

Balanda and Yolŋu maths

Remarks made during the Maths as a Cultural Practice Workshop, CDU, 2007¹

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<p>Ma' ŋarrany yäku nhawi Waymamba, ga mak ŋarra Yurripuy dhuwal, mak yuw, yaka ŋarra marŋgi. Maths dhuwal nhakun in Yolŋuwalnydja nhawinur romŋur, ŋorra napurrungal ga. Bili napurru ŋuli gan ŋuli bäki ŋunhidhiyi maths mala, Yolŋuwalnydja gali'ŋur.</p>	<p>Okay, my name is Waymamba, and maybe I'm from Milingimbi, maybe, I don't know. (Joking she has lived in Darwin a long time.) Maths is in our Yolŋu law, it is lying in there for us. Because we always had our own mathematics on the Yolŋu side.</p>
<p>Manymak ŋunhi napurr dhu balandawalnydja mathslil gärrri napurr dhu ga ŋunhili dhu marŋgithirr, napurru dilkurru, djamarrkuli, ŋunhidhin napurr dhu malŋ'maram differencenja.</p>	<p>Okay, so when we enter into balanda maths, and learn in there, we older people or children, that's where we will find a difference.</p>
<p>Bili ŋunhi walalangaldja balandawalnydja, idea-y ŋayi ga ŋunhi dividing ŋayi ga world into numbers, balandawalnydja, ga bala ŋayi dhu ŋunhi djamarrkuli wo dilkurruwurrui yakan ga dharanjan nhaltjan ŋayi ga djäma ŋuruni nhakun mathstja ŋunhi walalangal romŋur balandawaldja.</p>	<p>Because the balanda idea, (maths) is dividing the world into numbers, on the balanda side, and so those kids or older people can't recognise how it is working, that maths which is inside Balanda culture...</p>
<p>Unless napurr dhu baladhi bili roniyirr napurrungal djalkirilil, ga romlil napurrungal yolŋuwal, ga ŋunhili ŋathil marŋgithirr, ga yorrnha manapan beŋurnydja bala märram, balandawalnydja mathsnur,</p>	<p>Unless we go back to our foundations, and to our Yolŋu law, and start by learning there, and later add the other from over there, from the balanda mathematics</p>
<p>Unless we go back to our foundations, and to our Yolŋu law, and start by learning there, and later add the other from over there, from the balanda mathematics.</p>	<p>And then we will work them both together, and teach the kids, the kids will learn in courses, or at home or wherever they will learn, that's my view.</p>

¹ See www.cdu.edu.au/centres/yaci/projects_maths.html

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