

What's in a Name?: Exploring the Implications of Eurocentric (Re)naming Practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nomenclature in Australian Education Practices

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The aim of this article is to provide teachers with knowledge of ways in which Eurocentric (re)naming practices inform contemporary pedagogical approaches, while providing understandings pertinent to the mandatory inclusion of the cross-curriculum priority area: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures* (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2015). While we have focused on Eurocentric naming practices, we have also been conscious of names used by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders to name themselves and others and as non-Indigenous Australians we acknowledge that it is not our place to explore these in detail, or offer alternatives. In this article, we have explored the history of nomenclature as it relates to original inhabitants, the connotations of contemporary (re)naming practices in Australian education and discussed the importance of drawing on cultural protocols and engaging local communities for teaching and learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. It is anticipated that discussions arising from this article may open up spaces where teachers may think about ways in which they approach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

■ **Keywords:** Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Indigenous, teaching pedagogy, nomenclature, cultural protocols

Introduction

The Australian Curriculum (AC) (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2015) advises teachers to incorporate studies of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures where such 'opportunities add depth and richness to student learning' and 'encourage conversation between students, teachers and the wider community'. This raises questions about what this means for teachers who do not identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person and ways in which they access such knowledge and (re)present it. In studies published before the implementation of the AC (see for example Clark, 2004, 2006, 2008; Henderson 2009, 2011), it has been reported that teachers of Australian History tend to avoid teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content because they feel confused, or doubt their knowledge to teach in what they perceive is a politically correct manner. This is perhaps understandable given the scope

and range of the education they themselves might have received in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies during their own university education (Henderson, 2011; Ma Rhea & Russell, 2012; Nakata, Nakata, Keech, & Bolt, 2012; Scott, 2009; Williamson & Dalal, 2007). In this article, we argue that lack of clarity about what name(s) are appropriate to use when referring to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders in teaching and learning programs of Australian education may contribute to teacher avoidance canvassed in the literature. We aim firstly to provide teachers with historical knowledge and understanding of the connotations of names applied by European descendant Australians to Aboriginal

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peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, and secondly to provide teachers with knowledge about cultural protocols which engage language practices that name and frame Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders. In doing so, we have extended on Nakata et al., (2012) discussion to contribute to literature on ways in which new knowledge may contribute to understandings of the Eurocentric 'legacy of a very complex and historically layered contemporary knowledge space' (p. 132). In this article, we use the term Eurocentric to denote ways in which thoughts, discussions and constructions of naming in curriculum and schooling for example, are constrained to understandings couched within European/Western cultures, histories and societies.

While we have focused on Eurocentric (re)naming practices of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, we have been cognisant of names used by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders to name themselves and others. It is beyond the scope of this article to examine such naming practices, but we acknowledge that names used by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders to refer to themselves and others provide a wealth of knowledge about and contributes to understandings of cross-cultural relationships in Australian society. A growing body of literature developed by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander academics focuses on ways in which they have been (re)named, and ways in which they name themselves, embedded in cultural positions (Carlson, Berglund, Harris, & Te Ahu Poata-Smith, 2014; Craven & Price, 2011; Williamson & Dalal, 2007). We have drawn on these discussions in our examination of ways in which Eurocentric language practices have (re)named and framed Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples since English contact in 1770, as they provide a means for depth of exploration and understanding.

Education practices across Australia tend to use three names to refer to the original inhabitants of this country. These are derived from European colonial, or Eurocentric perspectives. *Aboriginal* is used to identify the original inhabitants of the Australian continent and southern islands. *Torres Strait Islanders* is used to identify the original inhabitants from the islands in the Torres Strait, located north of the Australian mainland. *Indigenous* is a collective name generally used to group both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (Carlson et al., 2014). It is useful to examine where these names have come from and what the connotations are as this provides deeper understanding of the legacies of Eurocentric (re)naming practices. Other considerations might be what other names come from non-colonial perspectives, how one knows whether any given name or names are appropriate, or whether they are appropriate and possibly interchangeable. Given such considerations, our decision to use the names *Aboriginal peoples* and *Torres Strait Islanders* in this article has not been an unconsidered one; our decision is couched in

understandings that are multi-layered, multi-cultural and multi-perspectived.

