

2 NN Have you already turned it on?

3 SE: *Of course it's already on!*

4 Yes. The old people back at the beginning, well, they didn't have anything in the way of Balanda things, particularly not food. They only had Aboriginal stuff - yams, bush honey, cheeky yams, they used to dig them out of the dirt and give it to the kids and the elders. They used to go fishing and hunting. In the wet season they collected bush honey. They would collect it and put it in dilly bags, that bush honey. They would take it along with them in the dilly bag, and by the end of the wet they would probably have nearly run out. And when the dry season came they would be doing the same thing, looking for food. That's what the old people did here in the past, before white people came. They were just here themselves. Later on the Balanda came and they taught them about white peoples' food. So they ate white people's food. The Balanda introduced it to them so the adults stopped eating our own food, [] white peoples' food. That happened when the Balanda arrived here. Actually, to begin with, when the Balanda first came, the old people were frightened of them. Some of them didn't know about Balandas. [] Those first Balanda used to teach them, That old man who built the first house.

5 They used to eat that food. They used to shop, and they would give them clothes. Clothing. They would give them clothes. They didn't wear clothes before that. They would make grass skirts from long grass, something like this, they would wrap it around themselves. They would use mankurladj vines to wrap around themselves, both men and women. And they tied it around the children. That's what they would do, the people here. Later on, when those two (missionaries) came and set up this place, then they gave them clothes. So they just stopped using those clothes made from grass. They were given real clothes by those two Balanda who came. Those two old people who first set up this place here.

6 SE: *This is going well. About this history. What about when you were a child, how did you learn things?*

7 Old people used to explain things to me. Mr and Mrs Dyer, when they came and taught them, and they (in turn) showed them about the vines.

8 SE: *The other day you were working at the, ah, Women's' Centre, there a couple of days ago, here. How did you learn about baskets in the first place? [I was there.] Yes, it was good. Can you talk about how you were teaching those young men, I mean, young women? [You'll tape it?] Yes, it'll come out on the tape. Yes, its okay, its on. Go ahead and talk about it.*

9 My mother and her mother used to teach me. I used to watch what they did when they made things - when they made baskets and mats. I would sit and I would watch them as they told me what they were doing. And also dilly bags, they used to make. And other the different old people too, we used to sit and watch them. That's what I did, and then I used to make things myself as I got bigger. I watched them as they made things, and another woman I would watch making dilly bags, as I sat there. I would watch that woman. Then as I went along and got bigger, and I would watch how they did it, and then do it myself. That's how I made things. So now I'm teaching these kids, this later generation who are growing up now. I tell them, "Don't do it this way, just make it properly. Like I'm doing it. Watch what I'm doing." And those kids I'm teaching, some of them don't know, some of them do know. Some of them are growing up into women, young women, older women and they'll know how we make things, what we know.

10 SE: *Those young women, did they learn well the other day? The ones you were teaching, they learnt things okay?*

11 Yes. They do know. When we go collecting pandanus leaves they dig up the colours, and put it in their bags. So those young women do know. They've been digging up and collecting colour and putting into their bags – baladji bags. So I've told them, "This I'm telling you is what you do when you grow up and have your own children. You teach them, and your daughters' children, your kakkak. So watch and then teach those children so they'll know in their turn." I teach them so they do know. [MmMm.]

12 [[Tea break with some informal discussion on tape, not transcribed.]]

13 SE: Now my daughters' children, our (inc) daughters' children, M____. E____ and so on - they're good kids - do you teach them, I mean, at home?

14 I do teach them. They know things.

15 SE: What sort of things? About language? Or so they'll have good manners? Or what? [Yes.] **They come here all those Mamam, they come sometimes, come visiting. Sometimes I give them colouring in.** [Colouring. Yes they said to me, "We're going to visit Mamam Nabulanj to do colouring in."] **They're good artists.** [I told them, "When you've finished and they send you home, don't leave any mess."] **Yes. They're good. They sweep up and tidy up. It's fine. And I heard news that Jules might be going in a film. You know about this? Some Balanda came who are making that picture, and they were listening to Jules so maybe they'll film him in this picture.** [Whereabouts?] **Yes. It's called "Yolngu Boy". They'll make that film** [So its decided. At an outstation?] **Somewhere I guess they'll do it, I don't know.** [Yeah. Maybe.] **Holiday?** [Kudjekbinj.] **Where is his country?** [Wammarli, the camp is right on the beach.] **Waminari?** [Wammarli] **Wammarli?** [Yes. We (inc) all camped there.] **Yes, yes. His father's (country).** [Yes. We stayed in that jungle at Sandy Creek. You know Sandy Creek, where you go down to the beach. [] it belongs to those children.] **Those kids, when they were small, did you teach those boys?**

