In The Bora Ring: Yugambeh Language and Song Project - an investigation into the effects of participation in the ‘Yugambeh Youth Choir’, an Aboriginal language choir for urban Indigenous children.

A dissertation by
Candace Kruger,
BAMus, GradDipEd(Sec)

School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science, Griffith University

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Supervised by: Associate Professor Sarah Baker and Dr Catherine Grant

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Abstract

Knowledge of Indigenous language and identity for Australian Indigenous children is vital. Despite this there has been little research into the effects that living culture practice affords Australian Indigenous children through learning heritage language. *Yarrabil* (to sing) is one way in which Indigenous youth can participate in learning Indigenous language. Through a series of surveys, *wula bora* (focus group) sessions, interviews and reflections, the *jarjum* (children) of the *Yugambeh* language region assisted to discover how the process of participation in an urban Aboriginal children’s language choir can play an integral part in youth leadership, language acquisition, well-being (self-efficacy), and Identity and Aboriginality. The research also demonstrates how a language choir can safe-guard language and culture whilst building socio-cultural capital within an Indigenous community. The National Indigenous Languages Survey Report of 2005 listed the Aboriginal language *Yugambeh* of the Gold Coast, Logan and Scenic Rim regions of South-East Queensland, Australia as endangered. This thesis investigates an alternate way to *girrebbba* (wake up) a sleeping language and engage youth in the process of learning their heritage language. The ‘*Yugambeh* Language and Song project’ provides academic knowledge in a relatively unstudied field, supports living culture practice and provides a model to assist other Indigenous communities to sing their language alive.
Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

_________________
Candace Kruger
March 1, 2017
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### Yugambeh Language Glossary of Words

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<th>English</th>
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<tr>
<td>Barragunn</td>
<td>boomerang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bora</td>
<td>ring or sacred ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borobi</td>
<td>koala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bula</td>
<td>two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bula-yabru</td>
<td>three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bula-bula</td>
<td>four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bula-bula yarga</td>
<td>four winds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chumau</td>
<td>black wattle tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chungarra</td>
<td>pelican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corroboree</td>
<td>gathering (a time for sing, dance, tell story)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunngunn</td>
<td>five, hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaureima</td>
<td>story (tale)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girrebbba</td>
<td>awake / to wake up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gundala</td>
<td>boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingbullei</td>
<td>(to) ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagun</td>
<td>country (common spelling, also Djagun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jarjum</td>
<td>children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jebbribillum</td>
<td>Bora Ground, Burleigh, Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jingeri</td>
<td>hello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jingeri jingeri</td>
<td>willy wagtail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Junnebeineubani  family
Karaulgaia    for the good of all people
Kubill        beautiful
Kungabulehla  to rethink and reconsider
Mibunn        eagle
Migunn        (to) know
Moiyum        water lily
Mummerimabu   (to) make alive again / revitalise
Mundindehla   protecting
Ngai Jigala   I'm shaking
Ngalingah     our
Nguram        sleep
Ngulli nabai  when we begin
Nganya nyari  my name is
Nyumbala      (to) show / study
Nyanyahbu     see you around
Talga         beat time
Waddy (Jabiri) club ( nulla-nulla)
Wandah Jageegan Djagun rise up beautiful country
Wehga mullil  calling the children home
Warrun        boomerang double, not used for throwing
Wallul        many
Winjigahl wahlu  where you from?

Wogai  soul, shadow of departed spirit or ‘sign’ reference to inner-self

Wongara  flower

Wula bora  to give or share in a gathering at a significant space

Wumgin Karulbo  coming together

Yabru  one

Yabruma  always

Yanbalehla  walking

Yarrabil  sing

Yarrabilgin  songman

Yarrabilgingunn  songwoman

Yidaki  didgeridoo (yolngu language)

Tribal Names (Family groups)

Ngughi

Kombumerri

Mununjali

Aboriginal Language Regions

Yugambeh (Gold Coast, Logan and Scenic Rim, Queensland, Australia)

Bundjalung (Northern New South Wales, Australia)

Jandai (Moreton Bay region, Queensland, Australia)

Gamilaraay (North-East, New South Wales, Australia)

Darug (Western Sydney, New South Wales, Australia)
Dreamtime Legends

Yarberri

Jabreen
Acknowledgments

I am grateful to the jarjum and the junnebeineubani of the Yugambeh Youth Choir. Thirty-eight kubill jarjum (beautiful children) graciously gifted me their time and I recognise how privileged the audience is to hear their thoughts. I acknowledge the backing afforded me from the Yugambeh Museum, Language and Heritage Research Centre, and thank Elder Patricia O’Connor, CEO Rory O’Connor, Project Officer Paula Nihot, Language Advocate Shaun Davies and Administration Assistant Reeghan Finlay for language and cultural support. I acknowledge my family Elder Rose Knott, Elder Ian Levinge and my husband and children who always listened and gave their time when I required cultural advice, direction and time to speak my thoughts. I owe special thanks to Dr Michelle Whitford for her continued support of my research and assistance with the Yugambeh Youth Choir. And finally I thank my supervisors Associate Professor Sarah Baker and Dr Catherine Grant for their practical and moral support through my endeavours to complete this research.
Chapter One: Introduction, Yarrabil (to sing)

Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population has reached 669,900... And contrary to popular belief, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population predominantly lives in Australia's most populous areas, with about 60 per cent living in major cities and inner regional areas... with the second largest population within the state of Queensland (189,000). (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013)

The urban population of Queensland Aboriginal people is the second largest within Australia and within this area there are over 100 language dialects (Queensland Government, 2016). Specifically, the Yugambeh language region includes the areas of the Gold Coast, Scenic Rim and Logan and is comprised of several clan groups, including the Kombumerri and Mununjali. The Yugambeh language region, according to the National Indigenous Languages Survey Report (McConvell & Marmion, 2005), is listed as endangered and Australia has been singled out as the continent where languages are disappearing fastest (Nettele & Romaine, 2000).

One Indigenous Voice

In 1994, after completing a Bachelor of Arts Music and Graduate Diploma in Education, my Grandfather Sam Levinge, a Ngughî\(^1\) man of Moreton Island in the Jandai language region and a Kombumerri\(^2\) man of the Southport/Nerang (Gold Coast) people in the Yugambeh\(^3\) language region (see Appendix A) (2015), encouraged me to research the songs of the Kombumerri. This led to the book Yugambeh Talga – Music Traditions of the Yugambeh People, published by the Yugambeh Museum in 2005, initial report written by me with additional information sourced from Ysola Best and Patricia O’Connor (Best, et al., 2005).

For more than 20 years I have worked as a music educator in Queensland, New South Wales and South Australian schools. However it was in 2007 when I was home on jagnun (country) that I was asked to teach a ‘Yugambeh Language in Song’ workshop and did so, and continued to do so annually from then on. By 2013 I realised that I had a burning desire to

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\(^1\) Also Nooghie/Ngugi
\(^2\) Also Nerangwal
\(^3\) Also Jukambe
hear my heritage language sung more regularly, not just once or twice a year, to actually revitalise the practice within the community and to teach Yugambeh language to jarjum (children).

In 2014, as a proud Aboriginal community member of the Kombumerri (Southport/Nerang) and Ngughi (Moreton Island) families, I established the Yugambeh Youth Choir, the first Indigenous Youth Choir on the Gold Coast for urban youth aged 5-25 years. The main objective was to yarrabil (sing) and learn Yugambeh language and this idea was supported by the Kombumerri Aboriginal Corporation for Culture – Yugambeh Language and Heritage Museum.

Aboriginal community, local community and the broader community have accepted this choral group and as a result there are up to 60 members who regularly perform in Yugambeh language throughout South-East Queensland. These events have included: the Gold Coast Show 2014-2016, the 2015 National Rugby League Indigenous All Stars Australian National Anthem in Yugambeh language, the 2015 International Carer’s Conference, 2016 ANZAC Southport Service, 2015-2016 ABC Radio Regional and National programs, 2015 National Reconciliation Week Launch and 2016 Commonwealth Day for the 2018 Commonwealth Games. These performance opportunities have meant that Yugambeh jarjum have been able to meet and talk to the Governor-General of Australia Sir Peter Cosgrove, federal and state politicians, the Gold Coast and Logan mayors, sporting and cultural identities, university educators and business and community organisers.

In April 2016, in response to requests from within the Yugambeh language region, I established a satellite choir in Logan and in the first seven weeks attracted over 15 participants. Following this, in June 2016, the Yugambeh (Museum) Youth Choir was named as the 2016 Winner of the Queensland Reconciliation Award - Community Division.

As a direct result of witnessing the connection to culture, understanding of identity, development in self-efficacy, well-being and acquisition of language skills being experienced by the children, youth and families who are members of the Yugambeh Youth Choir, I decided, supported by community, that an investigation was necessary into the potential
benefits that could be afforded to urban Aboriginal children and youth through participation in an Aboriginal language choir.

Therefore this Master of Arts Research thesis, *In the Bora Ring: Yugambeh Language and Song Project - an investigation into the effects of participation in the ‘Yugambeh Youth Choir, an Aboriginal language choir for urban Indigenous children*, explores the benefits of community singing, and discovers the extent to which singing supports the development of Aboriginal identity and language acquisition through participation in a community choir with urban Aboriginal youth, within a living culture.

**Project Rationale: Girrebba (to wake up)**

The *Yugambeh* Language and Song Project (YLSP) is a necessary component of language revitalisation in the *Yugambeh* language region. *Girrebba* (wake-up) in *Yugambeh* language (Allen & Lane, 2001) is one key element and assists to generate interest in promoting culture and language within the local and broader community.

‘Kombumerri projects have focused on positive aspects of our history so that the wider community could be made aware of the contribution that our ancestors have made to the economic and cultural development of this country’. Kombumerri Aboriginal Corporation for Culture. (Best & Barlow, 1997)

This contextual study about living culture will support the practice of living culture and identity through song. It assists to establish a place where youth can begin their journey of cultural understanding, and identifies the extent to which urban Aboriginal children can be empowered to learn language through song.

The YLSP contributes to the development and growth of a living culture in South-East Queensland and provides academic knowledge in a relatively unstudied area, which is supported under principle 3 of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) guidelines (2012) where Indigenous people have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage and traditional knowledge.
The YLSP is supported by the Yugambeh Museum Elder in Residence - Patricia O’Connor, of the Yugambeh language region, Christopher Levinge - President of the Kombumerri Corporation for Culture, Shaun Davies - Yugambeh Language Officer, and Rory O’Connor – Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Yugambeh Museum. The Yugambeh Museum CEO and linguist experts have agreed to support the Yugambeh Youth Choir with learning Yugambeh language and assist with the sharing of cultural knowledge for the duration of this project and beyond.

**Significance of the Study: Wogai Nyumbala (to show your spirit, honour and power)**

During this study urban Aboriginal youth participants in the YLSP were provided with an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of Aboriginal identity and living culture within their urban environment. It was also anticipated that there would be an improvement to well-being and self-efficacy within participants through the applied practice of living culture.

This study also supports acquisition of academic knowledge in a relatively unstudied field and is an entry point for further academic research in the areas of Yugambeh language, song, lore, ritual and/or place. Kickett-Tucker’s (2009) research into racial identity in Aboriginal children and youth successfully advocates that a strong racial identity supports cultural security and individual self-esteem, and is linked to positive outcomes for Indigenous health and well-being (Chandler, et al., 2003). The YLSP continues the work on racial identity in Aboriginal children and seeks to identify how choir plays a part in positive well-being.

Through participation in a community choir, Aboriginal children come into direct contact with Aboriginal cultural knowledge about Aboriginal cultural heritage and Aboriginal language, whilst they acquire language-learning skills. The Yugambeh gaureima (stories) of Yugambeh jagun will assist learners in their journey of cultural understanding, and learning Yugambeh language through song will continue the discovery work on positive self-efficacy for jarjum as first raised by Kickett-Tucker.
The legends of Bundjalung take our beginnings back to a journey of three brothers whose kinship bonds extend throughout the country. Yugambeh people are descendants of the brother Yarberri who travelled to the north. In Yugambeh legend he is known as Jabreen. Jabreen created his homeland by forming the mountains, the river systems and the flora and fauna. The people grew out of this environment. Jabreen created the site known as Jebbribillum when he came out of the water onto the land. As he picked up his fighting waddy, the land and water formed into the shape of a rocky outcrop (little Burleigh). This was the site where the people gathered to learn and to share the resources created by Jabreen. The ceremony held at this site became known as the Bora and symbolised the ignition of life. Through the ceremony, people learned to care for the land and their role was to preserve its integrity. (O'Connor, 1993)

Koen (2009) believes that an outward looking orientation results from an aspiration to do work of value, import and benefit to others. The place, The Bora Ring, as labelled in the project title, is a network of significant places for Aboriginal people, evidenced to be found only within the region of Queensland and Northern New South Wales. Within the Moreton Bay region, these culturally significant sites provided a tangible framework for the structuring of social and cultural interaction. Knowledge of these places fosters and strengthens the ties to place, knowledge, language and the formation of cultural identity (Satterthwait & Heather, 1987) and will empower traditional owners to be socially and culturally connected within their own community.

The Yugambeh Museum Elders and Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members who support Yugambeh language revitalisation efforts regard this project as being significant to the revitalisation of Yugambeh language. The YLSP, in addition to the choir, has explored key themes and ideas and measured benefits afforded to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and youth, and additionally any benefits which emerged as themes from participation in the project.
Research Question: *Ingbullei* (to ask in Yugambeh)

This research explores the question:

*How does participation in a community choir support the development of Aboriginal language skills and cultural identity in urban Aboriginal youth?*

This research then discovers how, through the field of Applied Ethnomusicology and Participatory Action Research (PAR), the ethnomusicologist can *action*: any use of ethnomusicological knowledge for planned change by the members of a local cultural group, and/or *advocate*: by the ethnomusicologist to increase the power of self-determination for a particular cultural group (Pettan, 2008), the development of cultural knowledge and identity and the revitalisation of an endangered language through a language and song project.
Chapter Two: Literature Review, *Karaulgaia (for the good of all people)*

**Benefits of Participation in a Community Choir**

‘Choir singing requires collaborative action and can be viewed as a social phenomenon’ (Tonneijck, et al., 2008).

The concept of choral singing – singing as a group – is a shared process. Participants in a choir must connect (Bailey, 2013), contribute (Tonneijck, et al., 2008) and collaborate (Sun & Buys, 2013) in order for the process of community singing to be productive. This productivity can be measured and is identified as the benefits of choral singing, which include social inclusion, self-efficacy and the development of identity (Welch, et al., 2014). Research into these aspects of choral singing comes from the fields of psychology, physiology, social work, sociology, community studies and ethnomusicology.

Social inclusion studies are multi-disciplinary and draw on the disciplines of psychology and sociology, and relate to social and behavioural fields. Research into the psychology of participative community singing is a key theme in many choral projects. Studies in this area often also determine a link to the physiological benefits of choir. Through a phenomenological approach, Bailey (2013) reported positive effects from participative community singing, such as increased physical and social benefits and also an improvement to quality of life, as choir provided a mental release period from the participants’ problems. Clift (2007), through research into a number of choral societies across England, also reported the promotion of positive well-being through choral participation.

In choirs where the element of cultural identity (ethnicity) is included, the positive effects of physical and mental well-being are also reported. Southcott and Joseph (2010) studied well-being and ageing through community choir in Australia where members were of Bosnian-Herzegovinian heritage and identified three effects: enhanced physical well-being, engendered belonging to community and a connection to cultural identity. In an Australian study which sought to determine the improvement to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian adults’ well-being though community singing, Sun and Buys (2013) discovered community singing promotes individual resilience by decreasing stress and increasing
confidence and self-esteem through social interaction. The authors noted that where singing fosters sustainable relationships when people collaborate, participants’ gain empowerment to connect to their own culture and community, hence strengthening social inclusion.

The social phenomenon of choral singing as discussed by Tonneijck (2008) has engendered song projects such as Sing Up (Welch, et al., 2014), England’s national program for singing and social inclusion (2007-2011); and Music Count Us In (2006-2016), Australia’s national singing inclusion program (Music Australia, 2016). Sing Up and Music Count Us In, as large scale choral projects, advocate for ‘improved access to music education for all’ (Music Australia, 2016) and ‘the chance for our most vulnerable and marginalised children to change their lives through music where singing is a fast route to participative music making for every child and helps to build communities.’ (Music Manifesto, 2006).

Creative Victoria (2008) cites creative engagement as vital to the development of a strong, vibrant and cohesive community. England’s Sing Up program, which engaged 11,258 children (youth) through 184 schools and explored relationships between children’s developing singing behavior and development and social inclusion (Welch, et al., 2014), is a robust example of such creative engagement. Through established quantitative assessment protocols for singing development (Rutkowski, 2010), and Likert-type smiley face scale questionnaires measuring participants’ social self-concept (sense of self, sense of social inclusion) (Wong & Baker, Jan-Feb 1988), Sing Up concluded that there was some empirical evidence of social benefit in participants (due to perceived confidence afforded by competence through singing, self-efficacy and self-esteem) and could increase children’s sense of social inclusion (through a more positive sense of self through social integration) (Welch, et al., 2014).

Research in the field of participatory choral singing, with a focus on social inclusion, reveals a wide variation within participants studied (children, adults, aged, same sex), the purpose of the inquiry (health, identity, social-inclusion), and methodological approaches used (phenomenological, analytical, participatory action), and highlights that the benefits of community singing are independent of social background, ethnicity or gender; however the
characteristics of the individual’s benefits will vary, dependent on the circumstances of each participant.

These choral studies corroborate that there are identified benefits to choral singing, and list social inclusion, self-efficacy and the development of identity as positive benefits. Additionally, the research categorises these positive measures of change as psychological and/or physiological in nature and validates the underlying idea that through connection, contribution and collaboration the process of singing is productive.

As demonstrated by some of the studies above, ethnomusicology is represented within the literature that forms social inclusion studies, but can be viewed as providing distinct contributions in the community choir literature, particularly in regards to Aboriginal choirs.

Specific research into Aboriginal community choirs highlights an identifiable gap in the defined area of participatory choral singing in urban Aboriginal youth. Relatively little prior research or literature exists in this area. This study, *In the Bora Ring: Yugambeh Language and Song Project - an investigation into the effects of participation in the 'Yugambeh Youth Choir', an Aboriginal language choir for urban Indigenous youth*, is an applied ethnomusicological study exploring the benefits of choral singing contributes to this under-researched field and has endeavoured to discover the extent to which singing supports language skill acquisition and cultural identity in urban Aboriginal youth. Research previously alluded in this thesis suggests that participants in the YLSP may be expected to connect, contribute and collaborate through the act of group singing, and gain positive psychological and physical benefits in the form of social inclusion and self-efficacy, through the development of cultural identity.

Applied Ethnomusicology

Theories on what is ethnomusicology have evolved since Adler (1885) first classified folksongs from various peoples of the earth as ethnographical. The term ethnomusicology was not formally documented until Kunst used the term *ethno-musicology*, to describe the
music and the musical instruments of all non-European people, in opposition to the term comparative musicology in his work *Musicologica* (Kunst, 1950).

Until this time early contemplations on non-European musicological systems were comparative, hence the definition of comparative musicology (Merriam, 1977), and based on structures typically other than European, such as studies of extra-European musical systems, i.e. Chinese, Indian, Arabian and folk music, and were transmitted by oral tradition (Haydon, 1941).

However, by the 1950s Nettl (1956) began to use comparative musicology and ethnomusicology as synonyms, within his comparative musicological summaries. Sachs (1962) however claimed that the term comparative had become unsatisfactory and had lost its usefulness. Blacking (1966) to advance this argument, thought it impossible to compare incomparable phenomena, such as the patterns of music sound from one culture to another and thus began leaning toward the term ethnomusicology.

These early trends within this field led to the formation of the Society for Ethnomusicology in the USA in 1955 (Society for Ethnomusicology, 1997-2015) and the formalisation of the term ethnomusicology. Merriam (1963) claimed that music is a universal human phenomenon and deserves to be studied in its own right; scientifically by studying phenomena we increase knowledge of ourselves. Music is a product of human behaviour, and therefore the purpose of ethnomusicological studies is the study of human behaviour through music.

The idea that ethnomusicological endeavours as a strategy were guided by a sense of social purpose (Titon, 1992) led to early theories on the sub-genre applied ethnomusicology. Spitzer (1992) echoed the sense of social purpose needed within an applied ethnomusicological study, stating that ethnomusicologists should ‘cultivate cultural conversation’ in the place of ‘cultural conservation’.

Sheehy’s (1992) initial findings lent support to this theory through four key areas of exploration found within an applied ethnomusicological study: developing new performance
frames, feeding back musical models to the communities that created them, empowering community members to become musical activists, and developing broad structural solutions, therefore addressing the issue of social purpose.

Harrison (2014) concludes that the sub-genre applied ethnomusicology – guided by the community – was the ‘first wave’ of the newly identified field of applied ethnomusicology, in the 1990s-2000s. The ‘second wave’, which has gained momentum since 2007, moves on from the ideal of social purpose, appreciates that approaches to national ethnomusicologies vary greatly and the practices vary greatly among the different iterations of ethnomusicology (Usner, 2009), and directly influence the approach taken by the ethnomusicologist.

This approach, as identified by Pettan (2008), includes action ethnomusicology, adjustment ethnomusicology, administrative ethnomusicology and advocate ethnomusicology, which are viewed as participatory research strategies (Araujo, 2008), linking the earlier work of Spitzer’s cultural conversation (1992) to this new wave of research design.

