Teaching Indigenous Australian Studies in Contemporary Settings: Are Pre-service Teachers Prepared?

Submitted by

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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.

Signed: _______________________

Mitchell Rom

Date: 27 February 2017
ABSTRACT

This research study critically explores the attitudes of Griffith University (Griffith) pre-service teachers in relation to teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages in education contexts. Educational policy from the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) - Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (National Teaching Standards), in particular AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 provides the framework for this study. At a graduate level, this standard requires graduates to “Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages” (AITSL, 2011, p. 11). Research participants were Bachelor of Education students who completed an Indigenous education course 3030EDN Studies of Indigenous Australia (3030EDN) prior to participation in this study.

In order to explore this research topic, a case study methodology was employed. Within the case study, data collection methods included an on-line survey of 82 pre-service teachers, followed by extended interviews with four pre-service teachers, who identified themselves as being willing to participate in a yarning session. Moreover, an analysis of the course materials from 3030EDN as well as AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 was undertaken. The collated data then formed the basis for a critical analysis framed by Indigenous standpoint theory (Nakata, 2007a).

I worked as a sessional tutor for 3030EDN at Griffith during Semester 1, 2016. During this experience, I noticed that students displayed mixed attitudes towards various aspects of the course. Specifically, some students stated they were hesitant about teaching Indigenous studies, while other students appeared to be more confident towards learning and teaching in this space. My observation of this diversity of attitudes amongst students and a desire to understand the values and beliefs that underpinned their perspectives, influenced me to pursue this research.

Findings of this study indicate that the majority of survey participants perceived they were able to meet the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. In contrast to this, no participant interviewed considered that they could meet the standard. The range of perceptions amongst students highlights the need for further work to be done to better prepare pre-service teachers to teach Indigenous content at the required professional level.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

3030EDN: Final year Indigenous Education Course in B. Ed. (Primary) at Griffith University

AC: Australian Curriculum

ACARA: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

AITSL: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

IST: Indigenous Standpoint Theory

MCEETYA: Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
LIST OF DEFINITIONS

Indigenous knowledges/studies/content: Indigenous histories, cultures and languages

Indigenous education: Training of pre-service teachers and in-service teacher competency, pedagogy and cultural awareness

Indigenous teaching: Teaching Indigenous students or Indigenous subject matter

Indigenous: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples or First nation peoples of Australia

Non-Indigenous: Peoples who have arrived in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander lands whether “arrival occurred over 200 years ago or more recently” (Phillips, 2011, p. xiv)
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Research Project

The learning and teaching of Indigenous studies is a recent addition to the Australian curriculum agenda (Ma Rhea, Anderson, & Atkinson, 2012; ACARA, 2016). The historical absence of Indigenous knowledges in curriculum materials stems from the destructive effects of Eurocentric schooling practices and from the previously adopted view that Indigenous knowledges were unimportant or inferior to non-Indigenous or western knowledges (Nakata, 2002; Foley, 2003; Kerwin, 2011; Phillips, 2011). This study examines the issues associated with the teaching of Indigenous studies and the extent to which pre-service teachers perceive they are prepared to teach this discipline at the required national level.

In 2011, AITSL introduced the National Teaching Standards across Australia (AITSL, 2011). As such, both initial teacher education programs and in-service teachers are now regulated by these Professional Standards (AITSL, 2011). Pre-service teachers are expected to meet the Graduate Teacher standard upon the conclusion of their pre-service teacher training.

According to White, Ma Rhea, Anderson and Atkinson (2013) the standards outline the need for Australian teachers to have “demonstrable professional expertise in both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies” (p. 5). There are two Professional Standards which relate to Indigenous education. The first standard (Focus Area 1.4) is primarily concerned with teaching Indigenous students (AITSL, 2011). The second standard (Focus Area 2.4) focuses on the relationship between teachers and Indigenous histories, cultures and languages (AITSL, 2011; Ma Rhea et al., 2012).

The tables below outline the Indigenous National Teaching Standards for Australian teachers. These two standards delineate the desired capabilities of teachers at four levels: Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished, and Lead Teacher. Both of these tables were extracted from AITSL’s online website.
Table 1.1: Focus Area 1.4

Focus Area 1.4: Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (AITSL, 2014a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Highly Accomplished</th>
<th>Lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.</td>
<td>Design and implement effective teaching strategies that are responsive to the local community and cultural setting, linguistic background and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.</td>
<td>Provide advice and support colleagues in the implementation of effective teaching strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students using knowledge of and support from community representatives.</td>
<td>Develop teaching programs that support equitable and ongoing participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by engaging in collaborative relationships with community representatives and parents/carers.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

This focus area requires graduates to “Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds” (AITSL, 2011, p. 9).

Table 1.2 Focus Area 2.4

Focus Area 2.4: Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (AITSL, 2014a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Highly Accomplished</th>
<th>Lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.</td>
<td>Provide opportunities for students to develop understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.</td>
<td>Support colleagues with providing opportunities for students to develop understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.</td>
<td>Lead initiatives to assist colleagues with opportunities for students to develop understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This focus area requires graduates to “Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages” (AITSL, 2011, p. 11). This specific standard (AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4) strongly underpinned this research study and its design. Key components of the standard include graduate teachers to
have a ‘broad’ knowledge, understanding and respect for Indigenous ‘histories’, ‘cultures’ and ‘languages’. These elements were used to provide the framework for the research data collection. For example, the yarning sessions required pre-service teachers to discuss whether they perceived they could meet these particular elements. In this way, the research design was developed to gauge the perceptions of pre-service teachers regarding their capacity to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

1.2 Rationale

Recent policy shifts have focused more intensely on Indigenous issues and affairs and on the implementation of Indigenous studies in the education system (MCEETYA, 2008; AITSL, 2011; Closing the Gap Prime Minister’s Report, 2016). There is now a level of professional responsibility for graduate teachers to teach Indigenous studies in their professional practice (AITSL, 2011). Given the recent introduction of the National Teaching Standards, in particular AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, it is important to examine this standard against the attitudes and perspectives of pre-service teachers. Through doing so, a more comprehensive understanding of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 and how to better prepare pre-service teachers for meeting this standard may be uncovered.

1.3 Purpose

The aim of this study was to provide insight into pre-service teachers’ perceptions on teaching Indigenous content at the AITSL graduate level. To identify these perceptions, this study examined students’ attitudes and perspectives in relation to:

1. Learning and teaching Indigenous studies;
2. AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4; and
3. Pre-service teachers’ individual experiences with 3030EDN.

1.4 Research Question

The main research question for this study was: What are the perceptions of pre-service teachers in relation to their preparedness to meet the requirements of the AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 following the completion of 3030EDN?
Two further research sub-questions were:

To what extent do pre-service teachers feel prepared to teach Indigenous studies?

To what extent do pre-service teachers feel 3030EDN has prepared them to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research study will contribute to the growing body of Indigenous education research, specifically research which focuses on educational policy. Malezer and Sim (2002) state that “Graduate teachers can be the major change agents necessary in developing a cultural understanding of Indigenous Australians” (p. 10). This notion of graduates becoming ‘change agents’ for educational purposes is only possible if they perceive they are prepared to work effectively in the Indigenised space. This study is necessary in order to analyse the perceptions of pre-service teachers and evaluate whether this cohort can positively contribute to further Indigenous education progression.

Research in relation to the teaching of Indigenous knowledges in the education system is continually emerging in academia. Since 2000, there have been a number of articles published and studies conducted which have examined the teaching of Indigenous studies as well as the teaching of Indigenous students (Harslett, Harrison, Godfrey, Partington, & Richer, 2000; MarRhea et al., 2012; McClure, 2008; Beveridge & Hinde McLeod, 2009; Santoro, Reid, Crawford, & Simpson, 2011; Moreton-Robinson, Singh, Kolopenuk, & Robinson, 2012; Booth, 2014). This research, however, has primarily focused on the views of in-service Australian teachers.

While research on teacher preparation in relation to AITSL Focus Area 2.4 is growing, the voices of pre-service teachers in this domain are not as prevalent and are generally absent from academic discussion. This supports the validity and overall importance of this study which seeks to provide a platform for the missing voices of pre-service teachers in critical Indigenous education research. It is hoped that the findings and key messages from this study will inform university policy as well as the planned and enacted curriculum in relation to pre-service Indigenous education courses throughout Australia. It will also suggest possible directions for further research.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Four areas within the field of pre-service teacher preparation have been identified as relevant to this study. These areas are: the absence of Indigenous knowledges in the education system; Indigenous disparity and Indigenising academia; modern Indigenous education policy; and teacher issues with Indigenous studies. In this review, the analysis reveals a key gap in the available research in relation to pre-service teachers.

2.2 The Absence of Indigenous Knowledges in the Education System

The historic conflict between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples since European occupation in 1788 has contributed to western knowledges being prioritised over Indigenous knowledges (Foley, 2003) in the education system. The term ‘Indigenous knowledge’ is

“…understood to be the traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples. In Australia, a common misunderstanding is that this equates Indigenous knowledge to ‘past’ knowledge, when in fact Indigenous people view their knowledge as continuing (M. Nakata, Byrne, V. Nakata & Gardiner, 2005, p. 7).

In relation to colonised nations such as Australia, Plater, Mooney-Somers and Lander (2015) contend that Indigenous disadvantage finds its origins in historic oppression. Since 1788, “Indigenous people have experienced displacement, been the targets of genocidal policies and practices, had families destroyed through the forcible removal of children, and continue to face the stresses of living in a racist world that systematically devalues Indigenous culture” (Dudgeon, Wright, Paradies, Garvey, & Walker, 2010, p. 38). This position of Australian history continues to varying degrees but was strongly debated through Prime Minister Howard’s era. The coalition at the time supported a ‘white blindfold’ position of the History Wars while leading Australian academics were accused of holding a ‘black armband’ view (Curthoys, 2006). There is consensus amongst prominent researchers that Australia has a dark history of oppression, violence, and dispossession of Indigenous people from their families, knowledge, culture and land since European occupation (Read, 1981; Clark, 1993; Manne, 2001; Nakata, 2002; Foley, 2003; Macintyre, 2003; Moreton-Robinson, 2004; Reynolds, 2006; Broome, 2010).
Another serious effect of European colonisation has been that the dominant, western culture has been imposed on multiple aspects of Indigenous peoples’ lives (Perso, 2012; Nakata, 2007a; Kerwin, 2011). The marginalisation of Indigenous peoples, culture and issues has also permeated formal education systems (White et al., 2013). Since the late eighteenth century, European peoples “failed to recognize or appreciate that Indigenous Australians maintained complex formal education systems” (Townsend-Cross, 2011, p. 69). As a result of this, Indigenous knowledges have been “wrested from the traditional teachers, parents, grandparents, aunties, and uncles and … attempts were made to assimilate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children through western-styled education” (White et al., 2013).

This cultural subjugation is evidenced by the strong decline of Aboriginal languages. At the time of colonisation, they were approximately 250 languages that were spoken by Aboriginal people (Walsh, 1993; Rigney, 2003). However, a recent study on Aboriginal languages found that “160 languages are extinct, seventy are under threat and only twenty are likely to survive” (Walsh, 1993, p. 2). Walsh (1993) contends that this decline was due to the discourse that Aboriginal languages were seen as inferior and of less value than English. This discourse also influenced past governmental policy and affected the education system (Walsh, 1993; Rigney 2003).

An example of the historical absence of Indigenous knowledges in the education system, was the prohibition of traditional languages on Aboriginal missions (Kerwin, 2011). Language learning on missions solely focused on teaching English to Aboriginal children (Kerwin, 2011). This position is reinforced by Aunty Margaret Iselin, a Quandamooka (Moreton Bay) elder and chairperson of the Minjerribah Moorgumpin Aboriginal Elders-in-Council Corporation. Iselin lived at the Myora Aboriginal Mission on Minjerribah (Stradbroke Island) and was taught her traditional language (Jandai) by Quandamooka elders (Straddie Island News, 2012). She stated:

My early days were spent with two old grannies who decided to teach us the language when I was five years old… In the middle of 1935 the government sent out notices to the people to tell the grannies on Myora Mission that the language had to be stopped... We were told that if we were caught speaking the language we would be sent away to the Barambah Mission (Iselin as cited in Straddie Island News, 2012, p. 19).

As a result of this edict, English was the only language spoken at the Myora Aboriginal Mission (Straddie Island News, 2012). Rigney (2003) adds to this discussion and stated that Indigenous
people are often “victims of past settler cultural and linguistic eradication strategies sanctioned and enacted by previous government systems” (p. 80). Rigney (2003) also stated that the idea of reversing language loss is a highly challenging task. It is important to note that despite past governmental policies, Iselin, together with Lyn Shipway, Sandra Delaney, Richard Day, Marlene Kerr, Fay Mabb and Colleen Hattersley revived and documented the Jandai language for educational and schooling purposes (Straddie Island News, 2012). Their action not only supports Aboriginal cultural progression with regards to language and its place in contemporary education, but it is also “testimony to the courage and strength of Indigenous peoples that their languages have survived” (Rigney, 2003, p. 80). It is it clear that the practice of Aboriginal language was historically controlled by government authorities (Rigney, 2003; Kerwin, 2011) and this negatively affected the learning of languages in traditional and contemporary education systems.

According to Hauser, Howlett and Matthews (2009), the western education system is one of the most debilitating effects of European occupation which continues to marginalise Indigenous knowledges and people. Moreover, Rigney (2001) submits that historically, the Australian consciousness has failed to recognise the varied and positive contributions of Indigenous people. This position is further reinforced by Kerwin (2011) who stated that “Aboriginal Australians pride themselves on being Aboriginal, however Aboriginal epistemology and ontology are never considered as true methodologies within a dominant learning environment” (p. 249). The exclusion of Indigenous knowledges in mainstream schooling finds its roots in the complex historical fabric of Australia which at times imposed the concept of racial inferiority towards Indigenous people. Kerwin (2011) stated that until the 1970s, no positive representations of Aboriginal people, culture and language were presented in Australian society, and that Indigenous knowledge was “invisible and no inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives was given within the Australian educational curriculum” (p. 251). This discourse has also affected the Australian university sector and the training of pre-service teachers in Indigenous courses (Phillips, 2011).

A key element to this discussion is the relevance of ‘race theory’. According to Townsend-Cross (2011), at the time of colonisation, Indigenous people were regarded as “primitive savages” (p. 69) who were destined to eventually become extinct. Moreton-Robinson (2004) elaborates on this and stated that since the 1700s, Indigenous people have often been viewed as the ‘other’, and this provided a basis for exclusion. She submits that “since the
Enlightenment, the dominant epistemological position within the Western world has been the white Cartesian male subject whose disembodied way of knowing has been positioned in opposition to white women’s and Indigenous people’s production of knowledge” (Moreton-Robinson, 2004, p. 76). Foley (2003) reinforces this and stated that British colonisation “brought a new form of ‘science’ to the Australian landscape. It was an approach to knowledge that was Anglo-European male dominated...” (p. 44). This is further supported by Ma Rhea and Russell (2012) who state that the “existence of extensive knowledge held by Aboriginal peoples about this land and its people was all but invisible to the British colonists” (p. 18). Carnes (2015) adds to this and submits that “Historically Aboriginal people have always been educated, just differently and for different purposes to the western world which has a focus on education as a means of gaining employment and contributing economically to the wider society” (p. 3). As a result, western knowledges have historically been viewed as superior to Indigenous knowledges (Ma Rhea & Russell, 2012; Ma Rhea, 2015; Nakata, 2002; Foley, 2003).

Accordingly, Australia’s past and current education system has been traditionally underpinned by dominant western cultural ideologies (Apple, 1993; Gunstone, 2009; Townsend-Cross, 2011; Kerwin, 2011). The effect of this is that the inclusion of Indigenous knowledges in the education system has been a very slow and gradual progression which continues to face a myriad of challenges. This background provides an important historical context to the cultural tensions that have existed throughout Australian history and highlights the lack of credibility that has been attributed to Indigenous knowledges. This historical lack of inclusion of Indigenous knowledges in the education system has also contributed to Indigenous education disparity. However, it has also sparked recent educational shifts in the university landscape.

2.3 Indigenous Disparity and Indigenising Academia

Educational disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people remains an important issue in the education system (MCEETYA, 2008, AITSL, 2011; Closing the Gap Prime Minister’s Report, 2016). This disparity has been founded on past governmental and educational policies that contributed to a negative effect on participation rates and experiences of Indigenous people (Campbell, Kelly, & Harrison, 2012). Doyle and Hill (2008) contend that “poor Indigenous education outcomes…have been linked to the historical exclusion of Indigenous people from the Australian education system, both formally through past government policy and informally through the failure to deliver education services that meet
the needs of Indigenous students” (p. 7). An example of this was the ‘Exclusion on Demand’ policy which was introduced in 1902 and continued until the early 1970s in New South Wales. This specific policy operated to prevent thousands of Indigenous people from accessing the public education system (Townsend-Cross, 2011). The effect of this policy was that if any non-Indigenous parent objected to the enrolment of an Indigenous student at their child’s school, the school principal was authorised to exclude that student from attending school (Townsend-Cross, 2011). These past policies have produced intergenerational disadvantage for Indigenous people in relation to educational access and opportunity (Townsend-Cross, 2011).

Indigenous university participation has also been affected by the lack of equity and opportunity afforded to Indigenous people. Demosthenous (2012) stated that “although the first Australian university began operations in the mid-1800s, it was not until the advent of mass higher education in the 1970s that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were given access to higher education institutions” (p. 72). The Review of higher education access and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people report found that in 2010, Indigenous students made up only 1.4% of all enrolments in universities, despite the fact that Indigenous peoples comprised 2.2% of the Australian population (The Department of Innovation, Industry, Science, Research, Climate Change and Tertiary Education, 2012). It is clear that Indigenous people have been underrepresented as students in the university system (Universities Australia, 2014). Moreover, according to the United Nation’s State of the World’s Indigenous Peoples report, “Indigenous students have lower enrolment rates, higher dropout rates and poorer educational outcomes than non-indigenous people in the same countries” (Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2009, p. 130). This reinforces the under-representation and lack of educational outcomes for Indigenous students enrolled at universities on both a national and global scale.

Similarly, Indigenous people represent a small proportion of those in academia. The Australian universities benchmarking report, National Best Practice for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities noted that Indigenous researchers remain underrepresented in comparison to non-Indigenous researchers (Universities Australia, 2011). Mellor and Corrigan (2004) state that “up to the early 1980s our Indigenous communities had very few academic graduates to contribute to the development of us as a people and the nation as a whole” (p. 4). This demonstrates that Indigenous voices have been historically absent from academic dialogue, which has impacted the development of university curriculum (Nakata, 2002).
In relation to the incorporation of Indigenous knowledges at university, Nakata (2002) stated that until the 1980s, Indigenous knowledges were not present in the majority of academic disciplines. However, in recent times there has been a growing emphasis on the notion of ‘Indigenising the academy’ and as a result, the incorporation of Indigenous knowledges is now more common in the higher education sector (Nakata, 2002). Moreover, Nakata and Langton (2005) consider that since the 1990s, Indigenous knowledges have received international recognition as being legitimate and valuable. This concept of ‘Indigenising academia’ involves expressly incorporating an authentic Indigenous standpoint and seeks to ‘decolonise’ western influenced curriculum (McLaughlin & Whatman, 2007). The introduction of an Indigenous standpoint in academia is a relatively new concept and finds its origins in feminist ideology, as a similarly marginalised group (Nakata, 2002; Rigney as cited in S. Phillips, J. Phillips, Whatman, & McLaughlin, 2007). This prominent shift reflects political and social changes that have led to the recognition of cultural and social rights together with Indigenous issues. These progressive shifts in Australia’s formal education history have been the result of prolonged political and social justice activism by Indigenous people as well as by the formation of Indigenous advisory groups to guide and consult on educational issues and policy development (Townsend-Cross, 2011).

The move to incorporate Indigenous knowledges and Indigenous standpoints has led the development of Indigenous courses in university curriculum (S. Phillips, J. Phillips, Whatman, & McLaughlin, 2007). This progression has also affected pre-service teacher education programs. According to the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration (2004), the value of Indigenous knowledges was recognised by the former Department of Education, Science and Training in 2003. This department called for “all initial pre-service teacher education programs to promote as a mandatory competency in qualifying teachers an understanding of the diversity of students and their communities – most especially in relation to Indigenous students” (p. 1). As a result of this, university institutions began implementing mandatory Indigenous education courses for pre-service teachers (Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003a). Norman (2014) adds to this stating that “most Australian universities are currently in the process of developing institution-wide approaches to Indigenous Australian content in undergraduate curricula” (p. 42). In 2016, most Australian universities now include at least one compulsory Indigenous education course as part of their undergraduate program for training primary pre-service teachers (see Appendix A).
These university courses were intended to be, and still are, the “primary programs for educating both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in preparation for professional work and future engagement with Indigenous Australians, or for more general understanding of the knowledge, cultures, histories and contemporary concerns of Australia’s First People” (M. Nakata, V. Nakata, Keech & Bolt, 2012, p. 121). While such university courses are designed to be the primary programs for educating pre-service teachers about Indigenous education, the notion of ‘decolonising’ pedagogy may present complex issues for teachers. Sherwood, Keech, Keenan and Kelly (2011) state that “decolonisation is a process that requires the positioning of oneself in history and the recognition of ideas and assumptions that have informed one’s worldview” (p. 194). Elizabeth Mackinlay (2012) critically discussed her position as a non-Indigenous academic in relation to teaching Indigenous studies and the concept of ‘decolonising’ pedagogy through a reflective story. Mackinlay (2012) stated:

I became so caught up in defending my right to represent Indigenous people because of my own experiences with Indigenous peoples that I conveniently sidestepped the whiteness of that power and privilege. I forgot that the experiences of Indigenous people are not mine and that we experience colonisation differently — me as a coloniser. I became too comfortable and fell into a deep complacency that soon led to carelessness (p. 70).

This particular story highlights some of the many complexities and politics surrounding the implementation of Indigenous studies at a university level, specifically in relation to the notion of ‘decolonising’ pedagogy within Indigenous university courses.

2.4 Modern Indigenous Education Policy

In recent years, educational policy has sought to address Indigenous education disparity. In 2008, the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) published the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (Melbourne Declaration). This policy was agreed to by all education ministers. The document outlines current educational issues and lists a range of goals, commitments and strategies to achieve these aims (MCEETYA, 2008). The Melbourne Declaration focuses on Indigenous education issues. MCEETYA (2008) stated that “there are several areas in which Australian school education needs to make significant improvement. First, Australia has failed to improve educational outcomes for many Indigenous Australians and addressing this issue
must be a key priority over the next decade” (p. 6). This declaration was a response to the historical exclusion of Indigenous knowledges in the education system and past policies which sought to reinforce western cultural systems, values and ideologies.

The Melbourne Declaration also notes a level of accountability for past failures in relation to the education system and its damaging effects on Indigenous people. This is evident in the declaration which stated that “Australian governments commit to working with all school sectors to: –‘close the gap’ for young Indigenous Australians” (MCEETYA, 2008, p. 16). One of the key ideas in this policy is the incorporation of Indigenous cultures as an important part of Australian history and contemporary society (MCEETYA, 2008). This recognition and acknowledgement of Indigenous education disparity has affected the teaching profession. The education system is now shifting to be more inclusive and responsive to Indigenous knowledges.

The acknowledgement of these issues has led to further progress at both a national and state policy level. AITSL (2011) provides “national leadership for the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments in promoting excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership” (p. ii). AITSL (2011) seeks to improve the teaching profession so that the education system can develop and produce quality teachers. As such, the National Teaching Standards is a comprehensive list which acts as a benchmark to achieve these educational goals. The National Teaching Standards outline the expectations of Australian teachers’ professional knowledge and skills (AITSL, 2011). Specifically:

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers are a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality. They define the work of teachers and make explicit the elements of high-quality, effective teaching in 21st century schools that will improve educational outcomes for students. The Standards do this by providing a framework which makes clear the knowledge, practice and professional engagement required across teachers’ careers. They present a common understanding and language for discourse between teachers, teacher educators, teacher organisations, professional associations and the public (AITSL, 2011, p. 2).

The National Teaching Standards provide guidance on both the quality and expectations of graduate teachers and directly affect the training of pre-service teachers. This is because pre-service teacher programs are now regulated by the National Teaching Standards (Chigeza &
Whitehouse, 2014). There are two key AITSL standards which directly relate to Indigenous education as outlined in Chapter One (see Appendix B). These standards not only support the educational progression and shifting landscape of the education system, but they also place a considerable amount of professional expectation, responsibility and pressure on graduates in relation to teaching Indigenous content and Indigenous students.

Curriculum policy has also been influenced by the growing recognition of the role of Indigenous studies. After a change of federal government in 2007, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) replaced the National Curriculum Board. In May 2009, ACARA became responsible for developing a national school curriculum (Foundation to Year 12); a national assessment program; and a national data collection and reporting program (Parkinson, 2015; ACARA, 2016). The 2008 Melbourne Declaration and the 2009 Shape of the Australian Curriculum, assisted ACARA in this process of national curriculum development (Parkinson, 2015). Both ACARA and the Australian Curriculum (AC) place importance on the implementation of Indigenous studies as Cross-Curriculum priorities, labelled as ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures’ (ACARA, 2016). In terms of practicality, Cross-Curriculum priorities are designed to add depth to student learning in already established discipline areas (ACARA, 2016).

The AC's Cross-Curriculum priority section further states that these priorities aim to provide students with the:

- Tools and language to engage with and better understand their world at a range of levels. The priorities provide national, regional and global dimensions which will enrich the curriculum through development of considered and focused content that fits naturally within learning areas (ACARA, 2016, par. 1).

Within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures section, the AC (2016) states that the inclusion of Indigenous histories and cultures provides learning opportunities for all students to develop their knowledge and understanding of Indigenous culture. Through this, students will understand that “contemporary [Indigenous] communities are strong, resilient, rich and diverse” (ACARA, 2016, par. 2). Moreover, both ACARA and the AC acknowledge the educational disparity that continues to exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. In connection with this, the AC is working towards two goals. Firstly, for Indigenous students to be able to recognise that their cultures are being embedded into the curriculum. And
secondly, that this Cross-Curriculum priority is designed to ensure and promote reconciliation and respect for Indigenous cultures (ACARA, 2016).

On a state level, the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) highlights the importance of teaching Indigenous perspectives in schools. The QCAA (2015) states that they are “working to increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Queensland schools” (par. 3). This objective is reinforced by the Queensland Government’s Department of Education and Training: Indigenous Education sector. The in-service professional development program, Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools (EATSIPS), is a tool that assists educators to include Indigenous perspectives into the teaching and learning process (Queensland Department of Education and Training, 2015). The justification for the implementation of Indigenous perspectives in schools is to:

Build long lasting, meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student learning outcomes [and] give all students an understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional and contemporary cultures (Queensland Department of Education and Training, 2015, par. 2).

In appraising both Australia’s and Queensland’s policies on Indigenous education, it is clear that there has been a prominent shift in the direction of the education system. The current system seeks to acknowledge many aspects of Indigenous education. This system also outlines the need for teachers to be aware of Indigenous histories, cultures, languages and perspectives in order to enrich the learning experiences of all Australian students. However, while recent educational policy advocates for Indigenising the education process, current research suggests that teachers of Indigenous studies may in fact struggle with this discipline, due to a lack of content knowledge and pedagogical skills (Kerwin, 2011; Santoro et al., 2011; Moreton-Robinson et al., 2012; Ma Rhea et al., 2012; Booth, 2014; Bond, 2014).

2.5 Teacher Issues with Indigenous Studies

Teachers of Indigenous content are likely to face a myriad of unique and complex issues (Santoro et al., 2011; Ma Rhea et al., 2012; Bond, 2014). These issues stem from the historical lack of Indigenous knowledge appreciation, the knowledge deficit of Indigenous content and
Indigenous pedagogy, as well as the discourses of power in relation to Indigenous and non-Indigenous people which have permeated Australian history (Nakata, 2002; Moreton-Robinson, 2004; Moreton-Robinson et al., 2012; Booth, 2014; Bond, 2014). As a result, it is an ongoing challenge for teachers to overcome the reality that the education system has been:

Explicitly and implicitly a site of rejection of indigenous knowledge… [and] it has been used as a means of assimilating and integrating indigenous peoples into a 'national' society and identity at the cost of… indigenous identity and social practices (May & Aikman, 2003, p. 143).

The act of trying to reverse past policies and now shift the focus to incorporate Indigenous knowledges into the teaching and learning process may present a serious challenge for some teachers. Mackinlay and Barney (2010) stated that the discipline of Indigenous studies “addresses emotionally-difficult topics related to race, history, colonialism and our identities as Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians” (p. 91). This reinforces the complexity of this discipline and both the challenges and the importance of preparing pre-service teachers to work and teach effectively in this space. In 2002, two national studies were carried out to analyse the complexity of issues for pre-service and in-service teachers in relation to teaching Indigenous studies. The first study - Teachers in Australian Schools Study, surveyed a total of 10,019 teachers across all Australian education sectors. Participants were asked about their teaching preparation in the area of Indigenous studies. A total of 8,375 participants (86.3%) left this question blank indicating that they had received no initial teacher preparation in this space (Malezer & Sim, 2002). The second study - The National Inquiry into School History, examined the discipline of History in schools and how this subject was being taught with reference to Indigenous perspectives. Some views of the teachers interviewed are extracted below:

You notice with Australian history that it's the same topics that they do over and over again with no sense of continuity. I remember saying to my Year 10s, "we're going to do Colonisation and change: what happened to indigenous peoples". And they said "We've done aboriginal history. We don't want to do any more"....

...The community is racist and (there are) even colleagues who scoff at the idea of having the (Aboriginal studies) content.
There isn't much support for Aboriginal studies and there is even a fear of doing the wrong thing. Like using the wrong terminology.