16 Yes. And they do know things. They know how to hunt geese. They spear kangaroo, you know what I mean? They know that.

17 SE: And you teach them things?

18 I tell them stories. I've taught them. [MmMm.]

19 SE: And, did you go to school yourself, Kakkali? [What?] **When you were little, did you go to school?** [Of course I went.] **So who were your teachers?**

20 Oh, who were those Balanda here then? We didn't have any building like now. They would build shade shelters and that's where we used to go to school. And the Balanda used to live in a house, with a dining room, and we had school in there, and they would teach us. And in that building just here. [**Here?**] Yes.

21 SE: You mean they would make bark shelters?

22 Yes. They used to make shelters, with bark on the roof and floor. Dry season it was okay, but when it was going to rain we didn't have it there, they taught us in the houses where they lived.

23 SE: Who was the teacher?

24 I've forgotten her name, but there was a Miss Rodda who used to take us. And Miss Maralngurra used to teach us too. Ngalkodjok.

25 SE: I know her, B ___'s mother. I see.

26 She was the teacher [].

27 SE: Did they get angry with you? [What?] Did they get angry with you? [Who?] When you went to school.

28 They didn't get angry with us. [**But...**] Sometimes, when there were no teachers, the nursing sister would teach us – here where they used to work at the old hospital. One sister used to come and teach us. She would have to go and then another sister would teach us, and that one, if we were silly, she used to hit us. This was here []. They used to make books (at the literacy centre). That (lady) R___ M___ used to make that literature.

29 SE: And all those grandchildren of yours, do they go to school all the time?

30 . Two, I mean three, of them go to Kormilda. A girl and two boys, E___ and also T___.

31 SE: Do they like it?

32 Yes, although T___ has said, "I don't want to go back. I want to stay here."

33 SE: Did you ever see, I mean in the old days or maybe even now too, at the ceremonies, when they were teaching them?

34 They do teach them. [[Two words inaudible]] at the start. Four of those young men, they're going.

35 SE: Okay, I want to ask you to think about this. Think about it and then talk about both the way Balanda do things and Bininj do things – an old man or old lady teaching young men or young women: do they do things differently or the same? Bininj and Balanda. You know what I mean? It's about how people teach.

36 The same, of course. Whether it's Balanda things or Aboriginal they teach both, Balanda first, then later they teach them our Aboriginal way. It's true - both young men and young women.

37 SE: Did they explain things? When the old people used to teach you, when you were small, and you said you used to watch what they did, did they explain it to you, did they give you an explanation? In words. Or, you just, you just watched what someone did? Or, did they perhaps talk about what they were doing?

38 I just watched what they were doing when they made things. They used to say to us, "When you become an adult later on, you'll be able to do this. You won't just sit there. And when you have your own children [], you should teach them, and that's how you will tell them the law, later when you're grown up."

39 SE: Kakkali, tell me if you need a break. I've got a lot questions here, and I don't want to tire you out. Do you want to talk about school?

40 You mean back when you and I were teaching, about that?

41 SE: Your choice. If there's anything you want to talk about to do with school, Balanda school? Do you want me to give you any suggestions, questions? I can read them. I've got these questions. I can read them so you can listen and decide for yourself something to talk about. Um, "What if you talk about the way the school organizes itself to teach white and black things." "When you were small, did you go to school?" Oops, I already asked you that. [Mm.] "When children go to school now..." Hang on. "When children go to school, are they learning anything there or not?" "Is it too strict or too slack?" You know what I mean? Some of them are strict some are slack. Is that good or not? "Do you want them to become competent at writ- at writing and reading Kunwinjku at school? Do you want them to learn that, or just English or both, or what? [Both!] So you want both. Okay. Go ahead and talk about that.