Since 2007, groups such as the Applied Ethnomusicology Section under the USA’s Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) and the Study Group on Applied Ethnomusicology of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) have been growing (Harrison, 2014) and as such research into the field of applied ethnomusicology comes from the areas of anthropology, sociology, health, psychology, musicology and community studies and is here defined by the International Council for Traditional Music (2010-2016):

Applied ethnomusicology is the approach guided by principles of social responsibility, which extends the usual academic goal of broadening and deepening knowledge and understanding toward solving concrete problems and toward working both inside and beyond typical academic contexts.

Harrison (2014) believes the field of applied ethnomusicology has grown because local community demands have affected objectives and the approaches to knowledge production
within ethnomusicology. This view is along similar lines of researchers within the second wave of applied ethnomusicology. Seeger (2008) claims that knowledge should be used for practical purposes and also to produce more knowledge. Dirksen additionally (2012) claims that applied ethnomusicology builds on participatory action research (PAR) and promotes collaboration and exchange between the researcher and the researched.

Sheehy (1992) believes that by viewing ethnomusicological endeavour as strategy, guided by a sense of social purpose, we can expand the potential of ethnomusicological skills and minimise counter-productive perceptions of barriers between academic and applied work. Therefore the Yugambeh Language and Song Project (YLSP) is an applied ethnomusicological study using PAR research, and based on Sheehy’s (1992) and Seeger’s (2008) views should be able to combine the social purpose of teaching language, stories, cultural protocols and traditions through song and promote collaboration and exchange between the researcher and the researched.

**Exploring Identity and Cultural Knowledge through Song**

Research on developing identity through song is a key theme in several case studies in the field of applied ethnomusicology. Trimillos’ (1986) research into strategies employed by Filipino populations living in the United States to maintain ethnic identity draws upon the activities undertaken by Filipino youth to support ethnic identity through or within musical activities. The study accounted for 67% of a projected 781,890 populus group undertaking multiple activities to recapture, reclaim or identify with their heritage. This investigation is a report on how the power of self-determination by a cultural group can use music to maintain ethnic identity, and reports that the six strategies employed by Filipino youth to maintain ethnic identity through or within music were: maintaining traditional music ensembles, imbedding Philippine repertoire into new musical settings, creating neotraditional styles, disseminating Philippine music through mass media, presenting Philippine artists in performance, and becoming a Filipino exponent of Euro-American musics.
In 2009, Joseph argued that participation in a music activity in multicultural Australia would be an effective way for South Africans to strengthen identity, and therefore investigated the role and place of music in building a community as a minority group and how identity through participatory community singing can cross borders, within the South African Immigrants Jabulani Choir, in Melbourne, Australia.

Pohjola (1993) also claims that music has no boundaries and that songs sung in their original tongue from different countries make other cultures accessible. Solbu (1998) also claims that music creates and confirms identity whilst Joseph (2009) furthers these ideas with the additional claim that within song material is the hidden aesthetic of the people, their language and culture and therefore South African people singing South African songs would build a sense of identity through shared cultural experience; Mansfield (2002) adds that through music making we learn aspects of cultural narrative.

Members of the Jabulani Choir reported that singing in choir gave them a sense of belonging, it added to their identity, it exposed them to culture that hadn’t been previously understood and provided them with an opportunity to learn of their own culture through song. As a result of this investigation Joseph (2009) claims that the sharing of music and culture in a choral group are social domains for renewing knowledge and strengthening musical and cultural identity. The experience of choir members in the Jabulani Choir is also authenticated by the commonality of the group, which included the advocate – the conductor – being South African, who was able to communicate in both English and Afrikaans.

In 2013 Benoit addressed the difficulties faced by Francophone communities in Canada to transmit, promote and teach traditional French language and culture where the majority setting is dissimilar and out of school activities for children were conducted in English. Benoit (2013) argues that arts and music are important for growth, cultural identity and belonging to community (Haentjens & Chagnon-Lampron, 2004) and can provide a means to express self and cultural identity (Durrant & Himonides, 1998). The results of this investigation demonstrated that Benoit, acting in the advocate role, passeur culturel – the role of cultural agent (Gohier, 2002) – was able to promote shared culture through singing,
and could plan, introduce and reinforce French language and songs and create an awareness of different cultures through choral activities.

Titon (2003) advocates that as ethnomusicologists we learn from each other, we collaborate and we are partners in a common cause. The exploration of cultural identity and knowledge through song by Joseph (2009) and Benoit (2013) supports the action of the ethnomusicologist to develop knowledge and plan change, supports the role of the conductor as being important to the cultural identity of the choral group (Durrant, 2005) and defines the role of the conductor as facilitator, leader and contributor.

Consequently these claims strengthen the view that the role of the advocate ethnomusicologist is to increase the power of self-determination for a particular cultural group (Pettan, 2008) and through applied ethnomusicology and PAR research (Reason & Bradbury, 2008), the YLSP expects to support the ethnomusicologist to be able to develop cultural knowledge and identity within participants.

**Mummerimabu Yugambeh Yarrabil (to make Yugambeh songs alive): Language Revitalisation through Song**

As a language revitalisation project Baloy (2011) suggests that fostering ties between land and language will empower traditional owners to be socially and culturally connected with their own community and these ties are an ideological (identity, development, pride, community) and practical pursuit.

Johnson (2012) also claims that projects that look at language and identity will be highly charged with cultural capital and that it is the responsibility of all to actively promote language. Hudson (2006) identifies the link between music, place, identity and region and notes the importance of the connection between these key ideas, and concludes that music, in both its production and consumption, can be an important influence in shaping the identities of people and places, of engendering a sense of place and attachment to place. Marrett & Barwick’s (2003) research in Aboriginal endangered songs and endangered language advocates that the survival of song and language is dependent on the songman or
songwoman and their willingness to transmit/pass on songs according to traditional methods to a younger generation; Benoit’s (2013) research in a Francophone minority children and parents choir advocates the importance of the teacher as the transmitter. The instructor, myself who is a Yugambeh language region (Kombumerri) traditional owner, author of *Yugambeh Talga – Musical Traditions of the Yugambeh Language Region* and qualified music teacher fulfils both of these necessary roles.

Garma (Yunupingu, et al., 2002) also identifies that the preservation of performance traditions is one of the highest priorities for Indigenous people, as it is through song, dance, and associated ceremony that Indigenous people maintain lore and a sense of self within the world, and that without immediate action many Indigenous music and dance traditions are in danger of extinction.

Johnson believes that the functions of music in language acquisition, through choir, are interconnected to: micromusic, the interconnection of a minority group, endangered language and the creation of music culture through mimicking; Johnson (2012) therefore focuses on the role of song as a vehicle for nurturing language promotion and the creation of new traditional music as a result of linguistic activism.

Through a case study of 19 participants from The Group from the West community choir on Guernsey, who promote and sustain their own endangered language through song, Johnson (2012) discovered members in choir had different abilities in speaking the language, choir required participants to conform to one strain of the language, pronunciation may be different and is therefore negotiated, and participants gained personal enjoyment as well as contributing to language promotion. Choristers also noted that language and singing are interconnected; speaking the language allows the participants to perform meaningfully and performing allows an expression of their identity.

In the case study of the Basque Choirs, Bergadaa & Lorey (2015) investigated and reported on how living culture choirs support language skill acquisition and retention, and additionally assist with connection to culture and identity. Basque language is identified as being spoken by 1.2 million people in the seven provinces of Basque Country, where
approximately 80 choirs with 2,700 singers participate in a living art form. Choir is embedded in community practice and has thrived since the 19th century (Morel Borotra, 2002) and the Euskara language is the necessary component in Basque culture. This language forms 70% of choral repertoire (Laborde, 2002) and membership to be in a Basque choir is based either by ethnicity or on the basis of belonging to choir.

Research data revealed that Basque people love to sing. The singing is a way of expressing themselves, which is connected to Basque life, as Basque people do not like to talk about emotion, but will sing it. For some, it is intensely personal: a sense of belonging, a connection to lyric, melody and culture and a link to history. Basque communities are identified by their connection to song and they are proud to sing, perform for friends, local community and tourists. Basque choristers also explain that performing in language gives them personal and national pride.

Based on the theory that globalisation of culture will cast a shadow on the Euskara language, Bergadaa & Lorey (2015) recommend that Basque choirs, and choirs in general who wish to protect their performing arts cultural heritage and language, recruit younger members to safeguard retention of language. This recommendation supports the intentions of the YLSP: to recruit and teach an endangered language through song to the youth of the region.

**The Transmission of Culture through the Yarrabilgin (songman) or Yarrabilgingunn (songwoman)**

Marett and Barwick (2003) recognise that songs in Aboriginal culture deal with contemporary topics and articulate fundamental cosmological truths (Moyle, 1974) and therefore investigate, through five case studies of Aboriginal song traditions of Northern Australia, the characteristics of song language and language documentation.

Throughout each case study it is acknowledged by the authors that the survival of song and language is dependent on the songman or songwoman. Marett and Barwick (2003) discovered that the elders of Northern Australia have committed to this cause and moved
beyond traditional methods though their community-initiated song project Yawulyu, where twenty-three songs were recorded, songs dreamed by the senior women of this region, recently and up to seventy years ago, to ensure that the song material is preserved until a younger songwoman is ready to take over.

However, as a direct result of Marett’s reflection that all of the seven Aboriginal songmen that he worked with in the 1980s have passed, and as he casts doubt on the survival of the song material with the passing of each songman, the action of the ethnomusicologist in this situation becomes essential. Within this study there was a clear and defined need for the applied ethnomusicologist to advocate ethnomusicology to increase the power of self-determination for cultural survival, and according to Pettan (2010) scholars should efficiently employ their knowledge and understanding of music, in the broadest sense, for the betterment of humanity; therefore Marett’s reflections serve as a timely reminder that culture can be lost if it is not activated. The Yugambeh Youth Choir is guided by the purpose to ensure the survival of song and language within the Yugambeh language region and all songs that the choir learn are in Yugambeh Aboriginal language.

The following chapter, Design and Methodology: Kungabulehla (to rethink and reconsider) defines the way I work as yarrabilgingunn in community. The chapter also discusses the methodology behind the process of choir and the methods used to measure the evidence gathered through the research.
Chapter Three: Design and Methodology, *Kungabulehla* (to rethink and reconsider)

The voice of Australian Indigenous children is only occasionally heard in the academic world. For example, Purdie and McCrindle’s (2004) work measured self-concept in Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and was followed by Kickett-Tucker’s (2009) research on Aboriginal children and racial identity. Both of these investigations privilege Indigenous children’s voices and verify that a strong racial identity supports a sense of cultural security and self-esteem.

This project continues in this tradition of privileging Indigenous children’s voices and the investigation into racial identity and cultural security. It additionally investigates Indigenous youth leadership, heritage language acquisition, well-being, cultural connectivity, developing cultural capital and identity and Aboriginality through Aboriginal song. This project should expect to reach this goal as evidenced in the research of Bergadaa and Lorey (2015) in the case of Basque choirs, where living culture choirs support language skill acquisition and retention and additionally assist with connection to culture and identity.

In this context the term *Indigenous* refers to: ‘a person of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives’ (Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 1981).

The term *children* refers to young people aged between 5 and 17 years and the term *youth* refers to young people aged 18 years to 25 years. The term *jarjum* (children) in *Yugambeh* does not distinguish between children and youth, therefore in this thesis *jarjum* refers to all participants. The *jarjum* in this research have not identified the difference between children and youth and refer to all participants as children in their data.

My role in this research was facilitated through my role as Choirmaster of the *Yugambeh* Youth Choir, a choir that I conceived and began in 2014. The choir is open to all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander *jarjum* (children and youth) aged 5-25 years who live in *Yugambeh jagun* and want to learn *Yugambeh* Aboriginal language through song. My
connection to country as *Yugambeh yarrabilgingunn* songwoman and music teacher by qualification has afforded me a privileged position to work with Indigenous *jarjum* that live within my community.

I conceived this research project whilst observing and being inspired by Jacob over the period of a year (January – December 2015) in choir. As an older member of the group, Jacob (17+) would talk to me about how little he knew about being Aboriginal. During the year I personally witnessed his connection to culture, when he understood his identity, his development in self-efficacy and well-being and his acquisition of his heritage language that began to benefit him. Jacob even began to aspire to go on to further studies after school, which he has done. It was more noticeable in Jacob than others. I was busy trying to start a new group and other choir members already had some prior knowledge, therefore the benefits of being in a cultural choir weren’t as easy to observe. However Jacob had no prior knowledge. He was a sponge in his first year of choir; it didn’t matter that he was an older boy, he had a cultural connection to make and he was determined to do so.

Jacob has understood what choir has done for him. He has shared that choir has taught him language and connected him to a culture that he otherwise wouldn’t know. He is proud of himself and the choir when they perform, and he shares his newly acquired cultural skills with all his friends on social media. Jacob is also excited that we will begin to share some of our choir material with the schools within the *Yugambeh* language region.

My unique position as researcher and choir leader has consequently enabled me to share not only Jacobs’s voice, but also those of the thirty-eight Indigenous *jarjum* (who all identify as Aboriginal and a small number who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) who agreed to participate in this project.

This chapter is divided into five sections where I will focus on the areas of participatory action research, a mixed methodological approach, the field work process, an Indigenist ethnographical study and a real purpose: to action change for community.
**Participatory Action Research**

The *Yugambeh* Language in Song Project (YLSP) has followed the systemic development of knowing and knowledge principles of participatory action research (PAR) as outlined by Reason (2008). In this research PAR examines action and reflection and theory and practice, and through participation with others is the pursuit of practical solutions for the flourishing of individual persons and communities.

Another component to this PAR research is the role of the conductor. The evidence in Durrant’s (2005) work supports the role of the conductor as being important to the cultural identity of the choral group. It defines the role of the conductor as facilitator, leader and contributor and draws on evidence from both the singers’ and conductor’s perspective.

When I established the choir my purpose as choirmaster was, and is, to teach urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth *Yugambeh* Aboriginal language through song. However choir participants have demanded more. The *jarjum* have wanted to additionally learn the stories, cultural protocols and traditions that belong to the songs and perform them for their local and broader community. They ask to learn new songs and they want to help create songs that teach important cultural lore and lessons. The *jarjum* voice is paramount and we are collectively involved in making informed choices about our cultural expression. Therefore as conductor, leader and facilitator of this group, I am empowered as the *yarrabilgingunn* to be the ethnomusicologist for the community, work for the community in the field of applied ethnomusicology and compose new language songs. I do what is necessary to support, educate and transmit language and culture through music to my community.

The *Yugambeh* Youth Choir flourishes through our practical pursuit of learning language and culture and participant numbers have swollen from an initial six to the occasional sixty. As a result, upon hearing about the opportunity to participate in research, individual *jarjum* were keen to explore and measure their cultural connection and language acquisition. They have enjoyed the opportunity to tell others what learning language and culture means to them, and some *jarjum* have engaged as participant researchers as the interviewer or directed the line of questioning.
An Indigenist Ethnographical Study

This ethnographic study respects local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and knowledge and follows the guidelines of GUREM Booklet 30 (2015), where a member of the research team, myself, is a traditional custodian. Traditional Yugambeh Elders Patricia O'Connor and Ian Levinge were consulted about the research project and publication and identification issues were addressed with participants and guardians. The research appreciates and respects the diversity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities that it comes into contact with.

My perspective on this research and my way of working within community, migunn Yugambeh (what it means to know), aligns with Martin and Mirraboopa’s (2003) view and is termed by them as Indigenist Methodology. Martin considers the aspects of identity, gender, life age and role in community to be important influences within research. Therefore I have considered my tribal identity as a Kombumerri/Ngughi woman, my life age of 44 and my specific role in community, which is songwoman and teacher, to be important to my knowledge. Martin’s ideology behind the ontology of what I have been taught by my father and grandfather from our traditional ways and the knowledge shared by aunties supports how I have formed my way of knowing. Martin describes this knowledge as important for Indigenous people to ground their perspective. In turn my knowledge has informed my way of being. I regularly ask questions of family, elders and the wider community so that I can gather and collate stories and songs. I then prepare this material as cultural lessons to teach the jarjum. How I work aligns with Martin’s view on Indigenist methodology. I know, therefore I am and this is what I do.

In consideration of Rigney’s (1999) earlier work on Indigenist methodology where Indigenous voices are privileged within research, Yugambeh language words were incorporated throughout this project. An example of this is the term ‘focus groups’. Focus groups for this research were renamed wula bora sessions. This Yugambeh phrase means to give or share in a gathering at a significant space. There are many Yugambeh phrases and words contained in this thesis and all are identified by italics. Only the first time a Yugambeh word appears will it be followed by the English translation. All translations are additionally accessible in the glossary of Yugambeh terms (page 6). All Yugambeh phrases and words
have been approved by the Yugambeh Museum Elder in Residence Patricia O’Connor, Yugambeh Language CEO Rory O’Connor and Yugambeh Language Advocate Shaun Davies. This consultation process was a privilege. Elders took interest in my work, in the process, outcomes and future works, and as a result have advised me and are working with me toward a future where many more jarjum can be reached.

A Mixed Methodological Approach

*Migunn Yugambeh* (what it means to know *Yugambeh*), from the *jarjum* perspective have been observed and recorded through the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Utilising a number of methods has ensured validity to the emerging themes, credibility of the information given by the participants, and has allowed for greater versatility when working with children (Creswell, 2009). To do this I utilised surveys, *wula bora* sessions, interviews, video observation and personal reflections to stimulate evidence from participants.

Action and reflection were measured in five ways through Surveys #1, #2 and #3 [appendices B, C, D], *wula bora* sessions and participants’ personal reflections. Gibson (2007) suggests that focus groups which are used to generate narrative data, particularly when working with children and young people, would be best conducted in a neutral environment and be age appropriate. Therefore, *wula bora* sessions were conducted wherever and whenever *jarjum* were ready to initiate a conversation and consequently took place at the Logan Choir rehearsal venue, at the Gold Coast rehearsal venue, at participants’ homes, at the Gold Coast Show performance venue, at the QT Hotel in Surfers Paradise and on sacred ground in Burleigh, Queensland. The data collected from these action and reflection methods are in chapters four and five.

Furthermore, Surveys #2 and #3 for measuring the benefits of choir were collected using the Likert Scale [Figure 1], a visual analogue scale (Conlan, 2013). Studies in collection methods (van Laerhoven, et al., 2004) report that, when working with children, children prefer this scale, they identify with emoji and they find this scale easiest to complete. The *jarjum* in this
research found this scale easy to use and could identify their response by circling or ticking how they felt without needing to ask for assistance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FANTASTIC</th>
<th>REALLY HAPPY</th>
<th>HAPPY</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>NOT HAPPY</th>
<th>WORRIED</th>
<th>SAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>😍</td>
<td>😊</td>
<td>😊</td>
<td>😐</td>
<td>😐</td>
<td>😞</td>
<td>😞</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: visual analogue scale used in this research.

Theory and practice were measured in two ways: observation, written as field text, and video recording at performances which was a complementary process to analyse social interaction and body language, and is an indicator into the social and cultural significance of kinship ties (Marsh, 2011). These theory and practice observations are noted in my reflective field text in chapter four.

Creswell (2009) suggests that timing is important when collecting data in a mixed methodological study and that collecting data in phases or sequentially can be beneficial. The Yugambeh Youth Choir regularly performs and therefore access to participants after performance or after weekly rehearsals wasn’t difficult, however gathering data was a challenge and gathering data in phases or sequentially was extremely difficult.

Participants, the jarjum, chose to express themselves when they felt that they were ready. The majority didn’t want to be filmed in rehearsal, but were happy to be filmed in performance as they wanted to see what they looked like. Therefore my field notes have some anecdotal records from word of mouth, as they were not recorded transcripts and my observations have been noted down after rehearsal and performances as they were not captured by film. Additionally not all participants participated in every performance during the research time frame; therefore not all participants are included in each data set. Further, older male participants were happy to be interviewed but did not feel that they wanted to complete surveys. All participants and parents consented to being identified by their own names, as approved by ethics, within the data and participant’s ages have been defined by years which fit within approximate schooling level brackets in Queensland as listed in Figure 2.
Figure 2: Age range of participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range in Years</th>
<th>Approximate Schooling Bracket in Queensland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>Lower Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>Upper Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>Lower Secondary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>Upper Secondary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17+</td>
<td>Senior Secondary School, University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance at choir is also irregular and although most jarjum turn up most of the time, illness, family or school commitments and inability to attend is a factor, with reasons given as: ‘no fuel in the car this week’, ‘the car battery died’ and ‘mum didn’t want to bring us this week’. Therefore during a typical week, in total at both locations, I could work with up to 60 choir members or as little as 10.

Unfortunately after rehearsal and performance most families are keen to leave immediately as it is early evening or they have other commitments. Therefore I had to make alternate arrangements to speak with participants when it was most convenient for them. This also meant that sometimes the timing and location to complete a survey or interview after a performance was not practical and therefore did not happen.

However, sometimes research participants actively engaged in the research process. In particular, after the Taylor Swift performance Isobella (14-16) took on the role of researcher and interviewed other choir members about their experience of the performance that had occurred the same day. Peer participants enjoyed this opportunity to be involved in the research process and actively assisted her with formulating their own line of questioning and videography.