...we try to teach Aboriginal content but it is very difficult with the parent community...We actually got some help from the (Aboriginal Studies) Centre because the teachers were having to deal with attitudes in kids that are reinforced in the community. There are no Aboriginal kids in the school (Malezer & Sim, 2002, p. 7-8).

These extracts highlight a range of issues with regards to teaching Indigenous studies. However, despite these issues, most teachers interviewed in the study stated that they were still committed to Indigenous education (Malezer & Sim, 2002).

Mooney, Halse and Craven led a study in 2003 that focused on the perspectives of university staff including Heads of Schools, Directors of Aboriginal Education Units and academics from seven universities in Australia. The study focused on rationales for the implementation of compulsory Indigenous courses in initial teacher programs and examined the issues surrounding this. Some participants stated:

Their students often had little or no prior experience of interacting with Indigenous people. As such Aboriginal Studies courses were seen as starting point for students as fostering reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians (Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003a, p. 2).

This view is corroborated by Indigenous academic, Bond (2014) who stated that “some of our students are engaging with Indigenous knowledges, perspectives and peoples for the very first time in their life, and as such, the teaching and learning environment is a new frontier” (p. 1). What is interesting to note is the publication difference between Mooney, Halse and Craven and Bond’s work. There is an 11 year gap between these two publications, however despite this, teaching Indigenous studies at an academic level is still considered to be a predominately new experience for university students.

Mooney, Halse & Craven (2003a) submit that compulsory Indigenous teaching at university was agreed by all participants to be challenging because of resistance amongst some academic staff and students. Participants stated that there were “… little signs of overt racism or explicit objections to Aboriginal Studies from staff in the Faculty… [and] some students openly
displayed resentment at being required to undertake compulsory courses in Aboriginal Studies” (Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003a, p. 5). It should be noted that the resistance in academia was mostly because of pedagogy and curriculum issues (Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003a). In addition, some students found Indigenous material confronting and other students openly displayed negative attitudes throughout the learning process (Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003a). Despite this, academics still agreed that “undertaking a core Aboriginal Studies subject usually impacted positively on the majority of students and by the end of the course they usually observed a positive attitudinal change in most of their students” (Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003a, p. 5).

A further study by Mooney, Halse and Craven (2003b) focused on the roles of 18 in-service teachers and the ways in which they taught Indigenous studies. The majority of participants were non-Indigenous teachers. The study found that the “ethnic composition of the school influenced how teachers thought about teaching Aboriginal Studies. Hence, teachers in schools with a high proportion of Aboriginal students tended to place a greater emphasis on teaching Aboriginal Studies” (Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003b, p. 10). Furthermore, “teachers in schools with few or no Aboriginal students had a lower emphasis on teaching Aboriginal Studies” (Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003b, p. 10). These findings draw attention to the school culture faced by non-Indigenous teachers and the need for support systems within schools (Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003b). Whilst current policy such as AITSL and ACARA emphasise the importance of teaching Indigenous perspectives, the goals of these policies may struggle to be achieved if the background and student demographics of the schooling institution mean that Indigenous studies is not considered an educational priority.

Another issue affecting the teaching of Indigenous studies relates to a lack of teacher competency, in particular a lack of cultural awareness. Indigenous academic, Dale Kerwin documented a story about his child’s experience at school. Kerwin (2011) stated:

Today class, we are going to learn about the Bunyip and Yowie’, said the Year 3 primary school teacher (not knowing that in her class she had a couple of children of Aboriginal Australian descent). As the lesson progressed, she stated that these were ‘mystical creatures that were not real and were only Aboriginal Dreamtime mythology’. My son was one of these children; he challenged and questioned her knowledge. As a consequence, he was punished and spent time in front of the principal’s office (children are not meant to challenge the authority figure). That night he came home clearly upset.
and told the family over dinner what happened. As a parent and an Aboriginal person, I was disturbed that he was punished for his beliefs and that the teacher was insensitive to Aboriginal cultural methodologies of life (p. 249).

Since this incident, I have contacted Kerwin and he has clarified that the teacher in this story was a non-Indigenous teacher. While this story does not include a teacher response in relation to this issue, it does highlight some key issues in teaching Indigenous content. What is evident in this story is an example of poor teacher training and the exclusion of an Aboriginal student and his ways of knowing (Martin, 2003). The teacher failed to see value in Kerwin’s son’s questions. This may be because it challenged her own knowledge, understanding and ideologies (Apple, 1993). Within culturally dominated education contexts, Indigenous knowledge “competes for validity and is vexed by questions of racial and cultural authenticity, and therefore struggles to be located centrally in educational systems, curricula and pedagogies” (Hart, Whatman, McLaughlin and Sharma-Brymer, 2012, p. 704). Moreover, Nakata (2007b) stated that it is vital for teachers who are:

wanting to bring Indigenous knowledge into teaching and learning contexts to understand what happens when Indigenous knowledge is conceptualised simplistically…[and] it is also important to understand what happens when Indigenous knowledge is documented in ways that disembodies it from the people who are its agents (p. 9).

As a result of the teacher not establishing an inclusive space for Kerwin’s son to offer his Indigenous perspective, the student experienced cultural and learning exclusion. Given the history of the education system, this example provides an insight into how curriculum and pedagogy is shaped to align with the dominant culture (Freire, 1972; Bernstein, 1975; Apple 1993; Giroux, 2004). This story addresses an important issue for Australian teachers. It demonstrated that there is a difference between teaching Indigenous content and teaching Indigenous content effectively (Nakata, 2007b; M. Nakata, V. Nakata, Keech, & Bolt, 2012). This concept of what constitutes ‘effective Indigenous teaching’ presents a serious, multifaceted and complex issue for all teachers at all levels of education, especially for academics in preparing graduate teachers to teach Indigenous studies at the required national standard. In this story, it may be argued that the primary teacher was simply completing an administrative requirement by ticking the ‘Indigenous education policy box’ by attempting to
teach Indigenous studies, rather than appropriately allowing for the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives from Indigenous students on Indigenous topics.

In 2012, a national study was conducted by the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) Indigenous Studies Network. The report was titled *Learning the lessons: Pre-Service Teacher Preparation for Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students*. A substantial part of the study was concerned with teachers’ initial teacher preparation to teach Indigenous students (AITSL Professional Teaching Standards - Focus Area 1.4) and Indigenous studies (AITSL Professional Teaching Standards - Focus Area 2.4). This report was published by AITSL and was also submitted to the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment in relation to the ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education: Improving Teaching’ Project (Moreton-Robinson et al., 2012).

The study was broken into three phases. The first phase outlined a review of international and national literature in relation to the above Focus Areas as well as a desktop audit of 38 Australian universities with regards to initial teacher training courses in Indigenous education. Phase two involved both a teacher survey and focus group and phase three involved a presentation of the findings to a national forum in Brisbane in July, 2012 (Moreton-Robinson et al., 2012). In the teacher survey and focus groups, eight Indigenous teachers participated and 13 non-Indigenous teachers participated. Participants came from various Australian states and territories. A key purpose of phase two was to explore teachers’ initial teacher education experiences and preparation in relation to Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4.

The findings from the survey are outlined below:

- “Most new teachers report no compulsory units on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture or language in their degree courses.
- Most new teachers say that their pre-service did not prepare them well to know, understand and respect Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander history, culture or languages.
- Most new teachers are not confident in their ability to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and languages.
- Most new teachers report that they did not receive any specific instruction on how to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their pre-service education.
Most new teachers say that their pre-service did not prepare them well to teach Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander students” (Moreton-Robinson et al., 2012, p. 144-145).

In addition, some of the focus group comments in relation to Indigenous histories, cultures and languages from the Indigenous teacher cohort were as follows:

- “I received cultural awareness training but sugar coated history. Need to be brutally honest about Australia’s recent history.
- Teachers expected to teach about Sorry Day but know nothing of Indigenous history” (Moreton-Robinson et al., 2012, p. 145).

Moreover, some of the comments from the non-Indigenous teacher cohort are set out below:

- “I learnt more on my first day of teaching [in relation to Indigenous histories, cultures and languages] than 4 years of pre-service teacher education.
- We are also teaching non-Indigenous children. What about them…” (Moreton-Robinson et al., 2012, p. 149).

In relation to the sample size of the study, the authors stated that “although the survey sample was relatively small, and therefore limited in reach, the findings are nevertheless instructive” (Moreton-Robinson et al., 2012, p. 143). Overall, the QUT study suggested that despite progressive policy in the field of Indigenous education, many in-service teachers perceived that their initial teacher preparation to teach Indigenous content was inadequate and ineffective (Moreton-Robinson et al., 2012).

**Summary of teacher issues**

There is a diverse range of issues associated with teaching Indigenous studies. These issues are either teacher-related, student-related, institution/school-related or community/parent-related. Teachers report a lack of effective training and preparation in the area of Indigenous education and Indigenous studies. There are also issues surrounding teacher competency, cultural knowledge and awareness, fear and resistance, teacher interest, time management and a lack of Indigenous education policy knowledge. In addition, the absence of an agreed body of Indigenous knowledge is another concern for teachers (Moreton-Robinson et al., 2012; Ma Rhea et al., 2012; White et al., 2013; Kerwin, 2011; Booth, 2014; Anderson & Atkinson, 2013).
Students learning Indigenous studies may be resistant to the educational process and may question the value or ‘worth’ of Indigenous content (Phillips, 2011; Malezer & Sim, 2002; Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003a). The schooling institution can also affect the implementation of Indigenous studies. This is primarily due to resistance by teaching staff and low numbers of Indigenous students at the school (Malezer & Sim, 2002; Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003b). Moreover, the social community may also affect Indigenous teaching. If the community or parents at the school practice racist and discriminatory behaviour towards Indigenous people, this discourse can negatively affect the attitudes of students who are learning Indigenous content (Malezer & Sim, 2002).

### 2.6 The Missing Voices of Pre-service Teachers

In appraising this literature, it is clear that there is solid body of international and national literature that focuses on the historical relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in relation to cultural and Indigenous education issues. Moreover, there is a considerable body of work that discusses historical and modern Indigenous education disparity, university participation rates and issues, and the notion of Indigenising academia. However, the literature on teachers’ perceptions on teaching Indigenous studies is an unfinished and fragmented body of work. The research that is available is mostly conducted with in-service teachers, such that the perceptions of pre-service teachers are not as well researched or recognised.

Despite this, there has been some research conducted on pre-service teachers’ perceptions towards Indigenous university courses. Malezer and Sim’s study in 2002 found that out of 26 pre-service teachers, students “did develop an immense satisfaction with the outcomes of this [Indigenous] subject” (Malezer & Sim, 2002, p.13). One pre-service teacher commented that Indigenous courses were:

> … just so vital to every Australian to understand where we come from rather than the status quo. People are sort of understanding of the present situation and don't like to change you know… (Malezer & Sim, 2002, p. 14).

In addition to this, Phillips’ 2011 doctoral thesis examined seven non-Indigenous pre-service teacher responses to compulsory Indigenous education. She noted that resistance was a common feature of pre-service teachers’ early interactions with the course. This concept of resistance is a key issue in the teaching of Indigenous studies as outlined in the aforementioned
Phillip’s (2011) study saw that students who undertook the compulsory Indigenous course “with little interest, motivation or understandings about the relevance of Indigenous issues were able to shift from positions of distanced observers to interested knowers” (p. 276) by the end of the course.

In 2012, a study was carried out by Hart, Whatman, McLaughlin and Sharma-Brymer in relation to Indigenous pre-service teachers’ perceptions on embedding Indigenous perspectives in their teaching practicum. The study focused on the relationships between supervising teachers and pre-service teachers. Overall, the study found that while Indigenous pre-service teachers were willing to embed Indigenous perspectives in their teaching practicum, this stance can lead to negative tensions between pre-service teachers and their supervisors (who are less willing) which can in turn affect the professional relationship.

While there is some evidence of the inclusion of pre-service teachers in Indigenous education research, this area has been significantly under-researched in relation to whether pre-service teachers perceive they are prepared to teach Indigenous studies in a way which meets AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Overall, the literature in this field mainly privileges the views of in-service teachers, and in turn, the critical perceptions of pre-service teachers are mostly absent from the academic landscape.
CHAPTER THREE: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in the literature review, the dominance of western knowledges has marginalised Indigenous knowledges in the Australian education system. Despite this, the progressive increase of Indigenous academics has led to the development of a theory dedicated to research practice and analysis of political and social practices from an Indigenous standpoint (Foley, 2003; Nakata, 2002). This theory, known as Indigenous standpoint theory (IST), will be used throughout Chapter Six as the theoretical lens for the discussion of the collected research data.

3.2 Indigenous Standpoint Theory

3.2.1 Background

The prioritisation of western forms and methods of research over traditional Indigenous research methods has permeated the academy (Nakata, 1998; Foley, 2003; Martin, 2003, 2008). Since 1788, the “scientific discourse in Australia… was based on racial superiority” (Foley, 2003, p. 44). This discourse has affected the ways in which research has been conducted. Historically, research within an Indigenous context has been solely undertaken from a western framework and has been controlled and dominated by non-Indigenous researchers (Smith, 1999; Foley, 2003; Rigney, 2006). For decades, Indigenous people have been viewed as the ‘object’ of the study as opposed to the ‘researcher’ of the study (Nakata, 1998; Smith, 1999; Martin, 2003).

Because of this, Indigenous academics and researchers have lacked a recognised platform through which to conduct research from their complex and unique standpoint (Martin, 2003). The development of IST arose as a response to this absence and evolved from feminist critique and discourse (Foley, 2003; Nakata, 2007a). Throughout the last two decades, research conducted by various Indigenous academics has been united under the banner of ‘Indigenous standpoint theory’ and includes recognised Indigenous research practices and systems of analysis (Nakata, 1998; Smith, 1999; Martin, 2003; Foley, 2003).

IST has its origins in the more general ‘Standpoint theory’ which gave a critical voice to marginalised groups. Nakata (2007a), a key contributor to the development of IST, identified this method of inquiry as having been utilised by a “diversity of marginalised groups whose
accounts of experience were excluded or subjugated within intellectual knowledge production” (p. 213). Historical representations of this theory are reflected in various human rights, social feminist and Indigenous rights movements.

3.2.2 Research practice

Indigenous academic Foley (2003) has outlined four key principles for academics in relation to IST and Indigenous research. These principles are: the practitioner must be Indigenous; they must be well versed in social theory; research must be for the benefit of the researcher’s community or the wider Indigenous community; and wherever possible traditional language should be implemented in the recording process (p. 50). Foley stated that “these four criteria form the discussion basis for determining [if] Indigenous standpoint theory” should be implemented in research practice (2003, p. 50). Overall, Foley (2003) contends that with “this basic outline, formulating an Indigenous standpoint theory may now commence” (p. 50). This study incorporates the first three principles of Foley’s criteria. As an Aboriginal man, with family and relatives belonging to the Nunukul and Ngugi peoples of the Quandamooka nation (Moreton Bay), it is appropriate that this study incorporates Foley’s theory of Indigenous research practice and Nakata’s theory of IST, in relation to its analysis. With regards to Indigenous research methods, the method of ‘yarning’ as a data collection tool will be outlined in Chapter Four.

3.2.3 Analysis

IST is a framework which seeks to investigate and critically understand issues from a multifaceted Indigenous standpoint. This theory is “not the aggregation of stories from lived experience… [or] the endless production of subjective narrative …” (Nakata, 2007a, p. 213). Rather, it primarily depends on Indigenous researchers to differentiate between ‘experience’ and ‘standpoint’ (Pohlhaus as cited in Nakata, 2007a). IST is not merely a reflection of an Indigenous person’s lived experience. Nakata (2007a) stated that it is “not any sort of hidden wisdom that Indigenous peoples possess… [rather] it is a distinct form of analysis” (p. 214). The role of lived experience of Indigenous researchers should be limited to the first principle of Nakata’s IST framework with regards to the production of critical and objective analysis on Indigenous-related issues (Nakata, 2007a).
A key purpose of this theory in relation to analysis, is to examine and uncover the hidden social discourses which affect Indigenous people (Nakata, 2007a). In this study, IST will be used to focus on and analyse pre-service teachers’ perceptions on teaching Indigenous content. According to Nakata (2007a), this theory does not seek to “produce the ‘truth’ of the Indigenous position but to better reveal the workings of knowledge” (p. 215) and how Indigenous people are affected by this knowledge. It provides a solid basis for Indigenous researchers to produce rational arguments.

Because of the important distinction between Indigenous ‘experience’ and Indigenous ‘standpoint’, IST encourages researchers to use personal or lived experiences as a basic foundation from which to further ask critical questions on issues (Nakata, 2007a). This particular process of inquiry ensures that Indigenous researchers adopt a critical and objective Indigenous standpoint rather than a non-critical, subjective one (Nakata, 2007a). This distinction is crucial to the effectiveness of IST and in turn, credible analysis.

IST seeks to add additional information to the existing body of knowledge in relation to Indigenous knowledge production, peoples and issues, which is referred to by Nakata as the ‘corpus’ of Indigenous knowledge (2007a, 2007b). It is also designed to shed light on Indigenous issues and raise awareness amongst those who belong to the dominant culture or who are more socially and culturally privileged (Nakata, 2007a). By doing so in a persuasive, rational and intellectual way, members of the dominant culture can better understand and be attentive to Indigenous issues.

3.2.4 The cultural interface

The Cultural Interface is a “theoretical model that offers an explanation for the daily negotiations made by Indigenous people in colonised contexts” (McGloin, 2009, p. 38). Nakata (2002) submits that:

The Cultural Interface [is] the place where we live and learn, the place that conditions our lives, the place that shapes our futures… For Indigenous peoples our context, remote or urban, is already circumscribed by the discursive space of the Cultural Interface. We don’t go to work or school, enter another domain, interact and leave it there when we come home again. The boundaries are simply not that clear. The fact that we go to work means we live at the interface… (p. 285).
In general, the Cultural Interface outlines how Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge domains (Indigenous knowledge systems, Indigenous knowledge etc.) meet and are valued and accepted, however during this process of ‘acceptance’, these two knowledge domains ultimately create a contested space of knowledge (Nakata, 2002, 2007b). More specifically:

In this space are histories, politics, economics, multiple and interconnected discourses, social practices and knowledge technologies which condition how we all come to look at the world, how we come to know and understand our changing realities in the everyday, and how and what knowledge we operationalise in our daily lives (Nakata, 2007b, p. 9).

3.2.5 Stages of analysis

According to Nakata (2007b), there are three key principles that comprise IST. These principles revolve around Nakata’s concept of the Cultural Interface. The first principle is that Indigenous peoples live at the Cultural Interface and experience this notion of contested knowledge in the everyday, which is referred to by Nakata as the locale. In relation to analysis and to the first principle of IST, Nakata (2007a) contends that Indigenous peoples’ “lived experience at the cultural interface is the point of entry for investigation” (p. 215). Understanding these lived
experiences is the first step for Indigenous researchers in applying IST as this understanding provides an initial pathway to conduct further inquiry into issues. The locale of some research participants from 3030EDN will also be critically discussed in Chapter Six.

The second principle is focused on the notion of *agency* at the Cultural Interface. Nakata (2007a) stated that Indigenous researchers at the interface have a unique and valuable opportunity to expand on the “limits and possibilities of what [they] can know from this constituted position…” (p. 216). This principle mainly focuses on the role of the researcher in this context. It is vital for researchers to understand their own epistemologies (ways of knowing), philosophies and ontological positions (ways of being) in order to effectively apply IST. However, researchers must also realise how they are positioned by others in relation to what is legitimate knowledge and ‘truth’ (Nakata, 2007a). An important aspect of this principle is for the researcher to recognise the ongoing negotiation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous positions in this space. Within an educational context, it is argued that the principle of agency could also extend to pre-service teachers regarding their preparedness to work and teach within the Indigenous space. This principle can also highlight and address pre-service teachers’ sense of empowerment (or lack thereof) within the Indigenous space through having studied and completed 3030EDN.

Lastly, the third principle relates to the *tensions* that arise at the Cultural Interface. The effect of this “tug of war” (Nakata, 2007a, p. 216) of knowledge means that the tensions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are not only academic, but translate into a physically lived experience and memory for Indigenous peoples (Nakata, 2007). An example of this principle is evident within the literature review of this paper. Within this chapter, in particular section 2.5 – Teacher Issues with Indigenous Studies, Kerwin’s story about his child highlights the tensions that exist at the Cultural Interface. This tension was between a non-Indigenous primary school teacher and an Aboriginal student (Kerwin’s son) in relation to Aboriginal stories. Ultimately, this tension resulted in Kerwin’s son being “punished and [spending] time in front of the principal’s office” (2011, p. 249). This particular situation was a physically lived experience for Kerwin’s son and it translated into a memory for him as he told his father about the incident. Because of the implications of this final principle, researchers must note that their inquiry into these issues is not merely academic and devoid of context, but may have a profound effect on the contested issues at the Cultural Interface and in turn, affect the lives and experiences of Indigenous peoples.
Table 3.1: Stages of Indigenous standpoint theory (analysis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First stage:</th>
<th>Locale</th>
<th><em>(The locale of the learner)</em></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Indigenous peoples lived experience is the entry point for investigation into Indigenous-related issues.</td>
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<th>Second stage:</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th><em>(A place of agency)</em></th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Recognition of own position, epistemology and philosophies and the recognition of the constant negotiation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous positions on Indigenous-related issues.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Third stage:</th>
<th>Tension</th>
<th><em>(Is a place of tension)</em></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The interface is a ‘tug of war’ of knowledge production. It is a place of cultural tension. This tension is translated into a physical experience for Indigenous people and as such researchers need to understand the impact of this in order to “get beyond notions of structuralist power” (Nakata, 2007a, p. 216) and produce critical and objective analysis.</td>
</tr>
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3.2.6 Summary

These three stages of analysis are the foundational principles of IST and are primarily centred on academics and researchers having knowledge of the contested issues at the Cultural Interface (Nakata, 2002, 2007a, 2007b). The appropriate implementation of these principles as a theoretical framework and analytical lens is vital so that researchers can produce objective arguments which seek to broaden the existing corpus of knowledge on Indigenous issues. This study employed the various analytical principles of IST as a way to collect research data and critically examine the data. IST suited certain aspects of the research design but not others. Given Nakata’s concept of the Cultural Interface as a contested space of knowledge, this study used a blend of Indigenous (i.e. yarning sessions) and western (i.e. on-line survey) research methods.

It should be noted that despite knowledge of my own epistemological (ways of knowing) and ontological (ways of being) position and lived experience at the Cultural Interface, including
my teaching experience with 3030EDN, I recognise that I am “not out singularly to overturn the so-called dominant position” (Nakata, 2007a, p. 216) but rather put forward critical and objective arguments developed from my position as an Indigenous teacher (Nakata, 2007a). Moreover, I intend to apply IST throughout Chapter Six as an analytical lens through which to challenge the existing status quo and assist in “forging a new agenda” (Foley, 2003, p. 50) to address historical and educational power imbalances.
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction: Case Study Methodology

This project utilised a case study methodology as the theoretical foundation of its data collection process. Yin (2009) defines case study research as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth” (p. 18). This study investigated the critical perceptions of pre-service teachers in relation to whether they considered they were prepared to teach Indigenous content at the required AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Johansson (2005) stated that case study research “should have a ‘case’ which is the object of the study” (p. 2). The ‘case’ of this study was a group of pre-service teachers from the Bachelor of Education (Primary) program at Griffith University. This group of pre-service teachers studied and successfully completed 3030EDN Studies of Indigenous Australia in Semester 1, 2016. It should be noted that 3030EDN is the only Indigenous education course offered within the Bachelor of Education (Primary) program for pre-service teachers.

A case study methodology provides a useful and insightful research paradigm for data collection purposes (Johansson, 2005; Stake, 2005). Stake (2005) contends that the case study methodological approach has “working parts [and]… is an integrated system” (p. 236). These notions of ‘working parts’ and an ‘integrated system’ applied to this study. This study consisted of four ‘working parts’. These were: an on-line survey; four yarning sessions; an analysis of 3030EDN course materials; and an analysis of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. These four components are interrelated and directly informed each other in order to provide a critical response to the main research question. The main research question for this study was: What are the perceptions of pre-service teachers in relation to their preparedness to meet the requirements of the AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 following the completion of 3030EDN? Moreover, this approach, whilst providing a comprehensive framework for data collection purposes, also provided a useful mechanism through which themes within the data emerged and were critically examined using IST (Stake, 2005).

Case study methodology is also particularly useful and appropriate when research involves asking a series of ‘what’ questions (Yin, 2009). According to Yin (2009), these types of questions are best answered through an exploratory case study approach. The main and subsidiary research questions all involved asking a series of ‘what’ questions in order to understand and explore pre-service teachers’ perceptions on teaching Indigenous studies.
Overall, these aforementioned concepts set out by Yin (2009), Johansson (2005) and Stake (2005) supported the decision to design this study via a case study methodology.

4.2 Research Limitations

The design of this study was impacted by a number of issues. The first issue was that it was conducted with final year pre-service teachers who would be graduating from the Bachelor of Education program from Griffith in 2017. As such, these students would likely want to commence their professional careers as registered teachers. There was a possibility that students may have considered they would need to implement certain positive biases in relation to their knowledge, understanding and skills to teach Indigenous studies. This may have caused students to not accurately disclose information in fear of academic shame or future teacher registration issues. This was a concern in relation to the overall effectiveness of this study. Research participants may have been likely to implement certain biases if they felt that the online survey or yarning sessions were a ‘serious’ test of their knowledge with academic or career implications.

In order to accommodate this issue, students were notified that their online survey responses would remain anonymous to the research team and that their responses would only be used for the purposes of the study. Moreover, the design of the survey (attitude statements) included a ‘subtle’ form of questioning. The decision to exclude direct references to AITSL policy in this section was a deliberate attempt to focus students’ responses on their individual feelings and perspectives rather than a formal assessment of their knowledge and teaching skills. The implementation of these specific strategies was designed to manage and contain the impact of these issues.

As researcher, I was an important influence in this study. I was a sessional tutor for three 3030EDN tutorial classes at Griffith University’s Gold Coast campus. As such, there was a potential issue that participants may have felt the need to implement positive biases if they felt the yarning sessions were a formal test of their content knowledge and skills in relation to Indigenous studies with course assessment implications. The notion of students feeling as though they could only ‘pass’ 3030EDN if they responded to the survey or yarning sessions in a specific way also presented as an issue. In order to manage this issue, the data collection process commenced after the release of the final course marks for 3030EDN.
Lastly, it should be noted that my Aboriginal identity status was shared with the 3030EDN Gold Coast cohort. During the yarning session stages, there was a possibility that this discourse may have influenced students and their responses in order to ‘satisfy’ my cultural identity. This issue was contained by stating to each session participant that there were no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers in relation to the research topic and questions.

4.3 Methods

Four research methods were selected to contribute to the case study for this project. As outlined in the previous chapter, this research study incorporated a combination of both Indigenous and western research methods. In particular, the Indigenous research method of ‘yarning’ was utilised, together with the western research method of an on-line survey. The four research methods are outlined below.

4.3.1 On-line survey

This study was primarily designed to investigate how pre-service teachers perceived their preparedness in relation to teaching Indigenous content at the required national standard. This required participants to indicate their preparedness levels through a series of attitude statements. The on-line survey was an attitudinal survey as it measured pre-service teachers’ attitudes towards their own preparedness to teach Indigenous studies in education settings. This part of the study did not measure participants' personal attributes or ability to actually teach Indigenous studies, as these were addressed during the interview sessions.

A key component of this study was carried out via an on-line survey using the program Lime Survey. Overall, the survey consisted of five background demographic questions and 12 attitudinal statements. Kasunic (2005), contends that a useful survey “can characterise the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours” (p. v) of a group of peoples. With this in mind, this survey was designed to collect the background demographics of participants; key education data; AITSL data and 3030EDN data.

The 3030EDN course website provided the platform to both promote this study and distribute the on-line survey link to participants. An introductory statement about this study was posted via the 3030EDN course announcements section on 13 June 2016 (see Appendix C). Once ethical clearance was approved, the survey link was posted in the 3030EDN course
announcements section (see Appendix D). Participants who were interested in this study could then access the link and complete the survey. At the end of the survey, participants were given the option to participate in a further interview session on the topic of teaching Indigenous studies.

It is important to note that the Research Project Information Sheet was uploaded to the 3030EDN course content section for participants to read before the on-line survey link was posted (see Appendix E). This approach was intended to provide participants with a background and context to this study as well as to familiarise them with the key objectives of this study. Reminders to complete the survey were sent via the 3030EDN course website to the students’ emails approximately twice a week for one month during June and July 2016. This strategy was implemented in order to maximise participation rates. A more in-depth explanation of the on-line survey is provided below.

4.3.2 On-line survey design

The on-line survey was designed in order to respond to the main research question (see Appendix F). This survey involved an inquiry-based approach in order to collect the most effective numerical statistics and data on the research topic (Aliaga & Gunderson, 2000). The explicit design of an appropriate survey was a major focus for this study. Each of the five background demographic questions were important to the survey as they revealed key participant information, including whether the participant spent most of their formal education in Australia; their gender; age; cultural background (non-Indigenous, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander); and it also confirmed that the participant was an enrolled Griffith University pre-service teacher who had successfully completed 3030EDN.