42 Both Aboriginal and Balanda, the two. We want them to teach Balanda things, so they know that, and teach them Aboriginal, and come back to teach our own stuff, our Aboriginal things. Both those laws. They should learn properly Balanda things and Aboriginal things, so they should teach it all. Then they can make things, cut spears, make baskets and mats, dilly bags.

43 SE: Now about Kunwinjku language, you remember when you and I worked in the bilingual programme. We all worked there back then, with Ngalwurrik, my mother-in-law, and there was, who else, all mixed in together. But it's quite different now. So who is teaching them Kunwinjku?

44 J___. She's the one who's teaching them. [**Just her?**] J___ teaches Kunwinjku to the children going to school, so they can write it. She writes it.

45 SE: And she knows how to spell well. Do you read Kunwinjku Kakkali?

46 I know how

47 SE: You know. So how did you learn?

48 You used to teach me. [*Me?*] You did when you worked in that bilingual when it started. Ngawamud too. We went to school first, then over there and we worked and did writing.

49 SE: Ngawamud – Miss Rowe?

50 Yes Miss Rowe.

51 SE: So there's a lot who write Kunwinjku.

52 Some of them don't know. [*Mm.*] They don't really understand. We older people know how. They just know English, and how to write it. But Kunwinjku, no. They just speak Kunwinjku but they don't know how to write it. [*Mm.*] They don't know how.

53 SE: Are you feeling too cold? [No, I'm fine for now.] Um, You know how there's a lot of children who don't want to go and don't go to school? Do the parents send them or not?

54 (The parents) send them but the kids themselves don't want to go. Some of them want to. [*Mm.*] Some don't want to.

55 SE: The ones who don't want to, what's the reason?

56 I don't know. Why don't they go? They just don't want to. Sometimes it's because of dirty clothes. Or sometimes they sleep in. They don't want to [] they just want to go all night long, so then they make themselves too tired to wake up on time.

57 SE: So why do they sleep in – they just do that to themselves.

58 But they do it.

59 SE: If they got enough sleep they'd get up okay.

60 They don't get up.

61 SE: Now, the children who do go to school, those children: what should a teacher do with a child who does the wrong thing, who is “mucking up”?

62 Yes. That's what those two (grandchildren of mine) were doing. The teacher sometimes is harsh with those kids. When teachers tell them off, a child will become very unhappy. But, if they speak to them gently they kids' (behaviour) just gets worse and worse and they will abuse them, they'll end up throwing things around, written work, books, or cutting things up.

63 [[Brief interruption due to interviewer coughing.]]

64 NN I might be wrong about this, when you listen to it.

65 SE: No. You won't be wrong because you're actually an expert, you know a lot about this. You've got your own children, and now you've got lots of grandchildren, your Kakkak, eh? [Yes.] So, are children nowadays learning Kundebi, Kunbalak, and, I'm talking about all the other Balanda- oops, I mean, Aboriginal things?

66 They know. I'm teaching them. I'll say to them, “You call that man Kanjok, or Nakurrng. Don't go up to people you call Nakurrng, not close, they are you're sons-in-law, so you keep your distance.”

67 SE: Do they use Kundebi in talking to you? [Might be.] What about Kundebi?

68 Kundebi I'm teaching them, so they know it.

69 SE: Actually I'm learning it too, but I don't know it. It's too difficult. You know when they teach them at ceremonies, when they used to teach them in the old days, were they very strict with them? [Yes.] And is it any different now? Or has it got easier? Or what? Do they still have that approach?

70 They still have it. It's strict.

71 SE: *When you were working at school, did you teach the kids?*

72 Yes, I used teach the kids. I used to rouse at them, and they would cry, and I used to hit them. But only sometimes, those kids. If any of them did something wrong or didn't obey me, I would hit them. [Mm.] []

73 SE: *So you (plural) had strict discipline. And when you and I used to teach the bilingual class, you remember? [Yes.] You used to teach them in two languages, both languages. [Yes.] Talk about that. Maybe you could talk about what you did back then when you and I worked together.*

74 Okay. When you and I used to work together we taught them both languages in that Bilingual. Both - English and Aboriginal languages. We used to teach them Kunwinjku, we would write it. We used make books, we used to write them for the kids to read. Some of them didn't know how to read - no. They found it hard to read - they didn't know the letters.