This cultural group, The Yugambeh Youth Choir, is strongly supported by the parents and guardians of the participants. It is a community. Participants’ parents also wanted to offer their opinion and insight into the benefits that have been afforded to their jarjum through their membership in choir for this research. This additional information could have added an
additional layer to the data set, however it was determined that this research would remain child centered and is the opinion of the jarjum.

The Field Work Process

The initial concept for this research was conceived by the end of 2015 and the research title, *In the Bora Ring: Yugambeh Language and Song Project (YLSP)*, was proposed to Griffith University as a Master of Arts Research thesis in January 2016.

By the time of the research collection period, the relationship between me, local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander choir members and parents/guardians was well established. Therefore in a large group situation parents and caregivers were handed the Research Participant Information Sheet [appendix E] and Consent Form [appendix F] and were additionally verbally explained the form which described: why the research was being conducted, what participants would be asked to do, the expected benefits of the research, risks to participants, confidentiality, voluntary nature of participation, feedback, ethical conduct and privacy as per the GUREM booklet 22 (Allen, 2015).

Children under the age of 18 were handed an age appropriate Participant Information Sheet [appendix G] and age appropriate Consent Form [appendix H]. It was explained to all participants, parents and caregivers that there was no obligation to be involved in the research and that participants and family could take their time to decide if they wanted to be involved. Adewumi (2001) suggests that the act of effecting agency from children is enabled when participants are included in the research process. This agency was demonstrated to me after the *jarjum* had read or had read to them their own age appropriate forms as they were excited to be involved in the research, in particular because they would be an equal partner, their individual voice would be heard and they could choose how and when they assisted with the research in a format of their choosing.

I had anticipated that participants and parents would process the request and take any necessary time to consider participating in this research, however parents on behalf of the participants, and participants, were immediately and passionately committed to
demonstrating to a broader audience any positive effect caused by participation in a cultural choir.

Tabled below in Figure 3 is the time frame for the field work process which was instigated as part of this research. The table lists all field dates including participant numbers, performance events, data collection dates and data collection types that formed the research process.

**Figure 3: Field Work Process Timeframe.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February and March 2016</td>
<td>Field work data collection methods were researched and prepared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 27th April 2016</td>
<td>Ethics application submitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 28th June 2016</td>
<td>Ethics application approval&lt;br&gt;Griffith University Ethics Reference Number: 2016/325.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 7th July – Sunday 30th October 2016</td>
<td>Research collection period - 16 ½ weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 7th July 2016</td>
<td>Consent process begins and is completed at the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Ceremony at the Jebbribillum Bora Grounds at Burleigh Heads, Queensland. &lt;br&gt;• 38 participants (all members of the choir who attended the NAIDOC ceremony on the 7th July) aged 5 years to 18 years (14 males aged 7 years to 18 years and 24 females aged 5 years to 15 years) agreed to volunteer. &lt;br&gt;• All 38 participants agreed to interviews, surveys, focus groups, video observation and to be fully involved in the research process. &lt;br&gt;• 13 of these participants were from the newly formed Logan Choir and 25 from the established Gold Coast Choir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 7th July 2016</td>
<td>Data Collection: Written Reflection presented as Reflection on Participation in the Yugambeh Youth Choir as a public presentation at the NAIDOC ceremony by 1 participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday 16th July 2016</td>
<td>Choir Performance: Police Citizens Youth Club Fundraiser event inBeenleigh, Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 22nd July 2016</td>
<td>Choir Performance: Live radio performance for ABC Gold Coast performing a Taylor Swift song in Yugambeh language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 22nd July 2016</td>
<td>Data Collection: 7 participants conducted their own interview on, after the ABC radio performance this included 1 participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday 29th July 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Performance</strong>: Queensland Training Awards at the QT Hotel in Surfers Paradise, Queensland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday 29th July 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: Survey #3 Performing completed by 19 participants after the Queensland Training awards performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday 7th - Tuesday 9th August 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: 2 participants wrote three short reflections about choir for their School Community Action Service Logbooks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday 26th and Saturday 27th August 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Performances</strong>: Gold Coast Show, Queensland, two performances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday 27th August 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: Survey #3 Performing completed by 11 participants after the Gold Coast show performances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday 17th August – Wednesday 31st August 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: Survey #1 Prior Cultural Knowledge and Survey #2 Choir Participation were completed in the week prior to and after the Gold Coast Show by 12 participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday 10th August 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: Wula bora Session (semi-structured conversation) with 5 participants.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday 7th September 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: Wula bora Session (semi-structured conversation) with 2 participants.</td>
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<td><strong>Wednesday 14th September 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: Wula bora Session (semi-structured conversation) with 2 participants.</td>
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<td><strong>Saturday 15th October 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: Interview in unstructured style with 2 participants.</td>
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<td><strong>Saturday 15th October 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: Written Reflection by 1 participant.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday 16th October 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: Interview in unstructured style with 1 participant.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday 16th October 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: Written Reflection by 1 participant.</td>
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<td><strong>Sunday 30th October 2016</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Collection</strong>: Interview in unstructured style with 1 participant.</td>
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**A Real Purpose: To Action Change for Community**

For both languages and musical traditions, learning and teaching (implicit or explicit) are cornerstones of sustainability. Without them, inter-generational transmission does not take place, spelling the decline and eventual disappearance of the cultural heritage in question. (Grant, 2012)

Grant’s comments serve as a reminder that inter-generational transmission of culture is a key basis for cultural sustainability. As a yarrabilgingunn of the community, it is with pride that I transmit traditional and contemporary pieces. It is with knowledge of story and
language that I preserve, create and regenerate performance tradition which maintains lore and provides a sense of self within the world to urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. *Yarrabil* (sing) and *talga* (beat time) are important words in *Yugambeh* language to the *yarrabilgin* (songman) and *yarrabilgingunn* of community. Singing and keeping time are just two of the ways that lore and knowledge are passed on through music.

In 1913 John Allen (Bullumm) 1850-1931, committed himself to the task of working with the school teacher, John Lane to record the language that he had spoken throughout his childhood.

*Yugambeh* Language Dictionary (The Kombumerri Corporation for Culture, 2001)

Bullumm was one of many elders who committed to the task of *Yugambeh* language revitalisation and he left his legacy with John Lane when he recorded *Yugambeh* language. Others have also pursued this endeavour. Professor Margaret Sharpe, of non-Indigenous heritage, is a leading authority in the Australian Indigenist languages of the *Yugambeh* and neighbouring *Bundjalung* dialects.

There is also a community of *Yugambeh* Indigenous people who actively work toward language revitalisation and the return of many fluent speakers, in particular the *Yugambeh* Museum Language and Heritage Research Centre, which was founded by the *Kombumerri* Corporation for Culture. *Yugambeh* is not a dead language, but it is in revival stage. There are olds within community who are known to speak the language, but there are many who cannot.

We are all still guided by our elders. My grandfather was known to correct linguists’ pronunciation and my father will correct me today. I am not a linguist and I cannot profess to be a fluent speaker, but I am an ethnomusicologist in my community. I learn my heritage language ahead of the *jarjum* and I practice with them. The choir and I learn together. I am also guided by experts and I regularly check on grammar and pronunciation of the language.

There is deep knowledge in our language. There is a spirit of learning in our words. This is more than just knowledge of what to learn, but knowledge of how we learn.
This is our pedagogy, our way of learning. We find it in words about thinking and communicating. The patterns in stories, phrases, songs, kinship and even in the land can show us the spirit of learning that lives in our culture. (Yunkaporta, 2010)

The parents and *jarjum* in my choir are well aware that we are on a learning language journey and that I actively uncover the meanings of songs and stories. These songs communicate the language and the stories of the land. In our language the word for hand is *dunngunn*, however *dunngunn* also means five. This is an example of how the language itself depicts a ways of knowing and understanding and therefore cultural lessons come from the language. This is also our way of activating or *girrebbah* (awakening) our sleeping language.

To acquire *Yugambeh* language through choir I take the approach that we learn by doing, that the words and stories are what the members want to hear, similar to the recommendations of Krashen (1982).

Real language acquisition develops slowly and speaking skills emerge significantly later than listening skills. The best methods are therefore those that supply low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear. These methods do not force early production in the second language, but allow students to produce when they are "ready", recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production.

In choir there is no pressure placed on the *jarjum* if they cannot remember *Yugambeh* words; I simple tell them that they will remember next time or the time after that. To assist me, particularly when we perform, the older *jarjum* lead the singing and this prompts the younger ones along. The younger *jarjum* produce and remember *Yugambeh* language when they are ready and their pronunciation improves over time.

This is not to say that we don’t work hard at learning language. We use a white board and have short language lessons. We use song sheets [appendix I] and look at how words are
spelt to help with pronunciation. When we learn a new song the *jarjum* search for any words that they already know and we discuss the meaning in the new context. We discuss the fact that one *Yugambeh* word could express several meanings or could be slightly different and not understood by its western interpretation, i.e. the language word for *barragunn* (boomerang) is different to the language word *warrun* (boomerang double not used for throwing). In this context *warrun* means to play (clap) as in a musical instrument and this is the context for double, not a thrown *barragunn*. Our way of gaining knowledge in this context is to clarify the meaning of the word or symbol through land or lore to understand the story, to learn *Yugambeh* language.

This way of learning *Yugambeh* language has similarities to Yunkaporta’s (2009) Eight Aboriginal Ways of Learning Framework. Yunkaporta’s framework demonstrates a deep awareness of cultural learning through the use of: Symbol and Image, Story-Sharing, Learning Maps, Non-verbal, Land Links, Non-Linear, Deconstruct-Reconstruct and Community Links, when working with Aboriginal *jarjum*. Yunkaporta’s framework is an influential model for an Indigenist methodology to explore the connections between knowledge, language, the land and people through song.

*Wandah Jageegan Djagun* (Rise Up! Beautiful Country) (2011), our tribute to the Australian National Anthem, is an excellent example of the time frame that it takes *jarjum* to learn to speak *Yugambeh* language accurately. The Anthem melody is known to all *jarjum* who attend and only the translation is new. I have established, after teaching the Australian National Anthem in *Yugambeh* since December 2011, that it can take on average 3 months for 15-17+ year olds to correctly learn the words, 3-6 months for 10-14 year olds and a full year or more for 5-9 year olds. Learning *Yugambeh* takes time.

As earlier stated, I began collecting song material over 20 years ago. Some of the repertoire that I teach the choir comes from this collection (Best, et al., 2005), some of the repertoire has been collected by others (Sharpe, et al., 1985) and some is still being collected today when community members share knowledge. Some song material can be presented as originally found, but some cannot due to a lack of score, recording or melody. Therefore I transmit song material to the choir in the following three ways:
• songs that have been directly transcribed into musical scores with language and can be taught in original context,
• songs that were known to be songs and have traditional words provided but no musical score, therefore I lend them a melody as approved by elders and
• songs that I or other yarrabilgin or yarrabilgingunn have composed for the purpose of teaching language and or songlines.

When I conduct the choir I do not conduct with my hands, as in the western methodology of choral conducting; rather I talga (beat time) on a pair of traditional Kombumerri barragunn. As stated earlier the word in this context is talga warrun (beating time on the boomerang double, not for throwing). The barragunn are a lesson in culture themselves. Every part of what I do transmits culture. The barragunn that I use are slightly curved, rather than a returning barragunn shape, and they were used for duck hunting. My barragunn are made of hardwood from chumau (black wattle tree) found in Yugambeh jagun and have been handed down the family line for many generations. Choir participants understand that the person who controls the warrun is in charge of the group. This person, the yarrabilgingunn in the case of the Yugambeh Youth Choir (the conductor in western music), signals the start, accompanies the song, signals changes during the song and signals the end all through talga warrun.

The Yugambeh Youth Choir teaches language and culture through song to up to 60 members at two locations, Gold Coast and Logan, each week in school term time for 40 weeks per year for approximately 1½ - 2 hours. To be a member of this choir each participant must identify as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Some participants are direct Yugambeh descendants from Yugambeh jagun and others are not. It is clearly articulated to all members who join choir that we learn to sing in Yugambeh, the Aboriginal language of the region and that I volunteer my time as choirmaster and organiser of this group. This is in equal partnership with the community members who want to learn Yugambeh language and also volunteer their time. This arrangement works in our community because as a community we feel that we are invested together. The choir is open to new members at any time of the year; the only commitment required of participants is to turn up to rehearsal.
At a typical rehearsal members are welcomed with the Yugambeh greeting jingeri (hello) at
the beginning of rehearsal. During rehearsals all teaching material is presented to the group
in a culturally respectful way which means that jarjum and parents are free to ask and seek
clarification of a word, sense or understanding when they need to. When this happens I ask
if another choir member can answer the question. If they cannot I do it and use the moment
to be a cultural teaching point during the rehearsal.

The rehearsal venues provide large spaces and have multiple rooms. Choir rehearses in one
of the provided spaces whilst Bula-bula Yarga Four Winds Didgeridoo Orchestra rehearses in
another. Jarjum and parents are free to move around the spaces any time. During rehearsal
the jarjum are able to take breaks when they want; however they generally wait until given
a break, unless they are in the 5-7 age group. The younger jarjum go between rehearsing,
sitting on the laps of their parents, the laps of the older jarjum or the laps of their siblings.
All jarjum know to tell me if they don’t feel up to rehearsing or singing, if they feel unwell, if
they have had a big week and don’t feel up to rehearsing or just want to listen. When this
occurs participants always seem happy to remain in the space with the other choir members
and listen. Often they will eventually participate. Parents are welcome to sit in on rehearsal.
This provides them with an insight into their own culture or the culture of their jarjum if
they themselves are not Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander because some jarjum are in
care. The parents across both groups, although in different locations, have formed their own
network of support for each other and the jarjum and we have a closed Facebook group for
communication. Also at the Logan venue parents engage during choir over coffee and cake
and at the Gold Coast venue sit together at the side.

At both rehearsal venues a few boys are members of both groups. These boys play the
didgeridoo, rehearse and learn their instrument with Bula Yarga, then attend a portion of
the choir rehearsal to accompany choir with their didgeridoos. The didgeridoo or yidaki in
traditional Yolngu language (2014) is not a musical instrument from Yugambeh jagun. This
instrument is known by elders to be introduced to Yugambeh people from other Aboriginal
tribal groups and has been on Yugambeh jagun and played here for many years. The elders
and male leaders of Bula Yarga have gained permission and a cultural blessing from Arnhem
Land elders to use this instrument in *Yugambeh jagun*. Therefore the *yidaki* (didgeridoo) instrument has been incorporated into the *Yugambeh* Youth Choir for accompaniment and is a modern addition to traditional song and an equal partner to newer song material in our urban context.

In choir rehearsals the *jarjum* collaborate and they make the process of singing productive. The *jarjum* and their families are aware that my point of view on cultural performativity is to: understand the songline of the song that you are sharing, understand the language translation and meanings of the words and know how to sing it with skill, although the act of singing is not a secondary element to the process and skill of learning a new language. Learning to sing is equally important and in choir the *jarjum* are acquiring multiple skills. As a qualified teacher in this area I impart the knowledge and technique required to sing.

The choir is also guided by my principle purpose, to action change for my community and to build ‘cultural capital’ (Jeannotte, 2003) within my community, where the *Yugambeh* Youth Choir is an applied ethnomusicological endeavour to begin to action such change. To engage *jarjum* I combine learning the skill of singing and having ‘fun’ and ‘enjoyment’, with learning language through song as a methodology for preservation. Grant’s (2012) theory that grassroots community choir initiatives which safeguard language should utilise various methodologies for preservation, supports my principle purpose and methodology.

Therefore when teaching the *Yugambeh* Youth Choir I follow a combination of the following two principles: rehearsals that teach culture and language which safeguards our culture and rehearsals that prepare performance material to build cultural capital in community.

I acknowledge that younger *jarjum* don’t necessarily distinguish between these methods because I teach that learning is a way to know and knowledge should be passed on. I say, ‘Once you have learnt these songs you can share them with anyone’, and then *jarjum* will tell me when they have passed culture on and to whom they have shared it with. However, the older *jarjum* are beginning to understand the concepts of ‘cultural capital’ and ‘performativity’ through the choir’s artistic intent. Their thoughts on ‘cultural capital’,
‘preserving and learning language’ and ‘sharing culture’ are shared in the data set in chapter five.

The following chapter *Ngulli nabai yarrabil* (We begin to sing) begins to reveal the evidence from the *jarjum* which supports the significance of learning Aboriginal language through song. The chapter also reveals how knowledge of the language, songs and stories help choir members to become cultural and language advocates.
Chapter Four: *Ngulli nabai yarrabil (We begin to sing)*

In this chapter and the next I present the narratives of the *jarjum* in the Yugambeh Youth Choir and my own reflective field text. In this chapter I reflect on the process of choir, rehearsals and performances and the methodology that I use, and the *jarjum* reflect on their feelings in choir and their own performativity.

It is my intent to privilege all voices in the most authentic way possible; therefore I have kept dialogue, narrative and *wula bora* session information in blocks of text to accurately represent the thoughts of the *jarjum*. This style of presentation supports the evidence in context, respects Indigenous knowledge and advocates the child’s voice.

The journey of learning *Yugambeh* Language for some in community begins with membership to the *Yugambeh* Youth Choir. This membership begins with an invitation to *jarjum* and *junnebeineubani* (family) to join a free cultural choir and subsequent journey.

![Recruitment flyer](image)

**Figure 4: Recruitment flyer.**

The recruitment flyer [Figure 5] is the first step in sharing stories of the land. The artwork in the background of the 2016 recruitment flyer was designed by Gamilaraay (Kamilaroi) (NSW) artist Paula Nihot, specifically for the use of the *Yugambeh* Youth Choir. Paula created this artwork to reflect a narrative of the *Yugambeh* region. Paula lives on *Yugambeh jagun* and her *jarjum* are raised here. The colours of this artwork come from this *jagun*, in particular, *moiyum* (water lily), known for its pink or purple petals and yellow centre. The
moiyum gaureiman (story of water lily) is passed on by the Nankeen Night Heron, one of our local totem animals and is known as ‘The Kombumerri Love Story’. The dot circles on the outside represent the youth within the region coming together. The three larger circles represent Bora (earth rings), the meeting places in jagun, and within them the songlines that are taught in choir. This flyer represents yabru gaureima (one story) of the Yugambeh region.

Building Self-Efficacy

Another gaureima (in this context to relate a story) is the experience of working in rehearsals and performances with the jarjum, particularly for the newer members to the group who have only just begun their cultural journey. On Wednesday 13\textsuperscript{th} July 2016 at the Beenleigh Police Youth Citizens Club (PCYC) the members of the newly established Logan choir rehearsed for a performance. At this rehearsal I observed the acceptance of relationships within the group, the trust afforded me by the jarjum and the shared knowledge of trying something new.

‘Jingeri! Hello,’ Pinjarra (5-7) shouts as he enters the PCYC. Pinjarra has a very big smile on his face and he is clearly excited. I introduce Pinjarra and the members of his family to my husband. They haven’t met my husband before and he isn’t Indigenous, however it is interesting to watch the jarjum instantly accept him and begin a conversation with him because they have already accepted me, although they have only known me for 13 weeks. It makes me feel proud for our future relationship as we have now established trust. 13 weeks ago when Pinjarra’s family attended the newly formed Logan choir there was little trust. The younger jarjum of this family would engage in conversation with me, but didn’t know me. Their body language was reserved. The older jarjum in this family barely said hello, they were nearly standoffish. These jarjum were not rude, but they were skeptical. They didn’t know anything about me and yet I was going to teach them their cultural heritage and language through song.

As we prepare to rehearse on the PCYC stage I ask the jarjum, ‘Who has been on a stage before?’ but no-one puts up their hand. I am not sure if this is shyness or they haven’t
really been on a stage before. The Logan choir has done two performances prior to this community performance, but the previous two were not on a stage and were very short two or three minute beginning performances and they were in language. Rather than worrying about shyness or the stage, I choose to move on. I ask the jarjum to line up in a single line and tell everyone that they are going to walk onto the stage one by one to see how it feels. I also let them know that they can have fun with it and do a model walk or an action. Dylan (8-10) and Bailey (11-13) try to outdo each other with various poses, but it is fun and we are all laughing. The serious faces on the jarjum before they went onto the stage have disappeared and in place are smiles and relaxed shoulders. The tension has left everyone’s bodies.

The difference in the relationship between myself and these jarjum from 13 weeks ago is vastly different. We have conversations about school, likes and dislikes. We have moved on from being a teacher and students. We are now a community who engages with each other.

Lowanna (8-10) asks me, ‘Will we just line up here to go onto the stage?’, and so for the remainder of the rehearsal we go back to the beginning and we physically run through everything, including any language or vocal difficulties. We rehearse walking on and off the stage in lines, the run order of the songs, how to perform the songs on stage and how the microphones and lighting will operate. The police who are in charge of this event are incredibly helpful to the jarjum and answer every one of their concerned questions. They even tell the jarjum how impressed they are at learning language and songs so quickly. When we leave choir members seem very comfortable and ready to sing in language for this community performance on Saturday night.

(field notes, 13 July 2016)

The rehearsal experience was followed by the performance on Saturday 16th July 2016 at the Beenleigh PCYC Annual Fundraiser Event. In both rehearsal and performance choir provided the initial step in ‘mastery experiences’ (Bandura, 1995) required for the building of self-efficacy in jarjum. These experiences included the different techniques modelled in rehearsal to achieve success and the final performativity of sharing culture. Additionally
through ‘social persuasion’ (Bandura, 1995), myself, parents, care-givers and elders of community assisted new performers to believe in their capacity to have a go. This is reflected in field notes from the performance.