History of Eurocentric (Re)naming Practices of Original Inhabitants of the Australian Continent and Surrounding Islands

From 1770 to 1989, non-Indigenous people in Australia have (re)named Australia's original inhabitants in a number of ways, usually in generic, anthropological terms. These names have drawn on Eurocentric understandings of what it means to be from a race of peoples different from European races, positioning such understandings as privileged. In Australia, Eurocentric practices of naming and framing have been used to (re)name Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders even before the First Fleet landed (Atkinson, 1982). When Australia was encountered by European explorers in the 17th century, the land mass was referred to as *New Holland*, with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders at that time (re)named as *New Hollanders* (Rowse, 2001). By 1770 the term *native* appears in Captain Cook's journals to identify Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, but as Rowse (2001) explains, this name was generally not taken up by other European explorers until the land mass known as *New Holland* came to be known as *Australia*, as promoted by Matthew Flinders. The processes by which Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders of the Australian continent and surrounding islands have been (re)named according to Eurocentric language practices continued through the 19th and 20th centuries, entrenching a practice which endures in the 21st century.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders continued to be (re)named according to Eurocentric language practices, the (re)naming to be understood in binary understandings of race. During the 19th century the self-governing colonies of Britain used the term *native* in communications to identify Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders of each colony (Rowse, 2001). Other names such as *Indians*, *savages*, *blacks*, *coloureds* and *negroes* were used within these colonies to identify local Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders (Rowse, 2001). The diversity of (re)naming practices may have developed out of the different geographical origins of settlers, convicts and migrants who sailed to the Australian continent at this time, and their understandings of race. Frankland (1994) states that by the 20th century — around the time when the six individual British colonies formed one nation — the terms *aboriginals*, *aborigines* and *aboriginal people*, homogenisation in (re)naming practices, began to appear in government documents. Although homogenisation naming practices have arguably persisted to date, the 20th century saw a rise in understandings and (re)naming practices

which recognised and honoured diversity among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Rapid occupation across the Australian continent by European (predominately British) colonists, migrants, convicts and explorers during the late 19th and early 20th centuries frequently reported peaceful contact with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders (Reynolds, 2006). Reynolds (2006) argues that such peaceful contact was more often than not reported, but not isolated to, the coastal regions of the continent where both non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Australians and Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders stood to benefit from amicable meetings. As this occurred and language barriers began to break down, (re)naming practices of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders according to geographical locations began to emerge. Inextricably linked with these emerging practices was the integration of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders' language and words, but not necessarily their understandings of land, culture and society. Evidence of these practices emerges around 1880, 110 years after the arrival of *The Endeavour* in 1770. Fison and Howitt (1880) for example, published a book called *Kamilaroi and Kurnai* in which they analysed the social structures of these two communities. Even though they used names from Aboriginal speech in Eastern Victoria to identify them, assumptions about ways in which their ancestral domains were identified and defined on a map were inextricably linked to Eurocentric understandings. In similar vein, Threlkeld, Ridley, Livingstone, Ganther, & Taplin (1892) published a book where language used by Aboriginal peoples of the Lake Macquarie area in New South Wales, *Awabakal* and *Awaba*, was appropriated and used in the title. As the National Museum of Australia (2015) states, the purpose of this book was to use the language of these peoples to convert them to Christianity. The indications are that although knowledge, acknowledgement and recognition of the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language groups was practised, they were inextricably embedded within Eurocentric understandings and perspectives.

Although European arrivals acknowledged and recognised diversity among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Eurocentric practices which homogenised such diversity was simultaneously practised. Superintendent of the Port Phillip District of New South Wales, E.B Addis (1841) discussed in one diary entry 'tribes of aborigines', but in another the 'hunting grounds of the Yarra Yarra tribes'. At other times recognition of diversity among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities were conflated with notions of homogeneity. Baylie (1843), a medical officer in the Goulburn District of Northern Victoria is an example of this. In one report he states, 'There appears to be about one thousand [Aboriginal peoples] in this district, they are divided into twelve tribes,

namely, Neenbullocks, Budderbullocks, Orilims, Yarranilums, Youngillums, Warnigullums' (Baylie, 1843, p. 89). Recognition of diversity in conjunction with homogeneity was not restricted to discussions and recording by European arrivals alone; Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders also engaged in such practices. Chief Protector of Aborigines from 1838–1849, G.A. Robinson, for example, notes a number of examples in his journals of Victorian Aboriginal peoples proudly proclaiming their country, territorial borders and language affiliations (Clark, 2000). One specific example may be gleaned from a court testimony by Peter Mungett, a Wathawurrung man, where he states, 'He is a native Aboriginal of Balliang, dwelling in Ballan and born out of the allegiance of our Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria' (The Argus, 1860). At the same time as practices recognising diversity among Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders other practices which implied notions of homogeneity linked to Eurocentric understandings of race and race relations were in play.