75 SE: *You remember when we used to have M___ and those others?*

76 Yes. The older girls, we used to teach them, some of them could read and some not. Some didn't know.

77 SE: *Can I ask you, Kakkali? When they used to go up to the ceremonies and stay there, when someone was teaching them, a man may have been teaching them and they made mistakes, they couldn't do something properly, they hadn't really learnt something, what did they do with them? Did they go crook at them or just teach them again?*

78 Whether they roused at them or taught them, that was up to the men. They would give them instructions and then those young boys would come down here. They would tell them, "Don't do this or that. Don't go running around. Just settle down." When they had seen the first ceremony they would just have to stay in the camp.

Then when the time was finished, they would do that special washing, and they would be finished up at the ceremonial area.

79 SE: Did they, for example, say to them, “Hurry up! Hurry up and learn this!” Or put them under pressure? Or did they just wait for them?

80 They would make them hurry, they would push them, talk to them to push them along.

81 SE: So they pushed them along, they pressured them. I’ve found another question. I’ve got it here. “How do children learn?” I mean when they are small. How particularly do they learn language? Kunbalak, um, Kundebe or, for example, how do they learn to become well mannered? How do they learn this?

82 The old people teach them, their mothers’ mothers, they tell them, that’s how.

83 SE: Okay, that’s that. What about country? Who told you about country, talked to you about your country, so you’d really know about it. Country, the land, how did you learn about that? [] I mean your (plural) country.

84 Our father taught me what we know, or his father, our Mahwah we called him, that was about our (exc) country, yes that was about our country. [*Your father’s father?*] Yes our fathers’ fathers used to tell us. He told our father, our father used to tell us. This place here is not our country, our country is a long way off.

85 SE: I see. And when you were a young woman, did you (plural) mix with the young men when you were learning things? Or not? Were you separate? Is it okay to ask? [Me?] Yes.

86 When we were children, as young girls, we didn’t mix with young boys. They would go off and stay somewhere, just themselves. Our grandmothers and mothers stayed there with us. We didn’t live with those young boys. Men, the young men lived separately themselves. They adults used to supervize them too, and look after them.

87 SE: So they used to teach you separately?

88 Yes, they used to teach us []

89 SE: What about Christianity – how did you learn about that?

90 They used to teach me, missionaries, they taught us. That's how I know it. And our mothers used to talk to us about it, so then we in turn would know for the future. That Yiwarrudj they used to teach us that so we know. That was right back in the earliest days. We knew about it because they used to teach us. [*Those...*] Those two old people.

91 SE: Did you live in a dormitory? [What?] Dormitory, did you live there?

92 Yes, we lived in the dormitory. Yes. We women and the young men separately. [*In two buildings?*] In two buildings.

94 SE: Did you ever, um, hang on, did you ever “run away”?

95 No I didn't run away, we just stayed there.

96 SE: Some interesting questions here. What if a teacher, Aboriginal or Balanda, is teaching some kids, should he, should he just teach them very directly, should he explain everything to them, or is it okay if he asks them a lot of questions, so the children will make up their own mind and think about it?

97 Should the teacher ask them questions? [*Yes, is that a good thing?*] It's good if the teacher asks them questions, the ones he's been talking to. What they'll do if he just talks to them is think about other things. They won't pay attention to what the teacher tells them.

98 SE: Okay, listen to this. I'll read this here. Two children, little kids, babies, boys or girls, are born separately but on the same day. The one day. One is a Balanda.

One Aboriginal. You know what I mean? Maybe one born in Melbourne and one here. If we were to steal them both, and then we put the white baby here so Aboriginal people could look after him and raise him, and the other, the Aboriginal one, we put in Melbourne, so the Balanda could raise him, what would happen to each of those two, what would happen to them? What do you think? What would you say? As they both grow up separately.

99 The white and the black? [*Mm.*] It would teach each one, one the white way and the other the black. The same thing would happen to them both, the same with the Balanda. I don't know how intelligent the child would be. That little Aboriginal kid would forget Kunwinjku, our language, and he would just talk English. He would know both – English and Kunwinjku, the Aboriginal language as the child gets bigger.

100 SE: At the deepest level, I mean in thinking, the will, feelings, you know, deep inside, are Aboriginal people and Balanda different or maybe the same as each other. Not at skin level, but underneath.