The jarjum are excited and nervous and are pointing at all the people in evening clothes in the foyer. It doesn’t seem to matter what age the jarjum are; they are all discussing with their peers what the audience looks like.

I gather the jarjum into the rehearsal room and we line up and warm up our voices. Many of the jarjum are moving between the choir lines and their parents. I can clearly hear the parents and guardians reassurances: ‘you will be alright’, ‘you don’t need to worry’, ‘yes, you can go to the bathroom again’, ‘just listen to Candace and follow her’. It is obvious by body tension, facial expression and the level of anxiety in the room that the Logan choir members are worried about their first major performance. The Gold Coast choir members are also picking up on this level of anxiety and whilst they look ready to perform also appear a bit anxious.

I ask Morgan (8-10) from the Gold Coast choir if she is OK and she replies, ‘I just don’t know if these other kids know what to do,’ [referring to the Logan choir participants]. Morgan, whom I have known for nearly two years, is always incredibly honest and her thought process is reasonable. This is the first time that some of these jarjum from the two choirs have met each other and I am asking them to perform together unrehearsed. Although I have gone through introductions with everyone and we had established and rehearsed where everyone would stand at the two separate rehearsals, the rehearsal venues are too far apart to come together for anything other than performance. Performing and additionally performing beside people you don’t know is a little intimidating and I am beginning to worry.

As the performance time gets closer, I move the group into the green room. For this performance the green room is a weights gym beside the hall. This is a great distraction for some of the teenage boys who have only just met and they start talking about the equipment.
Fortunately I have people assisting us who are calm and proud of the jarjum before they even go on stage. The policeman who was at rehearsal is a familiar face and Aunty Robyn Williams, Elder of the community comes to tell the jarjum how proud she is of them as they line up. I instantly see some of the worry drain away from faces. It is a great time to do a physical jump up and down and have the jarjum copy. We are relaxed and ready.

At performance time we enter onto the stage and line up as rehearsed. The jarjum have worried faces but I smile at them, to remind them to smile and they smile back. I signal to look up and out at the audience. We begin.

We sing Wehga Mullil, Chungarra, The Wedding Song and Rise Up! Beautiful Country Wandah Jageegan D jagun, our Tribute to the Australian National Anthem. By the beginning of the third song the jarjum are relaxed and standing tall, they are engaging with the audience and I haven’t needed to remind them to smile. This is assisted by the thunderous applause from the audience of 200 people after the second song as both the first and second pieces were sung together. Cameras are flashing, many photographs are taken and at the end of the performance the Master of Ceremonies tells the jarjum how wonderful and talented they were.

After the performance, in the green room, the jarjum are high-fiving each other and everyone is laughing. I hear a few ‘we did it’s, and one ‘that was awesome!’ from Bailey (11-13). Aunty Robyn Williams makes a special effort with the group to tell them what a wonderful job they have done to learn and share Yugambeh language with the Logan community and asks for a photo. [figure 6]

The jarjum are quite excited after their performance and the parents and members of the community tell them how proud they are of them. There are many happy, excited smiling faces on both parents and jarjum and endless hugs for everyone.

(field notes, 16 July 2016)
The master of ceremonies (MC), elder and audience of the PCYC performance were all positive influences in this mastery experience for the *jarjum*. As a direct result of the MC publicly telling the audience, in front of the *jarjum*, how impressed he was with their learning of language and performance of cultural songs, the *jarjum* immediately became more secure with their cultural identity and sense of self. This was evidenced in that after he spoke, the *jarjum* showed pride through their body language. Smiles were larger, chests were higher, shoulders were set back and *jarjum* looked taller. Additionally when the respected elder told the *jarjum* how proud she was of them after the performance the *jarjum* were able to acknowledge or identify with a shared history and further their pride in themselves and their culture.

![Figure 5: Beenleigh PCYC Fundraiser with Candace Kruger left and Aunty Robyn Williams centre.](image)

The mastery experience gained by *jarjum* at the PCYC performance assisted the performers’ newfound sense of trust and group belonging. Through this experience, choir begins to demonstrate that *jarjum* will be motivated to learn *Yugambeh* language and culture through choir. The act of singing and performing in this initial context begins to indicate that singing in the *Yugambeh* Youth Choir promotes self-efficacy in the Indigenous youth of the
Yugambeh language region. The jarjum voices and further evidence of building self-efficacy through choir is highlighted in the section on well-being in chapter five.

Safeguarding Culture

I have learnt that whilst my underlying methodology and purpose does not change, the group and I have evolved continuously and concurrently through the opportunities that are presented to us. The knowledge that is gained by learning language through song leads to a deeper understanding of culture and as the jarjum mature or become curious they ask more in-depth questions. It is mostly spontaneous for the primary school age (5-11) jarjum because that is the moment that they need to know, whereas the secondary school age (12-17) jarjum sometimes ask after rehearsal or in break time. Whenever these questions occur the process is to stop the rehearsal and to provide a response. The jarjum have come to understand that if the singing is put on hold in order for us to explain and explore something pertaining to culture then this is OK; it is also part of the process of learning culture through choir.

The jarjum and junnebeineubani are naturally curious. I have discovered that some of the urban jarjum who have joined choir know nothing to very little about their cultural heritage and this evidence is presented in chapter five in the language acquisition section.

An example of this curiosity and thirst for cultural knowledge was demonstrated in Jamaica (11-13) and Louella’s (8-10) wula bora session. They asked for some cultural explanations.

| Louella: Can I ask you something? (Louella’s facial expression and body language express that she’s not sure if I want to hear her question) | Candace: You can ask me anything. |
| Louella: You know how there were elders, like before, before, before? | Candace: Yes. |
| Louella: Why would they create songs and spiritual things? | Candace: Oh, like the Dreamtime, I guess we’re asking the big question? (both girls nod) |
(There is a large section of the wula bora session here that has been intentionally left out of the transcript as it contains culturally sensitive material. The girls and I have an in-depth discussion on the Dreamtime, kinship ties and Corroboree).

Louella: Can I just tell you something, this is between us two, no-one else. (Louella has another look that suggests she’s changing the topic again, but she also knows that she’s being recorded; she just doesn’t want her sister to hear, so she waits until her sister moves away)

Candace: OK go.

Louella: Jacob thinks you’re making some of the songs up.

Candace: Ah, OK. So let me tell you my job. My job is called Yarrabilgingunn, which is the song woman of our community. So when Jacob says, you’re making songs up, Jacob’s right and let me tell you why. Every person in community has a different job to do and my job as a music teacher is to go and collect songs from people and then tell the songs. Some of them come exactly down the line, (I sings examples of Wehga mullil and Wedding songs), however Chunganra the words were passed down, but the man who passed them down said he didn’t write down the music, although this is a song and the words for the song and they [Aboriginal people] sang them a couple of hundred years ago, but he didn’t tell us the music. So I say, and I make sure I tell people, these words were traditional song words and I’m putting the music melody to it, so sometimes I do that. And my other job is to write songs to help learn language; Borobi is a song that I have written to teach us the story of the koala and to teach us language words. So we have a combination of all of those things.

Louella: Can I ask you something? (Louella stops to think for a moment)

Candace: Yes.

Jamaica: How come the Bora ring, we can’t go in it?

(There is a section of the wula bora session here that has been intentionally left out of the transcript as it contains culturally sensitive material. The girls and I have a discussion about Bora Ring Ceremony and the Bora ring that we attend for celebration and ceremony at Burleigh Heads, QLD).
Just like the jarjum, when community hear us and see us perform they also want to know more. The choir members, parents and myself are often asked questions after a performance by community members, or comments are made to us, such as, ‘I didn’t know any of this information’, ‘I really liked hearing the children sing and learning about the region’, ‘Thank you for sharing your culture with us’.

These community experiences have additionally evolved the choir into a commodity with its own identity. The choir performs for community. The choir is not a ‘product’ nor are we subject to ‘cultural cringe’; the Yugambeh Youth Choir is made up of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander jarjum learning culture and sharing it authentically with community.

Grant’s view on safeguarding culture through music is ‘that the odds of successfully safeguarding music might be higher than of language, perhaps because of music’s greater ability to recontextualise or its greater commercial potential’ (2012, p. 110). Therefore it is with Grant’s contextual view on safeguarding music and commercial potential in mind that I develop a similar claim to acknowledge how our commodity works in our community. Jarjum are sustaining and safeguarding their music traditions, in addition to their language, through choral performativity which communicates culture to the community.

On this topic, I was able to share my thoughts with Pat Hession, ABC Radio 630 North Queensland, on the 3rd of June 2016 in Townsville, prior to the 2016 QLD Reconciliation Award Ceremony. We discussed the themes of safeguarding music and tradition, commercial product and sharing culture with community.

**Pat:** Why do you think it is something that people seem to be interested in, that people are connecting with in some way?

**Candace:** We’re connecting in community, we’re connecting within our own community, we’re connecting in the broader community. We are asked all the time to come and perform; just last week we (choir) opened the new
Woolworths on the Broadwater in Southport. We sang some of the traditional songs, but in the ‘Welcome to Country’ I was able to let people know that in these waters right behind us [Broadwater of Southport], where we are, our families were collecting oysters, our grannies were growing the nuts and the food sources around this area. We’re allowing people to understand that our culture is here in the grounds that are all around you and our knowledge and our stories are surviving and thriving and we need to pass them on.

Pat: I know when I’ve travelled overseas, I’ve seen people doing traditional performances and I’ve thought ‘there’s a bit of cultural cringe in there’. I’m worried that people are putting on a show rather than giving me an authentic interpretation of what their culture means to them.

Candace: ‘Authentic’ is an interesting word. We are working with urban children who are demonstrating living culture, so for us it is about sharing the stories. You’ll see kids hop up and sing and we’re actually telling the tales of our area and it may not be exactly what someone expects to see, but it is what we do. So we use our voices and we sing, and the kids have beautiful voices and I’m training them to sing well, correctly as well and to sing in harmony and we’re just doing our ‘thing’. And our ‘thing’ is to share our story in community.

(radio interview, 3 June 2016)

Pat Hession’s question about the perception of authenticity by an audience was surprising as I had not considered that an audience would view the choir as disingenuous. Adverse thoughts about a living culture choir or the practice of learning culture do not assist the safeguarding of language or culture and the choir’s experiences to this point have not demonstrated that there is negativity surrounding urban jarjum learning Yugambeh tradition; rather it has been the opposite.
Nicole Dyer from ABC 91.7 assisted our positive position in community by encouraging the *jarjum* with their endeavours to spread language through song. ABC Radio invited choir to perform live on Friday 22nd July 2106 when Taylor Swift was visiting the Gold Coast. There was great excitement in the wider community and she [Taylor] was spoken about in the media every day. I took this opportunity to see if Taylor might like to meet some local Aboriginal children, but mostly to positively recontextualise her song ‘Shake it Off’ and have some ‘fun’ with the *jarjum* when singing and learning language.

(Note: The *jarjum* did not meet Taylor Swift, but they had fun trying to).
With a language translation from Shaun Davies, the Yugambeh Museum language advocate, 12 choir participants turned ‘Shake it Off’ into Ngai Jigala. At this time Nicole Dyer also re-opened the dialogue with me about sharing language.

Nicole: You came up with a fantastic idea, Candace.

Candace: I thought it would be a wonderful opportunity to share our local language with Taylor, we’ve come up with the idea to sing her ‘Shake it Off’ ‘Ngai Jigala Jigala’, in Yugambeh language.

Nicole: How cool is it though to be able to use Yugambeh language and to make it so accessible to other people by using a song people have an affiliation with?

Candace: It’s very cool, it’s fun, and language is fun, language learning. And it’s really important that we’re sharing this learning with community and some of the kids around on the Gold Coast. Listen to how we’re singing ‘Shake it Off’ in language and you can learn it for yourself.
Nicole: How complex was it though to learn this song and to be able to perform it in language?

Candace: I have to thank Shaun Davies, our Language Advocate at the Yugambeh Museum, he worked tirelessly for a couple of hours yesterday and put this together on our crazy idea of let’s sing something for Taylor Swift in language. The kids that are here with me, there’s about 11 kids here in the studio, they came over to my place last night and we quickly put it together and they’ve learnt it overnight; these kids are getting really confident with language, so it wasn’t too difficult to do.

Nicole: Why is language so important?

Candace: This is our heritage language and it connects us to land; the songlines that we sing tell us the culture and the stories of our people and what goes on in the land.

Nicole: Song is such an empowering way to tell a story.

Candace: The songlines of this country are amazing and it’s wonderful that we get to share them.

(radio interview, 22 July 2016)

The jarjum who performed Ngai Jigala, having only learnt the language translation the evening before, demonstrated to the broader community how easy it is to learn Yugambeh language and how comfortable they have become with Yugambeh language. They promoted their own choir as a fun way to learn and sing Yugambeh language and raised the profile of their choir as a culturally safe place for local jarjum who want to learn language and culture through song.

After this exciting adventure the Gold Coast choir still had rehearsal in the evening of Friday 22nd July 2016. I made many observations during this session, but the jarjum took control of the rehearsal as they felt they had a contribution to make to this research.

This afternoon’s rehearsal was slow to start. The jarjum were up early at the radio station, 6am before school, so I am not surprised. There was conversation this morning between
parents and myself about whether or not to have rehearsal tonight, but it was felt that it
was important to keep going as not everyone had participated that morning or been
involved the night before. We have the Gold Coast Show coming up soon and we need to
keep working repertoire, in particular Borobi koala, our new piece to debut at the show.

Parents and jarjum were quite excited when they entered rehearsal after hearing
themselves on radio that morning; they were chatting about how it went and how they
felt. Singing Ngai Jigala, Taylor Swift’s ‘Shake it Off’ was fun and a successful venture in
presenting and sharing Yugambeh language to the Gold Coast community.

After I settled everyone in, I began with a warm up; we made siren sounds with our voices
and sang numbers in Yugambeh as we went up and down a major scale pattern, however
it quickly become apparent to me that I had tired jarjum in front of me. Today I would
need to allow for several water and toilet breaks and for the younger jarjum to run
around and play with each other whilst the older jarjum chat and relax. I don’t mind, even
play and conversation is part of building our community.

We worked on the piece Borobi koala, the language and context of language is learnt and
the musical notes and harmonies are sounding good as they are in-tune and accurate, but
the jarjum are not confident yet. It is difficult when the numbers aren’t high at rehearsal
to get the younger jarjum into a circle to perform the dance and to be confident to sing,
however today the older jarjum help out and we manage to move the littler ones into
position and produce a stronger sound with the people at rehearsal.

Isobella (14-16) has decided she wants to be more involved in the research. She has said
that she is learning about quantitative and qualitative data at school and would like to
participate in my research by doing some interviewing. Therefore we decided before the
rehearsal, that halfway through the rehearsal would be a good time for her to begin her
interviews about the performance on radio that morning. She hadn’t decided who to
interview or what they would say, but I happily handed over my phone for video and
audio recording. I realised that I had no idea what I might see or hear, however once I had
announced what Isobella was going to do, all the girls who performed wanted to be outside to have their say. Isobella took them away one or two at a time and I heard lots of laughter and was told ‘you’ll love it’ by Sophia (8-10) and to my surprise Violet (5-7) also wanted to talk.

(field notes, 22 July 2016)

The data collected by Isobella (14-16) has variable themes because the interviewees took control of their own interview. Isobella informed me that there were many ‘takes’ so that the girls were happy with ‘how they looked and sounded’, that there was ‘lots of laughter’ and ‘it was fun’, and she was assisted with the line of questioning and camera angles by the interviewees.

These interviewees were Morgan (8-10), Juliette (13-15), Isabella (11-13), Sophia (8-10) and Chloe (14-16), and they revealed how the process of choir and joy of performing in choir, especially on radio, has assisted their cultural journey.

Isobella: So after today’s performance Morgan, how did you feel about singing the language?

Morgan: I felt really good and it was really cool at the start and then I got really used to singing it.

Isobella: Was it exciting, or scary to sing in language on a radio station?

Morgan: At first when I firstly tried to sing at the radio station I was really scared in case I mucked up, but after I’ve done it a couple of times now I’m really used to it.

Isobella: Did singing in language any way help you feel, maybe more a part of your community, more a part of your language?

Morgan: Yep, it felt really good.

Isobella: Yeah.

Morgan: I love singing in language.

Isobella: So Juliette, after today’s performance, How do you feel about singing in
Juliette: Singing in language has made me more connected to my Aboriginal heritage and culture and it’s brought me closer with family that I might not have met if I hadn’t joined choir.

Isobella: So Isabella, how do you feel about today’s performance?

Isabella: I felt that it was really exciting and I hope that Taylor Swift does come.

Isobella: So, why do you like singing in language?

Isabella: Cause it connects me back to when we originally owned the land and it connects me to all my people.

Isobella: And how do you think this choir has sort of helped you learn more about your culture?

Isabella: Well I wouldn’t have met all these Aboriginal people if the choir had not been formed.

Isobella: And so do you like singing in language? Do you think it maybe helps you connect to your Aboriginal cultural understanding?

Isabella: Yes it does.

Isobella: How did you feel after today’s performance?

Sophia: I felt like Candace lost her mind about the performance [we pulled this together the evening before and I had previously said it was a crazy idea, but a bit of fun] and second of all it was kind of scary cause you’re doing it on radio, so once you’ve done it, it’s kind of it!

Isobella: Did it get exciting afterwards though? Was it a bit of a hype?

Sophia: Yes I was excited to hear how it would sound on radio.

Isobella: About the language, how do you feel about singing in language?

Sophia: The way I feel about singing in language is that it’s a lot harder to do, but I find it great how it connects other people to Yugambeh or Aboriginal language, it’s kind of like introducing different languages.

Isobella: So maybe does it make you feel more connected to your own culture?

Sophia: Yes definitely.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Isobella:</th>
<th>And do you find it difficult or hard to learn all the language?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sophia:</td>
<td>Definitely a bit harder because there’s all the word pronunciations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isobella:</td>
<td>How do you think the choirs helped you, maybe benefitted you, in any way, confidence, singing, language, anything like that, connecting you to your culture?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia:</td>
<td>Definitely in confidence because of all the performances we’ve done and it connects me to more of my heritage because now that I know more about the language I know more about my heritage, culture.</td>
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| Isobella: | So Chloe, how did you feel after today’s performance? |
| Chloe:    | I felt really good, I felt really good about being able to express my language to everyone on the Gold Coast, so it felt really good. |
| Isobella: | And how do you think the choirs benefitted you, maybe in confidence, or in singing, anything like that? |
| Chloe:    | Definitely confidence; when I first started I was a nervous wreck, but it’s gotten so much better since then, even public speaking as well. |

(participant self-directed interviews, 22 July 2016)

Violet (5-7), one of our littlest jarjum, usually speaks through Morgan or Ciarn, her older cousins. However, on this day as Isobella was conducting her PAR interviews, Violet followed Morgan to her interview. Violet wasn’t at this early morning performance but allowed Isobella to interview her. Isobella felt honoured that Violet wanted to share with her.
Isobella: So Violet, do you like being in the choir?
Violet: Yes. (big nod)
Isobella: And does it make you happy to sing in the choir?
Violet: Yes. (big nod and big smile)
Isobella: Does singing in language make you happy?
Violet: Yes. (big smile)
Isobella: Do you like doing the performances in choir?
Violet: Yes. (nod and big smile)

(participant self-directed interviews, 22 July 2016)

Figure 8: Violet (5-7)

The jarjum are aware that learning language and culture through song benefits them. There is evidence of several benefits afforded to them in their Taylor Swift radio interviews with Isobella (14-16). The five girls aged from 8-16 years have begun to unpack the complexity of learning language and culture through song into terms of cultural identity, well-being and self-efficacy, through their own words: ‘feels good’, ‘confidence’, ‘connects me to my heritage’, ‘privilege and honour’.

Through further interviews, reflections and survey data the jarjum continue to discuss the benefits afforded to them through participation in an urban Aboriginal language and cultural community children’s and youth choir. Some are these benefits are implicitly identified and some are explicitly identified by the jarjum and these opinions are offered by jarjum within a wide range of age and gender from the participant group.

The following chapter discusses the five emerging benefits of: youth leadership, language acquisition, well-being, identity and Aboriginality, and socio-cultural capital, for Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander *jarjum* when participating in an urban Aboriginal language and cultural children’s and youth choir.
Chapter Five: The Emerging Benefits of Choir

This chapter discusses the holistic way in which an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander choir provides benefits to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander *jarjum*. It is divided into the five themes which have emerged from the research and are categorised as: Youth Leadership, Language Acquisition, Well-being, Identity and Aboriginality, and Socio-Cultural Capital [Figure 10].

These themes could be presented in any order as they are holistically connected by culture and tied to the individual’s thoughts and feelings. I have begun with the theme youth leadership because it allows me the opportunity to begin to introduce some of the older *jarjum* and their engagement with choir.

Figure 9: Identified benefits of participation in an Urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s and youth choir.
Youth Leadership

‘Being an elder is not a process of saying, or determining, who is the eldest. It is an inner thing that makes you act that way. You never butt in when anybody else is speaking, there is great warmth and love and respect for each other... It’s sort of, the seed germinates and the flower develops its fragrance by what you learned from that, and that’s the best way I could describe it, as the fragrance of those elders’. Elder Uncle Robert (Bob) Anderson, Gheebelum, Ngugi, Mulgumpin (Peacock, 2002)

I don’t consider myself to be an aunty, but some of the jarjum call me aunty. This is a part of the kinship system in Aboriginal culture. My father, Elder Uncle Ian Levinge (Kombumerri/Ngughi) and I have had this philosophical conversation on several occasions, however I am still not comfortable with being called aunty because I do not feel I am old enough. My father tells me, ‘It isn’t your choice and it is not about age, it is the choice of those around you and it is a sign of respect. It doesn’t matter if the jarjum call you Candace, Miss Candy or Aunty, once they choose to call you Aunty, you are’.