Following this, the next part of the survey was comprised of 12 statements that participants completed using a Likert Scale. This method involved participants providing a numeric rating which indicated their level of agreement with each attitude statement (Borman, 2013). These levels of agreement included: 1. Strongly Agree; 2. Agree; 3. Neutral; 4. Disagree; and 5. Strongly Disagree (Borman, 2013). While it is important to acknowledge that there are many types and variations of Likert Scales, Chimi and Russel (2009) state that a common Likert Scale in research surveys includes the five responses as outlined above.
It is important to note that the first two statements in the attitude section of the on-line survey were designed slightly differently in terms of participants’ levels of agreement/responses. For example, the first statement asked participants to ‘describe’ their knowledge of Indigenous content prior to their commencement of 3030EDN. The rating system for statements one and two included the following responses: 1. Very Minimal; 2. Minimal; 3. Uncertain; 4. Good; 5. Very Good. This slight variation from the rating system described above was required due to the nature of the on-line survey statements and was designed for the comfort of research participants. However, the remaining ten attitude statements (3-12) in the on-line survey were rated by participants according to Borman’s aforementioned description of Likert Scales.

The structure of these 12 attitude statements in the survey were carefully designed. The first two statements (1-2) were designed to capture the educational context of pre-service teachers’ experiences in relation to Indigenous studies. The following two attitude statements (3-4) were designed to provide an insight into the political context of Australian schools and their position towards the curriculum implementation of Indigenous studies.

While these first four statements did not directly correspond to AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, they did provide a useful framework to this study and were needed due to the complexities of this research topic. Furthermore, the first and second statements provided a platform from which to compare participants’ growth and development in relation to their preparedness to teach Indigenous content. This is because these statements were designed to assess the participants’ content knowledge and teaching skills in relation to Indigenous studies prior to enrolment in, and following completion of, 3030EDN. Statements 7-12 were designed to evaluate participants’ preparedness to teach Indigenous studies following the completion of 3030EDN. This comparative analysis served to directly respond to the main research question and specifically consider the effect of 3030EDN on participants’ preparedness to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

Attitudinal statements 5 and 6 were designed to relate to AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, in particular the requirement that graduates demonstrate a respect for the discipline of Indigenous studies. The design of these attitude statements (5-6) provided an indirect way to assess the value that participants placed on the learning and teaching of Indigenous content. The following four attitude statements (7-10) asked participants to reflect on their theoretical (content knowledge) and practical capabilities (pedagogical skills) to teach Indigenous studies. These four questions directly aligned to AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.
Following this, the final two attitudinal statements (11-12) directly related to the main research question and subsequent sub-questions. These two statements were designed to reveal the attitudes of pre-service teachers in relation to their preparation in the 3030EDN course. Moreover, these two statements had the potential to benefit this study by providing critical suggestions to the Bachelor of Education program.

4.3.3 Yarning sessions

This study involved four, one-hour discussions with selected 3030EDN pre-service teachers. These yarning sessions were one-on-one, semi-structured and took place at the Mt Gravatt and Gold Coast Griffith campus sites in Semester 2, 2016. These locations were selected by participants. This strategy allowed for both participant flexibility and comfort. The sessions were conducted in office rooms and at available table spaces. Participants were randomly selected to voluntarily take part in the yarning sessions. The session dates and times were organised and discussed with participants via email. It should be noted that research participants were reimbursed with a $40 dollar Gift Card to compensate them for their time while participating in the session.

Yarning within a semi-structured interview process

The process of yarning as a research method was used within a semi-structured interview framework (Bessarab & Ng’andu, 2010). Yarning as a research method and semi-structured interviews are not distinctly different research methods. Yarning can be used within semi-structured interviews where it is culturally appropriate to do so (Bessarab & Ng’andu, 2010). This research study incorporated traditional methods including oral practices as a way to both share knowledge and collect important information from research participants (Kovach, 2010; Bessarab & Ng’andu, 2010). These methods included storytelling, sharing narratives and yarning, which were implemented in each session (Kovach, 2010). The practice of yarning involves an informal conversation that is culturally friendly and recognised by Indigenous peoples (Bessarab, 2012). Bessarab & Ng’andu (2010) submit that “yarning as an Indigenous research method [can be] deliberately employed in semi-structured in-depth interviews to gather information from the participants of their lived experience” (p. 37). Bessarab and Ng’andu (2010) further state that:
Yarning in a semi-structured interview is an informal and relaxed discussion through which both the researcher and participant journey together visiting places and topics of interest relevant to the research study. Yarning is a process that requires the researcher to develop and build a relationship that is accountable to Indigenous people participating in the research (p. 38).

The utilisation of yarning as a data collection tool provides Indigenous researchers and Indigenous participants with a “means through which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ontology, epistemology and axiology can be prioritised in the completion of research” (Leeson, Smith, Rynne, 2016, p. 7). This approach to the research data collection was culturally appropriate as it aligned with Indigenous ways of knowing, being, valuing and doing (Martin, 2003; Foley, 2003). Moreover, the research method of yarning was specifically selected as I am of Indigenous background and this method is culturally appropriate for Indigenous research methodology (Foley, 2003).

The utilisation of yarning as a data collection tool provided a culturally safe and friendly environment for knowledge to be shared and for data to be collected. It should be noted that all research participants for this part of the study volunteered to take part in the session and as a result of the random selection process, no participant identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background. In the circumstances, the cultural approach to this research method was designed primarily for researcher purposes, as the method of yarning is an Indigenous research method. While yarning is primarily recognised as a method of dialogue and communication by Indigenous people, the fact that none of the four research participants identified as being of Indigenous background did not affect the implementation of this research method as yarning is an appropriate research method for Indigenous researchers and Indigenous research methodology (Foley, 2003; Bessarab & Ng’andu, 2010).

Throughout Australia, Indigenous peoples use yarning to share stories and information (Bessarab & Ng’andu, 2010). Furthermore, the yarning sessions involved asking additional questions to participants on certain topics such as their practicum experience with teaching Indigenous studies. These additional questions were primarily designed for participants to “elaborate further, formulate, and share… ideas” (Mills, Sunderland, Davis-Warra, 2013, p. 289) on relevant topics in culturally safe contexts without interruption. Overall, the inclusion of yarning as a research method is of significance to Indigenous researchers, peoples and Indigenous methodologies. This is primarily because this data collection tool involves an
approach to both sharing and gathering knowledge and information that is consistent with an Indigenous paradigm (Kovach, 2010).

All participants had completed the on-line survey prior to their yarning session. It should be noted that all participants agreed to and signed the Research Project’s Consent Form prior to the commencement of the session (see Appendix G). In total, there were four research participants for this part of the study. There were three female participants and one male participant. All four participants were non-Indigenous, aged between 25 and 45. All participants undertook the majority of their formal education in Australia and successfully completed 3030EDN in Semester 1, 2016. Three sessions were conducted at Griffith’s Mt Gravatt campus and one session was conducted at the Gold Coast campus. A more in-depth explanation of the yarning sessions is provided below.

4.3.4 Yarning session design

The structure of the yarning sessions consisted of creating a comfortable environment and then asking seven main questions to participants. The participants commenced the session with a rudimentary knowledge of the research topic. Upon commencement of the yarning session it is customary to share some personal or family background in a reciprocal arrangement (Bessarab & Ng’andu, 2010). This process was followed which allowed participants to understand my background, or in essence receive information from me, prior to my asking for information in return. This established a strong rapport with research participants prior to seeking deeper content knowledge.

These sessions were primarily designed to further explore participants’ preparedness levels in relation to teaching Indigenous studies and in meeting AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. The overall structure and set questions were designed in order to respond to the objectives of this study (see Appendix H). All sessions were conducted in safe and quiet locations for comfort and recording purposes. Turner (2010) suggests that well conducted sessions can “provide in-depth information pertaining to participants’ experiences and viewpoints of a particular topic” (p. 754). As such, I ensured that an appropriate structure of each session was followed.

The design of the session was similar to that of the survey. In order to limit any aforementioned research design issues set out in section 4.2, I did not introduce the AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 to participants at the beginning of each session. Instead, the standard was introduced as a
hard copy document during the middle stages of the session (see Appendix I). The reason for this strategy was to limit participants’ potential bias in relation to teaching Indigenous studies. Moreover, this approach allowed for a more informal and relaxed discussion on AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 and how this standard related to this research study.

In total, there were seven questions. The first question was designed to relate to the ‘respect’ component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. The second and third questions related to the ‘knowledge and understanding’ aspect of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. The fourth and fifth questions related to the ‘skill’ component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. On completion of the fifth question, AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 was introduced to participants. Question six was designed to explore participants’ perspectives on AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 and what this standard meant to them as graduating teachers. The final question was designed to explore the impact of 3030EDN on preparing pre-service teachers to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. This question was also designed to further explore pre-service teachers’ recommendations regarding 3030EDN and the wider Bachelor of Education program.

4.3.5 3030EDN: Studies of Indigenous Australia

An analysis of the 3030EDN course materials (course profile, weekly units, assessment, texts/resources/readings etc.) also contributed to the data collection process. 3030EDN was an Indigenous education course offered to pre-service teachers in Semester 1, 2016. In order to analyse the course materials, I had full access to the 3030EDN course website. This access included being able to view all of the online course components which were offered to pre-service teachers.

Analytical approach

The 3030EDN course materials were examined through the method of content analysis. Content analysis “is a method of analysing written, verbal or visual communication messages” (Cole as cited in Elo & Kyngas, 2007, p. 107). According to Wilmarth (2004):

Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts. Researchers quantify and analyze the presence, meanings and relationships of such words and concepts, then make inferences about
the messages within the texts, the writer(s), the audience, and even the culture and time of which these are a part (p. 1).

The process of content analysis was used to examine the 3030EDN course materials because the key objective of this part of the study was to determine to what extent the course materials offered to enrolled pre-service teachers aligned with AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. For example, an analysis of the 3030EDN unit outline with regards to the key components of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 including Indigenous ‘histories’, ‘cultures’ and ‘languages’ was undertaken. Through using content analysis as a research tool to investigate this issue, I was able to make critical and informed decisions and comments regarding the educational relationship between 3030EDN’s course materials and AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

4.3.6 Public Policy Documents: AITSL Focus Area 2.4 - Graduate Stage

The final component of the data collection was an analysis of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Additional AITSL documents also assisted in this analysis. Access to all AITSL’s policy documents was available online.

Analytical approach

The AITSL policy documents were also examined through the method of content analysis. As described above, content analysis is “known as a method of analysing documents” (Elo & Kyngas, 2007, p. 108) as well as analysing certain words and concepts within texts (Wilmarth, 2004). As the key focus of this investigation was an analysis of the contents of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 and what the standard specifically requires of graduate teachers, content analysis was the most appropriate research tool for this part of the study. Given Wilmarth’s definition of content analysis, this analytical process involved the critical examination of certain words and concepts within AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. For example, it involved an in-depth analysis of the word ‘broad’ within the policy standard. Overall, this specific research tool provided the opportunity to carefully and critically comment on AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 and other AITSL documents in relation to what these policies mean for pre-service and graduate teachers in the Indigenous space.
### 4.4 Research Participants

Research participants were Griffith University 3030EDN pre-service teachers enrolled in Semester 1, 2016. Within this cohort, there were 231 students enrolled over three campuses which included Mt Gravatt, Logan and the Gold Coast. Specifically, 87 students were enrolled at Mt Gravatt, 32 students were enrolled at Logan and 112 students were enrolled at the Gold Coast campus (Griffith University SEC, 2016). This cohort of pre-service teachers were selected in this study because as participants, they can overall “best inform the research questions and enhance understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Sargeant, 2012, p. 1). These participants were also unique due to the fact that they had transitioned into their final year of the Bachelor of Education (Primary) program at the time of conducting the research. It is important to note that these pre-service teachers were still required to complete one further teaching practicum as well as one final six week teaching internship before graduation in 2017.

### 4.5 Data Collection Instruments

The data collection instrument for the on-line survey was through the survey program, Lime Survey. The data collection instruments for the extended yarning sessions included recordings made on both an iPhone and iPad. The iTunes application ‘Voice Memo’ was used for the recordings. This was to ensure that all session sessions were recorded accurately. Moreover, both the iPhone’s and iPad’s storage capacity was sufficient to record and store the data. Both of these devices were switched to ‘airplane mode’ in order to avoid potential interruptions by calls or texts during the sessions. A transcript of each session was made available to each participant, for amendments, upon request. Participants were also made aware that the audio recording was taking place and gave their formal consent via The Research Project Consent Form (see Appendix G), before the commencement of the session.

#### 4.5.1 Data security

The recording for each yarning session was stored on both an iPhone and iPad until it was transcribed onto a Microsoft word document. Once transcribed, the original audio recording was deleted from these devices and recording applications. It should be noted that until all recorded audio had been transcribed, the iPhone and iPad remained password protected.
4.6 Data Analysis: Software

The main tool which assisted the results of the survey was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. This program is designed for “analyzing, and presenting data [and is] widely used in the social and behavioural sciences” (Landau & Everitt, 2004, p. 11). As such, it was an effective software program for dealing with the study’s research data and was useful in carrying out descriptive analysis and comparing research variables (Landau & Everitt, 2004).

4.7 Ethics

Griffith University conducts its research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. This study was committed to working in accordance with the ethical guidelines, regulations and policies set out by Griffith and those which specifically relate to research involving the participation of humans (Griffith University, 2016). A human ethics application was submitted to Griffith University’s Human Research Ethics Committee on 9 June 2016. This research study was granted ‘Full Approval’ by the Human Research Ethics Committee on 1 July 2016 - GU Ref No: 2016/457 (see Appendix J).
4.8 Timeline

Table 4.1: Timeline of the project (2016)

Submission: February 2017
CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND EMERGING THEMES

5.1 Introduction

This chapter has been divided into four main sections. Section 5.2 will discuss 3030EDN and analyse the course materials which were offered to pre-service teachers; section 5.3 will examine AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 with a focus on the content of the standard and what it specifically requires of graduate teachers; section 5.4 will discuss the results of the on-line survey; and lastly section 5.5 will discuss the responses and themes of the yarning sessions. Following this, Chapter Six will synthesis and discuss the results and emerging themes of the data collection process using IST.

5.2 3030EDN: Studies of Indigenous Australia

5.2.1 Details of the course

3030EDN was a Semester 1, 2016 compulsory Griffith Indigenous education course. The duration of the course was nine weeks and consisted of a one-hour weekly formal lecture, to approximately 231 students, and a two-hour weekly tutorial class with a maximum enrolment of 25 students. 3030EDN was intended to prepare pre-service teachers to meet National Teaching Standards in particular AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 (see Appendix K). It is important to note that this thesis and therefore this section is not an analysis of the pedagogical approaches or teaching practices used in 3030EDN in either lectures or tutorials or an examination of pre-service teachers’ level of interaction with 3030EDN course materials. Rather, this section is an analysis of the course materials offered to enrolled 3030EDN pre-service teachers. The table below is an extract from the course profile that stated 3030EDN addresses Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4 of the National Teaching Standards at a graduate level (Griffith University 3030EDN, 2016, p. 7).

Table 5.1: 3030EDN and Focus Area 2.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Graduate Stage)</th>
<th>Focus Area 1</th>
<th>Focus Area 2</th>
<th>Focus Area 3</th>
<th>Focus Area 4</th>
<th>Focus Area 5</th>
<th>Focus Area 6</th>
<th>Focus Area 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Know students and how they learn</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Know the content and how to teach it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.2 Analysis of course materials

This following section has been divided into three parts. These are: unit outline; assessment; and course text book, resources and readings. The key objective of the analysis in this section is to determine if the course materials offered to enrolled 3030EDN pre-service teachers align with AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

Unit Outline

The weekly teaching and learning activities offered to pre-service teachers included a diverse range of Indigenous education topics. These topics primarily focus on students’ learning: general knowledge on Australia’s Indigenous peoples; the relationship between Indigenous people and the education system; western and Indigenous knowledges; teaching and learning strategies for Indigenous students; the role of teachers in Indigenous communities and schools; and contemporary Indigenous issues including literacy, numeracy and health. The table below shows a course outline of the topics covered.

Table 5.2: 3030EDN weekly units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Commencing</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29 Feb 16 (1)</td>
<td>1. Indigenous peoples and Australian Society (Lecture):</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readings/Ref: Recommended (Productivity Commission Report);</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Mar 16 (2)</td>
<td>2. Indigenous Peoples &amp; the Education System (Lecture):</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readings/Ref: Harrison, N. (Chapter 2, pp.17-38.;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Mar 16 (3)</td>
<td>3. Western &amp; Indigenous Knowledge (Lecture):</td>
<td>1, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readings/Ref: Harrison, N. (Chapter 3, pp.39-56);</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Mar 16 (4)</td>
<td>4. Teaching &amp; Learning Strategies (Lecture):</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readings/Ref: Harrison, N. (Chapter 4, pp.57-76.;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Apr 16 (5)</td>
<td>5. Indigenous Communities and the School Setting (Lecture):</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readings/Ref: Harrison, N. (Chapter 9, pp.165-177.;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommended (L@G website.);</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Apr 16 (6)</td>
<td>6. Literacy &amp; Numeracy Issues (Lecture):</td>
<td>2, 3, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readings/Ref: Harrison, N. (Chapters 5 &amp; 7. pp.87-115, 130-145);</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Apr 16 (7)</td>
<td>7. Indigenous Health &amp; Schooling (Lecture):</td>
<td>2, 3, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readings/Ref: Recommended (Otitus Media &amp; Aboriginal Children: A Handbook for Teachers and Communities);</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This unit outline emphasises students understanding the historical interactions between Indigenous peoples and wider Australian society. There is also an importance on students learning about the historical relationship between the education system and its negative impact on Indigenous people, including the historical exclusion of Indigenous knowledges from this space. Moreover, the table highlights the need for pre-service teachers to both learn and engage in professional practice and pedagogy in order to work effectively with Indigenous students and in Indigenous communities. Overall, this unit mainly emphasises students learning about Indigenous schooling and education, with some focus on Indigenous histories and cultures.

While the key components of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 (histories, cultures and languages) are not specifically stated in the course unit structure, it is clear that 3030EDN’s lectures are focused on these aspects (to varying degrees). This is further supported by various 3030EDN tutorial materials (see Appendix L). There is also an importance on developing pre-service teachers’ professional knowledge and skills with regards to teaching and working with Indigenous students. This course aim strongly aligns with Focus Area 1.4.

However, it appears there may be a lack of emphasis on the learning of Indigenous languages and Aboriginal English. Whilst some emphasis is placed on student language development, the teaching process appears to generally favour the learning of Indigenous histories and cultures. This is compounded by the fact that the terms ‘language’ or ‘Indigenous languages’ is not referenced in the weekly unit outline nor do any of the course topics strongly imply the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages including Aboriginal English. This suggests that there is a potential misalignment with 3030EDN and AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 in relation to the language component of the policy standard.

While it is difficult to confirm that the 3030EDN associated tutorial materials are actually being implemented in tutorial classes, the course profile stated that “Tutorials will further clarify and develop student knowledge and understanding of the presented [lecture] concepts through
topical discussions and participation in small group activities” (Griffith University Course Profile, 3030EDN, 2016, p. 8). This statement indicates that there is a connection between 3030EDN lecture material and tutorial material regarding content and educational direction and focus. All of the course lectures appear to follow the exact same structure as the proposed unit outline above (see Appendix M).

Overall, the 3030EDN unit outline appears to align with the Indigenised areas of the National Teaching Standards, in particular Focus Area 1.4. With regards to Focus Area 2.4, it appears that the weekly topics are more favoured towards the development of pre-service teachers’ knowledge regarding Indigenous students, histories and cultures as opposed to languages. One possible reason for this may be because of time constraints and limitations of 3030EDN as a nine week course.

Assessment

In total, there are three assessment items for 3030EDN. These are: a lesson plan; a reflective student journal (EATSIPS); and a multiple choice exam. The lesson plan requires pre-service teachers to embed Indigenous perspectives in a specific discipline area. The reflective journal revolves around the online program EATSIPS and asks students to document their ideas, attitudes and perspectives in relation to the EATSIPS modules. Lastly, the course exam requires students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the lecture and tutorial materials covered in the 3030EDN (Griffith University 3030EDN, 2016).

The table below is a summary of 3030EDN assessment. The course profile also provides a more in-depth and detailed summary of each assessment item (see Appendix N).

Table 5.3: 3030EDN summary of assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weighting/Marked out of</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment - Planning Document – Lesson plan</td>
<td>29 Feb 16 - 22 Apr 16 Week 7</td>
<td>20%/20</td>
<td>2, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment - Reflective Journal</td>
<td>29 Feb 16 - 8 Apr 16 17:00 Week 5</td>
<td>40%/40</td>
<td>1, 3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In analysing the alignment regarding the course unit schedule and the assessment items, it is clear that there is a strong link between these two components of the course. For example, the lecture material on Indigenous knowledges and on teaching strategies for Indigenous students, together with the EATSIPS assessment item, is directly connected to the core objectives of the lesson plan assessment task. Overall, it is clear that 3030EDN provides a strong alignment between its curriculum and its assessment items.

While 3030EDN stated that the course will prepare students to meet Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4, the course profile fails to reference these focus areas within the course assessment outline. While it is clear that the lesson plan assessment item aligns with Focus Area 2.4, which requires graduate teachers to embed Indigenous perspectives in classrooms, without specific reference to the standards, pre-service teachers may be confused as to the overall importance, value or ‘worth’ of the assessment item. Direct reference to Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4 in the course assessment outline may reinforce the significance of each assessment item and also emphasise the need for pre-service teachers to engage with Indigenous education policy.

The marking criteria sheets for the lesson plan and the student reflective journal align with AITSL’s formal definition of the term ‘broad’ in AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. AITSL (2011) defines ‘broad’ as “Ensuring variety, not narrow or limited; i.e. comprehensive in content, knowledge, experience, ability, or application” (emphasis added) (p. 20). The assessment criteria for these assessment items includes the word ‘comprehensive’ in several marking descriptors (see Appendix O). For example, in order for students to receive an ‘outstanding achievement’ in relation to the ‘breadth and depth’ of the lesson plan, students need to demonstrate a ‘Complete and comprehensive application of appropriate lesson structure including specific objectives, learning area, content descriptors, school and year level to meet a range of student needs’ (emphasis added). Moreover, the assessment criteria for the reflective journal stated in order for pre-service teachers to receive an ‘outstanding achievement’ in the ‘conceptualisation understanding and intellectual initiative’ standard of the journal, they need to demonstrate a ‘Complete and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of significant issues, relevant themes and concepts [and] intellectual initiative and creativity used to conceptualise and present informative perspectives’ . Both of these assessment criteria sheets
align with the structural elements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, in particular AITSL’s definition of the term ‘broad’. Overall, the 3030EDN lesson plan and the EATSIPS journal align with Focus Area 2.4 at a graduate level.

As a part-time tutor, I did not have access to the 3030EDN course exam paper. As such, it is not possible to conduct an effective content analysis on this assessment item. However, the 3030EDN course profile stated that the “course exam [is] based on all material covered in the course” (Griffith University 3030EDN, 2016, p. 10). As the course materials aligned with the standard, and assessment materials undergo an internal (to the School) moderation and monitoring process, it is possible to assume that the course exam generally aligned with AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

Course Text, Resources and Readings

Course Text

The required course text book for pre-service teachers is titled *Teaching and Learning in Aboriginal Education (2nd Edition)* by Dr Neil Harrison. This is an academic text and does not include the National Teaching Standards or samples of classroom lessons. Harrison is a non-Indigenous person and has worked in Aboriginal education since 1978. He is a senior lecturer at Macquarie University.

As discussed in the Unit Outline of this section, Harrison’s text was the required reading for pre-service teachers. Students were instructed to read various chapters of the text each week (see Table 5.2). This text is designed for pre-service and graduate teachers working in urban, rural and remote primary and secondary school settings. It assists pre-service teachers in relation to their preparedness to effectively teach Aboriginal students and Aboriginal perspectives in a range of discipline areas. Furthermore, the text offers students both theoretical and practical knowledge and information with regards to “working with Aboriginal students, as well as teaching Aboriginal perspectives to non-Aboriginal students… the overall aim of the text is to encourage teachers to make Aboriginal Australia a significant and ongoing reference point for all students” (Harrison, 2011, p. vi). The text is solely focused on Aboriginal education and Aboriginal students and is divided into 10 chapters (see Appendix P). It is important to note that the 3rd edition of this text titled *Learning and Teaching in Aboriginal*
and Torres Strait Islander education was published in 2016 and does include Torres Strait Islander education.

The following chapters of the text align with Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4 (graduate stage).

- Chapter 2: Recognising our History
- Chapter 3: Aboriginal Ways of Learning
- Chapter 4: Quality Teaching Practices for Aboriginal Children
- Chapter 6: Incorporating Aboriginal English in Classroom Learning
- Chapter 10: Teaching Aboriginal Perspectives

More specifically, chapters three and four align with Focus Area 1.4 and chapters two, six and ten align with AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Chapter 2: Recognising our History is a useful chapter which seeks to develop pre-service teachers’ historical knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Australia. This chapter is a useful starting point for pre-service teachers in relation to the history component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Chapter 6: Incorporating Aboriginal English in Classroom Learning focuses on the relationships between Aboriginal English as a dialect of Standard English, Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal students. This chapter reinforces the credibility and importance of Aboriginal English as a fundamental part of Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal students’ language systems and vocabulary. It suggests a number of teaching strategies around the implementation of Aboriginal English in education contexts, whilst discussing the complexities and political elements of the language. This specific chapter aligns with the language component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

Lastly, Chapter 10: Teaching Aboriginal Perspectives offers a diverse range of pedagogical strategies to assist pre-service teachers in relation to the implementation of Aboriginal perspectives in established disciplines. This chapter primarily focuses on how pre-service teachers “will present Aboriginal Australia to [their] students, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal” (Harrison, 2011, p. 178). It offers a range of ideas regarding how pre-service teachers should approach the teaching of Aboriginal perspectives in disciplines such as Science, History, Geography, Health and Physical Education and Creative Arts (Cultural Arts). It is clear that this chapter aligns with AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 in relation to the histories and cultures component of the standard. Overall, the required course text Teaching and Learning in Aboriginal Education for 3030EDN generally aligns with Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4 at a graduate
level, however this course text does not include Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, cultures and languages.

**Resources and Readings**

Another required text for pre-service teachers was the Queensland Department of Education & Training’s (DET) 2011 *Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools (EATSIPS)* resource. This resource provides a useful framework for teachers to incorporate Indigenous perspectives in the teaching and learning process. The Department stated that:

> It is essential that schools and teachers embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the school. Our goal is to maximise the learning outcomes for all children, especially for Indigenous children, as the first Australians (Department of Education & Training, 2011, p. 53).

This resource provides pre-service teachers with a solid foundation from which to build their knowledge and understanding in relation to Indigenous perspectives. The resource is careful in its structure and approach to learning Indigenous perspectives and avoids stereotypical cultural writing and the homogenisation of Indigenous perspectives. Overall, it is a useful resource for pre-service teachers.

All lecture PowerPoint slides were posted to 3030EDN in advance of each weekly lecture and all tutorial notes were posted to 3030EDN after the completion of all weekly tutorials. Moreover, all course resources and readings were available for pre-service teachers to access via 3030EDN’s Learning@Griffith website (see Appendix Q). There are no AITSL policy documents attached or referenced in 3030EDN’s ‘Indigenous Education Policy’ readings folder. Overall, it is clear that 3030EDN offered students a wide range of Indigenous resources. These resources and readings focus on Indigenous education issues, Indigenous teaching as well as other Indigenous-related topics. In relation to Focus Area 2.4 they provide important information for pre-service teachers. The course resources aim to develop and broaden the knowledge, understanding and skills of pre-service teachers in relation to both teaching Indigenous students and Indigenous studies.
5.2.3 Summary

In summary, 3030EDN is a compulsory Indigenous education course which provides a diverse range of Indigenous topics to pre-service teachers. The unit outline aligns with AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 but generally favours the teaching and learning of Indigenous histories and cultures as opposed to languages. In terms of assessment, there is a link between the assessment criteria and AITSL’s definition of the term ‘broad’. The required text by Harrison is very useful and is written specifically for pre-service and graduate teachers. The text generally aligns with Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4 (graduate level), however it does not include Torres Strait Islander studies. The 3rd edition of this text was published in 2016 and does include Torres Strait Islander education.

While 3030EDN does not reference any AITSL policy documents in its ‘Indigenous Education Policy’ readings folder, the course offers students a useful collection of resources and readings in relation to Indigenous education and embedding Indigenous perspectives in schools.

Overall, this analysis reveals that the course materials offered to enrolled pre-service teachers, including the unit outline, assessment items, course text, resources and readings, generally align with AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. This means that pre-service teachers had access to required learning and support materials to assist their preparedness to meet the requirements of the AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 following the successful completion of 3030EDN.

5.3 AITSL Focus Area 2.4 – Graduate Stage

5.3.1 Introduction

In 2011, AITSL introduced the National Teaching Standards across Australia (AITSL, 2011). Overall, there are seven Professional Standards which are divided into Focus Areas. These Focus Areas are further categorised into descriptors according to particular career stages (AITSL, 2011).

This content analysis is limited to the terms and key components of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 and some additional AITSL supporting documents.
Table 5.4: Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (2.4)

Professional Standard 2: Know the content and how to teach it

Focus Area 2.4

AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 requires graduate teachers to have respect for and a broad knowledge and understanding of Indigenous studies, as well as the capacity to teach this discipline to all students (AITSL, 2011; White et al., 2013). The graduate descriptor within this policy does not specifically mention that the teaching of Indigenous content is designed to assist in promoting reconciliation. However, Focus Area 2.4 is directly concerned with teachers’ understanding and respecting Indigenous people in order to foster cultural reconciliation (AITSL, 2011). This is evident in the title of Focus Area 2.4 and is further supported by Ma Rhea et al. and the publication, *Improving teaching in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education: Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* in 2012. This document stated that Focus Area 2.4 is “described according to four levels and focuses on teacher skills and knowledge associated with understanding and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians” (Ma Rhea et al., 2012, p. 25). Therefore, there is a direct link between graduates teaching Indigenous studies and the desired reconciliation outcome of Focus Area 2.4. From this, it is clear that AITSL intends that the implementation of Indigenous studies in Australian schools will promote the notion of reconciliation.

