



Report back on **Getting in Touch Workshop**
8-9 April 2014, Desert People's Centre, Alice Springs
Inge Kral, Margaret Carew, Marie Ellis

How it came about:



- Research Unit for Indigenous Language (RUIL) at the University of Melbourne - a new initiative, seeking to do meaningful language projects with Indigenous communities.
- Researchers associated with RUIL have become aware of the link between new digital technologies and language and communication.
- Alongside growing concern that much of that activity is taking place in English, despite the Indigenous language context.
- Are Indigenous languages being left out, or included? The project wants to support DIGITAL INCLUSION – making sure that Indigenous communities have support to develop digital resources in their own languages.

Getting in Touch Workshop

- A two day workshop to explore language and digital inclusion in Australian Indigenous Communities
- Held at the Desert People's Centre in Alice Springs on 8-9 April 2014
- Various projects delivered presentations
- Projects matched up with language teams interested in developing apps and other digital resources – introductions leading to new collaborations
- Supported by: University of Melbourne (Social Equity Institute and RUIL), CAEPR-ANU, Batchelor Institute, First Languages Australia, Indigenous Languages Support (Australian Government)

Who came?

- Language teams from across the NT, South Australia and Western Australia, including:
 - Maningrida
 - Wadeye
 - Warruwi (Goulburn Island)
 - Ti Tree
 - Alice Springs
 - Willowra
 - Ngaanyatjarra Lands
 - Pitjantjatjara Lands
 - Mwingart (McClaren Creek)



Presentations included:

- Steven Bird – Aikuma Project
- Ala' Diab – Freedom Games, Chicago US
- Bruce Birch – Ma! Iwaidja Project
- Karina Lester and Paul Paton – First Languages Australia
- Ben Foley – digital media consultant (First Languages Australia review of digital resources in Indigenous Languages)
- Lizzie Ellis, Inge Kral, Jenny Green – digitally based narrative practices in the Ngaanyatjara Lands.
- Iityem-iltyem Central Australian Sign language project
- Stuart Dwyer and Tristan Duggie – IAD Alyawarr language app in NT Schools in the Barkly Region.
- Margaret Carew and Maree Klesch – Batchelor Press and CALL, creating books with a digital twist