Whilst exploring the themes of developing Aboriginal identity and language acquisition through participation in choir, the jarjum on many occasions brought up the theme of leadership. This was an unanticipated development, but one that underpins Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, learning, knowing and sharing – the concept of being or becoming an elder or respected uncle or aunty. Elder Uncle Bob’s description of this process from jagun – the germinating seed, the flower development and the fragrance of that flower, has helped me to process why some jarjum call me aunty. Through teaching choir I have come to understand that the knowledge passed to me by my elders is valuable and it is expected that I will pass this knowledge on.

In this section the jarjum share their thoughts on learning to be a role model in community, helping others because of what they already know, how to become a leader themselves one day and how choir provides leadership opportunities. These jarjum share their first steps of communicating culture to each other and discuss how their cultural seed is being germinated, where their cultural seed is being germinated and in some cases that the flower has just developed.
Aric (17+) is a Kombumerri and Ngughi young man and traditional owner within the Yugambeh and Jandai language regions, (Southport/Nerang and Moreton Island regions, Queensland). He was interviewed on Saturday 15th October 2016. Aric has been a member of the Yugambeh Youth Choir Gold Coast since 2014. He was the first male in choir when it was established and he has had to assist in some capacity all other male singers who have joined. Whilst he isn’t the eldest male, he is the most experienced singer who often sings lead solos. He is the first performer in over 110 years to reactivate the Yugambeh Call to Corroboree (Best, et al.). In 2016 Aric had a busy year at school and although he participated in all choral rehearsals and performances during this research he didn’t have time to complete surveys; however he took the time at the end of the research period to write a reflection on his role in choir, what it means to him and what it has done for him.

Being a leader in this group is important as I am a role model to the younger boys in the group. I am a determined young man who works hard in every aspect of my life. The young boys that I work with each week take inspiration from this and this makes me an effective role model for them. In particular Bailey and Dylan from the Logan choir actively seek my attention and ask me about my life. They want to know what I do and how I do it.

When Jacob was struggling with his changed voice (Jacob is a year older than me), I was able to assist him in proper vocal technique with a changed voice because it is very different. Jacob and I successfully found his pitch and I showed him some technique. I’ve noticed his increased participation and self-confidence since helping him. I can now hear Jacob’s voice when we are singing, as he is more capable vocally.

‘I am a role model to the younger boys in the group... I hope that the younger members will be inspired to follow their own pathways as I am and find their passion.’ Aric

Figure 10: Beenleigh PCYC Fundraiser, Aric (17+), Teagan (5-7), Ethan (11-13).
Prior to joining this choir, I knew very little about my culture and hadn’t really paid attention when I was told. I knew my tribe names and I knew the language regions, but very little about traditional stories and family connections. I now have an interest in my culture through joining this choir because we perform culture. I feel the need to know what I am singing about, I have a responsibility to know what it is I am sharing with others. This choir teaches community about the local Aboriginal culture and it is important to learn culture to share with others.

I enjoy singing. This choir has supported me and given me a platform for further opportunities within the wider community – Locally, Nationally and hopefully Internationally. I hope that the younger members will be inspired to follow their own pathways as I am and find their passion. The choir is a community group which has supported me and I know will support others.

(Aric, participant reflection, 15 October 2016)

Whilst it is likely that Aric understands the role he plays when assisting others because of his age, he is able to demonstrate that he understands the responsibility to know culture if he is sharing or teaching it. There is great respect for the way this young man conducts himself in community and the way in which he is learning from his culture. And it is the way others notice and react to what he does that makes him a role model in community.

Members of community that know the choir, parents of choir jarjum and elders in community often comment on what a good leader Aric is and how he is a role model for the younger boys in choir. Jacob (17+) has said before performances, ‘I’ll be fine if you just put me near Aric so that I can hear his voice and watch what he does’, and Bailey (11-13) has said, ‘I want to sing like Aric, I think my voice could be that good’. Bailey is also often observed to sit near Aric where he watches everything he does and engages him in conversation about all different topics. Lily (5-7) often says, ‘Aric is the best thing to climb’, because she knows that Aric will carry her at any time and he carries her onto stage if necessary for her to feel comfortable enough to perform. Being in choir has afforded Aric the opportunity to learn to lead.
Isobella (14-16) is a Kombumerri and Ngughi girl and traditional owner in the Yugambeh and Jandai regions, (Southport/Nerang and Moreton Island regions, Queensland). She has been a member of choir for two years. On Thursday 7th July Isobella volunteered to give a public presentation at the 2016 NAIDOC Ceremony, *Wumgin Karulbo* (Coming Together) on sacred ground, Jebbribillum Bora Ground.

Her reflection, ‘What being a part of the Yugambeh Youth Choir means to me’, expressed how she has had to step up to the role of leadership by ensuring that she understands her culture. Additionally for Isobella, the act of volunteering to present her thoughts on choir also demonstrates that she is well on her way to becoming a youth leader.

*Choir has benefitted me in so many ways that I am incredibly grateful for. Before joining the choir, I was very nervous when performing and found that my nerves were a detriment to my performing ability. However, the numerous performance opportunities for choir and the leadership role I have in the choir have forced me to gain confidence when singing, as I have to be a role model to the younger kids in the choir. In a singing competition I participated in last month that was held in Murwillumbah, I received two first places. I feel as though my new found confidence was a major factor in my achievements in Murwillumbah as I now have the ability to sing more confidently in front of others. Choir has also helped to improve my leadership skills. As I am one of the older members of the choir, I am seen as a role model to the younger kids in the choir. This role has compelled me to step-up and help some of the younger kids to learn about their culture, learn some of the language for the songs and help them when performing in front of an audience. (Isobella, participant reflection, 7 July 2016)*

‘Being a role model... has compelled me to step up and help the younger kids learn about their culture and language of the songs.’ Isobella

*Figure 11: 2016 NAIDOC Ceremony, Wumgin Karulbo (Coming Together), Rory O’Connor CEO Yugambeh Museum, Isobella (14-16).*
In further reflections about leadership for her school Community Action Service (CAS) Logbook on Participation in Choir Isobella acknowledges that being a role model means assisting with younger *jarjum* and new *jarjum* in the choir and at performance, and Isobella also recognises that being a leader means being a teacher of culture.

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**Tonight we performed at the PCYC in Beenleigh.** We performed the National Anthem (in language and in English), the Wedding song and Chungarra. We also performed with members of the Logan choir who haven’t ever performed on stage before. As they had never performed before this gave me an opportunity to use some of my leadership skills to help direct and calm some of the other members of the choir. **Tonight I got to perform a solo in the Anthem and felt as though this went well. I enjoyed having a solo and hope that I will have more to come.**

(Isobella, participant reflection, 16 July 2016)

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**Tonight we had a choreographer come in and help the choir learn some of the new dances.** This was nice because I was able to pick up the dance moves faster than some of the other children and I was able to help them. I also helped the choir master to interview some of the younger kids for her research project on the choir so that she can look into new ways to benefit the people in the choir. **I liked doing this as it gave me a chance to have a leadership role in the choir.**

(Isobella, participant reflection, 22 July 2016)

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Whilst Aric’s and Isobella’s thoughts demonstrate that they may be further along in becoming leaders in community, their understanding of leadership is similar to other *jarjum* within the research group.

Kyeisha (14-16) is a *Munjnali* girl (Beaudesert, Queensland) and traditional owner in the *Yugambbeh* language region. She had been a member of choir for 12 weeks at the time of the performance at the *Wumgin Karulbo* on sacred *Jebbrillum Bora jagun*. I asked Kyeisha to speak publicly about one of the pieces. This is one way in which choir additionally provides an opportunity for older *jarjum* to speak as youth leaders in their community; *jarjum* narrate the songline (story) of each piece before a song is sung and teach a cultural story to the wider audience.
Kyeisha expressed to me and another adult helper that she was: ‘both nervous and excited because no-one has ever asked me to speak before, I have never spoken in public and I was proud because I was chosen to do something’.

When following up with Kyeisha after the performance she couldn’t stop smiling; she was so happy to have spoken in public for the first time ever and for it to have been about her culture. Speaking about her culture made it even more special. Kyeisha was able to express that she understands her future role in community and acknowledges that it is just beginning.

In a wula bora session on Thursday 7th July 2016 Kyeisha (14-16) and her siblings, who had now been in choir for 18 weeks and had performed several times, continued to share about learning culture and language. Their guardian also wanted the jarjum to share their opinions that they have about choir as they often talk about how they feel about choir in the car. However, halfway through the session Kyeisha became choked up emotionally because she wanted to make sure she could express the true meaning of participation in choir for her and her siblings around the ideas of respect and leadership.

Kyeisha: To find out what we are (tribal and language ties) and to be appreciated of who we are (Aboriginal), what we stand for and ‘cause it’s our land and people should respect us and treat us like everyone. Being community leaders and learning this (language, songs and stories), so we pass it down to our kids one day.

Lowanna: Yeah! (Yilarra also nods yes)
Guardian: So we talk about that (in the car), and being Indigenous community leaders in their area with their knowledge to pass on the stories and the songs.

Candace: Do you feel proud?

Kyeisha: Yes. (all 5 jarjum agree)

“I am proud of this... being community leaders and learning this [language, songs and stories], so we pass it down to our kids one day.’ Kyeisha

Some of the younger jarjum have also touched on the idea of leadership in their focus group sessions or reflections. Jamaica (11-13) and Louella (8-10) are Kalkadoon (Mt Isa, Queensland) jarjum adopted into Kombumerri/Ngughi tribes, and have been choir members for one and a half years. They are not regular attendees at rehearsal, but manage to attend most performance opportunities. In a wula bora session on Wednesday 7th September 2016, they discussed how they view the older children in choir as leaders, how the older children assist them to learn and have respect for them, and it was also an exciting moment when they realised that they would become leaders of the choir one day.

Louella: Yes, I love coming to choir.

Candace: So when you say yes I like coming to choir, I love coming to choir, what makes you say that? What things happen at choir that makes you feel that way?

Louella: The people there (at choir) are really kind and they’re like understandable and they can explain stuff more interesting.

(Wula bora session, 7 July 2016)
Candace: So who are the people that you were talking about?

Louella: I think it might be you, as well as some of the older girls like Kiara and Isobella.

Candace: You are (11-13), those older girls Kiara is (11-13) and Isobella is (14-16), and who are some of the really older people that help out at choir?

Louella: You.

Candace: And kids, the kids who have been helping you out at choir?

Louella: Myora! and it would probably be...

Jamaica: Aric!

Louella: Aric. (nods happily remembering the older kids in choir)

Candace: How have they helped you? How have the older kids helped you out at choir?

Louella: They like help us out when we get into our spots [choir positions] and they like pitch us (help with musical notes) when it gets high.

Candace: They help you with the music. So I guess you’re saying they are being leaders in choir?

Louella: (nods yes)

Louella: What if I tell you that Myora (17+) is sometimes not coming to choir anymore because she’s older now and she’s at university (girls have a really sad face) and I can see your sad face, but what if I say some of the 15, 16 and 17 year old kids now, like Isobella and Chloe are becoming the leaders in choir and Myora can only come sometimes.

Jamaica: Oh! (surprised sound) Really?

*They have to show respect and make a path for us so we can follow.* Louella
Candace: Yes and if I tell you that the next lot of kids are coming up to be leaders, what do you think is going to happen when they’re going off to University? What does it mean to you?

Jamaica: The other older kids? (lots of laughing)

Candace: Noooo, what does it mean for you? When you’re 15 and 16?

Both girls: We might be the leaders?

Candace: Yes, so being in choir, listening to the older kids, you might get to be the next leaders too. How do you feel about that?

Jamaica: Good.

Louella: Good.

Jamaica: I like lead singing and then I don’t ‘cause I get butterflies in my tummy.

Candace: It’s not just lead singing; what else do leaders do in our choir?

Jamaica: They lead us.

Louella: They have to show respect and make a path for us so we can follow.

(Wula bora session, 7 September 2016)

Baden (8-10) and Ciarn (8-10) also share their understanding that it is the responsibility of older jarjum to assist and teach the littler jarjum in choir. In separate interviews (Baden Sunday 16th October 2016, Ciarn Saturday 15th October 2016) they both acknowledge that they don’t fit into this category yet. Instead they express what they already do to assist, where they fit into the community hierarchy and how they look forward to becoming a leader one day.

Baden (8-10) is a Kombumerri/Ngughi boy and traditional owner in the Yugambeh and Jandai language regions (Southport/Nerang and Moreton Island Queensland regions). He has been a member of choir for two years. He has participated in all choral rehearsals and performances during this research, however until this interview he didn’t wanted to complete any surveys or participate in any other interviews. This was the first and only time that he wanted to discuss his thoughts on choir. In this section of Baden’s interview he expresses that leadership in choir means that more people can teach him and he can also
teach younger jarjum. Also he acknowledges that older jarjum are role models for him and he hopes to become a role model himself one day.

| Baden: | I have met people that I am related to that I didn’t know existed and now I’ve become friends with them. I have met people that are very outgoing and some that aren’t and it’s good to know them all and get to know other people. |
| Candace: | How do you feel about learning with them? At the same time? |
| Baden: | It feels easy to do it in a group because you’ve got people that might know it more and they can teach you, that would be the older kids, and they can teach me things that I don’t know and I also help the littler kids than me, so we can learn faster. |
| Candace: | When you watch the older kids in choir and they get to do solos and introduce songs and give speeches, how does this make you feel? |
| Baden: | It makes me feel happy, because when I’m older I’ll get to sing solos and speak as well. |

‘It feels easy to do it in a group because you’ve got people that might know it more and they can teach you, that would be the older kids.’ Baden

Figure 15: Baden (8-10).

Ciarn (8-10) is a Gamilaraay girl (New South Wales) and has always lived on Yugambeh jagun. She has been a member of choir for two years. In an unstructured interview in her home, with her mum nearby, Ciarn reflects on the opportunities that choir has given her. Ciarn discusses how she looks up to the older children in choir and how she might want to be a leader one day. Ciarn acknowledges that she assists her younger cousin Violet (5-7), who is also in choir, with songs and language words.
I like to teach people and I get to teach Violet (5-7), I perform with Morgan (8-10) for the family. It’s cute and makes me feel proud watching Violet perform.

It’s the big kid’s job to lead the singing.

Watching the older girls speak about the songs and introduce stories, makes me want to have a turn someday. I want the other younger people to look up to me.

‘It’s the big kid’s job to lead the singing.’
Ciarn

Figure 16: Ciarn (8-10).

(Ciarn, interview, 15 October 2016)

The jarjum have identified that choir provides a positive environment where they can promote teaching and learning from within. The Music Manifesto (2006) suggests that choral projects are the chance for our most vulnerable and marginalised children to change their lives through music. The Yugambeh Youth Choir jarjum have expressed that choir provides such an opportunity and they can therefore grow and develop into role models and future leaders. The jarjum have demonstrated their awareness of where they are in life and demonstrated great respect for their immediate leaders, older jarjum.

The Yugambeh words mibunn wallul mundindehla ngalingah jagun (many eagles protecting our country) is a phrase which resonates within community. It is passed down and Yugambeh people learn the importance of the protection of the land and the people by Elders with particular reference to Yugambeh warriors who went to war (Kombumerri Aboriginal Corporation for Culture, 1991). Jarjum learn this phrase when attending ceremony at Jebribillum Bora ground on sacred country and learn the importance of becoming a leader in community.
Elder Uncle Robert (Bob) Anderson, *Gheebelum, Ngugi, Mulgumpin* (Peacock, 2002) suggests that learning the importance of acting the right way to become an important member of community is significant for community. As evidenced by the *jarjum* in choir, learning the right way to become a leader assists to plant the seeds for the future and through this act the flowers will grow and produce leaders who will become an unforgettable fragrance.

Therefore the research evidence on the theme Youth Leadership confirms that Urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s and youth choir assists with the development of positive role models in community. Choir additionally develops youth leaders who actively share, teach and promote their culture within the community.

**Language Acquisition**

At the beginning of most choir lessons we make up counting songs to warm up our voices. We use our fingers to show numbers and sing them in *Yugambeh* because the numbering system is simple.

... did not regard (arithmetic) as much importance... ‘one’ was ‘yabru’; ‘two’ was ‘bula’; ‘three’ was ‘bula-yabru’; ‘four’ was ‘bula-bula’, and so on.

(The Kombumerri Corporation for Culture, 2001, p. 14)

We try the numbers forward and backward. The *jarjum* usually laugh at me because they are so much more skilled at counting numbers backward in language than I am. At times the *jarjum* will also ask to sing a song completely on their own, to prove to themselves and others how well they are doing at learning language. Sophia (8-10) often asks to sing the Anthem in front of everyone to be tested. She is usually followed by Miah (11-13) and Morgan (8-10). During this research period other *jarjum* have wanted a turn; Isabella (11-13) and Balin (8-10) have asked to have a go on their own for the first time. I give feedback and gently correct any pronunciations; sometimes other *jarjum* will ask to do this. It is all a part of the process of learning our language in a culturally sensitive environment and we help each other.
Pinjarra (5-7) shouts meanings at me as soon as he recognises a Yugambeh word (Logan choir rehearsal). Morgan (8-10) and Sophia (8-10) try to give me a translation before anyone else can get a word in (Gold Coast choir rehearsal).

Learning language this week seems to be rewarding and fun. Jarjum are beginning to get excited during rehearsals, for The Gold Coast Show performance is just three weeks away.

(field notes, 5 August 2016)

Many of the jarjum are becoming comfortable with the greeting jingeri (hello), and use it regularly when they arrive at choir. Isobella (14-16) is comfortable introducing herself when she speaks publicly and feels at ease explaining other Yugambeh words.

Jingeri nganya nyari, Isobella. Hello, my name is Isobella. The youth choir has enabled me to learn and connect to my culture in many different ways. During rehearsals I have picked up new Yugambeh words such as ‘gaureima’, which means ‘story’ or ‘yanbalehla’, meaning ‘walking’.

(Isobella, participant reflection, 7 July 2016)
There was a limitation in this research when establishing the level of prior cultural knowledge and language in half of the participants. This was because the first group of 19 participants (50%) had been with the choir for over one year or their parents or caregivers are active in Aboriginal community. The first group of 19 jarjum knew varying amounts of cultural knowledge and language at the time of research and at a minimum they knew their tribal (Aboriginal family) name, knew the Yugambeh language region and a few Yugambeh language words and could not establish or recall if this information was learnt through choir or from a family member. Therefore these participants did not complete Survey #1, Prior Cultural Knowledge.

The second group, remaining 19 participants (50%) completed Survey #1 Prior Cultural Knowledge. These 19 participants were able to identify that they did not know the name of the Aboriginal language region that they lived in (Yugambeh language region) or where the language region borders were. These participants could definitively recall having no prior cultural knowledge or contact with language before joining choir.

*Mununjali jarjum* Kyeisha (14-16), Yilarra (14-16), Lowanna (8-10), Michael (8-10) and Pinjarra (5-7) fall into the second group of participants and in a *wula bora* session on Wednesday 10th August 2016, recalled newly acquired Yugambeh language words and shared how they are going at learning Yugambeh language.
Candace:  OK, so did you guys understand the songs that we sang? So we sang Chungarra, did you understand what Chungarra was about?

Pinjarra:  Pelican.

Candace:  What else did we sing? We sang the wedding song.

Pinjarra:  Yila wallul. (Pinjarra answers in language)

Candace:  What does that mean?

Mikey:  You’re gonna... get...

Pinjarra:  We’re gonna find a wife.

Candace:  Oh yeah, we’re going looking for a wife, well done. Ok, we sang the National Anthem in language. How did that make you feel?

Pinjarra:  (spontaneously begins to sing the Australian National Anthem in Yugambeh language) Karalboo...

Candace:  (joins Pinjarra’s singing) Karalboo... (Pinjarra continues to sing in the background while Kyeisha talks)

Kyeisha:  Make him stop. (referring to Pinjarra’s singing)
Lowanna: Pinny don’t be nervous. (she encourages him to keep singing)
Kyeisha: Part of Australia, cause it’s our language. (referring to making her feel like she belongs to Australia by having the National Anthem in her heritage language)
Candace: Ah, it made you feel part of Australia. Since you have joined this choir, did you know language before you came to this choir?
Kyeisha: No.
Answer from all 5: No.
Candace: Did you know any language before you came to this group?
Answer from all 5: No.
Candace: Did you know where your language region was?
Answer from 4: No.
Kyeisha: Ah yes. (Yilarra changes her answer to a hesitant head nod of yes)
Candace: Did you know your Mununjali group before you came here?
Answer from all 5: No. (but these ‘no’s were hesitant)
Candace: Not too much? (Participants nod their heads)
Have you learnt a lot of words since you’ve been to this group?
Answer from all 5: Yes.
Candace: So can you tell me some straight away what you know?
Michael and Lowanna: Jingari, Nyanyahbu,
Candace: Which means?
Mikey: Hello.
Pinjarra: And Goodbye.
Candace: Good job. Can you count? (They all begin to call out over each other)
Michael: Bula, Bula Bula.
Lowanna: Yabru, first.
Lowanna: Dunngunn.
Pinjarra: Dunngunn, it’s the number 5.
Candace: And what does it mean, it also means? (Lowanna tries to show Pinjarra, by giving him a high five, demonstrating that she knows that Dunngunn also
Jamaica (11-13) and Louella (8-10) also fall into the second group of participants and they also share their journey with learning language and their knowledge of Yugambeh words.

