

# Situating myself as a researcher...



Quandamooka (Nunukul/Ngugi)  
Researcher and Teacher (Humanities)



This is me and how I am **in relation to** the Australian context – the British coloniser/colonised context – and the theory of coloniality/decoloniality in modernity

# Decoloniality begins with you first...

- “Coloniality wants, that is, to know, thus possess, and therefore control the colonized” (Mackinlay, 2019, p. 167).
- Decoloniality (or decolonial thinking) is a broad field of studies and intellectual work that in general seeks to analyse and delink from colonial epistemologies, ontologies and axiologies (Bunda, 2018; Mackinlay & Barney, 2014; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Mignolo 2007; Tuck & Yang, 2012).
- Recommended readings:  
Dr Katelyn Barney, Professor Tracey Bunda, Dr Grada Kilomba, Professor Liz Mackinlay, Professor Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson, Professor Aníbal Quijano, Professor Martin Nakata

## Coloniality: Classroom example

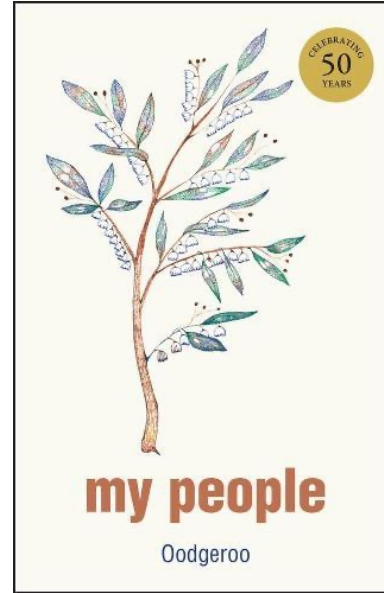
- The school teacher was teaching an Indigenous poem and using past tense to talk **about** Indigenous Australian peoples.
- Language included “Aboriginal people used to...” and “Aboriginal people were...”
- This problematic language reinforces an absence of Indigenous Australian peoples in society/modernity and therefore perpetuates colonising thinking and behaviour

## Decoloniality

- For decoloniality, I encourage you to shift ontologically (way of being) in relation to how you think towards and see coloniser/colonised contexts - this is key for the progression of decolonial agendas

## Questions for the audience

- How can you begin to decolonise the curriculum if you are not first willing to decolonise yourself at an ontological level?
- What are you seeking to achieve in decolonising the learning and teaching environment?



# Practical ways to decolonise learning and teaching

(4 ways to interrupt and disrupt coloniality – for an Australian context – all students benefit)

## Indigenising

1. Embedding a language word at certain times of the year in class (example: “Yura” during NAIDOC week)
2. Embedding stereotypical images of Indigenous peoples in class (creates mythical representation/reinforces Aboriginalist discourse)
3. Embedding historical content in schools/universities (which may contain misleading content)



## Decolonising

1. Greet the class all year round/place language cards on classroom walls (check the local language of the area you are teaching in)
2. In relation to identity, understand that Indigenous peoples and students are not homogenous. Also, consider placing contemporary Indigenous success images around your class (from various fields)
3. Select Indigenous authors. Build relationships **with** Indigenous community members (such as Elders), Indigenous academics/teachers, listen to your Indigenous students. Talk with “knowers”. Non-Indigenous scholars/peoples are not our “knowers” of our histories, lived experiences or stories – our families are.  
\*Invite guests – Be aware of cultural taxation

4. Embed yarning circles inside and outside of classrooms

(Yarning (talking) circles are generally considered a safe place for Indigenous Australian peoples – good way for non-Indigenous academics/teachers to participate in Indigenous ways of doing and to build relationships)



Alexandra Hills High School has opened a yarning circle. Raymond Walker conducted a smoking ceremony to open the circle. Photo by Chris McCormack