While AITSL (2014) is committed to achieving reconciliation via Education, AITSL fails to specifically define ‘reconciliation’ in both the 2011 Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Professional Standards) policy document or in the online Professional Standards
section. This lack of clarity may be because the notion of reconciliation is culturally subjective and it has also been a political and debated term since the 1991 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Gunstone, 2005). However, it is important to note that AITSL does provide more in-depth information with regards to reconciliation in its Reconciliation Action Plan 2014 - 2015 online document located in the ‘About Us’ section.

Unfortunately, this document is not attached to or referenced in Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4 in the Professional Standards section. Without this context, the concept of ‘Australian reconciliation’ in Focus Area 2.4, when viewed in isolation, has the potential to affect and confuse pre-service teachers’ perceptions surrounding reconciliation and what this means to them as future teachers. Moreover, it is important to question to what extent pre-service teachers perceive that the implementation of Indigenous studies will promote reconciliation. Furthermore, what does reconciliation actually mean to pre-service or graduating teachers and what is their perceived role in the reconciliation process?

One of the defining features of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, is the requirement that graduate teachers demonstrate a ‘broad’ knowledge, understanding and respect for Indigenous studies. It is important to recognise that the term ‘broad’ is inherently subjective. In the Glossary section of the Professional Standards document, AITSL provides a formal definition of the word ‘broad’. Broad is defined as “Ensuring variety, not narrow or limited; i.e. comprehensive in content, knowledge, experience, ability, or application” (p. 20). Unfortunately, this definition is not attached to or referenced in AITSL’s online Professional Standards section in relation to Focus Area 2.4. The effect of this is that pre-service teachers who view the online Professional Standards may potentially be unaware of AITSL’s definition of the word ‘broad’.

The AITSL document, A unit outline and content for professional learning units to support teachers in meeting Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4 does provide more in-depth knowledge and information to assist teachers to understand Focus Area 2.4. This document is a comprehensive and useful resource which offers a series of learning modules for teacher professional development purposes in Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4. This supporting document, in relation to Focus Area 2.4, stated that it is underpinned by three key themes: Rights; Language; Celebration. It goes on to provide a series of modules for teacher engagement which include activities and questions for teachers in relation to the subject matter of Focus Area 2.4 (see Appendix R). In relation to the Language theme, the document encourages teachers “to contemplate the impact of being allowed to speak ones’ languages, or to be educated in ones’
languages and to develop an approach to their teaching that might address this situation…” (emphasis added) (White et al., 2013, p. 38). It also suggests that teachers should:

**Begin to learn** the languages of their location where this is still possible… [and] **familiarize** themselves with, for example, Koori, Nyoonga, Nunga, Murri and Koorie Englishes and the ways that these are similar to or differ from standard Australian English (emphasis added) (White et al., 2013, p. 38).

While this document is an effective resource for teachers, it does not clarify what is specifically required of graduate teachers to adequately meet the term ‘broad’ according to AITSL’s formal definition. For example, it is uncertain whether a ‘broad’ knowledge means that graduate teachers should be able to *teach* language elements of traditional Aboriginal language, Aboriginal English and/or Torres Strait Creole; or merely have an *awareness* that these languages exist and how and where they operate. Rather it appears that Focus Area 2.4 is primarily concerned with the role of language as a significant part of Indigenous people and culture (White et al., 2013). For example, it asks teachers to consider the relationship between culture and language; the cultural protocols around language ownership; and how language can be celebrated. While teacher discretion is important, this must be balanced with the need to have specific and practical guidelines for pre-service and graduate teachers to assist them in meeting the language component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

The words used in the Language theme, such as ‘contemplate’, ‘begin to learn’ and ‘familiarize’ do not specifically align with AITSL’s definition of ‘broad’ which requires a ‘comprehensive’ knowledge of Indigenous studies. The effect of this tension is that both pre-service and graduate teachers may be uncertain as to whether a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous languages requires them to simply ‘contemplate’, ‘begin to learn’ and ‘familiarise’ themselves with this content, or in fact have a ‘comprehensive’ knowledge of this content. The subjectivity of the word ‘broad’ is compounded by the fact that AITSL’s formal definition and AITSL’s supporting document of how to demonstrate that term appear to be inconsistent.

Another issue with AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, is that there is confusion around the cultures component of the standard. AITSL’s definition of the word ‘broad’ within Focus Area 2.4 requires graduates to have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures and to be able to demonstrate this accordingly. However, the supporting document for graduate teachers again appears to contradict AITSL’s formal definition. It stated:
The most important thing to remember is that as a teacher, they are not teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children their culture. Nor will they become an expert in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. What they will develop are the skills and knowledge to affirm and celebrate the cultural identities of all of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (White et al., 2013, p. 42).

While this position demonstrates a level of cultural knowledge, understanding and sensitivity, it may also confuse pre-service teachers as to what and how much knowledge is actually required and how this should be implemented to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. The document further stated in the content summary of module 2, that it “encourages teachers to learn about the diversity of [Indigenous] cultures” (emphasis added) (White et al., 2013, p. 47). Pre-service teachers may feel conflicted between the requirement to demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of Indigenous cultures (as required by AITSL’s definition), the supporting document which ‘encourages’ them to learn about Indigenous cultures and, the stated outcome that they will not “become an expert in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture” (White et al., 2013, p. 42).

Lastly, in relation to the Indigenous histories component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, there again appears to be a disconnect between AITSL’s formal definition of the term ‘broad’ and the details provided in the supporting document. Module 4; History, Policies and Practices provides sufficient guidance for graduates to be able to understand the type of content regarding Indigenous histories that should be implemented. However, in the content summary, in states that in relation to history, teachers are “encouraged to develop [their] understanding of the various approaches that have been used and be able to identify what has worked and what has failed over the years” (emphasis added) (White et al., 2013, p. 55). This section of the document again ‘encourages’ teachers to develop their knowledge rather than requiring them to have a ‘comprehensive’ knowledge as outlined by AITSL’s stricter definition of the term ‘broad’. The effect of this is that pre-service and graduate teachers may again be confused about the level of knowledge required to meet the history component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

These aforementioned issues with the term ‘broad’ as it applies to Focus Area 2.4 are further compounded by the fact that this policy standard is a difficult and complex standard to professionally measure and assess.
Ma Rhea et al. (2012) state that:

This is arguably a more complicated Focus Area to measure and address [than Focus Area 1.4] because it is predicated in the personal understanding of, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies held by each teacher and how this translates into their professional practice in promoting reconciliation (p. 25).

AITSL’s supporting document suggests a number of useful self-assessment activities for teachers to demonstrate their proficiency of Focus Area 2.4. However, the nature of self-assessment is inherently limiting as it relies on teachers evaluating their own demonstrated knowledge, understanding and respect for Indigenous studies. This is further complicated by the overall subjective nature of this policy standard, specifically in relation to the notion of ‘respect’. Overall, there is a potential risk that without also a formal process of assessment through education experts (Indigenous or non-Indigenous) or pre-service Indigenous education courses/programs, graduate teachers may not be effectively and successfully assessed regarding their knowledge and competencies to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

5.3.3 Summary

In summary, AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 requires graduates to teach components of Indigenous studies in a bid to promote reconciliation. However, there is a possibility that pre-service teachers may be confused as to what it exactly the term ‘reconciliation’ means and what their professional role is in the reconciliation process. Another issue relates to the term ‘broad’ in the standard. The alignment of the term ‘broad’ is not consistent in AITSL’s documents and this has the potential to confuse pre-service teachers in relation to what level of knowledge, understanding and skills are required to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Overall, the standard is difficult to both measure and assess in professional contexts. Furthermore, the complexity, subjectivity and underlying politics of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 may result in confusion amongst pre-service and graduate teachers if they are unable to discern what is required of them to meet the standard.
5.4 On-line survey

5.4.1 Introduction

The on-line survey results comprised the responses from a total of 82 pre-service teachers from a wider course enrolment total of 231 students (Griffith University SEC, 2016). This is approximately 35 percent of the student cohort. However, not all 82 students responded to each background demographic and attitude statement. This is because the survey was completely voluntary.

5.4.2 Background demographics

From a total of 81 participants, 76 participants attended the majority of their formal education in Australia (93.8%); 68 participants were female (84%); and 13 participants were male (16%); 49 participants were aged between 18 and 24 (60.4%); 23 participants were aged between 25 and 34 (28.3%); 7 participants were aged between 35-44 (8.6%); and only 2 participants were aged between 45 and 54 (2.4%). From 78 participants, 70 participants identified as being non-Indigenous (89.7%); 5 participants identified as being Aboriginal (6.4%); 2 participants identified as being Torres Strait Islander (2.5%); and 1 participant identified as being both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (1.2%). In relation to the completion of 3030EDN, a total of 80 out of 82 participants said that they had successfully completed 3030EDN prior to participation (97.5%). From these demographics, it can be seen that the majority of research participants were non-Indigenous female participants aged 18 to 34. Most participants experienced the majority of their formal education in Australia and the overwhelming majority of participants (80 from 82) had successfully passed 3030EDN at the time of completing the on-line survey.

5.4.3 Attitude statement responses

The on-line survey comprised 12 attitude statements (see Appendix F). The purpose of these statements were to examine pre-service teachers’ preparedness to teach Indigenous studies. Section 3.7 of this paper outlines the design of the on-line survey in more detail. Below is a list of the key survey findings.
Figure 5.1 Participants’ responses to statement 1

Participants were asked to rate their individual knowledge in relation to Indigenous studies prior to their commencement to 3030EDN. From a total of 77 participants, 50 participants rated their knowledge as either uncertain, minimal or very minimal (64.9%). The remaining 27 participants considered their knowledge was either good or very good (35%). This highlights that the majority of participants did not feel they had adequate knowledge of Indigenous content prior to engaging with 3030EDN.

Figure 5.2 Participants’ responses to statement 2

Participants were asked to rate their practical skills with regards to teaching Indigenous studies prior to their learning in 3030EDN. From a total of 76 participants, 56 participants indicated
that they had limited skills or were uncertain about their pedagogical skills with regards to Indigenous content (73.6%).

This figure is consistent with Figure 5.1. Both figures indicate that the majority of pre-service teachers perceived they had limited knowledge and limited teaching skills in relation to Indigenous studies before commencement of 3030EDN.

Figure 5.3 Participants’ responses to statement 3

Participants were asked to rate their primary school experience in relation to whether their school placed importance on Indigenous studies. While the responses suggested that Indigenous content was included within schools, 48 out of 76 participants stated that they were either uncertain or that their primary school placed limited to no importance on Indigenous studies (63.1%).
In this statement, participants were asked to rate their secondary school experience in relation to the importance placed on Indigenous studies. This figure shows similarities to Figure 5.3. From a total of 74 participants, 55 considered that their secondary school did not place importance on Indigenous studies, or they were uncertain as to this (74.3%). These figures also indicate that secondary school placed lesser emphasis on Indigenising the curriculum agenda compared to participants’ primary school experiences. Overall, these figures suggest that the majority of pre-service teachers did not feel as though their primary and secondary schooling experiences placed importance on Indigenous studies.

Figure 5.5 Participants’ responses to statement 5
Participants were asked to state whether they would have chosen to enrol in 3030EDN if it were an elective course. From 75 participants, 37 would have selected 3030EDN if it were an elective course (49.3%), while 38 participants indicated that they were either uncertain or would not have selected 3030EDN as an elective.

These results reveal that while nearly half of participants considered that they would have enrolled in 3030EDN as an elective, the remaining half were either unsure or would not have selected 3030EDN as an elective (50.6%). Such a decision would have clear implications for their capacity to meet the graduate standards expected upon completion of pre-service teacher education and, presumably, compliance with teacher registration requirements.

*Figure 5.6 Participants’ responses to statement 6*

The overwhelming majority of participants indicated that Indigenous studies should be taught in Australian schools. From 75 participants, 71 either agreed or strongly agreed to this statement (94.6%). What is interesting to note is that Figure 5.5 indicates that approximately half of participants were either uncertain or would not have selected 3030EDN prior to commencing the course, however Figure 5.6 revealed that nearly 95 percent of participants considered that Indigenous studies should be taught in schools after participation in 3030EDN.
Figure 5.7 Participants’ responses to statement 7

![Bar chart showing responses to Statement 7](image)

Statement 7 asked participants whether they perceived they had a broad knowledge of Indigenous histories. This statement directly aligned with the history component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. From a total of 77 participants, 51 indicated that they perceived they had a broad knowledge of Indigenous histories (66.2%). Moreover, 26 participants either strongly disagreed, disagreed or were uncertain as to whether they had a broad knowledge (33.7%). See related Figure 5.9 for the ‘skill’ aspect in relation to teaching Indigenous histories.

Figure 5.8 Participants’ responses to statement 8

![Bar chart showing responses to Statement 8](image)

Statement 8 also directly aligned with AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, specifically the cultures component of the standard. Participants were asked if they perceived they had a broad
knowledge of Indigenous cultures. From 77 participants, 50 either agreed or strongly agreed (64.9%). A total of 27 participants were either unsure or disagreed (33.7%) and 1 participant strongly disagreed (1.2%). See related Figure 5.10 for the ‘skill’ aspect in relation to teaching Indigenous cultures.

**Figure 5.9 Participants’ responses to statement 9**

From 77 participants, the majority of participants perceived they were confident to teach Indigenous histories. A total of 62 participants either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement (80.5%). However, 15 participants were either uncertain, disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement (19.4%).

**Figure 5.10 Participants’ responses to statement 10**
From 77 participants, 56 either agreed or strongly agreed that they were prepared to teach Indigenous cultures (72.7%). While no one strongly disagreed, 21 participants indicated that they were uncertain or disagreed with this statement. A total of 19 participants were uncertain with their teaching ability as opposed to 11 participants in relation to Indigenous histories. This figure suggests that 8 more participants were unsure about their ability to teach Indigenous cultures as opposed to Indigenous histories.

Figure 5.11 Participants’ responses to statement 11

From 76 participants, 65 participants either agreed or strongly agreed that 3030EDN equipped them with the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to teach Indigenous histories (85.5%). A total of 11 participants were either uncertain or disagreed that 3030EDN prepared them to teach Indigenous histories effectively.
Participants were also asked if 3030EDN prepared them to teach Indigenous cultures. From 76 participants, 65 participants either agreed or strongly agreed that 3030EDN equipped them with the necessary knowledge and skills to teach Indigenous cultures (85.5%). Overall, this statement received exactly the same response as the previous statement.

5.4.4 Summary

In summary, most participants surveyed indicated they had limited content knowledge (64.9%) and teaching skills (73.6%) in relation to Indigenous studies prior to 3030EDN. The majority of participants also indicated that their primary (63.1%) and secondary (74.3%) schooling experiences did not place importance on Indigenous studies as part of the curriculum, or they were uncertain as to this. While half of participants were either uncertain or would not have selected 3030EDN if it were an elective course prior to enrolment in 3030EDN (50.6%), nearly all participants considered that Indigenous studies should be taught in Australian schools (94.6%). This is an interesting result as it indicates that 3030EDN played a key role in the shaping of pre-service teachers’ attitudes towards the discipline of Indigenous studies and its importance in education and curriculum.

In relation to Indigenous histories and cultures, most participants indicated they had a broad knowledge of Indigenous histories (66.2%), while 33.7% of participants did not feel as though they had a broad knowledge. Moreover, most participants indicated they had a broad knowledge of Indigenous cultures (64.9%), while 34.9% of participants did not feel as though
they had a broad knowledge. What is interesting to note is that participants perceived their teaching skills to be greater than their knowledge of Indigenous content. The majority of participants indicated that they were prepared to teach Indigenous histories (80.5%) and cultures (72.7%).

However, some participants did not feel prepared to teach Indigenous histories (19.4%) and cultures (27.3%) in education contexts. Overall, the overwhelming majority of participants considered that 3030EDN effectively prepared them to teach Indigenous histories and cultures in education spaces (85.5%). This a positive result because it indicates that 3030EDN was a necessary course in the training of pre-service teachers with regards to Indigenous education. However, the results also indicate that there are a number of pre-service teachers who still require further support in this space.

5.5 Yarning Sessions

5.5.1 Introduction

The yarning session component of this study involved four, one-hour yarns with 3030EDN pre-service teachers. It should be noted that through the on-line survey all session participants indicated that they were willing to be interviewed by providing details when completing the on-line survey. The interview method used was ‘yarning’ as discussed in Chapter Four and it was hoped that this method would provide participants the opportunity to discuss their individual experiences with 3030EDN, teaching Indigenous studies and AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

My role within the session was to facilitate asking a number of questions and to actively listen to participants as well as ask additional questions in order for research participants to elaborate on important issues. In total, there were seven main questions as well as a number of sub-questions (see Appendix H).

5.5.2 Background demographics

Before the commencement of each yarning session, participants completed a general background demographic sheet (see Appendix S). In total, were three female participants and one male participant. All four participants were non-Indigenous, aged between 25 and 45. All participants undertook the majority of their formal education in Australia and successfully
completed 3030EDN in Semester 1, 2016. Three sessions were conducted at Griffith’s Mt Gravatt campus and one session was conducted at the Gold Coast campus. All participants signed the Research Project Consent Form before the commencement of the session (see Appendix G).

5.5.3 Participants’ responses

For the purposes of anonymity, in this section, all participants’ names have been substituted with a pseudonym. The main themes and responses are outlined below.

Lack of interaction with Indigenous content at school

The first question focused on participants’ schooling experiences with regards to Indigenous studies. Sue stated she had not learnt any Indigenous content whilst at school. She stated:

I didn't do it. I was at school in the 80s to early 90s. We didn't do anything - never studied it. History, we just did the explorers that came to Australia - Burke and Wills. We did NAIDOC celebrations at one school I went to there but there were very few Indigenous kids at the school.

Deb indicated that when “doing Indigenous studies here [Griffith], I discovered my schooling was extremely limited”. She also stated that “At school, we had no Indigenous students. We covered Australian history – western history. We studied some Aboriginal studies. We glossed over it. We went out to the local Aboriginal centre but other than that there wasn’t really a lot covered”.

Frances shared a similar view, commenting:

You kinda glossed over the fact that it was invasion and that there was a past history there but you didn't really learn a lot about what happened or how it happened… it was very glossed over and I don't know if that's probably because of maybe living in a very middle class to upper class… I mean I went to very good schools in Sydney and you just didn't have anything like that available.

Jack also agreed that his exposure to Indigenous studies was limited. He stated, “It was pretty much non-existent, like 10-15 years ago. So if there was [Indigenous studies], it wasn't very
engaging or meaningful. Just the usual, like murals and dot paintings, but I can't remember learning about actual culture”. He further stated that Indigenous studies at school “was tokenistic and it wasn't enlightening at all. They did the bare essentials with what the curriculum back then probably dictated they do”. From this, it is clear that participants all perceived that their schooling experiences with regard to Indigenous studies was limited. Sue stated that she had no schooling experience with the discipline and a key theme which emerged from these sessions was that when Indigenous studies was incorporated into the curriculum, it was ‘glossed over’ or presented in tokenistic ways.

**Student hesitation before 3030EDN and the issue of ‘white privilege’**

Participants were asked how they felt with regards to starting 3030EDN. This question received mixed responses. Sue stated:

> I must admit that it was very shocking that first lecture. I just felt like segregated in a way. It was very ‘your people’, ‘my people’, and you know 'you're privileged' and I thought that's not very fair because there's probably people in this course who aren't privileged at all – they are struggling. I looked around the lecture hall and there were a lot of people, the body language, it was just very closed and you could just see they were very uncomfortable and very angry… [they had] folded arms and you know sort of not comfortable facial expressions and stuff and there was a lot of bitching after that first lecture.

Sue confirmed that the students mentioned in the above story were non-Indigenous pre-service teachers and when asked what students were saying in relation to this issue, Sue stated “Oh you know just people saying ‘I'm not privileged’”. Despite these comments, Sue was initially excited about commencing 3030EDN. She considered that the course was important for quality teacher purposes and she would have selected the course if it were an elective.

In contrast, Deb was hesitant about both starting 3030EDN and selecting the course if it were an elective. With regards to commencement, she stated “I was nervous because I heard things from other students and things that the course convenor was very tough on us. But going in I was really interested in the information we were given”. When asked about whether she would have chosen the course as an elective, she stated “That's a really good question. I don't know… probably a little bit hesitant. It's more of a worry that I'm going to do something wrong”.

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Similar to Sue, Deb also commented on the language and terms used in 3030EDN. She stated “I know a lot of people weren't happy with the 'white privilege' term”. Deb then explained that her first year of university was a new experience in relation to Indigenous perspectives being embedded into the curriculum. She stated:

> When we came to university they were extremely clear in our first course, about the specific ways – you can't call them 'Aboriginals'. You have to say 'Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander' or ‘First Nations'. When they were acknowledging the original owners of the land, I realised that I had a very limited and sheltered background. I hadn’t ever seen or encountered anything like that, especially in my first degree 20 years ago.

This prior lack of cultural and content knowledge contributed to Deb’s feelings of hesitation before starting 3030EDN.

Frances shared a similar response to Deb. She stated “I think probably the hardest thing was, when you actually spoke to the guys who were in the year above us, they didn't have a particularly good experience. They might have tainted our views initially”. When asked about the information given to Frances in relation to the course, she was told by past students that “there's a lot of blame happening in those lectures… it’s all your fault, you're in trouble, you need to be nice to Indigenous children – and it's all white fault, but it wasn't like that when we went in there”. Frances stated that she was also hesitant and had her “defences up” with regards to starting 3030EDN. This was due to a lack of content knowledge and negative student feedback, however she was still prepared to engage in the course. Frances was also uncertain about selecting 3030EDN if it were an elective.

Furthermore, Jack also received negative feedback from previous students. He stated “I heard a couple of students did a summer course, I didn't hear like raving things about it, so I was going into it with mixed feelings”. This response is very similar to Deb and Frances as it highlights a sense of uncertainty before the commencement of 3030EDN. Jack indicated that before 3030EDN, he had studied a History course. This course appeared to be the reason why Jack would have selected 3030EDN as an elective. He stated “prior to History, I would probably not have chosen it, but post History, I definitely would have”.

These views from Deb, Frances and Jack suggest that their limited schooling experiences with Indigenous studies, together with a lack of content knowledge prior to 3030EDN, as well as
being subjected to mostly negative student feedback all contributed to feelings of uncertainty regarding the commencement of 3030EDN.

Mixed experiences with 3030EDN

When asked what participants thought the main purpose or learning objective of 3030EDN was, Sue, Deb and Jack had similar views. These were mainly focused on the importance of Indigenous studies, issues and Indigenous students. Sue stated “I think it's just being aware of the culture of Indigenous people and how it's different to western society”. Deb perceived that the purpose of 3030EDN was to “increase awareness of Indigenous issues and how we can teach Indigenous students and Indigenous studies”. Jack perceived the key aim was to “inform pre-service teachers about the negative stereotypes and misconceptions in relation to Indigenous people and students”.

Frances expressed a different view. She stated, “To be honest, I didn’t really know. I thought the main purpose initially was a bit of a history lesson. It didn't turn out to be a history lesson”. She went on to say:

I thought it was more about ways we could incorporate teaching Indigenous students because they do learn maybe a little bit differently. I think it gave me awareness… but I don't think it gave me the right tools to be able to deal with Indigenous students - cause I mean you're dealing with Indigenous students, you're dealing with students with difficulties, and they're saying, well they're not students with difficulties.

In addition to this, Frances elaborated on her experiences with 3030EDN’s assessment items, resources and course textbook:

There just wasn't enough maybe resource given, or resource sort of pointed out. I found the EATSIPS modules were terrible… you probably have heard this feedback as well, and they were just annoying to be honest… one of the things I think I found most influential in changing my thought process was the textbook. Because it was written in first person, but it also gave a lot of his kind of stories about how he dealt with it, and what he sort of felt going in to remote communities and Indigenous communities and how he changed what he was doing in order to kind of make it work. And that I probably found it was a bit more influential than being told ‘this is how kids learn’.

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Pre-service teacher interest in Indigenous education

It is important to note that all participants had engaged in or attempted to further develop their knowledge of Indigenous education issues or affairs either during or since 3030EDN completion. Sue stated that she was Facebook friends with Indigenous people and as such received Indigenous-related social media notifications. Moreover, she stated that she had spoken to her family and friends about Indigenous histories and had also engaged in watching programs on the National Indigenous Television (NITV) network.

Deb stated “I liked some pages on Facebook since I started the course”. Furthermore, Deb had ordered some children’s texts on Indigenous stories. Frances stated that she was more aware of students with an Indigenous background. In addition Frances said that during 3030EDN, she had conversations with her family and other students at university on Indigenous issues. Moreover, Jack had contacted a family member who is a teacher in a remote Aboriginal community and talked with her in relation to her teaching experiences. He stated “I found it very interesting listening to her experiences and thinking 'wow' just so much out there that they [pre-service teachers] are not prepared for and these kind of courses would really, really save me in those kind of situations”. Moreover, Jack stated that since his 3030EDN completion, he is now more willing to embed Indigenous perspectives in his future lessons.

Lack of knowledge on Indigenous histories and confusion with the word ‘broad’

Participants were asked whether they perceived they had a broad knowledge of Indigenous histories. Sue responded “I wouldn't say broad, I don't think unless you're probably an Indigenous person you have a ‘broad’ knowledge… I’m aware”. Deb was confused about the word ‘broad’ and perceived that she had a ‘general’ knowledge of Indigenous histories and said her knowledge had developed because of 3030EDN. Deb stated “I feel there are topics now that I didn't even think about, that I could go into a classroom and take more comfortably than I would have prior to the course”. Deb further stated “To me, broad seems a really big understanding… I have some understanding but I wouldn't describe it as being broad”. Overall, Deb considered that her knowledge of histories equated to a 6 out of 10 (with 10 as ‘broad’).

In addition, Frances perceived her knowledge of Indigenous histories as being ‘mixed’. She stated “I feel yes in some parts of Australia and no in others”. She described her knowledge of Indigenous histories as uncertain and said she was overall “sitting on the fence”. Moreover,
Jack stated “I wouldn’t say a broad knowledge, I have a broad interest… I don’t have a commanding knowledge but I feel like I have the basis to be able to do more”. From this response, I asked Jack to rate his knowledge of Indigenous histories using the scale that Deb described in her session. Jack responded “I am maybe a 7”.

When asked about the number of Aboriginal languages spoken prior to European occupation, Sue responded with “there were hundreds of Aboriginal language groups” and Deb stated that “I don’t know the exact number, but there was more than 200”. Frances and Jack stated that were thousands (3000) of Aboriginal language groups before 1788. All participants agreed that they had viewed the map of Aboriginal Australia at some stage in 3030EDN. Jack commented that it was the first time he had seen a map of Aboriginal Australia. Overall, Sue, Deb and Jack directly perceived that their knowledge of Indigenous histories was not ‘broad’. Frances considered that her knowledge was uncertain. While all participants considered they had some knowledge of Indigenous histories, no participant perceived they had a ‘broad’ knowledge.

Lack of knowledge on Indigenous cultures and languages

Participants were asked whether they perceived they had a broad knowledge of Indigenous cultures. Sue perceived her knowledge as “a little bit above average”. Deb was again confused in relation to the definition of the word ‘broad’. She stated “There's that word ‘broad’. I know a lot more than I did… but it was all very new content”. Deb perceived again that she had a ‘general’ knowledge as opposed to a ‘broad’ knowledge and rated her knowledge a 6 out of 10.

Frances considered her knowledge of Indigenous cultures was very limited. She stated:

No, I think this one’s an outright no. If you were to pick me up right now and stick me in the middle of a remote community and say 'go and make friends', I would probably make every cultural insensitivity thing wrong, because I don't really know… I think I would probably offend somebody.

When asked how Frances felt in relation to her current knowledge of Indigenous cultures, she said “It’s pretty scary when you think about it. But I think it's just sort of, something that you kind of learn along the way”. Jack also perceived his knowledge of Indigenous cultures as limited. He stated “No, not broad enough. I would like it to be more. I’m probably a 5 out of 10”. Jack elaborated and said “I had absolutely no idea of Indigenous cultures. I was quite
shocked to see like, to have such a big part of Australia and know nothing about it”. Overall, this question received similar responses to the previous question with regards to participants’ knowledge of Indigenous histories. Frances and Jack directly stated they did not have a broad knowledge of Indigenous cultures. While Sue did not directly use the word ‘broad’, she perceived her knowledge was “slightly above average”. Also, Deb perceived she had a ‘general’ knowledge of Indigenous cultures as opposed to a ‘broad’ knowledge. From this, no participant perceived they had a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous cultures.

In relation to participants’ local knowledge of the Brisbane and Gold Coast Aboriginal nations and language groups, Sue, Deb and Frances could not recall this information and did not know the names of the language groups. However, Jack stated the correct name of the language group of the Gold Coast campus site.

**Student confidence and teaching practicum issues**

Participants were then asked whether they were prepared to teach Indigenous histories. Sue stated “I’d have a go. I feel I can probably like do a brief summary, but learning from 3030, I would contact with the local Indigenous community and have someone come in and help guide the learning process with students”. Deb was confident and said “I think I'm ready to have a go at it”. Frances responded similar to both Deb and Sue. Frances stated “I think I could teach it. But I’d need the correct resources”. Jack also displayed confidence. He stated:

Yes, a lot more than last year. Like if you asked me that question last year, I would probably think yeah should be pretty easy, like what is there to say? But after History and definitely Indigenous studies, it's so much more, and like I'd definitely make it un-tokenistic, like meaningful.