Candace: Did you know any language before you came to choir?
Louella: Kinda.
Candace: A couple of words or a lot of words?
Louella: Couple.
Candace: Did you know little bits? (the girls had stated earlier, prior to the session, that they didn’t know any words before joining choir)
Louella: (nods yeah)
Candace: Do you think choir has helped you learn a lot more words?
Both: Yes.
Candace: Can you say anything? (girls hesitate) (prompt) What do you say if I say hello?
Both: Jingeri.
Candace: How do say goodbye?
Jamaica: Jingeri jingeri.
Candace: Jingeri jingeri is double hello, he’s the Willy wagtail. We might not have practiced this one very much. (the girls aren’t always at choir)
Candace: Do you know how to count?
Louella: Yes. (both girls count fluently)
Candace: If I say we are going to sing Gundala, what’s that?
Jamaica: The flower song?
Louella: No, isn’t it the boats?
Jamaica: Oh I get mixed up.
Candace: That’s OK that you get mixed up between those two. If I say Gundala and
we’re doing the boat, what does it mean? (testing cultural and language knowledge)

Jamaica: It means hide and the boats are coming, look out the boats are coming.

Candace: Yes, look out, look out the boats are coming, shh, be quiet, hide, the boats are coming. And when you sing flower, which is? (testing language knowledge)

Louella: (slowly tries) Won gar ah.

Candace: Good, so when you sing those songs you know the words, or when you sing the pelican, what’s that one called?

Both: Chungarra.

Candace: Well done!

(Wula bora session, 7 September 2016)

Figure 19: Louella (8-10), Rasheed (8-10), Marijah (5-7), Jamaica (11-13).

Bailey (11-13) and Dylan (8-10) are Darug boys (New South Wales). They have always lived on Yugambeh jagun. The boys had been members of the Logan choir for 20 weeks by the time of this wula bora session on Wednesday 14th September 2016. Bailey and Dylan are also incredibly proud of their newly acquired Yugambeh language skills.
Candace: Let’s talk about learning (Yugambeh Aboriginal) language, language skills that we’ve learnt in choir, to sing in language. Did you know any language before you came to this choir?

Dylan: Yes, I’ve learnt... what is it? German.

Candace: Did you know any Aboriginal language before you came to choir?

Both: No.

Candace: Do you reckon you know more than 5 aboriginal words now?

Bailey: Yep, maybe about 30-40.

Candace: 30 or 40! What, just in the space of 20 rehearsals?

Both: Yep!

Candace: So you’re getting pretty confident with it now aren’t you?

Both: Yep. (very big smiles and beating of chests)

Candace: Do you boys enjoy learning it? (Yugambeh language)

Both: Yep.

Candace: We’ve got a long way to go and a lot more language to learn. Would you recommend choir to other people who discover that they are Aboriginal or know that they are Aboriginal?

Both: Yes.

Candace: What word do we say in our song to wake up the koala because his environment is disappearing? (I am testing to see if Dylan recalls a word as learnt in context in the song)

Dylan: Wehga wehga mulil? (Dylan sings the wrong song)

Candace: No, no, when we go (I sing an earlier line of the song as a hint) yabruma nguram...

Dylan: Girrebbah! (Dylan confidently responds with the correct word)

Candace: Girrebbah, so we say Girrebbah to wake up. Yeah you know that one.

(Wula bora session, 14 September 2016)
Figure 20: Dylan (8-10), Bailey (11-13).

Figure 21: Marijah (5-7), Pinjarra (5-7).

Figure 22: Jacob (17+) [back right].
Jacob (17+) is a Kombumerri (Southport/Nerang) young man of the Yugambeh language region and a traditional owner. He was interviewed after the 25th anniversary service at the Yugambeh War Memorial in Burleigh on Sunday 30th October 2016. Jacob shares that choir has taught him language and it makes him feel very proud to know Yugambeh. He also shares that he is excited that we will share Yugambeh songs with schools within the Yugambeh language region.

Candace: How does choir make you feel?
Jacob: Honestly, choir makes me feel so happy, to just sing, like sing my language, like I’ve participated in ceremonies but I’ve always wanted to have that knowledge of speaking it and singing it out and honestly I can’t believe that I can actually do it, I can sing my language. Thanks for your help.

Candace: Jacob did you know any language before you came to choir?
Jacob: None.
Candace: And you’ve got a fair bit of it now haven’t you?
Jacob: Yeah.
Candace: Do you feel confident saying that you speak Yugambeh now?
Jacob: Um hm, (yes) I’m confident, everyday I’m confident, I’ll be walking in the shop and I’m shopping and I’ll be singing the songs of the choir, I do it all the time.

Candace: Wow!
Jacob: When I’m at school, I always sing it and everyone goes, ‘What are you singing?’ And it’s like, oh a choir, a family choir on the Gold Coast, we sing, like yeah. And they always want to see it on Facebook, the videos and stuff and I show them.

(Jacob, interview, 30 October 2016)

Whilst the jarjum haven’t directly said that learning Yugambeh language is difficult, they have commented on the challenges. For example Sophia (8-10) emphasised it is ‘definitely a bit harder because there’s all the word pronunciation’. Chloe spoke in some detail about this issue:
Learning these new songs is proving to be slightly challenging at the moment as I have to practice them at home on top of all my other homework and assessment tasks... [and] sometimes it is frustrating when the younger children can’t get it, but I find it is helping me to work collaboratively because being an older member it’s my job to help the younger children, but that’s where I step in to give them confidence.

(Chloe, participant reflection, 9 August 2016)

However Chloe is also able to articulate the positive in learning language even though she sometimes finds learning Yugambeh ‘challenging’ and ‘sometimes frustrating’. As she stressed, there are ‘so many new words and so many new meanings, it’s amazing’.

The research evidence from the jarjum supports the statement that Aboriginal language acquisition occurs when Indigenous children and youth sing in an Indigenous children’s and youth choir. Although whilst I expected that jarjum would want to share exactly what language they have learnt, most jarjum moved directly over this step and focused on how learning Yugambeh language has made them feel or how learning Yugambeh language has connected them to culture. This discovery is along similar lines to Johnson’s (2012) discovery that the role of song in a language acquisition choir is just the vehicle for nurturing language promotion and interconnection of a minority group.

Therefore the research evidence on the theme Language Acquisition has revealed that in the context of a language cultural choir the evidence supports the statement that learning Aboriginal language through participation in an urban Indigenous children’s and youth choir is a process or vehicle for feelings of well-being, connection to identity and the transmission of culture to community.

Well-Being

Choir members and their families are continually getting to know each other and these relationships will endure each year as jarjum grow, as friendships deepen and as family connections become clearer through cultural awareness. This research has discovered similar findings of well-being in jarjum to the evidence of Sun & Buys’ (2013) research with Indigenous adults and community singing. Sun & Buys discovered that participants gain
empowerment to connect to their own culture where singing fosters sustainable relationships through community singing.

The jarjum were excited and interested to take part in this research ‘with them’ and ‘about them’ and to have ‘their voices heard’ because they want to share their enthusiasm for learning culture and language through song. 100% of jarjum in this choir, ‘like’ choir and it makes them ‘happy’. There are many reasons why it makes them happy and every response is different and has been dependent on the situation.

Jacob (17+) feels the formation of choir around him, he expresses this as ‘love’, ‘like’ and the good feelings that come through family connection.

| Candace: | Jacob, these kids that you’ve known for years, every time you see them, how do you feel? |
| Jacob: | Well, seeing all my cousins (Jacob refers to me as aunty and all the kids in choir as cousins – this is a cultural respect that he has for community) and that stuff, it makes me feel so happy, I get to muck around, be me and I don’t really get to see them much when I’m living in ………, but when I’m down here (Jacob refers to the Gold Coast) there’s so much love and like… love and I feel that, that family connection with them, it’s so good. |
| Candace: | The kids in choir make you feel like family? |
| Jacob: | The kids in choir make me feel like family. Everyone is just like family in choir, we’re just linked in all together and with our singing we make everyone else link in like family as well. |

(Jacob, interview, 30 October 2016)

Choir rehearsals are designed to be ‘fun’, and the jarjum state that they are, however performance situations can be stressful for both the jarjum and me. There are so many unknown variables when performing. This small amount of stress is evident in the ‘before you perform’ data set from Survey #2 Choir Participation. This survey was completed by 11 of 38 participants in the week prior to and of 17th – 31st August and was designed to determine the emotional state of participants at choir. It was split into categories to
establish: how participants felt before they came to choir, how participants felt at choir,
how participants felt about singing in Aboriginal language and how participants felt after
choir.

![Graph showing emotional responses of participants before coming to choir]

Figure 23: Responses to "Before you come to choir".

‘Worried’ is a key word that choir jarjum use. It signals to me that they might be scared, the
situation feels uncomfortable or they don’t understand what is happening. ‘Sad’ is another
word, however it is usually in the context that ‘I am sad because the choir or performance is
over or finished’ and ‘I am sad to be leaving’. The jarjum have never told me that they are
‘not happy’ or ‘unhappy’.

I always ask each jarjum child ‘how they are today?’ and ‘how was school?’ when they arrive
to choir rehearsal or performance. I am aware that it is important to know the mindset of
the child and the group before we begin. Additionally an awareness of the younger jarjum 5-
7 year olds, who need emotional support from the older 15+ jarjum, needs to be taken into
consideration each week. This often comes in the form of holding hands and giving
knowledge to younger jarjum of who is looking after them or who will assist or stand beside
them when they are worried.
Jarjum are generally happy to come to choir rehearsal and they ‘like’ it. The responses of 11 participants in the ‘before you come to choir’ (Figure 24) data set indicate that this is the case. 100% responded that they feel ‘OK’, ‘Happy’, ‘Really Happy’ or ‘Fantastic’ before coming to choir for the questions: ‘How do you feel about coming to choir rehearsal?’ and ‘When I am in the car to come to choir I feel?’ Additionally it is evident that they ‘like’ choir in the way that all of the jarjum respond to me and each other when they arrive, and for the duration of choir.

Jarjum also responded with 100% positivity to the question: ‘When I see people at choir I feel?’ and from observation this is also evident. They hug me and each other when they arrive, smile at each other upon greeting and immediately sit beside friends and relatives to chat. Sophia (8-10) looks forward to telling me about her week every time we catch up and Tyler’s (8-10) hugs are almost a tackle they are so big. I notice that the jarjum arrive and are pleased or happy to be at choir. When they are not, I will ask and it is always a response that has nothing to do with choir. But in these few instances I will observe that these same jarjum leave happier than they came. At the very least their peers make them feel better.

I like to go to choir because I get to meet new people, I learn new things about my culture and songs. We learn songs and dances to the songs, and stories about our culture. Some parts of songs are in English and some songs are in Aboriginal – Yugambeh, we tell story in Yugambeh language.

(Ciarn, interview, 15 October, 2016)

Isobella (14-16), Chloe (14-16), Juliette (11-13) and Kiara (11-13) have a relationship that is made up of sisters, first and third cousins. These girls talk and laugh together socially about everything. Ciarn (8-10) and Morgan (8-10) look forward to seeing their cousin Violet (5-7) each week at rehearsal, as some weeks they wouldn’t see her if it wasn’t for choir.

Bilin (8-10), Balin (8-10), Baden (8-10) and Tyler (8-10) enjoy each other’s company. Distant family relationships exist in this choir and the known connection makes people happy to see each other and get to know each other.
I have met people that I am related to that I didn’t know existed and now I’ve become friends with them. I have met people that are very outgoing and some that aren’t and it’s good to know them all and get to know other people.

(Baden, interview, 16 October 2016)

Coming to choir is relaxing for me. I look forward to working with my community each week and evidently the jarjum do too. Balin (8-10) says, ‘my favourite day of the week is Friday because I get to go to choir’.

![Figure 24: Responses to "When choir is over".](image)

The data set ‘when choir is over’ (Figure 25) reveals that jarjum feel ‘happy’, ‘really happy’ or ‘fantastic’ to have found their singing voice during choir and that choir and singing helps them to feel good once they have finished singing. Singing with others also makes them feel ‘happy’, ‘really happy’ or ‘fantastic’ and other choir members make them feel this way as well. However some participants expressed sadness when choir is over. Balin (8-10), Dylan
(8-10), Bailey (11-13) and Kieeshah (8-10) said this was because choir rehearsal was over and they had to go home, therefore this made them ‘sad’.

Occasionally I need to cancel choir. Parents have shared with me that their jarjum are upset when this happens. Pinjarra (5-7) was devastated when he found out that I had to cancel a rehearsal that fell on his birthday due to a work commitment. His family needed to check with me that choir truly wasn’t able to be on because they couldn’t believe how upset he was. He wanted to share his birthday with the choir because it feels good at choir and he loves to sing. Consequently we celebrated it the following week.

When the jarjum leave choir they are happy to go, but sometimes it is with sadness because the euphoric feeling that comes with participating in an activity that you enjoy is over. Jarjum express this as sadness. To counteract sadness, we always say nyanyahbu (see you around) as a group. There is also no rush to be out the door; people still chat and jarjum run around with each other. They hug, say thank you and goodbye even though they have already said goodbye and we all progressively leave.

![Figure 25: Responses to "Singing at choir".](image-url)

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Didgeridoo orchestra for boys and men occurs at the same time as both choirs; eight boys have the option to participate in either group. The boys that sing have told me that they choose to sing because they enjoy it and singing Yugambeh language songs makes them happy.

In the data set ‘singing at choir’ (figure 26) some of these jarjum have prior experience of choir as they sing in their school choir. Some do not. The three jarjum that responded with *singing on their own makes them feel worried or not happy* have not previously participated in a choir and there are other jarjum that have also not participated in a school or community choir. For these jarjum this experience is new and daunting; the research demonstrates that they are happiest singing in a group where they can determine how their voice works in their own time. Morgan (8-10) understands this feeling and explains why she now helps others and how she feels about singing in choir.

> I meet new people and I get to make new friends with people who are shy. Like when ….. came and straight away we became friends because I asked my mum to sit with her… I feel okay, I get really nervous if I’m standing by myself, but it feels good to have choir with me because I’m not by myself. I feel most comfortable next to Violet because she’s my cousin. I wouldn’t sing at all without choir. I’m too scared to try out for my school choir, Miss Candace isn’t scary like my school choir teacher and she makes it fun.

(Morgan, interview, 15 October 2016)

But sometimes the jarjum, irrespective of their age, can’t express why choir feels ‘good’. They understand that it does and are satisfied with this response because ‘good’ is how singing makes them feel; this is exampled in responses by Kyeisha (14-16), Yilarra (14-16), Lowanna (8-10), Michael (8-10) and Pinjarra (5-7).

| Candace: How do you feel about singing in an Aboriginal choir? |
| All 5 say: Good! |
| Kyeisha: Fantastic! (then all children agree fantastic), nervous? |
| Candace: What exactly makes you say good and fantastic? What sorts of things? |
(silence) Does anyone have an answer? (they all look to the oldest child Kyeisha) It doesn’t always have to be the oldest sister. Do you know what? You might not actually know why singing, singing in an Aboriginal children’s choir makes you feel good or fantastic, that’s OK, that’s actually the answer in itself:
‘That singing in an Aboriginal children’s choir makes you feel ‘good’ and ‘fantastic’ and that’s OK’ (All five nod that they agree).

(Wula bora session, 10 August 2016)

Survey #3, Performing Friday 29th July 2016, Queensland Training Awards Performance was completed by 19 of 38 participants after the performance and Survey #3 Performing Friday 26th and Saturday 27th August 2016, Gold Coast Show Performances was completed by 11 of 38 participants after the performances.

This survey was designed for participants to express their thoughts on singing in choir, singing in front of an audience and sharing culture with others. Survey #3 Performing provided four main response areas in which participants were initially asked to rate on the picture chart: how they felt before performing and after performing, if they liked sharing Aboriginal songs with other people and finally if they liked singing these songs. Each question was then followed by a written response to the question What makes you say that?

The responses to these questions are listed in Tables 1 – 6. Participants respond with a variety of words that can be determined to mean that they have received a positive physiological experience such as ‘fun’, ‘good’, ‘like’, ‘enjoy’, ‘exciting’ and ‘proud’.

Performing is stressful and performing before an audience that you do not know can be intimidating. Jarjum express this to me through the word ‘worried’. The members of choir always have the choice to perform and if they don’t want to at the moment of performance, then they don’t, although it is rare that a choir member will not perform. I often need to speak to individuals to allay their specific worry. As a group the jarjum and I always discuss
every new situation, what the performance venue looks like and who the audience are before every performance. This is enough to elevate stress for most of the jarjum. Others feel better because their parents always watch or are nearby and others don’t feel better until they start singing.

Figure 26: Jamaica (11-13), Louella (8-10).

Figure 27: Rasheed (8-10).

Figure 28: Candace Kruger, Marijah (5-7).

Figure 29: Myora (17+), Marijah (5-7).
Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 demonstrate the positivity that comes from performing for *jarjum*. This is reflected in Rasheed’s (8-10) response to *How did you feel before performing?* I’m worried, because I’m nervous and shy, I don’t know the people. And how did you feel after performing? I feel fantastic, *I feel a lot better because it is Aboriginal singing*. And the Tables demonstrate that there is positivity around sharing song material. Louella (8-10) says, ‘It is awesome to share songs’ and Marijah (5-7) responds that, ‘It makes me happy’ when she shares songs.

**Table 1: Queensland Training Awards, Survey #3 Performing, responses to Question 1.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QLD Training Awards</th>
<th>QUESTION 1:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants were asked to respond to the question:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>How did you feel before performing tonight?</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 of 19 participants responded that they felt either:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>😊 Fantastic 😊 Really Happy or 😊 Happy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Before** performing at the QLD Training Awards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Response to question “What makes you say that”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isobella</td>
<td>14-16</td>
<td><em>I was in a good mood</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td><em>Because everybody stares at me</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob</td>
<td>17+</td>
<td><em>Candy and the choir are my second family</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloe</td>
<td>14-16</td>
<td><em>I enjoy sharing my language with others</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juliette</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td><em>My friends and family are there</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violet</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td><em>Because I like being with Ciarn and Morgan (my cousins in choir)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilin</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td><em>I like singing</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td><em>It is exciting</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td><em>Because I am with my friends</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethan</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td><em>It is fun and thrilling</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciarn</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td><em>Well it’s not every day you get to perform</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td><em>I am with my family and friends</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louella</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td><em>Because we’re really happy with it</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijah</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td><em>I like performing</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 of 19 participants responded that they felt either:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>😊</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>😥</th>
<th>Worried</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Before** performing at the QLD Training Awards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Response to question “What makes you say that”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lily</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td><em>Because I was nervous</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miah</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td><em>Because I’m just getting over my phobia, which is really good</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasheed</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td><em>Because I’m nervous and shy, I don’t know the people</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Gold Coast Show, Survey #3 Performing, responses to Question 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Response to question “What makes you say that”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dylan</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>I felt really excited and really glad to come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>I love singing and we were singing in front of a big audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kieeshah</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>Because I really like choir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balin</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>Because I feel good today and I am singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiara</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>I had a good day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miah</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>I am a bit nervous, but also excited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lily</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>I was nervous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>Nervous, but singing in front of others makes me feel better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>I like singing songs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 of 11 participants responded that they felt:

してください 介係前表演 at the Gold Coast Show.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Response to question “What makes you say that”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lily</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>Because I was nervous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Queensland Training Awards, Survey #3 Performing, responses to Question 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Response to question “What makes you say that”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isobella</td>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>I love choir. It makes me feel great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>Because everyone was clapping for us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob</td>
<td>17+</td>
<td>It always keeps me calm when performing and it helps my disability and nerves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lily</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>Because I did it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miah</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>I was very proud of myself (Miah sang a solo in this performance)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We did it
Because I think I did a good job
We got to play in front of 400 people
Well I think we did a great job
It was fun
I feel a lot better, because it’s Aboriginal singing
Because I smiled the whole time and sang beautifully
Because it feels good and you’re proud of yourself
I like singing

Table 4: Gold Coast Show, Survey #3 Performing, responses to Question 2.

**GOLD COAST SHOW**

**QUESTION 2:**
Participants were asked to respond to the question:
How did you feel after performing tonight?

All 11 participants responded that they felt either:

😊 Fantastic 😊 Really Happy 😊 Happy 😞 OK

After performing at the Gold Coast Show.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Response to question “What makes you say that”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dylan</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>I felt like I achieved something (goal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>Because it was over, but it was fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kieeshah</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>Because I feel proud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balin</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>Because you have sung for so many people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiara</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>Because I feel like I did a good job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyler</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>Because I like singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miah</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>I get nervous, but after the performance I am happy, I am proud that I did it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lily</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>Because I did it and it was fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>Still great, but sad because it is over and I want to do it again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>I’m happy to know that I’m Aboriginal and I have friends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Queensland Training Awards, Survey #3 Performing, responses to Question 4.

**QLD Training Awards**

**QUESTION 4:**
Participants were given a list of repertoire songs that were sung at the performance and were asked to respond to the question:
Do you like singing these songs?