Workshop explorations

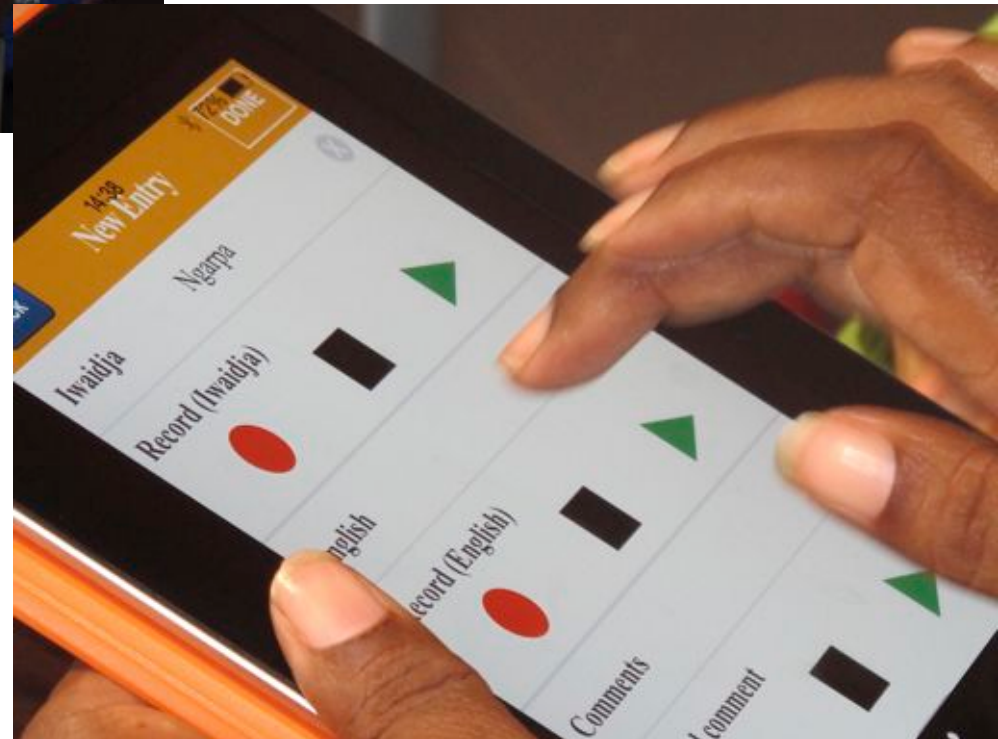


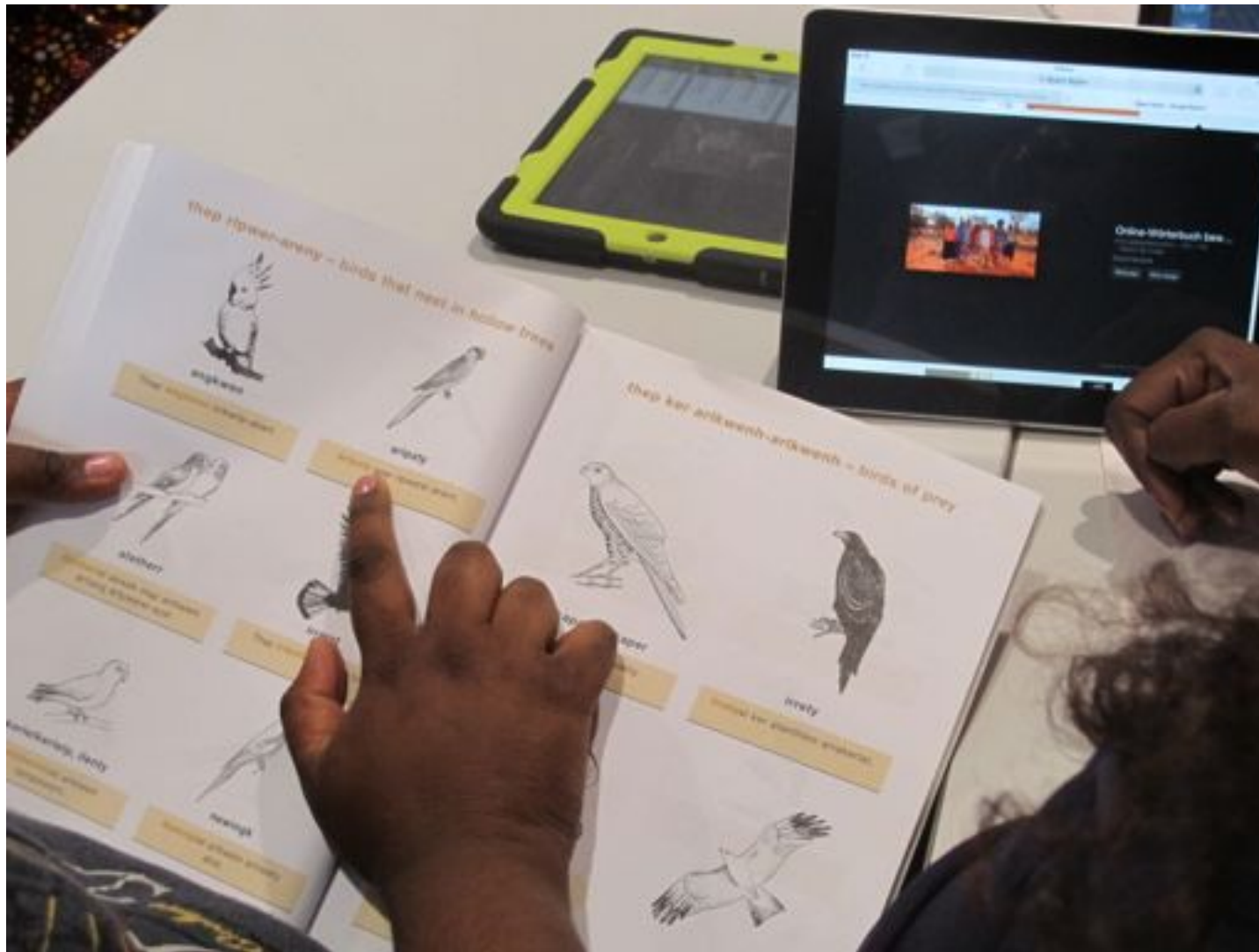