During the 20th century there appeared to be an increased understanding and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and words in (re)naming practices, as Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders were (re)named according to their geographical locations. A point to note here is that these geographical locations were not understood in relation to Traditional Owners' boundaries based on knowledge sacred to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, but rather on identified Eurocentric understanding of land and boundaries. Spencer (1914), for example, (re)named Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders of the Northern Territory area as the *Melville and Bathurst Islanders*. By the 1930s, ethnographer Hart had (re)named these same people as *The Tiwi's* [*sic*], using the Islanders' word for 'we, the only people' (Rowse, 2001). Even so, understanding of diversity and use of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander language for identifying individual language groups and dialects by geographical location did not prevent the introduction of draconian laws in Victoria (and elsewhere in Australia) which dispossessed Aboriginal communities of their traditional lands. With the introduction of these laws a number of Aboriginal communities in Victoria moved or were moved onto reserves or missions where ways in which they were (re)named by European Australians continued to espouse notions of homogeneity. (Re)naming practices shifted to recognition and identification by new geographical locations (Broome, 1989). As Broome (1989) states:

Europeans sought to 'settle down' Aboriginal people and centralise them for European convenience . . . as Aboriginal groups formed or were encouraged into new groupings . . . kinship and marriage traditions solidified these new communities . . . Traditional identities were enlarged by new colonial identities. Thus, a person who was of the Wurundjeri-baluk clan of the Woiworrung language group, which was part of

the Kulin confederation [Nation], became also one of the Coranderrk mission people (p. 119).

Eurocentric understandings of race relations and practices which simultaneously recognised diversity while promoting homogeneity continued to persist throughout the 20th century. Carlson et al., (2014) highlight such practices in their discussion of the Australian assimilation policy, under which Aboriginal children ‘considered to be part *Aboriginal*, and (re)named as *half caste*, *quadroon* or *octoroon* (these names are no longer considered appropriate because identification as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander within communities is not, and never has been, based on biological percentages rather identification is inextricably tied to social-cultural-spiritual practices), were forcibly removed from their families and are now known as the Stolen Generations’ (p. 66). Classifying and (re)naming Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders according to such eugenic principles suggests that Eurocentric concepts of homogeneity and superiority in the 20th century were privileged over other understandings of what it may mean to be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person (Neville, 1947). Such concepts, notions and ways of (re)naming Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders came under attack in the second half of the 20th century.

From about the 1960s, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders collaboratively and simultaneously campaigned in political arenas to combat ways in which they were (re)named according to Eurocentric language practices and notions of homogeneity. In 1966, for example, the ‘people of the Northern Territory’s Victoria River region in a Native Title claim referred to themselves as *the Gurindji?* (Rowse, 2001). Such political activism was in stark contrast to Australian government practices of the same time. Before the 1970s, the Australian government grouped Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and (re)named them collectively as *aboriginals* or *natives*. In doing so they denied recognition of diversity and status of language groups while promoting notions of homogeneity. After this time, though, the Australian government adopted a capital A, for *Aboriginal*, in official communications where both Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders were referenced (Rowse, 2001). The reasoning behind such changes remains unclear, but one could perhaps link such changes in official communications to increased political campaigning by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders at the time. During the 1970s peoples of the Torres Strait Islands had politically campaigned to ‘articulate their distinct claims as an indigenous [*sic*] people, [and since then] there has been good reason to refer to [the language groups of Australia] as Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders’ (Rowse, 2001). Language practices by European Australians at this time began to (re)name both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language groups separately. At the same

time, other processes which subtly once again sought to promote homogeneity also gained momentum, one such example being the abbreviation of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders to ATSI¹ (Campbell, 2000; Hickling-Hudson, 2005). During the 1980s, Aboriginal groups across the continent campaigned for and promoted words and understandings embedded in their own languages to be used in similar (re)naming practices. As Broome (1989) states:

... in recent times – 1980s – many descendants of the first people who live in Victoria prefer to be called Kooris ... it is certainly a reasonable request given that Koori is the name by which many Victorian Aborigines now wish to be called and no other Victorian group seems disadvantaged by such usage. Many believe that ‘aborigine’ and other terms, including derogatory ones, are the political and pejorative words of the colonisers, the invaders of their land (p. 5).