17 of 19 participants responded with ‘YES’ and the 2 participants that responded with ‘SOMETIMES’ cited tiredness after performing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Response to question “What makes you say that”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

99
I like singing
Because they are all fun
My favourite was Ngai Jigala (shake it off) last week, that was lots of fun!
It makes me happy
It is awesome to share songs
Well in particular the songs are so cool to sing!
Because I sing them a lot, every practice I do, I get better

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Response to question “What makes you say that”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharnece</td>
<td>14-16</td>
<td><em>I like singing</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciarn</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td><em>Because they are all fun</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td><em>My favourite was Ngai Jigala (shake it off) last week, that was lots of fun!</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijah</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td><em>It makes me happy</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louella</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td><em>It is awesome to share songs</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miah</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td><em>Well in particular the songs are so cool to sing!</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td><em>Because I sing them a lot, every practice I do, I get better</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Gold Coast Show, Survey #3 Performing, responses to Question 4.

Clift’s (2011) research into positive well-being through choral participation across a number of choral societies in England revealed similar findings as those reported by jarjum: Choir ‘makes me feel proud’, ‘choir makes me feel good’ and ‘I like singing’.

Jarjum were additionally able to describe the positive psychological benefits to themselves through performing in a choir in wula bora focus group sessions. Kyeisha (14-16) and her siblings expressed how performing was ‘good’ for them as a family.

Candace: So at that performance we sang Aboriginal songs.

What did you like about that performance?

Pinjarra: Good.

Candace: It was good?

Pinjarra: It was good on the stage we done, on Saturday night,(Pinjarra has trouble
with his words and Kyeisha assists) Kyeisha for Pinjarra: We were singing together. (Pinjarra nods)

Candace: You guys are a family, so how did it make you feel doing something together as a family?
Pinjarra: Good.
Kyeisha: Weird.
Candace: It felt weird? Why did it feel weird?
Lowanna: Usually we kill each other, (Yilarra jokingly touches Lowanna on the arm) don’t touch me sister (sometimes they argue) but we did this as a family.
Kyeisha: Just meeting people and you know if they like you, bringing you in.

(Wula bora session, 10 August 2016)

Bailey (11-13) also felt that performing feels ‘good’. By making this statement Bailey articulates the emotional response that performing affords him and reveals the positive psychological effect given to him through his participation in choir.

Candace: How do you feel about sharing Aboriginal language and song in front of audiences?
Bailey: It feels good because I’m sharing my culture with other people so they can learn language and really get into the culture of the first Australians.
Candace: And how do you feel about knowing it?
Bailey: It feels really good because I know the people who were here before me and the English we came, and ‘cause I’m learning about my culture and my people.
Candace: Inside, does it make you feel anything in particular?
Bailey: It feels good.
Candace: Just feels good.
Bailey: Yep.
Candace: You can’t describe what ‘good’ means?
Bailey: (shakes head no)
Candace: Just good?
Baden (11-13) gets ‘enjoyment’ out of the places that we go and the people that we meet. His comments assist us to understand that by sharing language and culture with others Baden begins to gain an awareness of building capacity in community.

Candace: Do you like being in choir?
Baden: Yeh.
Candace: Why?
Baden: Because you get to go to all the performances like the Gold Coast Show and meet all really famous people. (Baden was star struck by football idols at a recent NITV League Nations performance where the choir had performed)
Candace: Was there a favourite performance for you that we have done?
Baden: Not really because they’ve all been pretty good.

Juliette (11-13) expresses that she ‘enjoys’ performing because she draws her ‘pleasure’ from the audience, she ‘feels’ that the choir are a family when we perform and performing is ‘exciting’. Juliette’s comments are a combination of Bailey’s and Baden’s. She draws on the positive physiological effects afforded to her through performing and her understanding that she is sharing culture with others.

Isobella: Yep and do you enjoy performing in the choir? Do you feel like it makes you closer in more of a community sense?
Juliette: Oh, it definitely makes it more of a community and I love performing because everyone’s just like family.
Isobella: And how did you feel about today’s performance? Were you excited? Were you nervous? Was it fun to try something new?
Juliette: Excited, it was great to try something new, well we’ve done it before (referring to the other two times the choir have sung live on ABC radio) and it was pretty fun.

(participant self-directed interviews, 22 July 2016)

The responses from individual jarjum from interviews, wula bora sessions, interviews and survey response overwhelmingly indicate that choir promotes well-being and provides positive psychological benefits.

In addition to well-being, Isobella (14-16) and Chloe (14-16) begin to establish that choir contributes to an increase in confidence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Isobella:</th>
<th>So Chloe, how did you feel after today’s performance?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chloe:</td>
<td>I felt really good, I felt really good about being able to express my language to everyone on the Gold Coast, so it felt really good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isobella:</td>
<td>Do you enjoy singing in the choir? Do you get nervous? Or is it just really good to sing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloe:</td>
<td>It’s really good to sing, it’s really good to be around so many people who share the same passion for their culture and I’ve met so many extended cousins I didn’t know existed, so it’s good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isobella:</td>
<td>And how do you think the choir benefitted you, maybe in confidence, or in singing, anything like that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloe:</td>
<td>Definitely confidence, when I first started I was a nervous wreck, but it’s gotten so much better since then, even public speaking as well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(participant self-directed interviews, 22 July 2016)

Jacob (17+) also enjoys performing because it makes him feel ‘happy’ to sing in language and he ‘likes’ to share his culture. Jacob’s connection to language gives him pride in himself and his community and he is able to articulate the positive effects learning language in choir has afforded him.
**Candace:** How does choir make you feel?

**Jacob:** Honestly, choir makes me feel so happy, to just sing, like sing my language, like I’ve participated in ceremonies but I’ve always wanted to have that knowledge of speaking it and singing it out and honestly I can’t believe that I can actually do it, I can sing my language. Thanks for your help.

**Candace:** How does it make you feel inside?

**Jacob:** It makes me feel so happy, it makes me feel... oh... I don’t (Jacob is overcome with emotion and cannot find the words to describe how he feels).

**Candace:** Is it proud?

**Jacob:** I’m proud of myself for doing it and I’m proud of my culture!

**Candace:** Do you tell other people?

**Jacob:** Yes, I tell other people. Like when we sing, when we go on TV, I make everyone watch it because I am just so proud of myself and I’m proud of everyone else, all 6 of us.

(Jacob, interview, 30 October 2016)

In addition to the vast amount of evidence on well-being that choir provides to *jarjum*, Chloe, Jacob and Isobella have begun to demonstrate a higher level of understanding when performing, a level beyond that of ‘feels good’ and ‘enjoyment’. They have noticed and measured an increase and called it ‘confidence’ and ‘pride’. Bandura’s (1995) research on efficacy reveals that ‘successful efficacy... raises people’s beliefs in their capabilities... and encourages individuals to measure their success in terms of self-improvement’.

Chloe, Jacob and Isobella have revealed that choir provides the right environment for increased self-efficacy in *jarjum*. Therefore the research evidence on the theme Well-Being confirms that Participation in an urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s and youth Aboriginal language choir promotes positive well-being and fosters self-efficacy in participants.
Identity and Aboriginality

No Aboriginal group anywhere in Australia ever surrendered its title to or its rights over the country it traditionally had responsibility for.

(Best & Barlow, 1997, p. 41)

‘Who am I?’ and Winjigahl wahlu (Where you from?) are important questions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The answers to these questions connect us to land, lore and kinship ties. To care for this jagun means to keep alive people’s link to the jagun. Unfortunately for some this has been difficult to do. Singing in Yugambeh language in choir is just one way that jarjum can connect to culture, and the data set below (Figure 31) reveals that learning language in choir has a positive effect on Indigenous jarjum.

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**Figure 30: Responses to "Singing in Language at choir".**

The choir attracts urban youth and their families who would like to know the answers to questions about their identity. As a result the following gaureimen from the jarjum are how they have found some answers to these questions through participation in their urban Indigenous children’s and youth choir, a place where they feel happiest to learn.
When *Mununjali jarjum*, Kyeisha (14-16), Yilarra (14-16), Lowanna (8-10), Michael (8-10) and Pinjarra (5-7) began choir they told me that they didn’t know anything, meaning they had no prior knowledge of cultural heritage. What they did know was their tribal name and a family connection through an apical ancestor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kyeisha:</th>
<th>To find out what we are (tribal and language ties) and to be, um, appreciated of who we are (Aboriginal), what we stand for and ‘cause it’s our land and people should respect us and treat us like everyone else...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lowanna:</td>
<td>Yeah. (Yilarra also nods yes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>It’s a bit of a good thing isn’t it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>Do you feel proud?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyeisha:</td>
<td>Yes. (all agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>You do feel proud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>I’ve got a question for just this family group. So how do you feel about singing <em>(Candace sings)</em> <em>Wehga Wehga mullil, Jubbum Jubbum ngyu</em>, which was passed down by Aunty Moira Coolwell, who you now know was a family line for you guys, how does it feel?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinjarra:</td>
<td>Good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowanna:</td>
<td>Cool. (all laugh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowanna:</td>
<td>Coolwell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td><em>(laughing)</em> It felt Coolwell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>Do you know when we sing the different stories, different kids in the choir that come down those family lines go, ‘that’s my family connection’, so when we sing <em>Wehga Wehga mullil</em>, until I met you guys...<em>(Kyeisha excitedly interrupts)</em> Are we the only ones?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>Yes, so ‘till I met you guys, I knew of Aunty Moira Coolwell, but I hadn’t met her. The song was passed down to the Museum and we sang it, but it wasn’t until I met you guys that I went, ‘there’s the real connection to a family group of one of the songs that we’re singing’ so it made me feel proud for you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kyeisha gets very tearful and indicates her emotions by drawing a line with her right fingernail down the inside of her left forearm.

_Candace:_ What does that mean?

_Kyeisha:_ Like the bloodstream that’s being passed down and we got them.

_Candace:_ So the bloodline, you feel the bloodline?

_Kyeisha:_ Yeah. (nods and wipes a tear from her eye)

(Wula bora session, 10 August 2016)

Kyeisha’s evidence that she feels the ‘bloodstream’ from the songs that have connected her to her cultural identity provides confirmatory evidence, along similar lines to Joseph’s (2009) evidence from his work with the Jabulani Choir, that cultural choir builds identity for participants within cultural groups. Furthermore Kyeisha’s evidence confirms that Aboriginal children’s and youth choir connects participants to years of past knowledge and establishes a place to learn and build identity within culture.

In Louella (8-10) and Jamaica’s (11-13) _wula bora_ session the girls were curious about culture and took this session as an opportunity to ask me to share with them my own knowledge of culture.

_Louella:_ Choir helps, because we have people from our centre, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait centre (at school) and they ask us what tribes and everything comes from and they ask us what tribe we come from and that’s helped us to tell what tribe we come from and the language that we speak sometimes.

_Candace:_ When you learn stories and culture and songs, how do you think that it helps you know who you are?

_Jamaica:_ It helps me, by the language that you teach us and the dances that we can do, like to show everyone.

_Louella:_ (Choir) It helps me, to make everybody comfortable that we’re not the only people on Earth that have dark skin and to be able to share our culture with other people.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candace:</th>
<th>Thinking to the future, singing in choir, is it something that you know that you want to keep doing for a while?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica:</td>
<td>(very quick response) Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louella:</td>
<td>Um yeah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>When you’re singing these songs, how do you feel about your culture then?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica:</td>
<td>I feel great, I feel like I belong in the actual tribe and the culture and it makes me feel, so when I get up on that stage and sing, and I get up and I sing again, it makes me feel proud. Like what Louella said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>It makes you feel proud of your culture and who you are?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louella:</td>
<td>Yeah! They’re the same thing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>Chungarra – pelican dusty moorhen (words to the song) is one of our songs and the National Anthem in language is one of our important songs. Our Grannies saw the boats on Stradbroke Island when they were little, when you know those songs are from your elders, you know from Grandpa’s people, how does that make you feel?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louella:</td>
<td>To be able to share that culture, by them, I think it makes us feel great, like happy, to be able to embrace that feeling, inside you. It’s respect and knowledge and all that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>So you can embrace the feeling of their knowledge, let’s see if we can word that. When you sing the songs that are Grandad’s culture, you can embrace the respect and the knowledge. What else?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louella:</td>
<td>Brought down to us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>It’s yours though as well, because it’s the culture of the land that you’re living on, so it’s yours as well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Wula bora session, 7 September 2016)

Whilst Louella and Jamaica used their session to have some questions answered, they also utilised their session to demonstrate their understanding of how choir helps them to know more about their identity and be comfortable with who they are.

In particular Louella’s comment that ‘choir helps her to make everybody comfortable that we’re not the only people on Earth that have dark skin’, expresses her desire for others to
accept her identity. Louella’s thoughts about choir are along similar lines to Gohier’s (2002) findings that cultural choirs create an awareness of different cultures. Jamaica additionally articulates that choir helps her to know more about her identity and therefore she actually belongs to a tribe.

Baden (8-10) also expressed his understanding about cultural revitalisation and the part that he plays in learning and sharing culture and language. But in particular he shares that learning language through choir makes him feel special.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candace:</th>
<th>What has it been like to learn your Aboriginal language?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baden:</td>
<td>It has been pretty cool because I can say words in a different language and it (Yugambeh) belongs to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>How does it make you feel that this language belongs to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baden:</td>
<td>It makes me feel special (points to his chest) because this language belongs to me and my family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>Learning language makes you feel special and belongs to your family, how does this make you feel inside?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baden:</td>
<td>It makes me feel happy, but also sort of excited because it was almost gone and now we are bringing it back to life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>How does choir make you feel?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baden:</td>
<td>It makes me feel connected to my culture, the language of my family and I’m getting to learn all about it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Baden, interview, 16 October 2016)

Louella, Jamaica and Baden’s evidence has similar lines to Yunupingu’s (2002) identification that through the preservation of performance traditions Indigenous people maintain lore, a sense of self with the world. These jarjum have identified that through choir they gain community and cultural connection and the feeling of family and belonging to tribe. Their evidence confirms that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s and youth choir assists to create an awareness of Aboriginal culture in community. Choir also helps participants know their own identity which gives them a sense of belonging and creates a safe environment for them to express their identity.
In Bailey’s (10-12) and Dylan’s (8-10) wula bora session they share how they connect to the stories of the land they have always lived on and how choir makes them understand their Aboriginality.

| Candace: | When you stand up in front of an audience and perform, how does that make you feel? |
| Dylan:   | I feel pretty good because I’m showing my Aboriginality. |
| Candace: | Aboriginality, that’s a really big word, but it’s a good word isn’t it? What do you think that means, ‘Aboriginality’? |
| Dylan:   | I think it means ‘sharing your culture’ and like singing for other people, so they can learn more words and learn Aboriginal language, that’s what I think it means. |
| Candace: | Bailey, what do you think Aboriginality means? |
| Bailey:  | (unsure) I think it means Aboriginal people learning their language, culture and what they use. |
| Candace: | What about I said it’s about – my Aboriginality is about who I am? And where I’m placed, does that make more sense to you? |
| Bailey:  | Yeah. (Dylan also nods) |
| Candace: | Dylan, yeah? |
| Dylan:   | Yeah, although doesn’t it mean like about your culture? |
| Candace: | Yes, about you, who you are. |
| Dylan:   | Yeah. |
| Bailey:  | Yes I would recommend it to all Aboriginal people because it links into your culture and you can really learn what you are and who you are. |

(Wula bora session, 14 September 2016)

Dylan’s use of the word ‘Aboriginality’ expresses his desire to understand who he is. Although the boys understand that choir affords them this opportunity to learn who they are it is Bailey’s statement that he would recommend choir to other Aboriginal people that confirms that through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s and youth choir, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can benefit by learning about their cultural identity.
Isobella (14-16) in a public address reflected on her positionality of Aboriginal identity and the factors that have contributed to these thoughts.

I joined the Yugambeh Museum Youth Choir in 2014, when it first began. Over my two years in the choir, I have watched it evolve and grow and have found a new sense of community and family within the choir. Also, for each song our choir master tells us the story of our land that is the inspiration for the song. Learning about these stories has improved my appreciation for the land around me and compelled me to feel a sense of connectedness within my own mob.

Learning these words from my own language has given me a sense of pride and connection to my culture. The youth choir has connected me to my family, the Kombumerri people of the Gold Coast in the Yugambeh language region. Upon joining the choir I met three girls similar to my age who shared my mother’s maiden name. They are my third cousins and without this choir I might not have met them. The youth choir has also allowed me to meet people from different families and regions. I’ve met Mununjali people from Beaudesert, Qandamooka people from North Stradbroke, Gamilaraay people from northern NSW and people from my own family the Kombumerri people of the Gold Coast.

I believe that the Yugambeh Youth Choir has helped me on my own journey of cultural understanding and sense of community and identity. It is with pride that I say I am Kombumerri.

(Isobella, participant reflection, 7 July 2016)

In Juliette’s (11-13) reflection she is able to express her satisfaction by her new found cultural connection and in her last comment she demonstrates that through singing she has made a deeper connection to her culture. Juliette recognises that choir is a process and through this process it teaches, revives, and passes language and culture on.

I sing in the Yugambeh Youth Choir because my parents want me to so I have a better
connection with my culture. I am part of the choir so I can learn the Yugambeh language, the stories of our country and build a deeper connection with my family. Singing at many different events for different occasions brings me a feeling of satisfaction knowing that I and the rest of the choir are reviving culture. Over the past two years I have learnt in great depth about my elders and the stories they have passed down generation to generation.

(Juliette, participant reflection, 16 October 2016)

Isobella positions that choir makes her appreciate the land, connects her to her own mob family and other Aboriginal mobs and assists with her cultural journey. Juliette also expresses that choir assists her to build a deeper connection with her family. They both unwittingly express Baloy’s (2011) thoughts that a language revitalisation project will foster ties between land and language and empower traditional owners to be socially and culturally connected to their own community. Therefore Isobella’s and Juliette’s evidence confirms that through Aboriginal children’s and youth choir individuals and families identify and connect to the land, language and each other, and as a group establish community empowerment and pride.

‘... knowledge and practices are not lost, they just go inside for a time and return to surface consciousness when the time is right.’

Colleen Hattersley (Best, et al., 2005, p. 13)

The Yugambeh Youth Choir aims to provide cultural knowledge and practice to jarjum in community. The jarjum have evidenced that in addition to providing culture they understand that choir affords them the opportunity to explore their identity and Aboriginality. Therefore the research evidence on the theme Identity and Aboriginality confirms that an urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s and youth choir can significantly contribute to the discovery, knowledge and expression of identity and Aboriginality for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children and youth and creates community within the urban environment.
Socio-Cultural Capital

The *Yugambeh* Youth Choir is an arts activity in community. At the most rudimentary level this arts activity engages, teaches and passes on Aboriginal language and culture through song. Jeannotte (2003) reported that the arts have a positive effect on social cohesion; they promote intercultural understanding, empower communities, regenerate neighbourhoods, encourage active communities and celebrate local culture and tradition.

The *jarjums* of the *Yugambeh* Youth Choir perform in community at least twice a month. These performances have been for smaller community gatherings, corporate functions, community shows and television. The reach of this choir is wide and varied. These *jarjum* have met federal, state and local politicians, sporting stars and celebrities and performing is always a choice. The members of the choir and their parents participate when they want to and when they are available. Not every member performs at every performance; it is always optional, but at least 20 - 30 members perform regularly.

![Figure 31: Yugambeh Youth Choir, live on NITV League Nations Grand Final Show 2016.](image)

Ruhanen (2012) found that Indigenous groups who performed at Indigenous festivals increased their socio-cultural benefits as they became recognised components of their community development. Independently, during the time of this research *jarjum* from the
choir were individually invited to perform within the local community. Aric, Isobella and Sophia performed the National Anthem in Yugambeh language as soloists for the community. Aric, Isobella and Dylan performed a Welcome to country and/or Acknowledge of country. Morgan, Ciarn and Ethan developed a performance piece for their school community and several jarjum have expressed that they have been asked questions about their culture at school. The Yugambeh Youth Choir jarjum are becoming recognised components of their community development who celebrate local culture and promote intercultural understanding.

Jacob (17+) understands the notion of promoting intercultural understanding. He surmises that he will be happy when schools in the area learn about the language and sing the songs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candace:</th>
<th>So we tried our first days of Christmas and it was all giggly and funny, but you’ve taken a song that belongs to the world and put our own spin and language on it, so what did you think of that?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jacob:</td>
<td>I think it’s quite awesome... oh (he gets excited) it’s like, I can’t explain, it’s just pretty awesome how we just like (he does some animal actions that we do with the song) and with that number counting and stuff (Jacob refers to singing the 12 days of Christmas counting the numbers in Yugambeh language) that will probably be used in schools around our Mob area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace:</td>
<td>Our region, yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob:</td>
<td>It’s gonna be helpful for the future and showing people like, showing that there’s actually a language out there, it’s amazing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Jacob, interview, 30 October 2016)

Morgan (8-10) transmits culture with others at school, she creates performances, including her S-Factor performance and she shares that she celebrates local culture and tradition at school. Through choir Morgan has learnt how to perform and share knowledge, song, language and tradition. She additionally shares that her happiness in sharing is transmitted to others and consequently Morgan is building cultural capital in community.
I am doing a performance at school in the S-Factor (school competition). I’m doing a traditional eagle dance with my brother and sister; we are doing a story about two eagles. I move my arms to show me catching fish and flying away. Then I begin to flap my wings. I use this dance to tell stories like I would in choir.