Designing language and culture games for mobile devices



Understanding Ma! Iwaidja
– a language dictionary app

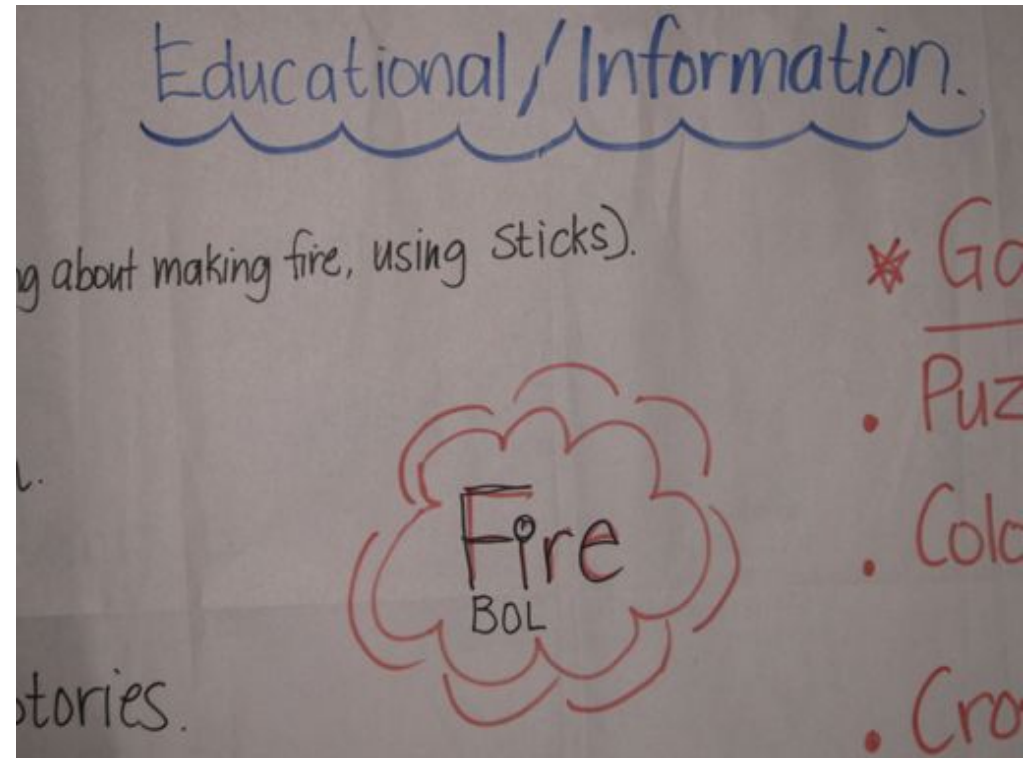
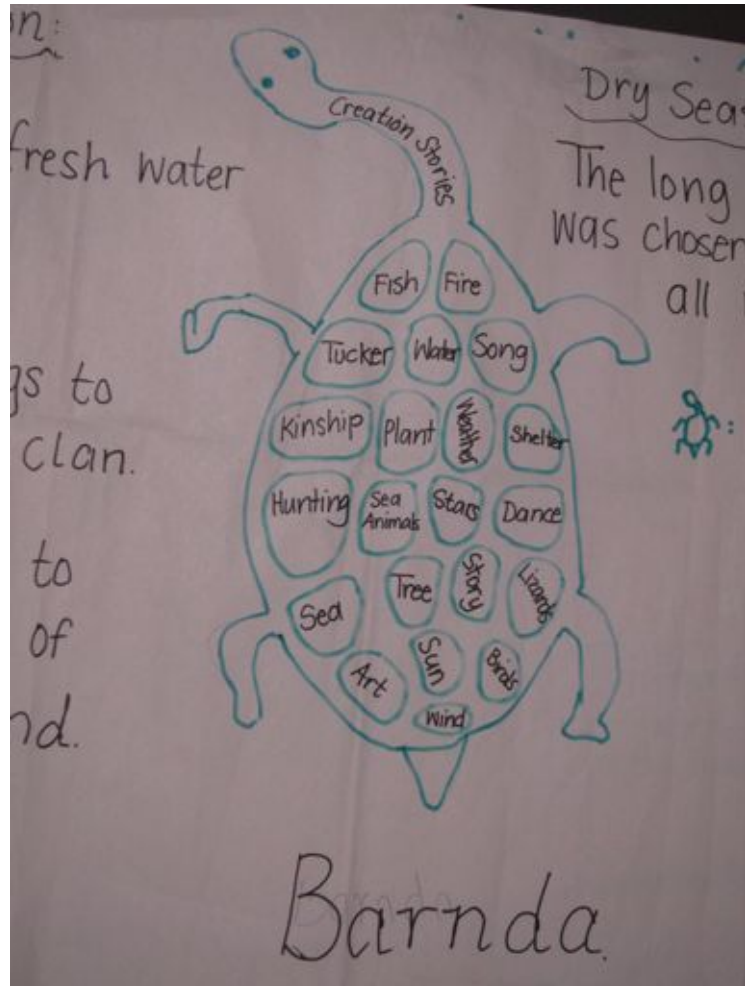