Other Aboriginal communities took up such calls for sovereignty and recognition and (re)named themselves using their own languages. As a result of this, the following names which identify a number of Aboriginal communities in these locations have come to be understood and used in the larger Australian society, *Goori* — Northern NSW; *Murri* — North West New South Wales and Queensland; *Nunga* — South Australia; *Yolungu* — Northern Territory; *Anangu* — Central Australia; and *Noongar* — South West Western Australian (NSW Department of Health, 2004). There is a lack of clear evidence whether Aboriginal communities in Victoria began this trend, or indeed where it started, but what is clear, as suggested by Carlson et al., (2014) and the NSW Department of Health (2004), is that these names are preferred over generic ones, such as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or Indigenous. One could perhaps suggest that using such names when talking about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in these areas reignites practices of recognition and acknowledgment of the diversity throughout Australia. It could also be argued that although these names identify diversity across the continent, they still maintain notions of homogeneity among these groups.

Political activism for recognition, acknowledgment and sovereignty in (re)naming practices by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders gained momentum in the second half of the 20th century. This can be observed in documented changes in Australian government communiqués as well as in organisations run by, and for, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders. What remains unclear in these changes is where the name, Indigenous or Indigenous Australian, as the common popularised umbrella term to refer to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders originates. As O’Connell (personal communication, December 12, 2012), from the Australian

¹This abbreviation may be considered offensive to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders and should not be used.

Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) explains, ‘... There is nothing definitive in our collections about when the specific terms used to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples actually began [to be used]’. Before the 1980s, both Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders were defined as Aborigines, but from 1989 the name Indigenous Australian seems to have been adopted to refer to both Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples alike (O’Connell, personal communication, December 12, 2012). This may have stemmed from Torres Strait Islander academics’ calls at this time for recognition of their own unique languages and cultures in Australian society (Dudgeon, Wright, Paradies, Garvey, & Walker, 2010; Sellwood & Angelo, 2013). What is perplexing and disappointing at the same time is that although awareness of diversity among Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders exists in current-day Australian government relations, Eurocentric practices of homogenising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities persists in 2015. Perhaps, as argued by Carlson et al. (2014), writing the phrase, *Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders*, time and again in official documentation is considered too cumbersome, and that the name *Indigenous Australian* is preferred as an inclusive term as it does not segregate or marginalise one group over another. Carlson et al. (2014) also states that there are those Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders who do not like to be named as Indigenous Australians because this does not identify them appropriately, and it continues to promote notions of homogeneity.

Despite awareness and acknowledgment of the diversity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language groups over the past 220 years or more, Eurocentric language practices which background this diversity and promote notions of homogeneity persist. Langton (2012), in a speech delivered at the Melbourne’s Writer’s Festival, has called for a rethink of the name *Indigenous Australian* or *Aboriginal* in light of calls for constitutional recognition of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders, alongside a reconsideration of welfare based on race. Linking her premise with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (United Nations, 2008), Langton (2012) argues ‘... in the slowly building campaign for constitutional recognition of indigenous [*lower case original*] people, it is vital that we broaden the understanding that constitutional traditions of treating Aborigines as a race must be replaced with the idea of first peoples’ (p. 2). Her argument suggests another leap in understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nomenclature and ways in which (re)naming practices promote diversity or homogeneity. Until this is taken up, we argue that we are yet at a place where understanding ways in which Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders have been (re)named since European contact highlight germs of prejudice and pejoration of race that are carried by these names. We are at a place where teachers may critically examine ways

in which Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders have been (re)named throughout Australia’s history and ways in which this constructs understandings and perceptions of what it means to be an Aboriginal person and/or Torres Strait Islander, albeit through a Eurocentric lens. Informed by such knowledge, teachers are at a place where they are empowered to explore, investigate and engage critical conversations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nomenclature in Australian society.