101 Yes. Underneath, deep down, they are both the same. That's why they can be taught English. Both black and white can be taught.

102 SE: This is good. When Balanda children learn, they sometimes just watch what adults are doing, and then they copy them. Do Aboriginal children do the same thing or not?

103 Just the same.

104 SE: Do...? Who learns things better without being taught; Aborigines or Balanda? Can a child teach himself and learn things?

105 He'll only know a little bit as he grows up. Children learn and he'll know things well, both Balanda and Aboriginal. Each child will grow up with it. So he would become just like a Balanda in his mind, that Aboriginal child, as they teach him.

106 SE: *Which people are good teachers? ,maybe better than other teachers? Or in English, maybe I would say, “Are there some people that are really good teachers and some that are bad teachers?” And, I mean, a good teacher, what does he do with them? [Balanda?] Or Aboriginal.*

107 Some are no good, some teachers. A child may not really understand because some of them are not intelligent, whereas another child is clever when someone is teaching them, but some of them just don't know much. No.

108 SE: *You already spoke about the bilingual programme. Would you like it to come back into the school, for it to start again? [The...] The bilingual programme.*

109 Yes. Some kids know, and some kids don't know the language, the one we speak, Kunwinjku. That's the one. They only know how to read English. The Aboriginal language, no, they can only speak it. Some adults don't know either, and the children don't know.

110 SE: *If they do learn Kunwinjku at school, should it be written down and read aloud or not?*

112 No. They don't write it. They only know English.

113 SE: *So you'd like them to learn that?*

114 They should know how to write their own language, Kunwinjku. I mean we already know how to write English, although some don't, they don't know.

115 SE: *Kakkali, you know how with children some of them learn quickly and some don't. Why is this?*

116 I'm unsure. I don't know. One (written language) they know, all of them. That's the one they teach them. But not our Kunwinjku language, they are not able to read bilingually, they don't know that.

117 SE: Mm. Those children you took for basketry last week [Yes, they know basket making.] **Did all of them learn, or...?**

118 Yes, they all know, they learnt so they can make baskets. Both Balanda and Aboriginal kids.

119 SE: They all watched you and listened to you.

120 Yes, they watched me while I was making (baskets) – they were watching as I made it. The kids all crowded in together, close, those kids, white and black. They were thinking, “What do we do?” I pulled and tightened very firmly, the right way. “Don’t leave any slack. That’s not the way.” []

121 SE: We’re nearly finished now. But there’s a few others. Children, you know, there are some who don’t learn quickly, and some who learn very fast. Why is this difference? One child will listen to the teacher and he’ll understand, another, won’t get it.

122 That first one, is listening to what the teacher tells him and he hears him. The other who doesn’t know, doesn’t understand, so one of them knows, the one who when it is explained to him, he gets hold of it.

123 SE: But why is this?

124 I don’t know what would be said to a child. If you are simply unintelligent, then you don’t really understand. I don’t know what they would think about, in their brains.

125 SE: Is it true that Balanda and Aboriginal people have the same brains?

126 Yes. Some are intelligent, some don’t really know things.

127 SE: So Balanda and Aboriginal people are the same?

Balanda and Aboriginal people are the same. Some Aboriginal people, if they are taught English, they will know it right through their lives. Some, no, they'll only know [], they won't be ignorant of that.

129 SE: Who should teach children, I'm talking about sex education as they call it in English, they say "sex education" in English, or in Aboriginal language, I mean, men and women separately? Anyway, who should teach them?

130 There aren't any Aboriginal staff there to teach them. Aboriginal. There's only Balanda staff there.

131 SE: So how do children learn about sex education or about sex, so they know about it, do they just discover it?

132 The Balanda teach their kids so they know, that's what's in their heads. [*I see.*] The same with Aboriginal kids.

133 SE: Mm. You mean in the past, or now?

134 Yes, it's the same. Then and now.

135 SE: That's it. But hang on. Um, should we (inc) all meet together, you and the others I've been interviewing, and later when I finish and write it up I'll make copies and give you all copies to talk about. Is that okay?

136 Good.

137 SE: You don't sound very enthusiastic.

138 [[Laughs.]] Its good.

[[INTERVIEW FINISHED. TAPE OFF.]]