Adapting picture dictionary themes to language apps and games

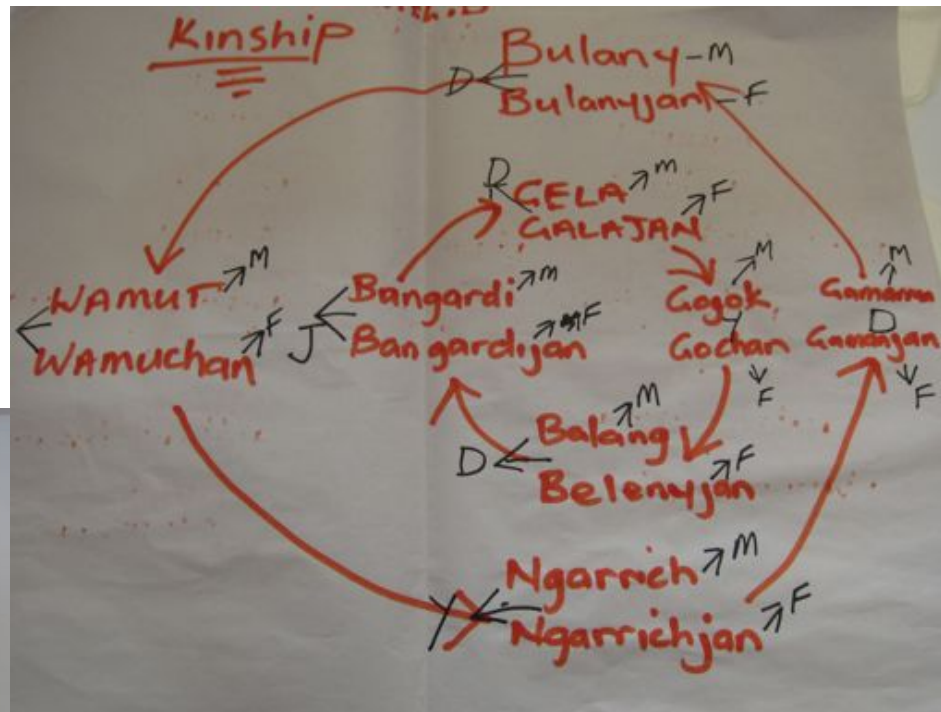


Exploring language recording apps

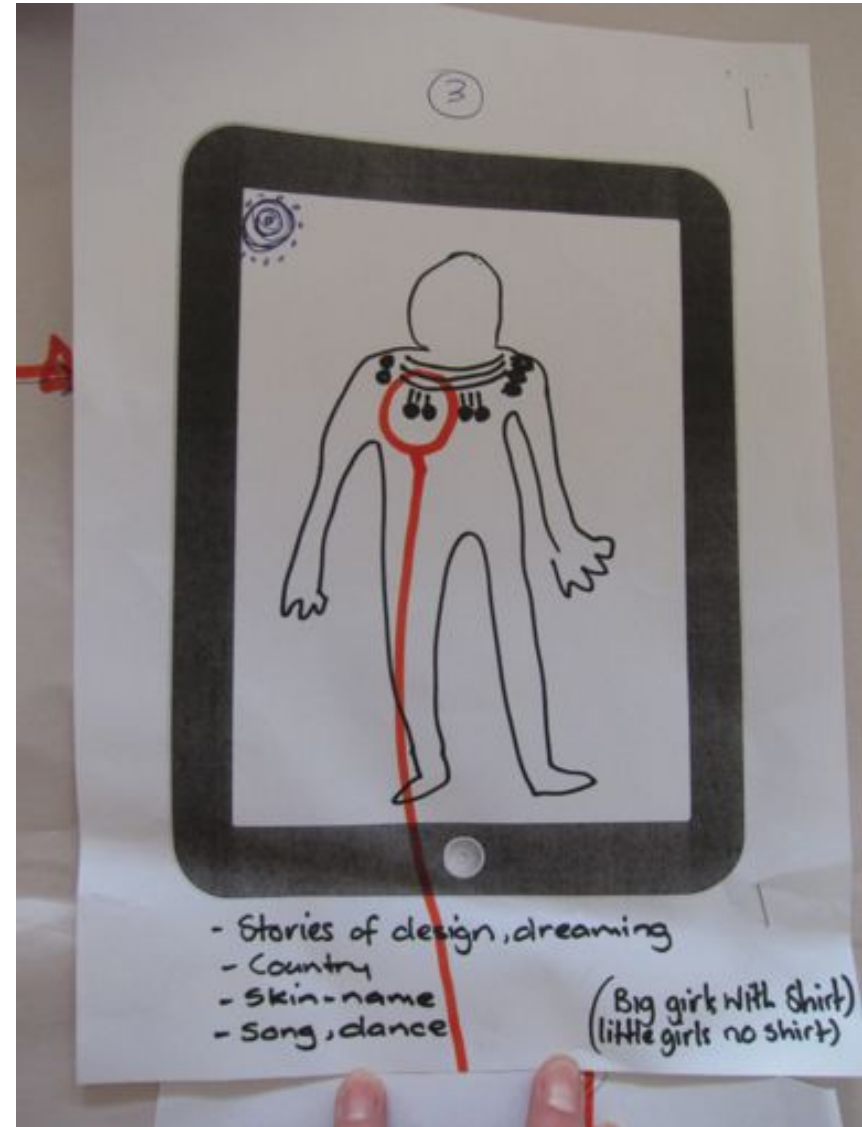
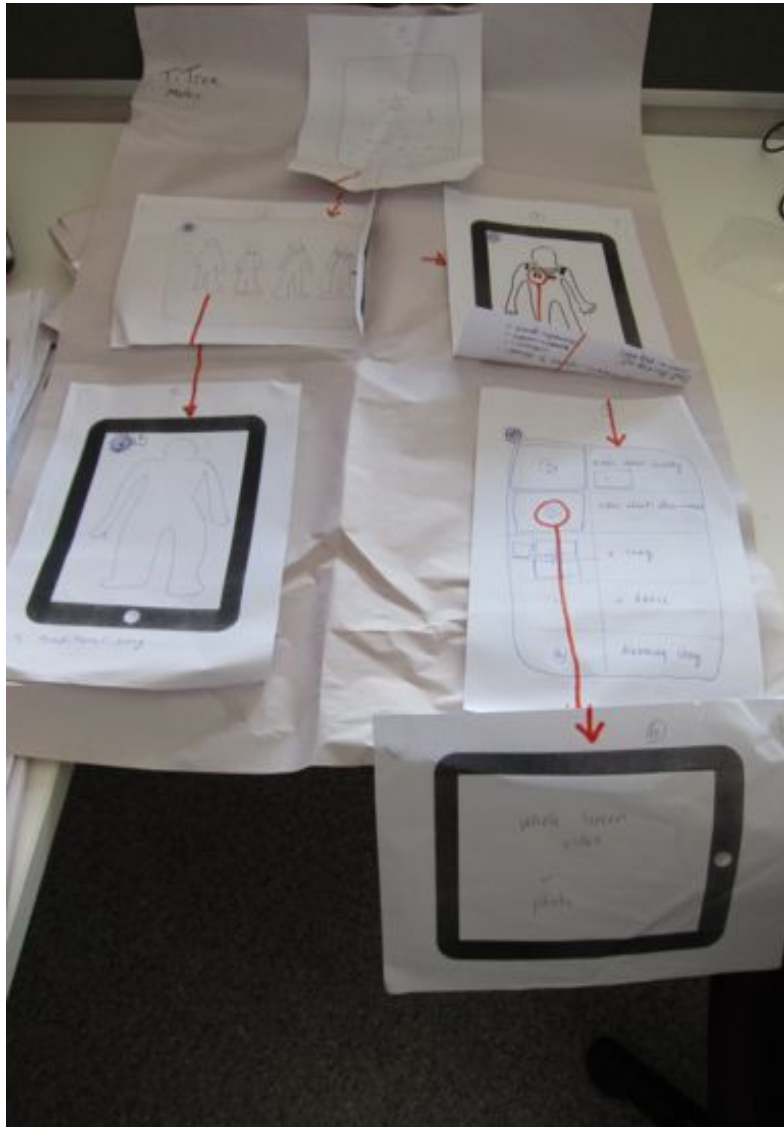


We found that existing language planning tools are ideal for developing apps and games

For example: familiar themes like 'kinship' appear to be ideal for the new digital environment



As do other cultural themes...



Why is it important?

- Digital technology is part of our lives, and the NBN is coming. Let's work with it.
- Many Indigenous people have already got valuable skills, especially people who have worked in Bilingual schools and Indigenous media organisations. These transfer well to planning and developing digital resources.
- The digital environment is important for language learning, language maintenance and the business of everyday communication.
- Indigenous languages are changing rapidly, digital resources can strengthen people's language activity.

Future directions

- We plan to develop many of the ideas drafted at the workshop by:
 - seeking funding to produce apps and games
 - building links and collaborations
 - raising awareness of importance of keeping Indigenous languages strong in the new digital environment

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank:

- The many different Indigenous community members who travelled a long way to participate in the workshop
- All the presenters
- The workshop organisers
- The generous support of various funding bodies



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Australian Government
Indigenous Languages Support

Funded by Melbourne Social Equity Institute with support from the Centre for Australian Languages and Linguistics at Batchelor Institute, and First Languages Australia.
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