All participants were more confident in their teaching skills than their content knowledge of Indigenous histories. Deb elaborated on her response and stated that she was hesitant of teaching Indigenous histories in her current teaching practicum. She stated:

I’m not really sure how it will be received, my supervising teacher said to me, ‘that girl over there is Indigenous’ and then she said ‘whatever that means’ after it. I was like that sounds a bit strange - coming out of an Indigenous course and seeing a teacher that
has been teaching how many years saying that… it was my first day with her, so I didn't say anything… she's the one who’s going to be passing or failing me.

Jack shared a similar experience on his teaching practicum. He considered that his supervising teacher failed to effectively embed Indigenous perspectives in relation to the topic of Australia Day. He stated:

So I was in the class. Some students actually said to her that they’ve heard something different [regarding different perspectives on Australia day]. They ‘opened the door’ for her to go into a pathway, but then she just slammed it shut. And I was like 'no’… I was frustrated with the education that the kids were receiving in that history lesson.

Jack also did not initiate any conversation about this issue with his supervising teacher. Overall, these examples highlight the complexities surrounding pre-service teachers who may be interested in embedding Indigenous perspectives, but may feel cautious or hesitant due to their supervising teacher’s ideological or educational position. This also may be impacted by the discourses of power between supervising and pre-service teachers in relation to ‘passing’ or ‘failing’ the teaching practicum.

Mixed responses regarding teaching Indigenous cultures

From this, participants were asked if they were prepared to teach Indigenous cultures. Frances responded “That's a hard question. I think I do. I'm pretty sure I can. But I think I would struggle if I didn’t have the resources”. Jack stated “I would like to say yes, but my only worry is that I haven't had any experiences teaching students from an Indigenous culture”. Sue and Deb had very similar responses. They considered that the teaching of Indigenous cultures should be left solely to Indigenous people. Deb stated “I’d prefer to get someone in, from the Indigenous community to help me and advise me, rather than just going in blind and doing it by myself”. Moreover, Sue said “I think there's a lot of people in the community who would be able to assist. You know, bring them in, an Indigenous elder or something”. Both Sue and Deb said that their responses were directly informed by 3030EDN. Sue stated:

Well 3030 really pumped into us that we shouldn't be teaching it – that we should be getting a member of the community to come into the classroom and they teach it. It
should really be the Indigenous community coming in and doing it, and we're just like, alongside them.

Overall, Frances and Jack perceived that they may struggle to teach Indigenous cultures due to a lack of experience and resources. Moreover, both Sue and Deb stated that Indigenous cultures should only be taught by Indigenous people. From this, it is clear that all participants indicated they were less prepared in teaching Indigenous cultures as opposed to histories.

Lack of confidence with Aboriginal English

Against this backdrop, participants were asked about their attitudes regarding the teaching and use of Indigenous languages including Australian Aboriginal English (Aboriginal English) in classrooms. This question received very similar responses amongst Sue, Deb and Frances. Sue stated that she did not feel comfortable using or teaching Aboriginal English. She stated “No, because I haven’t studied it enough. I’ve never been taught anything. I'd have to really research it”. Deb stated “No, I don't know any Aboriginal English so I don't think I would be able to teach it”. Frances also responded “No, cause I don't know enough about it. And I don't know the correct terminology”. In contrast, Jack stated that he was prepared to teach Aboriginal English. When asked if Jack could demonstrate his knowledge of some Aboriginal English words, Jack only remembered one word. He rated his knowledge of Aboriginal English a 6 out of 10 (10 being ‘broad’).

Despite all participants’ lack of Aboriginal English knowledge, Sue, Frances and Jack supported the notion that Aboriginal English was appropriate to use in classrooms by Aboriginal students in relation to writing, speaking and assessment. For example, Frances said “At the end of the day if they're completing assessment and they feel comfortable using the word then why can't they use it?” However, Deb considered that the use of Aboriginal English was only appropriate in certain geographical settings. When asked if Deb would allow Indigenous students to speak and write in Aboriginal English, she responded:

I don’t know. Well teaching in Brisbane, probably not. But if I was in a remote community than Aboriginal English would be the language you would use in the classroom… You'd have to teach everyone a completely different language to be able to get them to respond in that language… that would be extra on top of the Australian Curriculum as well.
This response is interesting as it directly contradicts all of the other participants’ responses.

Overall, Sue, Deb and Frances perceived that teaching Aboriginal English would be a challenging task. While Jack showed an interest in Aboriginal English, he did not perceive that his knowledge was at a ‘broad’ level. All participants considered that they did not have a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous languages including Aboriginal English and the majority of participants stated that they were not prepared to teach it in classrooms.

*Limited practicum experiences with embedding Indigenous perspectives*

In relation to practicum experiences, Deb and Jack had no experience of teaching Indigenous content prior to the yarning session, whereas Sue and Frances had some limited experience. Both Sue and Frances stated that they each had one practicum experience incorporating Indigenous perspectives. Sue did not comment on her teaching experience and Frances stated that her practicum experience was “actually not too bad”. It should be noted that no participant critically reflected on their practicum experience.

*Policy issues: Unable to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4*

At this stage of the session, participants received a hard copy of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 (see Appendix I). Participants were asked to read the policy standard and share their perspectives. When asked what this policy standard meant to participants as graduating teachers, Sue and Deb shared similar responses. Both participants simply re-read the policy. Sue elaborated on the policy and said that prior to the session, she thought that the standard only focused on Indigenous histories and cultures, and did not involve Indigenous languages.

Deb stated “Well this policy means that you have to understand it [Indigenous content], and be able to teach it”. Deb also commented on the language component of the standard. Deb said “The language part - well I don't think that really means that you have to be able to teach an Indigenous language”.

Sue perceived that she was unable to meet the policy standard. She stated:

I’d love to teach it (Indigenous studies). I think I’m very passionate that my students should know the histories and everything. Whether I’m going to give all the correct
facts because I'm not Indigenous, that's where I'm worried… I would love to be able to demonstrate that standard.

Deb also perceived that she could not meet the policy standard. After reading it, she stated “So I'm not where I need to be”. Deb said:

On paper, I think I would pass this… I think that I could demonstrate it at an interview - the people interviewing me would be completely happy and satisfied with my answers. But for me personally, I feel like I haven’t had enough interaction with Indigenous people in my life time to be fully at that ‘broad’ level.

Deb also stated that “If you had given me this [policy] at the beginning I probably would have said ‘yes I can’, but because we broke it down I was like ‘no I don't feel confident’”.

Frances questioned the structure of the standard and also perceived she was unable to meet the policy standard. She said:

This standard actually scares me… It says here 'demonstrate'. Demonstrate means that I need to show somebody that I have a broad knowledge and understanding and respect, but how do you demonstrate that? How do you physically show someone that?

In addition to this, Jack considered that the policy standard meant that graduates should teach Indigenous studies “in the right way… in a respectful way and not in a tokenistic way”. With regards to the histories and cultures component of the standard, Jack considered that he would feel more prepared to teach these aspects if he had an Indigenous elder or a professional with Indigenous expertise overlooking his professional practice.

Jack also perceived that he did not meet the policy standard. He stated:

The word ‘broad’ confuses me. To be on the graduate level of it, I feel like I would definitely [need to be] implementing it a bit more in my prac.

Overall, the general perception of all research participants was that they were unable to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Sue, Deb and Frances were asked to rate their knowledge and understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures and languages from least prepared to teach to most prepared. Participants all agreed that teaching Indigenous languages (including
Aboriginal English) would be the most difficult component of the standard, followed by teaching Indigenous cultures. Participants perceived they were most prepared to teach Indigenous histories. While Jack was not directly asked this question, his aforementioned responses suggested that he was more prepared to teach Indigenous histories as opposed to cultures and languages.

Assessment concerns, the issue of ‘white privilege’ and more courses for pre-service teachers

The final question explored participants’ individual experiences with 3030EDN. Sue stated that the 3030EDN EATSIPS assessment item developed her learning and understanding of Indigenous content. However, she stated that “the exam was very strange. It shouldn't have been multiple choice. It was too content heavy”. In addition, Sue mentioned that her engagement in tutorials in terms of speaking and responding to questions was limited. This was because Sue considered that she did not have adequate knowledge of appropriate Indigenous language terminology. She stated “I think I was worried I would offend… I just didn’t want to say the wrong thing. I didn’t know if my tutor had an Indigenous background”.

Overall, Sue perceived that she was more prepared to teach Indigenous studies than she was prior to 3030EDN. She also stated “I would probably incorporate it [Indigenous content] the same as teachers who are in schools now”. When asked to clarify this statement, Sue explained “Well they don't incorporate – they just teach what's in the textbooks really. Not that I'm going to teach what's in the textbooks, I think I'm more aware than the teachers”.

In terms of recommendations, Sue suggested that two compulsory Indigenous courses, professional development workshops and longer courses were needed for pre-service teachers. She stated “If they were truly going to train pre-service teachers to achieve the standard then there would be at least two compulsory courses on it… maybe even do PD workshops or something… nine weeks is not enough, it’s probably enough to do the EATSIPS module”. When asked if Sue would like to make any further comments on 3030EDN, she commented on the teaching practice, course assessment and on the concept of ‘white privilege’. She stated:

I sort of feel in a way, it came across like it was a blame game. Like it was always 'you people', 'you people' and then ‘my people’, it was the whole 'us' and 'them' and the privilege – 'you're privileged' I think that just got people… like at first I was like 'what the hell' but as I went through, there was one module we did in the EATSIPS module
and it just, you know it just put yourself in the place of an Indigenous person and I was just like 'wow, we are privileged'. It was a lot of the younger kids, I think that [the term 'white privilege'] wasn't clarified as much so a lot of people were like 'how dare you say that'?... I think there's a better way of going about it though. I think instead of just going 'blah' at someone, I don't know, maybe a better explanation at the beginning.

Sue again mentioned that throughout 3030EDN, some students were frustrated and angry with the concept of ‘white privilege’.

There were many similarities between Sue and Deb’s responses. Deb also considered that the EATSIPS program improved her learning. She stated “it made me look at things I hadn't even considered”. However, she commented on the attitudes of other students and said that they were negative towards the EATSIPS program. She stated:

The attitude, the way people talked about the EATSIPS modules as well, they didn't, some people didn't seem to be taking it that seriously, [they said] 'Oh I just wrote anything' and I was like well you're meant to be reflecting on this information as much as you can. I mean this is something that could be a real issue.

In relation to the course exam, Deb stated that “the exam was awful. It was so much information to read”. In addition, Deb enjoyed the lesson plan assessment item and her tutorials. She also mentioned that she was more prepared to teach Indigenous studies after completing 3030EDN. Overall, Deb recommended that a longer course was needed in order for her to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. She stated:

Well it was a lot of information to get into 9 weeks as well. Cause this is our only chance to study the Indigenous side of things… give us the full 13 weeks to absorb it all because a 9 week course and then you're also doing your prac and you're thinking about prac, so you're really not focussing as much as you should be…

Deb made additional comments on the language and terms used in EATSIPS and in the lectures. She recommended that 3030EDN should be careful in its teaching delivery with regards to the use of ‘divisive’ language terminology and binaries. She stated:

We all knew about the white privilege questions coming on EATSIPS, everyone's like 'you've got the white privilege' - 'yep' and it’s like ‘no’ [I don’t]. And yeah those kind of concepts and things, ‘us and them’… We were very respectful in the tutorial room
and I don't think anything like that was really said. It was, I think, more in the lecture that people were getting off-side.

Against this backdrop, Frances shared similar views to Sue and Deb. She considered that the course exam was her least favourite assessment item. She stated “the exam – disgust. There was a series of things in that exam that were never discussed in the tutorial or never discussed in the lecture. I think it just needs a review”. While Sue and Deb agreed that overall they benefited educationally from the EATSIPS program, Frances did not share this view. She stated the “EATSIPS module needs to be completely reviewed. It was confusing”. Frances also commented on the duration of 3030EDN, in particular on the length of the EATSIPS assessment item. She considered that EATSIPS was not an appropriate assessment item for the nine week course and a longer course was needed to complete that assessment task. When asked if she thought EATSIPS assisted her in attempting to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, she stated “Possibly, but my hatred for it probably blocked if from my mind. It sounds really harsh but when you're doing something that takes you the whole semester to kind of work on – you start to hate it”. Despite this, Frances stated that “I really liked the lesson plan”.

Overall, Frances recommended that longer courses, Indigenous elective course options and a stronger emphasis on embedding Indigenous perspectives in university practicum courses would have assisted her in meeting AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. While Frances perceived that she needed professional development in all three areas of the standard (histories, cultures and languages), she also considered that her preparedness to teach Indigenous content had developed from 3030EDN. She stated “I probably know more than I did when I walked into the subject”.

Jack agreed with Sue, Deb and Frances and noted that it was difficult to cover the 3030EDN course content within the nine week course. He stated “I definitely felt that I could have gotten more from a longer 13 week course. The content could have been explored in more depth”. While Jack did not discuss the course exam, he considered that the EATSIPS program was beneficial. He stated “EATSIPS was great. I really enjoyed that resource”. Jack also found the tutorials to be supportive and friendly. He commented:

I came into [the] tute and it was completely different than what I thought, it was just nice and friendly. I liked [the] tute because it was quite casual and I guess quite a small
group and it was quite easy to talk and I enjoyed that. Completely different to what I was leading into it.

Jack also perceived that he was more prepared to teach Indigenous studies after 3030EDN. He stated “I definitely feel more prepared after 3030. I think what is most notable is that I had no idea how unprepared I was prior to taking the course”. In terms of recommendations, Jack mentioned that other academic disciplines should attempt to Indigenise the teaching and learning process. He also commented on the program structure. He stated:

Because I've done two pracs before going into this and I was preparing for my third during this and I had no understanding of Indigenous culture so how was I meant to incorporate this in my first two pracs anyway? So I think you'd need to have something… earlier… I think this was a great introductory to it anyway.

5.5.4 Summary

In summary, all participants considered they had limited knowledge, understanding and schooling experiences with Indigenous studies prior to 3030EDN. Most participants were hesitant about commencing 3030EDN and half of participants were uncertain if they would have selected the course if it were an elective. This is a very similar result to the survey which also found that half of participants were either unsure or would not have selected 3030EDN as an elective prior to commencing the course. It is important to note that all participants attempted to further develop their knowledge of Indigenous issues during or since completion of 3030EDN. However, a serious issue which permeated throughout some of the sessions was the concept of ‘white privilege’. Some participants mentioned that the term ‘while privilege’ was very difficult for 3030EDN students to effectively understand. Moreover, the responses of these participants also indicate that they themselves did not fully understand the concept of ‘white privilege’. This issue was further compounded by participants who stated that 3030EDN implemented at times ‘divisive’ language terminology and binaries in the education process.

In relation to Indigenous studies, all participants perceived they did not have a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous histories, cultures and languages. Despite this, all participants stated various skill-levels with regards to teaching Indigenous content. All participants perceived they were more prepared to teach Indigenous histories as opposed to Indigenous cultures and Indigenous languages (including Aboriginal English). This theme is interesting as it aligns with
the survey results regarding the teaching of Indigenous content. Both the survey and yarning sessions found that pre-service teachers perceived they had a greater level of pedagogical and teaching competency as opposed to their perceived knowledge and understanding of Indigenous studies. Within the sessions, this is further interesting due to participants’ lack of practicum teaching experience with the discipline.

They were mixed experiences regarding the assessment items of 3030EDN. While most research participants benefited from the EATSIPS assessment item, the majority of pre-service teachers considered that the Course Exam needed to be revised. No in-depth comments were made about the Lesson Plan assessment item indicating that participants had no serious issues with this assessment item. In terms of recommendations, all participants stated that the duration of the 3030EDN nine week course was not sufficient to cover the amount of course content.

While all participants considered they were more prepared to teach Indigenous studies after 3030EDN completion, no participant perceived that they met the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. This issue was further compounded by the fact that some participants were unclear if they were meant to teach Indigenous cultures or if AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 required them to know and teach Indigenous languages. Furthermore, some participants were also confused by the definition of the word ‘broad’ in the standard. Another key theme of the yarning sessions was that no participant discussed that teaching Indigenous studies would assist in promoting reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. No participant stated that the main aim or purpose of 3030EDN was to foster cultural reconciliation despite being asked this particular question. This aim of promoting reconciliation was a key focus and learning objective of 3030EDN as well as a key educational goal of AITSL Focus Area 2.4.
CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

6.1 Approach

Before undertaking the analysis of the results and themes from the collected research data, it is important to outline the general structure of this section. According to Kohn (1997) and Harling (2003), a key approach in relation to case study analysis concerns the identification of research data patterns. Through this approach, researchers’ “primary focus of [their] analysis is on the overall pattern of results” (Kohn, 1997, p. 6). This chapter is primarily based on the ‘summary’ sections with regards to the 3030EDN course materials (5.2.3); AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 (5.3.3); the on-line survey (5.4.4); and the yarning sessions (5.5.4). An in-depth examination and comparison of these summaries including the identification of patterns, data similarities and repetition across the results of the various methods provides the foundation for this chapter.

The theoretical framework of IST will be used at various stages throughout this chapter to analyse the themes of this research study. In particular, I will draw upon my own lived experience as an Indigenous teacher which will provide the entry point for investigation and the locale for this critical discussion. From this, an understanding and recognition of the negotiation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous positions in this space will highlight the agency component of IST. Lastly, this discussion will carefully analyse the tensions which exist at the Cultural Interface, including the discipline of Indigenous studies evidenced in the collected research data.

This chapter has been organised into four sections. These sections include: before commencement of 3030EDN; student experiences with 3030EDN; knowledge and preparedness to teach Indigenous studies; and AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

Sections one and two of this chapter are explicitly designed to provide context to both the research topic and the main research question. Section three will respond to the first research sub-question: To what extent do pre-service teachers feel prepared to teach Indigenous studies? Following this, section four will respond to the main research question: what are the perceptions of pre-service teachers in relation to their preparedness to meet the requirements of the AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 following the completion of 3030EDN? Section four will also respond to the second research sub question: To what extent do pre-service teachers feel
3030EDN has prepared them to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4? Lastly, the final section of this chapter (6.3) will summarise the main findings of this study.

6.2 Analytical discussion

This section has been further organised into key themes that arose from this study.

6.2.1 Before commencement of 3030EDN

Introduction

The majority of students surveyed and all yarning session participants indicated that their schooling experiences did not place importance on Indigenous studies as part of the curriculum. Moreover, most survey participants and all session participants perceived they had a limited knowledge and understanding of Indigenous studies as well as the skills needed to teach the discipline prior to 3030EDN. It is also interesting that half of participants surveyed were uncertain or would not have selected 3030EDN if it were an elective prior to enrolment in 3030EDN. This result aligns with the yarning sessions which similarly found that half of participants were uncertain if they would have selected the course as an elective prior to 3030EDN. Furthermore, three out of four session participants were hesitant about commencing 3030EDN.

From this, three key themes have emerged. These are: students’ limited experiences with Indigenous content at both school and university; students’ uncertainty in relation to the selection of 3030EDN as an elective; and student hesitation towards the commencement of 3030EDN.

Limited experiences with Indigenous content

Of the 76 students surveyed, 28 students (36.8%) considered that their primary school placed an importance on Indigenous studies and from 74 participants, 19 students (25.6%) considered that their secondary school placed an importance on Indigenous studies. These results are positive given the historical absence of Indigenous studies in the education system. They demonstrate that the education system is gradually becoming more inclusive of Indigenous knowledges, which is a key aim for Indigenous education policy. However, these results also indicate that the majority of students perceived that their primary and secondary schools did
not place emphasis on Indigenous studies as part of the curriculum. What is interesting is the gap between students’ primary and secondary schooling interactions with this discipline. A total of nine students considered that their secondary experiences did not place emphasis on Indigenous content compared to the results regarding primary school experiences. This is revealing because it demonstrates that there was less exposure and interaction with Indigenous studies as students progressed throughout their schooling career. While this difference in figures is not substantial, it still highlights a lack of consistency in primary and secondary curriculum with regards to students learning Indigenous studies. In addition, all session participants considered that their schooling experiences were limited and most stated that the discipline was either ‘glossed over’ or implemented in ‘tokenistic’ ways at school.

In applying the IST principle of locale, I note that these findings are consistent with my teaching experience with 3030EDN as many of the students revealed in the early stages of the course that they had limited exposure to learning Indigenous content prior to 3030EDN. During the first tutorial session, the overwhelming majority of pre-service teachers indicated (by show of hands) that they had limited interaction with Indigenous content during their schooling experiences. This finding is supported by the literature which stated that Indigenous university courses are often the starting point for students to engage with Indigenous content (Mooney, Halse & Craven, 2003a; Bond, 2014). This finding also reinforces the literature which discusses the current education system and how it is underpinned by western influenced ideologies. As an Indigenous teacher, this is a major issue because if pre-service teachers are not exposed to learning Indigenous studies at school, then courses such as 3030EDN are likely to be the first substantial course of Indigenous curriculum interaction. This lack of exposure and interaction undoubtedly holds implications for pre-service teachers in their capacity to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

Students’ perceived lack of Indigenous knowledge at university is most likely underpinned by a lack of exposure to Indigenous studies at school. The majority of participants surveyed considered they had limited pedagogical skills (73.6%) and content knowledge (64.9%) of Indigenous studies prior to 3030EDN. All session participants perceived they had a limited knowledge of Indigenous studies prior to 3030EDN. These issues are a concern for AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. While this standard advocates for Indigenising the teaching and learning process, most survey participants and all session participants leading up to their commencement of 3030EDN, stated they did not have a strong foundational knowledge base.
of Indigenous studies. There is perhaps an imbalance in AITSL’s professional expectations of pre-service and graduate teachers to not only teach Indigenous studies, but in a way which meets AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. These figures suggest that it may be challenging for some pre-service teachers to perceive that they meet the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 when most students have had a lack of educational experience with Indigenous content during their schooling career. Overall, these results suggests that the locale of the majority of participants in this study (on-line survey and sessions) were mostly inexperienced non-Indigenous pre-service teachers who had limited exposure or content knowledge regarding Indigenous studies prior to commencement of 3030EDN.

**Student uncertainty about selecting 3030EDN as an elective course**

As stated above, half of the participants surveyed (50.6%) were either uncertain or would not have selected 3030EDN if it were an elective prior to compulsory enrolment in the course. Similarly, half of the session participants were uncertain if they would have selected 3030EDN as an elective prior to taking the course. In applying IST to this issue, it is argued that the lack of importance given to Indigenous university courses by these pre-service teachers is reflective of a broader prioritisation and familiarity with western knowledges over Indigenous knowledges. Through the lens of IST, this issue reveals a lack of agency experienced by most research participants as they may have felt disinterested or ill-prepared to undertake the course. This is an example of the negotiation stage that pre-service teachers may experience at the Cultural Interface in relation to selecting Indigenous elective courses over other university courses (*agency*).

This is a concern for Indigenous education progression and for AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. One must ask the question, how are educational outcomes going to improve for Indigenous students and how can pre-service teachers more effectively develop their knowledge and skills when they are hesitant about selecting Indigenous courses as electives? This data indicates that there needs to be more research undertaken in this space as to why so many pre-service teachers feel reluctant towards undertaking Indigenous courses. In addressing this lack of agency through IST with a view to contributing to a new agenda, it is submitted that there is a continued need for compulsory Indigenous education courses in university curriculum until such a time that this reluctance is alleviated.
Another issue surrounding students’ positions before 3030EDN is a feeling of hesitation towards the commencement of 3030EDN as a compulsory course. Phillips (2011) noted that there are many complexities and issues surrounding the compulsory nature of Indigenous university courses. She noticed throughout her teaching experience, that some students were resistant to learning within compulsory Indigenous courses. Phillips (2011) stated that “students in the compulsory program [appeared] to resist both content and process more strongly” (p. 1) as opposed to elective courses. While one session participant was initially excited to start 3030EDN, all of the other participants were hesitant to do so. Frances was both hesitant about starting 3030EDN and unsure about the overall aim of the course. When asked what she thought the purpose of 3030EDN was, she stated “To be honest, I didn’t really know. I thought the main purpose initially was a bit of a history lesson”. This response indicates a level of uncertainty towards and a lack of understanding of 3030EDN. The hesitation amongst three out of four participants was primarily underpinned by a lack of Indigenous content knowledge as well as negative course feedback from former Griffith pre-service teachers.

What is interesting to note is that the four session participants undertook the course at various Griffith campus locations which aligned with where the yarning sessions were conducted. Sue, Deb and Frances’s sessions were conducted at the Mt Gravatt campus whereas Jack’s session was conducted at the Gold Coast campus. Despite these location differences, all participants were exposed to mostly negative feedback by past students. While these participants did not consider that this feedback aligned with their individual experiences with 3030EDN, it did create a level of hesitation prior to starting the course. This issue highlights that compulsory Indigenous courses are challenging and at times, also controversial amongst some of the student population.

In reflecting on my own locale as an Indigenous tutor, it is concerning that the students who relayed this feedback to the 3030EDN cohort had previously undertaken the course. This result is another example of pre-service teachers struggling to negotiate in the Indigenous space. This is a clear demonstration of the principle of agency as pre-service teachers are attempting to reconcile feedback and criticism from past Griffith students with their own individual experiences. This also reinforces Nakata’s (2007a) views that the Indigenised space is a contested space of knowledge. In this case, 3030EDN was contested and criticised as an undergraduate course by pre-service teachers outside the teaching location.
It appears that even with the benefit of the course, these past students continue to struggle to reflect on and challenge their intrinsic educational and societal beliefs about Indigenous education. This issue highlights the tension at the Cultural Interface with regards to learning about Indigenous content and perspectives. As such, this discourse may influence university students who enter the compulsory Indigenous classroom to become critical of the teaching process and content (Phillips, 2011). Bond adds to this and stated:

The encounters that students have with Indigenous knowledges, perspectives and peoples are, of course, varied. Some students are willing participants who have elected to study us, but not necessarily learn from us, while others are resistant and dare I say “racist”, particularly if the course or lecture is a compulsory unit of study (2014, p. 1).

There are a range of issues which students may face before the commencement of a compulsory Indigenous course. These issues include a lack of content knowledge, limited schooling experiences with Indigenous studies, and an attitude of uncertainty and hesitation prior to starting the course or towards learning new knowledges. The initial attitudes of some pre-service teachers may affect the early teaching and learning process and in turn make it challenging for academics to prepare pre-service teachers in this space. There is a possibility that academics and tutors may be situated in a disadvantaged position before the commencement of the university course due to these aforementioned factors. These issues that Phillips and Bond highlight present as a concern for academics in not only teaching pre-service teachers, but also in preparing them to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

Figure 6.1 Conceptual diagram: Experiential stages of pre-service teachers

Below is an illustration of some pre-service teachers’ experiences with regards to the commencement of 3030EDN. This diagram highlights the relevant tensions including how a lack of exposure to Indigenous studies during school, compounded by a lack of content knowledge as well as negative feedback from former students throughout the undergraduate program, may impact upon pre-service teachers and contribute to feelings of hesitation prior to commencement of 3030EDN.

It is important to note that this diagram is not a representation of all 3030EDN students and their approach towards starting the course.¹ Rather, this diagram is based on the collected data

¹ For example, one session participant stated that she was excited about starting 3030EDN.
and key similarities between the on-line survey and sessions. This diagram is an attempt to explain the initial stages of some students’ experiences before commencement of 3030EDN. It has been divided into the following stages: school student; undergraduate student; and 3030EDN student.

6.2.2 Student experiences with 3030EDN

Introduction

This section has been predominately informed by the yarning session responses. All sessions were designed to yarn with participants and further explore their attitudes and perspectives on Indigenous studies, 3030EDN and AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

Mixed perceptions on Indigenous studies

While most session participants were initially hesitant about starting 3030EDN, after 3030EDN completion, the overwhelming majority of pre-service teachers (94.6%) surveyed considered that Indigenous studies should be taught in Australian schools. This is also supported by various statements made during the sessions. Sue stated “I’d love to teach it (Indigenous studies). I think I'm very passionate that my students should know the histories and everything”. Moreover, Jack stated that he would teach Indigenous histories in a meaningful and ‘un-
tokenistic’ way. These combined responses demonstrate that most participants valued the subject matter of the course and considered that it should be included in some capacity in the school curriculum. These responses are interesting given that most survey and all session participants stated that they had limited schooling experiences with Indigenous studies. This positive response highlights the IST principle of agency and its capacity to transform throughout compulsory Indigenous education courses. In particular, this group of pre-service teachers consider that what was lacking in their own schooling experience is important enough to now be included in schooling curriculum. This highlights these pre-service teachers’ improved sense of personal agency as they negotiate and shift in the Indigenous space and begin to reflect on and change previous attitudes towards Indigenous education. This result also reveals that this improved sense of agency in relation to Indigenous studies being included in Australian schools has led to a sense of empowerment and awareness of their role in teaching Indigenous perspectives.

In addition to this, all session participants attempted to further develop their knowledge of Indigenous issues during or since completion of 3030EDN. For example, Jack had contacted a family member who is a teacher in a remote Aboriginal community to discuss her teaching experiences. Jack also considered the main purpose of 3030EDN was to “inform pre-service teachers about the negative stereotypes and misconceptions in relation to Indigenous people and students”. While this participant perceived he did not meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, these specific responses highlight a positive attitude and a willingness to engage in Indigenous educational affairs. Moreover, it demonstrates a level of respect for Indigenous studies and 3030EDN. The continued involvement in Indigenous issues either during or post 3030EDN indicates that these students were interested in the subject matter beyond the classroom. The course materials and information taught in 3030EDN may have acted as a catalyst for further student interaction regarding Indigenous issues. This is another example of personal agency transformation as Jack shifted from a position of hesitation prior to 3030EDN commencement to a position of empowerment after completion of the course.

