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Editorial

In the first article of this issue Buschenhofen tells us about the bilingual program at Yuendumu School, Northern Territory. One of the aims of the program is

to help each child to believe in himself and be proud of his heritage by the regular use of his Aboriginal language in the school and by learning about Aboriginal culture.

At Yuendumu one of the Aboriginal languages is Warlpiri. This language is used almost exclusively for instruction at the pre-school level, and is maintained as a language of instruction throughout the primary school. In this way, as Buschenhofen notes,

a bilingual program teaches a child, by experience, that his own language, and by natural extension, his own culture, is worthy of study and respect.

It is not only in bilingual programs in Aboriginal communities, however, that such respect for Aboriginal languages and culture can be fostered. Nugent, in her article, shows how the incorporation of near extinct Aboriginal languages - Dharawal and Dhurga - into the curriculum of the Jervis Bay Primary School

demonstrates that the school values the original Australian languages and that it desires to achieve in its curriculum some cultural transmission by the Aboriginal community.

Such a program benefits the non-Aboriginal as well as the Aboriginal children, giving them both the opportunity to understand and appreciate the complexity and adequacy of the original languages of the region.