Implied Connotations of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Indigenous Nomenclature

Having explored the history of ways in which Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders have been (re)named since European contact, we turn to ways in which current (re)naming practices in education inform teachers’ understandings, not only of these names, but also of the peoples they represent. We have used the *Australian National Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2008) for definitions of these names, for as the dictionary states, it ‘makes up the Australian contribution to the English language’ understandings unique in Australia. We use the definitions supplied in this dictionary to highlight connotations which may be implied by the use of these names, and in doing so, suggest knowledge teachers may use to engage them, or not. While the use of dictionary definitions may be considered old practice we have used these definitions to highlight further ways in which Eurocentric practices of naming and framing permeate current day social practices and inform teacher understandings of these names.

Aboriginal is defined in the *Australian National Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2008) as an adjective, a noun and an adverb, which refers to ‘characteristics of the *Aborigines*, one of the *Aborigines*, an early-settler, an Australian-born colonist and an unspecified *Aboriginal* language [capitals original]’ (Oxford University Press, 2008). Carlson et al. (2014) explain that in recent times, non-Indigenous Australians have claimed to be Indigenous Australians or Aboriginal, based on the fact that they were born and raised on Australian soil and have called no other country home. They go on to explain that such assumptions ‘discredit the unique status that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people hold as First Peoples of this country [Australia]’ (Carlson et al., 2014, p. 67). When teachers use this name, they are taking up a name which defines a race of people using out-dated anthropological colonialist language. They are taking up the naming of peoples based on racial features, including physical and linguistic features, and continue to promote homogenised understandings of what it means to be Aboriginal person couched in Eurocentric understandings. In doing so, they position Aboriginal people in opposition to European Australians and maintain adversarial dichotomies. There is also suggestion of global application of the name

by undefined geographical or national links in the dictionary definition. The name, *aborigine*, meaning ‘an original inhabitant of a country or region who has been there from the earliest known times’ (Liddle, 2014, cited in, Carlson et al., 2014, p. 67) implies homogeneity of shared cultural, social and spiritual practices between all aboriginal people on earth. This silences the distinct difference between characteristics of European Australians and those ‘characteristics of Aborigines’ (Oxford University Press, 2008). Furthermore, it privileges Eurocentric language practices and understandings of race by defining the referencing ‘an unspecified Aboriginal language’ (Oxford University Press, 2008).

Torres Strait Islanders are not mentioned in the Australian National Dictionary at all, despite the last update of this dictionary being in 2008 and the use of the name Torres Strait Islanders having been in circulation in Australian society since the 1970s (Rowse, 2001). Given this, we have turned to a document developed by the Queensland Government (2011), the governing body for the Torres Strait Islands, for a definition of the name. The Queensland Government (2011) defines Torres Strait Islanders as ‘a person/descendant from the Torres Strait Islands . . . [and it] should be used as an adjective, not as a noun’. In this context, it could be argued that the name is appropriate to use, as it states the origin, albeit a large geographical area, from which the peoples of the Torres Strait Islands derive. It does not suggest neutrality; in fact according to this definition it is not even a name. It is a descriptive term. When teachers unquestioningly take up and use this name, they also take up the homogenised understandings of indigeneity in Australia, of one culture, using one language and guided by one spiritual order (Schnukal, 2001). This is far from the case, as Schnukal (2001) argues, for there is documented evidence which demonstrates that ‘although they formed part of a broad culture area and were linked by warfare, trade and ceremonial exchange . . . each group considered itself separate from its neighbours’ (p. 2). Worse still, according to Schnukal (2001), is that Torres Strait Islanders have been constructed as a ‘minority within a minority’ (p. 1). Ways in which they have been (re)named by Europeans appears almost as an afterthought to ways in which Aboriginal peoples have been (re)named by the same processes. When teachers take up the name *Torres Strait Islander* with the definition supplied by the Queensland Government, they also take up Eurocentric understandings and language processes which background the unique knowledges of landscape, histories, trading and stories. Given this, the name continues to position Torres Strait Islanders as the *other* Indigenous Australian group in Australia, the one to be learnt about after Aboriginal Australians. The connotations of the name *Torres Strait Islander* combined with the definitions supplied in the dictionary suggests a denial of the unique cultural ways and experiences of communities of original inhabitants in the Torres Strait.

