doc. 6000 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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### Appendix VI  Data: Methodology Details of BATSIS Units

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<tr>
<th>Unit YEAR 2000</th>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Tutorial / Seminar</th>
<th>Other Methodological Features</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS100</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Lecture series delivered by Indigenous people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS101</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Practical workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRS100</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Variety of resources in combination with face-to-face and or via WWW.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS102</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Workshops with TS community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS110</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Learning with small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD ROM programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Small groups, Audio visual aids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS160</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Interaction with Aboriginal Writers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS170</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Delivery: Face to face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS203</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Indigenous speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS204</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Tutorial/lecture workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS205</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Guest lectures by first speaker of language, possible fieldtrips to communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS206</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Small groups to practice oral skills and class instruction (grammar and Pronoun.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS207</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Guest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from leading organisations, field trips to Indigenous communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS225</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS226</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS229</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Internship: under supervision action research methods. Students participate in daily operations of chosen area of focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS265</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS280</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Face to face and practical exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS285</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS305</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Series of lectures from first language speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS316</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>External-print mode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS325</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td>Unit</td>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>Tutorial / Seminar</td>
<td>Other Methodological Features</td>
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<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS350</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td>CAS380</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS362</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Independent work, appointed supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS365</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Formal lecture format, workshops involving Aboriginal authors, producers, directors, stage mangers and performances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS370</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS259</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Internship, negotiated placement for a semester, field and scope negotiated by student, supervisors and the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS311</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Negotiated with lecturers and stakeholders- regular meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS312</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Negotiated with lecturers and stakeholders- regular meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS328</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Independent work, appointed supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS361</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Independent work, appointed supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS375</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Individual research, consultation with supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS376</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Minor research thesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS381</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Individual research, consultation with supervisor.</td>
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### Appendix VII  Data: Interview Analysis

Overview Summary of Response to Interview Questions

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<td>1</td>
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</tr>
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<td>All</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>c</td>
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<td>Academic Interviewees</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 a</td>
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<td>+ ve</td>
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<tr>
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<td>No direct response</td>
<td>Practical functional contextual</td>
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<td>- ve and + ve</td>
<td>Provide consensus of Indigenous. Viewpoints Issues of feelings</td>
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<td>Y</td>
</tr>
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<td>Y and N</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 c</td>
<td>+ ve</td>
<td>+ ve</td>
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<td>- ve and + ve</td>
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<td>Needs external links</td>
<td>- ve and + ve</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>- ve</td>
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<td>Not academic or structured</td>
<td>- ve and + ve</td>
</tr>
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<td>- ve and + ve</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<td>Structured</td>
<td>P.15, 16 Indigenous and Western</td>
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<td>Not academic or structured</td>
<td>Different process depending on unit. Refers to Indigenous pedagogy and Western academic pedagogy.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs external links</td>
<td>Variety of methods, different Views and no one truth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Westernised</td>
<td>Standard western approach, too rigid. No alternative framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 c</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Mona El-Ayoubi MA Research Thesis
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Appendix VIII   Data: Interview Transcripts

See attached CD-ROM, PDF format (requires Adobe Acrobat Reader® v 5 or later available at http://www.adobe.com)
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