Contrast between past and present student interactions with teaching practices

Participants expressed mixed responses towards both the lectures and tutorials. While most session participants received negative feedback from past students in relation to 3030EDN, their individual experiences generally did not align with this feedback. For example, Deb stated “I was nervous because I heard things from other students… going in I was really interested in
the information we were given”. Frances had a similar experience. She was told by past students that “there's a lot of blame happening in those lectures... it's all ‘white fault’, but it wasn't like that when we went in there”. In addition, Jack also heard negative feedback but agreed that this feedback did not align with his personal experiences of the course. He said that 3030EDN “was completely different than what I thought”. These responses again indicate a positive shift in participants’ agency and ways of thinking about 3030EDN. They highlight a level of negotiation, self-reflection and transformation from what participants initially heard about the course and what they experienced. The utilisation of student reflective practice is needed in Indigenous courses so that pre-service teachers can appropriately and effectively engage with the course objectives and overcome the many complexities that arise from learning in this space.

A key issue which was discussed by Sue was in relation to ‘doing the wrong thing’ in class. Sue perceived she did not have adequate knowledge of appropriate language terminology and this created a feeling of hesitation with regards to 3030EDN contribution. She said “I think I was worried I would offend... I just didn't want to say the wrong thing. I didn’t know if my tutor had an Indigenous background”. As an Indigenous teacher, this particular response to learning Indigenous content is not uncommon. This issue was raised in my class by some 3030EDN students as an issue of concern (locale). These particular students were fearful of either ‘saying or doing the wrong thing’ in the tutorial sessions. In addition, Malezer and Sim’s study found that one of the issues affecting in-service teachers teaching Indigenous history was a “fear of doing the wrong thing. Like using the wrong terminology” (2002, p. 8). The only difference between these aforementioned examples is that one statement is at a pre-service level (learning the content) and the other is at an in-service level (teaching the content). This is a concern because this perceived fear of ‘saying or doing the wrong thing’ demonstrates a lack of agency and may mean that pre-service teachers who would like to engage or ask questions in Indigenous courses may be hesitant to do so. One implication of this is that it may limit student learning and development and therefore stifle the progress for student preparedness to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Given that this perceived fear may first arise at a pre-service level, addressing this lack of agency and lack of empowerment within an undergraduate program may assist in combatting this issue before it is experienced at an in-service level.
The issue of ‘white privilege’

While the majority of session participants considered that 3030EDN was more enjoyable than initially anticipated, certain concepts and language terminology were challenging for some students. In particular, two participants’ responses regarding the concept of ‘white privilege’ were highly charged. Sue stated:

I must admit that it was very shocking that first lecture. I just felt like segregated in a way... 'you're privileged' and I thought that's not very fair because there's probably people in this course who aren't privileged at all... [students] were very uncomfortable and very angry... there was a lot of bitching after that first lecture.

Deb also considered that some pre-service teachers found the term ‘white privilege’ contentious. Deb’s comment on the EATSIPS program was interesting. She stated that “We all knew about the ‘white privilege’ questions coming on EATSIPS, everyone's like 'you've got the white privilege' - 'yep' and it’s like ‘no’ [I don't]”. Deb was specifically referring to the article *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* by Peggy McIntosh in Module 5 of the EATSIPS program.

The issue of ‘white privilege’ was a profound example of the IST principle of tension at the Cultural Interface. In applying IST to Sue and Deb’s responses, it is clear that the concept of ‘white privilege’ was a serious issue for these participants. The concept of ‘white privilege’ is a particularly difficult concept and issue for teachers to navigate in the classroom in order for students not to disengage from the learning process. There is potential tension that can arise between teachers of Indigenous education courses and pre-service teachers when this concept is introduced and unpacked (Carnes, 2015). These responses, especially Sue’s, indicate that some pre-service teachers misunderstood the fundamental meaning of ‘white privilege’ as an analysis and evaluation of social and structural power and dominance rather than an individual and personalised criticism of non-Indigenous people. It appears as though Sue and Deb may have merged the concept of ‘class privilege’ with the concept of ‘white privilege’.

It is not surprising that some pre-service teachers found the concept of ‘white privilege’ difficult to understand and grasp as it requires non-Indigenous pre-service teachers to critically reflect on their own “invisible dominance” (Phillips, 2011, p. 180). This is further discussed by Carnes (2015) who stated that “Non-Indigenous people often have some predictable
reactions on their journey of transformation” (p. 6) in Indigenous courses. The particular comments made by Sue and Deb indicate that the focus of the discussion shifted from being a dialogue about Indigenous-related-issues to a dialogue about Sue and Deb’s reactions and emotions (Carnes, 2015). This is evident in Sue’s response as she stated “I must admit that it was very shocking that first lecture. I just felt like segregated in a way… (emphasis added)”. There was little discussion or analysis made by Sue regarding the educational content of the first 3030EDN lecture as most of Sue’s discussion on this matter was solely focused on exploring the issue of ‘white privilege’ and how she felt towards being introduced to this concept. Sue, to an extent, sought to justify her position by stating that, “there was a lot of bitching after that first lecture”. This comment indicates that Sue’s emotions, reactions and feelings towards hearing about the concept of ‘white privilege’ were not individually based, however, were a collective and common pre-service teacher response in relation to the concept of ‘white privilege’ after the first lecture. A serious implication of this is that Sue may be positioned into thinking that her response to the term ‘white privilege’ was ‘justified’ or ‘normal’ as her response was shared by other 3030EDN pre-service teachers. This issue has serious concerns for Indigenous teaching and in particular for Sue, in her ability to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

The concept of ‘white privilege’ is a contested term within the Cultural Interface and may be a source of frustration or anger for some pre-service teachers who have difficulty understanding it and negotiating between Indigenous and non-Indigenous positions on this concept (agency). It is clear that these responses indicate that both Sue and Deb lacked an academic and critical understanding of the concept of ‘white privilege’ and therefore lacked agency during and after 3030EDN regarding this matter.

The concept of ‘white privilege’ is a clear example of the “tug of war” (Nakata, 2007a, p. 216) of knowledge production within the Cultural Interface. Both Sue and Deb struggled to critically reflect on and resolve inner tensions between what they were being taught in 3030EDN and their personal views, attitudes and epistemologies. The debate surrounding this term is not merely academic. When non-Indigenous pre-service teachers explicitly refute the existence of ‘white privilege’ as outlined in Sue and Deb’s responses (perhaps because the concept is misunderstood), this may have a substantial impact on both Indigenous academics and Indigenous students. As an Indigenous tutor of 3030EDN, it was confronting to hear and witness these types of responses from pre-service teachers who had successfully completed the
course. This situation highlights the IST principles of agency and cultural tension. I was conflicted during these stages of the sessions as I experienced a “push-pull between Indigenous and not Indigenous positions” (Nakata, 2007a, p. 216) on important educational and socio-cultural related affairs. An understanding of the IST principle of agency during this stage of the sessions allowed for me to “see my position in a particular relation with others [and] maintain myself with knowledge of how I am being positioned…” (Nakata, 2007a, p. 216) by Sue and Deb’s responses. Overall, it was difficult to hear these types of comments and understand how I was being positioned in relation to the topic of ‘white privilege’. Due to research purposes, I was unable to defend my own position on this issue (Nakata, 2007a) which contributed to a personal lack of agency and lack of empowerment.

AITSL’s supporting document A unit outline and content for professional learning units to support teachers in meeting Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4: Module 3: Identity recommends that Australian teachers should read and reflect on McIntosh’s article on ‘white privilege’ for AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 purposes. What is interesting is that despite the inclusion of McIntosh’s article in 3030EDN assessment (as recommended by AITSL’s supporting document on Focus Area 2.4) some students still struggled with the concept of ‘white privilege’ after completion of 3030EDN. In order to respond to this tension, more work needs to be done so that pre-service teachers can understand the concept and apply it appropriately to their professional practice and philosophy.

The language binaries used in the lectures also sparked powerful responses from Sue and Deb. The language of ‘my people’ and ‘your people’ and ‘us’ and ‘them’ were discussed at length as an issue of concern. Deb warned that 3030EDN needed to be careful in its pedagogical delivery with regards to the use of ‘divisive’ terminology such as ‘us’ and ‘them’. Sue also said that 3030EDN “came across like it was a blame game” through the use of terms including ‘your people’ and ‘my people’ and ‘us’ and ‘them’. While Sue considered that her understanding of certain concepts including ‘white privilege’ developed throughout the course, she also suggested that this type of language should be softened and ultimately thought that “there's a better way of going about it”.

These responses again highlight a lack of agency and the struggle that these pre-service teachers have faced in negotiating Indigenous and non-Indigenous positions and perspectives. At its core, these responses are a criticism of teacher capabilities and pedagogies. Bond submits that “Interrogating Indigenous pedagogies and educator capabilities without acknowledging
[or understanding] how race, racism and whiteness are operationalised in teaching and learning environments is irresponsible and counter-productive” (2014, p. 2). It is argued that this is what occurred in the aforementioned responses of Sue and Deb. Their responses evidence the students’ non-Indigenous positions, epistemologies, and philosophies which were brought into the classroom environment. The participants’ responses demonstrate a continued level of resistance with regards to some language terminology despite having successfully completed 3030EDN. This analysis is another example of a lack of personal agency and unresolved tension which may confront pre-service teachers. It is a concern for academics as these responses indicate that there is still continuing work needed with some pre-service teachers.

**Mixed responses towards 303EDN course materials**

Most participants did not make specific reference to the 3030EDN course materials during the sessions. However, Frances did comment that “There just wasn’t enough maybe resource given, or resource sort of pointed out”. This response directly opposes my analysis of the 3030EDN course materials (see Section 5.4.3). In this analysis, I found that 3030EDN provided a comprehensive and diverse range of Indigenous resources to students. These course materials also aligned with AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Despite Frances’s comments, she considered that the course text book was highly useful. She stated “one of the things I think I found most influential in changing my thought process was the text book… I probably found it was a bit more influential than being told this is how kids learn”. This particular response aligns with my analysis of the course text book *Teaching and Learning in Aboriginal Education* which found that the text is a useful resource which corresponds with AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 as it is written specifically for pre-service and graduate teachers.

While this was not directly mentioned by session participants, my analysis of the course materials revealed that the text book was solely developed for Aboriginal education purposes. As a result, the selection of this text book as the primary course text may inadvertently marginalise Torres Strait Islander students who may feel as though their histories, cultures and languages are not as well represented in the course materials. An unintended consequence of selecting this as the primary text book is that it may lead some pre-service teachers to preference or prioritise the teaching of Aboriginal studies over Torres Strait Islander studies.
In relation to course assessment, three out of four participants considered that the course exam needed to be reviewed. However they provided scarce details of how, practically, the content of the exam could be improved. Furthermore, no criticism was made about the lesson plan assessment item. Frances stated that “I really liked the lesson plan”. Most session participants felt they benefited educationally from the EATSIPS assessment task. For example, Deb stated “it made me look at things I hadn't even considered” and Jack stated “EATSIPS was great. I really enjoyed that resource”. However, Frances was unsure whether EATSIPS assisted her in meeting AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. She said the “EATSIPS module needs to be completely reviewed”. Moreover, Deb stated that other enrolled 3030EDN students “didn't seem to be taking it [EATSIPS] that seriously [and]… just wrote down anything”. These mixed responses demonstrate that while EATSIPS benefited most participants, other students questioned the content of the EATSIPS program. This is a serious issue because the main aim of EATSIPS is to effectively assist pre-service teachers in embedding Indigenous perspectives in schools. This is an example of the IST principle of tension as it highlights the conflict which arises for non-Indigenous pre-service teachers learning about Indigenous perspectives on issues at the Cultural Interface. It is concerning that some students did not appreciate the learning benefits of EATSIPS and Frances negatively criticised the online EATSIPS program entirely. It is somewhat challenging to see how these pre-service teachers could effectively embed Indigenous perspectives in classrooms when EATSIPS was undermined in this way.

**Insufficient duration of 3030EDN**

All session participants considered that the nine week duration of 3030EDN was not sufficient to cover the amount of course content or assessment tasks. There are many complex components and concepts within 3030EDN, for example, the concept of ‘white privilege’ and the EATSIPS modules. All participants considered the course was too short and that longer courses were necessary for them to understand the course content more effectively or have more time in relation to the completion of assessment items. These responses highlight that there is a level of complexity associated with Indigenous education courses and Indigenous studies which is difficult to be covered in a sole nine week course. Perhaps, with longer or multiple courses, students can develop their understanding of these difficult concepts such as ‘white privilege’ which was clearly a serious issue for some pre-service teachers. This is supported by Sue who stated that more courses would assist in the developments of students’
knowledge. By having a solid understanding of these concepts, pre-service teachers may be able to engage with and operate more effectively in the Indigenous space and their potential to teach Indigenous content may be improved.

6.2.3 Knowledge and preparedness to teach Indigenous studies

Introduction

This section responds to the first research sub-question: to what extent do pre-service teachers feel prepared to teach Indigenous studies? Overall, there were mixed responses in relation to students’ knowledge and preparedness to teach Indigenous studies. The on-line survey indicated that most pre-service teachers perceived they had a broad knowledge of Indigenous histories and cultures and most pre-service teachers perceived they were prepared to teach Indigenous histories and cultures. However, the sessions found that no participant perceived they had a broad knowledge and understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures or languages. Moreover, all participants stated various levels of preparedness with regards to teaching Indigenous content.

Mixed responses in relation to knowledge of Indigenous studies

Most students surveyed perceived they had a broad knowledge of Indigenous histories (66.2%) and cultures (64.9%). These figures indicate that approximately two out of three students considered they had a broad knowledge of histories and cultures. It is very positive that most students felt as though 3030EDN equipped them with this knowledge especially when most students considered they had a limited knowledge of Indigenous studies prior to 3030EDN. This demonstrates that 3030EDN was beneficial with regards to student learning and development. Moreover, it suggests that the course materials offered in 3030EDN were valuable and effective. This result reinforces the need for compulsory Indigenous courses at university. It is likely that without 3030EDN, some pre-service teachers surveyed may have entered the classroom as a graduate teacher without feeling as though they had a broad knowledge of histories and cultures.

While it is positive that the majority of students felt they had a ‘broad’ knowledge of histories and cultures, one-third of pre-service teachers surveyed did not consider they did. This was reinforced by the fact that all session participants perceived they did not have a broad
knowledge of histories, cultures and languages. All session participants were more prepared to teach Indigenous histories and Indigenous cultures as opposed to languages. This may be because 3030EDN offered more course materials on Indigenous histories and cultures as opposed to languages. This was revealed in the content analysis of the course materials of 3030EDN.

There was an interesting response concerning pre-service teachers acquiring a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous studies. Sue mentioned ‘unless you are an Indigenous person’ then you are likely to not have a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous histories. This response not only confirms that Sue does not perceive that she has a broad knowledge of Indigenous studies, but it also suggests that in her view, if you are a non-Indigenous pre-service teacher, then there is a limited chance that you have a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous studies as only Indigenous pre-service teachers have acquired and can acquire this level of knowledge. This issue reflects of a lack of agency and a lack of empowerment. What is also concerning is that Sue considers this lack of empowerment as permanent as she does not believe that she can ever possess this level of knowledge. As an Indigenous teacher, it is challenging to effectively assist and prepare pre-service teachers to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 when some pre-service teachers, such as Sue, do not consider that they will ever be able to acquire the requisite level of knowledge (i.e. broad) of Indigenous studies. This reveals a tension between my agency as a teacher and Sue’s perceived lack of agency to receive and utilise what she is taught. If pre-service teachers are not willing to effectively engage with Indigenous knowledges, this may lead to ineffective teaching of Indigenous content or possibly the absence of Indigenous studies from the curriculum. This is a concern for both Indigenous teaching and AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Overall, this issue highlights that despite completion of 3030EDN some students feel they still require additional support.

Mixed preparedness to teach Indigenous studies

There were mixed responses with regards to students’ preparedness to teach Indigenous studies. Most participants surveyed perceived they were prepared to teach Indigenous histories (80.5%) and cultures (72.7%). Again, this is highly positive given that most pre-service teachers indicated that they had limited teaching skills in relation to Indigenous studies prior to 3030EDN. This demonstrates that the course not only increased students’ knowledge of Indigenous studies but also improved their abilities to teach the discipline. These figures also
indicate that if Indigenous content is taught by this cohort, then most feel prepared and confident in their pedagogical skills.

While it is positive that the majority of pre-service teachers perceived they had the requisite skills to be able to teach Indigenous studies, approximately one out of five students did not perceive that they were prepared to teach Indigenous histories and cultures. This was also seen in all session participants who identified various levels of teaching skills and preparedness. There were very similar results across the survey and the sessions. All participants in this study perceived they were more prepared to teach Indigenous histories as opposed to cultures. In relation to language component of the policy standard, all session participants considered that this component would be the most difficult to teach and incorporate in the classroom. Again, if pre-service teachers do not consider they have the capacity to teach Indigenous studies, this may lead to ineffective Indigenous teaching or the absence of Indigenous content in the curriculum agenda. This lack of empowerment negatively impacts AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 and the standards intention for graduate teachers to teach Indigenous studies in order to Indigenise the teaching and learning process to promote reconciliation. These results indicate that there is more work that needs to be done to improve pre-service teachers’ sense of agency so that all students feel prepared to teach Indigenous studies.

In relation to languages, Deb’s position on the use of Aboriginal English in classrooms was highly concerning. When asked if Deb would allow Aboriginal students to speak and write in Aboriginal English, she said “I don’t know. Well teaching in Brisbane, probably not. But if I was in a remote community than Aboriginal English would be the language you would use in the classroom”. This response highlights the complex relationship between language and specific geographical settings. In Deb’s view, Aboriginal English is ‘best suited’ to remote Aboriginal school settings rather than urban school settings. As such, Deb has failed to recognise and understand that “Culture and language are aspects of human behaviour that are inextricably linked” (White et al., 2013, p. 47). Harrison reinforces this and stated that “Correcting Aboriginal English can be like removing the child’s identity from his or her talking and writing” (2011, p. 120). Deb’s attitude towards the language component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 demonstrates a limited understanding of Aboriginal culture.

This is an example of the tension which arises at the Cultural Interface in relation to language. It demonstrates the conflict between some non-Indigenous perspectives in regards to the use and importance of traditional language as against Indigenous perspectives. As a future graduate
teacher, Deb’s perspective and ideological-westernised position may be imposed on Indigenous students and their cultural identity. Deb’s attitude may operate to marginalise Aboriginal students who attend schools in Brisbane (and other urban school settings) concerning their identity and expression of their identity through language. The tension between Deb’s epistemological and axiological position and Indigenous students’ ways of knowing, being and doing is a clear example of the conflict that may exist at the Cultural Interface if Deb is unable to shift from her current position on Aboriginal English. From this, it is clear that more work needs to be done regarding these issues so that pre-service teachers are able to understand that language is an integrated and fundamental part of Aboriginal culture.

Furthermore, students’ limited practicum experiences with regards to Indigenous studies may have impacted on their perceptions to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Sue and Frances had only one experience of embedding Indigenous perspectives in classrooms and Deb and Jack had no experience prior to 3030EDN despite having already completed two teaching practicums. In addition, both Deb and Jack had experienced negative attitudes by in-service teachers towards Indigenous teaching. While this limited interaction of teaching Indigenous studies presents as an issue for both pre-service teaching experience and AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, what is interesting to note is the recognition of poor teaching from pre-service teachers whilst on practicum. Deb thought that her supervising teacher’s remarks towards an Indigenous student sounded “a bit strange... seeing a teacher that has been teaching how many years saying that” and Jack “was frustrated with the education that the kids were receiving in [a] history lesson”. These responses highlight a level of reflective behaviour by pre-service teachers in their evaluation of in-service teachers’ attitudes towards Indigenous teaching. This evidences a constructive negotiation of the practical issues in Indigenous teaching which exist at the Cultural Interface and a transformation of pre-service teacher agency. It is positive that these students were able to recognise the deficiencies of supervising teachers’ professional practice in regards to teaching Indigenous issues and students.

Lastly, the overwhelming majority of students (85.5%) perceived that 3030EDN prepared them to effectively teach Indigenous histories and cultures. This is supported by the sessions. All participants considered they were more prepared to teach Indigenous studies after the completion of 3030EDN. Again, this highlights the importance of 3030EDN and the necessity of undergraduate programs including compulsory courses in the education of pre-service
teachers. It also indicates that the 3030EDN course materials benefited the development of students’ knowledge and skills to teach Indigenous content.

*Disconnect between student knowledge and preparedness to teach Indigenous studies*

There is a disconnect between students’ perceived knowledge of Indigenous studies and their perceived abilities and skills to teach Indigenous studies. From 77 students, 51 students (66.2%) indicated that they had a broad knowledge of Indigenous histories (See Figure 5.7) and 62 students (80.5%) perceived they could teach Indigenous histories (See Figure 5.9). This means that 11 students considered that they could teach Indigenous histories without having a broad knowledge of Indigenous histories. Furthermore, 50 students (64.9%) indicated they had a broad knowledge of Indigenous cultures (See Figure 5.8) while 56 students (72.7%) stated they were confident in their ability to teach Indigenous cultures (See Figure 5.10). Again, this means that six students perceived they could teach Indigenous cultures without having a broad knowledge of Indigenous cultures.

What is also interesting to note is that there is a substantial difference between students’ perceived knowledge of histories and cultures and their attitudes towards 3030EDN preparing them to effectively teach histories and cultures. While 85.5% of students perceived that 3030EDN prepared them to effectively teach Indigenous histories and cultures, only 66.2% considered they had a broad knowledge of histories and 64.9% considered they had a broad knowledge of Indigenous cultures. These results were similar to the yarning sessions. For example, all session participants perceived they were prepared to teach Indigenous histories after 3030EDN, but none of the students actually considered they had a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous histories.

There is no critical explanation for why some pre-service teachers consider that their skills to teach Indigenous histories and cultures exceeds their content knowledge on those subjects. Perhaps some pre-service teachers think that the teaching or pedagogical process simply remains the same regardless of the content being taught. If this is the case, then pre-service and graduate teachers may struggle to engage all students in their classrooms, especially Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students with culturally sensitive issues and topics such as colonisation or the Stolen Generations. As a 3030EDN tutor, it was difficult to negotiate and balance the time needed to raise pre-service teachers’ content knowledge (because of pre-service teachers’ knowledge-deficit as highlighted in this study); their teaching/pedagogical skills; as well as
attempting to guide them to become critical thinkers in the Indigenous space in order to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. At various stages of the course, it was difficult to decide on the most appropriate context and time to implement Indigenous content. For example, it was difficult to raise content knowledge regarding various Indigenous perspectives, and at the same time teach the pedagogical strategies required for pre-service teachers to effectively implement these Indigenous perspectives as graduate teachers. This issue was reinforced by one pre-service teacher in my tutorial class who asked, “How do we teach Indigenous perspectives to our students?” This balance between raising content knowledge and teaching skills highlights the tension and negotiation teachers of compulsory Indigenous courses may face.

The issue of disconnect regarding students’ perceived knowledge of Indigenous studies and their perceived skills to teach Indigenous studies is interesting. Most students found that they had higher levels of teaching skills than content knowledge. However, as a tutor of 3030EDN, the pre-existing knowledge deficit of students meant that I mainly focused on raising students’ knowledge of Indigenous content and perspectives as well as guiding pre-service teachers to become critical thinkers in the Indigenous space (Phillips, 2011). As a result, it was necessary to focus less on the actual teaching and pedagogical skills pre-service teachers need in order to implement Indigenous content effectively. Ultimately, in applying IST to this issue, is it argued that there is an ongoing tension educators of Indigenous courses may face in relation to compulsory courses where it is necessary to both improve content knowledge and at the same time enhance teaching skills in relation to the effective teaching of this content.

While there is no clear explanation for these results, there may not have been an appropriate realisation of the complexities surrounding the teaching of Indigenous studies or perspectives. Based on my own observations and interpretation of the research data, I consider that some students may have misinterpreted or undervalued the skills needed for effective Indigenous teaching in relation to the content knowledge required. It may be that this disconnect is underpinned by a philosophy or attitude which says that it is easier to ‘teach’ Indigenous studies than ‘know’ Indigenous studies. If so, this perception may have serious implications on pre-service teachers’ future professional teaching practice. Furthermore, a lack of cultural awareness within pedagogy may lead to a similar experience for Indigenous students as outlined in Kerwin’s story in Chapter Two.
6.2.4 AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4

Introduction

This section responds directly to the main research question: what are the perceptions of pre-service teachers in relation to their preparedness to meet the requirements of the AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 following the completion of 3030EDN? This section also responds to the second research sub-question: to what extent do pre-service teachers feel 3030EDN has prepared them to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4?

Mixed perceptions on meeting AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4

Overall, there were mixed perceptions from pre-service teachers in relation to meeting the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. The majority of students surveyed perceived they had a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous histories and cultures as well as the ability to communicate these subjects in education contexts. This directly aligns with the histories and cultures component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. This is a very positive result as it highlights that most pre-service teachers feel prepared to teach and incorporate these components of Indigenous studies in their future teaching practice. This also demonstrates that 3030EDN was a key course in preparing students to teach Indigenous content at AITSL’s required level.

In contrast to this, all session participants considered they did not have a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous histories, cultures or languages and perceived they did not meet the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. There appears to be a disconnect between participants’ perceptions of their preparedness to teach Indigenous studies following 3030EDN and on their feelings towards meeting AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

The sessions highlight a key issue surrounding Indigenous teaching. They suggest that some students consider that it is ‘one thing’ to teach Indigenous studies and ‘another thing’ to meet the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. This view evidences a fundamental misunderstanding of the standard. In applying IST as a way to develop “questions… in order to produce more objective knowledge” (Pohlhaus as cited in Nakata, 2007a, p. 214) it is important to consider the following three questions:
1. Do pre-service teachers, specifically graduating teachers, need to perceive that they have a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous studies in order to teach Indigenous studies effectively?

2. What are the implications for graduate teachers and their professional practice if they perceive they are unable to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4?

3. If a pre-service teacher considers they cannot meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, to what extent does this affect their interest and motivation to effectively teach Indigenous studies and perspectives?

These questions have been primarily developed from the individual perceptions of the four session participants reported in this study. Despite the finding that each of these participants did not consider that they were able to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, each of them successfully completed 3030EDN and therefore academics and tutors may have confidence in these students’ abilities to meet the standard. Through the lens of IST, this suggests that there is a tension between what pre-service teachers perceive in relation to their knowledge and pedagogical skills and the objective and formal criteria used to assess these capabilities. These questions may assist in further exploring this tension and the effect it may have on pre-service teachers in the Indigenous space.

The overwhelming majority of pre-service teachers surveyed (85%) perceived they were more prepared to teach Indigenous studies after 3030EDN completion. However, as a deliberate decision was made to omit any direct reference to AITSL in the survey, it is unknown whether students’ increased preparedness to teach Indigenous studies after 3030EDN also meant that they felt, unlike the session participants, that they could specifically meet the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 at an interview stage.

While it is highly positive that the majority of students surveyed perceived they could meet the histories and cultures component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, it is also concerning that some pre-service teachers surveyed and all session participants perceived they could not meet the requirements of the standard. Moreton-Robinson et al. (2012) found that:

Most new teachers [stated] that their pre-service did not prepare them well to know, understand and respect Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander history, culture or languages [and that] most new teachers are not confident in their ability to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and languages (p. 144).
The findings of this study were somewhat consistent with the above statement as they revealed that a number of pre-service teachers lacked agency as they considered that they were ill-prepared to teach and work in the Indigenous space.

As 3030EDN is the only compulsory Indigenous education course offered to this current Griffith cohort, there is a possibility that some pre-service teachers will enter the classroom as graduate teachers feeling ill-prepared to teach Indigenous perspectives. In analysing this through the lens of IST, this may mean that the ongoing cycle of Indigenous education disparity continues to permeate the education system and that the dominant western influenced curriculum will continue to be largely prioritised over Indigenous knowledges via teaching and learning. This is despite the current educational and inclusive policy on Indigenous studies. In order to combat this tension, there is a necessity for undergraduate programs to be designed to effectively prepare all pre-service teachers to feel component and professional in the Indigenous space for social, political, educational, educational policy and reconciliation purposes.

*The complex nature of the standard: Confusion, subjectivity and politics*

Another key issue which may affect students’ perceptions on meeting AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 is the complex nature of the standard. The subjectiveness of the standard confused some pre-service teachers in the sessions. For example, Frances stated:

> This standard actually scares me... It says here 'demonstrate'. Demonstrate means that I need to show somebody that I have a broad knowledge and understanding and respect, but how do you demonstrate that? How do you physically show someone that?

This response highlights a level of confusion regarding the evaluation and assessment of the standard. This issue was also identified in the analysis of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 (see Section 5.5). This section found that the standard is “arguably a more complicated Focus Area to measure and address” (Ma Rhea et al., 2012, p. 25) as opposed to Focus Area 1.4. As such, this issue may have contributed to Frances’s overall lack of empowerment and feeling of being unable to meet the standard. In addition to this, the term ‘broad’ also sparked some issues amongst pre-service teachers. Deb and Jack specifically commented on the term ‘broad’. Deb stated “There's that word broad” and Jack stated “The word broad confuses me”. Both students attempted to define the term. Sue interpreted ‘broad’ as having a “really big understanding”
whereas Jack associated the term ‘broad’ as having a “commanding knowledge”. These two examples highlight that students were unclear about the meaning and definition of the term ‘broad’. While these student definitions, to an extent, align with AITSL’s meaning of the term ‘broad’, is it interesting to note that no students described the term ‘broad’ by using any of the key words from AITSL’s formal definition such as the word ‘comprehensive’.