Neither is *Indigenous* mentioned in the *Australian National Dictionary*, even though it too emerged in the 1970s and is commonly used in current Australian education practices (Carlson et al., 2014). Given this, we turned to the Australian Government for a definition and were routed to a page where a legal definition of the term *Indigenous* has been supplied (Australian Government, 2014). Here it is stated that ‘Indigenous peoples have resisted attempts internationally to prescribe an exhaustive definition of ‘Indigenous’, and references the United Nations Working Group on the Rights of Indigenous Populations who ‘have considered the definition of *Indigenous* peoples, communities and nations but have never adopted a formal definition’ (Australian Government, 2014). For the purposes of highlighting connotations of (re)naming practices of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders in this article, we have sought a formal definition of the term *Indigenous* from the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2015). We have used this dictionary because as it states it is ‘the definitive record of the English language’, and *Indigenous* is defined as an adjective meaning ‘born or produced naturally in a land or region; native or belonging naturally to (the soil, region, etc), used primarily in reference to aboriginal inhabitants or natural products’ (Oxford University Press, 2015). This suggests global applications of the name, carrying with it sentiments of difference, not only from European Australians but also of other indigenous groups across the earth. The name raises more questions and concerns than the names *Aboriginal* and *Torres Strait Islanders*, as there is a question of ambiguity in meaning. Carlson et al. (2014) add scope to such concerns:

... several Aboriginal peoples have expressed dislike for the term ‘Indigenous’ because they consider it a government-imposed term popular with bureaucrats, because repeatedly writing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is viewed as cumbersome (p. 67).

Carlson et al. (2014) go on to explain that as Indigenous Australian academics:

While it may be a custom in the Australian context to use capitalised Indigenous to refer to Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders, and lower-case indigenous to refer to peoples outside of Australia, we depart from that convention to demonstrate the complications that emerge when doing transglobal comparative work. Moreover, capital *I* in one case versus another assumes a centring norm (p. 59).

Teachers taking up this name and using it to (re)name Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders continue to perpetuate homogenised understandings of what it means to be an original inhabitant of the Australian continent and surrounding islands. It continues to background the diversities of experiences, perspectives and knowledges within and among individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Just as European descendant Australians do not live, work and engage in entertainment in

the same way in Tasmania as they do in central Queensland, neither do Aboriginal peoples nor Torres Strait Islanders.

The legacy of Eurocentric (re)naming practices of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders where homogeneity is the preferred norm and diversity is not acknowledged continues to permeate current education practices. We suggest that further discussion of ways in which constructed language and terminology of privileged knowledge systems informs pedagogical use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nomenclature is required to explore further ways in which pedagogical practices constrain other possible meanings of such nomenclature. We argue that when teachers are informed with understandings of ways in which names applied to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders peoples since European contact, and the connotations of these, they are empowered to explore and challenge such (re)naming practices. In doing so, teachers are enabled to work with and engage Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders themselves, to learn ways in which local language groups prefer to be named. Drawing on cultural protocols to foster such relationships, teachers step away from government supported education practices that are out-dated and fail to respect and acknowledge diversity among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language groups.

Teaching Practices Drawing on Protocols for (Re)naming Practices and Relationships

Our discussion of ways in which Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders have been (re)named since European contact has not promoted one name over another. We have come to understand, acknowledge and respect during our own engagement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies that ways in which Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders choose to be named is inextricably linked to self-identity. Guided to engage with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders and not the disconnected literature about them, we have come to learn about cultural protocols as guides to inform our teaching practice. We have come to understand that relationships with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders is the key to begin development of understandings of ways in which (re)naming practices under the influences of Europeans has influenced not only self identity, but also the wider Australian society's understandings (Harrison & Murray, 2012).

There is emerging literature that suggests the names *Aboriginal*, *Torres Strait Islander* and *Indigenous*, are out-dated, constructed within colonial knowledge systems, and defined by European Australians to maintain adversarial dichotomies of race and race relations (Carlson et al., 2014). The literature in this field also suggests that non-Indigenous Australians not be involved in decisions

of (re)naming, on the basis that any such attempts would continue to permeate concepts of what it means to be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, inextricably tied to Eurocentric understandings of race (Frankland, Bamblett, Lewis, & Trotter, 2010; Kameniar, Windsor, & Sifa, 2014; Moreton-Robinson, Kolopenuk, & Robinson, 2012; Nakata et al., 2012). The literature further suggests that various Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations across the continent and surrounding islands are increasingly producing information for themselves and others about the most appropriate terminology to use when referencing a region or specific language group of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders (Koorie Women Mean Business, 2004). Guiding the production of such information is the notion of cultural protocols. The practice of engaging protocols developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations is gaining momentum throughout non-Indigenous run organisations that are increasingly producing similar relevant material for their employees (Federation University, 2015). As teachers in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies ourselves, we have been guided to use cultural protocols developed by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders as a reference point from which to launch further explorations. On the basis of our experience of engaging such material, we argue that (re)naming practices couched in Eurocentric knowledge which seeks to promote misconceptions about homogeneity among Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders may be disrupted, with diversity recognised and celebrated, and new cross-cultural understandings of what it means to be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person in Australia developed.

Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian organisations have produced information on cultural protocols to educate non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians on issues surrounding the practice of (re)naming, classifying, identifying and terminology about Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders. Formalisation of cultural protocols have emerged from Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander practices of self-determination and sovereignty as a means of positioning themselves as privileged knowledge holders about ways in which communication and relationships with them are to occur (National Board of Employment, Education and Training Australian Research Council, 1999; Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Inc., 2010; Universities Australia, 2011). Protocols, those informal codes of conduct which guide non-Indigenous peoples on best practice models for engaging Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders knowledges and perspectives (Oxfam Australia, n.d) may be recorded and accessed formally or informally (Oxfam Australia, n.d; Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Inc., 2010; Torres Strait Islander Authority, 2011; Yappera Children's Service Cooperative, n.d). Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander protocols are founded on principles of respect and understanding, recognition of and protection for intellectual property rights, interpretation and integrity and building culturally safe working relationships.

Cultural protocols for understanding ways in which Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders have been (re)named since European contact assist non-Indigenous Australian people in developing relationships and understandings with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders. Drawing on cultural protocols to inform understandings of (re)naming practices by Europeans, non-Indigenous Australian teachers may develop knowledge of current (re)naming practices as being couched in Eurocentric understandings of race and race relations. Protocols developed by Oxfam (n.d) suggest that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders prefer to be named according to their own country, using their own language. Instead of saying that a male Traditional Owner from the Ballarat area is an Aboriginal Traditional Owner in Ballarat, he might prefer to be named as an Aboriginal man from the mob with whom he associates, for example, a Wadawurrung man (B. Powell, personal communication, November 5, 2014).

We make the point that the documents drawn upon in this article are of a general nature only. Advice from Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders themselves suggests that schools and teachers should always contact local Traditional Owners or cooperatives for confirmation and guidance about which name(s) and spellings are preferred within individual local communities (Indigenous Lead Centre, n.d; Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Inc., 2010). We would stress the importance of ensuring a local focus on understanding ways in which Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders preferred to be addressed because within such spaces ways in which people prefer to be named is inextricably linked to notions of identity, pride and culture. Where one Aboriginal person and/or Torres Strait Islander might refer to themselves as an Aboriginal person, another might say they are from the Kulin nation, and yet another might prefer to be addressed simply as, 'Sir', or by their given name. It is a declaration of identity, as an Elder from the Wadawurrung community stated:

... everyone is different, everyone has their own personal views. But I'm not Aboriginal, I'm not Indigenous, I'm definitely not a Koorie because it's so close to the word Goonie, and it's a northern New South Wales word. I'm none of those. I'm Wadawurrung (B. Powell, personal communication, November 5, 2014).

Ways in which Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders prefer to be named on an individual basis is only one aspect of the need for cultural protocols to assist non-Indigenous Australians in developing relationships with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders. While

we have stressed the importance of cultural protocols for teachers' cross-cultural understanding and engagement, it is beyond the scope of this article to explore questions and puzzles that may arise about naming protocols in general and suggest that this may be an area that requires further research. When teachers draw on cultural protocols, they are guided to step beyond confines of not knowing, to move beyond Eurocentric understandings, ask questions, develop relationships and access the knowledges and perspectives inherent to each individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Australia. In doing so, Eurocentric practices of (re)naming Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders may be shaken, so that culturally safe spaces where knowledge and understandings may be opened up and shared.

Conclusion

Exploring the legacy of Eurocentric (re)naming practices and understanding ways in which local Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders preferred to be named, teachers generate opportunities to develop further understandings of connotations of Eurocentric (re)naming practices. Viewing such (re)naming practices through a multi-perspective lens — that is as Eurocentric practices, cultural protocols and personal relationships with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders — teachers are enabled to develop critical understanding and knowledge about ways in which Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders have been (re)named since English contact. Such approaches provide opportunities to deconstruct barriers, challenge homogeneity, embrace diversity among Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, and promote acceptance within Australian Curriculum practices for moves towards Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders' self-determination and sovereignty.

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