I like sharing culture... I take Mum’s possum skins to school, rattle sticks, boomerangs, I chose to take them. I showed and did the ‘night bird dreaming story’ to my class, I don’t think I did well, but my class said they have never heard something more wonderful and I think I should be happy for what I have because this song is about not being selfish. I sing songs and do dances to my friends and class. I’m making them feel happy and giving them a different culture that they didn’t know.

(Morgan, interview, 15 October 2016)

Recently we have two new choir members. These are not through their parents seeking a community connection, but rather through the recommendation of choir parents and jarjum actively seeking others in community to join them. The jarjum are recruiting other Indigenous jarjum that they know to strengthen social cohesion. Jamaica (11-13) likes the idea of new people joining choir ‘because the more people join the bigger the choir gets’. She tells me that she ‘lets others know that she is in choir’ and she happily assists the building of the community because she ‘wants to meet more Aboriginal kids in my area’.

In Survey #3 Performing, several jarjum were able to reason how they share culture with others and how members of the community can continue to pass knowledge on. When participants were asked if they ‘liked sharing Aboriginal songs with others’, all participants answered ‘Yes’ and shared their reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isobella</td>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>I like teaching my culture to other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabella</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>Because it makes us more visible, I can show them what the land used to be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob</td>
<td>17+</td>
<td>So people can know who we really are and belong to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloe</td>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>I get a chance to teach others about my language and share my culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I like my culture and I like sharing it and teaching to others

Because we’re sharing our culture

If other people learn language, the language will survive

Because they learn stuff too

It helps you and others learn more about the Yugambeh language

Because you can share Aboriginal language

Because I can share our language, because sometimes they can tell other people

I really like sharing my culture with other people

Because I can share my culture with other people

I love to share language and songs in front of others

Because other people aren’t Aboriginal

Overwhelmingly jarjum understand that when they perform they become teachers of culture. For them this is through the tradition of singing traditional and contemporary song in traditional language. They will become the yarrabilgin songmen and yarrabilgingunn songwomen of their community. Baden (8-10) understands this:

I’m sharing the lost language with other people who don’t know the language and I’m telling them stories that they wouldn’t hear anywhere else.

(Baden, interview, 16 October 2016)

Along similar lines to Johnsons’ (2012) claim that projects that look at language and identity are highly charged with cultural capital, The Yugambeh Youth Choir, as a collective group, has become teachers of Yugambeh language and culture in our region. Through participation, engagement and trust in what they do jarjum concomitantly provide community with local knowledge when they perform.

Aric (17+) already understands this. He states that he needs to: ‘have an interest in my culture... because we perform culture. I... need to know what I am singing about, I have a responsibility to know what it is I am sharing with others’. And he demonstrates a deeper
understanding that through choir performativity ‘this choir teaches community about the local Aboriginal culture... to share with others’.

Chloe (14-16) has a similar understanding and reflects that sometimes choir performs at ceremony which is aimed to engage people of any culture.

**During NAIDOC week, the choir performed at one of the ceremonies held at the Burleigh RSL. The theme for this year was song lines and I was asked to speak about what song lines has meant to me, particularly after joining the choir when it started in 2014. The ceremony aimed to engage people not only of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, but of any culture. It was a big turn out with many people of many different cultures attending, which filled me with pride to express the significance of song lines in my life and my culture.**

(Chloe, participant reflection, 19 July 2016)

Therefore the research evidence on the theme Socio-Cultural Capital supports the claim that participation in an urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s and youth choir assists children and youth to build a community, to support each other through this community and to become invested in each other’s lives. Choir additionally provides a secure and safe learning environment where social and emotional well-being needs are met, and choir delivers positive physiological benefits to its participants.
Final Thoughts

The evidence gathered from *jarjum* confirms that participation in an urban Aboriginal language children’s and youth choir facilitates well-being, improves self-efficacy, helps the discovery of identity and Aboriginality, assists with heritage language acquisition and affords a community the opportunity to develop social and cultural capital.

The following chapter presents a model based on the way of working and knowing and the methodology of process when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander *jarjum* in a community language activation choir. It also concludes the research and offers suggestions for future work with *jarjum* and community.
Chapter Six: *Yarrabil Girrebbah Yugambeh* (to sing *Yugambeh* language alive)

The purpose of this research was to demonstrate that Aboriginal language could be acquired by *jarjum* through the medium of Aboriginal song. The research in this thesis was first highlighted in chapter three through the discussion of methodological approach, chapter four by way of outlining the process of *ngulli nabai yarrabil*, and chapter five in teasing out the emerging benefits of choir.

As a result of the research outcomes I put forward here the claim that: *The process of learning Aboriginal language through Aboriginal song in an urban Aboriginal children’s and youth choir provides the benefits of youth leadership, language acquisition, well-being, connection to identity and Aboriginality and socio-cultural capital to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and youth.* Effectively the *Yugambeh* Youth Choir, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children’s and youth choir, where *Yugambeh* Aboriginal language and song is the medium, makes a place in urban community to *yarrabil girrebbah Yugambeh* (sing the language alive) and brings Aboriginal language and Aboriginal culture into the lives of urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and youth in a way that is meaningful and expressive.

Drawing on the analysis of data presented in chapters four and five, and in line with the emphasis on Indigenous methodologies, I have developed an iconographic model of a *framework for exploring and engaging Indigenous community with Indigenous language and culture through song*. This framework provides an alternate way for Indigenous community to approach learning Indigenous language. Through performativity, community can be culturally responsive, can become culturally aware and can *nyeumba* the land’s language. This framework has the potential to be effective in community because it has familial ties to land, language and knowledge systems, *junnebeineubani nyeumba junnebeineubani* (family teaching family). In what follows I outline each component of the framework, before presenting concluding thoughts on the *Yugambeh* choir song project.
Wula bora are the venues where the community come together to learn language and culture through song. *Wula bora ngulli yarrabil yugambeh girrebba* (in our gathering places we sing language alive). For the *Yugambeh Youth Choir* these locations are a centrally located school auditorium in Southport, Gold Coast and in Beenleigh, Logan the *Yugambeh Museum*. The *wula bora* must be accessible to participants and within *jagun* to ensure connection to land. Ideally the Gold Coast venue would be more like the Logan venue where participants are physically surrounded by history and culture; however where this is not possible a venue in a centrally located place on *jagun* where community members can gather will suffice.
NYEUMBA (TEACH)

Nyeumba means the culture is transmitted by the yarrabilgin or yarrabilgingunn. In this project, the double boomerang is quite literally representative of my actions as researcher and teacher, but it is also open to an understanding of teaching in which the yarrabilgingunn learns alongside jarjum. Yarrabilgingunn talga warrun gaureima jagun (the woman beats time with the double boomerang and shares the stories of the land).

GAUREIMA (STORIES)

Yugambeh is the language of the land which comes alive through the gaureima and articulates the meaning of the land. Yugambeh language is transmitted and taught through the gaureima passed down by elders and is carried through the people. Yugambeh people maintain their living culture through the gaureima of the jagun. Bujera goromgunn yauun yauun goromgunn gaureiman - the morning and evening star story was passed down by my Aunty Lottie Levinge and is depicted in this image. In this project, the choir is a part of the connections represented here. The choir yarrabil girrebbah gaureima (sing the stories alive) and learn the culture and language of their people to pass knowledge on.
The **jarjum** are connected to **jagun**. They are represented by the middle line. **Jarjum** are protected by their elders and ancestors. Elders are represented by the outside line. **Jarjum** are taught by the **yarrabilgingunn** and this is represented by the inside line and can be noted as the line where the **warrun** cross over. My position as teacher or aunty of the group affords me the opportunity to consult the elders who support **jarjum** on one side. These elders then support me with language, song, cultural lessons and research. Together on either side of the **jarjum** we assist and watch **jarjum** grow with pride and confidence as they learn the lessons of **Yugambeh**.

The **Framework for exploring and engaging Indigenous community with Indigenous language and culture through song** is a culturally responsive pedagogical approach which will hopefully assist and call for greater application of learning Indigenous culture and language through song. In any Indigenous region which is urbanised, the community needs to feel invested in their culture to teach, transmit and pass on the land’s language and culture. Choir is one way that Indigenous knowledge and language can adapt to its circumstances in order to survive and can assist **jarjum** in communities to become invested in their own cultural language and heritage.

The framework assists to guide local Indigenous speakers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous linguists, songmen, songwomen, musicologists, Indigenous families and Indigenous community members with an approach in which they can assist their community to engage with teaching and learning Indigenous culture through song. The four components of this framework: the place, the teacher, the stories/songs and the children/youth could be reasonably established in any Indigenous community and through choir Indigenous children and youth could potentially sing many Indigenous languages alive.
The stories and language of the land do not belong to a single person; they belong to everyone in their Indigenous community. Through choir jarjum can become stakeholders in community who learn, transmit and sing their culture alive. Whilst this framework defines one way of working with urban Indigenous jarjum, its application could also be trialed in rural Indigenous communities.

**Applications**

Through my endeavours to sing Yugambeh language alive, I hope that others might feel inspired to do the same with their own heritage language. In my own community I recognise that I have only begun to reach some of the jarjum who live in the Yugambeh language region because the region extends into the Gold Coast, Logan and Scenic Rim localities of Queensland and I acknowledge the community members who would like to but are unable to get to a choir. I therefore propose that this framework could begin a conversation with schools as either a feeder program for choir which assists the building of socio-cultural capital in community or as a partnership with school Indigenous immersion language programs, thereby assisting and reaching many jarjum.

**Limitations**

This research was limited by time and access to participants. Jarjum participate when they want to, therefore not all participants engaged in every aspect of the research. Although the jarjum gave quite insightful interviews and were happy to discuss their thoughts and feelings, there was little time to complete surveys before or after each performance opportunity because the venues were not a favourable environment for research or participants were tired. Also the research has not been able to gauge the exact amount of language learnt through participation in choir. This research was limited by how language is taught through song rather than through structured process and the amount of knowledge already known by participants.
Concluding Thoughts

Knowledge of Indigenous language and identity for Australian Indigenous children and youth is vital; however there has been very little research into the effects afforded to Australian Indigenous children through living culture practice on language and identity. Subsequently there is very little development of Indigenous methodology for Indigenous cultural groups to model living culture practice on.

This research provides academic knowledge in this relatively unstudied area, and contributes knowledge on how participation in a children’s and youth urban Indigenous community choir supports the development of youth leadership, language acquisition, well-being (self-efficacy), identity and Aboriginality in urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. The research additionally demonstrated how a language choir can safeguard language and culture whilst building socio-cultural capital in Indigenous community. This study supports the need for Indigenous communities to engage their children and youth in living culture practice because it assists with the learning of Indigenous language and culture, and addresses Indigenous identity issues in children and youth.
References


[Accessed September 2016].


Available at: http://www.ictmusic.org/group/applied-ethnomusicology
[Accessed 9 6 2016].


Appendices

Appendix A: Yugambeh Language Region Map.
Thank you for coming to choir!

To help me to get to know you, please complete this survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| GENDER  
(Male/Female) |  |

Do you know what your family's Aboriginal Tribe is called?  
If yes, can you name it?  
If yes, who taught you?  

Do you know what the Aboriginal Language region that you live in is called?  
If yes, can you name it?  
If yes, can you describe the area (borders) that makes up this language region?  
If yes, who taught you?  

Do you know any other cultural information?  
(list) i.e., animal names, place names, words, traditional sites, cultural ceremony, food sources, etc.  
If no, do you think anyone in your family does?
Appendix C: Survey #2 Choir Participation.

Survey #2 Choir Participation

Thank you for coming to choir! To help me to understand your experience, please complete this questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>AGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GENDER</td>
<td>(Male/Female)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEFORE YOU COME TO CHOIR</th>
<th>FANTASTIC</th>
<th>REALLY HAPPY</th>
<th>HAPPY</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>NOT HAPPY</th>
<th>WORRIED</th>
<th>SAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel about coming to choir rehearsal?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I am getting in the car to come to choir I feel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I see people at choir I feel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| SINGING AT CHOIR | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------|-------------|------|---|-----------|---------|-----|
| Warming up my voice makes me feel? | | | | | | | |
| Singing on my own makes me feel? | | | | | | | |
| Singing in a group makes me feel? | | | | | | | |
| Rehearsing songs makes me feel? | | | | | | | |
| Learning songs makes me feel? | | | | | | | |

| SINGING IN LANGUAGE AT CHOIR | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|------|---|-----------|---------|-----|
| Learning language words makes me feel? | | | | | | | |
| Singing language words makes me feel? | | | | | | | |
| Singing language songs makes me feel? | | | | | | | |

| WHEN CHOIR IS OVER | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------|------|---|-----------|---------|-----|
| Having my own singing voice makes me feel? | | | | | | | |
| When I have finished singing I feel? | | | | | | | |
| Singing with others makes me feel? | | | | | | | |
| How did other people at choir make you feel? | | | | | | | |
| How did you feel when choir rehearsal was over? | | | | | | | |
### Appendix D: Survey#3Performing

**Survey#3Performing**

Thank you for performing at the Gold Coast Show this weekend!

To help me understand how you felt, please complete this survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you want to get into the car to go to the performance?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did you feel <strong>before</strong> performing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What makes you say that?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did you feel <strong>after</strong> performing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What makes you say that?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you like <strong>sharing</strong> Aboriginal songs with other people?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What makes you say that?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the GC Show we sang these songs:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Chungarra</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Borobi</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- National Anthem in language</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please circle ‘YES’ if you understand what the song and language words mean or ‘NO’ if you don’t.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you like <strong>singing</strong> these songs?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What makes you say that?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E: Participant Information Sheet.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Who is conducting the research

Chief Investigators:
Associate Professor Sarah Baker
School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science

Dr Catherine Grant
Queensland Conservatorium

Student Researcher:
Candace Kruger

Why is the research being conducted?

_in the Bora Ring: Yugambeh Language and Song Project_ will explore the benefits of community singing and support the practice of living culture and identity.

Participants will begin their journey of cultural understanding and the project will explore the extent to which urban Aboriginal youth can be empowered through language acquisition within song.

The student researcher Candace Kruger is a Griffith University Master of Arts Research student and _in the Bora Ring: Yugambeh Language and Song Project_ is the work being investigated for this degree.

What participants will be asked to do

During choir participants will be filmed. This helps the researchers to see and hear what participants are learning and listen to what they say or how they sing. Filming of rehearsals is for the purpose of this project only. Filming of performances may be used by the Yugambeh Museum, as per Choir Membership consent.

Every second week before choir rehearsal, for 5-10 minutes, participants will begin a survey (someone will be able to assist with the questions if help is required) and then complete the survey, for 5-10 minutes, by the end of the same rehearsal.

Once on a weekend in August and/or once during the school holidays in September, we would like the participant to participate in an interview on their own or with others, this is a choice. This will take place at your house or another place where the parent/guardian decide is best and will only last for up to a half hour.

Participants might also like to write or draw about their experience in choir and can discuss with the researchers how they would like to do this. They might like to blog, journal, or create. The researchers can assist with how participants might go about doing this.

Participants are free to decide if they would like to complete surveys, be interviewed, write or draw. They are also able to decide how and when they would like to engage with the project.

Some questions the participants might be asked are:

- How did you feel about choir today?
- Singing in a group makes me feel?
- Singing language words makes me feel?

The basis by which participants will be selected or screened

Participants must already be members of the Yugambeh Museum Youth Choir.

The expected benefits of the research

Yugambeh Language and Song Project participants will connect and collaborate with others from their own cultural background through the act of group singing. Participants may be empowered to connect to their own culture...
through increased cultural confidence and begin their own journey of language acquisition.

Risks to participants
There are minimal risks associated with choral activities; however these include voice protection, care in basic physical movement/motion and working with children. To minimise these risks this project is conducted by a trained choral educator who will ensure the safe practices of vocal protection (using correct singing techniques and access to water), use of correct posture (when moving and singing) and the safety of all children through teacher directed activities and behaviour management strategies.

Participant confidentiality
The data (surveys, interviews, audio/visual and creative work) will be stored in re-identified format, meaning that participants will be identified by their real name in storage and the data will be stored in the Griffith University storage hub, as per Griffith University policy for a minimum period of 5 years.

However, in final publication, participants can choose to be identified by an alternate name, meaning that participants can choose to be identified by their real name or opt to be assigned an alternate name for identification in any publication.

Participation is voluntary
Participation is voluntary. Participation in the Yugambeh Language in Song Project does not affect membership in the Yugambeh Museum Youth Choir and participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Questions / further information
Please feel free to make contact should you require additional information about the project.

Associate Professor Sarah Baker      Dr Catherine Grant      Candace Kruger

Feedback to you
Participants, Parents/Guardians have the option to be informed of participant’s individual results. The overall findings of this project will be published in a one page report and will be available to participants and caregivers.

The ethical conduct of this research
Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. If potential participants have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the research project they should contact the Manager, Research Ethics.

This research project has the Griffith University Ethics Reference Number: 2016/32.

Privacy Statement – disclosure
“The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your identified personal information. As outlined elsewhere in this information sheet, your identified personal information may appear in the publications/reports arising from this research. This is occurring with your consent. Any additional personal information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded, except where you have consented otherwise. For further information consult the University’s Privacy Plan.”
Appendix F: Consent Form.

CONSENT FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Team</th>
<th>Chief Investigators:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Associate Professor Sarah Baker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr Catherine Grant</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Queensland Conservatorium</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Student Researcher:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Candace Kruger</td>
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By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET and in particular have noted that:

- I understand that my child’s involvement in this research will include (attendance at weekly choir rehearsals, surveys and interviews and possibly writing or drawing);
- I have had any questions answered to my satisfaction;
- I understand the risks involved to my child;
- I understand that there will be no direct fee to my child for participation in this research;
- I understand that my child’s participation in this research is voluntary (and in no way does participation impact on my child’s membership to choir);
- I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the research team;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw my child at any time, without explanation or penalty;
- I understand that I can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project.

I agree for my child to take part in the study: In the Bora Ring: Yugambeh Language and Song Project and agree for my child to take part in: (please tick as many as you would like your child to be involved in)

- An individual interview
- A group interview
- A survey
- Be video recorded during choir rehearsal
- Be video recorded during interviews
- Writing (blog, journal)
- Drawing / Creating

☐ I agree to my child participating in the project.

☐ I agree to my child’s real name to be used in any outputs for this research.

☐ I do not agree for my child’s real name to be used, instead I understand that an alternate name for my child will be used in any outputs for this research.

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Signature</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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Appendix G: Participant Information Sheet for Children and Youth.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET for CHILDREN and YOUTH
This is an invitation for you to participate in a study conducted by the researchers at Griffith University. The research is called In the Bora Ring: Yugambeh Language and Song Project.

The purpose of the research is to investigate the benefits that you receive when learning Yugambeh language though singing in a choir.

These are the people from the university involved in this study

<table>
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WHAT WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO DO

During choir you will be filmed. This helps the researchers to see and hear what you are learning and listen to what you say or how you sing. Filming of rehearsals is for the purpose of this project only. Filming of performances may be used by the Yugambeh Museum, because you are a choir member. Every second week before choir rehearsal, for 5-10 minutes, we would like you to begin a survey (someone will be able to assist you with the questions if you need help) and then complete the survey, for 5-10 minutes, at the end of the same rehearsal.

Once on a weekend in August and/or once during the school holidays in September, we would like you to participate in an interview on your own or with others, this is a choice. This will take place at your house or another place where your parent/guardian decide is best and will only last for up to a half hour.

Some questions you might be asked are:

- How did you feel about choir today?
- Singing in a group makes me feel?
- Singing language words makes me feel?

If you would also like to write or draw about your experience in choir, you can discuss with the researchers how you would like to do this and how often you might like to do this. You might like to blog, journal, or create. The researchers can assist you with how you might go about doing this.

You can choose to be involved in all of the research, including the surveys, interviews and writing/drawing or only a part of the research, it is up to you.

Your safety is important to us. We do not see any possible risks to you by participating in this project.

Your involvement in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw your participation from the study at any time.

This research will assist the researchers to discover if learning a language though singing is helpful to you in anyway.

If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research has been conducted, you can tell your parents/guardians and you can contact the supervisors that are listed at the top.

Thank you for your interest in this study.
Appendix H: Consent Form for Children and Youth.

CONSENT FORM for CHILDREN and YOUTH

<table>
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<td>Student Researcher:</td>
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<td>Candace Kruger</td>
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I have read and understood the PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET for CHILDREN and YOUTH.

I agree to take part in the study: In the Bora Ring: Yugambeh Language and Song Project and would like to take part in: (please tick as many as you would like to be involved in)

- [ ] An individual interview
- [ ] A group interview
- [ ] A survey
- [ ] Be video recorded during choir rehearsal
- [ ] Be video recorded during interviews
- [ ] Writing (blog, journal)
- [ ] Drawing / Creating

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and I can decide not to continue at any time and that this does not affect my membership in choir.

I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the research team.

- [ ] I agree to participate in the project.
- [ ] I agree to my real name to be used in this research.
- [ ] I do not agree to my real name to be used in this research. I want to use a different name.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>Signature</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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Appendix I: *Wehga Mullil* (Calling the Children Home).

**Calling the Children Home**

Voice: 

\[\text{weh ga weh ga mul lil weh gah weh gah mul il}\]

\[\text{jub bum jub bum ngy u jub bum jub-bum ngy u}\]