The confusion around the meaning of the word ‘broad’ was also realised in the analysis of the policy standard (see Section 5.5). This content analysis found that the alignment of the term ‘broad’ was not entirely consistent throughout AITSL’s policy documents with regards to AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. For example, AITSL’s supporting document *A unit outline and content for professional learning units to support teachers in meeting Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4* predominately associates the term ‘broad’ with the notion of ‘encouraging’ graduates to develop their knowledge and skills of Indigenous studies, while the document *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* defines the term ‘broad’ as “Ensuring variety, not narrow or limited; i.e. comprehensive in content, knowledge, experience, ability, or application” (AITSL, 2011, p. 20). Without further detail or consistency throughout AITSL’s documents, there is a possibility that some pre-service teachers may be confused with regards to what level of knowledge and skills are required to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

The political nature of the standard also confused pre-service teachers in the sessions. Deb was confused about the language component of the standard. She stated “The language part - well I don't think that really means that you have to be able to teach an Indigenous language”. When asked if students were prepared to teach Indigenous cultures, Frances said “I'm pretty sure I can” while Sue and Deb considered that Indigenous culture should be taught solely by Indigenous people. These responses highlight a mixture of interpretations towards AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. In relation to the cultures component of the standard, some students were confused if they were meant to be teaching Indigenous cultures or if the standard did not require this or indeed prevented them from doing so as it is in the exclusive domain of Indigenous people. This suggests that the standard was not fully understood by some pre-service teachers.

According to White et al. (2013), in the AITSL document teachers “are not teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children their culture. Nor will they become an expert in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture” (2013 p. 42). While this position highlights a strong level of cultural understanding, knowledge and sensitivity, this section of the document appears to be
largely based on the presumption that the teacher will be a non-Indigenous teacher. As such, it fails to explicitly differentiate the extent to which Indigenous teachers could draw upon their own personal knowledge, experience and expertise to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 or teach Indigenous cultures, including their own culture, to students. Moreover, this section appears to be developed for the purpose of celebrating the cultural identities of Indigenous students. Mooney, Halse and Cravens study in 2003 found that “teachers in schools with few or no Aboriginal students had a lower emphasis on teaching Aboriginal Studies” (p. 10). As such, there is a potential risk that for those educational institutions where there are few or no Indigenous students, this component of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 may be simply overlooked or deemed unnecessary.

Overall, AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 is a complex standard to effectively understand, demonstrate and assess. The politics of the standard such as the confusion surrounding “who owns [what] knowledge” (Ma Rhea et al., 2012, p. 58) and who can teach Indigenous cultures and languages (including Aboriginal English) may have influenced pre-service teachers’ attitudes towards meeting AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Harrison (2011) discusses the politics of Aboriginal English and stated that there is a level of division amongst Indigenous people regarding the teaching and use of Aboriginal English in schools. He stated that “some Aboriginal parents and children are opposed to using Aboriginal English in the classroom and may even find it shameful to do so… [while other] parents may demand that the school accepts the use of Aboriginal English…” (Harrison, 2011, p. 120). He also suggests that schools and teachers should consult with the local Aboriginal community with regards to the implementation of Aboriginal English in schools (Harrison, 2011). From this, it is clear that there is ongoing tension regarding the teaching of Indigenous languages, as well as some histories and cultures. This tension is not easily remedied as these issues are contentious and often debated amongst both the Indigenous community and within the Education community. These political elements may add a level of confusion to pre-service and graduate teachers’ professional practice in relation to teaching Indigenous content and also meeting the standard.

No discussion of reconciliation from pre-service teachers

None of the four pre-service teachers throughout the sessions mentioned that teaching Indigenous content and perspectives would promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The notion of reconciliation is a fundamental component and educational goal of Focus Area 2.4. AITSL (2014b) stated in its Reconciliation Action Plan
2014 – 2015, that it “recognises that reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians is the responsibility of all Australians. This Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is an acknowledgement of our responsibility and our commitment to be active in this space” (p. 3). Despite all session participants being asked the question: “What do you think the main aim or purpose of 3030EDN was?”; as well as receiving a hard copy of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 in the session, no one linked or associated this standard to the notion of reconciliation.

Through the use of IST as a way to develop “questions… in order to produce more objective knowledge” (Pohlhaus as cited in Nakata, 2007a, p. 214) the following two questions should be considered:

1. To what extent do pre-service teachers need to understand that teaching Indigenous studies is not only an attempt to Indigenise the educational process, but also to assist in promoting reconciliation?

2. To what extent does the realisation of reconciliation within pedagogy and teaching philosophy make one a more effective teacher of Indigenous content?

In considering this issue through the lens of IST, as an Indigenous tutor, it is disappointing that no pre-service teacher connected teaching Indigenous content or perspectives with the notion of promoting cultural reconciliation. It may be that these pre-service teachers do not connect or understand their role as a professional teacher to the notion of reconciliation. At this current stage, there is a gap in the understanding of some pre-service teachers and a lack of agency with regards to how the teaching of Indigenous content and perspectives can be a vehicle for achieving educational and social change and progress. If pre-service teachers understand the importance of reconciliation in Indigenous teaching and feel empowered in this space, then they are likely to become “major change agents” (Malezer & Sim, 2002, p. 10) for cultural and educational purposes. This in turn may assist in addressing the political and social tensions at the Cultural Interface in relation to the issue of reconciliation. This current absence of pre-service teacher awareness highlights the need for Indigenous courses to emphasise this philosophy so that pre-service teachers are able to meet the requirements and educational goals of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.
Figure 6.2 IST analysis of potential factors affecting pre-service teachers meeting AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4

Figure 6.2 below illustrates the interconnected nature of various issues which may affect pre-service teachers’ perceptions in relation to meeting AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. The diagram highlights some key factors which may affect pre-service teacher preparedness to meet the standard through the analytical lens of IST and its principles of locale, agency and tension. It should be noted that these factors are not intended to be the only reasons as to why some pre-service teachers perceive they do not meet the standard. Rather these factors are intended to provide additional context with regards to the complex issues surrounding the standard through the framework of IST.

6.3 Summary

This chapter has discussed the various issues faced by pre-service teachers prior to undertaking 3030EDN. In particular, it has identified that a lack of exposure to Indigenous content at school contributes to a substantial knowledge deficit in this space. This is compounded by negative feedback from past university students in relation to the compulsory Indigenous course which contributes to a sense of uncertainty and hesitation towards learning Indigenous knowledges. Throughout 3030EDN, students were confronted with some language terminology, including
language binaries and the concept of ‘white privilege’ which they found particularly challenging and difficult to understand. As a result, some session participants questioned the use of this language terminology in a way which demonstrated a lack of understanding and their own non-Indigenous paradigm and position. It is very concerning that these types of comments were made by final year pre-service teachers and after the successful completion of the course.

The analysis revealed the majority of pre-service teachers surveyed considered that they were more knowledgeable and prepared to teach Indigenous studies after 3030EDN. However, there was a disconnect between students’ knowledge and skill levels, as some students perceived they had the pedagogical skills to teach Indigenous studies without having a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous studies. This is compounded by the responses of the sessions which found that all participants perceived they could teach Indigenous content but none perceived they had a ‘broad’ knowledge of Indigenous content. While there is no critical explanation for this, it is argued that there may not have been an effective and comprehensive realisation of the complexities surrounding the teaching of Indigenous content. It may be that this disconnect is underpinned by a certain philosophy or attitude which says that it is easier to ‘teach’ Indigenous studies than ‘know’ Indigenous studies. If so, this perception may have serious implications on the future professional practice of pre-service teachers. Overall, most survey and all session participants considered that 3030EDN developed their knowledge and skill levels with the discipline. This highlights the importance of compulsory Indigenous courses in initial teacher education programs.

In relation to the main research question, there were mixed perceptions from pre-service teachers in relation to meeting the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. The majority of students surveyed perceived they met the histories and cultures components of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. However, all session participants stated that they could not meet any of the components of the standard (histories, cultures and languages). This demonstrates that there is a difference in students’ perceptions on teaching Indigenous studies generally and teaching Indigenous content at the required AITSL level. There are many issues surrounding pre-service teachers’ perceptions on meeting AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. These factors include: a limited exposure to Indigenous studies at school; limited pedagogical skills and content knowledge at university; limited teaching practicum experiences in relation to embedding Indigenous perspectives; course duration (3030EDN); and the complex nature of the standard.
What is also concerning is that one of the foundational purposes of Focus Area 2.4 is to promote reconciliation and no pre-service teacher interviewed in the yarning sessions linked the notion of reconciliation to either the course or AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

Overall, this study found that while most pre-service teachers perceived they could meet the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, there were a number of pre-service teachers who perceived they were ill-prepared to teach in the Indigenous space and meet the standard, despite having successfully completed 3030EDN. The combination of participants’ locale as mostly inexperienced non-Indigenous pre-service teachers; their lack of agency before, during and after the course; together with the complex nature of the standard which is confusing, subjective and political, offer explanation as to why some pre-service teachers perceive they do not feel prepared to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. This finding indicates that there is more work required in this space to break the cycle of pre-service and graduate teachers feeling ill-prepared to know and teach Indigenous content at the required AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 (Moreton-Robinson et al., 2012). Through doing so, this will benefit student outcomes and lead to further Indigenous education progression.
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

Teaching Indigenous studies is a difficult and complex process, fraught with the challenges relating to negotiating pre-conceptions, epistemologies and beliefs, as outlined in the literature review and identified in this research. This study examined pre-service teachers’ perceptions on teaching Indigenous content at the required AITSL level. The study found that the majority of students, including all yarning session participants perceived they were more prepared to teach Indigenous content after completion of 3030EDN. However, while most students surveyed perceived that they met the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, all session participants stated they did not meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Ultimately, there was a mixture of perceptions amongst 3030EDN pre-service teachers in relation to their preparedness to meet the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

It is positive that most students perceived that 3030EDN effectively prepared them to teach Indigenous studies at the required AITSL level. This highlights the importance of compulsory Indigenous courses in undergraduate programs and also suggests that such courses are vital for preparing students to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. However, it is of concern that all yarning session participants perceived that despite the benefits of 3030EDN, they were still unable to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. This outcome identifies the need for longer or additional courses, in order to effectively teach a number of complex concepts (including ‘white privilege’) which surround Indigenous content and the practical implementation of Indigenous studies. Without sufficient training, pre-service teachers may feel ill-prepared in this space, and as graduate teachers, struggle to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

This is further compounded by the complex nature of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. The political and subjective elements of the standard, such as who ‘owns’ what knowledge and ‘who can teach’ what type of Indigenous knowledge, may add a level of confusion to pre-service teachers’ professional practice. More explicit guidelines with regards to this issue are warranted so that students can understand what is expected of them as beginning teachers. Moreover, pre-service teachers ought to understand that the implementation of Indigenous studies in classrooms is not only an act of delivering content, but it is also an act of promoting reconciliation to achieve widespread educational and social change. This study found that no pre-service teacher interviewed linked the teaching of Indigenous content to the notion of achieving reconciliation. Again, it is of serious concern if pre-service teachers do not fundamentally understand why they are teaching Indigenous content. This has the potential for
some teachers to ‘gloss over’ or teach Indigenous studies in a ‘tokenistic’ way, or opt to not teach Indigenous content or perspectives at all.

Overall, the research found that 3030EDN had a largely positive impact on the development of pre-service teachers’ knowledge of Indigenous content. However, the combination of participants’ locale as mostly inexperienced non-Indigenous pre-service teachers; their lack of agency before, during and after the course; together with the complex nature of the standard which is confusing, subjective and political, is a key explanation as to why some pre-service teachers perceive they do not feel prepared to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. It is clear that there is still a substantial amount of work that needs to be done if all pre-service teachers are to perceive that they are prepared to teach Indigenous content at the required national level. It is unrealistic for the Australian education system to reverse past policies to now include Indigenous knowledges and perspectives as part of the curriculum agenda and to not expect a series of complex issues to arise with both in-service and pre-service teachers.

7.1 Research Implications

While there are “no silver bullets or quick fixes” (Sarra, 2015, p. 1) for improving Indigenous education outcomes, the following section will consider the key implications of the research and put forward some suggestions in response to the research data and the analysis of this data. Some of these suggestions are framed around the philosophy of being ‘proactive’ as opposed to being ‘reactive’. This means dealing with students’ issues at an initial teacher education level rather than waiting for these issues to arise at an in-service level. In this way, pre-service teachers may be more prepared to meet the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 when they commence their professional career.

1. Longer or additional courses

One of the key issues surrounding students’ perceptions in meeting the standard was the duration of the course (nine weeks) which students considered to be insufficient to cover the amount of course content and to complete the assessment items. Longer compulsory courses (12 weeks) or additional compulsory courses, may assist pre-service teachers to feel more prepared in relation to their knowledge, skills and understanding of Indigenous studies. Perhaps compulsory courses are needed until there is a positive shift in pre-service teachers’ attitudes towards the selection of Indigenous electives. Access to such provided courses may allow for
students to work critically within the space of Indigenous education and therefore develop their capacity to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

The positioning of the course/s may be more suited in the early stages of the degree, for example in the first year of the undergraduate program. While resistance may occur in these courses (Phillips, 2011), this approach ensures that all pre-service teachers will have some knowledge and understanding of Indigenous studies before they commence their teaching practicum. As such, students may feel more prepared to embed Indigenous perspectives in classrooms. This will add to their teaching experience of Indigenous content and it may positively impact on their perceptions to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

2. AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4

In the analysis of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4, there were some issues surrounding the clarity and consistency of the standard. It is suggested that AITSL may need to provide additional clarification in relation to what components of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 are to be taught in education contexts. Furthermore, more consistency between AITSL’s Professional Standards document and other supporting documents with regards to the term ‘broad’ may be beneficial for pre-service and graduate teachers so that they have clear guidance on the interpretation of the standard.

3. Further research

This research study identified some key issues in relation to the standard that could be the subject of further research. Perhaps a study which focuses on student preparedness to meet the standard after the completion of two compulsory Indigenous courses (as currently offered in some Australian universities) would be beneficial. Such a study may assist in understanding the extent to which more Indigenous education courses are necessary to further prepare pre-service teachers to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4.

Concluding remarks

Whilst current educational policy is now more inclusive of incorporating Indigenous content and perspectives into the teaching and learning process, it is clear from the research data that some pre-service teachers from 3030EDN are likely to struggle in this space. This reinforces the broader need for university institutions to offer courses of usual duration (12 weeks) or multiple courses so that pre-service teachers can feel prepared to meet the requirements of AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4. Through this, pre-service teachers have the potential to become
‘change agents’ for educational, political, cultural and social purposes. Ultimately, by continuing to improve pre-service teachers’ initial teacher training with regards to Indigenous education, it is hoped that these university programs will produce quality and well-prepared teachers for the benefit of all Australian students.
References


Department of Innovation, Industry, Science, Research, Climate Change and Tertiary Education. (2012). *The review of higher education access and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people*.


Appendices

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Appendix A: List of Australian Universities

Note: Below is a list of compulsory Indigenous education courses offered by Australian universities in 2016. This data was collected during April 2016.

<table>
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<th>No.</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Central Queensland University (CQU)</td>
<td>EDED11458: Indigenous studies and Learning</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Griffith University (Griffith)</td>
<td>4299EDN: Indigenous Perspectives for Teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>James Cook University (JCU)</td>
<td>ED4461: 03 Indigenous Futures &amp; IA1007: 03 Linking Indigenousness 1 or IA1015:03 Indigenous Australian World Views 1: Survival, Identity and Cultural Diversity</td>
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<td>N/A (Does not offer this degree)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>University of Southern Queensland (USQ)</td>
<td>EDC2200: Indigenous Perspectives</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Australian Catholic University (ACU)</td>
<td>EDAB411: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures, Peoples and Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Charles Sturt University (CSU)</td>
<td>IKC102: Indigenous Australian Cultures &amp; IKC103: Indigenous Australian Histories</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Macquarie University (Macquarie)</td>
<td>ABST100: Introducing Indigenous Australia</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Southern Cross University (SCU)</td>
<td>(No mandatory course offered in program)</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>University of Newcastle (Newcastle)</td>
<td>ABOR3500: Aboriginal Education, Policies and Issues</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>University of New England (UNE)</td>
<td>EDCX302: Aboriginal Education: PrEx 20 days</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>University of New South Wales (UNSW)</td>
<td>N/A (Does not offer this degree)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>University of Sydney (Sydney)</td>
<td>EDUDEB006: Indigenous Australian Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>University of Technology, Sydney (UTS)</td>
<td>028237: Issues in Indigenous Australian Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>University of Wollongong (UOW)</td>
<td>EDAE302: Aboriginal Education</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Western Sydney University (UWS)</td>
<td>N/A (Does not offer this type of degree: The specialised Bachelor of Education Primary (ATSIE) has not been included for the purposes of this study).</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Deakin University (Deakin)</td>
<td>(No mandatory course offered in program)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>Course Title</td>
<td>Credit Points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Federation University (Feduni)</td>
<td>EDBED3016: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Learning and Teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>22. La Trobe University (Latrobe)</td>
<td>EDU2CII: Cultural and Indigenous Perspectives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Monash University (Monash)</td>
<td>EDF2031: Indigenous perspectives on teaching and learning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>24. RMIT University (RMIT)</td>
<td>(No mandatory course offered in program)</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>25. Swinburne University of Technology (Swinburne)</td>
<td>EDU10005: Indigenous education and Perspectives</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. University of Melbourne (Melbourne)</td>
<td>N/A (Does not offer this degree)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>27. Victoria University (VU)</td>
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<td>28. Australian National University (ANU)</td>
<td>N/A (Does not offer this degree)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. University of Canberra (Canberra)</td>
<td>(No mandatory course offered in program)</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Northern Territory</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>30. Charles Darwin University (CDU)</td>
<td>EST203: Teaching Indigenous Learners</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>South Australia</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>31. Flinders University (Flinders)</td>
<td>EDUC2420: Teaching Indigenous Australian Students</td>
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<td>32. Torrens University Australia (Torrens)</td>
<td>N/A (Does not offer this degree)</td>
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<td>33. University of Adelaide (Adelaide)</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>34. University of South Australia (UniSA)</td>
<td>EDUC 2061: Teaching and Learning in Aboriginal Education</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Western Australia</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Curtin University (Curtin)</td>
<td>INED3001: Indigenous Australian Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Edith Cowan University (ECU)</td>
<td>EDF3101: Working with Indigenous Australian Children, Youth and their Families</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Murdoch University (Murdoch)</td>
<td>EDN353: Country, Cultures, Peoples: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives Across the Curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<td>38. University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA)</td>
<td>Course Code Unavailable: Working with Indigenous Students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>39. University of Western Australia (UWA)</td>
<td>N/A (Does not offer this degree)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td><strong>Tasmania</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. University of Tasmania (UTAS)</td>
<td>ESH390: Cultural Awareness: The Non-indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interface</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Some universities have combined the Bachelor of Education (Primary) as a dual degree (with a Bachelor of Arts etc.). These types of programs have still been included in this table. Moreover, only those courses which offer at least one credit point to students have been included in the above table.

**Summary:**

From 40 Australian universities: 31 universities offer a Bachelor of Education (Primary) program. From those 31 universities, 5 (16%) universities do not offer any compulsory Indigenous education courses, 23 (74%) universities offer one compulsory Indigenous education course and 3 (10%) universities offer two compulsory courses.
Appendix B: AITSL Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4 (AITSL, 2014a)

Standard 1: Know students and how they learn

Focus Area 1.4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.4 Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard 2: Know the content and how to teach it

Focus Area 2.4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.4 Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Show Illustrations
Show Evidence
Appendix C: Introductory Statement to the Project

3030EDN Students: Voluntary Research Project Opportunity

Dear students, on behalf of the teaching team I would like to say thank you for the Semester. As some 3030EDN students already know (GC), I am conducting a study on the topic of pre-service teachers’ teaching Indigenous studies. This study will involve an on-line survey and one hour interview. It is important note that you will be reimbursed with a gift ($40 dollar Coles/Myer gift card for your time spent) if you take part in both the survey and interview session.

Once ethical approval has been approved, the survey link will be posted to 3030EDN course announcements page and sent out via student email. On completion of the survey, you will notice that a ‘new’ page will appear – this page will ask you for some details (name, email etc.) for the interview stage. Please note that the on-line survey will remain anonymous and the research team will not be able to see your responses. The sessions will be conducted during early Semester 2, 2016 at the Griffith campus of your choice.

This announcement is just a quick introduction about the research project. More reminders will be sent out in the near future. The research team appreciates your involvement in this study and is excited to work with 3030EDN students regarding this topic. If you have any questions, then please email me at m.rom@griffith.edu.au.

Thank you!

The Griffith Research Team

(Mitch Rom, Harry Van Issum and Madonna Stinson)
Appendix D: On-line Survey Link

3030EDN Project – Survey Link

Hi 3030EDN students, the Teaching Indigenous studies Project has received ethics approval and is ready to move ahead. Please click on the link (or copy and paste it into a web browser) and complete this survey for an opportunity to receive a $40 Coles Group & Myer Gift Card. This survey asks pre-service teachers how they feel towards teaching Indigenous studies. It will take approximately 5 minutes to complete and all survey responses are anonymous. You can only complete this survey once.


Thank you, we appreciate your time!

The Griffith Research Team
(Mitch Rom, Mr Harry Van Issum and Dr Madonna Stinson)
Appendix E: Research Project Information Sheet

Pre-service teachers’ perceptions on teaching Indigenous studies
PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

Research Team

Chief investigator:
Dr Madonna Stinson
School of Education and Professional Studies,
Griffith University, Mt Gravatt, Brisbane, Queensland, 4111, Australia
Contact phone – 3735 1085
Contact email – m.stinson@griffith.edu.au

Co investigators:
Mr Harry Van Issum
School of Education and Professional Studies,
Griffith University, Mt Gravatt, Brisbane, Queensland, 4111, Australia
Contact phone – 3735 5940
Contact email – h.vanissum@griffith.edu.au

Mr Mitchell Rom
Masters (Research) Candidate
School of Education and Professional Studies,
Griffith University, Mt Gravatt, Brisbane, Queensland, 4111, Australia
Contact email – m.rom@griffith.edu.au

Griffith University ethics reference no: 2016/457

Dear participant,

The research team invites you to take part in the project Pre-service teachers’ perceptions on teaching Indigenous studies. This project will examine pre-service teachers’ preparedness to teach Indigenous histories and cultures in learning contexts. The mandatory purpose of this study is to identify whether pre-service teachers feel both competent and practically capable to implement Indigenous histories and cultures in teaching and learning spaces.

Why is the research being conducted?
Recent education and curriculum policy shifts have focused more intensely on Indigenous affairs and on the teaching of Indigenous studies in contemporary learning spaces. As such, Australian teachers, including graduate teachers, are required to implement elements of Indigenous studies in their professional teaching practice. This study is investigating this issue.

What you will be asked to do
Participants will be asked to complete an on-line survey as well as potentially take part in an interview session.
Expected duration of each data collection activity
The expected time to complete the on-line survey is approximately 5 to 10 minutes. The duration of the sessions will last approximately 45 minutes to one hour.

The basis by which participants will be selected or screened
The survey is open to all Griffith University undergraduate education students who have completed the university course 3030EDN – Studies of Indigenous Australia. Participant selection for the sessions is based on those students who indicate they are willing to be interviewed. It is important to note that not all students who complete the survey will be selected for the interview process.

The expected benefits of the research
This project will contribute to the growing body of Indigenous education literature and introduce the much needed voices of pre-service teachers into the discussion of Indigenous education questions and issues. A key benefit of this project is to assist the pre-service teacher who is taking part in the study, with reflection on their current competencies and capabilities in relation to teaching Indigenous studies, through the survey and interview.

Risks to you
As your participation is entirely voluntary, the research team believes that there are no foreseeable risks involved in your participation of this research project.

Your confidentiality
Confidentiality is a key concern and priority for the research team. As such, your survey responses will remain anonymous to other participants and to the research team. It should be noted that direct quotes of interview responses may be used in analysis and de-identified quotes will be incorporated into the final thesis which will be available through Griffith University. Every effort will be made to protect the anonymity of all respondents in this study.

Your participation is voluntary
Participation in this project is voluntary. As such, you a free to withdraw from the project at any time, without penalty, and without providing any justification to the research team.

Costs of participation and project incentive
The research team believes that there will be minimal financial cost to you in this project. The research team also appreciates your valuable time and will offer research participants who take part in both the survey and interview session a $40 dollar Coles/Myer voucher card.

Data storage and deletion
As required by Griffith University, all interview audio recordings will be erased after transcription. However, other research data (interview transcripts, survey responses, and analysis) will be retained in a password protected electronic file at Griffith University for a period of five years before being destroyed. Please note that use of the GU Research Storage platform (https://research-storage.griffith.edu.au/) is also recommended.

Feedback to you
A convenient and plain language summary of the research results will be made available to participants upon request via email. A transcript of the sessions will be made available to the participant upon request via email. Session participants will be given the opportunity to read and review their personal interview transcript upon request via email. Moreover, the final version of the researcher’s thesis paper will be stored electronically in the Griffith University library and made available to the public.
The ethical conduct of this research (ethical consideration)
Griffith University conducts its research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. If you have any issues or questions in relation to this project, please do not hesitate to contact the Human Research Ethics team on (07) 3735 4375 or email research-ethics@griffith.edu.au.

Privacy statement
The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your identified personal information. The 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. For further information consult the University’s Privacy Plan at http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/plans-publications/griffith-university-privacy-plan or telephone (07) 3735 4375.

Further information
The research team thanks you for taking the time to read this information. The team hopes that after reading this information, you agree to participate in this project. Please note that if you complete the survey and would like to participate in a more in-depth interview on this topic (which will be conducted on the Griffith University Campus of your choice) please leave your name, student number, student email and current Griffith University campus in the box which will be provided to you on a new page after survey completion. It should be noted that this research will form the basis of a thesis to be submitted by Mitchell Rom to fulfil the requirements of a Master of Education and Professional Studies Research degree.
Appendix F: On-line Survey

Survey Title: Teaching Indigenous Australian Studies

Description:

Recent educational shifts have focused more intensely on Indigenous Australian affairs and on the teaching of Indigenous studies in the Australian education system. This voluntary on-line survey asks pre-service teachers how they feel towards implementing Indigenous studies in the teaching and learning process. The Griffith Research Team values your opinions and assure you that your views will only be presented in de-identified form. Overall, we want to know what you think about this topic. There are no right answers and your insights will help us gain a more in-depth understanding in relation to this topic.

Important Note: The Research Team will not be able to see your on-line survey responses because they will remain anonymous.

Background Demographics:

To understand all the responses you make across the on-line survey it is valuable to have some of your background details. Please complete these five background demographic questions.

1. Did you attend most of your formal education in Australia?
2. What is your gender?
3. How old are you?
4. What is your cultural background?
5. Are you currently a Griffith University student who has successfully completed the course 3030EDN Studies of Indigenous Australia in Semester 1, 2016? If you are not, then please do not proceed.

Attitude Statements:

The following 12 statements discuss various aspects about Indigenous education and teaching Indigenous studies (histories, cultures etc.) in education spaces. Please complete all 12 statements. Please remember that your responses will remain anonymous to the Griffith Research Team.

1. Prior to 3030EDN, my knowledge of Indigenous content was.
2. Prior to 3030EDN, my skills with regards to teaching Indigenous studies were.
3. Primary school placed an importance on Indigenous studies.
5. Prior to 3030EDN enrolment, I would have selected 3030 if it were an elective course.
6. Indigenous studies should be taught in Australian schools.
7. I have a broad knowledge of Indigenous histories.
8. I have a broad knowledge of Indigenous cultures.
9. I am confident in my ability to teach Indigenous histories.
10. I am confident in my ability to teach about Indigenous cultures.
11. 3030EDN has prepared me to teach Indigenous histories effectively.
12. 3030EDN has prepared me to teach about Indigenous cultures effectively.
Appendix G: Research Project Consent Form

Pre-service teachers’ perceptions on teaching Indigenous studies
CONSENT FORM

Research Team
Chief investigator:
Dr Madonna Stinson
School of Education and Professional Studies,
Griffith University, Mt Gravatt, Brisbane, Queensland, 4111, Australia
Contact phone – 3735 1085
Contact email – m.stinson@griffith.edu.au

Co investigators:
Mr Harry Van Issum
School of Education and Professional Studies,
Griffith University, Mt Gravatt, Brisbane, Queensland, 4111, Australia
Contact phone – 3735 5940
Contact email – h.vanissum@griffith.edu.au

Mr Mitchell Rom
Masters (Research) Candidate
School of Education and Professional Studies,
Griffith University, Mt Gravatt, Brisbane, Queensland, 4111, Australia
Contact email – m.rom@griffith.edu.au

Griffith University ethics reference no: 2016/457

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet on Pre-service teachers’ perceptions on teaching Indigenous studies and that:

- I understand that my involvement in this research will include e.g. completing a survey and participating in an individual interview (approximately one hour in length);
- I have had any questions answered to my satisfaction;
- I understand the risks involved;
- I understand that there will be limited direct benefit to me from my participation in this research;
- I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary;
- I understand that I will receive an incentive if I take part in both the survey and interview;
- I understand that the interview session will be recorded via a recording device;
- I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the research team;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time, without comment or penalty;
- I understand that I can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee on (07) 3735 4375 (or via research-ethics@griffith.edu.au) if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research project; and
- I agree to participate in the research study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H: Yarning Session Questions

1. What was your schooling experience like in relation to Indigenous studies?

*Follow up questions:*

1.1. What do you think the main aim or purpose of 3030EDN was?
1.2. How did you feel about commencing 3030EDN?

2. Do you feel as though you have a broad knowledge and understanding of Indigenous histories? Why/why not?

*Follow up questions:*

2.1. Do you know how many Aboriginal language groups there were before colonisation?

3. Do you feel as though you have a broad knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures? Why/why not?

3.1. Do you know the name of the Aboriginal language group/s of this land?

4. Do you feel prepared to teach Indigenous histories? Why/why not?

*Follow up questions:*

4.1. Have you had any opportunities teaching Indigenous histories?

5. Do you feel prepared to teach about Indigenous cultures? Why/why not?

*Follow up questions:*

5.1. Have you had any opportunities implementing Indigenous cultures?
5.1.1. Do you feel prepared in teaching Aboriginal English?
5.2. Would you let your Indigenous students speak and write in Aboriginal English?

