

EDITORIAL

There is a diversity of topics considered in this issue of *The Aboriginal Child at School*.

We have two research reports, both highly significant in the insights they provide on the characteristics of schools and teachers that enhance Aboriginal learners' academic achievement and satisfaction with school. John Fanshawe develops the work he has done in Brisbane in determining features of teacher effectiveness. His study strongly supports the essential characteristic of "warmth" in teaching style preferred by Aboriginal learners. While much research into general effectiveness advocates "warmth" as a highly desirable teacher personality quality, "warmth" is critical for Aboriginal learners.

Bob Hill's careful and detailed study of Aboriginal students' perceptions of aspects of their Central Schools in NSW has important educational implications. Pre-service education should include programs to help future teachers to develop skills that will enable them to communicate effectively with their learners' parents and to develop positive and productive parent/school relationships. With the increasing devolution of decision-making in Australian education there perhaps needs to be more focus on developing these skills at the pre-service level.

Ruth Gledhill has presented an interesting and valuable paper on structures of discourse based on her reading and experience in teaching tribal Aboriginal students in North East Arnhem Land. Teaching implications are developed - the general recommendation -

"Ideally, teachers should have a knowledge and understanding of the language of their students in order that they may make explicit the differences in the languages and help their students become more proficient at both speaking and writing in English."

should be a basic principle for all teachers.

Included in this issue are a number of book reviews and notices of teaching materials. We would welcome more as we find these are of particular value to teachers who, because of distance, have difficulty in keeping abreast of recent publications and resources.

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