*Note: At this stage of the session, AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4 will be introduced to participants as a hard copy. Participants will be asked to read the policy standard.*

6. What does this policy standard mean for you as a soon to be graduate teacher?

*Follow up questions:*

6.1. What aspects of the standard do you feel confident with?
6.2. What aspects of the standard do you feel you need further development in?
7. What aspects of 3030EDN have prepared you to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4?

Follow up questions:

7.1 How can the undergraduate program be improved to better prepare you to meet AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4?

Note: At the end of the session, I will also ask participants if they have any other questions or would like to make any further comments on the research topic.
Appendix I: AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

Standard 2: Know the content and how to teach it

AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4

Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.
Appendix J: Ethics Approval Certificate

Kim Madison <k.madison@griffith.edu.au>

Your Human Ethics Protocol 2016/457 has been Fully approved

rims@griffith.edu.au <rims@griffith.edu.au> 1 July 2016 at 08:22
To: m.rom@griffith.edu.au, h.vanissum@griffith.edu.au, m.stinson@griffith.edu.au
Cc: research-ethics@griffith.edu.au, k.madison@griffith.edu.au

GRiffith University HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Dear Dr Madonna Stinson

I write in relation to your application for ethical clearance for your project "Preservice teachers T perceptions on teaching Indigenous Studies" (GU Ref No: 2016/457). The research ethics reviewers resolved to grant your application a clearance status of "Fully Approved".

This is to confirm receipt of the remaining required information, assurances or amendments to this protocol.

Consequently, I reconfirm my earlier advice that you are authorised to immediately commence this research on this basis.

The standard conditions of approval attached to our previous correspondence about this protocol continue to apply.

Regards

Kim Madison
Human Research Ethics and Integrity
Office for Research
Bray Centre, Nathan Campus
Griffith University
ph: +61 (0)7 373 58043
fax: +61 (0)7 373 57994
email: k.madison@griffith.edu.au

Researchers are reminded that the Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research provides guidance to researchers in areas such as conflict of interest, authorship, storage of data, & the training of research students.

You can find further information, resources and a link to the University's Code by visiting Griffith's webpage: Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research

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Appendix K: 3030EDN: Course Aims, Outcomes and Graduate Attributes

These extracts have been copied from 3030EDN’s course profile.

2.1 Course Aims

This course will focus on three related areas. Firstly it will develop your awareness of the historical context of education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students where over the past two centuries the institutional arrangements of school have been a negative experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and communities. Secondly, it will expose students to a range of learning and teaching strategies, and processes for interacting with the Indigenous community. Finally, it will also present a range of materials as part of the ‘What works- Improving outcomes for Indigenous students” published by the National Curriculum Services and Australian Curriculum Studies Association.

Full engagement in this course will enable students to continue to develop practice & knowledge relevant to achieving National teaching standards. In 2011 the Australian Professional Standards for Graduate Teachers (Australian PSGT) were approved and introduced across Australia by the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). Section 4.2 of this profile provides you with the alignment of this course to the Australian standards.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>After successfully completing this course you should be able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Demonstrate a sound knowledge of the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' interactions with the education system, including state and national issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Understand personal assumptions, pre-conceptions and value stances when interacting with Indigenous people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Understand issues that impact upon Indigenous learners and how they manifest in the school setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Demonstrate understanding of community interactions including cross-cultural communication protocols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Demonstrate understanding of EATSIPS- Embedding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools, including key teaching and learning strategies for Indigenous students.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2.3 Graduate Attributes

Griffith University aims to prepare its graduates to be leaders in their fields by being:

- Knowledgeable and Skilled in their Disciplines
- Effective Communicators and Team Members
- Innovative and Creative with Critical Judgement
- Socially Responsible and Engaged in their Communities
- Competent in Culturally Diverse and International Environments

(Griffith University 3030EDN, 2016, p. 4)
Appendix L: 3030EDN Tutorial Materials (Examples)

Below is collection of various tutorial activities.

**Week 1 - Indigenous People and Australian Society**

**Exercise 1**
Complete the quiz based on week 1 reading & lecture. (Use this reading if necessary)
Review these answers. (Remember the end-semester exam is based on the readings, tute exercises and lectures)

30 min.

Draw a large outline of an (Aboriginal) person on the white board. In 'Spider-gram' style nominate students to list statistics on the following social indicators drawn from this weeks reading -

- Life expectancy at birth
- Disability and chronic disease
- Years 10 and 12 retention and attainment
- Post secondary education — participation and attainment
- Labour force participation and unemployment
- Household and individual income
- Home ownership
- Suicide and self-harm
- Substantiated child abuse and neglect
- Deaths from homicide and hospitalisations for assault
- Family and community violence
- Imprisonment and juvenile detention rates

**Exercise 2 Discussion:**
If this is indicative of an ‘average’ Indigenous person (careful with this), what effect could this have on their children who attend your school? In general terms, what are the ramifications of this for education? 20 mins
Week 2- Indigenous Peoples and the Education System

1. Brief overview of lecture- discuss any parts not clear and application of history throughout history.

2. Domino game (History)
   a. Distribute 6 dominoes based on history as a brief exercise (give explanation of the game.)
   b. Check answers on board
   c. Distribute remaining dominoes to form a large interconnected series of definition
   d. Information is from reading (chapter 2) & lecture.
   e. Students may use keyboards, phones, etc.

3. Distribute sheet of A2 paper, tape the hidden histories poster in the middle.
   a. Interpret as many of the images as possible around the sides using pens
   b. Two students must report finding s of their poster back to the rest of the class.

4. Discussion:
   a. Given the history of Australia, can you explain any links to the current level of school achievement for Aboriginal students?
   b. At what point is history no longer ‘relevant’ in terms of educational achievement?

Week 3- Western and Indigenous Knowledge

Activity (History)

1. View the plaques with different perspectives of history.
   a. List the original first and highlight or underline the verbs used to describe each side.
   b. Discuss the emotive terms, Imperialism (a policy of extending a country’s power and influence through colonisation), power relationships.
   c. Uncover the second and discuss the issue below.

Discussion:

What is the difference between the two accounts?

Are they both equally valid? Is it important to know that there are different versions of the same event? What does this tell us about the nature of “History”?

What can we say about ‘Retrospective History’- placing today’s morals on the events of the past?

If you were to teach this event to a grade six class, how would you frame this?

How would you explain this to parents (Indigenous or non-Indigenous) who may be offended by your interpretation?
Activities - (Culture and knowledge)

Indigenous and non-indigenous people have different world views. Indigenous people commonly do not see the world through ‘Eurocentric glasses’.

Activity- IQ test- Make six groups and distribute a copy of the Australian IQ test to two groups and the Aboriginal IQ test to two groups and the Australian history test to the other two. Put group names on top. Allow students to work through these as groups then swap their answers between the two similar groups. Give them answer sheets and mark out of ten.

(Inform the group doing the Murri IQ test how poorly they have done and will have to probably repeat this year of school or take a job as a menial labourer)

Point 1

Discuss how historically Indigenous learners have been seen as deficit based. Cultural knowledge perceived as an impediment. Western knowledge is culturally biased [consider NAPLAN]. Ask for examples where this has been observed or discuss personal experiences. How does this effect self-esteem, desire to attend school, education levels of parents, etc.?

Key focus:-This primarily based on historical practices. link to lecture

Point 2

Imagine this applies to cultural/community knowledge passed down orally through generations.

Do you think Indigenous people who are experts in their ‘own knowledges’ should be encouraged to develop literacy and numeracy based on this knowledge alone? In reality, where will most people live and work after schooling?

How restrictive is this perspective. I mean, we are living in the modern world, should we just jump ‘boots and all’ into western knowledges and perspectives?

What does this mean for NAPLAN tests & scores?

Language Activity (This activity was designed for the beginning of Tutorial 3)

Open the Language group map and discuss how Aboriginal & Torres Strait islander people might see country.

Discuss the idea of language groups, clan groups and custodianship (not ownership).

Also open the Griffith Homepage and view the first nations link bottom right and highlight how Griffith is located on various traditional lands.
Appendix M: Weekly Lecture Material

Lecture Structure

Below is a list of weekly 3030EDN lecture PowerPoint headings.

1. Indigenous peoples and Australian Society (week 1)
2. Indigenous People & the Education System
3. Western & Indigenous Knowledge
4. Teaching & Learning Strategies
5. Indigenous Communities and the School Setting
6. Literacy & Numeracy
7. Indigenous Health & Schooling
8. Living & Teaching in Aboriginal Communities
9. No Lecture – Exam Preparation Questions

This PowerPoint slide has been copied from Lecture 1 in order to demonstrate the alignment between the course unit outline and the lecture materials.

Our people have the right to a good education. Our children need the skills, experiences and qualifications to be able to choose their futures. Our communities need young people coming through with the education and confidence to be effective leaders. We need young people who can be advocates for our people, able to take their place in Australian society and still keep their culture strong.

Appendix N: Course Assessment Items

These extracts have been copied from 3030EDN’s course profile.

5.2 Assessment Detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Lesson Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type:</td>
<td>Assignment - Planning Document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Outcomes Assessed:</td>
<td>2, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due Date:</td>
<td>29 Feb 16 - 22 Apr 15 Week 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight:</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marked out of:</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since 2012, Queensland schools have progressively implemented the F(Prep) - Year 10 Australian Curriculum. Education Queensland have applied the Australian Curriculum through the C2C materials. As there is no distinct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander subject in primary schools, the issues are addressed through ‘Cross Curriculum Priorities’. One of these three priorities is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. Your task is to use what you have learnt during the ‘EATSIPS’ process and apply it to a lesson plan. Select one learning area (English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography, with Civics and Citizenship, Economics and Business, Health and Physical Education, Technologies and the Arts) to develop a comprehensive lesson plan.

Criteria & Marking:

**Criteria & Marking:**

1. Depth and detail of planning (organisation)
2. Application of Blooms taxonomy
3. List/copy of appropriateness of resources
4. Application of EATSIPS-
   - content & pedagogy,
   - community engagement
   - organisational environment
   - professional and personal accountabilities
   - Presentation style and level of literacy

* Please see marking criteria matrix on course website under ‘Assessment’ folder.

Submission: On-line through safe-assign. Use course website.

This assessment item:

- is a school based activity
- is an individual activity
- includes a self assessment activity
Title: Reflective Journal  
Type: Assignment - Written Assignment  
Learning Outcomes Assessed: 1, 3, 4, 5  
Due Date: 29 Feb 16 - 9 Apr 16 17:00 Week 5  
Weight: 40%  
Marked out of: 40  
Task Description:
A journal for the EATSIPS modules must be kept which reflects your ideas, thoughts and perspectives based on the EATSIPS lecture & 6 on-line modules including readings, videos and cases studies. There are 20 points during the online course where you will be asked to make a response. These are marked with a number ie. 1. Reflection/Journal. These should be completed on a word document that you will submit electronically. They must not be a simple summary of the lecture or on-line material, but an active reflection of what you feel on the issues presented. It must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. It must:–
   a) be completed from all EATSIPS modules
   b) be approximately 100 words for each entry (2000 words in total)
   c) include at least one academic reference for each entry
   d) include a cover sheet and reference page

Criteria & Marking:
Students are expected to complete a reflective Journal based on the Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools (EATSIPS) modules. Please adhere to the American Psychological Association (APA) referencing style.

Assessment Criteria:
- Conceptualisation understanding and intellectual initiative
- Analysis and interpretation
- Development and clarity of expression
- Personal reflective comments
- Application to future teaching

Submission: Submit on-line through safe-assign on course website.

This assessment item:
- is a school based activity
- is an individual activity
- does not include a self assessment activity

---

Title: Multiple-choice exam  
Type: Exam - constructed response  
Learning Outcomes Assessed: 1, 3, 4, 5  
Due Date: 4 May 16 - 4 May 16 Week 9  
Weight: 40%  
Marked out of: 40  
Duration: 60 minutes  
Format: Closed Book  
Task Description:
The exam will be based on all material covered in the course. Questions will be drawn from the on-line EATSIPS modules, tutorials and lecture material for the course. The exam structure will consist of multiple choice questions only. Completion of this assessment should demonstrate your understanding of the issues raised in the course.

Criteria & Marking:
Criteria:
- Knowledge and understanding of course content

This assessment item:
- is a school based activity
- is an individual activity
- does not include a self assessment activity
**Appendix O: Marking Criteria**

Lesson Plan – Studies of Indigenous Australia - 3030EDN Assessment 2 - 20%

Name: ___________________ Stud. No: _______________ Date: ____________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria/standard</th>
<th>Outstanding achievement 20 - 17 marks</th>
<th>High achievement 16.5 - 15 marks</th>
<th>Substantial achievement 14.5 - 13 marks</th>
<th>Satisfactory 12.5 - 10 marks</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory &lt; 10 marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breadth and depth of planning</strong></td>
<td>Complete and comprehensive application of appropriate lesson structure including specific objectives, learning area, content descriptors, school and year level to meet a range of student needs.</td>
<td>Comprehensive knowledge of appropriate lesson structure including specific objectives, learning area, content descriptors, school and year level to meet a range of student needs.</td>
<td>Sound knowledge and understanding of appropriate lesson structure including specific objectives, learning area, content descriptors, school and year level to meet a range of student needs.</td>
<td>Evidence of knowledge and/or understanding of appropriate lesson structure including specific objectives, learning area, content descriptors, school and year level to meet a range of student needs.</td>
<td>Partial evidence of lesson structure. Failed to include some key areas of objectives, learning area, content descriptors, school and year level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application of Blooms Taxonomy</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and application of Blooms taxonomy. Five levels are present and applied appropriately through the planned lesson. Well thought out sequencing of activities with appropriate key questions.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a very high level of knowledge and application of Blooms taxonomy. Four levels are present and applied appropriately through the planned lesson. Well thought out sequencing of activities with appropriate key questions.</td>
<td>Substantial level of knowledge and application of Blooms taxonomy. Three levels are present and applied appropriately through the planned lesson. Clear and logical sequencing of activities with appropriate key questions.</td>
<td>Some evidence of knowledge and application of Blooms taxonomy. Two levels are present and applied appropriately through the planned lesson. Illogical sequencing of activities, lack of key questions.</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of knowledge and application of Blooms taxonomy. Little application is present through the planned lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>List/copy of appropriate resources</strong></td>
<td>Outstanding and logical alignment of appropriate resource and lesson sequence. Presentation of well-developed quality resources. Samples of personally developed resources.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a high level of knowledge of alignment of appropriate resource and lesson sequence. Presentation of high quality resources. Many resources personally developed.</td>
<td>Substantial level of knowledge of alignment of appropriate resource and lesson sequence. Presentation of resources with substantial quality. Some resources personally developed.</td>
<td>Some evidence of knowledge of alignment of appropriate resource and lesson sequence. Presentation of satisfactory resources. Appropriate resources gathered.</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of appropriate resource and alignment with lesson sequencing. Very few or a lack of appropriate resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application of EATSIPS</strong></td>
<td>Very high level of demonstrated application of EATSIPS principles as applied to lesson. a) content &amp; pedagogy, b) community engagement, c)organisational environment and d) professional and personal accountabilities.</td>
<td>High level of demonstrated application of EATSIPS principles as applied to lesson. a) content &amp; pedagogy, b) community engagement, c)organisational environment and d) professional and personal accountabilities.</td>
<td>Substantial level of demonstrated application of EATSIPS principles as applied to lesson. a) content &amp; pedagogy, b) community engagement, c)organisational environment and d) professional and personal accountabilities.</td>
<td>Some reflective comments showing adequate application of EATSIPS principles as applied to lesson. a) content &amp; pedagogy, b) community engagement, c)organisational environment and d) professional and personal accountabilities.</td>
<td>Inadequate comments to demonstrate application of EATSIPS principles. Little/no application and key areas not addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation style and level of literacy</strong></td>
<td>Presentation universally consistent with high academic standards; Mastery of academic language relevant to lesson plan; Comprehensively accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling.</td>
<td>Presentation thoroughly consistent with academic standards acceptable to faculty; Consistent use of language relevant to lesson plan; Very accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling.</td>
<td>Presentation consistent. Good application of language relevant to lesson plan; Good grammar, punctuation and spelling.</td>
<td>Presentation adequate. Adequate application of language relevant to lesson plan; Some minor grammatical, punctuation, or spelling errors.</td>
<td>Inadequate application of academic genre, generic structure, tenor and language relevant to lesson plan; Unacceptable level of grammatical, punctuation or spelling errors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Reflective Journal – Studies of Indigenous Australia - 3030EDN Assessment 1 - 40%

Name: ___________________                      Stud. No: _______________ Date: ____________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria/standard</th>
<th>Outstanding achievement (40 - 34 marks)</th>
<th>High achievement (33 - 30 marks)</th>
<th>Substantial achievement (29 - 26 marks)</th>
<th>Satisfactory (25 - 20 marks)</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory (&lt; 20 marks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conceptualisation, understanding and intellectual initiative</strong></td>
<td>Complete and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of significant issues, relevant themes and concepts. Intellectual initiative and creativity used to conceptualise and present informative perspectives.</td>
<td>Comprehensive knowledge of significant issues and themes, with conceptual understanding evident. Thorough coverage of topic reflecting sound grasp of central ideas.</td>
<td>Sound knowledge of identified issues, themes and concepts. Good understanding of selected ideas.</td>
<td>Evidence of knowledge and/or understanding of issues, themes and concepts. Adequate engagement with topic and central ideas.</td>
<td>Partial evidence of knowledge and/or understanding of significant issues, themes and concepts. Little or no engagement with relevant topic and central ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis and interpretation</strong></td>
<td>Extremely high level of interpretative and analytical ability, evidenced by thorough and effective analysis and synthesis of all issues. Thorough use of key concepts as frameworks for insightful interpretation of significant issues.</td>
<td>Very high level of interpretative and analytical ability, evidenced by effective analysis of all issues. Effective use of key concepts as frameworks for sound interpretation of significant issues.</td>
<td>Substantial level of interpretative and analytical ability, evidenced by sound analysis of some issues. Use of key concepts as frameworks for interpretation of significant issues.</td>
<td>Some evidence of analysis and interpretation; Rudimentary analysis and interpretation of selected issues. Some relevant issues introduced.</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of analysis or interpretation. Relevant issues not identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development and clarity of expression</strong></td>
<td>Very clear and careful definition of topic. Presentation of well-reasoned and paced ideas. Logical links between different parts.</td>
<td>Clear and careful definition of topic. Presentation of reasoned and well-paced ideas. Linkage between different parts.</td>
<td>Topic well defined. Effective structure of ideas for clarity. Use of ideas and evidence to develop and support ideas.</td>
<td>Some definition of topic. Basic structure of ideas and some linkage evident. Some structure apparent.</td>
<td>Inadequate or inappropriate definition of topic. Inconsistent or inadequate use of structure to clarify ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal reflective comments</strong></td>
<td>Very high level of demonstrated linkages between key points, analysis and personal perspectives.</td>
<td>High level of demonstrated linkages between key points, analysis and personal perspectives.</td>
<td>Substantial level of demonstrated linkages between key points, analysis and personal perspectives.</td>
<td>Some reflective comments showing linkages to key points and analysis.</td>
<td>Inadequate reflective comments to demonstrate understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application to future teaching</strong></td>
<td>Different parts strongly support application to teaching. Insightful conclusion drawn.</td>
<td>Very good development and support of application to teaching. Meaningful conclusion drawn.</td>
<td>Substantial details of application to teaching.</td>
<td>Application to teaching stated briefly or supported minimally.</td>
<td>Insufficient evidence of application to teaching.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix P: Table of Contents and AITSL Graduate Standard 2.4

**Table of Contents**

*Preface*

*Acknowledgments*

*Map of Aboriginal Australia*

**Chapters:**
1: Starting out as a Teacher in Aboriginal Education
2: Recognising our History: Dealing with Australia’s Past in the Contemporary Classroom
3: Aboriginal Ways of Learning
4: Quality Teaching Practices for Aboriginal Children
5: Teaching Reading and Writing to Aboriginal Children
6: Incorporating Aboriginal English in Classroom Learning
7: Aboriginal Children as Powerful Mathematicians
8: Classroom Management
9: Building Community Trust and Collaboration
10: Teaching Aboriginal Perspectives

*Bibliography*

*Index*
Appendix Q: Lists of 3030EDN Course Resources and Readings

List of Resources

- All Lecture PowerPoint slides were posted to 3030EDN (from week 1 to 9).
- All Tutorial notes were posted to 3030EDN after each tutorial (from week 1 to 9).
- Paul Keating – Redfern Park Speech
- Bringing Them Home Education Module – Queensland
- Improving the Educational Experiences of Aboriginal Children and Young People
- Pre-contact - Pre-1700’s Poster: Aboriginal Traditions and Lifestyles
- Contact – 1770 to 1890 Poster: European Invasion and Settlement
- Contact – 1890 to 1950 Poster: Protection and Segregation
- Post Contact – 1950 to 1960 Poster: Assimilation
- Post Contact – 1960 to 1972 Poster: Integration
- Contemporary – 1972 to 2000 Poster: Towards Self Determination
- Contemporary – 2000 to … Poster: The New Millenium
- Case Studies (Aboriginal students)
- Community Agreement between Western Cape College and Mapoon Community
- Yule Brook College & Aboriginal Community Agreement
- Department of Education and Training – Connectedness
- Yulunga Traditional Indigenous Games
- EATSIPS: Department of Education, Training and Employment lectures (2)
- Hopevale Shared Responsibility Agreement
- Crossing Cultures Resource (Aboriginal History, Culture & Language)
- Acknowledgement of Country
- Queensland Government Acknowledgement Protocols
- Dr Chris Sarra Speech (2007)
- Personalised Learning Plans
- Stronger Smarter YouTube
- School Attendance Strategies
- Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Body
- Indicators of a Successful Aboriginal Education Program
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols Documents
• What Works – Core Issues 3 & 4 (Literacy & Numeracy)
• Aboriginal Literacy Report
• Counting Cards Resource
• Otitis Media and Aboriginal Children: A Handbook for Teachers and Communities
• Teachers Facts
• Welfare Reforms
• What Works – Core Issues 8 (Health)
• Healthy Food Choices for Indigenous Children
• Close The Gap – Health Facts
• Mid-Year Update on Key Indicators for Queensland’s Discrete Indigenous Communities Report
• Nutrition Resource
• Renewing Rural and Regional Teacher Education Curriculum Resource
• Black Doll White Doll Experiment
• Linkz (connections and partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous)
• Exam Preparation Questions (Covers Week 1 to 8 – 90 Questions)
• Closing the Gap 2016- Prime Minister's Report
• University Career Leader
• Australian Curriculum Lessons
• Aboriginal Numbers
• Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in schools: A guide for school learning communities resource
• Appropriate Indigenous terminology resource
• Yarning Circles (QSA resource)
• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives Support Materials (QCAA)
• Solid partners Solid futures- (Qld)
• Push for bilingual education- 17th Sept., 2012.
• Indigenous Languages- State Library of Qld.
• Close the Gap- Next steps Initiative
• Community Partnership Agreements
• Case studies-Qld
• Woree Transition Program
• Transition Support Services
• A Flying Start
• Foundations for Success
• Dare to Lead Presentation
• LEP: Learning Earning Active Places Strategy
• Interactive Language Map
• The Learning Federation
• Crossing Cultures (PowerPoint from Education Queensland)
• 2010 Dare to Lead Excellence in Leadership in Indigenous Education Awards
• What Works-The workbook and guide for educators.
• Internet sites and Indigenous resources (Education Queensland, QCAA etc.)
• Families as First Teachers
• 'Effective Learning Issues for Indigenous Children aged 0 to 8 years'
• 30 years of reports into Aboriginal Australia
• Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies - http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/
• Reconciliation Australia - http://www.reconciliation.org.au
• Cultural Heritage websites
• Achieving Educational Equality for Indigenous Australians
• Student Engagement at School - An International Perspective

List of Readings

Required Readings

• Teaching and learning in Aboriginal education - Neil Harrison (2011)
• Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in schools.
• Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2007 - Overview - Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision
• Improving outcomes for Indigenous students: The workbook and guide for school educators
• What works. The work program: Core Issues 4 - Numeracy
• Otitis Media and Aboriginal Children: A Handbook for Teachers and Communities
Recommended Readings

- Sarra, C. (2003), Young, Black and Deadly. Deakin West: Australian College of Educators.


• Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. (2012) Success in Remote Schools


• Southside Education - Brief History of School development

• Learning Place

• Selection of pages from Reform and Resistance in Aboriginal Education: The Australian Experience

• Selection of pages from Australian sociology: a changing society

• Introduction: a lingering legacy - Julianne Schultz Winter 2007

• Chapter 5 Aboriginal education: A history - Nigel Parbury

• Chapter Learning and the importance of knowing: student perspectives on centralising Indigenous Knowledge in their preparation as teachers - M. Miller, T. Dunn, K. Currell

• Rethinking indigenous education: culturalism, colonialism and the politics of knowing - Cathryn McConaghy, Martin N. Nakata 2000
• Identifying white race privilege - Jenny Tannoch-Bland
• Chapter 4 Aboriginal history and Australian history
• Maintaining the practice of ceremony in Indigenous pedagogy: enhancing self and community learning - Rachel Lynwood, Jenny Graham, Judy Atkinson
• Chapter 15 Developing teaching activities
• Chapter 9 “They just can’t hack that”: Aboriginal students, their teachers and responses to schools and classrooms.
• Teaching the teachers mandatory Aboriginal Studies: Volume I Recent successful strategies - Rhonda G. Craven, Chris Halse, Herb W. Marsh, Janet Mooney 2005
• Young and black and deadly: strategies for improving outcomes for Indigenous students by Chris Sarra
• Selection of pages from Reform and Resistance in Aboriginal Education: The Australian Experience
• What works. The work program: Core Issues 1 - Setting up for success - Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
• Armed for success - Chris Sarra 2006
• Selection of pages from Teaching Aboriginal studies
• Practical guide for schools: Engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parent and communities - Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Body
• Protocols for consultation and negotiation with Aboriginal people - Department of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 1999
• What works: The Work Program: Core Issues 3 - Literacy for succeeding at school - Department of Education, Science and Training
• Numeracies in Indigenous communities - Caty Morris
• You gotta talk the proper way: language and education - Ian Malcom
• You gotta know how to talk: information seeking in South-East Queensland Aboriginal society - Diana Eades 1982
• Aboriginal literacy research project: Report to the NSW Board of Studies - Aboriginal learners and English 7-10 - Geoff Munns, Justine Lawson, Denis Mootz
• Healthy Aboriginal people
• What Works: Core Issues 8: Education and Students Health - Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
• Solid Foundations-Health and Education for Indigenous Children Aged 0 to 8 Years - Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) 2001
• Teacher's Fact Sheet - Department of Health and Ageing March 2012
• Healthy Jarjums make Healthy Food Choices - Queensland Health
• Closing the Gap: subsidising PBS medicine co-payments - Department of Health and Ageing
• Mid-Year Update on Key Indicators for Queensland's Discrete Indigenous Communities: Incorporating the October-December 2010 Quarter - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (ATSIS)
• Success in remote schools: A research study of eleven improving remote schools - Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations 2012
• Renewable rural and regional teacher education curriculum - Final Report 2012 - Simone White, Jodie Kline, Wendy Hastings, Graeme Lock 2012
• Indigenous housing needs 2009: a multi-measure needs model - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)
• A never-never land for sense - The Sydney Morning Herald - Don Watson 20 October 2007
• Queensland’s indigenous servicemen of the First World War digital story 2015
• ANZAC - Message stick - ABC TV Education

Indigenous Education Policy

• Indigenous Education Policy - Department of Education and Training
• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014 - Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, Education Services Australia
• National Integrated Strategy for Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage - Council of Australian Governments
• School entry assessment of Indigenous students - Catherine Dinos, Jay Marshall
• It's never too early to start teaching our kids | The Australian - Justine Ferrari
• Indigenous Education Strategies: Department of Education, Science and Training - Australian National Audit Office 02/2001
Appendix R: Focus Area 2.4: Key Themes, Modules, and Questions/Activities

Key Themes
1. Rights
2. Language
3. Celebration

The Modules
- Module 1: Protocols for Engagement
- Module 2: Culture and Language
- Module 3: Identity
- Module 4: History Policies and Practices
- Module 5: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Societies: Cultural Diversity, Rights and Socio Economic Justice
- Module 6: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Societies: Global Citizenship and Celebration

Questions/Activities (within the Language theme)

- **Module 1:** What are the protocols around the ownership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages? Who should speak these languages? Who should teach these languages?

- **Module 2:** What is the relationship between Culture and Language?

- **Module 3:** Identity and Language and inextricably bound. What is the consequence to your identity of being denied the right to speak your language?

- **Module 4:** Study language policy in education in Australia as a specific example of the impact of policies and practices on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

- **Module 5:** Examine the linguistic diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and the crisis facing these languages. What is the role of education in supporting the preservation and maintenance of Australia’s diversity of languages?

- **Module 6:** Celebrate language revival and understand its importance to successful education, health, well-being, and global citizenship.
Appendix S: Yarning Session Background Demographic Sheet

What is your gender?   M / F

What is your age?   Please list:

What is cultural background?   Indigenous / non-Indigenous

Did you attend the majority of your schooling in Australia?   Y / N

Have you successfully completed 3030EDN: Studies of Indigenous Australia?   Y / N